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Monday, 18 November 2019

Union Chief Justice attends Judicial College groundbreaking ceremony



Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo strikes the stake at the groundbreaking ceremony to build Judicial College of the Union Supreme Court in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

THE groundbreaking ceremony of Judicial College of the Union Supreme Court was held at the projected site of the building on Naygya Street, Zawana Theikdi Ward, Ottarathira District, Nay Pyi Taw

Council Area at 8 am yesterday. Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo, Union Supreme Court Judges U Tha Htay, U Myint Aung, U Aung Zaw Thein, U Mya Han, U Soe Naing, U Myo Tint, U Khin Maung Kyi and

U Myo Win sprinkled scented water at the designated places. After executing customary procedures marking the success of the groundbreaking ceremony, the Union Chief Justice posed for documentary to-

gether with guests and officials. He then performed the rituals of gold and silver showers. Afterwards, the Chief Justice and party observed the site.

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Agribusiness Service Center projects to start in four townships

THE implementation of Agribusiness Service Center (ASC) projects will begin in Ayeyawady, Yangon, and Mandalay regions and Rakhine State, according to a press statement issued by the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

The four projects will pull in investments of US\$140 million, and they are slated to be completed in the 2020-2021 fiscal year, according to the federation.

The MRF, the China International Trust Investment Corporation (CITIC) Group, and the Myanmar Agribusiness Public Corporation (MAPCO) signed a cooperation agreement for the ASC projects last Friday at the Park Royal Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw.

MAPCO, MRF, and the CITIC Group had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 21 July, 2017 in Nay Pyi Taw. The centers will be constructed in ten states and regions.

The consortium submitted a \$400-million proposal to the Myanmar Investment Commission to construct 33 centers in states and regions. It is also seeking contracts for international loans and local investments, according to the MRF.

It has discussed the projects with the respective state and regional governments.

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H&S Ministry receives modern genome sequencing machine



Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe delivers the speech at the Donation ceremony of the Whole Genome Sequencing machine in Yangon on 16 November. **PHOTO: MNA**

MINISTRY of Health and Sports has received a modern Whole Genome Sequencing machine which can determine complete genome sequence for a given organism at one time.

The US\$25,000 worth of Illumina iSeq100 machine was donated by the University of Otago, New Zealand Myanmar Chamber of Commerce and the Capital Diamond Star Foundation.

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe expressed thanks at the donation ceremony held at the Melia Hotel in Yangon on 16 November afternoon. He also explained

effectiveness of the machine in determining the order of all nucleotides in a certain genome and detecting any variations relative to a reference genome using bioinformatics analyses. The Union Minister also requested the New Zealand to do more multi-centric collaborative research works with Myanmar universities and research departments. After the extended greetings by the New Zealand Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Steve Marshall, Dr Htin Lin Aung from the University of Otago explained the donation of medical equipment and hand-

ed over the related documents to the Permanent Secretary of the ministry Professor Dr Thet Khaing Win.

Then, Dr Cho Cho San, the Manager of National Tuberculosis Programme (NTP) under the Department of Public Health, expressed thanks for the donation.

The Union Minister also discussed safety measures on hygiene of market foods with the officials of Yangon City Development Committee at his office in Bahan Township, Yangon. —MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Cross-border economic cooperation training course conducted in Mandalay

A training course for sustainable economic cooperation between Myanmar and China was launched at the Hotel Mandalay yesterday.

Deputy Consul General Ms Li Libei from the Chinese Consulate-General in Mandalay, Economic Consul Ms Yang Sheng and officials delivered opening remarks on the three-day course.

Then, Vice President Mr. Chen Xiangqiu from the CNPC Southeast Asia Pipeline Co Ltd and Executive Director Dr Zaw Oo from the Centre for Economic and Social Development (CESD) also delivered speeches. The training course is jointly conducted by the Kunming University of Science and Technology ASEAN Research Center (KUSTARC) and the CESD, with the main objective to promote bilateral

trade cooperation between Myanmar and China by clearing unbalanced information about cross border economic cooperation and the China- Myanmar Economic Corridor construction.

During the training course, experts from the KUSTARC, Yezin Agricultural University and

the CESD will discuss bilateral cooperation, cross-border economic cooperation and development of industrial zone.

A total of 30 trainees from Mandalay Region, Shan State and Kachin State are attending the course.—GNLM

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Officials and trainees pose for a group photo at the opening ceremony of the training course for sustainable economic cooperation between Myanmar and China in Mandalay yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Chief Justice attends Judicial College groundbreaking ceremony

FROM PAGE-1

Union Supreme Court laid down the Judicial College project to build an advanced judicial institution under the strategic goal 4.4 of the five-area strategic task which is under the five-year strategic judicial plan (2018-2022).

It will be a 164 feet by 126 feet three-storey building. The second floor will house a

20-room woman's hostel and the first floor 20-room man's hostel. The ground floor will have lecturer halls, meeting rooms, library, internet room, assembly hall, security rooms, duty room, parlour, dining room, common room and stores. Building division 2 of the Ministry of Construction is the contractor of the project.—MNA

(Translated by TMT)

U Lwin Oo appointed as Ambassador of Myanmar to the Republic of the Philippines

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Lwin Oo, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the People's Republic of Bangladesh, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of the Philippines.—MNA

UNSG special envoy arrives in Sittway



Officials welcome Deputy Minister U Soe Aung and Special Envoy of United Nations Secretary-General to Myanmar Ms. Christine Schraner Burgener at Sittway Airport yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

A delegation led by Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Aung and Special Envoy of United Nations Secretary-General to Myanmar Ms. Christine Schraner Burgener arrived at Sittway from Yangon by air at

4.20 pm yesterday.

The delegation was welcomed by Minister for Security and Border Affairs of Rakhine State Col Min Than and officials at Sittway Airport. —Zaw Gyi

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Senior General leads Tatmadaw delegation to Thailand

COMMANDER-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing led a Tatmadaw delegation departed for Thailand yesterday to attend the Defense & Security 2019 and the ASEAN Defense Minister's Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) (VIP Program).

The Senior General and delegation were seen off at Yangon International Airport by Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Tin Aung San, officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), head of the Yangon Region Command Maj-Gen That Pon and military officers, Thai Ambassador Mrs Suphatra Srimaitreephithak, Chinese Ambassador Mr Chen Hai, the Thai naval attache, Chinese military attache, and other officials.

The Tatmadaw delega-

tion consisted of the Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Mya Tun Oo and Tatmadaw officials from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army).

According to information released by the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, the Senior General and delegation were welcomed at Suvarnabhumi Airport by Lt-Gen Ekachai Harpoonvittaya and officers from the Royal Thai Armed Forces, Group Managing Director Mr M Gandhi of GML Exhibition Co Ltd, Myanmar Ambassador U Myo Myint Than, Myanmar military attache (Army, Navy, Air) Brig-Gen Khin Zaw and other officials.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing seen off at Yangon International Airport by Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Tin Aung San, military officers, Thai Ambassador Mrs Suphatra Srimaitreephithak, Chinese Ambassador Mr Chen Hai and officials. **PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES**

TOT course for disability grading, registration conducted in Bago Region

A four-day course of training for trainers to conduct grading and registration of persons with disabilities was launched in Nyaunglebin Township, Bago Region, yesterday morning.

The opening ceremony of the course was attended by Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye, Kayin Ethnic Affairs

Minister of Bago Region Daw Naw Pwe Sae, representatives from the Myanmar Federation of Persons with Disabilities (MFPD) and the related associations, UNICEF and the departmental officials.

The Union Minister explained programmes for the disabled persons such as enactments of the 2015 Law on

the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its by-law in 2017, formation of committees and sub-committees for effective implementation, the pilot projects conducted in Hlaingtharyar Township of Yangon Region, Nyaunglebin Township of Bago Region and Hpa-an Township of Kayin Region for grading and registration of these persons,

financial assistance to them, the drafting of National Strategic Plan (2020-2025) for this project and the priority areas of education, health, employment, social security, natural disasters and easy access to helps for emergency situations for the persons with disabilities.

The Minister for Kayin Ethnic Affairs of Bago Region gov-

ernment also expressed thanks for selecting Nyaunglebin Township as a pilot project area.

The Deputy Representative of UNICEF in Myanmar explained the processes of pilot project for the grading and registration.

The TOR course for this programme is attended by 148 persons from the government departments, women committees, the associations of persons with disabilities, Red Cross Society, and social organizations.

In the afternoon, the Union Minister and party arrived at Thamin Inn Gone Village in Kyauktaga Township and presented K 1.6 million for reconstruction of toilet damaged by floods.

They proceeded to Taungkhin village to provide K 194.473 million cash assistance of National Disaster Management Committee for reconstruction of inter-village rock road between Thahtaygone and Taungkhin villages.

The Union Minister and party also presented 2,000 units of school dresses and K15 million for construction of earth retaining walls to prevent soil erosion of Tonkan creek.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye and officials pose for a group photo at the opening ceremony of the four-day course of training for trainers to conduct grading and registration of persons with disabilities in Nyaunglebin yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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ACTING CHIEF EDITORAye Min Soe
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT**

Kyaw Myaing

SENIOR TRANSLATORSZaw Min
Zaw Htet Oo
Aung Khin**INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITOR**Ye Htut Tin,
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**LOCAL NEWS EDITORS**Tun Tun Naing (Editor),
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor),
nwenwe9131@gmail.com**TRANSLATORS**Hay Mar Tin Win,
Ei Myat Mon
Kyaw Zin Lin
Kyaw Zin Tun**REPORTER**Nyein Nyein Ei,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**PHOTOGRAPHER**Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar
Kyaw Zeya**COMPUTER TEAM**Thein Ngwe, Zaw Zaw Aung,
Ye Naing Soe, Hnin Pwint,
Kay Khaing Win, Sanda Hnin,
Thein Htwe, Nyi Lin Thu**EDITORIAL SECTION**(+95) (01) 8604529,
Fax - (+95) (01) 8604305**CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION**San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,
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Hotline - 09 974424848
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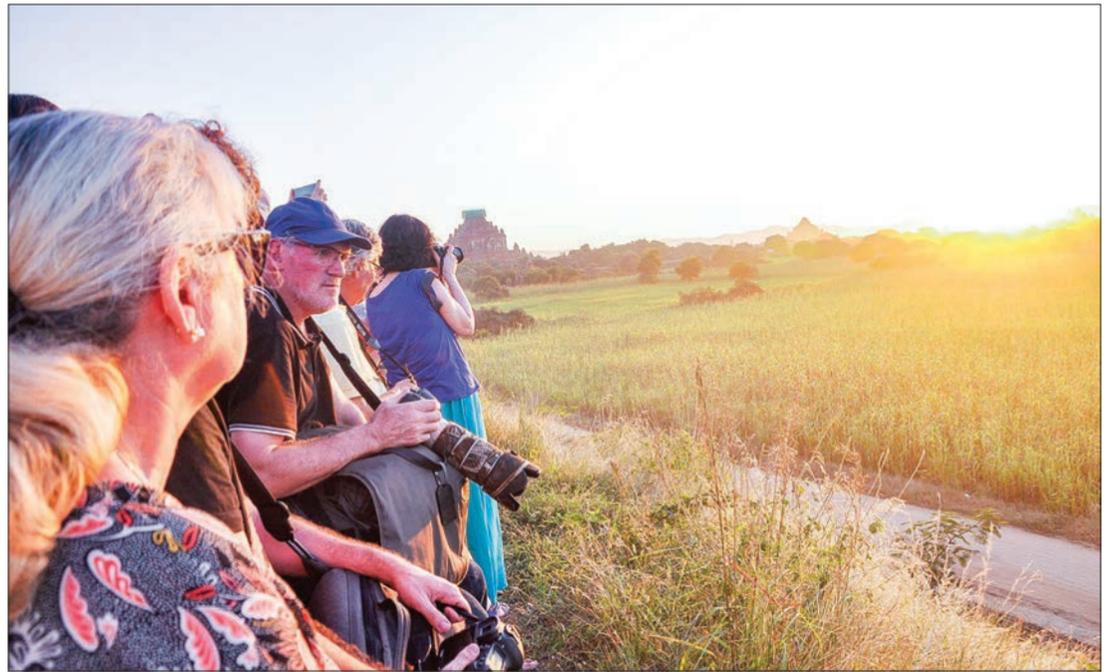
Tourists throng Bagan for sunset views

A larger number of tourists have been entering Bagan in the beginning of the high season to catch a glimpse of historical temples in the backdrop of breathtaking sunsets in the ancient city, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The famous Bagan sunset views can be observed from six places and of them, the Nyaung Lat Phat Kan viewpoint, the artificial hill close to Sulamani temple, the Taungthu hill, and Minnathu village viewpoints are packed with visitors hoping to catch the sunset views.

In the high season, horse-riding businesses, motorcycle and electric bike rental businesses, hotels, motels, and guesthouses are earning well, along with souvenir businesses. Those businesses create jobs for local residents.

"Starting from the first week of November, tourists are increasingly thronging to Bagan, a famous tourist destination in Myanmar, and they are mostly visiting in the high season. They like to enjoy Bagan's sunset views. Most of them are Chinese,

Tourists visit Bagan to catch the glimpse of historical temples in the backdrop of sunset. **PHOTO: THAN HTIKE**

French, and German. The businesses relying on tourism are flourishing in the high season. If there is the most favorable place for viewing sunsets, the country can generate more foreign income. However, it is important not to harm the culture and customs of the city," said U Aung Naing Moe, who owns a

guesthouse in NyaungU Town.

There are 220 villages and seven wards in NyaungU Town. As it is close to the Bagan Ancient Cultural Heritage site, most of the tourists stay in NyaungU Town, allowing local residents to earn a good living. In addition, locals earn an income from operating transportation

businesses and selling souvenirs.

During the high season from November to April, Bagan is packed with local pilgrims and tourists. They visit Bagan to observe the temples and stupas and view the sunset.—Than Htike (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

YWCA, YMCA celebrate World Week of Prayer 2019

Youths performing at the World Week of Prayer by the World YMCA and YWCA event in Yangon. **PHOTO: MYANMAR YMCA**

THIS year's World Week of Prayer by the World YMCA and YWCA was held from 10 to 16 November, under the theme "Young people transforming

power structures for gender equality". It is rooted in the need for the elimination of gender disparities and the transformation of the way societies treat young

women and men.

Yangon's YMCA on Theinbyu Road, Botahtaung Township, also commemorated the event. Firstly, Chairman U Thar Sein read the messages of greetings from the heads of the World YMCA and YWCA.

Next, Joint-Patron of the Finance Committee, U David Sakree gave prayers, Accountant Ma Ngu Wah Lin and Office In-charge Naw Phaw Ladar Say read scriptures, Human Resource Committee member Rev U Tin Maung Shwe delivered a sermon, and General-Secretary U Maung Maung Win spoke words of gratitude.

This was followed by songs

and dances from the trainees on high-level secretary and raising awareness to stop gender-based violence.

The training course to stop gender-based violence is 16 days long and will be held in Lashio Park on 30 November. It is a cooperation between the Myanmar Anti-Trafficking of Persons Unit, Lashio District, Social Welfare Department, Township Administration Office, humanitarian organizations of Northern Shan State and IMO. The high-level secretary course will hold a graduation ceremony on 20 November.—Myanmar YMCA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Ice worth K2.48 bln seized in Myawady

A local anti-narcotic squad seized 31 kilos of Ice crystals worth K2.46 billion from a garage in Myawady, Kayin State, on 16 October, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

The police discovered the drugs after interrogating Tan Gyi, 42, who was found in Ward-5

The suspect named Tan Gyi seen with seized 31 kilos of Ice crystals. **PHOTO: MPF**

in Myawady on suspicion of drug trafficking.

Following the interrogation, the police searched the garage

owned by Lu Maw and found the drugs. But, Lu Maw is still at large.

The suspect Tan Gyi has

been charged under the existing Anti-narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—GNLM (Translated by Ba Htoo Kyaw)

Traders at Reed border gate suffering due to India's ban on cigarette, betel nut imports

TRADERS at the Reed border gate said they are facing difficulties due to India's import restriction on betel nuts and cigarettes.

Myanmar primarily exports cigarettes and betel nuts to India through the Reed gate. Since October, India has put restrictions on betel nut imports following tax violations by some traders.

Earlier, betel nut exporters were facing problems as India had imposed a 40-per-cent import duty.

India's tax hike on betel nut imports posed difficulties for merchants, border traders, and transportation businesses.

Normally, 8,000-10,000 betel nuts are traded at the border gates every day.

There are nearly 150,000 acres of betel nut plantations in the country, mostly in Taninthayi and Ayeyawady regions and Mon State.

Myanmar conducts border trade with neighboring India through Tamu and Reed gates. Trade values were registered at US\$5.45 million at Tamu and \$1.82 million at Reed between 1 October and 1 November in the current fiscal year.

In the 2019-2020 fiscal, trade figures have fallen by \$4.6 million compared to the corresponding period of the previous fiscal year.

Myanmar exports mung beans, pigeon peas, green grams, areca nuts, ginger, saffron, turmeric, bay leaves, fishery products, fruits, and vegetables to India, while it imports pharmaceuticals, oil cakes, electronic appliances, motorbikes, steel and other construction machines from the neighboring country.—Ko Khant

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Agribusiness Service Center projects to start in four townships



Farmers planting rice in the field by using rice planting machine. PHOTO: CHIT THET LWE (EAINME IPRD)

FROM PAGE-1

During Phase I, four ASC projects will be implemented in Kyaiklat Township in Ayeyawady Region, Twantay Township in Yangon Region, Madaya Township in Mandalay Region, and Kyauktaw Township in Rakhine State, according to the signing

ceremony of the cooperation agreement.

The ASC projects include boosting production and quality of agro products, promoting exports, providing technical assistance on contract farming to farmers in project areas, and post-harvest handling and treatment methods, distributing

pedigree seeds, quality fertilizers, and agro chemicals, and systematic drying and milling processes.

"I would be very happy to see agribusiness service centers in our region," said a local farmer from Twantay Township.—GNLM (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

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Myanmar-China border trade fair to be held in Lashio

A four-day Myanmar-China border trade fair will be organized in Lashio, northern Shan State, for the first time, from 21 to 24 November.

"This is the first time that Lashio Town will host the trade fair. It is being jointly organized by the Commerce Ministry of Myanmar and China's Linchang provincial government. The trade fair will be held alternately between the two countries," said Dr. Thet Lwin Oo from the

organizing committee of the trade fair.

At the event, 40 companies from Linchang selling electrical appliances, consumer products, and motorcycles will exhibit their products. Myanmar's finished forestry products, foods, tea leaves, and agricultural products will be showcased at the fair. The trade fair will feature 132 stalls by exhibitors from the two countries. Ethnic dance performances from the

two countries will be held on the opening day.

The trade fair is aimed at boosting trade relations between Lashio Town of Myanmar and Linchang Province of China, strengthen interaction between traders, create more jobs for local residents, and promote tourism. It will bring about business-matching opportunities for traders from the two countries.—Mg Ba Oo (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Imports rise by \$59 mln in current fiscal, MOC reports

THE value of Myanmar's imports between 1 October and 1 November in the 2019-2020 fiscal year stood at US\$1.618 billion, an increase of \$59 million from \$1.559 billion registered in the year-ago period, according to data released by the Ministry of Commerce.

While imports of intermediate goods dropped, the value of consumer and capital imports rose in the current FY.

In one month, capital goods, such as auto parts, vehicles, machines, steel, and airplane parts

were brought into the country, with an estimated import value of \$577.69 million. The figure was \$82.2 million higher compared to the same period in the 2018-2019 FY.

Meanwhile, Myanmar imported consumer products worth \$301.16 million, including pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and palm oil. Both private and public sector imports of consumer products showed an increase of \$17.38 million compared with the same period of the previous fiscal.

Intermediate goods make up a large share of Myanmar's imports, with petroleum products and plastic raw materials being the main import items. In the current fiscal, imports of raw materials declined by \$39.7 million from the year-ago period to reach an estimated \$571 million.

During the same period, raw materials worth \$208.45 million were also imported for the Cut-Make-Pack (CMP) garment sector.—GNLM (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

New extended building inaugurated at Hlinethaya General Hospital

A new four-storey extended building was opened at the Hlinethaya General Hospital, in western Yangon, yesterday morning, to upgrade the 200-bed facility into the center of 450-bed capacity.

Union Minister for Health and Sports attended the inauguration ceremony and asked the medical superintendent and health workers to hold a regular coordination meeting with the Hospital Support Team every two months.

He also pledges the ministry will provide human resources, medical and equipment to the hospital.

Then, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein and Medical Superintendent of Hlinethaya General Hospital Dr San Lwin Oo made speeches about the hospital and the new



Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein and officials open the Hlinethaya General Hospital in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

four-storey building before its inauguration ceremony by cutting the ceremonial ribbons.

The Hlinethaya General Hospital is a reliable health

facility for people in western Yangon and Ayeyawady Region.

It was promoted to a teaching hospital in January this year and supplied with modern di-

agnostic equipment.

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe and party also attended 'Presentation of Public Health Sector in Yangon' held at the

Department of Public Health and Medical Services of Yangon Region in the afternoon.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

He, she, they: Americans and the choice of gender pronoun



Gender-neutral signs are posted in public restrooms in a hotel in Durham, North Carolina in May 2016. **PHOTO: AFP**

WASHINGTON (United States) — A few years ago Emily Gardner, who identifies as “more feminine than not,” instructed family members of a new preference to be referred to as “they” rather than “she.”

The 23-year-old represents a growing trend among progressive Americans, who are claiming a right to choose their own pronoun, regardless of their sex at birth.

It is a battle playing out on business cards, in email signatures and on social networks, where many people are identifying their preferred pronoun outright. And “they” is gaining ground as the pronoun of choice by “non-binary” people who iden-

tify neither as male or female.

The Philadelphia bookstore that employs Gardner is on board, with a sign taped to the counter reads: “Please do not assume staffers’ pronouns, ask.”

‘Not something new’

“Non-binary people have existed forever. It’s not something new, not a trend, it’s just who we are,” said Pidgeon Pagonis, a Chicago artist who goes by the pronoun “they.”

“When people don’t respect my pronouns I coil up inside, I don’t feel good” said Pagonis, who launched the apparel brand “Too Cute To Be Binary.”

Gender-neutral pronouns, long confined to the LGBTQ com-

munity, “are becoming increasingly popular, including beyond big cities,” said sociologist Carla Pfeffer.

“The rise of social media means that cultural transformations can happen faster and disseminate more broadly than in earlier eras,” Pfeffer said.

It also helps that non-binary people are enjoying increased representation on television and in pop culture, such as British artist Sam Smith, who recently revealed a preference for “they/them” pronouns “after a lifetime of being at war with my gender.”

However use of “they” is not trending in all quarters and can give rise to mockery, with critics denouncing it as politically correct overkill.

“At a Starbucks this morning & the baristas had their approved gender pronouns,” pro-Trump conservative activist Charlie Kirk recently tweeted.

“We are creating a society of people waiting to be offended,” he said.

‘It makes me angry’

Mallory Cross, whose hair is cut short, said “I think I’m aware of how I look like and how people read me, I’m very masculine.”

“When I make such an effort to look that way and people call me ‘ma’am’ or hold the door it makes me angry,” Cross said.—AFP ■

Electronic music festival rocks Tunisian desert

NEFTA (Tunisia) — A two-day electronic music festival got underway Saturday in the southern Tunisian desert where the original Star Wars movie was filmed, drawing thousands of fans and star DJs. As the sun set over the lunar-like landscape of the Sahara desert in Tozeur region near the Algerian border, people danced on dunes in the town of Nefta under heavy police protection.

Tunisia’s tourism sector — which accounts for around seven percent of GDP — was left reeling by jihadist attacks in 2015 on a museum and a tourist resort that left dozens dead, including 59 foreigners. But the sector has since rebounded on the back of improved security, with an expect-

ed record total of nine million people visiting the Mediterranean country in 2019, according to industry officials.

“I adore such festivals in France but here in the desert and in the midst of this landscape it is magical,” said Melissa Fleury, a 22-year-old who travelled from France to attend.

The festival was first launched in 2014 but was put on hold the following year after the deadly attacks.

It is organised by a Franco-Tunisian hotelier with backing from the Tunisian tourism ministry. This year the festival — named “Les Dunes Electroniques” — has drawn around 20 musicians, including award-winning Swiss-Chilean DJ Luciano.—AFP ■



People dance at the electronic music festival “Les Dunes Electroniques” at Ong Jmel, near the town of Nefta in western Tunisia on 16 November 2019, where the original Star Wars film was shot. **PHOTO: AFP**

St Mark's closed as water again invades Venice, rain lashes Italy

VENICE (Italy) — Venice's St Mark's Square was closed on Sunday as the historic city suffered its third major flooding in less than a week, while rain lashing the rest of Italy prompted warnings in Florence and Pisa.

Venice's latest "acqua alta", or high water, hit 150 centimetres (just under five feet) on Sunday, lower than Tuesday's 187 centimetres — the highest level in half a century — but still dangerous.

"The water has stopped rising," tweeted mayor Luigi Brugnaro, who has estimated damage so far from the invading salt water at over one billion euros (dollars).

"High of 150 centimetres... Venice is working to restart," Brugnaro said after the sea water swamped the already devastated city where authorities have declared a state of emergency.

To the south, Tuscany president Enrico Rossi tweeted a warning of a "flood wave" on the Arno and said boards were being installed on the swollen river's banks in Pisa "as a precautionary measure". The Italian army tweeted photos of paratroopers helping to bolster river defences in Pisa, with authorities monitoring the same river in Florence after heavy rain made it rise dramatically overnight. Arno flooding devastated Renaissance jewel Florence in 1966, killing around 100 people and destroying thousands of priceless works of art. Civil protection units in Florence advised citizens "not to stand near the Arno's riverbanks".

Firefighters tweeted footage of a hovercraft being deployed to rescue stranded citizens in southern Tuscany's Grossetano province. —AFP ■



Churches, shops and homes have also been inundated in the city, a UNESCO World Heritage site. PHOTO: AFP

Great Barrier Reef annual mass coral spawning begins

SYDNEY (Australia) — A mass coral spawning has begun on Australia's Great Barrier Reef, with early indications the annual event could be among the biggest in recent years, local marine biologists said Sunday.

Buffeted by climate change-induced rising sea temperatures and coral bleaching, the world's largest reef system goes into a frenzy once a year with a mass release of coral eggs and sperm that is synchronised to increase the chances of fertilisation.

Marine biologist Pablo Cogollos, from Cairns-based tour operator Sunlover Reef Cruises, said the first night of the 2019 spawning was notably "prolific" in a positive sign for the under-threat ecosystem.

"There was three times the volume of eggs and sperm compared to last year, when the soft corals spawned four nights after the full moon and it was deemed to be the best coral spawn in five years," he said.

The natural wonder, which

has been likened to underwater fireworks or a snowstorm, occurs just once a year in specific conditions: after a full moon when water temperatures hover around 27 to 28 Celsius.

Soft corals are the first to release, followed by hard corals, in a process that typically spans between 48 and 72 hours. Coral along large swathes of the 2,300-kilometre (1,400-mile) reef have been killed by rising sea temperatures linked to climate change, leaving behind skeletal remains in a process known as coral bleaching.

The northern reaches of the reef suffered an unprecedented two successive years of severe bleaching in 2016 and 2017, raising fears it may have suffered irreparable damage.

Scientists last year launched a project to harvest coral eggs and sperm during the spawning, from which they plan to grow coral larvae and use it to regenerate badly damaged areas of the reef. —AFP ■

Sudanese hope Ethiopian dam ends Blue Nile floods

JUREF GHARB (Sudan) — The Blue Nile is a renegade river, according to Sudanese farmer Osman Idris, its unpredictable flooding swallows crops and houses as it crashes through Sudan from Ethiopia on its way to Egypt.

"Tonight, the level of water will be low," said Idris, a resident of Juref Gharb, a small village on the bank of the Blue Nile outside Khartoum.

"Tomorrow, it will swallow all the houses... It's a renegade river, it rises so fast," said the 60-year-old, dressed in a traditional Sudanese robe.

For Idris, Ethiopia's construction of a controversial dam on the Blue Nile is a dream come true, as it promises to regulate

the floods that inundate Sudan every rainy season.

This year alone, flash flooding has killed more than 60 and injured dozens in Sudan.

The Blue Nile joins the White Nile in Khartoum and supplies the overwhelming majority of the Nile's water, which runs through Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea.

Construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam began in 2012, but since then Egypt has sounded the alarm that the project would severely reduce its water supplies.

Egypt depends on the Nile for about 90 percent of its irrigation and drinking water, and says it has "historic rights" to the river guaranteed by treaties from 1929 and 1959.

It sees the project as an existential threat, fearing Ethiopia's rapid construction of the dam might lead to water and food scarcity for millions of Egyptians.

- More cash crops -

After several rounds of talks failed to resolve the issue, a new dialogue between Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan was mediated by the United States in Washington earlier this month.

The three delegations agreed to resolve the dispute by January 15, with ministerial-level talks being held this week in Addis Ababa.

Ethiopia insists the \$4 billion hydro-electric barrage is essential for its economic growth given that most of its population still lives without electricity.

And in Sudan, farmers hope the dam will provide predictable flow.

Over the years, farmers like Idris who own farms along the Nile have been forced to change their crops due to flood devastation and tonnes of deposited silt.

Brickmakers fire blocks of mud in riverside kilns, producing smoke harmful to crops.

"I had to shift from cultivating fruits and vegetables to animal feed," Idris told AFP. Being reliant on flooding for irrigation means only one harvest per year and limits the kind of crops that can be grown. —AFP ■



Sudanese farmers like Othman Idris say Ethiopia's construction of a controversial dam on the Blue Nile is a dream come true that would regulate flooding during rainy seasons. PHOTO: AFP

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Nation branding

WEMUST make Myanmar known all over the world: That has been our resolve since the time we were under colonial rule, and we have been stating our intent loud and clear.

Myanmar once bustled under the dynamic drive of bodies such as the Burmese Translation Society, the Myanmar knowledge dissemination association, Gandakoka editors group and Sarpay Beikman (literature house), other forces, individuals, Myanmar literary experts, international experts, and literature lovers.

Keeping up with these activities throughout the Post-War II period, the post-independence era, and the parliamentary period, our countrymen continued their work in the field of translation with greater momentum.

Unfortunately, the Burmese Translation Society ceased to exist after the Revolutionary Council came to power. The country's translation industry, which was gathering momentum towards systematic progress, met its end as there was no encouragement and no place for literature experts.

People all over the world will know more about Myanmar only if it globalizes its image, or it undergoes a nation branding process.

Thanks to certain doyens well-versed in international literature, Myanmar literature was not totally cut off from global influences. However, the field of translation never saw any marked development.

Today, the country's translation industry is on the rise again amidst mushrooming international contact and involvement, alongside the democratic transition. Hence, the industry has seen encouraging signs since the start of the current decade.

The increase in the number of persons who enjoy reading or studying or are well-versed in international literature has shaped a brighter future for Myanmar literature. Nowadays, Myanmar people are no strangers to the latest international publications because of the efforts of such translators.

But, efforts towards translating Myanmar literature into foreign languages are still weak. As a result, our mechanism for placing Myanmar on the international stage also lacks energy. People all over the world will know more about Myanmar only if it globalizes its image, or it undergoes a nation branding process.

So, if we want the international community to know the truth about Myanmar or its objective conditions, we must encourage the translation industry as it is one of the main driving forces behind globalization or the nation branding process.



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Taking a crack at the brain: Neurosurgery in Myanmar

By Tar Yar, Kay Kay, Thi Thi Min, Min Thit (MNA)

SINCE 2012, a team of neurosurgeons from the University of Medicine 2, Yangon, and the Henry Ford Hospital from Detroit, USA, led by Prof Jack Rock has been providing medical treatment every November under the programme of the Foundation for International Education in Neurological Surgery (FIENS).

FIENS was founded by a group of leading neurosurgeons in order to address the critical lack of trained neurosurgeons in developing countries. Since 1969, they have provided hands-on training and education to neurosurgeons around the world.

Prof Rock and his team of medical professionals impart their skills and knowledge by working side-by-side with neurosurgeons nurses here including surgery methods, ICU response, pre and post-surgery care, and proper maintenance of surgical equipment.

The following are excerpts from interviews with officials, medical practitioners and other people involved in this charitable programme.

Dr Myint Htwe Union Minister for Health and Sports

"One of our ministry's many priorities is continually developing the capabilities of all medical practitioners in the nation, so that they may provide the best medical services they can offer to the public."

"In order to do this, we organize training courses and send them abroad for international



Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe.

training, seminars and workshops. This way, they won't be left behind on the technological advances of the world. Since I first assumed the union minister position in April 2016, there have been about 7,000 training courses organized or co-facilitated by the health ministry."

"We've had about 300 trainees on courses longer than six months and 1,400 trainees on those with a duration less than six months. Then we have about 60 people studying for their PhD and a hundred studying MSc. These are high qualifications. Those who return to Myanmar after finishing these studies are able to provide the best medical treatment and services to our people."

"We have medical practitioners from developed countries come here to train our nation's doctors in the fields of cardiology, kidneys, liver, and the digestive tract. But of course, this time we have Prof Jack Rock and his medical team at the North Okkalapa General Hospital."

"Prof Rock's team consists of nurses to medical engineers



Prof Dr Win Myaing, Head of Neurological Department.

who will teach our doctors on the use and maintenance of medical equipment and the latest surgical methods used by the world. They've also brought along their own advanced medical equipment which they use to treat the people here. Prof Jack Rock also consults with our doctors here through Skype every fortnight. We record his consultations and share it to all the neurosurgeons across Myanmar."

"Prof Jack Rock also teaches a class of 16 holders of master degrees in neuroscience every year. He praises them for their perseverance and adaptability. It is a source of pride for us."

"Currently, we have neurological departments in Yangon General Hospital, North Okkalapa General Hospital, Mandalay General Hospital, and Nay Pyi Taw 1000-bed Hospital. We plan to open more neurological departments in Magway General Hospital and Taunggyi Sao San Tun Hospital sometime in the future."

Prof Dr Win Myaing Head of Neurological Department, North Okkalapa General Hospital

"Our neurological department was opened on 2 May, 2017. We branched off from Yangon General Hospital to accommodate the growing needs in North Okkalapa General Hospital and its community."

"We first connected with Prof Jack Rock and the Henry Ford Hospital of Detroit through the Foundation for International Education in Neurological Surgery (FIENS) in 2012. They were eager to come and advance the neurological field in Myanmar. We welcomed them with open arms and they've been visiting Myanmar every year in November since 2012. It's seven years since."

"Before their arrival in November, we tell them if we have patients that would be difficult to enter surgery in Myanmar, patients with conditions they might be interested in, or if we need certain medical equipment. Then we make early appointments with the patients, with the earliest booking done about 3-4 months in advance."

"In some of our regions, we don't even have CT scanners to diagnose people who have headaches or migraines or to look for internal bleeding. Prof Jack Rock and his team will be bringing an infrascan machine. It's a bit more advanced and is a recent invention. It costs around US\$15,000 in America, but they will be bringing it for use in Myanmar."



Prof Dr Kyi Hlaing, Neurological Department.

"The good news is they will be donating that machine after teaching us how to operate it. The infrascan allows us to check if there is internal bleeding in the head in the event a surgeon isn't around. It's a very useful machine and it's so small and portable. You could carry it in your pocket. They usually bring inventions like that with them."

"They also take two of our doctors for a two-month training course back to the US once a year. They usually stay for two weeks when they come in November. This time they arrived on 2 November. Neurosurgery takes about 5 to 6 hours per person, so they most they can operate in a day is three people. And they manage to operate on about 20 people during each of their visits here."

"Right now, they've performed surgery on four people. They've also invited three professors from South Korea to teach our younger practitioners at a US-Myanmar-South Korea neurosurgery meeting."

"I arrived at the neurological department in 1990. From that time till 2010, you could count how

many neurosurgeons existed in Myanmar with both hands. But the use of motorbikes have increased the number of accidents. People especially get wounded near the head and with neurosurgeons in the rural areas, they were attended to the best of their ability by general practitioners."

"When Prof Rock arrived here, he wanted to improve this grim situation and we began discussing it in 2012. During our time, if someone wants to join the neurological department, they had to attend a general surgery course for three years. And after that, we'd only get about one patient every one or two years."

"They suggested opening a neurosurgery course so people can directly learn about neurosurgery and which will in turn increase the number of practitioners. We took them to the Ministry

Since I first assumed the union minister position in April 2016, there have been about 7,000 training courses organized or co-facilitated by the health ministry."

of Health and Sports, and after much discussion, the ministry opened a three-year course."

"We opened the courses in three schools, mainly University of Medicine 1 and 2 in Yangon and the one in Mandalay. We now have about 60 students actively attending these courses. After receiving training for three years, the doctor will be able to treat neurological emergencies with greater efficiency. After one more year, we will appoint them to rural hospitals where they can greatly aid the local population."

"With the help of this neurological programme, patients need to spend only K1 million or less for treatment, instead of going to Thailand or Singapore as in the past which cost more than K35 million."

"When we were younger, it took about two hours just to remove the cranium, but now it only takes about 15 minutes. In

addition, the old preconception of people receiving brain surgery will absolutely die is no more. We rarely hear of patients dying from a tumour removal. Overall, there has been numerous positive improvements."

Prof Dr Kyi Hlaing Neurological Department, North Okkalapa General Hospital

"Ten years ago, there weren't even ten neurosurgeons in all of Myanmar at a time. There were only two neurological departments in Yangon and one in Mandalay. We were also severely cut off from the rest of the world and our technology and methods became outdated."

"We decided that something needed to be done. So, we went abroad seeking assistance. Mind you, government-to-government cooperation existed but I believe neuroscience would be the last in the health category."

"We first approached Dr U Win Myaing for this matter. A German medical practitioner came to us first in 2012 and stayed for a month. Then Dr Jack Rock came and everything slowly improved."

"The most important thing when performing cranial surgery is the position. This involves everything from how the head is placed to the steps the operation will take. It all needed to be pre-planned and done successfully otherwise every step faces failure. Working with Dr Rock and his team greatly improved our understanding and skills for that."

"ICU support is also crucial. No matter how good we operate the surgery, inadequate ICU support will yield negative results. That is why the nurses in ICU support are given proper training as well."

"The field of neurology has greatly advanced after the 20th Century. The CT Scan and MRI were invented. It used to be extremely difficult to operate on the brain and there was an even lesser chance for survival of the patient. But now, the mortality rate is less than 10%."

"The youth generation are always the future of the nation. We are delighted so many young people are joining this field and helping it grow."

To be continued
(Translated by Pen Dali)



Objectives of the 99th National Victory Day

- * Perpetuation and strengthening of the Union spirit
- * Building the peace of the Union through mutual trust
- * Building a federal democratic nation
- * Promoting all-round development of the Union through collective strength of all national races

ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE

Antibiotic resistance happens when bacteria change and become resistant to the antibiotics used to treat the infections they cause. This is compromising our ability to treat infectious diseases and undermining many advances in medicine.

We must handle antibiotics with care so they remain effective for as long as possible.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- 1 Only use antibiotics when prescribed by a certified health professional
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- 4 Never share antibiotics with others
- 5 Prevent infections by regularly washing your hands, avoiding close contact with sick people and keeping your vaccinations up to date

www.who.int/drugresistance
#AntibioticResistance
World Health Organization

Myanmar Daily Weather Report
(Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 17th November, 2019)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy over the Westcentral Bay and Southeast Bay and a few cloud over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 18th November, 2019: Light rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Taninthayi Region, Kachin and Mon States. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be generally fair in Naypyitaw, Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions and partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (3-5) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperature in Upper Myanmar areas.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 18th November, 2019: Generally fair weather.

Australian man accused of starting bushfire to protect cannabis crop



Devastating bushfires have razed more than a million hectares along Australia's seaboard. **PHOTO: AFP**

SYDNEY (Australia)—An Australian man has been accused of deliberately lighting a fire to protect his cannabis crop, sparking an out-of-control bushfire as blazes rage along the country's east coast.

Four people have been killed and more than 300 homes destroyed in devastating bushfires that have razed more than one million hectares (2.5 million acres) along the eastern seaboard in just over a week.

Police said a 51-year-old man appeared before a local court on Saturday charged with intentionally lighting a fire at Ebor in New South Wales state in an attempt to protect his cannabis crop.

The alleged bungled attempt on Thursday at backburning — a practice used by firefighters to

clear the undergrowth that fuels fires — quickly spread the flames and the man did not try to extinguish the blaze, according to police.

The Ebor fire is about 10,000 hectares in size — and is still burning three days later. Authorities believe arsonists are behind several other bushfires across badly-hit New South Wales as well as in neighbouring Queensland, and have appealed to the public for information leading to more arrests.

On Sunday, there were 130 fires burning across the two states, large swathes of which have already been ravaged by a crippling drought. New South Wales firefighters undertook backburning as temperatures dipped on Saturday night, ahead

of an expected deterioration in fire conditions early next week.

Parts of Queensland were facing “extreme fire danger” as high temperatures and low humidity were forecast to combine with storms to create challenging conditions for firefighters.

Bushfire-prone Australia has experienced a horrific start to its fire season, which scientists say is beginning earlier and becoming more extreme as a result of climate change, which is raising temperatures and sapping moisture from the environment.

Growing calls to curb fossil fuels and drastically cut greenhouse gas emissions are being ignored by the country's conservative government, which is eager to protect its highly lucrative mining industry. — AFP ■

One year after arrest, Ghosn seeks to throw out case against him

TOKYO (Japan) — One year ago, the sudden arrest at a Tokyo airport of Nissan boss Carlos Ghosn, one of the world's best-known and respected tycoons, sent shockwaves through the business world.

After 130 days languishing in a Japanese detention centre, Ghosn is now out on bail and vigorously proclaiming his innocence, seeking to have his case declared null and void — even if legal experts and his own defence deem his chances unlikely.

The 65-year-old Brazil-born executive faces charges of deferring part of his salary until after his retirement and concealing this from shareholders, as well as syphoning off millions in Nissan cash for his own purposes.

Ghosn denies every charge and has accused prosecutors and even Japanese government officials of colluding in a “plot” with Nissan to find a way

to destroy him, fearful he was seeking to merge the firm with France's Renault.

His defence team filed a motion on October 24 to throw out the case given what they allege is illegal activity by Nissan and the prosecution — including seizing his wife's phone and searching private homes.

But even his own defence lawyer Takashi Takano is doubtful of success, telling AFP: “There are no precedents and Japanese courts are very reluctant to accept this type of argument.” Yasuyuki Takai, a former head of the special prosecutors' bureau in Tokyo, agreed: “This motion has zero chance of succeeding.”

“The real goal of the lawyers is to get an acquittal. This motion can only serve to calm down the accused and to say publicly that the prosecutors and Nissan did terrible things,” Takai told AFP. — AFP ■



The 2018 arrest of auto industry titan Carlos Ghosn sent shockwaves through the business world. **PHOTO: AFP**

UN rights chief warns Bolivia crisis could ‘spin out of control’

LA PAZ (Bolivia) — Four more people have died in protests in Bolivia, an international monitor reported Saturday, as the UN rights chief warned that excessive force by police could see unrest “spin out of control.”

Fierce clashes between security forces and supporters of exiled ex-president Evo Morales have rocked the country since Tuesday, when Senator Jeanine Anez declared herself the country's interim leader.

Morales resigned and fled to Mexico after losing the support of Bolivia's security forces following weeks of protests over his disputed re-election.

The latest toll takes the total

number killed in the political crisis to 23, according to the Washington-based Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, which also recorded 122 injured since Friday.

It raises to nine the number of people killed in clashes with security forces on Friday outside the central city of Cochabamba, a Morales political stronghold.

Thousands of coca growers had tried to reach the city to join a protest against Anez but they were blocked by riot police, who stopped them from crossing a bridge and dispersed the crowd after dark with the support of the army. Five protesters were initially reported dead in the confronta-



There have been frequent clashes between supporters of ex President Evo Morales and Bolivian riot police. **PHOTO: AFP**

tion. Interim cabinet chief Jerjes Justiniano was unable to confirm the higher toll when speaking to reporters on Saturday.

UN High Commissioner for

tremely dangerous development as, far from quelling the violence, it is likely to make it much worse,” she added.

“I am really concerned that the situation in Bolivia could spin out of control if the authorities do not handle it sensitively and in accordance with international norms and standards governing the use of force.”

Anez issued a decree on Thursday that authorized the military to participate in maintaining order and exempted the armed forces from criminal responsibility. Morales, 60, said on Twitter that the measure gave “carte blanche and impunity to massacre people.” — AFP ■

Human Rights Michele Bachelet said those deaths appeared to have resulted from “disproportionate” force by police and the armed forces. “This is an ex-

Aramco declares \$1.71 trillion valuation in blockbuster IPO

RIYADH (Saudi Arabia)—Saudi Arabia on Sunday put a value of up to \$1.71 trillion on energy giant Aramco in what could be the world's biggest IPO, but missed Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's initial target of \$2 trillion.

Aramco said it would sell 1.5 per cent of the company in a blockbuster initial public offering worth \$24-25.6 billion, scaling down Saudi Arabia's original plan to sell up to five percent of the firm.

"The base offer size will be 1.5 percent of the company's outstanding shares," the state-owned energy giant said as it began taking bids from investors in a price range of 30-32 Saudi riyals per share (\$8-8.5).

The much-delayed offering, a cornerstone of de facto ruler Prince Mohammed's ambitious plan to diversify the oil-reliant economy, could exceed the world's biggest listing — the \$25 billion float of Chinese retail giant Alibaba in 2014.

Aramco had initially been expected to list on two exchanges, with a first flotation of two percent on the kingdom's Tadawul bourse, followed by a further three percent on an overseas exchange.

But the firm has said there are no current plans for an international stock sale and the IPO seems to be banking on local demand, with one-third of the offering reserved for Saudi retail investors.

Aramco kicks off its investor road show on Sunday, but a source close to the company told AFP it will not be marketing the IPO overseas.

The source did not offer an explanation but the company has shied away from plans to list on foreign exchanges such as New York owing to litigation risks. The launch has been dogged by delays since the idea was first announced in 2016, with Prince Mohammed's desired valuation of \$2 trillion meeting with scepticism from investors and analysts.—AFP ■



The file photo taken on 15 September 2019 shows an Aramco oil facility near al-Khurj area, just south of the Saudi capital Riyadh. PHOTO: AFP



The long-running trade war between Washington and Beijing has weighed on the global economy and spooked markets. PHOTO: AFP

US, China negotiators hold 'constructive' call on trade deal: ministry

BEIJING (China)—Top Chinese and US trade negotiators held "constructive" discussions over the phone on a preliminary trade deal between the two countries, China's commerce ministry announced in a statement on Sunday.

The long-running trade war between Washington and Beijing has weighed on the global economy and spooked markets, with the two sides imposing punitive tariffs on hundreds of billions of dollars in two-way trade.

US President Trump announced a "phase one" trade

deal last month which has yet to be signed.

Vice Premier Liu He spoke with US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin on Saturday, and had "constructive discussion on each side's core concerns regarding the phase-one agreement", the Chinese commerce ministry said.

The two sides will "continue to maintain close communication", it added, without providing further details. Since October, differences between Washington and Beijing over whether, when

and by how much to reduce tariffs on each other's goods have spilled out into the open.

Trump this month denied the Chinese commerce ministry's claim that the two sides had agreed to roll back existing tariffs as part of the deal, details of which have not been released.

Trump had planned to sign a pact with China's President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the now-cancelled summit in Chile this month. Since that cancellation, no other meeting between the two has been announced.—AFP ■

From Mosul to Baghdad, a song of Iraqi solidarity and resistance

MOSUL (Iraq)—While Baghdad anti-regime protesters have clashed with riot police, their supporters in Mosul are using art to fight for change, with a new take on the resistance anthem "Bella Ciao".

In a viral music video clip, the World War II-era Italian anti-fascist song has been tweaked to "Blaya Chara" — meaning "no way out" in Iraqi dialect.

It captures the fatalistic sentiment many young Iraqis hold towards their violence-torn homeland.

"I don't have heating, not a cent to spend. Why would I even study if there's no way out?" sings one gaunt performer, huddled un-

der a blanket in a gutted building.

Others in the video, which has scored hundreds of thousands of hits despite frequent

internet blackouts, hold up signs that read "Justice for our martyrs" and "I want my rights."—AFP ■



The viral music video has scored hundreds of thousands of hits despite frequent internet blackouts in Iraq. PHOTO: AFP

UK's Prince Andrew denies having sex with Epstein accuser

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Britain's Prince Andrew has "categorically" denied having sex with an alleged teen victim of disgraced US financier Jeffrey Epstein, who claims she was forced to sleep with the royal, in an extraordinary interview broadcast on UK television.

In an unprecedented hour-long conversation with the BBC's Newsnight programme, Andrew insisted he had "no recollection" of ever having met his accuser, Virginia Roberts.

The prince also conceded his continued association with Epstein after he was convicted of soliciting prostitution had let the royal family down — but that he did not believe it had dam-

aged the reputation of his mother, Queen Elizabeth II.

"I can absolutely categorically tell you it never happened," Andrew told the BBC's Emily Maitlis in the interview broadcast on Saturday evening, on the allegations he had sex with Roberts, now Giuffre, on three occasions.

"I've said consistently and frequently that we never had any sort of sexual contact whatever.

"I have no recollection of ever meeting this lady, none whatsoever," he added. Andrew claimed he was "at home with the children" on the March 2001 night Giuffre alleges they had sex, after earlier taking his daughter Princess Beatrice to a pizza restaurant near London.—AFP ■

‘Terminator’ Rajapaksa storms to victory in Sri Lanka



The election was relatively peaceful by the standards of Sri Lanka's fiery politics. PHOTO: AFP

COLOMBO (Sri Lanka)—Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who spearheaded the brutal crushing of Tamil Tigers a decade ago, stormed to power Sunday but promised to be a president for all Sri Lanka's races and religions after a divisive election.

Seven months after Islamist extremist attacks that killed 269 people, Rajapaksa was elected on Saturday on the back of a nationalist campaign promising security and to crush religious extremism in the Buddhist-majority country.

However, Rajapaksa's triumph will alarm Sri Lanka's Tamil and Muslim minorities as well as activists, journalists and possibly some in the international community following the 2005-15 presidency of his older brother Mahinda Rajapaksa.

On Sunday Gotabaya Rajapaksa, 70, thanked all voters

in an election that heightened ethnic and religious tensions in a country that only a decade ago emerged from a brutal civil war that cost 100,000 lives.

“I am conscious that I am also the president of those who used the vote against me,” he said as he was formally declared the hands-down winner with 52.25 percent of the vote.

“It is my duty to serve all Sri Lankans without race or religious discrimination,” he said. “I promise to discharge my duties in a fair manner.”

Election results showed minority Tamil and Muslim communities voting overwhelmingly for the ruling party candidate Sajith Premadasa who came a distant second with 41.99 percent.

Mahinda Rajapaksa, with Gotabaya -- nicknamed “Terminator” by his own family -- ef-

fectively running the security forces, ended a 37-year civil war with Tamil separatists.

His decade in power was also marked by alleged rights abuses, murky extra-judicial killings and closer ties with China.

“I didn't sleep all night,” said student Devni, 22, one of around 30 people who gathered outside Rajapaksa's Colombo residence. “I am so excited, he is the president we need.”

Premadasa, 52, of the ruling party, conceded the race and congratulated Rajapaksa and urged him to implement his manifesto promising tax cuts, free food rations and subsidies to farmers.

Rajapaksa is due to be sworn in on Monday at the ancient north-central Buddhist pilgrim city of Anuradhapura. Turnout in Saturday's vote was 83.7 percent. —AFP ■

Hong Kong police officer hit by arrow as protesters dig in at campus

HONG KONG (China)—A police officer was struck by an arrow fired by a Hong Kong protester on Sunday, as fierce clashes raged around a campus which has turned into a base for a pro-democracy movement whose unrelenting protests have plunged the city into turmoil.

Protests have tremored through the global financial hub since June with many in the city of 7.5 million people venting fury at eroding freedoms under Chinese rule.

China has repeatedly warned that it will not tolerate the dissent, and there have been concerns that Beijing could send in troops to put an end to the unrest.

Chinese President Xi Jinping this week issued his most strident comments on the crisis, saying it threatened the “one country, two systems” model under which Hong Kong has been ruled since the 1997 handover from Britain.

On Sunday scores of activists dug in at Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) vowing to defend it from police and to maintain a blockade on the nearby Cross Harbour Tunnel, which has been closed for several days.

As dusk fell, police tried to retake a footbridge over the tunnel but were met by a barrage of petrol bombs.

Earlier, activists parried an attempt by police to break through into the PolyU campus, firing rocks from a homemade catapult from the university roof.

An AFP reporter saw a team of masked archers -- several carrying sports bows -- patrolling the campus.

Police shared images of an arrow embedded in the calf of an officer outside the campus and decried the use of “lethal weapons,” declaring the campus a “riot scene” -- a rioting conviction carries up to 10 years in jail. —AFP ■

8 wounded as rickshaw bomb rocks bazaar in E. Afghanistan

MAHMUD-E-RAQI (Afghanistan) —Eight people including seven civilians were injured as a rickshaw bomb exploded in the bazaar of Tagab district of Afghanistan's eastern Kapisa province on Sunday, provincial police spokesman said.

“A mine planted by terrorists on a rickshaw was detonated in the bazaar of Tagab district today, wounding seven civilians and a police constable,” police spokesman Abdul Shaeq Shurash told Xinhua.

Women and children were also among the victims, the official said, adding investigation is underway.

Tagab, Nijrab and the neighboring Alasay district of the relatively restive Kapisa province have been the scene of Taliban-led insurgency over the past couple of years. —Xinhua ■

US, S Korea put off air drills to boost diplomacy with North

BANGKOK—The United States and South Korea have decided to postpone their joint air defense exercises, slated for later this month, as an olive branch to North Korea, according to media outlets of both countries.

The decision to put off the Combined Flying Training Event was announced by US Defense Secretary Mark Esper and his South Korean counterpart Jeong Kyeong Doo on the sidelines of a regional security meeting in Bangkok.

“I don't see this as a concession. I see this as a good

faith effort,” Esper said at a joint press conference with Jeong.

“We encourage the DPRK to demonstrate the same goodwill as it considers decisions on conducting training, exercises and testing,” he added, referring to North Korea by its formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The gesture toward Pyongyang, which has protested the upcoming drills, appears aimed at reviving nuclear negotiations between North Korea and the United States.



US Secretary of Defense Mark Esper (L) and South Korean Defense Minister Jeong Kyeong Doo shake hands in Seoul on 15 November 2019. They held the annual Security Consultative Meeting. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Later in the day, a spokesman of the North Korean Foreign Ministry said that even if the talks reopen, Washington would need to withdraw its “hostile policy” as a condition for discussing the nuclear issue, according to a statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency.

The United States and South Korea last year halted an annual air defense exercise normally held in December to give a boost to diplomatic efforts with North Korea. —Kyodo News ■

Small French investors snap up 1 bln euros in lottery share subscription

PARIS (France)—The French state has raised 1 billion euros in subscriptions from small-time investors for shares in the national lottery, which is to be privatised next week, Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire announced Sunday.

The government is selling 52 per cent of the state lottery monopoly, Francaise des Jeux (FDJ), in order to raise money for investment in innovation.

It has launched a huge marketing drive to try attract as many individual French investors as possible.

Since the sale began on November 7, “there has been 1 billion euros (\$1.1 billion) in subscriptions from individual shareholders,” Le Maire told France’s BFM news channel, calling it “an immense success

for the people.” Individual shareholders, for whom a third of the shares have been reserved, have until November 19 to subscribe.

Institutional investors have until 20 November, a day before FDJ is floated on the Paris stock market.

Le Maire said that small-time investors, who are being offered a two-per cent discount, would be given priority if the shares were over-subscribed.

The government hopes the sale will rekindle demand for stocks among French savers, many of whom have stuck with ultra-safe low-interest savings accounts since the 2007-2008 financial crisis.

The shares have an indicative price of 16.50-19.90 euros, which would value FDJ at up to 3.8 billion euros.—AFP ■

Elizabeth Warren takes risk with ad blasting billionaires

NEW YORK (United States)—Elizabeth Warren, one of the leading Democratic presidential candidates, has stepped up her assault on billionaires -- a rallying cry popular with her base, but one that could stymie her efforts to garner wider support among US voters.

The 70-year-old US senator from Massachusetts on Thursday unveiled a new ad in an appearance on CNBC, a business news network that often criticizes her, in which she takes on the ultra-rich.

The one-minute campaign ad shows clips of several leading businessmen criticizing her plans for a wealth tax and predicting economic ruin if she is elected to succeed Donald Trump, a



Democratic presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren has taken aim at billionaires in a new campaign ad. PHOTO: AFP

billionaire himself.

“The vilification of billionaires makes no sense to me. It’s bull,” says investor and hedge fund manager Leon Cooperman, one of the men targeted in the ad. After he speaks, a note appears on screen -- “charged with insid-

wealthy to pay up to help reduce income inequality in America.

“Pitch in two cents so everybody else gets a chance to make it!” she says to cheers from the crowd.

The ad marks a new phase in the White House strategy of Warren, who has put her fight against the rich at the heart of her campaign.

“All of this is a publicity stunt,” said Capri Cafaro, an executive in residence at American University’s School of Public Affairs and a former Democratic member of the Ohio state senate.

“She’s showing that she has the toughest talk when it comes to taking on the billionaires and standing up for working families,” she told AFP.—AFP ■

Iran leader backs petrol price hike that sparked deadly unrest

TEHRAN (Iran)—Iran’s supreme leader on Sunday threw his support behind a decision to hike petrol prices, a move that sparked nationwide unrest in which he said “some lost their lives”.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei blamed “hooligans” for damaging property and said “all the centres of the world’s wickedness against us have cheered” the street protests.

A policeman was killed in the western city of Kermanshah in a clash with armed “rioters”, the sec-

ond confirmed death since protests erupted across Iran on Friday.

Several people were also wounded and dozens arrested in two days of demonstrations that saw motorists block highways and others attack and set fire to public property.

In a speech aired on state television, Khamenei said “some lost their lives and some centres were damaged”. The protests flared hours after it was announced that the price of petrol would be raised by 50 percent for the first 60 litres

(16 gallons) and by 300 percent for anything above that each month. It is a rise many consumers can ill afford, given that Iran’s economy has been battered since May last year when President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the US from a 2015 nuclear agreement and reimposed crippling sanctions. The rial has plummeted, inflation is running at more than 40 percent and the International Monetary Fund expects Iran’s economy to contract by 9.5 percent this year and stagnate in 2020.—AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V PACAO VOY. NO. (072N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V PACAO VOY. NO. (072N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18-11-2019 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 NEW GOLDEN SEA SHIPPING LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V XETHA BHUM VOY. NO. (1128E)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V XETHA BHUM VOY. NO. (1128E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18-11-2019 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 REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MCC KYOTO VOY. NO. (946N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MCC KYOTO VOY. NO. (946N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18-11-2019 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

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR BINTAN VOY. NO. (656 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SINAR BINTAN VOY. NO. (656 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18-11-2019 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 SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

Can community based tourism boost Myanmar's economy?

By Kyaw Htike Soe

COMMUNITY based tourism (CBT) is tourism in which local residents invite tourists to visit their communities with the provision of overnight stay. The local residents earn income as land managers, entrepreneurs, service and produce providers, and employees. There are many benefits to community-based tourism, for both the local community and visitors. Ecotourism and community-based tourism can go hand-in-hand. Community-based tourism is sustainable, providing environmentally-friendly experiences and attractions.

Supporting environmentally-friendly CBT projects can ensure that the environment, as well as other attractions, re-

mains for generations to come. The CBT provides opportunities for local people to bring in income and also to introduce their culture to visitors. The CBT can provide income and opportunities for all people, including women and other disadvantaged groups such as people with disabilities. In addition, the CBT gives local people a chance to share their culture with the world, as well as learn more about other peoples' cultures and experiences. Tourism activities should not damage the local community's way of life or traditions. Safety is important to CBT travelers, especially because some developing countries are politically unstable. Most international tour operators do not offer holi-



Tourists visit a CBT village in Meiktila Township, Mandalay Region. **PHOTO: IPRD**

days to the countries that their respective governments have declared unsafe.

This has previously led to a sharp fall in tourism arrivals in African countries such as Mali, Egypt and Kenya. Popular adventure activities for CBT travelers are walking, trekking

and cycling. Most CBT travelers want to have some access to the Internet – at least every few days, although they understand that this can be hard in remote areas. They usually bring their own electronic devices, like smart phones, tablets or laptops. Sustainable and ethical

tourism is very important to CBT tourists. CBT travelers are generally interested in culture, adventure and interaction with locals. According to the industry experts, popular CBT destinations around the world include Bolivia, Cuba, Indonesia, Laos, Morocco, and Tanzania. Tourists



Fresh green vegetable plantations of the Community based tourism (CBT) in Kyaikthale Village in Twantay Township. **PHOTOS: MINGALAR BAR BIO GARDEN COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM**



in the Ayeyawady River to observe bamboo handicraft industry and Ayeyawady dolphins. Local authorities are trying efforts to sell a wide range of bamboo handicrafts to the CBT visitors. Some tourists are very interested in the river cruise tours along Ayeyawady and Chindwin Rivers to enjoy the natural scenery of riverbed villages, visit elephant camps and observe living style of marine workers and traditional pottery industry. The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism is making concerted efforts to promote the CBT initiative in the country in joining hands with the local governments, and NGOs and establishing CBT villages to attract more tourists to the country.

Tourists flocked to a pilot CBT village in Meiktila Township in Mandalay Region, according to a programme officer from ActionAid Myanmar. "The community-based tourism was

first initiated in Myaing Township, Magway Region in 2014 by ActionAid Myanmar. The pilot project in Swartaw Village, Meiktila Township in Mandalay Region was launched at the end of 2018. Tourists from ASEAN countries, South Korea, Australia, United States, Nigeria, and other countries visited our pilot project to observe customs and traditions of rural people, agriculture and livestock breeding in rural area," he added. He continued that foreigners visited the pilot CBT village with the arrangement of some tour operators in Yangon. Representatives from ActionAid Myanmar are in consultation with village officials to continue implementation of the CBT village in January, he said.

In Myanmar's neighbours such as Thailand, Laos and India, hundreds of the CBT programs have been successfully implemented by local commu-

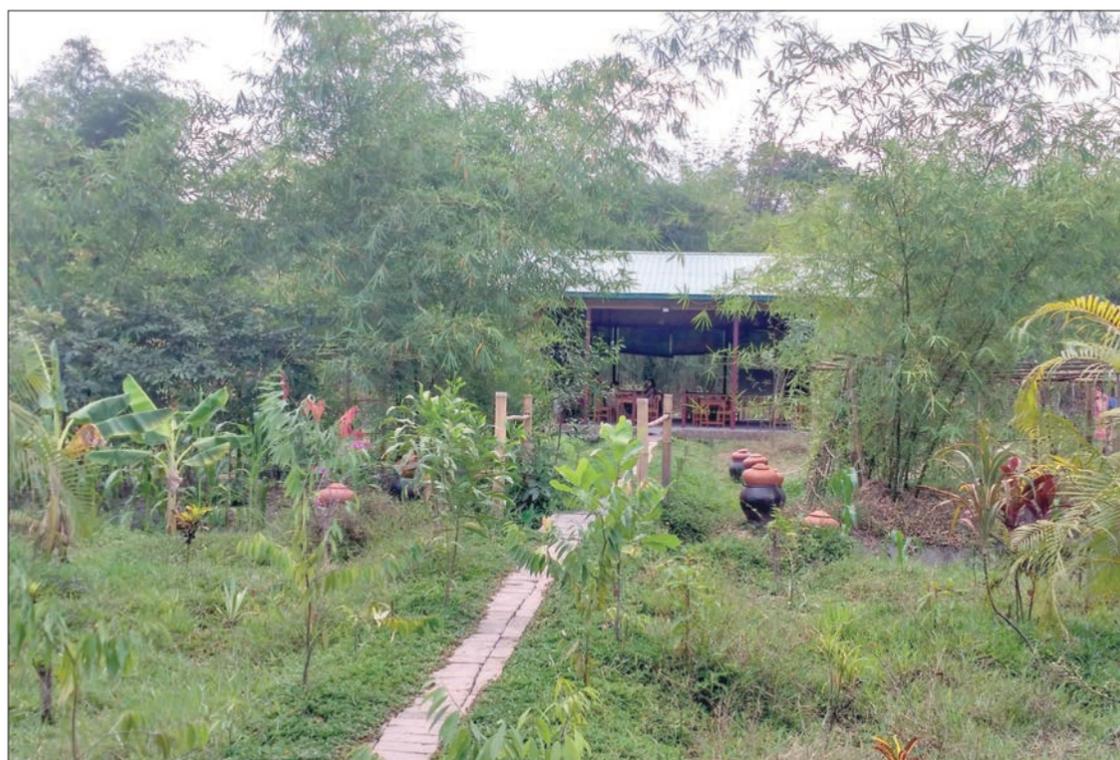
Tourism development is considered to be a top priority in Myanmar. Tourism continues to grow in Myanmar, with the skyrocketing number of visitor arrivals to the country on the rise. The CBT could become an alternative source of income for the local communities. Myanmar government's decision to ease visa regulations on tourists from Asia countries has considerably encouraged the increase of tourist arrivals to the country in the first ten months of 2019. With the prevalence of peace and stability coupled with a variety of scenic beauties, ancient cultural heritages, temples, pagodas, icy mountains, and natural beaches, tourist arrivals to Myanmar have increased significantly when compared to previous years. Myanmar aims to welcome seven million tourists by 2020.

The Southeast Asian coun-

prefer CBT to enjoy its natural sceneries, and at the same time the locals will have a chance to communicate with foreigners.

The CBT will help local residents reduce poverty rate in the area and contribute to improve their socioeconomic status. The local governments

need to open up its unspoiled beach and natural sceneries to the world where globetrotters can observe honesty, openness and customs of local people. The CBT has played a small role in Myanmar's tourism boom. Visitors at home and abroad visit some villages which are located



Mingalar Bar Bio Garden Community Based Tourism in Kyaikthale Village in Twantay Township.
PHOTO: THANT ZIN WIN (MNA)



nities, with support from the governments, tour operators and NGOs. Thriving CBT industry inspires tourists, promotes cross-cultural understanding, promotes skills, create job opportunities and increase the income of local communities. With its mix of culture, history, and unspoiled natural beauty, Myanmar has quickly become one of the Asia's top emerging tourist destinations. Myanmar has emerged in recent years as a top tourist destination in the Southeast Asian Region known for its tourism attractions. Since the country opened its doors through reform processes in 2011, many tourists have been attracted to its diverse landscapes, rich culture and heritages.

try fetched some US\$ 2 billion from 3.55 foreign visitor arrivals in 2018 and earned US\$ 1.9 billion from 3.44 million tourist arrivals in 2017. According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), total contribution of tourism sector to Myanmar's economy was US\$ 4.9 billion or 66.6 % of GDP in 2017. Total contribution of tourism is forecast to expand by 7 % per year to US\$ 10.1 billion or 7 % of GDP by 2028. The number of people working in tourism-related jobs was more than 580,000 in 2018, making up over 2.5 % of total employment. By 2028 the sector is forecast to directly account for 914,000 job opportunities, an average increase of 4.6 annually over the next decade.

Ref: Niti Travel, ADB,

Myanmar draw Viet Nam 2-2 in U-22 friendly match

THE Myanmar U-22 men's national football team played a 2-2 draw against the Viet Nam U-22 team in an international friendly match yesterday on the PVF Football Academy turf in Hanoi, Viet Nam.

As the match was a friendly match, both teams used unlimited substitutions.

Team Myanmar was headed by head coach Velizar Popov.

Myanmar used goalkeeper San Satt Naing, defenders Soe Moe Kyaw, Ye Yint Aung, Ye Min Thu and Aung Wunna Soe, midfielders Aung Naing Win, Nay Moe Naing, and Lwin Moe Aung, and strikers Myat Kaung Khant, Htet Phyo Wai, and Aung Kaung Mhan.

Head coach Velizar Popov substituted Thurein Soe, Kyaw

Myo Naing, Zin Min Tun, Soe Lwin Lwin, Hein Htet Aung, Kaung Htet Soe, Win Naing Tun, and Win Moe Kyaw in the second half.

Both teams relied on open attacks from the start.

Myanmar got the leading goal at 25 minutes. The goal was scored by Myanmar's stellar player Myat Kaung Khant.

Viet Nam managed to land the equalizer at 35 minutes, and the result remained 1-1 at the end of the first half.

The second half was lively with Myanmar dominating the play.

Team Myanmar bagged the second goal at 58 minutes. The goal was scored by youth star Win Naing Tun.

But, Myanmar did not remain long in the lead, as Viet



Myanmar U-22 striker Lwin Moe Aung (white) prepares for a kick during an international friendly match against the Viet Nam U-22 team yesterday in Hanoi, Viet Nam. **PHOTO: MFF**

Nam scored the equalizer three minutes later.

There were no more goals in the later minutes as both teams relied on defense and middle field style play, and the

match ended in a draw.

Team Myanmar will arrive back home on 18 November to prepare for the men's football event of the 30th South East Asian Games, which will be

held in the Philippines.

The team will leave for the Philippines for the SEA Games on 23 November, according to the Myanmar Football Federation.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)



Myanmar athletes take intensive judo training under the supervision of Japanese Judo rainer from Japan's Kodokan Judo Institute. **PHOTO: SAW THEIN WIN**

Eye on SEA Games gold, Myanmar athletes train with Japanese Judo trainer

WITH the aim of grabbing gold in the Judo competition of the 30th South East Asian (SEA) Games in the Philippines, 30 Myanmar athletes are training in Yangon with a Judo trainer and three athletes from Japan.

Mr Oshima, the Japanese Judo trainer with 7th DAN, is from the Kodokan Judo Institute, according to the Myanmar Judo Federation.

The Myanmar and Japan joint Judo training started on 10 November and will conclude on 27 November, according to officials. The Myanmar Judo team will leave for the Philippines for the SEA Games on 1 December.

Team Myanmar will com-

pete in four weight classes division men's individual event, four weight classes women's individual event, men's KATA event, men's team event, and women's team event.

As Myanmar national Judo athletes are aiming for gold medals in the 30th SEA Games, the Myanmar Judo Federation, led by chairman U Tun Tun, are also making efforts to ensure a victory for Myanmar athletes in the SEA Games, said officials.

They will attend the Asian Judo Federation's conferences and related meetings in the near future, according to the Myanmar Judo Federation.—Saw Thein Win

Shan United prepares for 2020 season of Myanmar National League

THE defending champion of the Myanmar National League, Shan United F.C., is preparing for the upcoming 2020 season of the Myanmar National League.

The team have started training under the guidance of head coach U Aung Naing.

Seventy players have joined the training session, while other players are with the Myanmar men's national football team and the U-22 Myanmar men's national team.

Head coach U Aung Naing said the team needs to be

physically and mentally strong for the upcoming season of the league.

"We are the champions of the 2018-2019 season of the Myanmar National League. We need to be mentally strong from the start of the season.

In the training session, I am aiming to give more physical exercise and encouragement to my players to improve their fitness and mental health," said U Aung Naing.

Shan United sailed through the previous season of the My-

anmar National League with no losses. The team which represents Shan State will soon recruit local and expatriate players after the pre-season training, according to a statement issued by the football club.

In 2020, Shan United is slated to compete in two international tournaments — AFC Champions League and the AFC Cup 2020. The team will also compete in a domestic competition — the General Aung San Shield 2020.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)



Shan United players undergo training to prepare for the Myanmar National League 2020 and the AFC Champions League. **PHOTO: SUFC**