

NATIONAL

State Counsellor leaves for Nepal to pay official visit, to attend Asia-Pacific Summit-2018

PAGE-4

NATIONAL

Workshop on national strategy for closing IDP camps held

PAGE-11

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Friday, 30 November 2018

State Counsellor attends opening of Nepal Chamber Expo-2018

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her delegation departed from Nay Pyi Taw by special flight to the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal yesterday morning and arrived at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu at 11 am local standardtime.

The State Counsellor was welcomed by Myanmar Ambassador to Nepal Thiri Pyanchi U Tun Nay Lin and Mr. Dipak Adhikari, Chief of the Protocol Division of Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The State Counsellor was greeted by the Deputy Prime Minister of Nepal Mr. Ishwor Pokhrel at the airport where they reviewed the Guards of Honor.

The State Counsellor and her delegation then departed by motorcade for the Soaltee Crowne Plaza Hotel where they will be staying temporarily.

In the afternoon, the State Counsellor received the Foreign Minister of Nepal Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali at the Soaltee Crowne Plaza Hotel.



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi officially opens the Nepal Chamber Expo-2018 in Kathmandu, Nepal. PHOTO: MNA

...investments in Myanmar are fully protected by the law which was crafted to be in line with regional and international agreements.

During the meeting, they openly discussed promoting bilateral relations and cooperation between Myanmar and Nepal, who share a long diplomatic history together.

They also discussed promoting bilateral trade and establishing a direct Myan-

mar-Nepal flight to promote tourism.

Afterwards, the State Counsellor and her delegation went to attend the Nepal Chamber Expo 2018 at the Bhrikuti Mandap Exhibition Hall, where the State Counsellor delivered a speech.

"This Expo will serve as an excellent platform for enhancing awareness, creating networks among our business communities and promoting economic and trade relations between our two countries," said Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

SEE PAGE-3

INSIDE TODAY

PARLIAMENT

Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's tenth regular session holds fifth-day meeting

PAGE-2

NATIONAL

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Chairman Thura U Shwe Mann meets British Ambassador

PAGE-6

LOCAL NEWS

Surprise monitoring to check on cheating agri inputs

PAGE-10

NATIONAL

Work Committee meeting on reading campaign held

PAGE-11

NATIONAL

Second meeting on national indicator framework held

PAGE-6

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's tenth regular session holds fifth-day meeting

THE Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's tenth regular session held its fifth-day meeting at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw meeting hall yesterday.

Hluttaw agrees on appointing U Min Thu as Union Minister for Union **Government Office**

The meeting starts off with Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat announcing the agreement of the Hluttaw on the appointment of U Min Thu as Union Minister for Union Government Office as proposed by the President.

Hluttaw approves Bill Amending the Sea Customs Act

Next, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker obtained the paragraph by paragraph decision and approval of the Hluttaw based on the comment of the joint bill committee regarding the Bill Amending the Sea Customs Act followed by Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win, tabling a motion to approve the entire bill.

After obtaining the decision of the Hluttaw, The Speaker announced the Hluttaw's approval of the entire bill.

Government debt explained and reported

Annual report on the government debt for financial year 2017-2018 was then explained by Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win.

The Deputy Minister explained that based on the comments and remarks of the Joint Public Accounts Committee and suggestions and discussions of the Hluttaw representatives on government debt annual report for financial year 2016-2017 the annual report on the government debt for financial year 2017-2018 includes comparison of data and debts figures for three financial years starting from 2015-2016 to 2017-2018, internal debt as of 31 March 2018 were shown period wise, assessment of challenges and difficulties faced on debt management for financial year 2017-2018 and charts and diagrams that includes figures and percentages were added to make it a better report.

As the report was prepared as discussed and suggested by



The fifth-day meeting of the Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's tenth regular session being convened in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

the Hluttaw representatives and followed the comments and findings of the Joint Public Accounts Committee, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is requested to put on record the government debt annual report for financial year 2017-2018.

Following this, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Public Accounts Committee secretary U Khin Maung Than read the committee's findings and comments report 10/2018 on the annual report.

Afterwards the Speaker an-

tee report on the committee's findings and comments on Traditional Medicine Council Bill on which the two Hluttaws were in disagreement was read by committee secretary U Zaw Win. This was followed by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker announcing for Hluttaw representatives who wish to discuss the report to register their names.

Discussion and decision
on IASIA membership

Afterwards, Hluttaw repre-

...the loan includes US\$ 11.3 million to upgrade water distribution system in Myawady, \$ 7.6 million to upgrade waste disposal system in Myawady, \$ 2.2 million for capacity building of government personnel in Myawady to conduct Public Awareness Programs, as well as financing charges and other expenses.

-Dy Minister U Kyaw Lin

nounced for Hluttaw representatives who want to discuss the report to register their names.

Joint Bill Committee report on Traditional Medicine Council Bill read

Later, a Joint Bill Commit-

mentatives discussed the matter of becoming International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA) member and annual membership fee sent by the President. U Myo Win of Mon State constituency 8 supported the matter while

Dr. Tin Tin Win of Bago Region constituency 5 and U Saw of Nyaung U constituency also discussed the matter.

Following the discussion of the Hluttaw representatives, Union Civil Service Board Chairman Dr. Win Thein explained that becoming a member of IASIA will allow institutes of civil service to study good international experiences and practice, raise the human resources capacity on teaching and training, enable discussion with international research organisations and prepare administration and management papers in collaboration with international research organisations, eventually raising the capacity of the institutes to international level and share international experience on training and teaching public servants.

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker then announced the Hluttaw's approval of the matter after obtaining the decision of the Hluttaw.

Hluttaw approves \$ 24.3 mIn NEDA loan

The matter of obtaining US\$ 24.3 million loan from Thailand's Neighbouring Countries Economic Development Cooperation Agency (NEDA) was then explained by Ministry of Construction and Ministry of Planning and Finance.

Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lin explained that the loan includes \$ 11.3 million to upgrade water distribution system in Myawady, \$ 7.6 million to upgrade waste disposal system in Myawady, \$ 2.2 million for capacity build-

ing of government personnel in Myawady to conduct Public Awareness Programs, as well as financing charges and other expenses. Preliminary preparation and approval process of the project was undertaken in 2017-2018 and in 2019-2020 details of the project and procurement works will be drawn up utilizing the service of a Consultant Team.

The Deputy Minister requested the Hluttaw to approve the \$ 24.3 million NEDA loan that is beneficial not only for the development of Myawady but also the related development in Myanmar hotel, travel sector and industrial sector supporting Myanmar's entire economy.

Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win on the other hand explained about how the negotiation and signing for loan agreement will be conducted with the loan providing organisation, managing the acquisition, reporting and repayment of the loan. Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker announced Hluttaw's approval of the loan after 463 Hluttaw representatives voted for with 9 against and 2 abstaining.

Hluttaw discuss and decide to sign MCMC MoU

As a final agenda of the day Hluttaw representatives discussed the matter of signing Mekong Capital Market Cooperation Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MCMC MoU). U Khin Cho of Hlaing-bwe constituency and Dr. Khin Sithu of Loikaw constituency discussed in support of the matter while Daw Khin Hnin Thit of Padaung constituency and U Kyaw Thaung of Sagaing Region constituency 1 participated in the discussion.

Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win responded to the discussion and explained about the benefits of signing the MoU and requested the Hluttaw to approve the signing of the MoU.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker then announced Hluttaw's approval to sign the MoU after the decision of the Hluttaw was obtained. The sixth-day meeting of the tenth regular session of the Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is scheduled for 3 December. —Aung Ye Thwin, Aye Aye Thant (MNA) (Translated by Zaw Min)



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Deputy Prime Minister of Nepal Mr. Ishwor Pokhrel receive the Guard of Honour at Tribhuvan International Airport in Nepal. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor attends opening of Nepal Chamber Expo-2018

FROM PAGE-1

As members of the BIM-STEAC (the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Co-operation), Myanmar and Nepal have been cooperating in the areas of commerce, investment, technology, tourism, human resource development, agriculture, fisheries, transport and communications, textiles and leather, among others.

“Moreover, we have been working together in the context of the South Asia Sub-regional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) programme, which aims to promote regional prosperity, improve economic opportunities, and build a better quality of life for the people of the sub-region,” she added.

As of September 2018, bilateral trade between Myanmar and Nepal accounted for US\$ 2.866 million.

The main export items from Myanmar are agriculture and forest products, hardwood and veneer while the import items from Nepal to Myanmar are consumer goods.

She also expressed delight



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visits the booth displaying textile produced by Nepal. **PHOTO: MNA**

for registration of ten Nepalese companies with the Myanmar Investment Commission as of March 2018.

“Of course, there is a lot of room for further economic cooperation between our two countries. Understanding and friendship between our two countries have been steadfast for many decades. The similarities in culture, tradition and experiences will enable us to enhance

people-to-people contact, which will subsequently bring not just our peoples but also our business interests,” said the State Counsellor.

Since assuming office in 2016, the present Government of Myanmar has been firmly committed to creating an enabling and sound environment for peace and prosperity.

“We have to strike the right balance between stability and

development which are interdependent. Both are indispensable if we are to reach our political goal of democratic federal Union and lay a firm foundation for sustainable development,” said Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

“To this end, we have adopted a National Economic Policy which is inclusive and people-centred. We have also laid down an economic framework that will support the long-term conservation and fair allocation of natural resources among all States and Regions. Healthy growth is equitable growth that will act as strong, unifying force,” she added.

She continued to say that to create a more attractive, investor friendly environment, the Myanmar Investment Law was enacted in October 2016, adding that the law simplifies the process for investment applications, provides incentives, guarantees protection for busi-

ness ventures, and a more transparent, more liberalized, and more protected investment environment. The Government recently established the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, which will play a pivotal role in creating business opportunities, encouraging local and foreign investments and coordinating all-round economic cooperation with regional and sub-regional organizations.

The State Counsellor reiterated that investments in Myanmar are fully protected by the law which was crafted to be in line with regional and international agreements. Among the 12 investment sectors of our economy, the leading ones are oil and gas, power and manufacturing.

“We would like to invite foreign investors to explore our priority sectors such as infrastructure, agriculture, livestock production, export promotion and import substitution, power sector, logistic industries, education services, health care industry, affordable housing and industrial estate,” said the State Counsellor.

Soon after the enactment of the Investment Law, Myanmar Companies’ Law entered into force on 1st August 2018, with the introduction of the MyCO electronic registration system. Companies can now be incorporated online.

“The Myanmar Companies’ Law will transform the corporate landscape by facilitating company registration, reducing the regulations for small companies, creating a friendlier environment for companies, and improving compliance with rules and regulations,” said the State Counsellor.

SEE PAGE-4

The Myanmar Companies’ Law will transform the corporate landscape by facilitating company registration, reducing the regulations for small companies, creating a friendlier environment for companies, and improving compliance with rules and regulations.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

State Counsellor attends opening of Nepal Chamber Expo-2018

FROM PAGE-3

“Myanmar is endowed with abundant natural resources. We also possess ample opportunities for infrastructure development as our government places special emphasis on prioritizing the basic needs of our people: particularly improved transportation networks, electrification, development of smart cities and improvement of healthcare and quality education.”

“The last is the most important as our most precious resource is our people, particularly our young, who constitute a vibrant work force with enormous, as yet unplumbed, potential,” she said. State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi encouraged the Nepalese business community to explore new opportunities in Myanmar and work together with Myanmar business sector for mutual benefits.

Additional speeches were delivered by former Prime Minister of Nepal and Chairman of the Communist Party of Nepal Mr. Pushpa Kamal Dahal, and Chairman of Nepal's Merchant Association Mr. Rajesh Kaji Shrestha.

The officials and the State Counsellor then cut ceremonial ribbons to open the Nepal Chamber Expo 2018. The State Coun-



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivers the speech at the opening of Nepal Chamber Expo 2018. **PHOTO: MNA**

sellor then toured the exhibitions at the expo, including exhibitions from Myanmar, together with the former Prime Minister and the Merchant Association Chairman. The Nepal Chamber Expo 2018 has 145 booths from

Bangladesh, China, India, Japan, Pakistan, Thailand and Myanmar displaying regional natural gems, jewelry, modern products and traditional accessories.

Myanmar is also displaying regional lentils and coffee

products in addition to natural gems, jewelry, modern products and traditional accessories in 20 booths.

In the evening, the State Counsellor met with embassy staff and their families at the

Myanmar Embassy in Nepal. In the evening, the Myanmar Ambassador and wife hosted a dinner in honour of the State Counsellor and her delegation. — MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

State Counsellor leaves for Nepal to pay official visit, to attend Asia-Pacific Summit-2018

AT the invitation of Nepalese Prime Minister Mr. K.P. Sharma Oli, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi left Nay Pyi Taw by special flight at 9:20 am yesterday for Nepal to pay an official visit and to attend the Asia-Pacific Summit-2018.

The delegation, led by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, was seen off at the Nay Pyi Taw International Airport by Union Minister for Office of the State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr. Myo Aung and wife, chargé d'

affaires a.i. of the Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal to Myanmar and officials.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was accompanied by Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government U Min Thu, Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin, Deputy Minister for Commerce U Aung Htoo, officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.— MNA

(Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is seen off by Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe (Right) as she leaves for Nepal to attend the Asia-Pacific Summit-2018. **PHOTO: MNA**

Gold to soon move freely within the country, says entrepreneurs guild



Gold jewellery displayed at a shop in downtown Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

By Nyein Nyein

THE government will soon allow free transport of gold within the country at the recommendation of the gold entrepreneurs association, said U Tin Tun, the chair of the Mandalay Gold Entrepreneurs Association (MGEA).

Members of the Yangon Gold Entrepreneurs Association and the Mandalay Gold Entrepreneurs Association met with high-ranking officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs, including deputy minister Major-General Aung Thu, he said.

At the meeting, the associations called for free transport of gold within the country, he said. They were asked to work out a form and put forward their request again, he added.

"The gold entrepreneurs

association have been asked to finalize a form and submit it to the authorities. Once the authorities give them the green light, the chair of the association will be responsible for issuing the forms. The forms will serve as official documents allowing us to carry gold within the country. All domestic airports will be notified about the forms," said U Tin Tun, chair of Mandalay Gold Entrepreneurs Association.

"Once the associations recommend their form and it is permitted, gold can be freely carried within the country without any unwarranted confiscation. However, the gold being transported must be legitimate," he said.

At present, gold nuggets are exempt from commercial tax. Although export/import of

gold and jewellery products are permitted, they cannot be freely carried within the country, according to the Yangon Gold Entrepreneurs Association.

"We made efforts to reduce the exemption from 5 per cent to zero. A one-stop service center for gold export/import was opened. It is unfair when gold cannot be freely transported in the country. A free transportation permit can ensure smooth flow of the commodity and facilitate processing," said U Tin Tun.

At present, gold nuggets are transported across the country by road, flight, and ships. However, the transport of gold nuggets, especially by air, usually runs into difficulties, according to the Yangon Gold Entrepreneurs Association.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Myanmar's imports reach \$2.39 bln

THE value of Myanmar's imports touched US\$2.39 billion in the period between 1 October and 16 November this year, with private sector imports totaling \$2.17 billion, according to data released by the Ministry of Commerce.

In the first month and a half of the Fiscal Year 2018-2019, the total import value showed an increase of \$232 million compared with the same period last year.

The total imports of consumer goods stood at \$598 million in the current FY, up \$86 million from last year. Myanmar imports consumer prod-

ucts such as pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and palm oil.

Imports of capital goods such as auto parts, vehicles, machines, steel, and airplane parts, totalled \$823.8 million, an increase of \$122 million from the same period last year.

Intermediate goods make up the bulk of Myanmar's imports, with petroleum products and plastic raw materials being the main import items. This year imports of intermediate goods stood at \$971 million. The import value of raw materials increased by \$22 million against last FY. —GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Myanmar exports total \$1.86 bln in current fiscal

MYANMAR'S exports reached US\$1.86 billion for the period between 1 October and 16 November this year, up \$415 million compared with the same period last year, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce.

During the same period last year, Myanmar's exports were pegged at \$1.44 billion. Out of the seven export groups, shipments of agriculture, livestock, fishery, and finished industrial goods registered an increase, while exports of minerals and forest products declined.

Myanmar's depends mainly on the agriculture

and manufacturing sectors for exports. The country's reliance on natural resources such as natural gas and jade has been reducing, while earnings from the CMP (cutting, making and packaging) garment businesses have registered a rise.

The value of exports in the current fiscal stood at \$312.19 million for agro products, \$68 million for livestock, \$119.6 million for fishery products, \$160 million for minerals, \$23.76 million for forest products, \$1.04 billion for manufactured goods, and \$134.9 million for other goods.— Ko Khant

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

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Pre-ceremony of National Day of Thailand held in Nay Pyi Taw



UEC Chairman, Union ministers and their wives attend dinner hosted by Embassy of Thailand. **PHOTO: MNA**

A CEREMONY to mark the coming National Day of Thailand was held at the Hilton Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw at 7 pm yesterday.

The ceremony commenced with the playing of the national anthems of Myanmar and the Kingdom of Thailand. Afterwards, Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Soe Win and Thailand Embassy's Chargé d'Affaires a.i Mr. Narong Boonsatheanwong delivered speeches. Mr. Narong Boonsatheanwong hosted a dinner during which traditional dances from Thailand were performed.

The Chairman of the Union Election Commission, U Hla Thein, Union Ministers Dr. Pe Myint and Nai Thet Lwin and their wives, Lt-Gen Than Tun Oo, Chief of Bureau of Special Operations No-2, Lt-Gen Aung Soe, Chief of Bureau of Special Operations No-4, Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Myint Maw, Deputy Ministers U Aung Hla Tun and Dr. Tun Naing and their wives, Tatmadaw senior officers, Permanent Secretaries, Thai Chargé d'affaires a.i., military attaché to Myanmar and their wives, and invited guests attended the ceremony.—MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Chairman Thura U Shwe Mann meets British Ambassador

THE Chairman of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission, Thura U Shwe Mann, met with the British Ambassador to Myanmar, Mr. Daniel Patrick Brendon Chugg, at the Hluttaw building in Nay Pyi Taw at 2 p.m.

yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters pertaining to the development of bilateral relations between Myanmar and the United Kingdom, democratic reforms, and legal issues.—MNA



Thura U Shwe Mann meets British Ambassador Mr. Daniel Chugg in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Second meeting on national indicator framework held in Nay Pyi Taw

THE second meeting to develop a national indicator framework to measure Myanmar's Sustainable Development Plan was held at the Park Royal Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

At the meeting, the Dep-

uty Minister for Planning and Finance, U Set Aung, the Director General of the Ministry of Planning and Finance's Central Statistics Organization, Dr Wah Wah Maung, and the UNDP Deputy Country Director, Ms. Shan Del Rio, delivered

speeches. The meeting was held to measure the effectiveness, capacity, sustainability, and long-term effects of Myanmar's Sustainable Development Plan during and after the implementation period.—Myo Myint, Han Lin Naing



Union Minister U Set Aung addresses the second meeting on national indicator framework in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: AYE THAN**

Fake Ks10,000 notes seized from Singaporean couple in Yangon

FORTY-five counterfeit notes in the denomination of 10,000 kyats were seized from a Singaporean couple at the Shwedagon Pagoda on 28 November; stated the Myanmar Police Force on 28 November.

The counterfeit notes were discovered when Mr. Lin Bee Fun, 40, and Mrs. Chin Kuo Kuang, 43, paid the entrance fee

at the counter on the southern stairway of the pagoda on 28 November

Police noticed three fake notes and conducted a search during which they found the remaining notes.

During interrogation, the couple said they received the kyats from two Indians at the

Arcade money exchange counter at the Collier Quay of the Changi Airport in exchange for 400 Singapore dollars on 27 November.

The couple arrived at Yangon by air the same day.

The police have lodged a case against them for using counterfeit money.—GNLM (Translated by JT)



The Singaporean couple claim the counterfeit notes were acquired at a money exchange in Changi Airport. **PHOTO: AYE THAN**



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Safe, systematic, and legal migration key to ensuring labour rights

MYANMAR has sent workers to Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea, Japan, and some countries in the Middle East through legal employment agencies. Following negotiations with Thailand, Myanmar has issued Certificate of Identity (C of I) cards to 1.2 million migrant workers there. Thanks to the bilateral effort, illegal workers have been legalized, getting the opportunity to work legally.

Taking this as an example, two diplomats at the Myanmar embassy in Malaysia have been assigned to assist Myanmar migrant workers in Malaysia to get full labour rights and protection.

Myanmar has sent its citizens to foreign countries legally in accordance with its 1999 Overseas Employment Law. For safe, systematic, and legal migration, Myanmar has declared that it will take action against brokers, agencies from the two countries that are conducting their work inappropriately, and employers who violate the rights of workers.

Myanmar signed the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers during the 31st

ASEAN Summit in Philippines in November 2017. The declaration was signed with the aim of setting up a framework for migrant workers under close cooperation with ASEAN countries. This reflects Myanmar's firm commitment towards social protection of migrant workers in the region, obtaining justice, health protection, and humane and fair treatment of migrant workers.

The countries that signed the declaration are obliged to give protection to Myanmar's migrant workers and to help them get jobs in accordance with the laws of the host countries.

Myanmar's migrant workers must note that C of I can be

issued only when a migrant worker is identified as a Myanmar citizen. Workers have been advised to contact the Myanmar embassy and diplomats (labour affairs) in Malaysia to apply for C of I. The Myanmar embassy in Malaysia is working with civil societies there to help them.

But, it has been found that illegal migrants often register themselves at the UNHCR office in Malaysia and find work using the cards issued by the UNHCR.

After some workers were arrested recently and had served their terms, Myanmar diplomats went to the detention centres and scrutinized whether they were Myanmar citizens and made arrangements to send them back to Myanmar.

At present, over 200,000 legal Myanmar migrants are working in manufacturing, agriculture, food stuff production, and electronics production in Malaysia. There are also illegal migrants working in the country.

To give protection to Myanmar migrant workers so they are not exploited and enjoy labour rights, civil societies connected with our workers in overseas countries must inform diplomats (labour affairs) and cooperate with them in a timely manner when our workers face problems there.

Reform means reforms carried out in government sector to improve private sector and to create economic growth— Director General U Aung Soe

Dialogue titled “Is Doing Business in Myanmar Easy?”

Myanma Radio and Television presents the dialogue under the title “Is Doing Business in Myanmar Easy?” in which Director General U Aung Soe of Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization, Director General U Aung Naing Oo of Directorate of Investment and Companies Administration, Director Daw Thidar Myint of Internal Revenue Department and Secretary Daw Khaing Khaing Nwe of Myanmar Garment Entrepreneurs Association are participating.

By Kyaw Thu Htet &
Myo Thu Hein
Photo by Aye Than

(Continued from 27th November issue)

Daw Khaing Khaing Nwe: Raising awareness is much needed. For example, the government side introduces a reform agenda which is known by some departments but some are not. For our part, we have to deal with many government departments not just one department. In such a case, we receive a better service at the department which has knowledge but face hindrance in other department which has no idea.

Another fact is that we know the change but we don't know what is going on in practice and when we are asked to answer the question, we reply that we don't know. It isn't wrong because we are facing some difficulties in the practical work. Yes, a change is made in one department, but the other department doesn't know about that. This shows the change does not flow properly.

When a question is raised to us at such a time, we do not know what is going on and it is not a lie to give an answer of we have no idea as we haven't enjoyed the change yet. But for the department, they have made a real change. Therefore, before a question is coming from World Bank, we need to know what is happening on ground to be able to enjoy benefit comes out from the change.

U Aung Soe: We have been introducing reforms. Reform means transforming systems carried out in government sector to improve private sector and to create economic growth. In the economy, making the businesses more profitable under



the leadership of the private sector and to ensure improvement, there are services to be provided by the government in harmony with the business. This is Ease of Doing Business Index.

Making reforms is to find the easiest way different from the previous approaches. This process is not an easy. There are something that we try to understand but couldn't. Therefore as providing information on what we are doing we are coming up with the marketing campaign. The private sector shall practice like an enterprise. We need to raise awareness on reform mindset especially to get the private sector to come along. Secondly, we need to conduct capacity building training for our staff. We ourselves also are learning this subject from World Bank. Experts from World Bank are here to clarify what is Ease of Doing Business Index. I myself visited Malaysia and studied

doing business there through joint committee between the government and private sectors. Taking into consideration the fact that which area should be developed or which part should be reformed, the process has to be developed for years.

We started introducing the process in 2014 and we are just at the very early stage in that knowledge. The questionnaires are in English and their writing styles are difficult for us to clearly understand resulting in getting confused among staff of both private and government sectors. These questionnaires were not replied by senior officials but by junior staff causing errors. These are the experiences every country had to accumulate.

We met the private sector and explained the nature of questionnaires. If you ask is it enough, the answer is “No.” The questionnaires were most sent

to law firms and legal firms. For legal firms, their relationships with government departments are not much. They may be proficient in answering questionnaires concerning the department with which they have more relations but they may give wrong answers concerning with the department with which they have less relations. We've tried to pass this stage as one of the steps.

We need to highlight the private sector and attract their interests. At the same time capacity building is a must for government departments. There is process for each indicator and there is also Standard Operation Procedure (SOP). It is to identify what is needed for each indicator. We upload all these facts on the website. Currently, we tried to create a website named Ease of Doing Business. Before it is emerged, one can browse what he wants to know in our

department's website. SOPs of each indicator can be browsed in the site. For convenience of every businessman, information counters have been established.

There are information counters at every service center. One can ask through email or phone. Based on experiences gained and through proper methods, we are trying our best with the support and suggestion of World Bank. If businessmen enjoy business dreams such as getting credit, enjoying electricity, receiving construction permit and smooth flow in import and export process, all the businessmen can be attracted to invest in our country. We are on the way to reach this goal. We are trying and we will continue our efforts.

With the aim of improving the process, a committee led by the deputy minister holds meeting once in every two weeks with officials of World Bank and businessmen from the private sec-

tor. He often meets DGs of the respective departments to hold meetings. If we can reduce the duration, cost and procedures, trade will improve. Through these measures we are trying for economic development.

Reform process is a long-term job. We can improve our rank to reach 170 from 190. Last year, it dropped to 171. But the score remained intact. Generally, the score has been improved. We have prepared for next year. As there are many countries participating in the process, we cannot definitely say we will improve. We are trying to get more score and we believe it will improve.

U Aung Naing Oo: Let me take this opportunity to inform the public an important matter. I'd like to share a topic called Protection of Minority Shareholders. In 1914 Company Act, there is no clause that protects minority shareholders. In this new law, protection of minority is enshrined. There are three indexes for protection of minority: Whether the interests are in contradiction to each other, to what extent shareholders can participate in company's management and how it protects the minority shareholders. Duties and responsibilities of directors are also enshrined in the law. So, I would like to inform the public that the roles of the directors are greater than ever. It must be taken into consideration. If he fails to discharge his duties there will be an action to be taken against him. He is also responsible to protect the minority. Finally, I would like to urge the minority to learn the new law to be able to fully enjoy own rights.

Thank you.
(Translated by Wallace)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Order 42/2018

7th Waning of Tazaungmone 1380 ME
29 November 2018

Appointment of Union Minister

In accordance with the provisions stated in article 232, article 235, sub-section (d) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and section 12 of the Union Government Law, U Min Thu has been appointed as Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government.

Sd/ Win Myint
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Order 43/2018

7th Waning of Tazaungmone, 1380 ME
29 November, 2018

Appointment of Judge for Rakhine State High Court

IN accordance with the provisions stated in the Article 308, sub section (b), sub-sub section (4) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, sub-section (d) under Article 82 of Union Government Law, Article 50 of Union Judiciary Law and Article 18, sub-section (D) of Region or State Government Law, Daw Wah Wah Tun has been appointed as Judge for the Rakhine State High Court.

Sd/ Win Myint
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

U Soe Lynn Han presents Credentials to King of the Belgians

U Soe Lynn Han, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Kingdom of Belgium, presented his Credentials to His Majesty King Philippe, King of the Belgians, on 28 November 2018 in Brussels.—MNA



EARTHQUAKE NEWS

A slight earthquake of magnitude (3.8) Richter Scale with its epicenter inside Myanmar (about (16) miles southwest of Mawlaik), latitude 23.50°N, longitude 94.22°E, focal depth (56) kilometers about (50) miles south of Tamu seismological observatory was recorded at (10)hr (27)min (37)sec MST on 29 November 2018.

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Surprise monitoring to check on cheating agri inputs

By May Thet Hnin

AS Shan state mainly focuses on agricultural businesses, the Consumer Affairs Department will accelerate the conducting of surprise checks and take legal action against those who are cheating in their reporting on their use of fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and seeds, which are distributed in Shan state, according to the Consumer Affairs Department.

The department will conduct surprise checks by forming township committees to inspect shops and companies that are producing, importing, exporting, storing or distributing agricultural materials in the townships of Shan State, said U Min Aung, Assistant Director of Shan State Consumer Affairs Department.

The department has been conducting educational activities for those engaged in this business since 2016. As a next step, the department will take legal action against those found to be selling prohibited goods.

"Last October, the ministers of Shan State government met with businesses engaged in the fertilizer, pesticide, herbicide and seed distribution businesses, and informed them that the

department will accelerate the conducting of surprise checks, and shop owners and producers will have punishments meted out as deterrents," he warned.

Recently, the department conducted surprise checks in Kalaw and Yaksawk townships, and the department will do the

The imported pesticides must be labelled with the country of origin, the company, the producer, the distributor, the brand and the expired date.

same in other townships. During the inspection tours, both expired and fake products were marked with stickers. The inspection team from the department reported, and presented the evidence, to the Shan State Dispute Resolution Team.

Action has to be taken against those buyers of fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and seed businesses because there are complaints from farmers, as well as from the commercial attaché in Myanmar, stating that some of Myanmar's exported goods contained chemical residues, said U Min Aung.

Currently, the Plant Protection Division of the Agriculture

Department under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation has been conducting educational programmes, but too many producers are still not complying.

"The local farmers rely on these fertilizer and pesticides because they have difficulty

buying the inputs due to high costs and hiring of labour. The local farmers use the pesticides on the wrong crops and in an improper ratios.

"Even if we invited local farmers to attend the discussion, they would not come. The distributors also need to sell their products—the fertilizers and pesticides, according to the law. There will be safety only if we have cooperation," said U Min Aung.

According to the 2014 Consumer Protection Law, the Consumer Dispute Resolution Team will grant the warranty, issue severe warnings, impose fines, ban products and deprive the

markets of the banned goods, while destroying harmful inputs and revoking business licenses in negotiations with the related ministries.

Currently, over 3,300 pesticides companies have registered with the department for legal import of the inputs into, and distribution of them, across the country.

This year, over 40,000 tons of pesticides were imported and distributed across the country, said U Aung Kyaw Oo, Director of the Plant Protection Division, Agriculture Department.

The imported pesticides must be labelled with the country of origin, the company, the producer, the distributor, the brand and the expired date. When the imported pesticides reach the port, the department conducts sample tests at the laboratory.

Following this, the department grants permission for distribution of the products that meet set standards. Also, the department conducts surprise checks every six months in the market. Currently, some pesticides have been suspended from being distributed, he added.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Drugs seized in Pyu Township

Acting on a tip, police raided a house in Tarcha Ward, which lies to the east of Pyu Town, on Wednesday afternoon and seized drugs and Ks3.192 million in cash.

"The raid was the result of an investigation conducted by a combined team from anti-drug police and township administration. As the suspect tried to flee, he flung a plastic bag containing drugs through the back door," said a police officer.

Police arrested Htaw Gyi, also known as Phyo Thu Aung, in the raid. They found over 2,000 WY brand yaba tablets and more than 4 grams of marijuana and Ks3.192 million in cash from him. The house that was raided belonged to Htaw Gyi's father, identified as U Tin Khwe.

Htaw Gyi was charged with smuggling drugs, which is in violation of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. The authorities are contin-



Illegal drugs, accessories and money seen. **PHOTO: PHYO KO LYNN (NYAUNGWAING)**

uing their investigations to find others connected with the case. —Phyo Ko Lynn (Nyaungwaing)

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Bago Region to implement smoke-free zones

Plans are under way to make Bago Region's Shwemawdaw pagoda precinct, Kanbawzathadi palace, basic education high schools and the Bago University campus smoke free. These smoke-free initiatives were discussed at a workshop in Bago recently.

The workshop was conducted at the Thirihantha Hall in Bago, under the supervision of Bago Region's Public Health Department. It was attended by

staff from the Public Health Department, Bago Development Affairs Committee members, civil society groups, and health staff.

At the workshop, doctors and surgeons from Bago Region's Public Health Department spoke about the establishment of smoke-free zones in the region and the harmful effects of tobacco. They explained how smoke can be harmful to non-smokers. Smoked tobacco products are

the leading cause for many types of cancer, including lung cancer, they said.

Following a workshop in June this year for setting up smoke-free zones in Bago Region, smoke-free signs were erected in the compounds of Bago Region's Public Health Department, the Bago General Hospital, and the Sports and Physical Education Department.

Now, plans are in process to set up no-smoking zones in

other townships and districts, so that the initiative covers the entire Bago Region.

To achieve this, the region's Public Health Department, related departments, non-governmental organizations, philanthropic groups, and civil society organizations will work together to raise awareness on the harmful effects of smoke.—Tin Soe (Bago)

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Workshop on national strategy for closing IDP camps held

A workshop on Myanmar's strategy for closing IDP camps in Kachin, Shan, Rakhine, and Kayin states was organized at the Horizon Lake View Resort Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

"Plans to close IDP camps require cooperation between government officials from the four States, local residents, UN agencies, civil society organizations, associate organizations, and residents of the IDP camps," said Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement, Dr. Win Myat Aye, at the opening ceremony of the workshop.

The union minister said there were roughly 160,000 people living in over 140 IDP camps across the country, but the numbers were prone to fluctuate.

The government held the first meeting on the nationwide closure of IDP camps in June this year and the workshop will discuss solutions to the hindrances and impediments faced in implementing decisions from the first meeting, he said.

The Union Minister said al-



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye addresses the workshop on Myanmar's strategy for closing IDP camps in Kachin, Shan, Rakhine, and Kayin states at the Horizon Lake View Resort Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

though the new administration has endeavored to bring about nationwide peace with earnest efforts through the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong, and the reconciliation effort in Rakhine State, there were still a number of challenges standing in the way of success. He said these challenges could only be overcome through negotiations and cooperation.

The Union Minister said the political, social, and securi-

ty aspects of the IDP camps in Kachin, Kayin and Shan states must be given consideration. He said security was an important issue in rehabilitating people and requested relevant departments to cooperate in landmine clearing operations in the regions. He said peaceful coexistence in Rakhine State must be prioritized and highlighted the importance of including rule of law and stability in designing relevant state projects.

The Union Minister said it

was important for the rehabilitation process to be swift and well-organized. He said the prolonged existence of IDP camps poses a roadblock to the path of development and requested everyone in attendance at the workshop to put forward suggestions for the organized closure of IDP camps in all four states.

Afterwards, the UN Resident Coordinator to Myanmar, Mr. Knut Østby, delivered a speech. "Identifying and implementing

sustainable solutions for the IDPs and closure of camps is a tremendous challenge. It requires a comprehensive national strategy and adequate implementation mechanisms. I commend the Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement, Dr. Win Myat Aye, for preparing the draft national strategy and inviting us to discuss it. The UN remains committed to supporting the formulation and implementation of the national strategy on sustainable solutions for the IDPs and camp closures," he said.

Deputy Ministers, representatives from UN agencies, directors-general, officials from concerned state and region departments, and invited guests attended the opening ceremony of the workshop. Later, group discussions on the current status of closure of IDP camps in the four states, plans for implementation and additions to the draft national strategy, and setting future processes were held at the workshop.—MNA (Translated Zaw Htet Oo)

Work Committee meeting on reading campaign held at MOI

A Work Committee coordination meeting was held at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning to discuss the 'All who can read should read' campaign, which is scheduled to be held from 20 to 21 December.

The campaign is being organized with the aim of encouraging the habit of reading among the people.

At the meeting, the Work Committee's Chairman and the Deputy Minister for Information, U Aung Hla Tun, said the campaign will be held at the International Convention Centre II (MICC-II), and the meeting would discuss ways to conduct the campaign successfully.

Afterwards, the Work Committee's Secretary and the Information and Public Relations Department Director General, U Ye Naing, explained the arrangements for the event. Officials from the Department of Historical Research and National Library, the National Archives Department, and partner organisations then detailed the arrangements for the event sector wise.

Later, the Ministry of Infor-



Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun addresses coordination meeting of reading campaign in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

mation's Permanent Secretary, U Myo Myint Maung, and participants discussed requirements and made suggestions. Work Committee Chairman U Aung Hla Tun delivered the closing speech. Myanmar Radio and Television Director-General U Myint Htwe, Printing and Publishing Department Director-General U Aung Myo Myint and other officials were also present at the meeting.

The campaign will include paper-reading events and seminars, feature a mobile library put together by the Department of Information and Public Relations,

the Daw Khin Kyi Foundation, and the Shanti Volunteer Association, a book fair, and festivals to increasing reading rate.

It will also showcase machines and equipment used across the ages to provide information to the public, methods for preserving photo records, old and historical documents, methods of recording them on micro-film, digitizing micro-films, old and historical writings on parabeik (thick sheets of papers glued together, a type of paper medium used in early Myanmar writings) and palm leaves.—MNA/(Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)

Singapore Festival 2018 to be held in Yangon

THE Singapore Festival 2018 will be held in Yangon from 30 November to 2 December. The festival is being jointly organized by the Yangon Region Government, the Singapore Tourism Board, and the Doh Eain Company.

Foods from Singapore and Myanmar will be sold at a flat rate of Ks 500 per item at the festival. The festival will also showcase a typical Singapore art presentation, street art and live graffiti in augmented reality by artist ROAR. It will also

feature a play area for kids as well as games families can play together.

Art, entertainment fairs, and music shows will be arranged at the event. Singapore's famous rapper The Lion City Boy and Myanmar singer Helay are scheduled to perform at the festival, which will also host meetings with Singapore artists. The festival aims to showcase Singapore-Myanmar relations.—Min Thit, Thant Zin Win (Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)



Workers make preparation for holding Singapore Festival 2018 in Yangon. PHOTO: HLA MOE

Ex-diplomat Zurabishvili elected Georgia's first woman president

TBILISI (Georgia) — Georgia has elected ruling party candidate Salome Zurabishvili as its first woman president, results showed Thursday, but the opposition claimed fraud and called for supporters to take to the streets.

With 99.9 per cent of ballots counted, the French-born ex-diplomat had taken 59.61 per cent of the vote in Wednesday's second round of the election.

Her rival Grigol Vashadze, from an alliance of 11 opposition parties led by exiled ex-president Mikheil Saakashvili's United National Movement (UNM), was on 40.46 per cent.

The election was seen as a test of Georgia's democratic credentials as the Caucasus nation seeks European Union and NATO membership.

It was also a trial run for more important parliamentary elections in 2020, when the ruling Georgian Dream party is set to face off against a range of opposition parties.

Georgian Dream — the creation of billionaire tycoon Bidzina Ivanishvili who many see as the country's de facto ruler — backed Zurabishvili in the presidential vote. Ivanishvili's great rival, the flamboyant ex-president Saakashvili, claimed "mass elec-

toral fraud" even before official results were released.

"The oligarch has stamped out Georgian democracy and the institutions of elections," he said on the pro-opposition Rustavi-2 television channel, referring to Ivanishvili.

"I urge Georgians to defend our freedom, democracy and the law. I call on you to start mass peaceful rallies and demand snap parliamentary polls."

Saakashvili swept to power in 2004 in a mass protest movement known as the Rose Revolution but, after a disastrous 2008 war with Russia, fled the country in 2013 and has since been stripped of his citizenship.

He was sentenced in absentia to six years in prison for abuse of office, charges he rejects as politically motivated. He now lives in the Netherlands.

Tensions increased ahead of the second round as the opposition accused the government of voter intimidation and claimed that ruling party activists had attacked Vashadze campaign staff.

Zurabishvili in turn said she and her children had received death threats through text and voice messages from people affiliated with the UNM.

Rights groups have accused

government officials of vote-buying on a "widespread" and "unprecedented" scale and of election fraud, including through the alleged printing of fake ID cards.

Opposition supporters will be watching for reports from foreign election monitors, including from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, to see if their claims of voter fraud are supported.

SCE observers were to hold a press conference in Tbilisi later Thursday.

Street protests against the results could shake the small ex-Soviet republic, which has seen civil wars, mass demonstrations and unrest since gaining its independence in 1991 on the break-up of the Soviet Union.

A smooth presidential transition, however, would be welcomed by many as a sign of stability in Georgia, which is emerging as a tourism hotspot and hopes for more foreign investment.

Daughter of refugees

Zurabishvili, a 66-year-old independent lawmaker, is the daughter of refugees who fled Georgia in 1921 for Paris after the country's annexation by the Red Army.

Her career in France's for-



Former Georgian foreign minister and France's ambassador to Tbilisi in the early 2000s, French-born Salome Zurabishvili is supported by the ruling Georgia Dream party. **PHOTO: AFP**

eign service culminated in a posting to Tbilisi, where then-president Saakashvili appointed her foreign minister.

But Zurabishvili quickly made enemies among the parliamentary majority, with MPs and some senior diplomats accusing her of arrogance and impulsiveness. When she was sacked after a year in the job, thousands took to the streets of the capital to protest her dismissal.

Vashadze, a 60-year-old career diplomat, had criticised

Ivanishvili's "informal oligarch rule" amid growing discontent over the government's failure to tackle poverty. The vote was Georgia's last direct leadership poll as it transitions to a parliamentary form of governance.

The first round on 28 October saw Zurabishvili take 39 per cent of the vote, against 38 per cent for Vashadze.

More than 3.5 million people were eligible to vote in the election and turnout was 56.23 per cent.—AFP ■

Air India plane hits building at Stockholm airport

STOCKHOLM (Sweden) — An Air India plane carrying 179 passengers struck a building at Stockholm's Arlanda airport with its wingtip as it taxied to gate on Wednesday, but no injuries were reported, police said.

"The 179 passengers could disembark from the plane on a mobile staircase and thereafter

enter the terminal," police wrote in a statement.

The cause of the accident was not immediately known, police said.

It occurred at 5:45 pm (1645 GMT), about 50 meters (yards) from Terminal 5, the main terminal for international flights.

Pictures from the scene

showed the Boeing aircraft parked on the runway with the very tip of its left wing stuck in the side of a building.

Several police cars and fire trucks were parked by the plane.

According to airport operator Swedavia's website, the flight had originated in New Delhi. —AFP ■



The tip of the Boeing aircraft's left wing got stuck in the airport building as it taxied to gate. **PHOTO: AFP**

Famed Australian soldier under investigation for alleged war crimes

CANBERRA — The Australian Federal Police (AFP) has launched an investigation into the nation's most decorated former soldier over alleged war crimes.

Fairfax Media on Thursday reported that the AFP begun investigating the actions Ben Roberts-Smith while serving with a Special Forces patrol in Afghanistan.

"The Australian Federal Police (AFP) received a referral to investigate allegations of war crimes committed by Australian soldiers during the Afghanistan conflict," an AFP spokesperson told Fairfax on Thursday.

Roberts-Smith became the most decorated member of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) in 2011 when he was awarded the Victoria Cross, the highest award in the Australian honours system, for gallantry shown while attacking a Taliban ma-

chine gun in Afghanistan in 2010.

The AFP investigation, which is the most serious inquiry ever conducted by police into alleged war crimes, is the second inquiry to focus on Roberts-Smith's conduct in Afghanistan.

Fairfax reported in July that a separate probe by the Inspector General of the ADF (IGADF) took sworn testimony from former and current members of the Special Air Service (SAS) Regiment, Roberts-Smith's former regiment, that he engaged in misconduct while in Afghanistan.

According to the report, over which Roberts-Smith is suing Fairfax Media for defamation, the soldiers testified that the medal recipient breached the laws of armed conflict, which governs how soldiers must conduct themselves in conflict. —Xinhua ■

In Lebanon, climate change devours ancient cedar trees

TANNOURINE (Lebanon) — High up in Lebanon's mountains, the lifeless grey trunks of dead cedar trees stand stark in the deep green forest, witnesses of the climate change that has ravaged them.

Often dubbed "Cedars of God", the tall evergreens hark back millennia and are a source of great pride and a national icon in the small Mediterranean country.

The cedar tree, with its majestic horizontal branches, graces the nation's flag and its bank notes.

But as temperatures rise, and rain and snow-fall decrease, Lebanon's graceful cedars are increasingly under attack by a tiny green grub that feed off the youngest trees.

At 1,800 metres altitude, in the natural reserve of Tannourine in the north of Lebanon, ashen tree skeletons jut out of the forest near surviving cedars centuries old.

"It's as if a fire had swept through the forest," says Nabil Nemer, a Lebanese specialist in forest insects. In ancient times, huge cedar forests were felled for their timber.

Egyptian pharaohs used the wood to make boats, and King Solomon is said to have used cedar to build his temple in Jerusalem.

But today's culprits lie underground, just several centimetres (inches) below the tree trunk: bright green, wriggling larvae no larger than a grain of rice.



The cedar tree, with its majestic horizontal branches, graces Lebanon's flag and its bank notes. **PHOTO: AFP**

Since the late 1990s, infant cedar sawflies have been eating away at the forest in Tannourine, as well as several other natural reserves in northern Lebanon. "In 2017, 170 trees dried up completely and became dead wood," Nemer says.

'Disturbed'

Like their food of choice, cedar sawflies have been around for thousands of years.

They mate in spring and lay their eggs on the cedar tree trunks, where grubs hatch and feast on cedar needles.

In the past, the larvae would then head back into the ground to hibernate for up to three or four years, before emerging again as adult sawflies with wings.

But a warming earth has disrupted this cycle, especially in the Mediterranean where "climate

change is more intense", according to Wolfgang Cramer, a scientist and member of Mediterranean Experts on Environmental and Climate Change (MedECC).

In a November report, MedECC said future warming in the Mediterranean region was "expected to exceed global rates by 25 per cent".

As the ground becomes less cold and humid in winter, sawflies are now springing out of the earth every year, and in larger numbers.

Their preferred victims are young cedar trees, aged 20 to 100 years old.

Temperatures in Tannourine have risen by two degrees Celsius in the past 30 years and there is less snow than before, Nemer says. "With the drought, this larvae has been disturbed," he explains. In

1999, the authorities managed to keep the pest in check by spraying insecticides from a helicopter.

But for the past four years, the cedar sawfly population has again been swelling.

With chemical pesticides now banned, park authorities have resorted to a more natural, though less efficient treatment: injecting a fungus into the ground to kill the sleeping grubs. The authorities

have backed the initiative so far, but it's a mammoth task that needs more funding, manpower and laboratories, Nemer says.

He says he hopes the state can increase its support, including by creating a nationwide authority to track "forest health".

Race to replenish forests

Forests cover just over a tenth of Lebanon. They are mostly made up of oaks, pines and juniper trees, but also a minority of cedars.

As scientists fight to prevent cedar deaths, the government has embarked in a race against time to replenish the country's forests.

Since 2012, it has helped plant more than two million new trees of all kinds across the country, agriculture ministry official Chadi Mohanna says.

The project is running a little late on a target of 40 million planted trees by 2030, but he is optimistic it will help mitigate climate change.

"In the next 20 to 30

years, we'll start to see a change, with more humidity, and several degrees less during heat waves," he says.

And civil society is also playing a role.

Since 2008, non-governmental organisation-JouzourLubnan has put 300,000 new trees in the ground.

On a recent sunny Sunday, in the rocky natural reserve of Jaj, dozens of scouts gathered to plant cedars, as Jouzour teamed up with the army to mark independence day.

Beyond centuries-old trees hugging the mountainside, boys and girls in blue shirts planted 300 saplings just a dozen centimetres high.

They protected them with bell-shaped cages and rocks to keep grazing animals at bay.

"Cedars have survived millions of years. They can also take on climate change and adapt," said Jouzour co-founder Magda BouDagherKharrat.

"We can't lose hope, but we do need to help them."—AFP ■

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE (INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER) (25/ 2018)

1. Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars and Myanmar Kyats.

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(a)	IFB-035(18-19)	Spare for VSAT (1) Set	US\$
(b)	IFB-036(18-19)	6" and 4" ERW Steel Line Pipe (2) Items	US\$
(c)	DMP/L-139(18-19)	NDT Services for 20" Domestic Natural Gas Pipe Line (1) Lot	Ks
(d)	DMP/L-140(18-19)	40 D-76-48 Type Pumping Unit (2) Nos	Ks
(e)	DMP/L-141(18-19)	228 D-213-120 Type Pumping Unit (1) No	Ks
(f)	DMP/L-142(18-19)	114 D-119-86 Type Pumping Unit (1) No	Ks
(g)	DMP/L-143(18-19)	Pipe Wrench and Chain Tong (2) Groups	Ks
(h)	DMP/L-144(18-19)	Fire Extinguisher (5) Groups	Ks
(i)	DMP/L-145(18-19)	Heat Shrinkable Sleeve and Closure Patches (2) Items	Ks
(j)	DMP/L-146(18-19)	Mobile Welding Machine (2) Sets	Ks
(k)	DMP/L-147(18-19)	Assorted Sizes of Tyres (12) Items	Ks
(l)	DMP/L-148(18-19)	13 5/8 x 5K Annular BOP Spares (2) Items	Ks
(m)	DMP/L-149(18-19)	Spares for Cooper Well Servicing Unit (35) Items	Ks
(n)	DMP/L-150(18-19)	Spares for 30 Ton Grove Mobile Crane (13) Items	Ks

2. The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available free download at the Ministry of Electricity and Energy Website Portal (www.moe.gov.mm) as from **30 November 2018**. Tender forms will not be sold.

3. The interested Bidders should submit the **Technical Specifications with Original Bid Bond and Commercial Quotation in each separate sealed envelopes** on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in Tender Box of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than **14:00 pm** on **26 December 2018**.

4. Tender Closing Date & Time- 26-12-2018, 14:00 pm
Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph . +95 67 - 411206

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CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V UNI AMPLE VOY. NO. (0269-465W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V UNI AMPLE VOY. NO. (0269-465W/E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30-11-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.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.

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Sylvester Stallone says hanging up his Rocky gloves

LOS ANGELES—After more than four decades and eight movies, actor Sylvester Stallone says he is finally hanging up his Rocky gloves. In a video he shared on Instagram Wednesday, the 72-year-old actor said he was ready to walk away from playing the iconic character, referring to his latest appearance in the recently released “Creed II” as his “last rodeo.” “I thought Rocky was over in 2006 and I was very happy with that,” he said in the video. “And then all of a sudden this young man presented himself and the whole story changed,” he added, pointing to his “Creed” co-star Michael B. Jordan.

“It went on to a new generation, new problems, new adventures.” The “Creed” films are a continuation of the Rocky story, following the retired champ as he faces up to middle age and trains a new protege.

Stallone said he couldn’t be happier for the way things



Sylvester Stallone attends “Creed II” New York Premiere at AMC Loews Lincoln Square on 14 November 2018 in New York City. **PHOTO: AFP**

turned out for the Rocky saga that began in 1976 and which chronicled the life of the heroic underdog boxer.

“As I step back, as my story has been told, there is a whole new world that’s going to be opening up for the audience, for this generation,” he said, adding that it was up to Jordan now to “carry the mantle.” Stallone

said the video, which appears to have been filmed on a beach, next to a bonfire, was shot on his last day making “Creed II.” In it, he addresses some of the cast and crew of the film. In a message on Instagram accompanying the video, Stallone said he was sad to abandon the role but that it was time to turn the page.—AFP ■

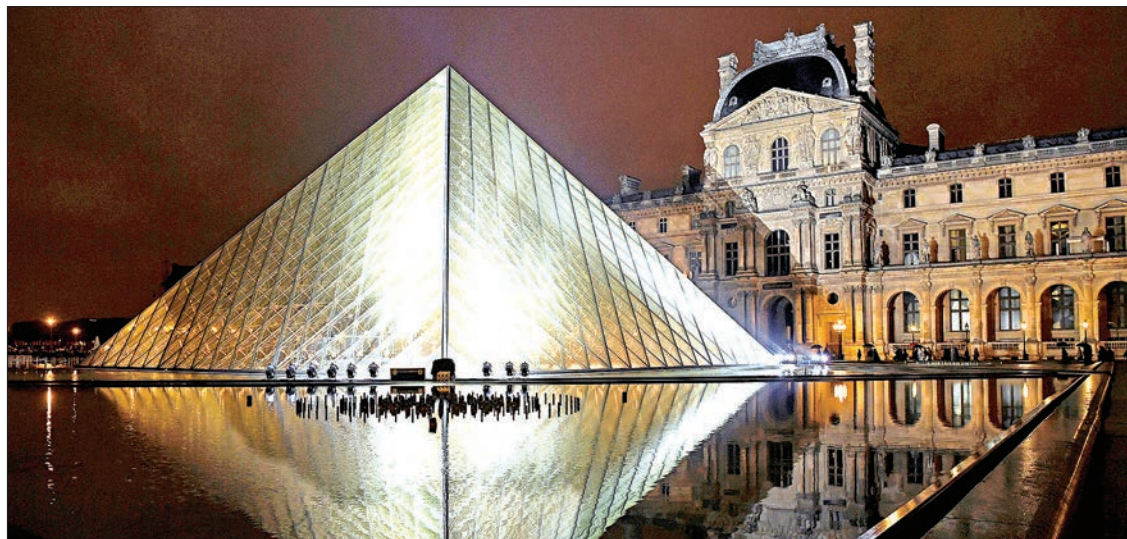
Louvre to open one Saturday night a month for free

PARIS—The Louvre museum in Paris has announced it will open its doors for free one Saturday night a month to attract younger, less wealthy visitors. Home to the Mona Lisa and the Venus de Milo, the world’s most-visited museum previously opened for six free Sundays a year, but a statement published Wednesday said this was failing to bring in visitors from a broad spectrum of society. The new nocturnal openings, set to begin on 5 January, are to include activities such as a board game area and reading corner to attract families. The Louvre is also hoping to appeal to more people living in poorer Paris suburbs as well as to young adults and families with older children with the initiative.

The museum’s statement said that the Saturday nights were a bid to underpin the “democ-

ratization” of the Louvre, where a full-price ticket costs 17 euros (\$19).

“The number of French visitors coming to the Louvre for the first time was dropping during these free Sundays, while the number of foreign visitors was going up considerably,” it added. The main people benefiting were tourism operators who cashed in by ferrying foreigners through the Louvre—an obligatory stop in any case—for free on the Sundays. “Working-class visits were not going up,” it said. The monthly Saturday evening sessions will run between 6.00 pm and 8.45 pm. The Louvre saw a sharp rise in visitors in 2017 to 8.1 million, making it the most visited art gallery in the world according to a ranking from the Themed Entertainment Association, an industry body.—AFP ■



Louvre Pyramid is to open for free one Saturday night per month to attract younger, less wealthy visitors. **PHOTO: AFP**

China’s Tibetan medicinal bathing listed as Intangible Cultural Heritage

PORT LOUIS—The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) inscribed on Wednesday China’s Lum medicinal bathing of Sowa Rigpa on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

The decision was announced during the 13th session of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage held from Monday to Saturday in Port Louis, Mauritius.

The Lum medicinal bathing of Sowa Rigpa is the knowledge and practices concerning life, health and illness prevention and treatment among the Tibetan people in China.

Speaking after the decision to inscribe this intangible cultural heritage on the list, Chinese Vice Minister of Culture and Tourism Zhang Xu said that

The knowledge and practices are widely distributed in areas inhabited by Tibetans in China’s Tibet Autonomous Region as well as provinces including Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu and Yunnan, according to China’s Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

Approved by the State Council of the Chinese government, Lum medicinal bathing of Sowa Rigpa was included in the National List of Representative Elements of Intangible Cultural Heritage on two occasions in 2008 and 2014.

A five-year safeguarding plan (2019-2023) has been made on the basis of a monitoring system so as to ensure coordinated safeguarding and development of the Tibetan tradition. Measures include special vocational training and increasing youth’s awareness of safeguarding through compilation of primary



Photo taken on 21 November 2018 shows the herbs of Lum medicinal bathing of Sowa Rigpa in southwest China’s Tibet Autonomous Region. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Lum medicinal bathing of Sowa Rigpa has an important bearing on the everyday life of people of the Tibetan ethnic group.

“This heritage not only embodies the folk experience in disease prevention and treatment, it also represents an inheritance and development of the traditional Tibetan medicine theories in modern health practices,” Zhang said.

In Tibetan, “Lum” indicates the traditional knowledge and practices of bathing in natural hot springs, herbal water or steam to adjust the balance of mind and body, to ensure health and treat illnesses.

The Lum Medicinal Bathing of Sowa Rigpa (Tibetan Medicine) has been developed by the Tibetan people with a life view based on Jungwa-nga (five elements) that includes Earth, Water, Fire, Wind and Space, and a view about health and illness.

and secondary school textbooks on related knowledge.

With the inscription of the Lum medicinal bathing of Sowa Rigpa, China now has 40 inscribed elements in total on relevant UNESCO lists, including 32 elements inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, 7 elements inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, and one program selected to the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices.

During the session of the intergovernmental committee, 40 requests for inscription on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity are being examined. Another seven elements are proposed for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.—Xinhua ■

Future uncertain for Australia's unique platypus: researchers

SYDNEY (Australia)—Australia's unique platypus population is shrinking under pressure from agriculture and pollution, putting the egg-laying mammals' future in doubt, researchers said in a report published Thursday.

A three-year survey of the duck-billed animal suggested its numbers had fallen by 30 per cent, to around 200,000, since Europeans settled the continent two centuries ago.

"We have great concerns about the future survival of this unique species," said Richard Kingsford, director of the University of New South Wales Centre for Ecosystem Science.

Threats endangering the platypus in its eastern Australian habitats include increased land-clearing for agriculture, pollution, dam building and fishing nets, Kingsford said in a statement.

Kingsford and his team called on authorities to elevate the protected status of the platypus from near-threatened to vulnerable.

They said that while population numbers varied in different regions of eastern Australia, platypuses had already disappeared from some areas.

"We cannot afford as a world, let alone Australia, to let his ani-



These platypus twin puggles were born in captivity in 2003. PHOTO: AFP

mal go extinct and we know that it's gone extinct in some areas already," Kingsford told the national broadcaster ABC.

The semi-aquatic platypus, which along with four species of echidna are the only mammals that lay eggs, is one of the world's

strangest animals, with the bill of a duck, tail of a beaver, otter-like feet and a venomous spur on its hind leg. —AFP ■

'Mini-placenta' organ models shine light on pregnancy defects

PARIS (France)—Scientists on Wednesday unveiled a model, lab-grown organ that replicates the early stages of the placenta which they said could transform our understanding of reproductive disorders and complications during pregnancy. As many as 300,000 women die every year around the world due to preventable conditions linked to pregnancy and childbirth, according to the United Nations. Many of these deaths are down to what happens to the placenta—a temporary organ connecting the developing baby to its mother's womb—during the first few weeks of pregnancy. But because the changes to both occur deep within a woman's body, the placenta is one of the most poorly understood organs there is. Researchers at the University of Cambridge said they had managed to grow placentas outside the womb that continued to grow for over a year and which performed most of the primary functions of the organ. They said the breakthrough creation of these placenta models—or organoids—provided a window into what changes occur during early pregnancy and could ultimately save women from potentially life-threatening conditions as their term progresses.

"The placenta is the first organ that develops and is the least understood," Ashley Moffett, from the university's department of Pathology, told reporters. "It supplies all the functions for the baby in utero, it protects the baby and it secretes a load of hormones and other products—if any of these functions don't work then the pregnancy will not be successful." Often, medical research for products or breakthroughs intended for humans begin on animals.

But human and animal placentas are too different to provide a good model for research, and the last 30 years has seen increasing efforts to grow placental cells outside the body. Moffett and the team managed to nurture a miniature model placenta under lab conditions by identifying and isolating cells from the trophoblast—the membrane that provides nutrients to an embryo and helps the placenta attach to the uterus. These organoids were able to survive long-term, and even began to secrete the same proteins and hormones that would affect a mother's natural functions during pregnancy. Even over-the-counter home pregnancy tests identified the presence, for example, of the hormone HCG.



Researchers say the 'mini-placentas' could shed light on a host of poorly understood reproductive disorders. PHOTO: AFP

'They tell us they're pregnant'

"We are now pretty certain that these are trophoblast cells—but do they function? Do they do the things that a placenta does?" said Moffett. "We stuck a pregnancy stick into the organoid and you can see that the organoids are making HCG and are telling us that they are pregnant." The team said the mini-organs would help doctors understand how perinatal complications develop, such as pre-eclampsia—a life-threatening condition where the mother's extreme high blood pressure can only be alleviated by giving birth.—AFP ■

Bulk of southern China was under sea about 400 mln years ago: study

NANJING—Chinese researchers have discovered through studying paleontology of strata that the bulk of today's southern China was beneath the sea between 410 million and 350 million years ago.

A research team from Nanjing Institute of Geology and Palaeontology with the Chinese Academy of Sciences spent three years on the study. Based on the latest paleontological evidence, they concluded that most parts of the South China Plate was under the sea between 410 million and 350 million years ago. The study shows that the South China Plate covers today's Yunnan, Guizhou, Sichuan, Hunan, Hubei, Zhejiang, Jiangxi, Fujian, Guangdong provinces, Chongqing Municipality, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and the southern part of Jiangsu Province, northern Viet Nam, as well as the Yellow Sea and the East China Sea. The researchers discovered a fossil, in east China's Jiangxi Province, of a plant that lived in nearshore waters dating back 410 million years. This means the area was submerged by shallow seawater at that time.

They continued to study plant fossils unearthed from more than 50 places on the South China Plate and found that the coastline on the plate gradually moved eastwards from 410 million to 350 million years ago.—Xinhua ■

Liverpool on the ropes as PSG close in on Champions League knockouts

PARIS (France)—Paris Saint-Germain took a big step towards qualifying for the Champions League knockout stages on Wednesday after Neymar helped sink Liverpool in a blistering 2-1 win at the Parc des Princes.

The Brazilian struck in the 37th minute after Juan Bernat's early opener to put qualifica-

tion for the last 16 in the French champions' hands and leave Jurgen Klopp's team needing to beat Napoli 1-0 or by two clear goals in two week's time to guarantee a place in the knockout stage.

Thomas Tuchel's PSG have massive European ambitions but have flattered to deceive on the continent since being taken over by Qatari investors, and after defeats at Anfield and draws with Group C leaders Napoli Wednesday's win gives them a great chance of qualifying from an extremely tight group.

They are in second place but still need a win at Red Star Belgrade—who they beat 6-1 in Paris in October—to ensure a knockout berth as they go into the final round of fixtures just two points ahead of Liverpool.

“It was our last chance

to show that we are capable of competing with a team like Liverpool, a team with an incredible mentality,” said PSG coach Thomas Tuchel.

“Everyone was ready to suffer for each other. That was necessary against Liverpool and it was a big step forward for

would make their task much easier.

If they score the Reds would need to do so three times without reply to qualify ahead of the Italians with a superior head-to-head record. A draw would also see them go through.

Spurs back from dead

Harry Kane said Tottenham Hotspur will go “all guns blazing” at Barcelona in two weeks time after Christian Eriksen brought his side back from the dead with the late winner in a pulsating clash with Inter Milan at Wembley.

Mauricio Pochettino's side go level on seven points with Inter but move above them into second in Group B thanks to their head-to-head away goals and now need to match Inter's result in the final week to qualify. They will travel to the Camp Nou on December 11 to take on Barcelona, who showed no signs of slowing down in a 2-1 win at PSV Eindhoven which guaranteed top spot.

“We played out from the back, through the lines, and we could have got a couple in the first half. The clean sheet was massive and thankfully we got the goal,” said Kane to BT Sport.

“We will go all guns blazing now. It will be tough, but it is all to play for.”

Atletico Madrid cruised into the next round with a simple 2-0 win over a Monaco team packed with youngsters and short on experience.

Koke set the ball rolling against Thierry Henry's rock-bottom Monaco after just 90 seconds, before Antoine Griezmann ended the match as a contest after just 24 minutes.

Porto and Schalke qualified before their Group D match kicked off thanks to Galatasaray falling 2-0 at Lokomotiv Moscow.

Goals from Eder Militao and Jesus Corona put the Portuguese champions two up early in the second half before Nabil Bentaleb's 89th-minute penalty have the German's hope of a late point. However Moussa Marega slotted home the third to seal first place for Sergio Conceicao's team. Borussia Dortmund also qualified following their goalless draw with Club Brugge.—AFP ■

“Let's raise a trophy,” Schweinsteiger said in a statement issued by the club. “I believe in this club and I believe that we can be champions. “This American journey has been very special for me and my family,” added Schweinsteiger, who is married to former WTA tennis player Ana Ivanovic. “I love being a part of the Chicago Fire and we appreciate how the city has embraced us with open arms.”—AFP ■

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Champion of the KBZ Bank Women's League 2017-2018, Myawady team.
PHOTO: SOE NYUNT

3rd Myanmar Women's League to start next week

THE 3rd Women's League, 2018-2019 season, will start in the first week of December, under the supervision of the Myanmar Football Federation (MFF).

A total of eight teams, including the defending champion Myawady team, Thitsar Arman team, Zwekapin team, Sports and Physical Education Department (SPED) team, YREO team, ISPE team, the University team, and Gandamar team, will take part in the matches. The schedule for the matches will be released by

the MFF. The Football Federation of Myanmar has been organizing football leagues with the aim of nurturing talented women footballers and to raise Myanmar football to the international level.

The Women's League is a professional football league for women's clubs in Myanmar. National women footballers and talented young players will participate in the league. Team Myawady is a two-time champion in the league.—Shine Htet Zaw
(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin) ■

Myanmar faces Thailand in AFC Futsal Qualification

MYANMAR'S national U-19 futsal team will clash with Asian futsal powerhouse Thailand in the 2019 AFC U-20 Futsal Championship Qualification, which kicks off on 5 December in Thailand.

Myanmar's futsal team will play against Malaysia on 5 December, Viet Nam on 6 December, futsal giant Thailand on 7 December, and Indonesia on 8 December. As part of preparations for the qualification matches, Myanmar is now undertaking

training in Thailand and testing some local clubs from Thailand, according to the Myanmar Football Federation.

A total of 18 players, including futsal stars Pyae Phyto Maung, Shine Htet Aung, Soe Lin Htet, and Hein Htet Aung, have reached Thailand with head coach U Htay Myint.

The final list of 14 players will be released soon by the futsal authority, said a source with the MFF.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Schweinsteiger to stick with Fire through 2019

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Neymar scored the decisive goal for Paris Saint-Germain in his side's 2-1 win over Liverpool on Wednesday. **PHOTO: AFP**