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Union Minister for Education Dr. Myo Thein Gyi presents a course completion certificate to a TVET trainee in Myitkyina. PHOTO: MNA

Over 70 trainees from KBC Camp, villages in Myitkyina complete TVET

A CEREMONY to present certificates for completing a short-term technical and vocational education training (TVET) course jointly conducted by the Ministry of Education's Department of Technical and Vocational Education and

Training and Myanmar Kindness Group, was held at Maina (KBC) camp for the displaced, in Myitkyina, yesterday afternoon.

Speaking on the occasion, Union Minister for Education Dr. Myo Thein Gyi said short-term courses, such as Basic

House Keeping and Restaurant Service course, and Household Wiring, were started for out-of-school youths in Maina (KBC) camp on 6 November by the Myanmar Hospitality & Tourism Institute (MHTI) and the Government Technical High School (Myitkyina).

The course was attended by trainees from Maina (KBC) camp, Waingmaw, Putao, Mogaung, Tanai, Namti, Myitkyina towns and Myitkyina Sitapu Ward and nearby villages.

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MoHS, MNMC discuss standards for private nursing schools

MINISTRY of Health and Sports, and Myanmar Nurse and Midwife Council, met yesterday in Yangon to discuss accreditation process for private schools for nursing and midwifery.

The meeting titled "Sharing Information on Accreditation Process to Private Sector", held at the University of Nursing-Yangon, and it was attended by Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe.

At the meeting, Chairperson of the MNMC Daw Nwe Nwe Khin reported on steps which were taken for opening the schools.

The attendees also discussed arrangements to work together with international universities and experts, to invite experts from the ministry, and to allow the trainees to carry out practical work at the hospitals. The union minister discussed the requirements for opening the schools.

Following the meeting, Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe met with the members of the Myanmar Medical Council Accreditation Committee-MMAC at Natmauk Road in Bahan Township.

SEE PAGE-7

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Amyotha Hluttaw

Record of 17th-day of 10th regular session of Second Amyotha Hluttaw(CONTINUED FROM
YESTERDAY)

During the question and answer session of the 17th-day meeting of the 10th regular session of the Second Amyotha Hluttaw on 21 December 2018, U Pe Tin of Mon State constituency 6 raised a question asking whether there were plans to overcome the current losses and revitalize Myanmar Railways to bring about public favor, to which Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung replied.



Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung. PHOTO: MNA

Operating on own budgets

Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung: Secondly, we have planned not to operate on the whole Mandalay-Myitkyina railway track by only relying on loans. We are first tackling the Namhkam-Meza and Mawhan-Kadu tracks. They have sharp curves and a steep gradient. We contracted a Korean firm to survey the area. They suggested digging a new tunnel and building a new bridge. This will require us to build 4 new train stations. They told us the entire project will cost US\$ 100 million so we renegotiated to include both tracks in the project.

Then there's the Bago-Mawlamyine track. We're proceeding this with our own budget. We started in 2016 and now we've gotten up to Mawlamyine. We've used short welded rails for the tracks and I admit they are not the best ones in the world. They ought to be able to handle a train at 50 miles per hour but since our traffic signals are not quite good yet we've opted not to increase the train speeds. We also have to construct a new bridge over Bilin creek after we lost one last year when the creek overflowed.

Foreign aid acquired with prudence

Regarding the Yangon-Pyay section, ADB understand our obstacles and offered their assistance to upgrade the road section. We estimated that the upgrade would cost US\$ 60 million. But, just yesterday, they offered more funding for the project. We hired an Australian company to conduct the Pre-Feasibility Survey and ADB funded it. After the survey,

we studied 434 bridges on the distance of 161 miles and we came to know that which bridges should be reconstructed and which bridges should be maintained. We are committed to carry out EIA and SIA at our best.

Regarding the Yangon circular ring road, Japanese government provided 660 million and proposed to upgrade the Yangon circular road. But we decided to get only 207 million and to upgrade signaling system and rolling stock which we cannot work. We asked them to give us just technical assistance such as engineers to supervise us upgrading the road.

Yangon Urban Mass Rapid Transit System

Let's go to next topic of Yangon Urban Mass Rapid Transit System. I requested them in August 2016 to carry out feasibility study about the Urban Mass Rapid Transit included in the Yangon Urban Transport Master Plan as motor roads only cannot solve the traffic congestion.

The pre-feasibility-study is complete in August 2017. They proposed two ways: east-west road and north-south road. There would be gap of 27,000 passengers in the east-west road. So, when Yangon becomes Mega City in 2030s, we need to run trains with six coaches every three minutes. When we decided to implement the project, Japanese government offered to grant loan for the project. But, we had to take into account possible ways which can avoid huge burden of debts and think about G-to-G system or PPP system. We have to take lessons from problems in some countries regarding PPP system.



U Pe Tin, Mon State constituency 6. PHOTO: MNA

We also considered the project to be implemented with G-to-G system and to be operated with the private system. We did another feasibility-study this year in detail. It was found that the gap of passengers can reach about 30,000 per hour in the south-west way. As traffic demand is high in Hlinethaya, we have chosen to start a phase-1 which includes the Hlinethaya-to-Toe Kyaung Kalay section and possible 13 exchange stations in Hlinethaya-to-Parami section. At present, we are implementing it as a phase-1.

Plan for Muse-Mandalay railroad

Muse-Mandalay, Road is 431 meters long. Lao built the same distance of road at the cost of US\$5 billion in cooperation with China.

Muse-Mandalay road includes in the National Transport Master Plan and in the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor. It is also a section of the Trans Asia Rail Link linking Europe and Asia proposed by UNESCAP. At the same time, traffic demand is also high in the Muse-Mandalay Road and from 3,000 to 5,000 trucks are running per day between Muse and Mandalay.

Train service is more environmental friendly than cars. It can take only five hours from Mandalay to Muse. That's why, we have conducted the feasibility-study about the rail road since last month.

Fixing signaling systems, railway ties

Our signaling system needs to be operated with modern system. We are still using the very primitive signaling system. We are working to operate the

fully automatic system along the Yangon-Mandalay Road and Semi-Automatic system along the Yangon-Pyay and Yangon-Mawlamyine railroad. We requested the Australian company and the ADB to assist in implementing the projects.

One of the reasons the railway tracks are in bad shape is because the railway ties were initially made with wood but when we transitioned to using concrete, we used Chinese designs and Indian designs based on where we got loans from first. The two designs don't synch well. We are shifting our railroad teams from being fully manual to semi mechanized and for that we will be receiving 100 hand tie tampers within this year. I think the tertiary tracks will become a bit better.

Also, we have to construct dry ports since we have signed the Inter Governmental Agreement on Dry Port led by UNESCAP. The multimodal transport system will help lower the value of consequential supply chains. We have completed two dry ports and will encourage people to transport their cargo with containers in the coming year.

Modernizing the system

We are working with the same Australian company to transition our management system to a digital IT system. It will link our entire network, down to the ticketing. We are trying to amend the system so that it can first be self-sufficient before undergoing reorganization. We are also training our staff to be more service minded. For that, we are teaming with JICA to provide free training over the course of 4 years. We are currently in our second year, and we are teaching everything from greetings, to bowing, to cleaning. It will take time as Japan also took 25 to 30 years corporatizing its services from 1987.

Financial status, continued projects

Concerning our financial situation, we still have a large debt to repay to the Paris Club. Even though they reduced our debt by half, the interests and capital on the loan, which dates back to 1988, amounts to K 128 billion, twice the revenue of our railways. Then there's the pension pay-

ment for 18,000 pensioners, which amounts to more than K 1 billion. We are trying to bring in more private investors as the railway business requires a lot of capital and it may take us 30 years to repay all our debts.

We've been discussing forming a joint venture with an Australian company who wants to produce crossing products and turnouts in Myanmar and sell it to Southeast Asian countries. We're also discussing a joint venture with a Japanese company who wants to take over our old factory to produce precast concrete structures. We have finished assembling 21 carriages with loans acquired from China in the previous government administration. We will complete assembling the 10 locomotives within this year.

Closing remarks

I also want to point out that our budget for 2018-2019 only placed 15 ordinary coaches for us. We requested for 500 passenger coaches and at least 800 cargo coaches. This is because before the war, we had more than 9,000 coaches but now we only have 2,000. This is even less than before the war in 1942. If we can increase our cargo transport service than our earnings from transport fees will be adequate. We may have to forgo human passengers.

In conclusion, I want to point out is that the most important point in our 12-point Transport Policy includes setting up an effective, efficient, cost-effective and modern transportation system. The market needs to be free and competitive. The Government is responsible for creating opportunities for the people to choose between methods of travel, whether by car, train or airplane. In the end, the Government will not run the trains or the motorways; they will be able to compete with each other. We are doing our utmost to ensure we achieve excellent results.

The Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker then announced that the question and answer between MP U Pe Tin and the Union Minister were to be published in the Myanmar Gazette and state media in accordance with Amyotha Hluttaw Bylaw 150.

(Translated by
Zaw Htet OO)

"Let us strive collectively to create such a nation as was envisaged by the architects of our independence: a nation practicing pure principles that guarantee justice and freedom, and equal rights that enable all our people to live in peace."

(Excerpt from the speech by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at the 2nd Anniversary of the Government on 1st April, 2018.)



Phan Khon game, a Myanmar traditional game.
PHOTO: KYI MYO THET

Border affairs minister inspects Chin State development

UNION MINISTER for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Ye Aung and Chin State Chief Minister U Salai Lian Luai inspected development works in Tedim and Reedhorda townships on 19 and 20 December.

They began their inspection with the Tedim-Manipura River Bridge (Phiton) project in Tedim Township jointly conducted by Myanmar Ministry of Border Affairs and India, where officials reported on the construction status of the bridge and Union Minister Lt-Gen Ye Aung coordinated on the long-term durability of the bridge.

Later, the Union Minister inspected the Manipura River Bridge (Twidam) and coordinated with the local people and Chin State government members to prevent overweight vehicles from crossing the bridge.

On 20 December, Union Minister Lt-Gen Ye Aung and Chin State Chief Minister U Salai Lian Luai visited a site in Tedim Town where a two-storey building for women's vocational training and general administration department office is to be built with allocation from the fiscal year 2018-2019 Union Budget Fund and drove a stake into the ground there.

The union minister also inspected the classrooms, the dormitory and dining halls. They then met with students from Border Areas National Races Youth Development Training school to provide



Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Ye Aung and Chin State Chief Minister U Salai Lian Luai meet with students of Border Area National Races Youth Development Training School in Chin State. PHOTO: MNA

guidance and coordinated on their requirements.

Next, they inspected construction projects of the Region Development Supervision Department and met with personnel from the department.

In the afternoon, they visited and inspected a two-storey school building in Basic Education High School (branch) in Reedhorda constructed with funds provided by India.

Afterwards, they visited a planned water distribution site

for Reedhorda Town where the Union Minister and Chief Minister coordinated on matters required after officials explained about the survey status. The Ministry of Border Affairs is carrying out the two main development duties in the region – infrastructure development and human resources development – not only with the government fund but also in cooperation with international organisations.

The 310-foot long 12-foot

wide Manipura River Bridge (Phiton) was constructed with K638.054 million provided by India and the 400-foot long 14-foot wide Manipura River Bridge (Twidam) was constructed with K660 million provided by the government.

The two bridges were constructed in accordance with the local road and bridge committee standards and can resist weights up to 13 tonnes. — MNA ■ (Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Missing police from 17 Dec. Maungtaw border action found killed

BORDER Guard Police forces patrolling between border Posts 41 and 42 in Maungtaw Township were ambushed at about 3:15p.m. on 17 December.

According to an initial report received, one police personnel was wounded and was treated in time at a hospital while another, Private Aung Kyaw Thet was missing in action with his BA-63 assault rifle and 120 bullets. Border Guard Police forces and Border Guards Bangladesh forces jointly cleared the area where the incident occurred on 21 December and found the body of Private Aung Kyaw Thet with gunshot wounds in his face, arm and leg near a hill inside the other country. A locally produced detonator was found underneath the body.

Foxholes were also found nearby with two empty packets of POPS brand biscuit manufactured in the other country and 17 spent MA-11 and MA-12 bullet cases. The body was carried back to this side and given a proper burial later in the day. A case has been filed with the Aung Zu police post, according to information released by Myanmar Police Force. — MNA ■ (Translated by Zaw Min)



Electrical fire breaks out in Thaton

An electrical fire broke out in Kyaikkaw Ward, Thuwunnawadi Town, Thaton Township, Mon State, on Friday night, destroying a 25'x 30' two-storey home, according to a police report. No injuries were reported.

Around 7 p.m. on 21 December, the fire started on the

ground floor of the home owned by Kaw Kyin Pu on Thukhida Street due to overheated wires, an investigator said.

With the assistance of residents and military personnel, firefighters completely controlled the flame within an hour.

The police are still investigating the case and action is being taken against the house owner under Section 285 of the Penal Code for negligence. — Khun (Winpa) ■

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

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Mandalay hosts 3rd Small-Scale Industrial Products, Myanmar Arts & Crafts exhibition

THE Mandalay Region Small-Scale Industries Department is holding the Third Small-Scale Industrial Products and Myanmar traditional Arts and Crafts Exhibition and Sale at Mingalar Mandalay Promotion Area, Chanmyathasi Township, Mandalay from 22 to 24 December. The exhibition is being held with the aim of developing small-scale industries, to connect with the small- and medium-sized enterprises, for small industry products to reach local and foreign markets, to acquire technology and financial assistance and to promote Myanmar traditional arts and crafts. At the exhibition, Mandalay Region Chief Minister Dr. Zaw Myint Maung delivered the opening speech and formally opened the exhibition.

Thereafter, the regional chief minister and responsible officials concerned visited the small industry showroom and Myanmar traditional arts and crafts, in the exhibition area.



Myanmar traditional arts and crafts seen at the exhibition in Mandalay. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

A total of 120 showrooms are exhibiting their products, which include 60 Myanmar traditional arts and crafts showrooms, 27 food showrooms, 16 consumer

and cosmetics showrooms, and 17 general industry showrooms.

The exhibition is held in conjunction with a small industry development seminar. Visitors

can also enjoy the entertainment programmes held to promote the products.—Maung Pyithu (Mandalay) ■ (Translated by Hay Mar)

Unidentified metal object falls from sky in Hkamti

A piece of metal wreckage fell from the sky around 6 a.m. on Saturday in Hkamti, Sagaing Region.

Acting on the information given by the duty-conscientious local people, the tactical operation command commander from Hkamti, the district management committee chairman, the township management committee chairman and the police checked the scene of incident and found a piece of wreckage which was 10 foot long and 3 foot wide.

The piece of the wreckage was entrusted to the re-



sponsible personnel at the airport.

No casualties or damage



was reported. — Sanay Maung (Hkamti IPRD) ■ (Translated by Hay Mar)

Men arrested for illegal timber transport in Kyaukme

FOREST authorities and township police teamed up to arrest two men transporting timber illegally, on Friday, on the Monglon-Kyaukme Road in Kyaukme Township, northern Shan State.

Acting on a tip-off, the team stopped the suspected vehicle heading to Kyaukme from Monglon in Taungnauk Village in Khomong Village-tract around 6.15 p.m. on 21 December. They discovered pieces of hardwood timber loaded onto the car and confiscated them. The seized timber and car have been kept at the township forest department.

The officials arrested the car driver, Hlaing Myo and another person onboard, who will face legal charges under the existing forest law.

Collaboration between the police and the forest department is helping eliminate illegal logging and smuggling. — Kyaukme District IPRD ■ (Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Thai govt hands over 15 Myanmar illegal migrant workers to Tachilek authorities

THE Thailand government has handed over 15 Myanmar illegal migrant workers to authorities in Tachilek, Shan State (East) through the Myanmar-Thai Friendship Bridge -2, on 22 December.

The 15 workers were welcomed by the Township General Administration Department, Immigration and Population Department, Anti-trafficking police

force, Caring and Negotiating Committee for Myanmar Citizens in Mae Sai, Thailand (CNCMC) members, Labour Department, Myitzima social organization.

Currently, authorities are making arrangements to send them back home. These workers were sent back to Tachilek by the Thai authorities because their border passes had expired and they did not possess any other

official documents.

Among the workers who have been handed over to Myanmar from 1 January to 22 December, were 1,200 workers comprising 808 men, 353 women and 39 children. They were officially handed over to the Myanmar authorities via the No. 2 Tachilek-Mae Sai Friendship Bridge.—Wai Yan Lin (IPRD) ■ (Translated by Hay Mar)

Mandalay property market recently cool with renting only

ALTHOUGH the government has changed the property tax rate, the property market is still cool in the city and suburban areas in Mandalay Region.

However, the rental market for apartments located in Chanayethazan Township and Yadanarbon market is slightly rise as more and more shops and showrooms are being opened these days.

Most of the shop owners are renting some apartments, and houses which are located on 73rd Street between 26th and 35th streets as well as on the 78th street between 26th and 38th streets in Chanayethazan Township to open mobile shops, online stores, motorcycle showrooms and auto accessories

shops.

The rental for a 20x40 foot room is around K1 million per month while for the whole house it is over K2 million per month, according to real estate agents.

The rents rose to around K500,000 for a home on 55 street between Manawhari and Mingyi Yan Naung Streets. Those families who came from other states and regions rent the homes in some wards of Chamyathazi Township located in the suburb of Mandalay.

Meanwhile, The house rents for the ground floor are around K300,000 per month, and the house rent market is active in the low-cost and affordable housing estates in Chanmyathazi Township.



The market for rented apartments located in Chanayethazan Township in Mandalay. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

The house rents for the fourth floor are K100,000 per month and only those small fam-

ilies rent such apartments. The rents for boarding rooms have also increased near Mandalay

University.—Maung Pyithu (Mandalay) ■
(Translated by Hay Mar)

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- City Mart (Junction Maw Tin)
- City Mart (Sule Square)
- City Mart (Star City - Thanlyin)
- City Mart (Waizayandar)
- City Mart (Hledan)
- City Mart (Myanmar Plaza)
- City Mart (Junction 8)
- City Mart (St. John)
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- Ocean Shwegonedine

Ocean SUPERCENTER **City Mart Supermarket** **marketplace**

Myanmar-South Korea bilateral trade up 31% in October

TRADE between Myanmar and the Republic of Korea (ROK) topped US\$74.9 million in October this year; an increase in value by \$18.13 million or 31.9 per cent over that of the same month last year, the Ministry of Commerce reported.

During the month, Myanmar's exports to the ROK reached nearly \$38 million and its imports from the East Asian country exceeded \$36 million. At this time last year, bilateral trade totalled \$56.8 million, with exports worth \$20.4 million and imports worth \$36.4 million.

In bilateral trade, Myanmar exports agricultural products, including cashew nuts, mangoes, rice, beans and pulses, and imports cosmetics, food products, electronic equipment, mobile devices and other goods.

The Myanmar-ROK trade reached its peak of over \$1.5 billion in the 2013-2014 FY. Trade between the two countries declined to \$862 million in the 2014-2015 FY and \$656 million in the 2015-2016 FY. The figure increased to \$866 million in the 2016-2017 FY.

Bilateral trade during the

six-month mini-budget period between April and September this year amounted to \$402.19 million when South Korea made investments worth \$77 million in Myanmar.

According to a report of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, South Korea's new investments in Myanmar in the first month of the current FY reached \$0.72 million. Its investment in the country last FY was worth \$253 million.—Khine Khant ■

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Mineral exports continue downward trend this fiscal year

MYANMAR'S export of mineral products in the current fiscal year 2018-2019 totalled US\$242.29 million, down by \$61 million, or over 20 per cent, as against the same period last year, according to the Myanmar's Ministry of Commerce.

From 1 October through 7 December this year, public sector exported only \$0.049 million of mineral products, while private exporters sold \$242.25 million worth of the same to international trade partners.

As compared with this time

last year, the current export value of minerals by the public sector dropped significantly by \$88.63 million. Last year, the sector exported minerals worth \$88.68 million.

Other products that saw a downward trend in export growth in the present FY included forest products and other miscellaneous items. This year saw a slight decrease in export of forest products from both sectors whereas private sector exports of other products declined to \$166 million from \$295 million.

Between April and September this year, the country earned over \$1 billion from mineral exports, increasing by \$368 million over the same period last year.

In the ministry's yearly trade report, the export values of minerals were \$897 million in the 2011-2012 FY, \$399 million in the 2012-2013 FY, \$1.339 billion in the 2013-2014 FY, \$1.498 billion in the 2014-2015 FY, \$968 million in the 2015-2016 FY, and over \$1 billion in the 2016-2017 FY.—Swe Nyein ■ (Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

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Day 3 of 'All Who Can Read Should Read' campaign in Nay Pyi Taw



Portraits of 20th century Myanmar writers on display. **PHOTO: MNA**



Adults and children reading books on display. **PHOTO: MNA**



People look on with interest at an electronic record player. **PHOTO: MNA**



Young female students browsing through books at reading campaign in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**



A child looks at a children's story book. **PHOTO: MNA**



A young girl reading a fairytale. **PHOTO: MNA**



Children and their parents reading at the reading corner. **PHOTO: MNA**

Over 70 trainees from KBC Camp, villages in Myitkyina complete TVET

FROM PAGE-1

Course completion certificates will be presented to 55 students who completed the House Keeping and Restaurant Service course, and 19 who completed the Household Wiring course, the union minister said.

The union minister stated that as per the ministry's discussion with youths in the two camps, arrangements have been made with the Kachin State Government to conduct sewing, computer, driving, motorcycle repair, car repair, mobile phone repair, beauty salon, English

speaking, snacks preparation and wiring courses. In addition to this, matriculation students in Maina (KBC) and Maina (RC), who had difficulties attending universities have been urged to attend the three schools in Yangon – jewellery welding, SITE (School for Industrial Training and Education), and SMVTI (Singapore-Myanmar Vocational Training Institute) – that has the highest job opportunities.

The Union Minister also thanked Myanmar Kindness Group and the donors profusely for providing scholarships to the three schools.

Next, Kachin State Chief Minister Dr. Khet Aung delivered a speech and Myanmar Kindness founder Daw Khin Marlar explained about the reason for cooperation.

Later, Union Minister Dr. Myo Thein Gyi, Kachin State Chief Minister Dr. Khet Aung and officials, presented course completion certificates to the attendees and certificate of honours to the donors. A Maina camp official responsible for education then delivered the words of thanks. — MNA ■ (Translated by Zaw Min)

Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Press Release 12/2018

1. The Myanmar National Human Rights Commission warmly welcomes the announcement on ceasefire and eternal peace made by the Office of the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Office on 21 December 2018.
2. At a time when the Union Government has been working with deep resolve towards not only ending the long running armed conflicts in the country but to resolve political problems through discussions using political means to achieve national reconciliation and peace, the announcement of the Office of the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief is supportive and positive.
3. At this time the Myanmar Human Rights Commission urges all ethnic armed organizations to discuss ceasefire as well as peace matters with the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre to quickly implement the eternal peace that the ethnic national races are expecting and yearning for. — Myanmar Human Rights Commission

MoHS, MNMC discuss standards for private nursing schools

FROM PAGE-1

At the meeting, Chairman of the Myanmar Medical Council Prof. Dr. S Kyaw Hla reported on the work processes undertaken by the council with the assistance of the ministry at the universities of medicine to accord medical accreditation to the universities. The council carried out initial surveys at the Defence Services Medical Academy and University of Medicine (Mandalay).

After that, Chairman of the Myanmar Medical Council Accreditation Committee Prof. Dr. Khin Maung Aye and Deputy

Chairman Prof. Dr. Marlar Than explained the work processes.

Prof. Dr. Win Win Mya and Prof. Dr. Tint Swe Latt reported on their experiences and challenges during the survey at the Defence Services Medical Academy and the University of Medicine (Mandalay).

The meeting concluded with remarks by the union minister after a discussion by the participants at the meeting.

In the afternoon, the union minister attended a ceremony to donate a Cardiac Ultrasound and ICE Module to the Cardiac Catheterization Lab of the Yan-



Meeting titled "Sharing Information on Accreditation Processes to Private Sector" being convened in Yangon. PHOTO: MNA

gon People's Hospital.

A Philips CX 50 Cardiac Ultrasound & ICE Module was donated by U Swe Hone and

Daw Min Min Thwe.

Following the ceremony, Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe inspected the preparations for

the inauguration of the five-storey expanded cancer ward at the hospital.—MNA ■ (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

Arkha ethnic tribe celebrate traditional new year in Monghsat



Arkha ethnic tribe in Monghsat Township, Shan State (East), celebrates their traditional new year festival at Kongkalar Village in Monghsat, Shan State (East) yesterday. At the ceremony, the young Arkha ethnic people entertained the guests with traditional dances. PHOTO: THAN ZAW OO (MONGHSAT DISTRICT INFORMATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT)

Shop owners protest eviction from department owned land

ON the morning of 21 December, shop owners who had set up shops on land leased from the Information and Public Relations Department (IPRD) Pyay District Office staged a demonstration against their eviction.

About 20 demonstrators demonstrated at Bogyoke statue in Pyay Shwesandaw Ward, Bogyoke Road, Township Police Force Office, Pyay National League for Democracy office and Pyay District/Township General Administration Department.

The shops to be evicted were on a 0.19 acre land owned

by IPRD in Kyaung Gyi Oo Dan ward, Pyay and a five-years lease for the shops was taken in 2013.

The shops were to be dismantled in 2019 but were kept on under compassionate grounds for seven years until 31 March 2015.

As plans were made to utilise the land for department works, rent was no longer collected starting from 1 April 2015 and shop owners were already notified five times via a letter, three times via a meeting and requested to evict several times, it is learnt.

Shop owners submitted an appeal to the Ministry of Construction and the Appeal Board had assessed the matter. As per the legal advice of the Union Attorney General Office, Legal Advice Department, the appeal was rejected on 7 December 2018.

Shop owners were presented with notices on 23 June 2018 and 15 December 2018. As complications can arise, IPRD will conduct the eviction of the shops according to the 1955 Government Building Eviction Act, it is learnt.—MNA ■ (Translated by Zaw Min)

Moving forward with genuine loving-kindness

THE Tatmadaw plays an important role in the national peace process. At the private meeting commemorating the third anniversary of the NCA (Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement), the Commander-in-Chief announced that the “Tatmadaw is committed to completing the peace process in 2020 and to achieving eternal peace desired by the people.”

The Tatmadaw reiterated this pledge once more in a special announcement on the ceasefire and eternal peace issued on 21st December, 2018. This is good news for the public and the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre (NRPC) and they also issued a press release welcoming the Tatmadaw’s announcement.

It is important to hold discussions when conducting the peace process to address the mutual concerns that exist between the Tatmadaw and the EAOs on military matters ...

The Union Government is strengthening the ceasefire with 10 Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs) that have signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) and is conducting political discussions in stages towards achieving the basic principles that are the basic foundations for establishing a Democratic Federal Union. At the same time, it is striving for the participation of eight EAOs that had not signed the NCA in the political discussions. Therefore, the Tatmadaw’s announcement is quite welcome during this period, as it puts loving-kindness forward as it invites the eight EAOs that have not signed the NCA, moving forward to realise the nationwide ceasefire and eternal peace.

The National Reconciliation and Peace Centre will continue to strive for strengthening the ceasefire with the 10 EAOs that had signed the NCA and to achieve political agreements with them. It will also strive for ensuring the participation of the eight EAOs that have not signed the NCA in the political dialogues of the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong. The Tatmadaw’s efforts in inviting the eight EAO non-signatories to the NCA is a strong action for eternal peace.

Achieving the ceasefire is of paramount importance for creating eternal peace. We invite all EAOs, with loving-kindness, to sign the NCA and take part in the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong, so that the whole nation can become peaceful and stable, and we can establish a democratic federal union.

It is important to hold discussions when conducting the peace process to address the mutual concerns that exist between the Tatmadaw and the EAOs on military matters so that the nation’s expectations are met and the wishes of the ethnic citizens over the years can be fulfilled. The present period is one of celebration for independence and endeavours are churned out with goodwill. With the Tatmadaw’s announcement that it will cease all its region-wise military operations from 21 December, 2018, to 30 April, 2019, it is the right opportunity for ethnic armed organisations to coordinate and discuss the ceasefire and peace matters with the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre so that eternal peace can be achieved, and a democratic federal union can be established soon.

The Essence of Independence

Hailing 71st Anniversary of Independence Day

By Maung Nyane Aye



The first independence day: Thakin Nu sworn in as the first Prime Minister along with his cabinet ministers by the first President Sao Shwe Thaik.

IN fact, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar is an independent and sovereign nation, upholding and cherishing with justice, independence and equality.

Each and every citizen of the Union enjoys justice in social relationship, justice in doing business, justice in political affairs, independence in expression, independence in belief, independence in faith, independence in consumption, independence in organizing, and independence in activity. These are the essence of independence.

Born many years later in post independent period of Myanmar, we fully understand the essence of independence. When someone softly or loudly utters the word “Independence....Independence”, we always noted with seriousness on the independence, equality and justice that rush into our mind.

However, we must exactly understand in the context of reference term and literary usage as well as in realistic ways on the meaning of independence in struggle, independence in value, independence in flavor; independence in definition, independence in aspiration and independence in duty. It is really a necessity that we should study the thorough meaning of independence as much as possible.

Whatever the theme or subject may be; only the practical approach could bring the accurate and right understanding of that topic. However, most of those elders and the war veterans who understand and knew about the independence in person have passed away over time.

On our part, we are the mere inheritors of the knowledge about the independence from others or from the documents. We actually need to know what exactly the essence of independence is about.

In fact, we are enjoying the fruits of independence whether we understand or otherwise. We must appreciate and thankful to those elders, patriots and war veterans who had struggled for regaining independence, but unfortunately missed the opportunity enjoying it.

At the moment, we are residing in the independent and sovereign nation as a free citizen. Such joy and happiness of independence is not created by Holy God nor does it come to existence from

elsewhere.

It is the pragmatic outcome from the collective endeavor and strong struggle of national leader Bogvoke Aung San, other national leaders, unknown patriots, and nation loving people.

Obligation and duty has landed on our shoulders to cherish and value the independence that had been fought and achieved through flesh, blood and bone by many people sacrificing lives and time.

In this world, following the Second World War, many countries stood up as independent nations one after another from the colonial status of subjugation.

Nation building endeavor were exerted by the people through unity from the rubble and burning ash being hit hard from the effect of war with the spirit of independence, aspiration of independence. We are able to step on the right track of democratic road as we have aspired for the greater good of the people.

During the era of technological and industrial development, we are on a par with other countries in the international arena as we worked in unity. Democratic transition is at the cross road in our path, and therefore, we are at the door way of democratic destination. Gradually, other remaining

countries are also coming nearer to their aspired goals.

Unfortunately, following the independence of the nation, all our strengths in the country divided and ripped apart. The road to democracy and the aspiration in building the nation were lost

Now is the time to start taking steps towards democratic goals that are appropriate for the people of the country.

due to ideological diversity and formation of different grouping.

For many decades, the people were under the rule of dictatorship, and that the dictator never termed themselves as tyrant. On the face value, they may be pretending as the good leaders working for the interest of the people, but in reality, they got hold of the supreme power with greed. The loyal people who loved and cherished democracy were watching the dictatorship, and revolt against the tyrannical system.

The people along with the leaders who loved democracy have

had to wait for (30) long years, and fought for social equality. During the era of absolute monarchy, nationalism and patriotism grew fast enough as they wanted independence. However, due to lack of knowledge and unsophisticated status, the independence, sov-

the methods and process in cherishing the value of independence.

Now is the time to start taking steps towards democratic goals that are appropriate for the people of the country.

Being enveloped by the opposing elements of the democratic norms, such as that of the disunity, the antagonism, and the roots of tyranny, we had encountered colonialists for (100) years and added the bitterness with (70) years of tyranny.

It is not to be surprised when our nation was totally left behind in the international arena, and that we are in limbo on the road to democracy, facing challenges in the democratic transition.

Fight is going on against the enemy of the democratic forces, while the anti-democratic hurdles such as thorns and spikes are being cleared away. Control mechanism and guiding principles are being designed not to make the democracy road dwindled, as we are walking on an elevated tight rope. Now, we are enjoying the comfort of independence due to the sacrifice of our predecessors with flesh, blood and bone.

Born together with the regaining of independence, the civil war and armed conflicts remained unending in the nation until today.

The questions arise such as that of the ways and means in paying back the gratitude to the national leaders and the people who fought the independence; that of

mentation of such destination and goal. With that we must pay back the gratitude of our predecessors.

Just taking satisfaction over the regaining of independence is not enough, and that we need more results that fit the status of the independent country such as that of genuine democratic system.

Those who fought for regaining independence had missed the comfort of independence, but we are enjoying such benefits of independence.

Striving ahead, we need to implement equal development of the people, socio-economic improvement of the people as these are the goals of democratic aspiration.

Regaining independence (71) years ago, we are yet to arrive at the democratic destination, and that the independent citizens are duty bound to choose the right path with parallel strides. Only then, the aim of independence and the value of independence might agree and correspond with one other.

Wayward steps towards independence goals might jeopardize our destination and distorted its magnificence. We were torn apart with the dignified independence for a term of life long period, which could be termed as a great loss.

It is therefore, the independent citizens of the Union of Myanmar must endeavor to the best of their ability in acquiring deserving benefits in line with proper independence in full swing and live a life by ways of decent and respectable manners.

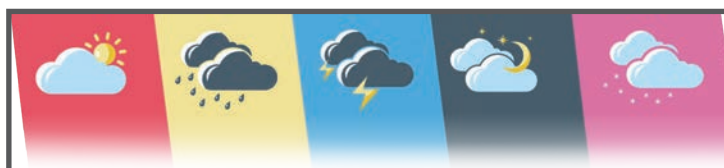
The author of this article would like to take the opportunity in urging to all people to walk straight ahead on the democracy road, and that things are to be carried out in all fairness. With a view to enhancing peace, prosperity and unity of the whole nation, the people are urged to endeavor through honesty, integrity and truthfulness for the greater good of the nation.

Only then, we would be termed as dutiful and devoted to the aspiration of our forerunners who sacrifice flesh, blood and bone in the struggle for regaining independence, and at the same time, we would be on the right track towards comprehensive democratic aim and objective.

Translated by UMT (Ahlron)

71st Anniversary Independence Day National Objectives

1. All National Ethnic Races to defend and protect with “collective strength” to ensure Non-disintegration of the Union, Non-disintegration of the Unity of National Ethnic Races and Perpetuation of National Sovereignty.
2. For the emergence of a Democratic Federal Union, to strive towards creating a suitable Constitution for the State in accordance with democratic standards.
3. To effectively combat and protect against the use of drugs and narcotic substances which can harm and erode the health and character of all citizens.
4. To continuously strive with determined effort for the balanced and equitable development of all states and regions.
5. To assist from all fronts the Union Government’s efforts for private sector development and the emergence of a fully-developed market economy.



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Saturday 22nd December, 2018)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is generally fair over the North Bay and partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 23rd December, 2018: Light rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Yangon, Ayeyarwady and Taninthayi Regions, Kayin and Mon States. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be generally fair in Naypyitaw, Lower Sagaing and Magway Regions, Rakhine State 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 in off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in Upper Sagaing Region, Kachin, Shan and Chin States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 23rd December, 2018: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 23rd December, 2018: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 23rd December, 2018: Generally fair weather.

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US Fed could rethink rate hikes as Trump trade wars drag on economy

WASHINGTON (United States)—The US central bank sent a strong signal on Friday that it would be willing to reconsider expected interest rate hikes amid new data showing President Donald Trump's multi-front trade wars are dragging on the economy and shaking up investors.

The message, from the senior Federal Reserve official with the closest links to US financial markets, sent the Dow Jones Industrial Average surging 300 points. But the index later turned negative once again, and closed with yet another steep decline, its worst week in 10 years. "I think we are hearing something important for markets and that is a concern around risks to the economy and potential slow-down," New York Federal Reserve Bank President John Williams said on Friday on CNBC.

He stressed that the Fed is listening to the fears about the risks and will "be ready to reassess and re-evaluate our views and our policy stance." It was a remarkable comment coming just two days after the Fed raised the key borrowing rate on Wednesday and signaled it will continue to hike next year, albeit at a slower pace, with only two increases projected. Economist Chris Low lambasted the Fed's "epic post-meeting communications bungle," and cited



Traders work on the floor at the closing bell of the Dow Industrial Average at the New York Stock Exchange on 19 December, 2018 in New York. PHOTO: AFP

the "glaring omission" of the Fed failing to recognize a global manufacturing slowdown, and continuing to believe the labor market is the main factor behind inflation. The Fed has continued to forecast strong growth, which would support their case for tightening monetary policy, but the expected inflation spurt and rise in wages have not materialized.

New data Friday showed the Fed's preferred inflation index slowed to 1.8 per cent in November, below the central bank's target. "It's hard to imagine anyone would think it's acceptable to signal three rate hikes when inflation

is below target," Low said, noting the Fed forecast see two hikes in 2019 and one in 2020.

Trump effect?

Williams tried to correct the market impression that two interest rate increases are set in stone for next year, highlighting a slight change of language in the policy statement issued on Wednesday. The Fed's November statement said rate increases were expected, while now it "judges that some further gradual" hikes are in store, which Williams said "is not a commitment or promise in any way." "Clearly the Fed is changing its

tone and it's getting a little more dovish following the market reaction this week," said Adam Sarhan of 50 Park Investments.

"The Fed is blinking."

Of course there were many who criticized the Fed for not raising interest rates fast enough in the past two years. While the Fed continues to forecast solid growth, new government data released Friday revealed that falling exports and slower consumer spending and business investment are putting the brakes on economic growth in the second half of the year, while inflation is again falling. — AFP ■

Lao exports expected to grow next year

VIENTIANE—The Lao Ministry of Industry and Commerce is hopeful that exports will continue to grow next year despite the challenges faced in achieving this year's target. According to a report submitted by the ministry to the National Assembly, the Lao government anticipates that next year's exports will be worth 5.5 billion US dollars, local daily Vientiane Times reported on Friday.

The new export target was set despite the fact that Laos was able to achieve only 78 per cent of this year's target, according to a November report by the Ministry of Planning and Investment citing data from the commerce ministry. In 2018, the government projected that the export value would reach 5 billion US dollars, but over the first nine months of this year, goods worth only 3.9 billion US dollars were exported, the report said. It is still unclear whether the government will achieve this year's export target. The government has lowered the GDP growth forecast after the country was hit by widespread flooding, which affected productivity.

According to another government report submitted to the National Assembly, the construction and operation of 12 hydro-power plants will be completed in 2019. A large proportion of the power generated by these plants will be exported. —Xinhua ■

Dow, Nasdaq close worst week since late 2008

NEW YORK (United States)—Wall Street suffered a third straight rout on Friday, ending its worst week since late 2008 at the start of the global financial crisis in a sell-off prompted by worries over trade wars and a possible government shutdown.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average finished with a loss of 1.8 per cent or more than 400 points, at 22,445.37, taking losses for the week to nearly seven per cent.

The broad-based S&P 500 slumped 2.1 per cent to 2,416.58, while the tech-rich Nasdaq Composite Index slid 3.0 percent to close at 6,332.99. The declines pushed the Nasdaq into a "bear" market, meaning a retreat of 20 per cent from its peak.

The losses came as Washington teetered towards a likely government shutdown as US President Donald Trump dug in on threats to close the government if congressional Democrats continue to refuse his demand for funds to build a wall on the border of Mexico.

Thousands of US government employees could be furloughed right before the end-of-year holidays without a paycheck if Trump and congressional Democrats fail to strike a deal by midnight (0500 GMT).

With that deadline looming, investors received another jolt in the final hour of trading when White House advisor Peter Navarro delivered hardline comments on the ongoing trade talks with China.

"China is basically trying to steal the future of Japan, the US and Europe, by going after our technology," Navarro, a longtime China hawk, told the Japan's Nikkei news agency in an interview conducted Thursday but published Friday. — AFP ■

Furniture retailer Otsuka Kagu agrees to tie up with Chinese firm

TOKYO—Struggling furniture retailer Otsuka Kagu Ltd said on Friday it has agreed to a business tie-up with a Chinese company in the same sector, as it looks to boost sales in the world's second-largest economy and turn its fortunes around.

The upscale furniture retailer based in Tokyo said it will also consider a capital alliance with Beijing Easyhome Yundi Huixin Retail Chain Co and provide customer service know-how to the company backed by Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba Group Holdings Ltd.

The cooperation with Easyhome, which operates more than 200 furniture stores across China and has been expanding online sales with the help of Alibaba, was endorsed at an Otsuka Kagu board meeting Friday afternoon.



Photo taken on 14 August, 2018, shows a building in Tokyo that houses a showroom of furniture retailer Otsuka Kagu Ltd. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

The Japanese company has been streamlining its domestic retail outlets to cut costs and aims to boost its online sales through the deal with Easyhome. Otsuka Kagu said it is still assessing the impact of the tie-up on its earnings.

The Japanese retailer,

which posted a net loss in the nine months to September for the fourth consecutive year, had been looking for a business and capital partner, with candidates including home electronics chains Yodobashi Camera Co and Yamada Denki Co. —Kyodo News ■

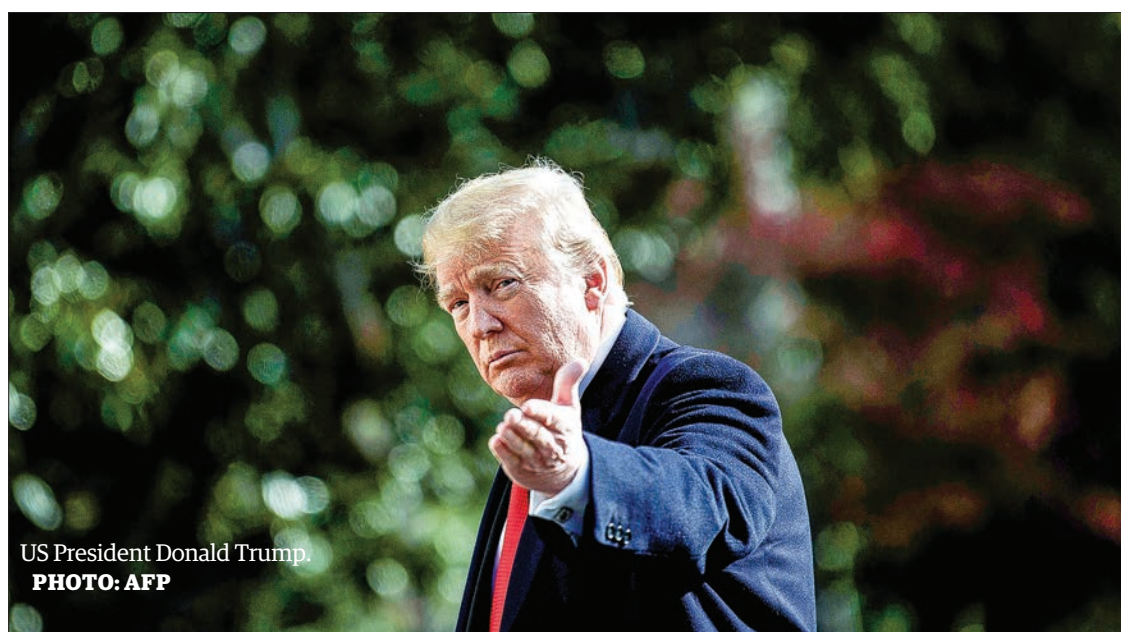
Trump more and more alone as another key advisor departs

WASHINGTON (United States)—As he prepares to begin his third year as the president of the world's top superpower, Donald Trump finds himself increasingly isolated.

One by one, quietly or with some noise, the heavyweight advisors and aides who have kept his worst impulses in check are abandoning ship or being kicked out. Belittling and oneupmanship, impulsive decisions taken without consultation and a White House seemingly in constant chaos are fueling concern among America's allies about a mercurial president operating largely alone.

National Security Advisor HR McMaster, White House chief of staff John Kelly and Defence Secretary Jim Mattis, all former generals, had been seen by many as the steady hands advising a man who took office in January 2017 without any political, diplomatic or military experience. McMaster is gone and Kelly and Mattis are on their way out the door. For Mattis, the four-star Marine general who was often referred to as the last "adult in the room," Trump's abrupt decision this week to pull US troops out of war-torn Syria was a step too far.

The tone of his resignation letter was courteous but the underlying message of disapproval was clear and it was heard by



friends and foes of the president alike and in capitals around the globe. "This is scary," said Democratic Senator Mark Warner of Virginia. "Secretary Mattis has been an island of stability amidst the chaos of the Trump administration." It wasn't just Democrats who were expressing concern.

"This is a sad day," said Republican Senator Ben Sasse of Nebraska. "Secretary Mattis was giving advice the president needs to hear." For Richard Haass, president of the Council on Foreign Relations, "Mattis clearly determined that he could no longer make enough of a difference to justify remaining part of an administration he so disagreed with."

'He makes the decision'

Rex Tillerson, the former ExxonMobil chief executive who was unceremoniously fired as secretary of state in March after a little over a year in the job, recently made his concerns known after months of silence about his former boss. Trump is "pretty undisciplined," Tillerson said, adding that he "doesn't like to read, doesn't read briefing reports, doesn't like to get into the details of a lot of things."

The stream of departures from the Trump administration has not been met with concern from everyone—many of his hard-core supporters have long felt that some of his advisors were putting the brakes on a presi-

dent who prides himself on his instincts and keeping his campaign promises at all costs.

"Getting out of Syria was no surprise," Trump tweeted about a move which stunned many members of the coalition battling the Islamic State group. "I've been campaigning on it for years." But many political and foreign policy analysts expressed concern about the potential danger of having a president surrounded only by "yes" men. Gary Cohn, a former Goldman Sachs banker who stood up to the president on several occasions as director of the National Economic Council, left in the spring and was replaced by television commentator Larry Kudlow. — AFP ■

Two arrested over London airport drone disruption: police

LONDON (United Kingdom)—Two people have been arrested in connection with the "criminal use of drones" at London Gatwick Airport, police said on Saturday, after three days of disruption in which tens of thousands of people missed their flights.

"As part of our ongoing investigations into the criminal use of drones which has se-

verely disrupted flights in and out of Gatwick Airport, Sussex Police made two arrests just after 10:00pm (2200 GMT) on 21 December", the force's Superintendent James Collis said.

Drones were first sighted hovering around Britain's second-busiest air hub on Wednesday, grinding the runway to a standstill and causing chaos

for more than 120,000 people in the run-up to Christmas.

A statement released on Sussex Police force's website said the probe was ongoing, and officers were using "a range of tactics" to "build resilience to detect and mitigate further incursions from drones". "We continue to urge the public, passengers and the wider community

around Gatwick to be vigilant and support us by contacting us immediately if they believe they have any information that can help us in bringing those responsible to justice," the statement added. "Every line of enquiry will remain open to us until we are confident that we have mitigated further threats to the safety of passengers." — AFP ■

Stowaways threaten cargo ship crew off UK coast

LONDON (United Kingdom)—Four stowaways armed with iron bars are threatening the crew of a cargo ship off the English coast and demanding to be taken ashore, a spokesman for the ship owner said.

Paul Kyprianou, spokesman for Grimaldi Lines, said they were discovered four days ago after the Grande Tema ship had set sail from Lagos in Nigeria, and had been detained.

But earlier Friday they managed to free themselves and the 27 crew members have since locked themselves in on the bridge.

"They have been threatening the crew since the morning..." Kyprianou said of the stowaways. "We are still waiting for the authorities to intervene."

Kyprianou said the crew were in direct contact with Essex Police and the British coastguard and were not in danger.

"We continue to deal with a complex incident on board a vessel," Essex Police said in a statement.

The ship is currently near the coast of the port town of Margate, according to the MarineTraffic tracker.

The Italian-flagged ship, carrying containers and machinery, was bound for the port of Tilbury in Essex, east of London. — AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

US govt shutdown begins after no deal between lawmakers, Trump

WASHINGTON (United States)—The US government began a Christmastime shutdown early Saturday, after Congress adjourned without passing a federal spending bill or addressing President Donald Trump's demand for money to build a border wall.

Operations for several key agencies ceased at 12:01 am on Saturday (5:01 GMT), despite last-ditch talks that continued on Capitol Hill between White House officials and congressional leaders in both parties. —AFP ■

US aircraft carrier enters Persian Gulf

TEHRAN—A US aircraft carrier sailed into the Persian Gulf on Friday, becoming the first since America's withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal in May, the Associated Press reported. The arrival of the USS John C Stennis has broken the longest carrier absence in the volatile region since at least the 11 September terror attacks on the United States, it said. It also came as Iranian officials have returned to repeatedly threatening to close off the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which a third of all oil traded by sea passes. Iranian Revolutionary Guard vessels shadowed the Stennis and its strike group, at one point launching rockets away from it and flying a drone nearby, according to the AP. —Kyodo News ■

23 dead in Nepal student bus crash

KATHMANDU (Nepal)—Twenty-three people died in western Nepal when a bus carrying school students and teachers back from a botanical field trip plunged into a gorge, police said. The students were aged mostly between 16 and 20. Two teachers and the driver also died in the accident early evening on Friday in a remote area. The vehicle was carrying 37 people, with 22 killed at the scene and another in a nearby hospital. Fourteen people were treated for injuries. "Our preliminary investigation shows the cause of the incident was speed," police officer Bel Bahadur Pandey told AFP. —AFP ■

Sino-India ties actively moving forward: President Xi



India Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

BEIJING—Chinese President Xi Jinping on Friday said Sino-India relations are “actively” moving forward with deepening mutual trust and cooperation, as the foreign ministers of the two countries held extensive talks in New Delhi under a newly established framework.

In his message of congratulations to the first meeting of ‘High Level Mechanism on Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges’ being held in New Delhi, Xi said China and India are both ancient civilisations boasting long history and splendid culture.

The two civilizations, with close exchanges and mutual learning from the ancient time, have both made significant contributions to the human development and progress, he said.

“Today, China-India relations are actively moving for-

ward, with mutual political trust deepening, practical cooperation accelerating, people-to-people and cultural exchanges flourishing, and bilateral coordination in international and regional affairs sustaining,” state-run Xinhua news agency quoted Xi as saying. It has been proved by practice that a good bilateral relationship benefits not only both countries but also the whole world, Xi added.

The Chinese president also expressed the hope for the two sides to make proper use of the high-level people-to-people exchange mechanism.

With the help of the profound implication in the two Oriental civilizations, China and India should promote the communication between the minds of the two peoples and forge a closer development partnership, Xi said. —PTI ■

Porky peak: Manila pig roasters in Christmas frenzy

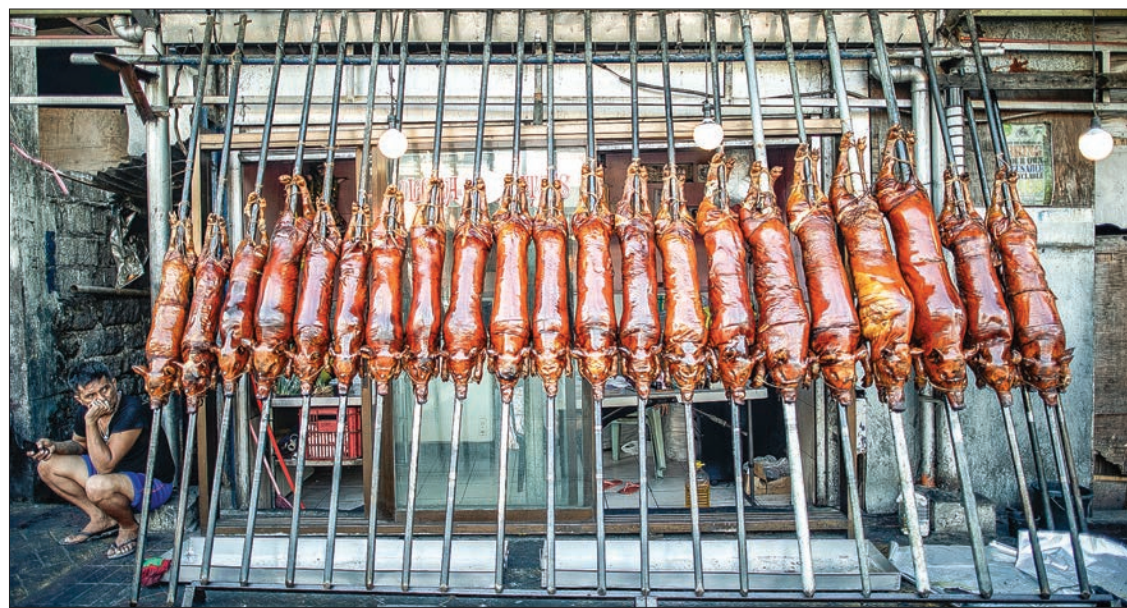
MANILA (Philippines)—Row upon row of pigs on bamboo spits sizzle slowly over orange embers in Manila just days before Christmas, peak season for the Philippines’ pig roasting “lechoneros”. Smoke rises day and night from their cooking pits in the La Loma area, which brands itself a hub for producing one of the nation’s favourite foods: “lechon”, or roast suckling pig. Crews shovel mounds of charcoal into neat rows under the pigs as they cook, gradually darkening into a crispy, caramel-colour.

“In December the demand for pork spikes, starting on the 15th up to the 31st,” said 44-year-old Arturo Ayapana, who has been a lechonero for 15 years. “We start (cooking) at dawn.”

Pork is one of the majority-Catholic country’s year-round staples, a taste introduced during 400 years as a Spanish colony—but consumption goes

into overdrive for the holidays. In La Loma, the roads and sidewalks are darkened and slippery in spots from the grease dripping from cooked pigs, which are hauled between roasting pits and sales stalls on hand carts. Squealing, still muddy pigs arrive by the truck load, before being slaughtered and skewered on bamboo poles for cooking. They get a final dunking in seasoning before the roasting begins.

Over the next several hours they are slowly spun over the blazing coals by a mechanical crank system that is still turned by hand in many of the pits. A whole roast pig, which weighs at least 15 kilograms (33 pounds), sells for about \$150. That is a small fortune for many in the Philippines, where nearly a quarter of the country lives on less than \$2 a day. —AFP ■



This picture taken on 21 December, 2018 shows roasted pigs displayed for sale in Manila. **PHOTO: AFP**

Japan, Russia foreign chiefs may meet in mid-January ahead of summit

TOKYO—Japan and Russia are making arrangements for their foreign ministers to meet on 14 January in Moscow to lay the groundwork for a summit intended to accelerate peace treaty talks, Japanese government sources said on Friday. Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono and his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov were tasked earlier this month with overseeing the forthcoming negotiations.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed in November to step up talks toward concluding a post-war peace treaty based on a 1956 bilateral accord, raising expectations of progress in the long-standing territorial dispute over islands off Hokkaido in northern Japan. Abe and Putin are expected to meet in Moscow before the Japanese premier visits Switzerland for the annual World Economic Forum in Davos, the sources said. The territorial dispute has prevented



Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono (r) and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov shake hands before their talks in Tokyo on 21 March, 2018. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

the two countries from signing a peace treaty. The 1956 accord refers to the handover from the former Soviet Union to Japan of Shikotan and the Habomai islet group following the conclusion of a treaty. The other disputed islands are Etorofu and Kunashi-

ri. At a press conference, Putin questioned on Thursday the level of Japan’s sovereignty, citing the fact that reclamation work to build a replacement facility for a US military base in Okinawa has been progressing despite local opposition. —Kyodo News ■

Goldman Sachs CEO defends bank in 1MDB scandal

NEW YORK (United States)—The head of Goldman Sachs defended the investment bank’s handling of the scandal-plagued Malaysian fund 1MDB on Friday, saying much criticism of the financial giant was unfair.

“I cannot stress enough how integrity is a cornerstone of our culture,” newly-installed Chief Executive David Solomon said in a year-end message to employees. He stressed that the bank was working with authorities to bring to justice the culprits behind a scandal that has roiled Malaysia. Goldman helped 1MDB to issue \$6.5 billion of bonds but Kuala Lumpur accuses the bank and its former employees of misappropriating \$2.7 billion during the process.

Malaysia on Monday filed criminal charges against Goldman Sachs and two of its former employees over the alleged theft of funds used to buy everything from yachts to artwork. The fraud

that involved former Malaysian leader Najib Razak, contributed to the last government’s shock defeat at May elections. Former Goldman banker Ng Chong Hwa was formerly charged in the case on Wednesday. Malaysia has also taken steps extradite Ng to the United States to face US criminal charges. Solomon said he was limited on how much to share on the ongoing probe, but defended the bank’s role in the scandal, which he said had “outraged” him. “While we understand the anger and skepticism, we do not believe that the criticism directed at us accurately reflects who we were then or who we are now,” Solomon said, according to the transcript of the video message obtained by AFP and confirmed by a Goldman spokesman.

“We believe our culture and our processes around our due diligence and compliance was strong at the time, and is even stronger today.” —AFP ■

With emotional goodbye, Germany shuts last black coal mine

BOTTROP (Germany)—Germany closed its last black coal mine on Friday, paying an emotional tribute to a 200-year-old industry that once fuelled the country's economic growth but lost the battle against cheaper foreign competitors. After the remaining 1,500 workers of the Prosper-Haniel mine in Bottrop clocked off from their final shift, a group of seven workers exited the mine's elevator carrying the symbolic last chunk of "black gold".

Veteran pitman Juergen Jakubeit, wearing faded overalls and a black-sooted hard hat, then handed the block of coal to German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, who accepted it with the traditional miners' greeting of "Glueck auf" or "Good luck". "A difficult day isn't it?" said Steinmeier. "A very difficult day," replied Jakubeit. In a ceremony carried live on television and attended by 500 people, including European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker, Steinmeier said the closure of the 150-year-old deep-shaft colliery marked "the end of an era" in western Germany's industrial Ruhr heartland.

"This is more than a piece of coal, this is history," Steinmeier told the crowd, several of whom wiped away tears. "This is a day of mourning for you but I assure you this day has moved many people across Germany." A mining choir then sang the miners' anthem "Steigerlied" while across the region local churches marked the occasion with special services. Although the closure comes amid a growing environmental outcry against coal, the dirtiest fossil fuel, it wasn't pollution concerns but cheaper imports from abroad that sounded the mine's death knell.

'Thanks, buddy'

With its own vernacular, songs, football clubs and masses dedicated to the miners' patron saint Barbara, mining is woven deeply into the fabric of daily life in the Ruhr region. On Saturday, players from the Bundesliga club Borussia Dortmund will pay homage by wearing the message "Danke, Kumpel" on their shirts, which means both "thanks, buddy" and "thanks, miner". In a reminder of the dangers of the job, a 29-year-old man died in a recently shuttered mine in the same state of North Rhine-Westphalia on Monday, where dismantling work is ongoing.

The industrial mechanic died from injuries suffered after getting trapped by a heavy door. And 13 miners were killed in a methane explosion in a coal mine in the Czech Republic on Thursday. At Friday's ceremony, guests held two moments of silence to mourn the dead comrades. —AFP ■

Rare albino orangutan released back into the wild

JAKARTA (Indonesia)—The world's only known albino orangutan has been released back into the jungle more than a year after she was found emaciated and bloody in a remote corner of Borneo, an Indonesian NGO said Friday. Environmentalists rescued "Alba" from a cage where she was being kept as a pet by villagers in Central Kalimantan in April last year. She was found with dry blood smeared around her nose—the result of her violent capture—and weighed just 8 kilogrammes, the Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation (BOSF) said.

The blue-eyed primate, covered in fuzzy white hair, was on Wednesday returned to the wild with her best friend, Kika, after leaving their reha-



bilitation centre. "So far she's showing good signs of adapting," Nico Hermanu, a BOSF spokesman, told AFP. "She's been climbing trees as high as 35 metres (about 115 feet) and has been eating fruit from the forest." Kika and Alba—who is six years old

and now 28 kilos—will be monitored by conservation teams at Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park.

The rescue is a rare spot of bright news for the critically endangered species, which has seen its habitat shrink drastically over the past few decades

largely due to the destruction of forests for logging, paper, palm oil and mining.

The population of orangutans in Borneo has plummeted from about 288,500 in 1973 to about 100,000 today, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature. —AFP ■

Cold wave sweeps Pb, Hry; Karnal coldest at zero deg C

CHANDIGARH—The mercury dipped to zero degrees Celsius in Karnal on Saturday as the cold wave sweeping most parts of Haryana and Punjab for over a week continued unabated.

The minimum temperatures in the two states were several notches below the normal.

Karnal in Haryana recorded a low of zero degrees Celsius, seven degrees below the normal and the lowest in the two states, a Meteorological Department official said.

Among other places in Haryana, Hisar, Ambala and Narnaul shivered at 2.7, 4.6 and 2 degrees Celsius respectively, up to five degrees below the normal.

Rohtak, Bhiwani and Sirsa recorded minimum temperatures of 3.8, 5.5 and 3.8 degrees Celsius respectively.

In Punjab, Adampur continued to be the coldest place in the state for the second consecutive day at 0.2 degrees Celsius. —PTI ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V YANTRA BHUM VOY. NO. (1017 W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V YANTRA BHUM VOY. NO. (1017 W/E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23-12-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P/M.I.T.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 REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V TORRES STRAIT VOY. NO. (1825/1826)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V TORRES STRAIT VOY. NO. (1825/1826) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23-12-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V KUO HSIUNG VOY. NO. (1095 S/N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KUO HSIUNG VOY. NO. (1095 S/N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23-12-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V IAL 001 VOY. NO. (018 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V IAL 001 VOY. NO. (018 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23-12-2018 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.

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

Phone No: 2301185

More foreigners see typical country life in Japan through farm stays



Jin Qiyang (r) experiences carrot harvesting in Ueda, Nagano Prefecture on 25 October, 2018. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

NAGANO (Japan)—An increasing number of foreign visitors are taking part in farm-stay programmes in Japan to get a taste of typical country life in areas without any particular sightseeing spots. The popularity of stays in traditional farming villages, which has helped attract some overseas travelers away from big cities such as Tokyo, is expected to help revitalize local communities amid the growing overall number of visitors to Japan. The annual number of foreign travelers to Japan has already reached the 30 million milestone for the first time in 2018 and the country aims to welcome 40 million foreign visitors by 2020.

In late October, when tree leaves began to take on autumnal colors, two workers for Chinese travel magazines were having fun harvesting vegetables such as carrots and green peppers at

a farm in the Takeshi district of Ueda, Nagano Prefecture.

At night, they enjoyed eating tempura made from the vegetables they had picked earlier in the day, and sat up late playing “hanafuda” card games and enjoying other Japanese traditional pastimes at the farmhouse.

“We had a good time chatting with farmers, something that we can’t enjoy at ordinary sightseeing places,” said Jin Qiyang, 34, one of the two Chinese visitors.

“Chinese people are curious to understand Japanese culture deeply. I suppose there is a strong demand for farm stays,” Jin added. The two were invited to the area by the Japanese government, Nagano prefectural government and a local tourism promotion body. Tranquil mountainous farming communities like the Takeshi district, about 150 kilometers northwest of cen-

tral Tokyo, or about a three-hour drive, can be found across the country. “At first, it never crossed my mind that so many people would come here all the way from other countries,” said Ichiro Kobayashi, 67, president of Shinshu Seishun-mura, a local firm operating farm-stay programs in Takeshi.

The company has accepted Japanese students on school trips at contracted farmhouses in the area since 2002 and foreign tourists since 2005. The number of overseas guests has been on the rise, hitting 2,322 and accounting for about 40 per cent of total visitors in 2016. Charging 8,000 yen (\$71) per person per night with dinner and breakfast included, overseas travelers from 20 countries and territories such as China, Taiwan and Australia have joined the company’s programmes.—Kyodo News ■

Spiegel apologises in cover story on faked news scandal

BERLIN (Germany)—German news weekly *Der Spiegel* publishes on Saturday a 23-page special report on how one of its award-winning reporters faked stories for years, dealing a blow to media credibility.

Claas Relotius, 33, resigned after admitting to making up stories and inventing protagonists in more than a dozen articles in the magazine’s print and online editions. The US ambassador to Germany on Friday called for an independent investigation in a letter to the weekly, pointing that many of the stories Relotius fabricated focussed on American life.

Since the scandal revealed by the magazine on Wednesday, other mainstream German outlets such as *Die Welt* and *Die Zeit* which once used Relotius as a freelancer, have also begun poring through articles that he wrote for them. “Tell it like it is,” wrote Spiegel on its latest magazine cover page, an allusion to the publication’s motto by its founder

and transparent investigation”, the statement added. Relotius had written for the magazine for seven years and won numerous awards for his investigative journalism, including CNN Journalist of the Year in 2014. The cheating came to light after a colleague who worked with him on a story along the US-Mexican border raised suspicions about some of the details in Relotius’s reporting.

The colleague eventually tracked down two alleged sources quoted extensively by Relotius in the article, which was published in November. Both said they had never met Relotius. Spiegel said it was “lucky that one of our employees managed to uncover this case.” But for others, the damage was already done, particularly at a time when disinformation campaigns are posing a constant challenge to the credibility of mainstream media.

“The losers are all the journalists in the country who carry out their research in difficult or



(FILES) In this file photo taken on 29 November, 2012, the logo of German news weekly “Der Spiegel” is pictured at the magazine’s headquarters in Hamburg, northern Germany. PHOTO: AFP

Rudolf Augstein that also hangs at the entrance of its headquarters in Hamburg. In its editorial, the magazine said the scam, involving subjects including Syrian orphans and a Holocaust survivor, is the “worst thing that can happen to an editorial team”. It also apologised for the mistake and promised to “do everything to boost our credibility again.”

US concern

The US embassy in Berlin on Friday expressed concern at the news. “The recent revelations of completely fabricated stories and fraudulent details in ‘Der Spiegel’ over the last 7 years are troubling to the US Embassy, particularly because several of these fake stories focused on US policies and certain segments of the American people,” it said. Ambassador Richard Grenell had written to the weekly’s management calling for “an independent

dangerous circumstances, as well as members of the editorial teams, who check through texts for quality and accuracy,” said *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* in an editorial. It noted that politicians in the far-right party AfD had immediately seized on the case as “evidence of the dysfunctionality of the quality media”. The AfD, whose supporters often attack mainstream media as “lying press”, has been gloating over the scandal. One of its MPs, Goetz Froemming wrote on Twitter: “Ironically, the #Spiegel—the self-claimed leading media outlet that likes to slag off Trump, AfD and Co., has been for years delivering the best #FakeNews via #Relotius.”

Amid the damaging atmosphere, public broadcaster *Deutsche Welle* appealed to the people not to condemn all mainstream media because of the “dangerous, isolated case”. —AFP ■

Sexual assault case against Steven Seagal dropped

LOS ANGELES (United States)—Hollywood action star Steven Seagal will not face prosecution after a woman accused him of sexually assaulting her when she was 17, prosecutors said on Friday. The Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office said time had run out to pursue the case brought by a Dutch model who alleges she was groped in a hotel room in 2002. Prosecutors did not name the alleged victim, but lawyer Lisa Bloom identified her as Dutch model Faviola Dadis.

Dadis, who didn’t come forward until several years after the alleged assault, accuses Seagal of attacking her during what she thought was an audition in the W Hotel in Beverly Hills.

She claims Seagal slipped his hand underneath her clothing, fondled her breasts and groped her crotch.

She is one of several women who have come

forward with allegations of sexual assault or harassment against the 66-year-old “Under Siege” star. He has denied all claims of misconduct. In paperwork released on Friday, a prosecutor said the case was referred for further investigation which did not yield evidence “sufficient to meet the requirements of state law involving the statute of limitations.” “Therefore, the case is declined due to the expiration of the statute of limitations,” it said.

The time limit for prosecution of sexual offenses ranges from six years to three in California, depending on the seriousness of the allegations.

Bloom released a statement thanking the district attorney for a “careful review” but saying prosecutors’ hands had been tied by “this unfair law which bars the courthouse door even to young women like my client, Faviola Dadis, who is highly credible.”—AFP ■

‘Smart’ uniforms track Chinese students in truancy fight

BEIJING (China)—Schools in southern China are using chip-powered “smart” school uniforms to track their students in a bid to tackle truancy and boost attendance, according to state media. The uniforms use chips to monitor the location of students and can record their exit and entry into school, according to the tech firm behind the tracking devices.

“When students enter the school, the smart uniforms help take a photo or video of them,” explained principal Ran Ruxiang, whose elementary school in Guizhou province started rolling out smart uniforms last November. More than half of the school’s

1,400 students were wearing the smart uniforms, he told AFP.

At least 10 schools in Guizhou and neighbouring Guangxi have adopted the technology, according to a Thursday report by the *Global Times*. If students walk out of the school without permission, an automatic voice alarm will activate, the report said. Paired with facial recognition devices installed on school doors, the smart uniforms can also sense if students swap uniforms.

“We choose not to check the accurate location of students after school, but when the student is missing and skipping classes, the uniforms help locate them,” Guizhou province school principal



The uniforms use chips to monitor the location of students and can record their exit and entry into school. PHOTO: AFP

Lin Zongwu told the *Global Times*. But so far, it’s not clear how effective smart uniforms are at preventing students from playing hooky. The

high-tech uniforms have helped increase the attendance rate, “but not much”, according to Ran, who added that the school chose the

uniforms mainly as a way to send notifications and homework to students through an app connected to the uniform chips.—AFP ■

Proton-M carrier rocket puts into orbit Defence Ministry’s spacecraft



After being put into orbit, the satellite will be tracked by ground-based equipment of Russia’s Aerospace Forces’ space units. PHOTO: TASS

MOSCOW—A Proton-M carrier rocket has put into orbit a spacecraft, which was launched for the Russia’s Defence Ministry, a representative with the Defence Ministry told reporters on Friday.

“The heavy Proton-M carrier rocket that was launched at 03:20 Moscow time on Friday, 21 December, at the stated time, from the Baikonur space centre (Kazakhstan), has successfully

put into orbit a spacecraft for the Russian Defence Ministry,” the representative said.

The representative also noted that the launch of the rocket and the launch of the spacecraft into orbit took place in a usual mode. After being put into orbit, the satellite will be tracked by ground-based equipment of the space units of the Russian aerospace forces.—Tass ■

Chinese researchers find way to ease radiotherapy-caused neuropathic pain

BEIJING—Chinese researchers have found that the medication pregabalin can help alleviate cancer patients’ neuropathic pain caused by radiotherapy.

Although radiotherapy can increase the survival rate of patients with head and neck cancer and prolong the survival period, many of these patients suffer from the severe complications of radiotherapy. Neuropathic pain after radiotherapy severely affects patients’ daily lives and may even lead to emotional disorders such as anxiety and depression.

Conventional painkillers have poor effects on neuropathic pain caused by radiotherapy and there are no randomized clinical trials in this direction in the world. Researchers from Sun Yat-sen University conducted a randomized controlled trial to test the efficacy and safety of pregabalin

in the treatment of radiotherapy-related neuropathic pain.

The clinical trial started in 2013, and 128 patients treated with radiotherapy for head and neck cancer from four medical centers around China were enrolled for the programme. Results showed

that after 16 weeks of treatment, the pain index of the patients is reduced by 37 per cent. At the same time, it can help alleviate negative emotions caused by pain.

The research was published in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.—Xinhua ■

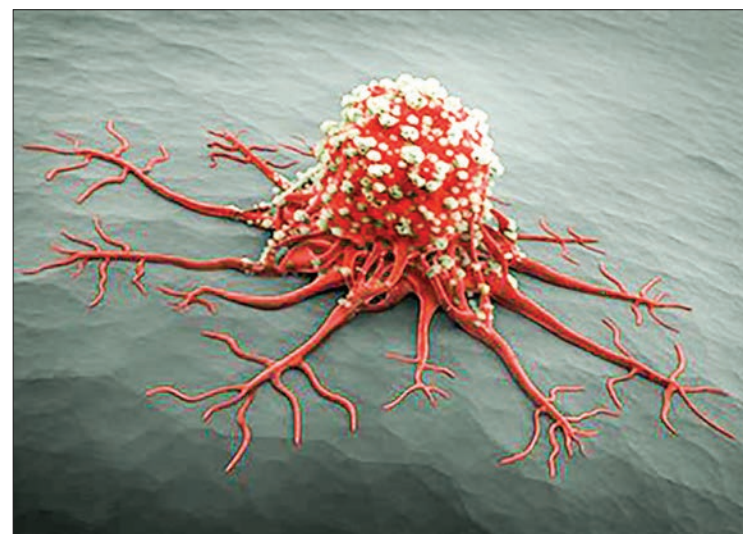


PHOTO: XINHUA

Blowtorches used to stop spread of devastating oyster virus in South Australia

CANBERRA—A specialist team using blowtorches and hammers had been deployed to stop the spread of Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome (POMS) in South Australia (SA).

The SA government on Friday confirmed it has taken extreme measures to eradicate POMS, a disease that causes the rapid death of Pacific Oysters, after it was detected in Adelaide’s Port River in February. If the virus spreads from the river to oyster farming areas, it would be devastating for the industry,

potentially wiping out the livelihood of those farmers. Tim Whetstone, SA’s primary industries minister, said the Department of Primary Industries and Regions, South Australia (PIRSA) had contracted a company to eradicate feral oysters infected with POMS in the Port River using blowtorches and hammers. “It’s vital we protect our commercial oyster industry from the threat of POMS and take every measure to reduce the threat of it in South Australia,” he told *News Corp Australia* on Friday.—Xinhua ■

China launches experimental satellite for broadband communication

JIUQUAN—China launched a tech-experimental satellite as part of the Hongyun Project, a low-orbit broadband communication satellite system on Saturday morning.

A Long March-11 rocket carrying the experimental satellite blasted off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China at 7: 51 am. It successfully entered its preset orbit.

It was also the first satellite of the Hongyun Project. The successful launch signifies the substantial progress of China in mapping the low-orbit broadband communication satellite system, said developer China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation (CASIC).—Xinhua ■

Myanmar youth teams to compete in invitational football tourney in Hong Kong

MYANMAR national boy's U-19 and U-15 teams will compete in the Jockey Club International Youth Invitational Youth Invitational Football Tournament in Hong Kong from 19 to 22 April, at the invitation of the Hong Kong Football Association (HKFA), according to the statement on the Myanmar Football Federation (MFF).

Authorities from the MFF accepted the HKFA's invitation and youth teams from Myanmar

will be competing with international youth teams in April 2019.

Earlier, in May 2018, Myanmar also participated in the tourney at the invitation of the HKFA.

In the previous tourney's final, Team India defeated Hong Kong team 4-2 and claimed the title.

The key objectives of the tournament are to provide a platform for the youth football teams to improve their football skills,

and foster cultural exchanges and understanding among young players from Hong Kong and nearby regions, a source from the football tournament's committee said.

Players will gain valuable opportunities and experience through such competitions to enhance their technical and tactical skills, and physical levels in the game and also broaden their football horizons, the source said. — Lynn Thit (Tgi)

Salah and Van Dijk seal Christmas top spot for Liverpool

WOLVERHAMPTON (United Kingdom)—Liverpool passed another stringent test of their Premier League title credentials as Mohamed Salah and Virgil van Dijk gave them a 2-0 victory at Wolverhampton on Friday that guarantees top spot at Christmas.

Salah's 11th goal of the season was a classy one and helped subdue a dangerous Wolves side who had made a lively start. The home side continued to push Jurgen Klopp's side hard but their resistance was finally broken with 22 minutes remaining as Van Dijk capped a superb performance with a goal that cemented his side's position at the top of the table.

While Liverpool have struggled at times to match the attacking potency of Manchester City, their added defensive steel has



Liverpool's Egyptian midfielder Mohamed Salah (L) runs to leap into the arms of Liverpool's Dutch defender Virgil van Dijk as he celebrates after scoring the opening goal of the English Premier League football match between Wolverhampton Wanderers and Liverpool at the Molineux stadium in Wolverhampton, central England on 21 December, 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**

made them serious contenders for their first title of the Premier League era. In the first half at a wet, windy Molineux they showed

signs that some of the swagger that marked them out as the league's great entertainers last season is returning.—AFP ■

Solskjaer talks tough as he vows to get best out of Pogba at Man Utd

MANCHESTER (United Kingdom)—Ole Gunnar Solskjaer says he will be no pushover as he attempts to save Manchester United's season, vowing to get the best out of Paul Pogba, who fell out spectacularly with Jose Mourinho.

Former Old Trafford favourite Solskjaer—known in his playing days as the “Baby-faced Assassin”, has been appointed as caretaker manager until the end of the season after Mourinho was sacked earlier this week. The Norwegian, 45, who spent nearly 15 years with United as a player and reserve team coach,

has stressed the importance of his stars playing with a smile on their faces under his leadership after a miserable season so far.

But he also said he would not be afraid to take a leaf out of the disciplinary book of his former United manager and mentor Alex Ferguson, whose legendary temper tantrums became known as the “hairdryer” treatment. “We are all different to how we manage people and the manager (Ferguson) was different to every individual,” said Solskjaer.

“Of course, maybe I should

get the hairdryer out of my pocket because I've got a hairdryer—when my hair needs lifting I use it on myself. But I am also not afraid of, if you like, laying down the law.

“You know with your kids when they disappoint you, you tell them off, you don't give them some chocolate do you?”

“So you treat players similar to how you treat your kids really because you want the best for them, you want to guide them, you want to help them.” Solskjaer's promotion from Norwegian club Molde, who have “loaned” him to United, has

surprised many in football. But he has been a popular appointment, not least because he has worked with a number of the club's current players in his previous coaching role.

Pogba fallout

Pogba, whose relationship with Mourinho had been little short of toxic this season, was a member of Solskjaer's reserve team in 2010 and the interim boss has pledged to try and return him to the form he showed in helping France win the World Cup. “He's a World Cup winner,”

said Solskjaer. “Paul is a terrific lad and when I had him as a kid, he was always there, the happy-go-lucky lad. “He hasn't changed personality-wise. He's a better player of course and he's one that I want to get the best out of. You have so many quality players that I want to get the best out of. He's no different to anyone else in that respect.” While Pogba's new manager dismisses the argument that the balance of power in football clubs has shifted to the players, he has reminded the Frenchman, and others, about their responsibilities with regards to social media.—AFP ■



Brazilian centre-back defender Ferreira Das Chagas Dedimar (centre) seen with the football authorities. **PHOTO: SUFC**

Shan United recruits Brazilian defender Dedimar

SHAN United recently signed a Brazilian player—Ferreira Das Chagas Dedimar—a centre-back defender, according to a statement on Shan United F.C.

During the signing ceremony, the Brazilian Defender said, “I usually play tough and always try to beat the opponents I face. Challenges are the forerunners of success.”

“I know about Asian players. Despite their average build, they have good agility and power. They are always ready to play with speed and I'd like to confront them,” the 26-year-old defender added.

Dedimar was born in 1992.

Being 6 feet and 2 inches tall, he is good at clearing high balls. He arrived in Myanmar on 12 December and displayed a good performance in the friendly match against Ayeyawady United on 14 December.

He started his professional life in 2012 and played for clubs in Brazil until 2017. In the 2018 season, he played for Kapaz FC of Azerbaijan and has now set foot in Southeast Asia for the first time.

As Shan United will play in the AFC Cup in the coming year, the team is bringing in many foreign players, revealed a source from the football club. —Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

SUNDAY SPECIAL

The Global New Light of Myanmar

NEXT GENERATION PLATFORM

23 DECEMBER 2018
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR



WHAT ONE SHOULD RESOLVE AT THE BEGINNING OF

A New Year



By Laura Htet
UDE English

THE New Year, 2019, is drawing near and near. Some of my friends far and near and many people all over the world are preparing to warmly welcome and to make the new year resolutions for the coming new year. Based on the experiences from the old year, 2018, they are contemplating their not only good and bad but also dos and don'ts. 1st January is the new year day and it is a special day for the people as this day is the beginning of the new year. They start the preparation for the new year celebration many days earlier. They buy new clothes, gifts and many new things from the market. Shops are full of the crowd on these days.

On the midnight of 31st December and on 1st January there is a celebration of New Year all over the world. After the Christmas celebration, people wait for the 31st night, that is the day when we recall all good and bad memories of whole year and say goodbye to the going year and welcoming the new year. They celebrate this day with music and dance. Children and youths are very happy on this occasion as they get lots of gifts and good food to enjoy the new year party.

Different communities celebrate their new year on different days according to their calendar. But everyone celebrates the new year on 1st January and this is a festival for all community people. And people spread the joy and happiness in nature. This culture has already spread among Myanmar people for decades, a large number of Myanmar citizens celebrate the new year's eve and new year day everywhere especially in big cities with lots of parties, events and the final new year fireworks at midnight. New Year's Eve is a day of mixed feelings for many people. On one hand, it is a time to celebrate the end

SEE PAGE- S-3



(CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK)

- 1. Maha Bandoola died in action at Danubyu. Maha Bandoola was a great soldier of 19th Century Myanmar. Maha Bandoola, who was a great soldier of 19th Century Myanmar, died in action at Danubyu.
- 2. U Ba Kyaw has left for London. U Ba Kyaw is the headmaster of our school. U Ba Kyaw, who is the headmaster of our school, has left for London.
- 3. Mandalay was founded by King Mindon. Mandalay is the second largest city of Myanmar. Mandalay, which is the second largest city of Myanmar, was founded by King Mindon.
- 4. Farmers are our benefactors. Farmers provide us with food. Farmers, who provide us with food, are our benefactors. (ကျေးဇူးရှင်)
- 5. Children must be given the best of everything. They are our future. Children, who are our future, must be given the best of everything.

For study (လေ့လာရန်)
(Peculiar expressions)

ထူးခြားသည့်အသုံးအနှုန်းများ

- (a) I can't help reading novels. ကျွန်တော်ဝတ္ထုဖတ်ဘဲ မနေနိုင်ပါ။ He can't help smoking. သူဆေးလိပ်သောက်ဘဲ မနေနိုင်ပါ။ We can't help singing in the bathroom. ကျွန်တော်တို့ ရေချိုးခန်းထဲတွင် သီချင်းမဆိုဘဲ မနေနိုင်ပါ။ (help ကို 'မတတ်နိုင်တော့'ဟူသော အဓိပ္ပာယ်ဖြင့်သုံးထားသည်။ ဤပုံစံတွင် help နောက်မှ V+ing လိုက်ရသည်။)
- (b) He felt like shouting at the top of his voice. သူ အသံကုန်အော်ချင်စိတ် ပေါက်လာသည်။ She felt like going out into the rain. သူမ မိုးရေထဲထွက်သွားချင်စိတ် ပေါက်လာသည်။ I feel like drinking tea. ကျွန်တော် လက်ဖက်ရည်သောက်ချင်စိတ်ပေါက်လာသည်။ (feel, felt, felt နောက် like ထည့်၍ နောက်မှ V+ing ပုံစံ ထည့်ရသည်။)
- (c) 1. This book is worth reading. ဤစာအုပ်ဖတ်ပျော်သည်။ 2. Life today is worth living. ယနေ့လူ့ဘဝသည် နေပျော်သည်။ 3. This radio programme is worth listening to. ဤရေဒီယိုအစီအစဉ်သည် နားထောင်ပျော်သည်။

Worth နောက်တွင် V+ing ပုံစံလိုက်ရသည်ကို သတိပြုပါ။

- (d) 1. It is time the children went to bed. ကလေးများ အိပ်ရာဝင်သင့်ပြီ။ It is time နောက် စာကြောင်းတွင် simple past tense (ရိုးရိုးအတိတ်ကာလ) လိုက်ရသည်။ 2. It is time Ko Ko got married. ကိုကိုအိမ်ထောင်ကျသင့်ပြီ။ 3. It is time she graduated. သူမဘွဲ့ရသင့်ပြီ။ (ဘွဲ့ရသင့်ချိန်မရသေး၍ ထိုကဲ့သို့သုံးခြင်းဖြစ်သည်။)
- (e) ကျွန်တော်သည် ဆံပင်ညှပ်ချင်သည်။ I want to cut my hair.

အထက်ပါအတိုင်းအင်္ဂလိပ်လိုရေးလျှင် မှားသည်။ 'ကိုယ့်ဆံပင်ကို ကိုယ်တိုင် ညှပ်မည်'ဟူသော အဓိပ္ပာယ်သက်ရောက်သွားသည်။ အမှန်မှာ 'ကျွန်တော့်ဆံပင်ကို ညှပ်ပေးစေလိုပါသည်'ဟု အဓိပ္ပာယ်သက် ရောက်သော အောက်ပါပုံစံသုံးရသည်။

I want to have (get) my hair cut. (Want to နောက်တွင် have/get လိုက်၍ ၎င်းနောက်တွင်နာမ် လိုက်ရသည်။ စာကြောင်းနောက်ဆုံးတွင် Past Participle (V3) လိုက် ရသည်။) တစ်စုံတစ်ယောက်ကို မိမိအတွက် ဆောင်ရွက်ပေးစေလိုသောအခါတွင်

- အထက်ပါပုံစံသုံးရသည်။
- 2. I want to get (have) my car repaired. ကျွန်တော့်ကားကို ပြင်ပေးစေလိုပါသည်။
- 3. He wants to have (get) the walls painted blue. သူနံရံများကို အပြာရောင်ဆေးသုတ်စေချင်သည်။
- 4. She wants to have (get) her clothes washed. သူမ သူမ၏အဝတ်များကို လျှော်ပေးစေလိုသည်။
- 5. I want to have (get) my shirts ironed. ကျွန်တော်၏ရှင်အင်္ကျီများကို မီးပူတိုက်စေလိုသည်။

Proverbs စကားပုံများ

- 1. No pain, no gain. အနာမခံက အသာမခံရ။
- 2. Make hay while the sun shines. လသာတုန်းပိုင်းငင်ပါ။
- 3. The pen is mightier than the sword. စားသွားထက် ကလောင်သွားထက်၏။
- 4. Birds of same feather flock together. သူတော်ချင်းချင်း သတင်းလွေ့လွေ့ ပေါင်းဖက်တွေ့၏။
- 5. Run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. ယုန်နှင့်အတူပြေး ခွေးနှင့်အတူလိုက်။
- 6. Too many cooks spoil the broth. ဆရာများ သားသေ။
- 7. Where there is a will, there is a way. လိုလျှင်ကြံဆ နည်းလမ်းရ။
- 8. Out of sight, out of mind. တစ်ချို့ကွယ် တစ်မယ်မေ့။
- 9. Rome was not built in a day. ရောမမြို့ကြီးကို တစ်ရက်တည်းနှင့် ဆောက်ခဲ့သည်မဟုတ်။ (တစ်နေ့တစ်လံ ပုဂံဘယ်ပြေးမလဲ။)
- 10. When in Rome, do as the Romans do. ရောမတွင်ရှိစဉ် ရောမသားကဲ့သို့ ကျင့်ပါ။
- 11. Spare the rod and spoil the child. ကြိမ်မစွက်က တပည့်ပျက်၏။
- 12. All that glitters is not gold. အရောင်လက်တိုင်းရွှေမဟုတ်။
- 13. Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones. မှန်နှင့်ဆောက်ထားသောအိမ်တွင် နေသူများ သူများအိမ်ကို ခဲနှင့်မပေါက်သင့်။

Lesson 14

အင်္ဂလိပ်စာလေ့လာရာတွင် Usage (အသုံးအနှုန်း) လည်း အရေးကြီး ပါသည်။ 'ပေါင်မုန့်ကို ပါးပါးခွတ်ခဲ့ပါ။' ဟုရေးလျှင် သဒ္ဒါအရ မှန်သော်လည်း Usage အရ မှားသည်။ 'လှီး' ခဲ့ပါဟု သုံးရန်ဖြစ်သည်။ ထိုကဲ့သို့ ပင် "Don't speak in class" ဟုဆိုလျှင် မှားသည်။ "Don't talk in class" ဟု talk ကိုသုံးရသည်။

Usage နှင့်ပတ်သက်သည့် သင်ခန်းစာထည့်သွင်းထားပါသည်။ Morphology (word form) လေ့လာရာတွင်လည်း အသုံးကျပါသည်။ ၉ တန်း၊ ၁၀ တန်းနှင့် ကောလိပ်ပထမနှစ်၊ ဒုတိယနှစ်ကျောင်းသားတို့လည်း လေ့ လာနိုင်ပါသည်။

(A) speak spoke spoken စကားပြောသည်။

- 1. Ko Ko speaks English well. (Ko Ko knows how to speak English well.) ကိုကို အင်္ဂလိပ်စကားကောင်းစွာ ပြောတတ်သည်။
- 2. Dogs cannot speak. ခွေးများ စကားမပြောတတ်ပါ။
- 3. She speaks five languages. သူမ ဘာသာစကား ငါးမျိုး ပြောတတ်သည်။
- 4. Ko Ko is a good speaker. ကိုကိုသည် စကားပြောကောင်းသူ တစ်ယောက်ဖြစ်သည်။
- 5. He made a speech at the meeting yesterday. သူ မနေ့က အစည်းအဝေးတွင် မိန့်ခွန်းပြောခဲ့သည်။ This sentence is written in the reported speech. ဤစာကြောင်းကို 'တစ်ဆင့်ပြောစကား' နှင့် ရေးထားသည်။
- 6. He is attending an English speaking class. သူ အင်္ဂလိပ်စကားပြော သင်တန်းတစ်ခုတက်နေသည်။
- 7. Loud-speakers are extensively used nowadays. ယခုခေတ်တွင် အသံချဲ့စက်များကို ကျယ်ကျယ်ပြန့်ပြန့်သုံးကြသည်။
- 8. U Ko Ko gave a talk on the Union Day at our school yesterday. ဦးကိုကိုသည် မနေ့က ကျွန်တော်တို့ကျောင်းတွင် ပြည်ထောင်စုနေ့အကြောင်း ဟောပြောခဲ့သည်။
- 9. The talks between the two leaders were held at the Prime Minister's Office yesterday. နှစ်နိုင်ငံခေါင်းဆောင်များသည် မနေ့က ဝန်ကြီးချုပ်ရုံးတွင် ဆွေးနွေးပွဲကျင်းပ ခဲ့သည်။

say said said ပြောသည်။

- 1. He said, "We must produce more". သူပြောသည် 'ငါတို့ကုန်ပိုမိုထုတ်ရမည်'။
- 2. She said that she did not know what to do. သူမ ဘာလုပ်ရမှန်းမသိပါဟု ပြောခဲ့သည်။
- 3. She speaks five languages. သူမ ဘာသာစကားငါးမျိုးပြောတတ်သည်။
- 4. Ko Ko is a good speaker. ကိုကိုသည် စကားပြော ကောင်းသူတစ်ယောက်ဖြစ်သည်။
- 5. He made a speech at the meeting yesterday. သူ မနေ့က အစည်းအဝေးတွင် မိန့်ခွန်းပြောခဲ့သည်။ This sentence is written in the reported speech. ဤစာကြောင်း 'တစ်ဆင့်ပြောစကား' နှင့်ရေးထားသည်။
- 6. He is attending an English speaking class. သူအင်္ဂလိပ်စကားပြော သင်တန်းတစ်ခုတက်နေသည်။
- 7. Loud-speakers are extensively used nowadays. ယခုခေတ်တွင် အသံချဲ့စက်များကို ကျယ်ကျယ်ပြန့်ပြန့်သုံးကြသည်။
- 8. She has not spoken to me for five days. သူမ ကျွန်တော့်ကို စကားမပြောသည်မှာ ငါးရက်ရှိပြီ။
- 9. Public speaking is an art. လူထုပရိသတ်ကို မိန့်ခွန်းပြောချင်းသည် အတတ်ပညာတစ်ခုဖြစ်သည်။

talk ed ed စကားပြောသည် (ဆွေးနွေးသည်)

- 1. Don't talk in class. အတန်းထဲမှာ စကားမပြောပါနဲ့။
- 2. I would like to talk to you. ငါမင်းကို စကားနည်းနည်းပြောချင်တယ်။
- 3. Father is talking with the headmaster. အဖေသည် ဆရာကြီးနှင့် စကားပြောနေသည်။
- 4. What are you talking about? မင်းတို့ ဘာအကြောင်းပြောနေကြတာလဲ။ We are talking about elections. ကျွန်တော်တို့ရွေးကောက်ပွဲများအကြောင်း ပြောနေကြပါသည်။
- 5. He is a talker. သူသည် လေအိုးတစ်ယောက်ဖြစ်သည်။
- 6. She is very talkative. သူမ အလွန်စကားများသည်။
- 7. This is a talking machine. ဤအရာသည် စကားပြောသော စက်တစ်စက်ဖြစ်သည်။
- 8. U Ko Ko gave a talk on the Union Day at our school yesterday. ဦးကိုကိုသည် မနေ့က ကျွန်တော်တို့ကျောင်းတွင် ပြည်ထောင်စုနေ့အကြောင်း ဟောပြောခဲ့သည်။
- 9. The talks between the two leaders were held at the Prime Minister's Office yesterday. နှစ်နိုင်ငံခေါင်းဆောင်များသည် မနေ့ကဝန်ကြီးချုပ်ရုံးတွင်ဆွေးနွေးပွဲ ကျင်းပ ခဲ့သည်။

(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK)

The Prisoners of Ageing

YOUTHFULNESS waves U Min Zan who was once a non-professional writer, saying goodbye and retreating from him.

Ageing is approaching him moment after moment.

In his 60s, infirmity starts to attack his physical body. A little pains and aches seem to appear hither and thither on his body. He does not seem to have the opportunity of eating whatever he likes. He does not also seem to have the opportunity of going to wherever he wants. It is the condition in which his body does not let whatever his mind wishes. He used to go to the downtown four or five times a week before. But, now, he is able to go there just once a week. His family members are worried about his going outside of the house lest he might encounter some accidental events such as dizziness, tiredness etc. They have not already let him to go out without any companion.

At the moment in which he thinks that ageing does not come to him alone, it has already arrived at him with its companion named 'infirmity'. Both of them occasionally beckon the one, their friend, called 'death' that is waiting from some distance apart. They sometimes raise their eyebrows, either. The one whose name is death also shows signs of an impending event. Although it is the last one, it wants to overtake its friends; the ageing and the infirmity, that got to him rather earlier. U Min Zan is not only being tortured by the infirmity but also threatened by the death.

Nevertheless, he is fortunate be-



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cause he has got the own children to look after him. Although his better half passed away 10 years ago, his children are good to him. He has got an own house to live in. He does not need to be worried about his food, clothing and shelter. However, these are not his own endeavor. All conveniences are due to the saving of his better half who was a broker. Whenever the news of his illness is heard, his friends always come to him to encourage him up. Some give him gifts and some cash. However, the materials they bring are not important for

him. The important ones are his friends themselves as half of his sufferings are already cured automatically whenever he makes a chat with them.

While going about, U Min Zan happens to meet the aged people who are in ragged clothes and beg for money. When he meets such ones, he feels sorry for them. Some of them are seen on the train. Some are in the streets. Some agitatedly walk and almost fall down. Some are accompanied by a child. Some are alone without even a stick. On their sun-burnt complexion, there are a lot of

sweat in a dangling position. They have no one to feed. They have no one to look after. They have no next of kin. Whenever he saw such aged people, he deeply grieves for them. At the same time, he happens to compare their lives to his. He thinks the world is cruel. Do not such aged people have an opportunity to come along with us to the peaceful and happy human society? Asking the same question again and again, U Min Zan visualizes the noble face of a Grandma namely Daw Oo Zonn.

FROM PAGE-S-1

of the year gone by and welcome what is in store in the New Year. On the other hand, some people experience a sense of nostalgia as they reflect on the events that took place in their lives in the past 12 months. Many people start thinking about New Year's resolutions at this time of the year.

Some people celebrate New Year's Eve by attending midnight church services, while others gather around in public places to count down for the closing seconds of the old year. Many people hold parties to farewell the finishing year and to celebrate the New Year. The size of festive events for New Year's Eve can vary in size and theme. Some people have small parties or gatherings at their homes. Many New Year's Eve celebrations are highlighted by firework displays. Many people start counting down to New Year's Day in the last minute or seconds before the last night of the year ends and the New Year begins. Some people tune into watching televised countdowns. As the clock strikes midnight into

New Year's Day, many people celebrate this event by exchanging hugs, kisses, and wish each other a "Happy New Year". In some parts of the world, including in Myanmar, many people sing the new year songs.

New Year's Eve is the last day of the year and the day before New Year's Day, which marks the start of a new year according to the Gregorian calendar. Pope Gregory XIII introduced the Gregorian calendar in 1582. It was adopted immediately in some areas of Europe but it was not used in various countries until even centuries later. For example, the United Kingdom and the United States started observing the Gregorian calendar in 1752, in which 11 days were dropped.

In fact, the practice of New Year and that of making New Year resolution are not Myanmar traditional cultures but in the era of globalization, it is not strange in spreading of practices from the west into the east and vice versa. Though it is right one's impurities of the old year must be taken as lessons, one should resolve he or she is going to do right deeds, words and thoughts

today. 'Today' is the most important day for everyone. Being good in deeds, words and thoughts on 'Every Today' assure to grant the good, bright and certain future of everyone. 'Today' means 'at the present'. Therefore, today is the best moment that one owns. The past was over and it can never be obtained again. It is meaningless and useless in yearning the past time. In the same way, tomorrow, the future, is a completely uncertain time or situation as no one can guess and tell definitely what is going to happen. Therefore, the present moment or 'Today' is the best time for everyone and one should stay doing good deeds, saying good words and thinking good thoughts not only 'Today' but also 'Every Today'.

All in all, I do not mean making New Year resolution is meaningless. But I mean the most reasonable act is that everyone should regard his or her 'Today' very valuable and do good deeds, say good word and think good thoughts at his or her present moment.



Kyin: the traditional wrestling of Rakhine, one of intangible culture of Myanmar

By Kyaw Zin Tun
PHOTOS: Phoe Khwar

RAKHINE traditional Kyin wrestling competitions can be seen at traditional festivals of Rakhine ethnic people, mostly in the Rakhine State Day which falls on 15 December.

It is one of the Rakhine traditional sports and a kind of martial art which mainly based on physical ability to uplift the happiness and physical prowess. Kyin wrestling is a favourite sports of the Rakhine people since the ancient times. It is also one of the intangible culture of Myanmar.

The demonstrative stone sculptures of Kyin wrestling



can be seen in the pagodas and temples built between 15th and 18th centuries in the state of Rakhine.

But, according to the oral tradition, it dates backs to earlier periods than those centuries. During the Vesali period, the kings preferred the wrestlers and the boat rowers for the military service. It was probable because Rakhine kings already possessed a formidable navy in the Bay of Bengal in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Kyin, a wrestling-like sports which symbolizes unity and strength, is an age-old tradition and the soul of the Rakhine people.

Kyin, whose name comes from the word Kya-Hlin (quick tiger), referring to the quickness and cleverness of a tiger in catching a prey, is the most important sports contest during the anniversary festival.

Rakhine State author-

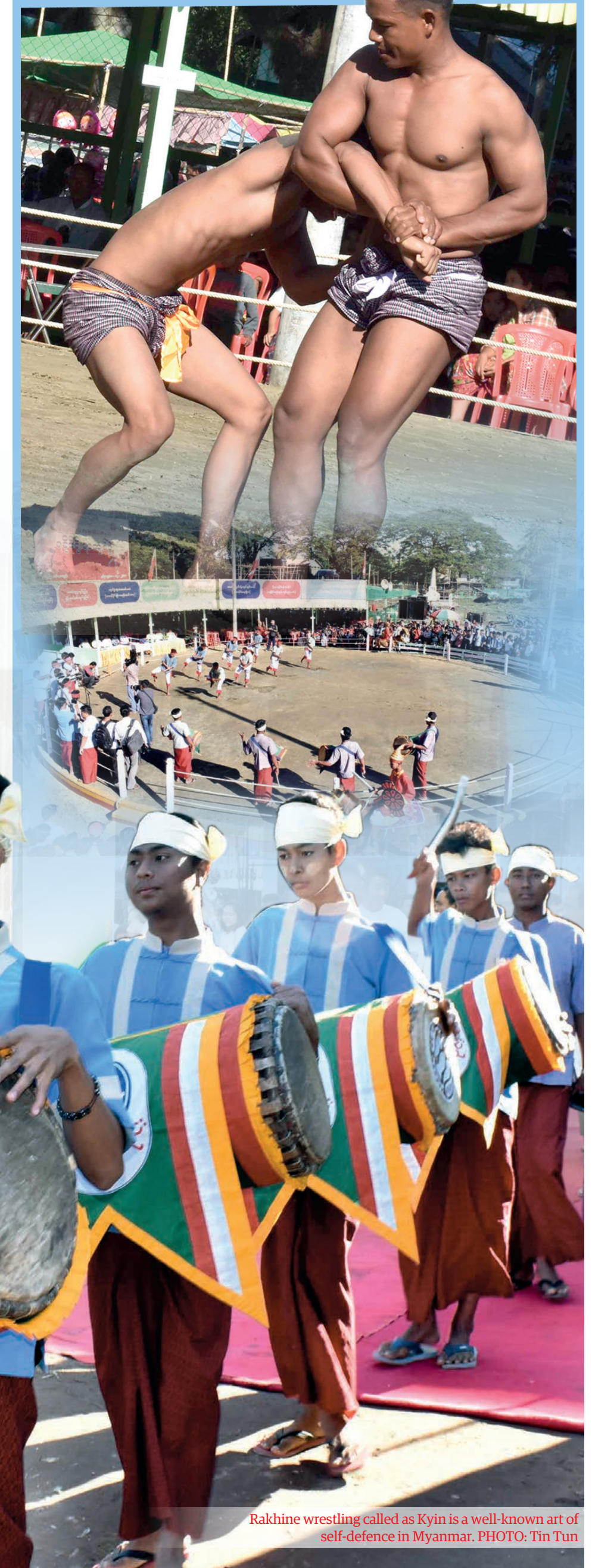
ities has urged the local people to hold the traditional sports in every town in the state when they celebrate Rakhine State Day so that the sports will become more alive and attractive.

The wrestling involves two athletes. In the first round, one athlete has to act like a tiger or as an offensive wrestler while another one is acting like a fly or as a defensive wrestler. During the second round, the defensive one in the first round becomes the offensive one while the offensive one in the first round becomes the defensive one.

During the tournament, the person who falls on the ground or whose hand touches the ground during the alternative rounds is the loser in the competition. But, the person who is capable to fell his opponent on the ground or able to make his opponent's hand touches the ground during the alternative rounds is the winner in the competition.

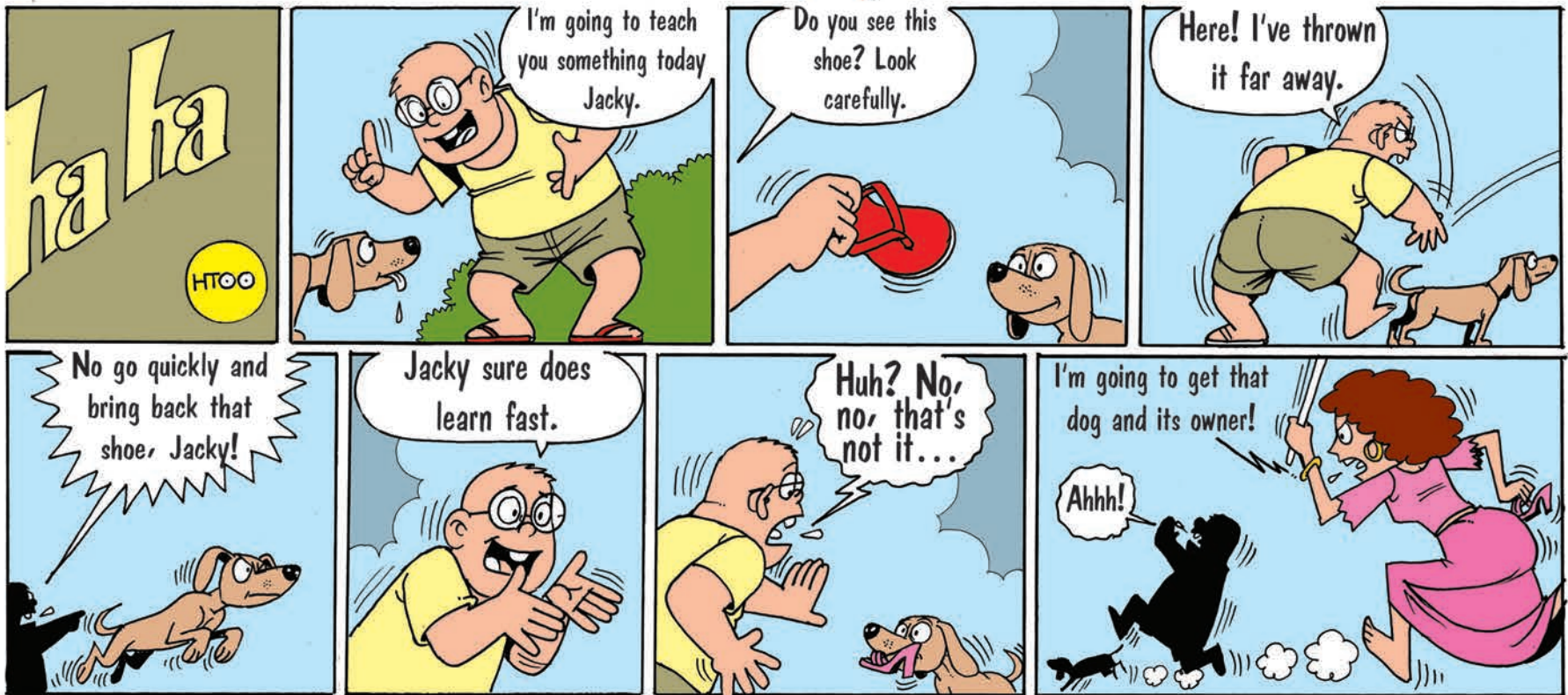
In the contest to mark the Rakhine State Day in Sittway, about 300 youths took part in the first division contest and about 40 wrestlers participated in the championship marches.

It shows that the intangible culture of Rakhine is becoming a popular sports among youths.



Rakhine wrestling called as Kyin is a well-known art of self-defence in Myanmar. PHOTO: Tin Tun

SUNDAY COMICS



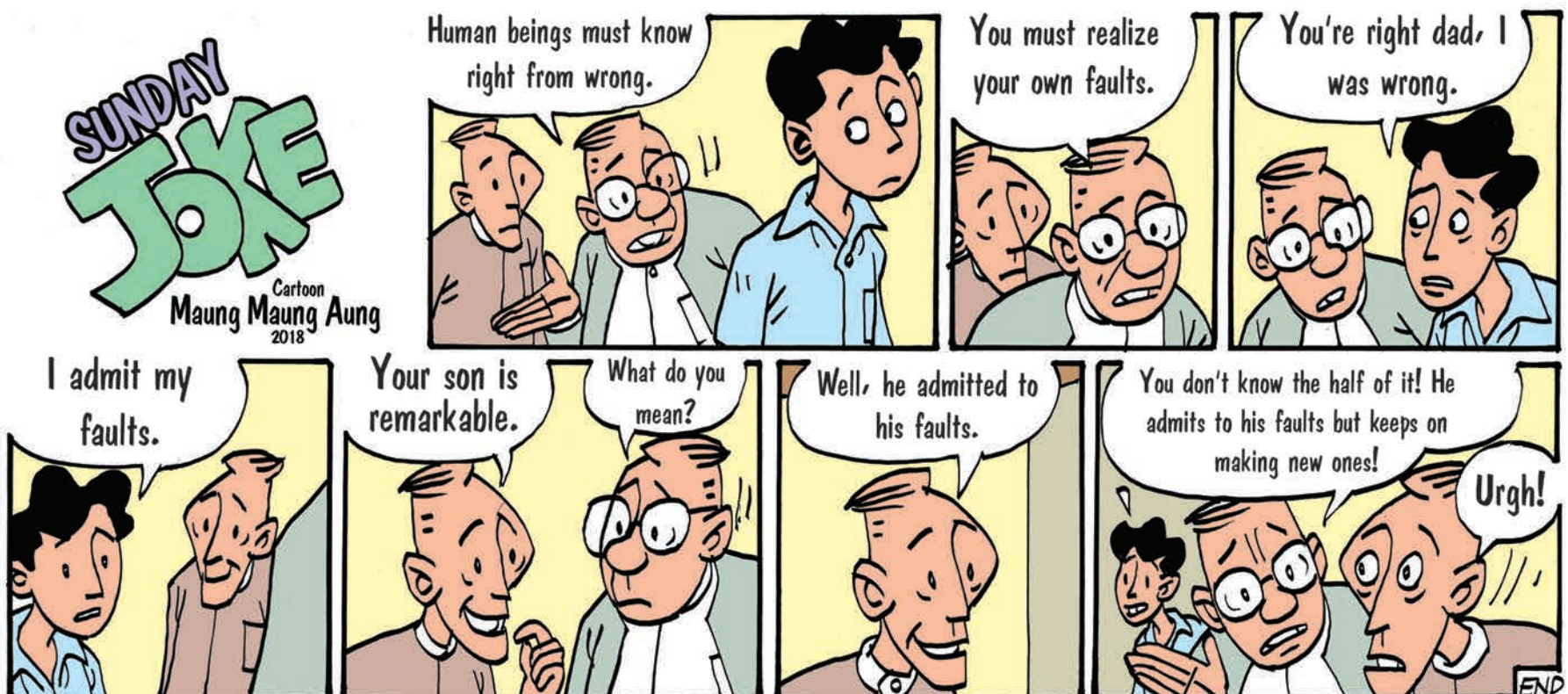
PEOPLE WILL BE PEOPLE

Cartoon
Maung Shwe Win



SUNDAY JOKE

Cartoon
Maung Aung
2018



Trouble of Ignorance



By Nwe Phyo
(Cherry Land)
Pyae Phyo



PHOTO: www.Buddha-Images.com

“KNOWING vaguely is worse than knowing nothing”. It is totally true. Sometimes, some people think that they know something. But, they do not know what they think they know is just a half of the full information they should do. So, when they take action on their half knowledge, it results in half accomplishment. The phrase “hearing through grapevine” means the information you learn bases on what you acquired. Its examples can clearly be seen on social media. Though it cannot be denied that most of the information spreading on it is reliable, some of them come from unreliable sources. But, as the users do not realize and access what it comes from or whether it is reliable, they again share those untruthful information to other; then to the whole technical environment. Because of these wrong facts, clashes and conflicts are dreadfully happening in the world. If we see those problems and their participants only on surface, we will see that the participants are the main cause. If someone better than us analyses this problem, he will see the true cause is the hatred within the participants who cannot forebear the difference. However, when another more intelligent one investigates this one again, the true main cause he will see will become the ignorance and the darkness.

Some people say “Ignorance is Bliss.” It is situationally true that it is better not too know about some cases. In Myanmar history, there are many examples, which prove this saying is right.

On the other hand, there is strong evidence for “Knowing vaguely is worse than knowing nothing”. In Buddhist Literature, there are three kinds of baskets: discourse, discipline and doctrine. In discourse, stories of the Buddha to be are included. Altogether, there are five hundred and fifty stories. There is a saying “five hundred

are the state of immature, while the ten are in the state of mature.” The ten are also known as “the ten great chronicles”. They are how the Buddha to be fulfilled the ten perfections in those lives to attain the Enlightenment. The ten are the life of Prince Temi, the Prince of Janaka, Suvasana, the King Nemi, Mahosadha the man of wisdom, Buriddatta the serpent king, Candakumara the Prince, Narada the Bramhin, Vidhura the great sage, and Vessantara the great benefactor. Among them, Mahosadha and Vidhura are the symbol of wisdom, knowledge, education, and intellect. These two lives were the

“Knowing vaguely is worse than knowing nothing”. It results in bad actions.

Buddha to be fulfilled the perfection of wisdom. Here, how Vidhura the great sage faced with the trouble of ignorance will be discussed.

In the Kingdom of Indapathanagara, Dannajarakorabya took over the throne after the demise of his father. He was fond of playing dice. One day, he kept fast with three other kings from different abodes. They were close friends in their former lives. For some reason, they were in different abodes though they did the same good deeds. The three kings mean the Serpent King, the Garuda King and the celestial King. It was so difficult to keep Sabbath

in their respective planes of existence that they came to their human friend's royal garden to take precepts peacefully. In the evening of the day before they returned to their homes, the four kings argued about whose precept was the most flawless and the noblest. The debate became heated and the resolution was not yet settled down. So, they asked Vidhura the great sage to judge their morals. The sage said each of their precept were the same in abandoning of passion. They were so satisfied that they awarded their Judge what they had. Among them, the serpent King gave him his ruby necklace. Upon his return to his home, his Queen asked where his ruby was left and the King narrated what happened to it. He also added how great Vidhura's intellect was. Hearing that, the Queen was eager to hear dharma of Vidhura. However, at that time, it was not in tradition of asking one's husband to bring another man to deliver sermon. So, the Queen used her womanly guile that she pretended to get sick. When the King asked the reason, she said she was in ill as she wanted to eat the heart of Vidhura. Here, the trouble becomes. Though the Queen said it was the sage's heart, it did not literally mean the real one and symbolically his intellect which was like his heart. However, as the King's ability to consider was hindered by Ignorance, he could not see the truth and he was in deep sorrow. Upon seeing her parents' being sadness, the princess decided to do something for them. The princess actually did not what the heart her mother said means. She was also in the trouble of Ignorance. She did not try to see the truth and she just knew the truth on surface. It is the “knowing vaguely”. “Knowing vaguely is worse than knowing nothing”. It results in bad actions. She sang a song in which she said she would get married with anyone who could get the heart of

Vidhura for her mother. Punnaka the powerful ogre heard her song and he promised to do so. He was the third one who was hindered by Ignorance and Attachment.

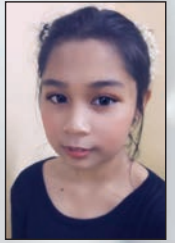
He thought that the heart of Vidhura means the heart of Vidhura. Thus, he tried to get the heart of Vidhura in a fair way. He played dice with the King and he could beat the King. Consequently, he urged the King to give him Vidhura. The King promised that if he lost the game, he would give him anything with the exception of himself, his family and his kingdom. But now, Punnaka was urging the King for Vidhura who was just like himself. He could not give Vidhura to Punnaka. But, upon the judgment of Vidhura, he had to hand over the Sage to Punnaka. On his way to the abode of Nags, he tried many ways to make Vidhura die. He was still thinking to get the sage's heart as he was

yet under the dominance of Ignorance. Finally, the sage asked Punnaka why he wanted to make him die. After learning the whole plot, he realized the Queen of Dragon wanted to hear his sermon not to get his real heart. He is the only one who is not covered by darkness of Ignorance. So, he sees the truth and what the Queen truly wants. It is because of the intellect. First, he made Punnaka tame and then he asked him to bring the Queen though the ogre disagreed to do so. Upon his arrival, the Queen was pleased that her aim was fulfilled. Vidhura delivered sermon she was eager to listen to. Finally, the whole problem was resolved. Punnaka got married with the Princess. Both the King and the Queen were joyful and Vidhura could return to his home. To analyze this story, the real cause is Ignorance.

“Knowing vaguely is worse than knowing nothing”. It is not that both the King and his daughter did not know. They know what it is but vaguely. Punnaka is the one who knows nothing. The only thing he knows that he will get the Princess if the task is done. Whatever it is, their ignorance becomes a threat to another life; Vichuga's life. If he did not know the truth, not only he but also the Queen would pass away. Now, the counter of Ignorance, wisdom brings a win-win situation. The trouble of Ignorance is not only the trouble itself but also the trouble makers. Because of it, the world was in chaos, is in chaos and will also be in chaos. The only solution to this trouble is the Wisdom. Unless having wisdom, conflicts external or internal, which are based on ignorance, can be settled down. The world of today full of conflicts needs so many intellectuals who see the real cause of problems and solve its roots. May the world have so many people like Vidhura the great sage.



I REGRETTED



By A W Khin Myat Phone
Grade 11 A, BEHS 4,
Botahtaung

THE sun was stilling sleeping. The clouds were flying in the sky. The birds had already woken up from their dreams. I was on my way home. I knew it. That I had gone too far. Dad would be nagging me. Mom would be waiting for me to give the punishment she had never ever given before. I had no clue why I had done this. Why?

Time was early. Rain was pouring slightly and my car's front window was a bit misty. No one could be seen out on the roads. Nor in the streets as well. I didn't tell my dad that I had taken his car. Bad me, though. Well, my eyes warned me that I was a bit drunk. However, my mind argued and told me that I was fine. Everything flashed back while I was driving with high speed on the road which had no one.

Dad was at the hospital the night before. He was on duty with his emergency patients. Mom was at our family clinic donating medicines for the elders. And I was at the night bar. It was, moreover, my graduation day from The Medical University. Together with my friends, I celebrated life, success and all those blessings.

"C'mon! Try some, man", said one of my friends. I didn't drink normally.

"What are you pretending? To be a good Mama's boy?" Their words pushed me hard. Finally, I gave in. I took one glass. Then another and another until I



saw the morning light. We all had fun. Laughters all around. Money and pleasure were what meant a real life for us.

I drove past the malls and houses with rush. I had to get home before things got worse. Doubts and worries were running through my head. Sweat ran down my spine. "What if dad punch me in my face?" I thought.

Suddenly, I felt that I hit something on the road. I couldn't see anyone and the scene was all blur. I got off from my car(dad's honestly) and looked. To my horror, I found a boy, maybe of my age, under the car. No way. I became more frightened. I looked around. No one. Right, no one saw me. "Okay, okay", I calmed myself down. He had a lunch box in his hand and seemed like he was on for the monastery a block from the place. I asked myself, "What do I do? Or what should I do?" He didn't move. So, I got onto the car and left the spot. I was to turn right to avoid the body but I got confused between the brake and lever and I ran over his body. I saw a pool of blood. Worse got worse. I immediately left the spot so that no one would know it was me who made all these severe mess.

Later, I got home. Dad and Mom were asleep upstairs. I tiptoed into my room and collapsed onto my bed. Sleep didn't come at once like usual. I passed off for a while then woke up sweating. The scene on the road with the bleeding body appeared like nightmares in my mind. My soul was heavy.

I was awakened by a loud knock from the downstairs in the late morning. Hearing mom's call, I nosed down at once. My eyes widened when I saw who were at the front door. The police. Without saying a word, they handcuffed me and took me outside. Mom and dad were both so surprised that they knew nothing to do. I then remembered everything I had done. Every single thing. My body began to shake with fear and my heart pounded like it was going to explode out of my chest. I regretted.

My mistake can't be erased now. It affects my parents, my pride, my country and the others too. But we can't fix the regrets once more, can we?

I should have sent that boy to the hospital. I should have informed the police instead. I should've followed with dad or mom to give a hand. I shouldn't have drunk. I shouldn't have done these things. My mind questioned me, "What am I?" I am the one who is going to be a doctor. And doctors save lives. They don't kill them.