Myanmar, Singapore eye to push forward military cooperation

Myanmar professionals secure prizes in photo contest

Nay Pyi Taw, 17 Oct—Two Myanmar photographic professionals secured one gold and one bronze medals in the invitational photo contest of an airline of Korea, and they are to accept the prizes in Seoul of the Republic of Korea.

“The fact is we were able to create chances. The big difference is Brazil turned their chances into goals and we didn’t,” said the Manchester United midfielder.

Goalkeeper Eiji Kawashima suggested the defeat was not as comprehensive as the final scoreline showed.

“If you look at the numbers in this big defeat but we had our moments,” said Kawashima. “We could have prevented some of the four goals.”

Kawashima and his team mates were outplayed by the five-time world champions in the friendly.

Top Chinese legislator, political advisor mourn death of Cambodia’s former King

Obama, Romney kick off high-stake second debate

French defence minister says military operation in Mali within weeks

---

President U Thein Sein of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar holds talks with Chief of the Defence Force of Singapore Armed Forces Lieutenant General Neo Kian Hong at the Credentials Hall of Presidential Palace, here, this morning. Also present together with the President were Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Hla Huy Win, Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, Lt-Gen Wai Lwin, Lt-Gen Thein Huy, U Winna Maung Lwin and U Thein Nyunt and departmental heads. The Singaporean delegation was accompanied by Singaporean Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Robert Chua.

Firstly, the President gave an account of progress in political, economic and social reform process and national reconsolidation task which are two desires inspired by the people for ensuring peace and stability and economic development.

Next, the President and the Chief of the Defence Force of Singapore Armed Forces held comprehensive discussions on matters related to boosting further cooperation between the two armed forces.

---

WROCLAW, Poland, 17 Oct—Midfielder Yasuhito Endo lamented Japan’s lack of bite in front of goal after his record 123rd appearance in front of goal after their heaviest defeat to Brazil in a World Cup qualifying warm-up on Tuesday.

Japan were outplayed by the five-time world champions in the friendly.

Endo, who was the source of the four goals.

“With a bit of improvement I think we will be able to create chances.”

The 32-year-old Endo, who was the source of the few opportunities Japan were able to create against the silky South Americans.

“I am pleased (to reach the milestone) and feel honored,” said Endo.

Hopefully I can keep on racking up the appearances.”

Shinji Kagawa, who struck the winner in Friday’s 1-0 victory in Paris, was unable to make much of an impact, although he went close to scoring five minutes before making the record his own on Tuesday.

The 32-year-old Endo, who was the source of the four goals.

“With a bit of improvement I think we will be able to create chances.”

The 32-year-old Endo, who was the source of the few opportunities Japan were able to create against the silky South Americans.

“I am pleased (to reach the milestone) and feel honored,” said Endo.

Hopefully I can keep on racking up the appearances.”

Shinji Kagawa, who struck the winner in Friday’s 1-0 victory in Paris, was unable to make much of an impact, although he went close to scoring five minutes before making the record his own on Tuesday.

The 32-year-old Endo, who was the source of the four goals.

“With a bit of improvement I think we will be able to create chances.”

The 32-year-old Endo, who was the source of the few opportunities Japan were able to create against the silky South Americans.

“I am pleased (to reach the milestone) and feel honored,” said Endo.

Hopefully I can keep on racking up the appearances.”

Shinji Kagawa, who struck the winner in Friday’s 1-0 victory in Paris, was unable to make much of an impact, although he went close to scoring five minutes before making the record his own on Tuesday.
Union Foreign Affairs Minister receives US Ambassador

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Oct—Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Winna Maung Lwin received Mr Derek J. Mitchell, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America at 11.30 am at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs today.

During the meeting, they cordially discussed bilateral relations and cooperation between Myanmar and the United States.—MNA

Workshop on REDD+ project held

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Oct—“Reducing Emission from Deforestation & Forest Degradation (REDD+) project would achieve success, only when the project would achieve Degradation (REDD+) Deforestation & Forest Degradation (REDD+) projects are fully implemented Public Private Partnership (PPP) is fully implemented through harmonious cooperation between related departments, civil societies, NGOs and the people,” said Union Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry Mr U Win Tun, at the opening ceremony of technical workshop on REDD+, at Forest Department, here, this morning.

As a forerunner project of ASEAN-Korea forest cooperation, REDD+ project has been established in Myanmar since November, 2011. The aim of workshop is to help those concerned in forest sector to know concept, objectives and implementation system of REDD+, to promote cooperation of REDD+’s economy and environmental conservation and to facilitate the forest administration and implementation of REDD+ works.

Five papers will be submitted at the workshop which is jointly organized by Forest Department of the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry and Forest Department of the Republic of Korea. The workshop also includes discussions by three groups and review of results.—MNA

Data from earth observation satellite could contribute to disaster risk prevention: Union Minister

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Oct—Data from small satellite for earth observation which will be provided by the Japanese government will be useful for disaster risk prevention, Union Minister for Transport U Nyan Tun Aung said at workshop on Myanmar-Japan aerospace technology-co-gical cooperation at Thingaha Hotel here this morning.

Representatives from line ministries proposed the data that each ministry wants to receive. Deputy Director of Meteorology and Hydrology Department U Maung Maung Soe said public awareness could be boosted by the launch of the satellite.

Japanese experts will elaborate on the application of the small satellite for earth observation.

Chairman of Marubeni Aerospace Corporation Mr Yoji Yamashita, Manager of Japan Space System under the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) Mr Nobuyuki Matsusomo and officials participated at the workshop.—MNA

Union Commerce Minister asks Japan’s help in quality promotion of Myanmar exports

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Oct—Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint invited direct investments from Japan as he met a delegation led by Chairman of Japan Center for Economic Research (JCER) Mr Ryoki Sugita at the ministry here this noon.

The Union Minister proposed to increase export cooperation of Myanmar agricultural produce and asked the assistance from guests in promoting the quality, packaging and standardization of Myanmar exports. He added that there are a great deal of opportunities for Japanese businessmen as the government is launching a series of economic reforms.

U Tha Aung Nyunt and personnel from American side led by Assistant Secretary Mr Michael Posner of Development, Human Rights and Labour held talks on effectiveness of labour law, the role of private sector in promoting labour rights and economic performance.

Deputy Minister for Defence Commodore Aung Thaw then led the discussion session in which the two sides held talks on levels and operations of defence institutions of Myanmar and US and exchanged views on future dialogue and bilateral cooperation.

During today’s session, the two sides discussed ways for protection of civilian in conflict areas, provision of human rights assistance to those regions, criminal judicial system, the role of court and judicial staff in the rule of law, crime and punishment, matters related to prisoners, laws enacted by Blattrow, the role of civil society and future programmes.

General of the Union, advisors to the President, high-ranking officials from US Department of State, US Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Derek Mitchell and Military Attaché Col William Dickey and personnel of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour of US were present on the occasion.

Union Ministers U Aung Min and U Khin Yi gave an account of progress in human rights and humanitarian assistance campaign and peace process in the country. Deputy Minister U Zin Yaw in his concluding remark said that the dialogue could touch on some important aspects of human rights, such as labour rights, protection of civilian protection in conflict areas, criminal justice and rule of law, but it was just an initial but a good step forward in our common efforts for promotion and protection of human rights in Myanmar. He also expressed his belief that the two countries would be able to continue our cooperation on the basic goodwill and mutual understanding for the benefit of the people and the bilateral cooperation in this area would contribute to the closer cooperation in regional and international forums.—MNA
Obama, Romney kick off high-stake second debate

China wants no trade war with anybody: vice foreign minister

China allows higher foreign stakes in securities firms

UN chief meets Sri Lankan presidential envoy

Iraq replaces central bank governor over fraud
Yahoo’s Mayer taps former Google colleague for COO

San Francisco, 17 Oct— Yahoo Inc hired Henrique de Castro, a Google Inc executive, to be its chief operating officer, the latest move by Yahoo Chief Executive Marissa Mayer to build a new management team at the struggling Web company. De Castro, who will oversee Yahoo’s global sales, operations, media and business development, will be eligible for a whopping $58 million total compensation package, according to an SEC filing by Yahoo on Monday.

Yahoo said that de Castro would receive $600,000 in annual base salary, as well as a $36 million in restricted stock units and stock options as a one-time retention award, among other parts of his compensation package. De Castro will start at Yahoo by 22 January the company said if de Castro, who is the technology blog AllThingsD.com said was born in Portugal, has not obtained a work visa prior to his official start date he will initially work in London for a Yahoo subsidiary, the company said. Mayer, a former Google executive who joined Yahoo as CEO in July, in a statement cited de Castro’s experience in Internet advertising and his work “structuring and scaling global organizations.”

The 37-year-old Mayer, who gave birth to her first child on 30 September, also announced the hiring of de Castro with a Twitter message in which she noted that Monday was her first full day back in the office.

Yahoo is one of the world’s most-visited online properties, but revenue has declined in recent years amid competition from Google and Facebook. Mayer has also been beset by internal turmoil that has resulted in a revolving door of CEOs.

Amazon in talks to buy TI mobile chip arm

New York, 17 Oct— Amazon.Com Inc is in advanced talks to buy the supplier of processors for its Kindle tablet computer, Israeli financial newspaper Calcalist reported on Monday, a step toward vertical integration that could portend a push into smartphones.

The report said any deal for the smartphone chip business of Texas Instruments Inc (TI) would probably be worth billions of dollars and could make Amazon, led by founder and Chief Executive Jeff Bezos, a direct rival to Apple and Samsung Electronics Co Ltd, which also design their own chips.

Owning its own chip business could save Amazon money if it plans to sell larger quantities of mobile devices. It could also help Amazon design better products.

“Look at Bezos and what he’s trying to build. I think he would consider himself of the Steve Jobs ilk,” said Williams Financial analyst Cody Acree. “If it works for Apple then wouldn’t it work as well or better for Amazon?” TI’s processors, essentially the smartphone and tablet chip business, called OMAP, and Wall Street has speculated it could be sold.

TI’s strength in the industry at the tablet’s recent launch.

More than a year since speculation has swirled that Amazon could sell its own smartphone but the company has not publicly confirmed those rumours. Texas Instruments has said it plans to move away from the increasingly competitive smartphone and tablet chip business, including OMAP, and Wall Street has speculated it could be sold.

Amazon to hire more than 50,000 for US holiday season

New York, 17 Oct— Online retail giant Amazon.Com Inc (AMZN.O) said it will hire more than 50,000 seasonal employees at its fulfillment centres across the United States, as the company and its rivals gear up for the winter holiday season.

Retailers typically add seasonal staff in the weeks leading up to the holiday shopping season to work in stores and help in other areas, such as in distribution and fulfilling online orders.

“Temporary associates play a critical role in meeting increased customer demand during the holiday season, and we expect thousands of temporary associates will stay on in full-time positions,” Dave Clark, vice president of Global Customer Fulfillment, said in a statement. Amazon did not say how many seasonal workers it hired for the 2012 holiday season, but said the plan to hire more than 50,000 is up slightly from last year.

Amazon.com in Boston, Massachusetts on 26 July, 2011.

Science

Moon rocks, chunks of Mars auctioned in New York

New York, 17 Oct— Meteorites from Mars and the biggest piece of the Moon ever offered for sale went on the block on Sunday in New York in what organizers billed as history’s largest meteorite auction, which brought in over $1 million.

More than 125 meteorites were offered in the private sale, from gray pockmarked lumps of iron to highly polished slabs glittering with extraterrestrial gems. But many of the big-ticket items, estimated to sell for $50,000 or more, did not find buyers.

The most expensive items on offer were four pounds (1.8 kilograms) of rock that were once embedded on the dark side of the Moon before an asteroid sent them hurling into space. They sold for $310,000 after the auction’s end. The rocks went for $10,000 less than the low-end, pre-sale estimate, organizers said.

The most hotly contested lot was a slice of the Seymour meteorite, pieces of which were found in Siberia in the 1960s. The 9-inch-tall (23-cm-tall) slice, embedded with olivine crystals, went for $43,750, about 12 times its estimated sale price.

Items that failed to sell included a large fragment of the Tissint meteorite of Morocco last year, and an iron meteorite resembling a howling face that was found in the Kalahari Desert in southern Africa. It was valued at $175,000 to $225,000. Meteorites are priced for their size, rarity, beauty and provenance. Some items sold for as little as a few hundred dollars.

“We wanted to make certain there’s something for everyone. We want to be egalitarian when we’re offering outer space,” said Darryl Pitt, the meteorite consultant for Heritage Auctions, which conducted the sale.

Buyers are typically willing to pay more for bits of rock or iron known to have originated on the Moon or Mars. —Reuters

Sponging” dolphins pass fishing trick from mother to daughter

Sydney, 17 Oct— A small population of dolphins in Western Australia state not only use sponges to help catch fish but the rare hunting technique has been passed from mother to daughter for generations, Australian researchers said.

Sightings of dolphins carrying sponges on their snouts to protect their sensitive nose while dislodging fish and crustaceans from the rocky ocean floor has been recorded since the 1980s. But researchers at the University of New South Wales added a new dimension to their research by using computer modeling of behaviour and genetics to estimate how long the technique, which they call “sponging”, has gone on.

“What’s unique about the sponging behavior is that only about five percent of dolphins use the sponges as a tool, and it’s only one maternal line,” said Anna Kopps at the University of New South Wales Evolution Ecologist Research Centre.

“What’s new about this study now is we’ve got the time perspective,” she told Reuters.

Scientists believe one single female started sponging in Shark Bay, Western Australia, and all her descendants in that area learned the behaviour from their mothers.

Knowing this, and that the sponging was done 30 years ago, computer modeling allowed them to study the spread of the behaviour over the past three decades — and then reverse the process using genetics and behaviour to figure out when it might have begun. Ultimately, they estimated that sponging has been going on for some 180 years, or roughly eight generations of dolphins.

It’s interesting that the behaviour doesn’t spread to the entire population and it doesn’t “go extinct” either,” said Kopps. Dolphin offspring are dependent on their mothers for about four years, and during those ample time to observe and learn survival techniques. The maximum lifespan of a dolphin is about 40 years.

“We don’t know if it’s teaching or other forms of learning,” Kopps said.

While male dolphins also learn sponging from their mothers, the study found they don’t pass the technique on.

Some males use it but not many and it will be a dead end because they don’t learn from the dads,” Kopps said.

Reuters

Sponging” dolphins pass fishing trick from mother to daughter

Sydney, 17 Oct— A small population of dolphins in Western Australia state not only use sponges to help catch fish but the rare hunting technique has been passed from mother to daughter for generations, Australian researchers said.

Sightings of dolphins carrying sponges on their snouts to protect their sensitive nose while dislodging fish and crustaceans from the rocky ocean floor has been recorded since the 1980s. But researchers at the University of New South Wales added a new dimension to their research by using computer modeling of behaviour and genetics to estimate how long the technique, which they call “sponging”, has gone on.

“What’s unique about the sponging behavior is that only about five percent of dolphins use the sponges as a tool, and it’s only one maternal line,” said Anna Kopps at the University of New South Wales Evolution Ecologist Research Centre.

“What’s new about this study now is we’ve got the time perspective,” she told Reuters.

Scientists believe one single female started sponging in Shark Bay, Western Australia, and all her descendants in that area learned the behaviour from their mothers.

Knowing this, and that the sponging was done 30 years ago, computer modeling allowed them to study the spread of the behaviour over the past three decades — and then reverse the process using genetics and behaviour to figure out when it might have begun. Ultimately, they estimated that sponging has been going on for some 180 years, or roughly eight generations of dolphins.

It’s interesting that the behaviour doesn’t spread to the entire population and it doesn’t “go extinct” either,” said Kopps. Dolphin offspring are dependent on their mothers for about four years, and during those ample time to observe and learn survival techniques. The maximum lifespan of a dolphin is about 40 years.

“We don’t know if it’s teaching or other forms of learning,” Kopps said.

While male dolphins also learn sponging from their mothers, the study found they don’t pass the technique on.

Some males use it but not many and it will be a dead end because they don’t learn from the dads,” Kopps said.

Reuters
Europe monthly car sales fall at fastest pace in a year

FRANKFURT, 17 Oct—Europe’s new car market shrank at the fastest pace in the past 12 months in September, leaving nearly all major brands nursing double-digit declines, as tight household budgets kept drivers away from showrooms.

New car registrations in the European Union dropped 10.8 percent last month to 1.10 million vehicles, data published by Brussels-based industry group ACEA showed on Tuesday. The euro zone debt crisis has hit carmakers hard, as consumers worried about their jobs and government austerity measures held off on buying a new set of wheels.

With the slump showing no sign of abating, mass market carmakers, which have borne the brunt of the downturn, such as Peugeot (PEUP.PA), Renault (RENA.PA) and General Motors’ Opel, are trying to find new ways to cut costs to survive. The ACEA figures showed even Germany’s Volkswagen (VOWGp.DE) brand, which has mostly gained market share in past months at the expense of its peers, saw a decline of 13.8 percent in September.

“The continuing discussion about the debt crisis has also left its mark on Germany,” auto industry forecaster R.L. Polk & Co said in a research note published late on Monday, predicting western European new car sales would drop by 1 million to just 11.76 million vehicles this year.

So far this year, western Europe’s car market has shrunk by 7.6 percent to 15.15 million vehicles, ACEA said.

“The crisis has also left its mark on Germany,” Polk & Co. said.

Ford (FN) and Opel (GM.), Europe’s second and third largest brands after VW, respectively, fared no better than VW. Their sales fell by 15 percent and 16 percent, respectively.

Renault had a near 33 percent drop in September, ceding its title as the largest French brand that month to rival Peugeot.

BMW (BMW.DE) fared better, posting a near 11 percent increase in volumes.

“EVEN ASSUMING THAT THE SITUATION IN THE EU CALMS DOW,” western European new car registrations should decline slightly (to 11.63 million) in 2013,” RL Polk said.

Ford (FN) and Opel said.

Britain’s Financial Secretary to the Treasury Greg Clark speaks at a Thomson Reuters Newsmaker event, in the Canary Wharf business district of east London on 16 Oct, 2012.—Reuters

FCA must promote banking competition, says minister

LONDON, 17 Oct—The top priority of the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) must be to promote competition in banking to give consumers more choice, financial services minister Greg Clark said on Tuesday.

“EVEN ASSUMING THAT THE SITUATION IN THE EU CALMS DOWN, WESTERN EUROPEAN NEW CAR REGISTRATIONS SHOULD DECLINE SLIGHTLY (TO 11.63 MILLION) IN 2013,” RL Polk said.

Ford (FN) and Opel (GM.), Europe’s second and third largest brands after VW, respectively, fared no better than VW. Their sales fell by 15 percent and 16 percent, respectively.

Renault had a near 33 percent drop in September, ceding its title as the largest French brand that month to rival Peugeot.

BMW (BMW.DE) fared better, posting a near 11 percent increase in volumes.

“EVEN ASSUMING THAT THE SITUATION IN THE EU CALMS DOW,” western European new car registrations should decline slightly (to 11.63 million) in 2013,” RL Polk said.

Ford (FN) and Opel said.

Britain’s Financial Secretary to the Treasury Greg Clark speaks at a Thomson Reuters Newsmaker event, in the Canary Wharf business district of east London on 16 Oct, 2012.—Reuters

FCA must promote banking competition, says minister

LONDON, 17 Oct—The top priority of the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) must be to promote competition in banking to give consumers more choice, financial services minister Greg Clark said on Tuesday.

“The FCA, which will be formally launched in early 2013 as part of sweeping changes to Britain’s banking industry after the credit crisis, should help customers switch accounts and lift barriers for firms to enter the market. ‘We need strong regulatory action to promote competition. It’s an urgent task,” Clark told a Thomson Reuters event.

Hopes of more competition in the UK banking sector were dashed last week when Spain’s Santander pulled out of a deal to buy more than 300 branches from the state-backed Royal Bank of Scotland.

High street banking in Britain is dominated by the so-called Big Four banks: RBS, Barclays, Lloyds and HSBC. Martin Wheatley, chief executive designate of the FSA, said the new watchdog will use competition as part of its toolkit to clean up markets and protect consumers better than it has in the past.

He told the Thomson Reuters event that the new regulator will have “a greater appetite to get things done”.

“We need to get to the root cause of problems,” Wheatley said.

Britain is shaking up its supervisory system to plug gaps highlighted by the financial crisis and try to draw a line under 20 years of post-crash scandals, from home loans to insurance policies.

The FCA will replace the Financial Services Authority, which will be scrapped, and focused on enforcement and keeping markets clean. The FSA’s banking and insurance supervisory tasks will be transferred to the Bank of England. “Our new approach will include tools, such as competition, that were never available to the FSA,” Wheatley said.

“We will also consider whether competition could lead to better results than other action we could take,” he added, without elaborating.

Reuters event that the new

Russia launches anti-smoking crackdown

MOSCOW, 17 Oct—Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev launched a crackdown on smoking on Tuesday with a bill to ban tobacco advertising and raise taxes on cigarettes in the world’s second largest tobacco market after China. Medvedev, stern-faced in a leather jacket in a message on his video blog, said one in three Russians, or 44 million people, are hooked on smoking in Russia, and almost 400,000 die every year of smoking-related causes. “Every year (the equivalent of a large city) disappears,” he said. “The government has adopted an anti-tobacco concept and today we are beginning to realize it.”

Under health ministry proposals, tobacco advertising — now only allowed in some print media — would be outlawed, taxes pro-gressively increased on cigarette sales and smoking in cafes and other public spaces eventually banned.
UN helicopter makes emergency landing in Afghanistan due to mechanical problems

UNITED NATIONS, 17 Oct—A helicopter of the UN peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) made an emergency landing on Sunday near the Yakawlang district of the country, a UN spokesman told reporters Tuesday.

“During the flight, the helicopter developed mechanical problems and the crew was forced to make an emergency landing,” said UN spokesman Martin Nesirky at a daily news briefing.

“All passengers on board were safe, some had minor injuries,” he added.

The passengers were immediately evacuated and taken to a UN office in Bamyan, in the central highlands of Afghanistan. The cause of the incident is still under investigation.

18,000 officials punished for construction corruptions

BEIJING, 17 Oct—A total of 18,100 Chinese officials have been punished for corruption concerning construction projects during the past three years, according to newly available data.

These officials, among whom 1,697 were cadres at county level, were involved in 27,100 cases investigated by China’s disciplinary and supervision organs from August this year, according to supervision organs from the central authorities that handles construction corruptions.

During the past three years, supervision authorities screened 98,600 real estate projects, 2,150 of which were found to be evading a whopping total of 15.8 billion yuan (2.52 billion US dollars) in land-transferring fees.

The principals of these projects were fined 792 million yuan, and administrative approvals for 47 projects were revoked, it said.

To curb corruption, a national information retrieval network has been established, with more than 5 million items of information concerning construction projects and their credentials becoming available.

The statement added that disciplinary authorities have given punitive treatment to eight ministerial officials involved in “extremely severe” accidents in the past five years, including former railway minister Liu Zhijun.

Liu was expelled from the Communist Party of China for corruption in May following the high-speed train collision that left 40 people dead and 172 injured near the eastern city of Wenzhou in July last year.

Nearly 16.4 million had fled abroad and were officially classified as refugees, while 41.4 million more were living in their own country as “internally displaced persons”, according to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the world’s largest disaster relief network.

The remainders were asylum seekers whose claims were pending or had failed, as well as refugees who had not registered, the IFRC said in its annual World Disasters Report.

Around 20 million people were living in so-called “prolonged displacement”, including around 5 million Palestinians living in camps run by the United Nations’ UNRWA agency in the Middle East since the late 1940s.

The figure of 72 million forced migrants compares to 101 million at the end of 2010.

Some 72 million living as refugees around globe in 2011: Red Cross

GENEVA, 17 Oct—Some 72 million people around the world had been driven from their homes by conflict, natural disasters or big development projects at the end of last year, the Red Cross reported on Tuesday.

Nearly 16.4 million had fled abroad and were officially classified as refugees, while 41.4 million more were living in their own country as “internally displaced persons”, according to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the world’s largest disaster relief network.

The remainders were asylum seekers whose claims were pending or had failed, as well as refugees who had not registered, the IFRC said in its annual World Disasters Report.

Around 20 million people were living in so-called “prolonged displacement”, including around 5 million Palestinians living in camps run by the United Nations’ UNRWA agency in the Middle East since the late 1940s.

The figure of 72 million forced migrants compares to 101 million at the end of 2010.

The wide fluctuations are largely due to the irregularity of major natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, droughts and cyclones, the Federation said.

Taleban says its attack on Pakistani schoolgirl justified

PESHAWAR, 17 Oct—Taleban insurgents said on Tuesday that the Pakistani schoolgirl’s killing was justified because she had spoken out against the group and praised US President Barack Obama.

Malala Yousufzai, 14, was flown to Britain on Monday, where doctors said she has every chance of making a “good recovery”.

The attack on Yousufzai, who had been advocating education for girls, drew widespread condemnation.

Pakistani surgeons removed a bullet from near her spinal cord during a three-hour operation the day after the attack last week, but she now needs intensive specialist follow-up care.

Authorities have said they have made several arrests in connection with the case but have given no details.

Pakistan’s Taleban described Yousufzai as a “spy of the West”.

“For this espionage, infidels gave her awards and rewards. And Islam orders killing of those who are spying on foremen,” the group said in a statement.

She used to propagate against mujahideen (holy warriors) to defame (the) Taleban. The Quran says that people propagating against Islam and Islamic forces would be killed.”

“With this attack, we targeted her because she would speak against the Taleban while sitting with shameless strangers and idealized the biggest enemy of Islam, Barack Obama.”

Yousufzai, a cheerful schoolgirl who had wanted to become a doctor before agreeing to her father’s wishes that she should be a policitian, has become a potent symbol of resistance against the Taleban’s efforts to deprive girls of an education.

Feds raid M Massachusetts lab tied to meningitis outbreak

Boston, 17 Oct—Federal agents on Tuesday raided the Massachusetts pharmacy linked to a meningitis outbreak that has killed 15 people and sickened more than 200 others, federal prosecutors said.

Agents from the US Food and Drug Administration searched the New England Compounding Centre (NECC) in the Boston suburb of Framingham, with officers from the local police department on site providing support, Framingham police said.

Carmen Ortiz, US Attorney for Massachusetts, said, “I can confirm that this office and our law enforcement partners are investigating allegations concerning the New England Compounding Centre.” Ortiz cautioned it was “entirely premature” to speculate about what might be uncovered.

Officials from NECC did not immediately respond to phone calls or e-mails seeking comment. The raid came as a leading US lawmaker called for an investigation of whether NECC violated federal laws covering potentially dangerous drugs.

NECC violated federal laws covering potentially dangerous drugs made by the NECC.

Nearly 14,000 people nationwide are at risk of infection because they received injections from suspect steroid medications shipped to 76 facilities in 23 states.

Another 19 people were reported sick with fungal meningitis on Tuesday. The 231 total does not include two people who have a non-meningitis fungal infection from injections in their joints (as opposed to back injections), so the total of infections reached 233.

In Washington, Massachusetts Democratic Congressman Edward Markey, a senior member of the committee that oversees business, called on the Justice Department to investigate whether NECC violated federal laws designed to stem illegal activity in controlled drugs.

A Syrian child refugee cries during the fourth day of school at Al Zaatri refugee camp, in the Jordanian city of Ma’arfa, near the border with Syria on 4 Oct, 2012.

A Chinese aircraft carrier cruising for a test on the sea. —XINHUA

A Framingham Motorcycle Unit officer stands by while federal agents search New England Compounding Centre in Framingham, Massachusetts on 16 Oct, 2012.

Some 72 million living as refugees around globe in 2011: Red Cross

Some 72 million living as refugees around globe in 2011: Red Cross

Some 72 million living as refugees around globe in 2011: Red Cross

Some 72 million living as refugees around globe in 2011: Red Cross

Some 72 million living as refugees around globe in 2011: Red Cross

Some 72 million living as refugees around globe in 2011: Red Cross

Some 72 million living as refugees around globe in 2011: Red Cross

Some 72 million living as refugees around globe in 2011: Red Cross

Some 72 million living as refugees around globe in 2011: Red Cross

Some 72 million living as refugees around globe in 2011: Red Cross
UN focuses on agricultural cooperatives to end global hunger

Vietnam’s ruling party chides leaders, signals reform

Citi’s CEO Pandit exits abruptly after board clash

French police dismantle drug network, arrest 42
The New Light of Myanmar: Your Newspaper

Today, we reach a turning point in the history of our newspaper. Perhaps we are trying to make each and every issue the cornerstone. We today embark on trial publication in colour and hope to distribute our redesigned colour version to all our readers in mid December.

You would possibly think it is just a facelift but it is our part to convince you that it is another sign we are changing. We are redefining our paper in this new era in which we are enjoying more and more freedom of speech, freedom of expression and freedom of press as fundamental rights of the citizens of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. The most significant example is that the draconian censorship that has been abolished a few months ago as the democracy has become more and more mature in Myanmar.

We the editorial board of The New Light of Myanmar with pride would love to inform our subscribers that we are transforming our paper into public service media. We hope to especially focus on neglected social groups from now on. We will represent the people and, strictly speaking, you. Here, we would like to reiterate that we do not represent an organization but the entire people, especially the vulnerable population.

You have the right to redefine how this newspaper you are reading represents you and a voice in the way it is printed. Your comments will be thankfully counted.

We vow to bridge the gap of understanding between the world and Myanmar and to help our once-isolated country reunite again with the global family.

The New Light of Myanmar is now simply at your service. Have your say!

Dancing Elephants Of Kyaukse

24th ASEAN Maritime Forum held

YANGON, 17 Oct—The 24th ASEAN Maritime Forum of Department of Marine Administration under the Ministry of Transport was held at Innya Lake Hotel, here this morning. The representatives from ASEAN countries, the Republic of Korea, Japan, India, IMO, APA, FASA, GIZ attended the forum. Deputy Minister for Transport U Han Sein delivered speech.

It is aimed at development of cooperation and competitive maritime in ASEAN—MNA

24th ASEAN Maritime Forum held

YANGON, 17 Oct—The 24th ASEAN Maritime Forum of Department of Marine Administration under the Ministry of Transport was held at Innya Lake Hotel, here this morning. The representatives from ASEAN countries, the Republic of Korea, Japan, India, IMO, APA, FASA, GIZ attended the forum. Deputy Minister for Transport U Han Sein delivered speech.

I'm over the moon today!

Because he arrives at the office in time! He did not need to wait for the green light. He got the seat on bus. The bus was not stuck in traffic jam. And conductor reminded him to get off slowly.

Cartoon: Maung Maung Lay

Dancing Elephants? Is that at a circus? No, it is a pagoda festival to commemorate the construction of a pagoda built by an ancient king more than 2000 years ago. Kyaukse is a rich and fertile land and was the granary of the mighty Bagan Kingdom way back in the 9th century. The legendary King of Bagan, Anawrahta, had seen to the Kyaukse plains to have good irrigation and came here at one time and wished to construct a pagoda here for his subjects. He put a number of Holy Relics on the back of an elephant with a vow to construct a pagoda on the place where it will rest and let it loose. The elephant climbed up the Kyaukse Hill and rested there and that was where the King built the pagoda. Furthermore he had commanded that all his subjects who benefited from the network of canals and weirs the King had constructed in this area must come and pray at the annual festival on shrine to this nat is seen everywhere, especially at working elephant camps inside the Teak forests. But whatever the cause the Kyaukse Elephant Festival is well known all over the country.

Hpone Thant

Every year in October the Fullmoon Day of Thadingyut (October). To commemorate the event elephant choosing a hill of their town to deposit the holy relics, elephants perform annually at Shwe Tharlyaung, the Reclining Buddha Pagoda where they had been enshrined. But another theory says that it is partly to honour Uteey Na, the patron Nat (Spirit) of Elephants. He is said to have the power of command over all elephants and worshipped by all mahouts (elephant handlers) in Myanmar. A day is chosen. Early on that morning flowers and prayers are offered to the appropriate nats before first stroke of work is done. This is to help prevent bad luck and also to bring good fortune in the competition.

The frame is made of green bamboo soaked in water and spliced into thin strips. They are rolled and secured with thin strips of bamboo. The body has an open belly but the legs will be of cotton tubes. The feet of the human dancers will be of cotton tubes. The feet of the human dancers will be (See page 9)
Dancing Elephants Of...

(on page 8) the feet of the elephants, so no need to have built-in legs. The head is also shaped out of bamboo with the flexible trunk made of cloth. The masters have their own tricks of how to fold the bamboo to make the best foundations and these secrets are kept in the dark. It is a trade secret carefully guarded. Visitors to the workshop are definitely not welcome if not actually escorted out, to prevent spies from other competitors try to get a glimpse of the work in progress. When the body and the head are done to satisfaction as to size and form, thin cloth or hand-made rice paper dipped in glue is wrapped all around the frame, leaving holes for neck, belly and legs. Several layers are pasted on until the ‘skin’ has a hardy thickness and allowed to dry thoroughly. Soot and water from boiled lime is used as adhesive for black elephants and the nobler white ones also get several coats of lime. Then comes the noise-less important touch of decoration as glitter, gold foil, satin, velvet, ribbons, faux pearls and glass pieces are sewn or glued on. Later clothes sewn into tubes are attached as legs. The head is connected to the body but in such a way that the man in front can turn it. The trunk is flexible, made with rings of bamboo set into a long, tapered roll of cloth. The man in the back is responsible for fancy legwork and the movement of the tail. The dancers not only go through the prim and dainty steps but also acrobatic twists and turns. Lastly, the name chosen by the team is painted in grand, curly letters on the sides. Those serious about competing make sure to choose a dignified name, for entrees called The Matrix or Lady Gaga are sure to be disqualified on the spot by the stern judges. When the flexible trunk frame is completed, the teams will come to collect it from the atelier and carry it home with pomp and ceremony, as if escorting a real, live one. This would be accompanied with lines of the local religious association chanting prayers and playing the traditional dboat music, no doubt with girls scattering rose petals.

The judges, made up of pagoda trustees and other distinguished personages, make the elephants go through three types of classical dances and the competitor must not have any part of its anatomy come loose during the performance. The other rules of the competition are that apart from behaving themselves in a manner befitting the occasion, the elephants must circle the marketplace three times, so that the audience would see all the entrances and choose their own favourites, which naturally enough would be the one from their own neighbourhood or village. The points are given according to how well the dancing, their own specially written song, the singing, music and teamwork. Each category has a maximum of a hundred points. The judges are very strict and no elephants dare to be too frisky, not even the baby ones manned by boys of under-ten, in a competition of their own class. The smaller elephants are also popular competitors as children begin early when it’s the honour of their hometown at stake. Months after the festival, the baby elephants with tattered ears or tail could be seen dancing along dusty lanes all over the region, troupes of tagging boys quarelling fiercely as to whose turn is next. The competition begins early in the morning, and goes on the whole day with a short break. By dark, the points are added up, the winners announced, and there is much rejoicing. The top three winning elephants stand proud to receive the trophies while their musical accompaniments break into ear-splitting joyous celebration. The winners will be busy until the next Lent day and for they will be great demand all over the country to perform at State functions, to welcome groups of tourists, to amuse the guests at novitiations ceremony and to perform at other charitable ceremonies.

The people of all ages stay up until late to cheer on their teams, to watch the victory dance of the winner. Early morning they climb up the 975th high hill to offer cakes, fruits and sometimes even small elephant figurines in clay to the Buddha statue at the top. The winning elephant is again dancing its heart out at the foot of the stairway. Along the way, wealthy patrons and religious organizations set up pandals to offer free food and soft drinks to the pilgrims, a tradition often seen at festivals. This is the moment of ultimate happiness for the town’s people; once again they honour their Lord Buddha with symbols of the noblest of creatures. They go home happy and already looking forward to next Thadingyut’s show of the dancing elephants.

Kyaukse is about 48 kilometres to the south of Mandalay and on the Yangon-Mandalay Highway. There are no good accommodations at Kyaukse but anyway it is just an hour’s drive by car from Mandalay. But prepare for a long day to enjoy the festival.

Myanmar National Races’ Traditional Performing Arts Competition continues

part in basic education level aged 10-15 girls’ piano contest.—MNA

A total of 10 contestants took part in basic education level aged 10-15 boys’ solo orchestra contest and seven in amateur level (first class) men’s solo orchestra contest. 

Altogether five contestants participated in amateur level (first class) women’s dancing contest and seven in amateur level (first class) men’s dancing contest.

Three contestants competed in amateur level (first class) Thanlan drama narration/ktakara contest.

All contestants who took part in amateur level (first class) men’s and women’s Thayoing song composing contest, amateur level (second class) men’s and women’s SEA Games song composing contest and higher education level men’s and women’s song composing contest, rehearsed their songs with the band.
Visitors watch a helicopter show at the China Helicopter Exposition in north China's Tianjin Municipality, on 15 Sept. 2011. Tianjin is shaping its aviation and aerospace industry based on the making of aircrafts, large rockets, satellites and space labs. The total output value of the city’s aviation and aerospace industry reached 22.77 billion yuan (3.6 billion US dollars) in 2011, growing 33.8 percent on a year-on-year basis. —Xinhua

Bin Laden driver’s conviction reversed by US court

WASHINGTON, 17 Oct—A US appeals court on Tuesday overturned the conviction of Osama bin Laden’s former driver and bodyguard, Salim Hamdan, on charges of supporting terrorism, in a long-running case emerging from the American military trials at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

The US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit concluded that providing support for terrorism was not a war crime at the time of Hamdan’s alleged conduct from 1996 to 2001 and therefore could not support a conviction.

Human rights activists hailed the ruling as a blow to the legitimacy of the US military commission system.

Hamdan was captured at a roadblock in Afghanistan in November 2001, not long after the US invasion of that country following the September 11 attacks on the United States.

In the first US war crimes trial since World War Two, Hamdan was convicted in August 2008 of providing personal services in support of terrorism by driving and guarding bin Laden, the al-Qaeda leader who was killed in a US raid in Pakistan last year.

Hamdan was sentenced to 66 months in prison but given credit for time served at the US detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. He was returned to Yemen in September 2008 and set free in January 2009 to live with his family in Sanaa.

The appeals court found that even though Hamdan already had been released from US custody, the appeal of his conviction was not moot. At the trial, prosecutors said Hamdan was close to al-Qaeda’s inner circle while his lawyers asserted that Hamdan was simply a driver and mechanic in the motor pool who needed the $200 monthly salary.

He was eventually convicted on five counts of providing material support for terrorism. On appeal, Hamdan argued that Congress lacked the power to make providing support for terrorism a war crime. Brian Mizer, who was a US Navy lieutenant colonel when he served as Hamdan’s defence lawyer during his military trial, welcomed the decision.

“After 10 years of litigation, the government effort at GTMO has produced a handful of convictions for war crimes that don’t exist, which occurred during a war that may not exist, and were tried before a war court that should not exist,” Mizer said in an email, using the military abbreviation for the Guantanamo Bay US naval base. —Reuters

Possible E coli cases reach 170 in North Ireland

LONDON, 17 Oct—The Public Health Agency (PHA) in North Ireland said on Tuesday an outbreak of E. coli bacteria in Belfast may have affected 170 people.

PHA said in a statement that as of 3 pm (GMT 1400) on Tuesday, there are 20 confirmed cases and 150 probable cases.

Six people have been hospitalized since the start of the outbreak, but most have now gone home.

“The further increase in cases is not unexpected as the incubation period for E. coli is typically up to seven days. We expect therefore to see a further increase in cases as people continue to report symptoms and submit samples for testing,” said Dr. Michael Devine, Consultant in Health Protection, PHA.

The outbreak of E. coli O157 is linked to Flicks restaurant in Cityside Mall, 100-150 York Street, Belfast.

The management of Flicks have voluntarily closed the premises and are cooperating with the investigation.

The PHA has advised that anyone who ate at Flicks restaurant since Sept. 24 and has symptoms of diarrheaa and/or abdominal pain should contact doctor urgently for medical advice.

The E. coli bacteria are commonly found in the intestines of humans and animals. It is found in faeces and can survive in the environment.

Dr. Evine said, “Symptoms cause by E. coli O157 can include diarrheaa, which can range from mild to profuse watery or bloody diarrheaa, tummy cramps, nausea or vomiting.”

“It’s vital that everyone follows some simple rules to prevent the spread of E. coli - not just those with symptoms, but everyone should wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating or preparing food,” he said.

“Raw and cooked food should be kept completely separate, raw meat should be cooked through and vegetables and fruit should be washed thoroughly before eating.” —Xinhua

Austria to exchange tax information with EU partners from 2015

VIENNA, 17 Oct—Austria will share tax information with its European Union (EU) partners from 2015 in order to fight against cross-border tax evasion, the Austrian cabinet decided on Tuesday.

Under the plan which puts Austria in line with EU requirements, tax assessments will begin in 2014 while the automatic exchange of tax information will follow the year after. The exchanges of information will be based on accessible tax records but not bank data, the finance ministry was quoted by the APA as saying.

The information of individuals will be passed on automatically, the finance ministry said, but would only be passed on in individual cases by request and in cases that are relevant.
Top Chinese legislator, political advisor mourn death of Cambodia’s former King

BEIJING, 17 Oct— Chinese top legislator Wu Bangguo and top political advisor Jia Qinglin mourned the death of Cambodia’s former King Norodom Sihanouk at the Cambodian Embassy in Beijing on Tuesday. Wu, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress (NPC), expressed deep condolences on behalf of the NPC.

Chinese Vice Premier Hui Liangyu met with Alicia Barcena, executive secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on Tuesday. Hui said China highly values the relationship with the ECLAC and will enhance contacts with the organization to push forward cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean areas.

Wu expressed gratitude for the condolences. Born on 31 Oct, 1922, Norodom Sihanouk reigned from 1941 to 1955 and again from 1993 until his voluntary abdication on 7 Oct, 2004 in favor of his son, the current King Sihamoni. He died of cancer at the age of 90 early Monday morning.

Key insurgent killed in restive S Thailand

BANGKOK, 17 Oct—A key member of a leading separatist group in restive southern Thailand was killed in an exchange of fire with security forces on Tuesday, local media reported. The clash took place on early Tuesday morning after a combined 50-strong military-police force laid siege to a house in Si Sakhon District of Narathiwat Province where three or four militants were reported to have been hiding, planning terrorist attacks in the district.

When the authorities showed up, three men slipped out of the house through the back door and one provided covering fire for his colleagues. The two sides exchanged shots for about 10 minutes. On clearing the scene, the security team found a man lying dead holding a .38 pistol in one hand in the rubber plantation behind the house. Bangkok Post online reported, adding that the others escaped.

The dead man was later identified as Sutthis Sutisri, 40, resident of Narathiwat’s Ruso District.

He was a core member of Runda Kumpulan Kecil—as an active local terrorist threat in Southern Thailand—under warrants for more than 10 cases of violence in three districts from 2004 to 2010. The authorities seized from the scene one .38 pistol with 10 rounds of ammunition and one motorcycle. As a suspected supporter of the militants was taken for questioning.

More than 5,000 people have been killed and over 8,400 hurt in the three southernmost provinces of Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat, since violence erupted in January 2004, according to Deep South Watch—an agency that monitors the conflict in the southernmost provinces.
Two Taleban leaders arrested in Afghanistan

KABUL, 17 Oct—Two local Taleban leaders were arrested by Afghan forces and the coalition forces on Tuesday, the latest in the increased counter-insurgency campaign in post-Taleban country, the NATO-led coalition forces confirmed.

“An Afghan and coalition security force arrested a Taleban leader in Nangarhar Province today,” the joint forces said.

The arrested leader commanded Taleban fighters, and is directly associated with facilitating the movement and escape of an inside-attacker shooter across Afghan borders,” the coalition said in a Press release.

The security force also detained a number of suspected insurgents and seized multiple weapons and mortar components in the province, 120 km east of Kabul, the statement added.

Separately, the joint forces also arrested a Haqqani leader in Ghazni Province 100 km south of Kabul earlier Tuesday.

The arrested leader coordinated attacks targeting Afghan and coalition forces and provided weapons to direct action cells located in northern Logar Province.

During the operation, the security force also detained a number of suspected insurgents,” the release said.

The Taleban-linked Haqqani network mostly operating in eastern Afghan provinces and capital Kabul is not at present engaged in any high-profile attacks against the security forces.

They also detained a number of insurgents during the operation in search of a Taleban explosives expert operating in the Haqqani Province, 555 km south of Kabul, on Tuesday.

Coalition forces also confirmed they recently detained two insurgents during two separate Afghan-led operations in Kandahar, 450 km south of Kabul.

“Haji Mama, a facilitator of weapons, ammunition, homemade explosives, and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) was arrested on 4 October,” the joint forces said.

Mohammad Nabi, an insulin facilitator of IEDs and radios, was arrested on 12 October,” it said.

The Taleban insurgents, who have been waging an insurgency of more than one decade, have yet to confirm the arrest of the insurgent leaders.—Xinhua

---

Senior Argentine, Ghanaian officials meet over seized ship

ACCRA, 17 Oct—Two senior Argentine officials met with their Ghanaian counterparts over the Latin American country’s training ship seized by port officials of the West African country earlier this month.

The Frigate Libertad, which was visiting Ghana as part of a West African tour, was detained on 2 October under a court order secured by creditors NML Capital, which sued the Argentine government in international courts over its 2002 debt default.

A Ghanaian Deputy Foreign Minister Chris Kpodo told Xinhua on telephone that the Argentine officials arrived on Monday night and had been holding meetings with their Ghanaian counterparts over the issue.

On Friday, the Argentine government of Cristina Fernandez dispatched to Ghana a high-powered delegation headed by Deputy Minister of Defence Alfredo Forti and Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Eduardo Zuain to negotiate an amicable settlement.

“Agreements have been reached yet; but talks are ongoing between us, and it is only after an agreement has been reached that we can talk about the way forward,” Kpodo said.

The AccraCommercial Court on Thursday ruled against the release of the vessel valued between 10 million US dollars and 15 million dollars. This value is believed to be only a fraction of the total amount owed by Argentina to NML Capital and other creditors under US and British laws.

The Argentine government could cause the ship to be released at any time by posting a bond.

NML Capital Limited went to the court in Accra on 2 October to obtain an interim injunction against the Argentine ship currently in Ghana, with about 200 men on board.

---

Maldives opposition: ex-president charged under outdated law

MCCZ, 17 Oct—Maldives opposition complained that former president Mohamed Nasheed is charged under an outdated law and legal action against him is politically motivated.

The Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) said that Nasheed is charged under an “archaic and incomplete” Penal Code that pre-dates the democratic transition in 2008.

“We are deeply concerned the prosecutor general is proceeding with a law that will neither be fair nor lawful,” the party said.

President Nasheed is charged under obsolete regulation that does not tally with the new democratic constitution and this trial is politically motivated,” stated Hamid Abdul Ghaffar, MDP spokesperson for International Affairs.

On 8 Oct, Nasheed was arrested on a warrant after he skipped two hearings to face the trial on abuse of power by ordering the detention of Chief Criminal Court Judge Abdulla Mohamed during his final days in office.

Nasheed charged under Article 81 of the Maldivian Penal Code titled “Public servant using authority to arrest or detain innocent persons.”

If found guilty Nasheed may be disqualified from contesting in the presidential election and even could be jailed or banished to a remote island for three years.

The former president claimed that he was ousted in a military backed coup on 8 February.

A Commonwealth-backed inquiry into the military coup rejected his claim and ruled that power transfer from Nasheed to his vice Waheed was constitutional.—Reuters

---

BHP Billiton September quarter iron ore output rises 1 pct

SYDNEY, 17 Oct—Global miner BHP Billiton on Wednesday reported a one percent rise in iron ore production in the September 2012 quarter, and a 19 percent increase in petroleum production.

BHP Billiton said its Western Australian iron ore operations produced 39.77 million tonnes of ore in the September 2012 quarter, up one percent from the same period in 2011.

The world’s biggest miner said production was impacted by a planned shutdown associated with its port expansion project.

Iron ore production guidance remains unchanged with a 5 percent increase expected in the 2013 financial year, BHP Billiton said.

The company’s total petroleum products were 61.25 million barrels of oil equivalent in the three months to September, up 19 percent from the previous corresponding period.

BHP’s total metallurgical coal production in the September quarter was down 4 percent on the same period in 2011, but its energy coal production was up 6 percent.

---

Lukashenko says Belarus ready to sell oil refiners to Russia in exchange for oil, gas

MINSK, 17 Oct.—Belarus is ready to sell its oil refineries to Russia if it is offered access to Russian oil and natural gas extraction, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko said Monday.

Lukashenko told a news conference for Russian language media outlets, said a deal could be reached but Belarus would want, as a foreigner, to help develop gas fields in Russia, and therefore receive oil and gas at a lower price.

“We will sell our oil refineries but we should give us an opportunity to extract natural gas and oil in Russia as foreigners,” he said.

Russian companies have shown an interest in purchasing Belarus’ two oil refineries – the Nastaf oil refinery in Novopolotsk and the Mozryl oil processing plant, which refined a total of 22 million tons of crude last year.

---

A staff member walks into the media centre for the second presidential debate at Hofstra University in Hempstead, New York state, the United States, on 16 Oct, 2012.The second presidential debate between US President Barack Obama and his Republican challenger, Mitt Romney will be held here on Tuesday night.

---

A girl rides bicycle in Taiyuan, capital of north China’s Shanxi Province, on 17 Oct, 2012. The lowest temperature in Taiyuan dropped to zero degrees Celsius on Wednesday.

---
Brad Pitt mystifies as first male face of Chanel No 5

LOS ANGELES, 17 Oct—Brad Pitt made his debut as the first male face of Chanel’s iconic fragrance on Monday, in an ad campaign that had fans and fashionistas split on the actor’s latest role. Pitt, 48, is seen with long hair and dressed casually, looking wistfully into the camera in an enigmatic black-and-white video directed by “Atonement” filmmaker Joe Wright. “It’s not a journey. Every journey ends, but we go on. The world turns, and we turn with it. Plans disappear, dreams take over. But wherever I go, there you are, my luck, my fate, my fortune. Chanel No 5, inevitable, the “Moneyball” actor says. The video is part of a $10 million advertising campaign for which Pitt was paid $7 million, according to Women’s Wear Daily.

Time magazine’s Erik Hayden called the ad “nonsensical,” saying Pitt’s “vaguely existential monologue...sounds like it could plausibly have been discarded narration from the trailer for Terrence Malick’s (film) ‘Tree of Life.’”

US Weekly’s Zach Johnson called the video “sensual,” while Vanity Fair’s Amy Fine Collins said the choice to cast Pitt as spokesperson showed the French fashion house “subtly circling back to its gender-twisting origins.”

Pitt is the first male spokesperson for women’s fragrance Chanel No5, the first perfume launched by legendary French designer Coco Chanel in 1921.

Bye-bye Ricky, hello Tina and Amy for Golden Globes

LOS ANGELES, 17 Oct—Comedy duo Tina Fey and Amy Poehler will host next year’s Golden Globe awards in Beverly Hills, bringing perhaps a gentler touch to a ceremony helmed for the past three years by acerbic Brit Ross Gervais.

Organizers the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA) and NBC said on Monday that Fey and Poehler would bring their tried and tested chemistry to the 13 January, 2013 gala dinner for Hollywood’s leading film and TV stars.

Fey, 42, creator and star of “30 Rock,” and “Parks and Recreation” actress Poehler, 41, have worked together for years — first on satirical sketch show “Saturday Night Live” and later on 2008 comedy movie “Baby Mama.” “Tina and Amy have a proven chemistry and comedic timing from their many years together,” NBC alternative programming president Paul Telegdy said in a statement.

Roger Moore nearly died on the sets of The Spy Who Loved Me

NEW YORK, 17 Oct— Former James Bond star Roger Moore says he almost died when a stunt went wrong while he was shooting for 1977 film The Spy Who Loved Me. The 85-year-old says he was filming a fight scene with co-star Curt Jurgens when he made a choreography change and was thrown across the room by a special effects blast, reported the New York Post.

Roger Moore was taken to hospital with several open wounds and it took him days to recover. “There’s a sequence in The Spy Who Loved Me where I nearly came a cropper (died). The audience knows that the villain, Karl Stromberg, played by Curt Jurgens, is going to shoot a missile under a table at Bond. They (the producers) had me standing behind a chair which had a steel back to it that so that, when the explosion took place, I would be wound-free. I, like a stupid idiot, suggested that, when the explosion took place, I would be wound-free. I nearly came a cropper. I, like a stupid idiot, suggested that, when the explosion took place, I would be wound-free. I nearly came a cropper.”

The special effects man mentioned that the seat of the chair was not reinforced. The special effects man was a little over-anxious and let off the explosion just before I got up from it (the chair). I was blown out of the chair and had smoldering holes in my back,” he said. The spy film series is celebrating 50 golden years on silver screen.

Lisa Marie Presley duets with dad Elvis in new video

CALIFORNIA, 17 Oct— When Lisa Marie Presley said she was doing fighting her legacy as the only child of rock ‘n roll king Elvis, she apparently meant it. Presley’s new video, “I Love You Because,” is an emotional duet with her late father. Due to premiere on Thursday on country music TV channel CMT and CMT.com, the video was recorded in August for the 35th anniversary of Elvis Presley’s death.

It was only intended to be viewed by the 25,000 fans at the special anniversary concert in Memphis on 16 August, but the response from fans convinced her to let the video play far and wide, CMT said in a press statement on Monday.

Lisa Marie’s latest album, “Storm and Grace,” released in May, saw her embracing her Americana roots while her lyrics address her efforts to find her place in the world as the King’s only daughter. Presley, who died at the age of 42, recorded “I Love You Because” in July 1954 at Sun Studio in Memphis, the same time he recorded “That’s All Right.”

Producer Sam Phillips deemed it unsuitable for Presley’s first single, and it ended up on Presley’s first album, from 1956, never to be performed by Presley again, according to CMT.

It’s fleetingly sad to finish Twilight Saga, says Kristen Stewart

LOS ANGELES, 17 Oct— Actress Kristen Stewart, who played the character of Bella Swan in all five Twilight Saga movies, says she finds it overwhelming to bid final goodbye to the film franchise.

The 22-year-old said she is having mixed feelings over it because finishing up the famous vampire series is both liberating and sad for her, reported Ace Showbiz.

“Both. Fleetingly sad and may be the then once or twice after,” she said about The Twilight Saga’s Breaking Dawn Part II.

“Like when you suddenly smell something that reminds you of being on set. But it’s not sad in between those moments, because I feel like no stone was left unturned,” she said.

The On the Road star further says that she is ready to bid farewell to the series and she is fine with it.

“Everyone thinks it’s hard to say goodbye, but it’s harder to say goodbye to crews and casts that I’ve only spent five weeks with. This was four years. I’m ready to say goodbye. I’m perfectly fine with it,” she said.

Kristen Stewart will reprise the role of Bella for the last time in Breaking Dawn II, which will hit theatres on 16 November.

Lisa Marie Presley duets with dad Elvis in new video

Music recording artist Lisa Marie Presley

Brad Pitt mystifies as first male face of Chanel No 5

Cast member Brad Pitt

Women’s Wear Daily
America’s Cup holder Oracle capsizes boat in training

SAN FRANCISCO, 17 Oct—Oracle’s preparations for defending America’s Cup suffered a setback on Tuesday when their AC72 class catamaran capsized on San Francisco Bay and incurred substantial damage.

It was only the eighth time Oracle had taken the massive catamaran—the class of yacht to be used for the Louis Vuitton challengers regatta and America’s Cup—on to water for training since it was launched in August. Official website www.americascup.com said the boat was still upside down, having floated under the iconic Golden Gate Bridge, having reached approximately 600 meters from the base, with its wing (mast and main sail) “damaged beyond recognition”.

None of the crew were hurt in the capsize, but the team were having trouble getting the catamaran back to base. Tactician Tom Slingsby said the boat had been preparing to beat away (turn away from the wind) when it capsized stern over bow (pitchpolled).

“Oracle Team USA were forced to tow their still capsized boat back to the base in four knots of current, resulting in severe damage.”

Massa stays at Ferrari for 2013

Ferrari Formula One driver Felipe Massa of Brazil talks to media following the Japanese F1 Grand Prix at the Suzuka circuit October 7, 2012.—REUTERS

Ferrari for the 2013 season in an unchanged lineup with Fernando Alonso, the Italian Formula One Team said on Tuesday.

Massa said on the Ferrari website (www.ferrari.com) that he had scored more points in his last two races than he had in the first 11 of the season.

Ferrari’s decision was not a great surprise, with Alonso clearly favouring the American team and the Brazilian as his team mate having established himself as the clear focus of the sport’s most successful team.

“Ferrari’s future has been uncertain all season, with the 31-year-old suffering an abject run until he finished second at this month’s Japanese Grand Prix for his first podium finish since 2010.”

The Sao Paulo driver was fourth in South Korea on Sunday, round 16 of the world championship, a result that meant he had scored more points in his last two races than he had in the first 11 of the season.

Ferrari’s decision was not a great surprise, with Alonso clearly favouring the American team and the Brazilian as his team mate having established himself as the clear focus of the sport’s most successful team.

Mortar racing

London, 17 Oct—David Ferrer of Spain and Andy Murray of Britain are two of the 12 International players who have qualified for the World Tour Finals in London next month.

Argentine Juan Martin Del Potro and last year’s runner-up Jo-Wilfried Tsonga of France are also on the brink of qualifying.

The tournament begins in November.

Reuters

US domination bad for Presidents Cup — Schwartzel

ANTELOPE, 17 Oct—The Presidents Cup falls short of the drama witnessed at the Ryder Cup due to the utter domination of the Americans and the weakness of their International Team opponents, 2011 US Masters winner Charl Schwartzel said on Tuesday.

South African highlighted Europe’s sensational final day with a 10-6 down to beat the United States in the ‘Miracle at Medinah’ last month to underline the Ryder Cup’s vibrancy. By contrast, the U.S. have maintained a cast-iron grip on the Presidents Cup, also a biennial team tournament, winning the event seven times since its 1994 inception.

The International Team have won since the 1998 victory at the Royal Melbourne Golf Club marked their one and only success in the tournament. The teams have played out one tie in 2003.

“I think there’s a few things that might have to be changed in the Presidents Cup to make it that special,” Schwartzel, who played in last year’s 19-15 defeat to the US told reporters in Australia.

“The Internationals need to start... winning a little bit more.”

“In this stage, the Americans have just won so many that it’s just assumed and it sort of makes it die out a little bit.”

There needs to be a format where the Internationals can be a little bit stronger.”

Schwartzel said he would love to compete in the Perth International at Lake Karrinyup from Thursday, the 28-year-old maintained the contest, in its current format, remained a mismatch. “I think the American side, every time they play, their world ranking hardly ever goes past 20th, whereas the 12th International player is sometimes 60th in the world,” he added.

“So they are definitely still stronger. There needs to be a way to make it more even. I think we need to have that sort of competition and it will make it very exciting.”

Lee Westwood of England tees off on the 11th hole during his World Golf Final semi-final match against Charl Schwartzel of South Africa in Antalya, southern Turkey, on 11 Oct, 2012.—REUTERS

Sailing

LONDON, 17 Oct—David Ferrer has ensured Spanish representation at the ATP World Tour finals by booking his place at the eight-man finale taking place in London for the fourth year next month.

Ferrer joins his compatriot Rafa Nadal as one of the five players guaranteed a place in the year-ender, although the injured Nadal has not played a match since June and the chances of him lining up at the O2 Arena are diminishing.

World number one Roger Federer, Novak Djokovic and Andy Murray have also qualified.

Ferrer, ranked fifth in the world, has enjoyed another consistent season, qualifying for his fourth consecutive ATP finals on the back of winning five titles this year.

“I am very happy because to qualify for the World Tour Finals is a great achievement,” the 30-year-old Ferrer said.

“Ferrerrr, I think we need to have that sort of competition and it will make it very exciting.”

REUTERS

Tennis

London, 17 Oct—AFP/Ferran Espuna

It’s always one of my goals at the beginning of each year. I look forward to coming back to the O2 in London to play against the best players in the world in November. The atmosphere in the stadium is incredible there.”

Ten-times grand slam champion Nadal has not written off his hopes of appearing in London but earlier this month said it would be difficult after a long recovery from the knee problems that have dogged his career. Should he not recover, the ninth-ranked player, currently Serbia’s Janko Tipsarevic, would qualify for the round-robin tournament.

Czech Tomas Berdych,
French defence minister says military operation in Mali within weeks

PARIS, 17 Oct—French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian on Tuesday unveiled that a UN-backed military intervention in Mali would be launched in a few weeks to help the West African country.

Le Drian told state-run TV channel France2, “The Sahel region becomes a terrorist sanctuary since the spring and the dislocation of Mali,” he added. The French minister’s remarks came after the UN Security Council on Friday unanimously adopted a resolution to give West African countries and the regional bodies 45 days to offer a “detailed and actionable” military plan to help local forces to oust Islamist insurgents that control the country’s northern region. Urging a swift action to end the Malian crisis in line with the UN Security Council resolution, Paris said to support “logistically” the military operation in the country and will not send troops.

Mali, a former French colony, has been struggling to stay as one united nation since military coup in March, when nonlinear Islamists and Tuareg rebel forces seeking an independent homeland took control of the country’s northern region.

Qinghai-Tibet Railway passes environmental assessment

XINHUA, 17 Oct—China’s Qinghai-Tibet Railway has passed the Ministry of Environmental Protection’s environmental impact assessment, and the body has labeled the project harmonious with the environment, authorities told Xinhua on Tuesday.

The ministry launched the assessment on the world’s highest rail system in early October and announced the results to be “satisfying.”

Focus Myanmar TV Programme

**MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL**
(18-10-12 09:30 am – 19-10-12 09:30 am) MST

* News
* Culture Stage
* News
* Intricate Myanmar Silver Art
* The Role of Myanmar Women in Environmental Issue
* News
* European Film Festival 21st Edition Press Conference
* Myanmar Movie “Miss Aragumi”

**MYANMAR TV**
(18-10-12, Thursday) 7:00 am
1. Meta Bhavana By Mingun Sayadaw Phayagi
2. 7:15 am
Dhamma Puja Song
3. 7:25 am
To Be Healthy Exercise
4. 7:30 am
Morning News
5. 7:50 am
Health Programme
6. 8:00 am
Song of National Races
7. 8:05 am
Documentary
8. 8:15 am
Musical Programme
9. 8:15 pm
Case Little Dancers
5. 20 pm
10. Songs For Upholding National Spirit
5. 30 pm
Science and Environment
11. 6:20 pm
The captain of the Costa Concordia Francesco Schettino leaves at the end of the preliminary hearings in Grosseto on 15 Oct, 2012.—Reuters

**Soccer**

The captain blamed for the Costa Concordia cruise liner disaster off the Italian coast that killed 32 people in January shook hands with survivors and apologized on Monday at a court hearing which will decide whether the case goes to a full trial.

Francesco Schettino appeared relaxed and spoke often to his legal team, the lawyer representing 80 US survivors and family members said.

The 114,500-tonne heavy cruise ship capsized on 13 January after approaching the Tuscan island of Giglio to perform a maneuver close to the shore known as a salute. It struck a rock which tore a gash in its hull.

Schettino has admitted he made mistakes but has accused the company of mishandling the response.

File photo taken on 26 Jan, 2011 shows a bird salouyeh, 1,000 km (621 miles) south of Teheran, the Persian Gulf water off Asalouyeh, 1,000 km (621 miles) south of Teheran. The European Union (EU) on Monday reinforced its fresh sanctions against Iran, including banning the import of natural gas from Iran over the lack of progress in nuclear talks.—XINHUA

Dempsey double secures World Cup progress for US

KANSAS CITY, 17 Oct—Clint Dempsey scored twice as the United States booked their place in the final qualifying round for the 2014 World Cup finals with a convincing 3-1 win over Guatemala in Kansas City on Tuesday.

The US finish top of North, Central America and Caribbean (CONCACAF) Group A on 13 points with United States needing goals to get back in the frame for qualifying, the US kept things tight in the second half and could have even extended their advantage—Johnson missed a great chance to score when he mis-kicked inside the area.

The win, and progress to the final six, was never in doubt after the first half and former Germany international Klinsmann was pleased with his team’s display. “The team stepped it up and we created the amount of chances we wanted to. I wished we could have had some goals in the second half too but I thought the performance was really, really good,” he told ESPN television. “The crowd was amazing and really helped the whole team...I think Guatemala never had (even) a little bit of a chance,” he said.
Myanmar, Japan view mutual respect foundation for amity between two peoples

Present at the call together with Vice-President U Nyan Tun were Union Minister for Industry U Aye Myint, Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Dr Kan Zaw, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Zin Yaw and departmental heads. The visiting delegation led by the former member of the House of Councillors in the Diet and Chairman of Japan-Myanmar Friendship Association Mr Hideo Watanabe and party at the Presidential Palace here this morning.

Everglade’s Lippi dismisses rumors of Drogba swoop

BEIJING, 17 Oct— Former Chelsea striker Didier Drogba is not a transfer target for Chinese Super League champions Guangzhou Evergrande, coach Marcello Lippi has said.

The Italian told local media there was no substance behind rumors he was planning a raid for Ivory Coast talisman Drogba, who plays for Guangzhou’s rivals Shanghai Shenhua.

“I know nothing about Didier Droba’s move,” Lippi told Xinhua news agency. “I have never contacted him myself or via anybody since I took charge of Guangzhou.”

According to Chinese media speculation, Lippi has been monitoring Drogba, whose future at Shanghai was thrown into doubt recently due an equity stake row among shareholders.

The China Daily claimed Shenhua chairman Zhu Jun had blogged: “Somebody finally came to make a bid (for Drogba).”

M maize harvested on model plot in Pindaya

PINDAY, 17 Oct— A 50-acre of 888-strain maize plantation provided by Shan State Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Breeding U Sai Has Lu was harvested at the farmland of U Chit Han of Tame Village in Pindaya Township of Dazu Self-Administered Zone on 11 October.

The harvesting ceremony was attended by Chairman of Leading Body of Dazu Self-Administered Zone U Htoo Ko Ko and members, Head of Township Settlement and Land Records Department U Thein Than and staff and local people.

The plantation produced 146 baskets of maize per acre.—Kyemon

Fire hydrants under repair

YANGON, 17 Oct— Water and Sanitation Department of Yangon City Development Committee built 386 hydrants as fire preventive measures in four districts of Yangon Region.

Of them, 21 hydrants in two districts are damaged and these taps are needed to be repaired.

The YCDC laid 104 hydrants in Yangon East District, 95 in Yangon West District, 108 in Yangon South District and 81 in Yangon North District.

Among them, a total of 15 hydrants were damaged in Yangon South District, according to an official of Water and Sanitation Department.

Officials concerned of Yangon City Development Committee are making preparations for repairing 21 hydrants in the open season.

Vietnam’s ruling party chides leaders, signals reform

Dempsey double secures World Cup progress for US

3rd Waxing of Thadingyut 1374 ME

Drogbahas scored eight goals in 10 appearances since his shock move to China, while Guangzhou’s summer signing Lucas Barrios has disappointed. “I don’t know how (the rumors) come,” Lippi added.

“I am satisfied with my forwards. We already have Lucas, Muniqi, Cleo and Gao Lin, we don’t need another Drogba."

Guangzhou currently head the league standings by three points from Jiangsu Shuntian and can retain the title by beating their closest rivals on October 27.

“I am confident about the team,” added the 64-year-old Lippi, who led Italy to the World Cup title in 2006. “I believe we can defend the title.”

Shanghai are languishing in ninth place in the 16-team Chinese Super League 20 points behind Guangzhou despite their lavish pre-season spending spree.

Ito reaches Kremlin Cup quarterfinals

MOSCOW, 17 Oct— Tatsunio Ito moved into the quarterfinals of the Kremlin Cup with a three-set victory over Konstantin Kravchuk on Wednesday. Eighth-seed Ito defeated the Russian qualifier 7-6 (7), 2-6, 6-3 and will face either second-seeded Andreas Seppi of Italy or the Netherlands’ Igor Sijsling in the last eight.

The Korean was trailing 2-6, 5-4 when returning serve. Ito saved two set points to take the second set and then broke Kravchuk’s serve in the 11th game.

Ito, who had lost four of his first six matches on the ATP circuit this year, improved to 13-9 in 2012.

French network sorry for “Fukushima joke” about Japan goalkeeper

PARIS, 17 Oct— A French broadcaster has apologized for showing a composite picture of the Japanese national goalkeeper with four arms and citing the “effect” of the Fukushima nuclear crisis when praising his performance in a recent friendly against France, Foreign Minister Koichiro Gemba told reporters Tuesday in Paris.

The national television station France 2 said it was regrettable that the picture hurt feelings in Japan, denying any intention to cause offense to either the Japanese public or those affected by the nuclear accident at the Fukushima Daichi power complex, according to the Japanese Embassy in France.

In a variety show aired Saturday, the host praised Japan’s historic 1-0 win over France in the soccer friendly. A composite photo of Japan goalkeeper Eiji Kawashima, who made a number of saves in the match, with four arms then appeared on the screen and the host said he thought it was the “Fukushima effect.”—Kyodo

PAGE 7

PAGE 15