Representatives from political parties on 28 August made commitments to put children at the centre of their policies and to further their best interests if elected.

The statements were made during an event titled “Let’s call for one clear winner at the 2015 elections: Children,” which was jointly organized by UNICEF and the NGO Child Rights Working Group (NCR-WG), in cooperation with the Union Election Commission and held in Yangon.

UNICEF and the NGO Child Rights Working Group said in a joint statement that children make up a third of Myanmar’s population and that investing in their futures and meeting their current needs is vital for the country’s development.

During the event, children aged from 12 to 18 voiced their hopes, dreams and concerns about the future to an audience of political hopefuls.

The children urged them to adopt child-focused policy platforms in the lead up to the 8 November general elections.

(See page 3)
Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Union Parliament) Roundup

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Nay Pyi Taw, 28 Aug — The 12th regular session of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw came to a close on Friday. Representatives discussed a Yen 99.850 billion loan for the Ministry of Rail Transportation and the Ministry of Electric Power from JICA during the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Session on Friday.

Some representatives supported the loan in principle but maintained it is important to spend the funds in the most beneficial way. One representative suggested that ministries provide updates to parliament every six months on the work being carried out using foreign loans.

Another representative pointed out that despite the benefits the loan may offer, Myanmar’s current economic slowdown means that the debt will also be a burden. The representative urged ministries to hold themselves accountable for the spending of the funds.

Members ultimately approved the plan to accept a loan from JICA, as well as the monogamy law and the signing of the Maritime Labour Convention 2006.

Later, Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Daw Su Su Hlaing explained ongoing disaster management efforts in flood affected areas. She said that disaster relief efforts could be considered a success overall despite some weaknesses in management. She commended the high level of cooperation between experts, civil society organisations and the government and added that state and region governments will be responsible for the reconstruction of flood-affected areas.

Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann explained the achievements of the 12th Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, which includes the passing of 185 laws, 10 motions and approvals for foreign loans. The speaker concluded the 12th regular session by saying that parliament has served the interests of the country and its people.

MNA

MPs attend final day in 12th regular session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. — MNA

INTERNATIONAL AID FOR REHABILITATION

China’s PLA sends relief supplies to Myanmar’s flood victims by flight

Nay Pyi Taw, 28 Aug — The Chinese People’s Liberation Army on Friday donated relief supplies to flood victims in Myanmar.

Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Hong Liang officially dispatched the items to Lt-Gen Ye Aung of Commander-in-Chief (Army) Office during a ceremony, after the two Ilyushin-76 aircrafts carrying 54.62 tons of relief materials arrived at Nay Pyi Taw Airport.

The supplies donated include tents, generators and blankets and further items will arrive on 29 and 30 August.

Also present at the ceremony was Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Brig-Gen Moe Myint Tun and senior military officials, as well as Chinese Embassy officials.

Myawady

Tatmadawmen unloading relief supplies from aircraft of Chinese People’s Liberation Army at Nay Pyi Taw Airport. — MYANAGY

Contemporary Asian artwork to go on display

By Aye Min Soe

Yangon, 28 Aug — Artists from Thailand, China, Japan, and Myanmar are taking part in a group exhibition at Beikthano Gallery from 29 August to 4 September.

The eight artists, five of whom are from Myanmar, are showcasing 40 contemporary works as part of the Oriental Friendship exhibition in Bahan Township.

“I decided to organise this exhibition as part of an ongoing cultural exchange between Myanmar art masters and their foreign counterparts. I’d like to see more opportunities for art students to take part in art exchange programmes in the future,” said Mon Thet, who is the ex-principal of the Yangon State School of Fine Arts.

He added that during various trips abroad he encountered a great deal of interest in Myanmar’s contemporary art scene, which inspired him to invite international and local artists to combine their works in a group exhibition.

Along with Mon Thet’s work, the other Myanmar artists being featured are Tin Win (Beikthano), Lun Pe, CNK and Thar Gyi.

Foreign artists include Assistant Professor of the Fine and Applied Arts Department of Visual Arts (Painting) Khon Kaen University of Thailand Kanaid Silsat, the award-winning Chinese artist He Si’en and Katsumi Mukai, a Japanese painter and sculptor who is well-known for his nature-inspired creations.

Beikthano Gallery is located at No. 113/3 (b), Kaba Aye Pagoda Road, Bahan Township.

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Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham meets Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency head

Naypyitaw, 28 Aug — Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham met Mr Soichi Noguchi, an astronaut and chief of Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), at the Presidential Palace in Naypyitaw on Friday to discuss future aerospace cooperation between the two countries.

Other discussion points included Japan’s assistance to Myanmar for disaster prevention in Myanmar and delivering long-term aerospace education programmes.

Also present at the meeting was Union Minister Dr Ko Ko Oo and deputy ministers U Tin Oo and Dr San Lwin.—MNA

Myanmar hosts Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund Caravan

Naypyitaw, 28 Aug—The 1st JAIF Caravan Workshop, jointly organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and JAIF Management Team (JMT) of ASEAN Secretariat, was held on 27 and 28 August at Grand Amara Hotel, here.

The workshop was officiated by Deputy Minister U Tin Oo Lwin with a keynote address. Mr Koichi Aiboshi, Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN and Dr Lim Hong Lin, Deputy Secretary General of ASEAN Secretariat made their keynote addresses.

The caravan aims to serve as a platform to share achievements of JAIF-supported projects for best practice, boosting effects and further support schemes for ASEAN member states (AMSs) under JAIF, particularly exploring and creating working-relationships between relevant ministries and JAIF public sector partners.


The JAIF caravan exchanged views on ways and means to develop project proposals, effective implementation and completion procedures for JAIF-supported programmes.

On Friday, the programme was handed over to Lao People’s Democratic Republic.—MNA

Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends Thailand-Myanmar high level meeting

Naypyitaw, 28 Aug— Senior General Min Aung Hlaing Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services attended the third Thailand-Myanmar High Level Committee meeting in Bangkok on Friday.

Co-chairman of Myanmar High Level Committee Senior General Min Aung Hlaing led the Myanmar delegation comprising Lt-Gen Yar Pyae from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) and party, and Myanmar’s military attaché to Thailand. The Thai delegation included the co-chairman of Thailand High Level Committee Thai Supreme Commander of Royal Thai Armed Forces General Worapong Sanganetra, as well as officials.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing emphasised that both countries were keen to engage in mutual trust building and enjoy close ties. He expressed his firm belief that the third meeting would further cement mutual understanding and friendly relations between the two armed forces.

The meeting decisions were subsequently confirmed and signed by both Commander-in-Chiefs.

The three-day talks took place from August 24 to 26 in Bangkok and focused on issues such as drug elimination, exchange visits, joint sporting competitions for Myanmar and Thailand armed forces, counter-terrorism and border security.—Myawady

Politicians pledge to put children first

(from page 1)

During the roundtable discussions, participants focused on strengthening understanding and adherence to the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child (CROC), improving children’s health and access to education, building a drug-free society and eliminating all forms of child labour.

The issue of corporal punishment at schools was also raised, as it contravenes the principles laid out by CROC. “I would be happy if CROC was incorporated into our school curriculum because it is teachers who interact the most with students and they should do so in a positive way,” said Mg Hwan Moe Aung, a 16-year-old Grade 10 student from Shwepyitha Township.

“Putting children at the top of the political agenda is good for political parties, good for voters, good for children, and good for the country. It is a clear winning strategy,” said Mr Bertrand Bainvel, UNICEF Representative to Myanmar.

The revised Child Law was also among the topics discussed during the event, with participants calling for heightened awareness of children’s legal rights. Some said that many parents know little about the legal framework surrounding children’s rights, while children tend to know even less.

“I want to see the rights of all children in Myanmar protected, regardless of geography, ethnicity and religious beliefs,” said Ma Shwe Yee Hnin, a 13-year-old student in Grade 8 from Shwepyitha Township.

Although poverty rates have been declining since 2010, more than 4.4 million children in Myanmar between 5 and 18 years of age do not attend school, while 10 million children live in poverty.—GNM
Paddy donated as floods ebb in Myaung Tsp

MYAUNG, 28 Aug—Water levels have dropped significantly in more than 30,000 acres of farmland in Myaung Township, Ayeyawady Region, however another 20,000 are still waiting for the flooding to ebb.

The Township Agricultural Supervisory Committee recently compiled a list of damaged farmlands.

Government departments in the township donated 200 baskets of paddy seeds, while Htoo Foundation has delivered 500 baskets, the secretary of the committee said.

The secretary of Township Rice Federation pledged to donate 100 baskets of quality paddy seeds to local farmers and rice millers have announced plans to donate paddy seeds shortly.

Goldsmiths and a local social association donated cash to the Township Agricultural Supervisory Committee.—Nay Win Zaw (Myaung)

Thousands of flood victims receive rice donations

TAUNGTHA, 28 Aug—The township natural disaster management committee delivered 243 bags of rice donated by Mandalay Region Department of Relief and Resettlement to flood victims in Taungtha Township on 27 August.

There is enough rice to feed 3,064 flood victims from Thayaye, Kyungyi, Aungzabu, Ywalaygon, Yabe, Ngapinsin and Hmnikin villages for three days.

Township administrator U Aung Kyaw Nyunt oversaw the distribution activities.—Kyaw Myo Naing (Taungtha)

Kanbawza’s Foundation donates over K6 billion to landslide victims

HAKA, 28 Aug—Kanbawza Brighter Future Myanmar Foundation, together with Chin State Chief Minister U Hong Ngai and State Education Officer Daw Win Kyi, donated relief supplies and K1 million each on 27 August to victims of the recent landslides in Chin State’s Haka Township.

A total of 517 houses in Haka collapsed in the landslides.

The foundation also donated K582.5 million for the reconstruction of 10 basic education schools through Chin State Education Officer Daw Win Kyi.

Moreover, the foundation provided K30,000 in cash assistance for 67 patients at Haka People’s Hospital and donated two ECGs, 10 suckers, 10 air sep (oxygen concentrator), four nebulizers, four refrigerators and a washing machine to Kalay People’s Hospital.

In Kalay, the foundation donated construction materials, fuel, school uniforms and stationery.

To date, the foundation has donated more than K6 billion to flood victims in Sagaing, Magway, Bago and Ayeyawady regions and Rakhine and Chin states.

Air KBZ has transported relief supplies to flood victims 49 times at its own expense.—KBZ

Palethwe hybrid paddy seeds supplied to five villages in Myaing Tsp

MYAING, 28 Aug—Magway Region Department of Agriculture has distributed packets of Palethwe hybrid paddy seeds to local farmers in Myaing Township.

“Myaing Township authorities arranged the provision of Palethwe paddy to one-acre areas of farmland in five different villages with the aim of enabling farmers to store quality paddy seeds for next year,” Staff Officer of the Township Agriculture Department U Khin Oo said.

“Department staff also provided instruction on improved cultivation techniques to local farmers,” he added.
Thai opposition slams draft constitution week before vote

BANGKOK, 28 Aug — Thailand’s main opposition party denounced a military-backed draft constitution on Friday saying it “totally disregards the sovereignty of the Thai people,” a week before a junta-appointed council is due to vote on it.

The army seized power in a bloodless coup in 2014, toppling the remnants of the Puea Thai Party-led government of ousted Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra. Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, who as army chief led the coup, has ruled largely unchallenged since.

“This charter totally disregards the sovereignty of the Thai people,” the Puea Thai Party said in a statement. “The true power belongs to agencies and mechanisms which are designed to maintain the junta’s power without checks and balances.”

The National Reform Council (NRC) will vote on the draft on Sept. 6 and if it passes, it will be put to a referendum in January. It needs the support of just over half the NRC’s 247 members.

Of particular concern is a proposal for a 23-member National Strategic Reform and Reconciliation committee dominated by the military that allows security to intervene in a time of crisis.

“Many provisions are contrary to international democratic principles and the rule of law,” Puea Thai said.

Many politicians say they expect the charter to pass the vote but to be rejected in the referendum, which would mean the drafting process has to begin again, delaying an election the junta has promised for next year.

Some groups have held peaceful protests against the junta but opposition activists have largely gone to ground in recent weeks after authorities arrested some student activists.

Bangkok, 28 Aug — Beset by crisis, scandal and a sluggish economy in the first half of her single five-year term, South Korea’s President Park Geun-hye’s approval rating soared in a poll released on Friday after a pact with North Korea brought back the rivals from the brink of conflict.

Park’s rating in a Gallup poll climbed a remarkable 15 percentage points from a week earlier to 49 percent, the highest in nearly a year, after the accord early on Tuesday ended an armed standoff in one of the world’s most dangerous flashpoints and cleared the ground for further engagement with Pyongyang.

She also scored points for sweeping through the negotiation agenda.— Reuters

SEOUL, 28 Aug — Cross-border firing kills nine on India-Pakistan war anniversary

SHINAGAR, India/Lahore, Pakistan, 28 Aug — Cross-border firing between India and Pakistan killed at least nine people on Friday, the day India marked the 50th anniversary of a war between the two South Asian nations.

On the Pakistani side of the frontier, six civilians were killed and more than 40 were treated for wounds in hospital in the town of Sialkot, the media wing of the Pakistani military said.

India’s Border Security Force (BSF) said three civilians had died and 22 were wounded in firing across the frontier in the northern Jammu region. Both said the other side had opened fire first.

The accounts could not be independently verified, but tensions have been running high between the nuclear-armed neighbors since peace talks that were due to be held last weekend were called off at the last minute. The talks had been agreed on at a meeting last month in Russia between prime ministers Narendra Modi of India and Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan, but fell apart over whether the disputed territory of Kashmir should be put on the agenda.— Reuters

Ending standoff with North Korea boosts South’s President Park

South Korean President Park Geun-hye

South Korean President Park Geun-hye called for the accord to cement peace and ensure the survival of North Korea. She had been criticized for not moving fast enough to deal with the nuclear-armed and unpredictable North Korea.

Still, she is not likely to rush into a summit as her style is cautious and she prefers an incremental approach.

Relations between the Koreas are characteristically volatile and could be set for another round of Pyongyang conducting a ballistic missile test on Oct. 10 to mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of the ruling Workers’ Party, as it has hinted it will do.

Lee Junhan of Incheon National University said Park could take advantage from the engagement with the North, but in the end, she would be judged by how the economy fares.

“If we have more outcomes in the follow up to the talks, such as family reunions and more working-level meetings, then the ratings can remain high, but if economic recovery is slow, then her ratings will decline again,” he said.— Reuters
Japan to offer 42 bil. yen in 3-year ODA for women’s empowerment

Tokyo, 28 Aug — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Friday that Japan will extend more than 42 billion yen ($347 million) in official development assistance over the following three years to promote the education of women and girls, as the government aims to push forward its agenda on women’s empowerment as host of next year’s Group of Seven summit.

In a speech at an international symposium in Tokyo on the empowerment of women, Abe also said his government will draw up by year-end a policy package to enhance support for female-head ed households in Japan. “Over the next three years, we will implement ODA of more than 42 billion yen toward high-quality education for women and girls so that they will be economically independent and able to determine the course of their own lives through their own volition,” Abe said.

Around 140 female political and business leaders from over 40 countries and international organizations attended the World Assembly for Women, including Abe’s wife Akie, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, executive director of UN Women, and Marilyn Hewson, president of US aircraft giant Lockheed Martin Corp.

Liberal President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said in her speech that it is important to remember “the great social and economic benefits that come with women’s active participation in public life and society.” The first democratically elected female president in Africa received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011. US first lady Michelle Obama called in a video message for investment in girls’ education. “Our goal is very clear. We want to ensure that every girl on this planet can develop her potential and contribute fully to her family, community and country,” she said.

The Japanese government launched the conference last year to discuss ways to promote women’s social advancement and protect their human rights, with Abe touting it as a “women’s Davos” modeled on the World Economic Forum meetings held annually in the Swiss resort.

Abe has placed women’s empowerment as a key pillar of his economic growth strategy, setting a goal of raising women’s share of leadership positions in the country’s workforce to 30 percent by 2020. During the speech, Abe noted the greatest barrier preventing women from participating in society is “a working culture that endorses male-centered long working hours.”

Japan “wants to emulate” successful attempts by the Nordic countries to “reconcile economic growth and rising birth rates under the banner of active participation by women,” he added.

Japan as host of next year’s meetings of the G7 countries — also comprising Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and the United States — will “push the agenda on women forward vigorously at the Ise-Shima Summit as well,” Abe said.—Kyodo News

US, China stress positives ahead of Xi trip

Beijing, 28 Aug — China and the United States stressed the positives in their complex relationship on Friday during meetings between US National Security Adviser Susan Rice and Chinese officials ahead of a US visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping next month.

While the world’s two largest economies have important mutual interests, like trying to rein in North Korea’s nuclear programme, deep disagreements exist over everything from Internet security to China’s claims in the South China Sea. “We have seen our bilateral relationship evolve and strengthen in recent months. And we have found areas of broadened and deepened cooperation that we are certainly looking forward to building upon,” Rice told China’s top diplomat, State Councilor Yang Jiechi, who outranks the foreign minister.

“At the same time, we have been able to discuss frankly our differences, which we both acknowledge need to be addressed effectively.”

Yang said that both countries had cooperated closely over the Iran and North Korean nuclear issues. “With shared efforts on both sides, China-US relations have maintained a trend of overall positive development recently,” he added.

Rice also met Fan Changlong, one of the vice chairmen of the Central Military Commission, which Xi heads and which controls the Chinese armed forces, the world’s largest.

Fan said that his meeting with Rice was the fourth in one year, which showed the importance the two countries attach to military-to-military relations.

Rice said the United States was committed to developing healthy and stable ties with the People’s Liberation Army, and praised cooperation between the two over the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and efforts to fight piracy in the Gulf of Aden.

There was no mention in any of the comments in front of reporters of cyber issues or the South China Sea.

The United States has repeatedly expressed concern about Chinese reclamation work in the South China Sea. China says the United States is not a claimant nation in the dispute and should stay out of it.

China claims most of the South China Sea, through which $5 trillion in ship-borne trade passes every year, and rejects the rival claims of Vietnam, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Taiwan.—Reuters

Thailand issues arrest warrant for suspect in second blast

Bangkok, 28 Aug — An arrest warrant has been issued for an unnamed suspect in a bomb blast at a Bangkok pier that took place a day after Thailand’s worst ever-bombing killed 20 people at a popular shrine, Thai police said on Friday.

Police spokesman Prawut Thawornsiri said a court issued the warrant based on grainy video footage of a man in a blue shirt kicking a bag into the water near the pier on the night of Aug. 17, soon after the blast at Bangkok’s Hindu Erawan Shrine.

“We issued an arrest warrant for the suspect in the Sathorn pier incident,” police spokesman Prawut Thawornsiri told Reuters, referring to a pier near Bangkok’s Chao Phraya river. The suspect faces charges of unauthorized possession of explosives, exploding a bomb that could cause harm and attempted murder, according to the warrant.

The pier explosion caused no casualties. Police have not definitively linked the two blasts and have offered few answers as to who could be behind the attacks.

In the shrine bombing investigation, police are focusing on a man seen in blurry security camera footage.

The footage shows a man in a yellow shirt and dark hair removing a backpack after entering the packed shrine and calmly walking away from the scene before the explosion.

Last week police issued an arrest warrant for an “unidentified foreign man seen in the video footage along with an image of the suspected bomber.”

P rawut said police were unlikely to issue a picture of the suspected bomber. “We’re unlikely to make a sketch of the suspect as his face is not clear,” he said.

The Erawan shrine bombing has taken a toll on tourism and caused a 17 percent fall in tourist arrivals, Thailand’s tourism ministry said on Wednesday.

Fourteen foreigners were among the 20 people killed in the attack at the famous Hindu shrine in Bangkok’s bustling commercial heart.—Reuters

Divers recover pieces of evidence, for members of the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), after a man threw an explosive from a bridge at Sathorn pier in central Bangkok, Thailand, August 18, 2015.—Reuters
Cancer, transplant patients protest over Venezuela’s medicine shortages

CARACAS, 28 Aug — Venezuelans with chronic medical conditions such as breast cancer, hemophilia and transplants protested in Caracas on Thursday, the latest demonstration to demand urgent medicines in a country beset by shortages.

Around 13,000 people with chronic issues are at risk of severe harm if they do not find fresh supplies of medicines, including those that prevent organ transplants being rejected, according to organizer CodeVida, a non-profit umbrella health group.

A combination of currency controls, slumping domestic production and cross-border smuggling have caused acute shortages of medical supplies in socialist-led Venezuela. With an estimated seven in 10 drugs currently unavailable, rights groups are warning the situation is increasingly untenable.

“The word ‘wait’ is increasingly untenable,” said Vinicio Salazar, head of the anti-government opposition party CodeVida.

“We’re receiving calls from across the country and we don’t know what to say because we don’t have medicine.”

President Nicolás Maduro has framed shortages as part of an “economic war” led by businessmen he accuses of hoarding and smuggling goods.

The government did not reply to requests for comment but Venezuela’s Social Security Institute said in a tweet to Reuters later on Thursday that to date this year its high-cost programme “has invested 169 million bolivars ($27 million) at strongest exchange rate, $243,000 at black market rate” in treatment for transplant patients.

We guarantee treatment for these catastrophic illnesses.”

Maduro’s predecessor, Hugo Chavez, harnessed an oil boom to build free clinics in the slums and health issues such as maternal mortality improved.

But many health statistics have not been published since shortages worsened.

Protesters hold placards during a gathering in demand for medicines in Caracas, Venezuela August 27, 2015.—Reuters

Greece’s Syriza to win election but face setback, poll shows

ATHENS, 28 Aug — Former Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras’ leftist Syriza will emerge as the biggest party in Sunday’s election but face a setback, according to a poll released on Wednesday.

The party has also seen a drop in support since the last election in June.

Greeks, the ally in Tsipras’ former coalition government, scored just 2 per cent, meaning Syriza would be forced to seek another coalition partner.

Tsipras this week ruled out cooperating with the main pro-euro opposition parties - New Democracy, the Socialist PASOK and the centrist To Potami.

The blasts at a warehouse storing chemicals in the port city of Tianjin, not far from Beijing, killed at least 145, and stirred public anger about persistently poor work safety standards and possible health risks from the incident.

Speaking at a meeting, Environment Minister Chen Jining said environmental monitoring would not let up, with 24-hour checking for air, soil and water pollution.

The ministry would release monitoring data to the public in a timely manner and accurately,” the official China Environment News cited Chen as saying.

Chen added that the ministry would “accurately respond to focus points and hot topics for society, the president of breast cancer group FUNCAMAMA.

“These women are going to see their tumor double in 100 days. There’s a risk of death or treatment being extended unnecessarily,” said Rodriguez, waving a sign listing a dozen missing medicines.—Reuters

China says will report pollution information from Tianjin blast site

BEIJING, 28 Aug— China’s Environment Ministry has put in place a 24-hour monitoring system for pollutants from explosions this month at a port and will report accurately and timely data to the public, it said on Friday.

The blasts at a warehouse storing chemicals in the port city of Tianjin, not far from Beijing, killed at least 145, and stirred public anger about persistently poor work safety standards and possible health risks from the incident.

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China has formally detained a dozen people over the explosions and accused 11 officials and port executives of dereliction of duty or abuse of power.

The party has also sacked the head of the work safety regulator, a former vice mayor of Tianjin, for suspected corruption, but without making an explicit link to the Aug. 12 chemical blasts.—Reuters
Dealing with Yangon’s growing canine and feline population

By Myo Myint

ONE distinct feature of Yangon that you will notice wherever you go, whether it is the city centre, or the suburbs, is the hordes of dogs. You find them on streets, you find them in markets, you find them in monasteries and numeraries, you find them in schools, colleges, universities, and government offices and you even find them in some hospitals. You will also find them living in grand mansions, spacious houses and humble, multi-storied apartments. Just as there is an influx of alien men and women, from the east, west, north and south, due to the development of a better mon- ey-making environment in the country, so also there is an influx of exotic looking dogs from abroad due to the emergence of a more prosperous class of people. Alsa- tians, Labradors, Dalmatians, and Dobermans, Terriers and Spaniels no longer merit a second glance in Yangon. There are now more pop- ular breeds like Chihuahuas, Shih Tzus, Beagles, Pugs, Bull Terriers, Rottweilers, and numerous other exotic and generous persons who have set up shelters for stray cats and dogs there on business.

Due to the easy availability of food provided with the compli- ments of kind-hearted people, and the food at local garbage dumps and because of little attempt to control the population of cats and dogs, their numbers are increasing year by year. Many city dwellers feel that the danger and annoyance posed by these animals demand some kind of swift action to limit their numbers. In addition to deci- mating them, there are less cruel ways of keeping their population under control. One such action is using sterilization. Another means is using suitable methods of birth control. It is to be welcomed that a foreign social organization has of- fered to assist the city development council in this very serious matter. Those who keep dogs and cats as pets should be charged license fees and made to follow the rules and regulations prescribed by the city development council such as re- stricting the number of animals that are allowed to be kept in a house, the vaccinations that their pets must be given to make sure that their cats and dogs do not pose a danger to the community or cause public nuisance by allowing their dogs to excrete on pavements, roads and parks.

There is no doubt that the number of stray cats and dogs will need to be reduced drastically through systematic and sustained means, not only because they pose a danger to the health and safety of the public, but also as it would contribute to making our city of Yangon, a clean, beautiful a high standard place. But, for the suc- cessful implementation of this scheme, the full cooperation of pet owners, the general public and the administrators of the city and the assistance of local and interna- tional social organizations are indis- pensable.

Our department is well-known now, sir.

Hla Htut Oo

By Kyaw Thura

I T is encouraging to see the government put its commitment to lifting Myanmar out of least developed to middle-income status into action. Over the past two years, it has spent K9.3 billion on some 2,000 development projects across the country, with a particular focus on tackling pov- erty in rural areas.

The success stories that sprout out of these projects have spurred foreign governments and international financial institutions to pump hun- dreds of millions of dollars into future projects in Myanmar. There is a shared vision of eradicating poverty by developing socio-economic infrastruc- ture through community-based development projects. Such projects will benefit not thousands, but millions of people across the country’s states and regions.

These combined efforts have resulted in a gradual drop in rural and urban poverty rates in Myanmar. Ten years ago, poverty rates stood at 32 per- cent. By 2010 that figure had dropped to 26 percent and the government is targeting a further reduction to 16 percent by the middle of the decade. Having this will put Myanmar well on track to meet the United Na- tions Millennium Development Goals.

Nevertheless, the majority of our people remain trapped in poverty. It is heartbreaking to see children born to poor families shouldering the bur- den of trying cover daily living expenses. Children ought not to be breadwinners. They ought to be stu- dents, so that they can break the vicious cycle of poverty when they enter adulthood. Yet for many families, education is a luxury they simply cannot afford.

There is no greater national asset than its youth. After all, it is they who will lead the coun- try when we no longer can. As adults, the onus is on us to protect them and nourish their talents in the knowledge that their success is a powerful in- dication of national prosperity.

We appreciate your feedback and contribu- tions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email wallace.tun@gmail.com with your name and title. Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish “Letter to the Editor” that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

By Myo Myint

ONE distinct feature of Yangon that you will notice wherever you go, whether it is the city centre, or the suburbs, is the hordes of dogs. You find them on streets, you find them in markets, you find them in monasteries and numeraries, you find them in schools, colleges, universities, and government offices and you even find them in some hospitals. You will also find them living in grand mansions, spacious houses and humble, multi-storied apartments. Just as there is an influx of alien men and women, from the east, west, north and south, due to the development of a better mon- ey-making environment in the country, so also there is an influx of exotic looking dogs from abroad due to the emergence of a more prosperous class of people. Alsa- tians, Labradors, Dalmatians, and Dobermans, Terriers and Spaniels no longer merit a second glance in Yangon. There are now more pop- ular breeds like Chihuahuas, Shih Tzus, Beagles, Pugs, Bull Terriers, Rottweilers, and numerous other exotic and generous persons who have set up shelters for stray cats and dogs there on business.

Due to the easy availability of food provided with the compli- ments of kind-hearted people, and the food at local garbage dumps and because of little attempt to control the population of cats and dogs, their numbers are increasing year by year. Many city dwellers feel that the danger and annoyance posed by these animals demand some kind of swift action to limit their numbers. In addition to deci- mating them, there are less cruel ways of keeping their population under control. One such action is using sterilization. Another means is using suitable methods of birth control. It is to be welcomed that a foreign social organization has of- fered to assist the city development council in this very serious matter. Those who keep dogs and cats as pets should be charged license fees and made to follow the rules and regulations prescribed by the city development council such as re- stricting the number of animals that are allowed to be kept in a house, the vaccinations that their pets must be given to make sure that their cats and dogs do not pose a danger to the community or cause public nuisance by allowing their dogs to excrete on pavements, roads and parks.

There is no doubt that the number of stray cats and dogs will need to be reduced drastically through systematic and sustained means, not only because they pose a danger to the health and safety of the public, but also as it would contribute to making our city of Yangon, a clean, beautiful a high standard place. But, for the suc- cessful implementation of this scheme, the full cooperation of pet owners, the general public and the administrators of the city and the assistance of local and interna- tional social organizations are indis- pensable.

Our department is well-known now, sir.

Hla Htut Oo
The Floods

End July Two Thousand and Fifteen
to Myanmar in its yearly Monsoon Season
cyclonic storm in the Northern part of Bengal Bay
brought dark rain clouds rumbling all the way
driven on to the Western shores, the Rakhine State,
by strong winds in full fury and spate
crossing over the Rakhine Yoma eventually
to the middle and northern parts of the Country
causing torrential rains unheard of before
flooding the land they pass through, for miles around
inundating fields, villages and towns
triggering landslides, destroying huts and buildings
driving people and animals from their dwelling
to higher ground to escape the flooding
and widespread destruction, leaving their belongings.
The awesome natural forces in their devastation
caused, to the roads and bridges extensive destruction
and overflowing of some of the dams resulting
in discharge of excess water to prevent them rupturing
threatening villages and towns downstream
with flash floods, sometimes in the extreme.
Thousands were left devastated and destitute
lands filled with the ‘muck’ of topsoil brought down
from the sides of hills on high ground
damaging thousands of acres of crops around.
There is however ‘A Silver Lining’
to the Dark Clouds’ as goes the saying.
In the aftermath of the floods, like never before
people from all over the country by the score
and members of the Armed Forces and Religious Orders,
Civil Societies, the Cultural Groups and others
came together as one, to lend helping hands
to the victims to assuage their misfortune
and, together with the Government Agencies
and Local and Foreign Non-Governmental Organizations
to help them put them back on their feet
to attain their normal lives and their woes mitigate.
Another ‘Blessing in Disguise’ of the floods again
is that it has showered the ‘Dry’ Region with enough rain
for life giving waters that will sink into the ground
helping in the Region’s ‘Greening’ all round
and the ‘muck’ brought down by the flooding rivers
will along all the way and in the delta gather
enriching the soil, thus contributing to higher yields
of the ever golden crops of the paddy fields.
All in all, the legacy of the floods mayhap be one
of bountiful crops in the years to come.

Incessant rains burst river
banks in Chin State

NAY P’I TAW, 28
Aug—Hours of incessant rain in Tunzang township
of Chin State on Friday
caused the banks of a river to burst above Twikeinzan
village.
The floods swept away 60 homes in Hakalay village,
forcing some 300 people to take shelter at a
rescue camp near Nankinsaung village. Two villagers
narrowly escaped death by drowning, while no ani-
mal deaths were reported.
Chin State Chief Min-
ister U Hong Ngai, together
with local military personnel,
rushed to the scene to
oversee the response oper-
ation.—MNA

Receding water levels
are little cause for joy

Dropping water levels in flood-hit farmland are
proving to be a bittersweet relief, says the Agriculture
Department.
Many farmers must
wade through waist-height mud as they attempt to
inspect the extent of the damage. The majority are
discovering that there is no chance of revitalising their
fields in the short term.
According to data, more than 1.2 million acres
of paddy fields were affect-
ed by floods in 184 town-
ships. The department esti-
mates that 0.7 million acres
will not recover. From last
June, Cyclone Komen trig-
gered heavy rains, causing
floods and landslides across
the country, including Sagaing and Magway re-
ions and Shan and Rakhine States.
“The presence of silt
can improve the health of
the soil,” said U Naing Kyi
Win, deputy director-gener-
al of Agriculture De-
partment, adding that the
floods deposited silt across
most of the farmlands to
an extent.
However an excess of sandy components
will make replanting very diffi-
cult and requires the use of
heavy machinery, said an
official from the Ministry of
Agriculture and Irrigation.
“It is getting late for
us to resume the monsoon season paddy cultivation,”
said U Aung Saw Maung
of Maung-hnama village in
Maungdaw Township.

National Library to launch literati talks

YANGON, 28 Aug—
Plans are underway to
promote the role of the na-
tional library and celebrate
Myanmar’s rich literary heritage by hosting sem-
inars every two months,
said the library’s Director
Daw Mya Oo.
The lectures will
cover a wide variety of topics and
will aim to appeal to appeal
to young people as well as
“instil national values into their minds”, Daw
Mya Oo told The Global
New Light of Myanmar.
The first seminar is
due to take place on 25 September at the Yan-
gon branch of the National Library, which is
located on the first floor of the National Museum on Pyay
Road.
It will feature noted
musician D Yar Mo and a professor from
the National Culture and
Fine Arts University, who
will share their insights on
music and drama during the
half-day event, Daw
Mya Oo said.
“Nowadays, youths
are more interested in pop
and general interest books.
However the library’s collec-
tion boats more than 1,000
rare publications, ancient
manuscripts, and palm-leaf
printed works, along with a
wide selection of academic
and general interest books.
Library members are
entitled to borrow
books and must instead use
the library’s photocopying
services. However Daw
Mya Oo said the policy
may change in the future
as the Ministry of Culture
is drafting a new law that
aims to promote the role
of the National Library
— if the law is passed it is
likely to include borrowing
rights, she said.—GNLM

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

Local farmers replant paddy saplings at flood-hit farmland.
HUNDREDS DIE AS DESPERATE MIGRANTS HEAD FOR EUROPE

TRIPOLI / EISENSTADT, (AUSTRIA), 28 AUG — Libya on Friday recovered the bodies of 82 migrants washed ashore after their overcrowded boat sank on its way to Europe while Austria said 71 refugees including a baby girl had been found dead in the back of an abandoned truck.

Three people were arrested in Hungary in connection with the truck deaths and Austrian police said they suspected a Bulgarian-Hungarian trafficking ring was responsible.

The victims — 59 men, 8 women and four children, including a girl estimated at 1-2 years old — were probably from Syria, police said.

At least 180 were either dead or missing in the Libyan disaster. Both tragedies were a result of a renewed surge in migrants seeking refuge from war and poverty that has confronted Europe with its worst refugee crisis since World War Two.

The UN refugee agency said the number of refugees and migrants crossing the Mediterranean to reach Europe had passed 300,000 this year, up from 219,000 in the whole of 2014.

More than 2,500 have died making the crossing this year, the UNHCR said, compared with 3,500 who died or went missing in the Mediterranean in 2014.

A security official in the western Libyan town of Zuwara, from where the doomed migrant boat had set off, said there had been around 400 people on board. Many appeared to have been trapped in the ship when it capsized on Thursday.

“About 100 people are still missing,” said Ibrahim al-Atouchi, a Red Crescent official, and about 198 had been rescued.

The migrants were from sub-Saharan Africa, Pakistan, Syria, Morocco and Bangladesh, the security official said.

The Italian coast guard said 1,430 people had been rescued in various operations off Libya on Thursday, and a merchant ship sent to the aid of a small boat carrying 125 people recovered two bodies.

The Libyan coast guard has limited capabilities, relying on small inflatables, tug boats and fishing vessels.

Zuwara, near the Tunisian border, is a major launchpad for smugglers shipping migrants to Italy.

Libya is a major transit route for migrants hoping to make it to Europe. Smuggling networks exploit the country’s lawlessness and chaos to bring Syrians into Libya via Egypt while Africans arrive through Niger, Sudan and Chad.

In Europe, refugees and migrants have swept north through the Balkans in recent days, with thousands of Syrians, Afghans and Pakistanis crossing from Serbia into EU-member Hungary, where authorities said more than 140,000 had been caught entering the country so far this year.

Almost all hope to reach the more affluent countries of northern and western Europe such as Germany and Sweden.

Hungary, which is part of Europe’s Schengen passport-free travel zone, is building a high fence along its border with Serbia to confront what it says is a threat to European security, prosperity and identity.

Austrian police had originally put the death toll in the truck found abandoned near the Hungarian border on Thursday at about 50, but later raised the figure to 71.

The refrigerated vehicle was found by an Austrian motorway patrol with fluids from the decomposing bodies seeping from its back door. It had been abandoned on the side of the highway that leads from Hungary to Vienna.

The truck is at a customs building in the village of Nickelsdorf, which has refrigeration facilities and where forensic specialists in white protective suits and yellow rubber boots could be seen wheeling body bags away.—Reuters

COALITION POISED TO RETAKE CAPITAL, BUT YEMEN RISKS GROW

SANAA / RIYADH, 28 AUG — Weeks after seizing Yemen’s southern port, Aden, members of a Saudi-led military coalition and the local fighters it supports say they are poised to oust Ira- ni-allied Houthi forces from the capital Sanaa.

But al Qaeda militants appear to be using the coalition’s gains against the Houthis in the south to entrench their position, as fractures start to show between local groups of fighters and the departure of their common enemy.

The prospect of returning exiled President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi remains distant, five months after an advance on his Aden bolthole by the Houthi, who overran the capital a year ago from their northern base, triggered the Saudi-led intervention.

At stake is not just who will rule Yemen, which regional power will hold sway and whether its persistent jihadist threat can be ended, but its future as a single state.

The Houthis have ramped up the Saudi border, determined to ensure coalition victories and continued airstrikes come at a cost. In southern Taiz, fierce fighting, and the bombardment of civilians, continues.

Attention is increasing-ly turned to Marib, a dry tribal region across the arid hills east of Sanaa, where Saudi-linked media and local sources report a build-up of coalition-backed forces preparing for a concerted thrust towards Yemen’s capital.

The dozens of Emirati troops guarding Aden’s smashed-up airport and their helicopters, tanks and armoured cars lined up on the apron during a recent Reuters visit to the city were am- ple evidence of the ground role played by Gulf states.

It was the direct involve-ment of Emirati ground forces, alongside Yemeni troops trained in Saudi Arabia and equipped with sophisticated heavy weap-ons that allowed the coalition to break months of stalemate to take Aden, informed diplomat-s say.—Reuters

A truck in which up to 50 migrants were found dead, is prepared to be towed away on a motorway near Parndorf, Austria August 27, 2015.—Reuters

A man looks through the window grills of a house that was damaged by a Saudi-led air strike in Yemen’s capital Sanaa August 26, 2015.—Reuters

UN CHIEF SETS OUT FRAMEWORK FOR SYRIA POISON GAS INVESTIGATION

UNITED NATIONS, 28 AUG — Success of a new international inquiry aimed at assigning blame for chemical weapons attacks during Syria’s four-year-old civil war will require full coopera-tion of all warring parties, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said on Thursday.

The remarks were included in a letter to the UN Security Council outlining his plans for an investigation into alleged gas attacks, to be conducted by the United Nations and Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

“Success will ... depend on the full cooperation from all parties, including the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and other parties in Syria,” Ban said in the letter, seen by Reuters.

The aim is “to identify to the greatest extent feasible individuals, entities, groups, or governments who were perpe-trators, organizers, sponsors or otherwise involved in the use of chemicals as weapons, including chlorine or any other toxic chemical.”

Ban said the inquiry will be chaired by an assistant secre-tary-general and two deputies. Earlier on Thursday he said in a statement that “continuing reports of the use of chemical weapons, as well as the use of toxic chemicals as a weapon in the Syrian conflict are deeply disturbing.”

He did not say who will chair the inquiry.

Ban’s letter is in response to the Aug. 7 adoption of a council resolution calling for an investi-gation. The council is expected to respond to Ban within five days.

The investigation will have a one-year, renewable mandate.

Syrian government and opposition forces have denied us-ing chemical weapons, while Western powers say the government has been responsible for chemical at-tacks, including chlorine attacks.

The United States, Russia and Ukraine have accused rebel forces of using poison gas.

Ban was asked to set up the investigation after the United States struck a deal with Russia, a strong backer of Syrian Presi-dent Bashar al-Assad, to demand an investigation.

Syria agreed to destroy its chemical weapons in 2013 in a bid to avoid US military strikes threatened over a sarin gas attack that killed hundreds of civilians.

The OPCW has since found chlorine has been “systemati-cally and repeatedly” used as a weapon, though it is not mandat-ed to do so.

A separate UN investigation had previously determined that sarin gas was used repeatedly in Syria’s deadly conflict, but that inquiry was also barred from assigning blame.

Chlorine’s use as a weap-on is prohibited under the 1997 Chemical Weapons Convention, which Syria joined in 2013. If inhaled, chlorine gas turns to hydrochloric acid in the lungs, which can be deadly.—Reuters
Uber China closes $1 billion fundraising round: sources

San Francisco, 28 Aug — Instagram has added new layout options in addition to its signature square for pictures and videos in a bid to attract more advertisers and to stop users defecting to more flexible services such as Snapchat.

The move is the first major alteration to the photo-sharing, social media service since Facebook Inc bought it for $1 billion in 2012, and addresses the wishes of many of its 300 million users, who have been constrained by the square format.

“With the advent of larger-screen phones and the rise of the big-screen photo as well as the big-screen video, we realized that we needed to evolve our photo and video formats to make them more flexible,” said Debra Aho Williamson, a social media marketing and advertising analyst. “You want people to be able to see more of your ad. It’s something advertisers are definitely going to be interested in.”

One in five photos and videos posted on the service do not fit the square format, Instagram said in a blog post.

“Friends get cut out of group shots, the subject of your video feels cramped and you can’t capture the Golden Gate Bridge from end to end,” it said.

From Thursday, Instagram’s web-based service and its mobile apps running on Google Inc’s Android system and Apple Inc’s iOS will allow portrait and landscape formats, giving both users and paying advertisers more options.

The move should help Instagram in its battle with newer rivals such as Snapchat for users in the fast-moving messaging and media-sharing market.

At the same time, it should attract more advertising revenue for Instagram, which said in June it would open its platform to all advertisers by the end of the year, rather than just to select brands.

Instagram is expected to generate nearly $600 million in advertising revenue this year and $2.8 billion in 2017, according to projections from research firm eMarketer.

By comparison, Facebook, the world’s most popular online social network, generated more than $12 billion in revenue in 2014. The growing service hit one billion users in a single day for the first time on Monday. — Reuters

Nikkei retakes 19,000 on hopes for global economic recovery

Tokyo, 28 Aug — Tokyo stocks advanced 3.03 percent on Friday, with the Nikkei index regaining the 19,000 line on hopes for global economic recovery following a wave of positive US economic data and gains on Wall Street overnight.

The 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average ended up 561.88 points from Thursday at 19,136.32. The broader Topix index of all First Section issues on the Tokyo Stock Exchange finished 49.39 points, or 3.29 percent, higher at 1,549.80.

Opening sharply higher on strong European and US stock market gains overnight, Tokyo stocks extended their gains in the afternoon session on a weaker yen and rises in other Asian stocks, brokers said.

“Global sentiment has begun to brighten, with investors starting to take hints from economies other than China,” said Toshikazu Ma- tsumoto, chief strategist at SMBC Nikko Securities Co.

The US economy’s growth rate in the April to June quarter was revised upward overnight to an annualized real 3.7 percent, a broader upgrade than most in the market expected, indicating “the strength of the US economy,” said Hiroshi Nishi, an general manager of investment research at SMBC Nikko Securities Inc.

“Solid performances in other Asian bourses, particularly Shanghai, provided support to Tokyo stocks, as well, Nishi added. Meanwhile, Japanese government data released just before the opening painted a broadly positive picture of the domestic economy. The core consumer price index was flat in July, beating market forecasts of a narrow decline. Advancing issues overcame decliners 1,822 to 61 on the First Section, while 11 closed unchanged.

All but the air transport section finished higher, with the non-ferrous metal, steel and automaker sections ranking among the day’s best performers.

Mining stocks and oil and coal stocks were in demand as crude oil futures leaped by the biggest margin since August 2012 in New York overnight. Oil and gas producer Inpex climbed 65.00 yen, or 5.6 percent, to 1,229.50 yen, and oil refiner JX Holdings gained 52.10 yen, or 5.7 percent, to 469.00 yen.

Major trading house Mitsubishi jumped 134 yen, or 6.2 percent, to 2,366 yen in its announcement in the morning to acquire a 20 percent stake in Singapore food giant Olam International Ltd. with an arm of its food business in Asia and African regions.

Construction firm Taisei rose 31 yen, or 3.9 percent, to 818 yen a day after Central Japan Railway Co. said it has made a contract with a consortium, including Taisei, in developing a massive tunnel for the railway operator’s planned high-speed magnetically levitated train line. Mitsubishi gener- al contractor Zenitaka, one of the consortium participants, soared 80 yen, or 21.2 percent, to 458 yen.

Tokyo’s volume on the main section totaled 2,959.77 million shares, compared with 2,820.17 million shares Thursday. — Kyodo News

Domestic output of Toyota, Honda falls in July, Nissan sees growth

Tokyo, 28 Aug — The vehicle output in Japan of Toyota Mo- tor Corp. and Honda Motor Co. dropped in July amid the lingering effects of the country’s tax hike on minivehicles, but Nissan Motor Co. saw a year-on-year rise thanks to the popularity of its X-Trail sport utility vehicle, data showed Friday.

Japan’s major automakers have been struggling to shore up domestic demand as consumers remain reluctant to buy new cars following the increases in the consumption tax in April 2014 and the ownership tax on minicars a year later.

Toyota’s domestic production fell 3.2 percent from the previous year to 287,492 units, while Honda’s declined 27.9 percent to 61,244 units. Nissan manufactur- ed 82,668 cars in the month, up 4.3 percent.

Toyota, which surrendered its top spot in global sales to Volkswagen AG in the first half of 2015, sold 137,366 cars in Ja- pan, down 6.6 percent. Its exports fell 12.6 percent to 153,889 units.

Honda’s domestic sales dropped 15.4 percent to 60,045 cars, while its exports nearly tripled to 8,248 units.

Nissan sold 51,075 cars in July, down 8.3 percent, shipping 48,037 cars overseas, up 10.6 percent. — Kyodo News

Facebook’s Instagram adds new photo sizes to keep users, attract ads

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The move is the first major alteration to the photo-sharing, social media service since Facebook Inc bought it for $1 billion in 2012, and addresses the wishes of many of its 300 million users, who have been constrained by the square format.

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By comparison, Facebook, the world’s most popular online social network, generated more than $12 billion in revenue in 2014. The growing service hit one billion users in a single day for the first time on Monday. — Reuters

Apple may launch new iPhones at Sept. 7 event

San Francisco, 28 Aug — Apple Inc (AAPL.O) on Thursday invited journalists and media to an event, where it is expected to unveil new iPhones and potentially a new version of its Apple TV set-top box.

The email invitation includes a colorful Apple logo with the sentence “Hey Siri, give us a hint,” referring to Apple’s popu- lar digital voice assistant.

The company traditionally announces its new iPhones in September. Apple is widely ex- pected to unveil the iPhone 6S and the iPhone 6 Plus S. Typically, the company launches upgraded versions to existing phones under the “S” range.

Media reports have indicated that Apple is preparing for the largest initial production run for its next iPhones by the end of the current fiscal year. New iPhones are also said to feature Force Touch technology, which can distinguish between a light tap and deep press.

Cross Research analyst Shannon Cross said she was also expecting a faster processor on iPhones. “We assume that they may come out with a new iPad at the same time,” Cross said.

When users posed the ques- tion on the forums to Siri on the iPhone 6S, Siri threw back re- sponses such as “I don’t have time when you’re desperate for infor- mation” and “You’ll have to wait until Sept. 7. I bet you were one of those kids who stuck downstairs to open presents early, wer- en’t you?” — Reuters

Apple's iPhone 6s Plus is due to be launched in September. It is expected to feature a faster processor and improved camera.
**Pension fund not responsible for stock market bail-out: official**

**BEIJING, 28 Aug** — A move to allow China’s pension fund to invest in the stock market is not intended to bail out the market but to create long-term and stable returns, said a vice minister of human resources and social security on Friday.

The change will have a positive effect on China’s real economy and support a healthy capital market, but the core purpose is to gain long-term and stable yields for the fund, vice minister You Jun said at a press conference.

The fund’s management must prioritize safety, and the timing of the fund’s entry into the stock market will be decided by the market, You added.

The State Council finalized guidelines on Sunday allowing the country’s pension fund to invest in new products, including the domestic stock market.

The new policy came as China’s stock markets continue to decline, beset by shrinking turnover and greater volatility. The key Shanghai index plunged more than 30 percent from its June peak, wiping out most of this year’s gains.

Under the new guidelines, up to 30 percent of the pension fund’s net assets can be invested in stocks and equities. The fund has assets of around 2 trillion yuan ($326.8 billion U.S. dollars) that could be invested, meaning up to 600 billion yuan could theoretically go into the stock markets.

The pension fund has been mainly parked in banks or invested in treasury bonds with low yields, which has long spurred calls for change as China faces the challenge of caring for its growing elderly population.—Xinhua

**Deported Iranian national arrested in India**

**NEW DELHI, 28 Aug** — Indian authorities have arrested a deported Iranian national at the international airport in the southern city of Bengaluru, a senior police official said Friday.

“Farzad Jafari Oulia, a disk jockey by profession, was arrested in India in March 2014. He was arrested at Bengaluru’s Kempegowda International Airport in the wee hours of Thursday,” he said, on condition of anonymity.

“He was heading to Turkey, interrogations have revealed.” A probe has been ordered into how the Iranian national managed to slip into India, despite being deported last year and blacklisted for 10 years, the official said.—Xinhua

**Thousands march in Guatemala to pressure president to resign**

**GUATEMALA CITY, 28 Aug** — Tens of thousands of Guatemalans took to the streets on Thursday to demand the resignation of President Otto Perez, who has refused to quit in the face of accusations by his attorney general that he was involved in a lucrative customs racket.

Carrying banners proclaiming, “Guatemala has no president,” demonstrators staged marches from the capital to the regions while businesses ranging from McDonald’s restaurants to brewery Cerveceria Centro Americana joined in support of the protest.

“It can’t be that he looks the other way and ignores the fact the people don’t want him any more,” one marcher, publicist FelipeFlores, 25, said of Perez.

Perez, a 64-year-old retired general, reiterated that he would not resign and pledged instead to submit to the legal process against him, which has engulfed the country in crisis just days before presidential elections due on Sept. 6.

The Supreme Court of Guatemala this week accepted Attorney General Thelma Aldana’s request to impeach Perez, but it must still pass Congress to be successful.

Perez has already survived one attempt by Congress to strip him of his presidential immunity as a two-thirds majority is required for the decision to go against him.

Congress has named a five-strong panel to decide if there is enough evidence to warrant prosecuting Perez. Pressure for him to resign is mounting, but if he does, he may suffer the same fate as former Vice President Roxana Baldetti, who was arrested last week for her alleged part in the customs fraud enveloping Perez, which is known as La Linea.

While saying he planned to stay on, the president conceded to Guatemalan radio that resignation was an option. “It’s a personal decision, I have asked God for great wisdom so I can be enlightened and take the best decisions for the Guatemalan people,” Perez said.

The accusations against Perez are part of a series of graft scandals that have rocked the nation in the last four months, and probes against opposition lawmakers have also dented their hopes of taking the presidency in the upcoming elections. Opinion polls suggest no candidate will secure the 50 percent of votes required to win outright on Sept. 6 so that the vote is likely to go to a second round run-off on Oct. 25.—Reuters

**Supreme Court head becomes Greece’s 1st female PM**

**NEW DELHI, 28 Aug** — At least four persons have been killed and 45 others injured in attacks by wild animals in the northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh since April this year, a senior minister has reportedly said.

“Some four persons were killed, 45 injured and one rendered permanently disabled in separate incidents of attacks by wild animals from April 11 to July 31 in Himachal Pradesh,” the state’s Forest Minister Thakur Singh Bharamauri was quoted as saying in the state Assembly Wednesday.

He added: “A total of 4 killed, 45 injured in attacks by wild animals in northern Indian state

**Australian surfers mourn death of surfer in Indonesia**

**SYDNEY, 28 Aug** — Surfers on the east coast of Australia are holding vigil on Friday after an Australian man was killed while surfing in Indonesia’s Mentawai Islands.

Ronald Stephen Schneider, 54, passed away at 6 p.m. local time on Tuesday after being slammed into rocks by a wave off the Mentawai Islands in Western Sumatra. The Mentawai Islands are a popular destination for Australia’s surfing community, though only the experienced dare surf the dangerous waves found there.

Local media reported on Friday that Schneider was a “quiet and gentle soul” who was “deeply loved” within the close-knit Sawtell community on the New South Wales mid north coast.

Schneider’s brother-in-law, Michael Greenwood, posted a tribute to social media, “You went out in the best way possible. Surfing in a beautiful tropical location, you always had a way about you.” Australian officials are providing support to Schneider’s family in Australia while Indonesian authorities prepare to repatriate the man’s body.—Xinhua
India to import 1,000 tons of onions to check retail prices

New Delhi, 28 Aug — India has decided to import 1,000 tons of onion at 685 US dollars per ton, in a bid to rein in retail prices of the commodity. A government committee held a meeting, where it has been decided that a tender will be floated for the import of onions Saturday, a senior official said Friday. “The committee has approved the offer for import of 1,000 tons of onion at 685 US dollars per ton,” Indian Agriculture Additional Secretary Avinash K Srivastava told the media. The imported onions would be supplied to state governments after seeking their requirements, the official said. Onions prices have touched sky-high rates in retail markets across India.—Xinhua

Construction of Japan-funded power plant starts in Indonesia

Jakarta, 28 Aug — After four years of delays, construction of a controversial, $4 billion thermal power plant funded by an Indonesia-Japan consortium on the main island of Java kicked off Friday.

The groundbreaking ceremony, attended by Indonesian President Joko “Jokowi” Widodo, took place in Central Java Province’s Batang Regency amid objections from some villagers there whose land was forcibly taken by the government to build the plant.

In his speech, Jokowi described how the islands of Java and Bali are badly in need of electricity and warned the country would face an energy crisis in 2018 if the project fails to proceed.

“This power plant is for Java and Bali so that our children can study well, our fishermen can buy freezers,” he said.

The 2,000-megawatt coal-fired power plant, meant to supply electricity to 13 million people in Central Java, has been promoted by PT Bhimasena Power Indonesia, a consortium of Japan’s Electric Power Development Co., J-Power, which is owned by Sumitomo Electric Industries Ltd., Itochu Corp., and Indonesian coalmining company Adaro Energy.

Construction of the power plant, one of the biggest of its kind in Southeast Asia, was initially slated to start in 2012, with commercial operation expected to commence by 2016.

But land acquisition for the project has been delayed amid on-again, off-again negotiations with local residents dominated by concerns over its environmental impact.

On June 30, the Central Java provincial government issued a decree allowing the state electricity company PLN to take over the land from the residents even as villagers owning a total of 12.51 hectares of land were still trying to defend their land.

The project itself needs 226 hectares of land straddling three sub-districts in Batang Regency.

“We farmers, who rely on our livelihoods on agricultural land to feed our families, pay our children’s school fees and meet other daily necessities, strongly oppose the Batang power plant’s construction,” said Karmat, a landowner in Ujungnegoro village.

According to Anri Fiyanto, climate and energy campaigner for Greenpeace Indonesia, Ujungnegoro and four other villages in Batang Regency — Karanggeneng, Roban, Wonokerso and Ponowareng — will be affected by the project, threatening the livelihoods of more than 15,000 small-scale fishermen and farmers and their families.

The consortium claims the power plant will be built on land that is unproductive from the agricultural point of view.

But Fiyanto said the area in question has approximately 300 hectares of productive farming land, including irrigated paddy fields, rain-fed rice fields and jasmine plantations that will be affected.

Greenpeace Indonesia also issued a statement that the power plant will also pump 10.8 million tons of carbon into the atmosphere a year, as well as air pollutants including neurotoxins such as mercury that will bring deadly consequences to Indonesia’s environmental and human health.

Supporting the consortium, the government says the power station will feature high generation efficiency using an ultra-supercritical coal-processing system that has a low impact on the environment.

In July last year, the consortium declared force majeure over the construction of the project, citing “the instability of the situation at the site,” an allusion to sometimes daily protests and occasional clashes between residents and security forces.—Kyodo News
**ABBA piano seen raising money, money, money at auction**

LONDON, 28 Aug — The piano used to play the glissando that kicks off ABBA’s disco hit “Dancing Queen” will be one of the star attractions at a rock and pop auction at Sotheby’s next month where it is expected to sell for up to 800,000 pounds ($1.24 million).

The instrument comes with a certificate of authentication from ABBA co-founder Benny Andersson, who describes it as “one of a kind and a great source of inspiration”.

It was designed by Swedish instrument-maker Georg Bolin and comes from the collection of Atlantic Grammofon, formerly known as Metronome Studios, in Stockholm where ABBA recorded the song released in 1976, Sotheby’s said on Thursday.

Bolin’s piano was built for the American jazz pianist and composer Bill Evans, who died in 1980. It was described in the New York Times in 1964 as a “Space-Age piano” that “gives the pianist the sensation of playing ‘directly on the strings’ as a guitarist would,” Sotheby’s said.

“The piano itself is an instrument of real importance and with the added ABBA provenance we expect it will have worldwide appeal,” Philip Errington, Sotheby’s Specialist in Books and Manuscripts, said in a statement. The London sale is scheduled for Sept 29.

Sotheby’s said John Lennon’s Steinway upright piano, on which he composed “Imagine”, sold for 1.67 million pounds in 2000 while the upright piano in Rick’s Cafe in the movie “Casablanca” sold for $3.4 million in 2014.

**Spike Lee, Gena Rowlands, Debbie Reynolds to receive honorary Oscars**

LOS ANGELES, 28 Aug — Director Spike Lee and actresses Gena Rowlands and Debbie Reynolds will receive honorary Oscars for their filmmaking legacies, the organizers of the world’s most coveted movie awards said Thursday.

Lee and Rowlands will receive the Honorary Award while Reynolds will be given the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award by the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences.

“We’ll be celebrating their achievements with the knowledge that the work they have accomplished — with passion, dedication and a desire to make a positive difference — will also enrich future generations,” Academy President Cheryl Boone Isaacs said in a statement.

The recipients will be celebrated at the Academy’s annual Governors Awards on Nov. 14.

Lee, 58, rose through the ranks of independent film to deliver work such as 1989’s “Do the Right Thing” and 1992’s biopic “Malcolm X,” earning two Oscar nominations along the way, including a best documentary nod for 1997’s “4 Little Girls.”

The African-American director is also an outspoken voice for the black community, often exploring race relations in his films.

Rowlands, 85, has a career spanning nearly seven decades with 40 feature films including 1974’s “A Woman Under the Influence” and 1980’s “Gloria,” both directed by her husband, John Cassavetes, and earning her Oscar nominations.

Bolton, 83, who rose to fame with her starring role in 1952’s “Sinful in the Rain,” has campaigned for raising awareness and treatment of mental health issues and is a founding member of charity organization Thalians. She earned an Oscar nomination for 1964’s “The Unsinkable Molly Brown.”

Previous recipients of the Honorary Awards include Steve Martin, Lauren Bacall and Robert Redford, while Hollywood humanitarians such as Angelina Jolie, Elizabeth Taylor and Oprah Winfrey have received the Jean Hersholt award.

**‘Labyrinth of Lies’ to be Germany’s Academy Award entry**

LOS ANGELES, 28 Aug — Filmmaker Giulio Ricciarelli’s feature “Labyrinth of Lies” will represent Germany as its entry for the Foreign Language film at Oscar.

The movie, which is distributed in the US by Sony Pictures Classics, centers on a young public prosecutor, Johann Radmann, who sets out in the 1950s to expose the full story behind the mass killings at Auschwitz, reported Variety.

Alexander Fehling plays Radmann, for which he won the Bavarian Film Award for best actor.

The decision was made by an independent nine-member jury appointed by German Films, and announced by representative Dagmar Hirtz in Munich.

**Adèle release next album in fall?**

LOS ANGELES, 28 Aug — Oscar-winning singer Adele will reportedly release her much-awaited follow-up to 2011’s album “21” will hit stores this winter.

The record may or may not be called “25,” reported Entertainment Weekly. The magazine appears to make the revelation on the Lady Gaga-getting-cover of its latest issue.

Above a picture of the bloodied Mother Teresa, there’s a headline that reads, “Fall Music Preview: New Albums From Adele / Prince / Disclosure / Lana Del Rey.”

“21” was a massive success, both critically and commercially. It spent multiple weeks atop Billboard 200 and won multiple Grammys including the coveted Album of the Year Award. On her 26th birthday last year, she hinted that the LP’s follow-up would be titled “25” and would arrive before 2015. So far, no new music from the British beauty has arrived.

**Clive Owen makes Broadway debut in Pinter’s ‘Old Times’**


The “Children of Men” and “Closer” actor, who has London theater credits to his name, will appear alongside fellow Brits Eve Best, who previously starred in Pinter’s “The Homecoming”, and “True Detective” actress Kelly Reilly.

In the play, Owen’s character Deeley and his wife Kate receive a visit from her longtime friend Anna, an encounter where memories are soon viewed as threats amidst building emotions.

“...it’s a really stunning piece of writing and three great parts. I love the part and I love the fact that the Doug (Hodge) our director has worked with Pinter a lot. Owen said at a photo call for the play on Wednesday night. “I feel very comfortable with him at the helm because he understands the world so well.”

British actor and Tony Award winner Douglas Hodge has starred in several of Pinter’s plays. He also makes his Broadway directorial debut with “Old Times”.

“I’ve worked with Pinter for more or less 10 years, almost exclusively really... He was a great mentor, a great friend, almost a father figure to me,” he said of the playwright who died in 2008. “I’ve loved this play... I think it’s probably one of the best plays in the last 50 years.”

Radiohead singer and songwriter Thom Yorke has written the music for the play. “Old Times” officially opens on Oct. 6 at the American Airlines Theatre, running until Nov. 29. Previews start on Sept. 17.

**Cast members Kelly Reilly (L), Clive Owen (C) and Eve Best pose together during a photo call for the Broadway revival of ‘Old Times’ at American Airlines Theater in New York, August 26, 2015.—Reuters**
Gareth needs goals as Real Madrid entertain Betis

MADRID, 28 Aug — Real Madrid’s players know they have to find their scoring boots when they play their first home game of the new season at home to newly promoted Real Betis on Saturday night.

Last weekend’s 0-0 draw against Sporting Gijon (another new season at home to newly promoted Real Betis on Saturday night). — (For Detailed Schedule – www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)

Gareth needs goals as Real Madrid entertain Betis

Gareth Bale is one player who has had the finger of blame pointed at him by Real Madrid’s ever demanding fans and the press and although he has been active in a new role behind the striker, Bale has yet to produce the goods in terms of goals and any misses on Saturday are likely to be seized on by supporters in the Santiago Bernabeu, although he defended their attitude on Friday in an interview on Real Madrid TV. “The fans treat me well and it’s a dream to be able to wear the Real Madrid shirt,” commented the Welshman.

Other options open to Benitez are midfielder’s Isco and James Rodriguez and James especially will be looking to return to the first team after playing in the Copa America. The Colombians have a good record in front of goal and could be pressing for a return.

Another player who could be back is striker Karim Benzema, who has recovered from the injury he picked up in pre-season and he could provide the extra creativity which has been missing from his side. — Xinhua

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Cat Café!

New vocabs join Oxford Dictionary

BEIJING, 28 Aug — Ever wonder WTF is a proper vocabulary? Well it is. Check out the latest Oxford Dictionaries online version. A list of new words have been added to the online dictionary on Thursday.

The list includes: Cat café: “A cafe or similar establishment where people pay to interact with cats housed on the premises.”

Manspreading: “The practice whereby a man, especially one traveling on public transportation, adopts a sitting position with his legs wide apart, in such a way as to encroach on an adjacent seat or seats.”

Awesomesauce: “Extremely good; excellent”

AJ Desko: “While working at one’s desk in an office (with reference to the consumption of food or meals).”

Cupcakery: “A bakery that specializes in cupcakes.” Beer o’clock — Xinhua

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PICTURE OF THE DAY

Artists of a theater company take part in the inaugural parade of the 10th International Street Theater Festival “Al Aire Puro” in Bogota, Colombia, on Aug. 27, 2015. The festival is held from Aug. 27 to 30 and about 60 performances will be held in various parts of the city. — Xinhua

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Myanmar International

(29-8-2015 07:00 am~30-8-2015 07:00 am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03 Am News
07:27 Am Great Shwedagon- The Exhibition Hall Of The Great Chronicle Of Buddha
07:53 Am Kayah
08:03 Am News
08:26 Am Myanmar Traditional Festival
09:03 Am News
09:26 Am Home Grown Treasure
10:03 Am News
10:26 Am Taung Byone Nat Festival (Ep-4)
10:43 Am A Myanmar Tapestry

Prime Time

(11:00 Am – 03:00 Pm) - Monday Repeat (07:00 Am – 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Pm – 07:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am – 11:00 Am)

07:03 Pm News
07:26 Pm Ngapali, Unique Spot To Relax
07:44 Pm Myanmar Puppet
07:51 Pm Today Myanmar: Rising Insurance Infrastructure
08:03 Pm News
08:26 Pm Hanthawaddy U Win Tin “A Fearless Man” (Episode-1)
08:50 Pm Myanmar Masterclass: Artist Khin Maung Zaw

(MR TV Youth Programme)

(11:00 Pm – 11:00 Pm)–Today Repeat (09:00 Am – 11:00 Am)
(For Detailed Schedule – www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)
Professional, amateur golfers participate in Myanmar Golf Tour

PyinOoLwin, 28 Aug — The 5th Myanmar Golf Tour kicked off at PyinOoLwin Golf Course on 27 August, led by Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Soe Htut, Commandant of Defence Services Academy Maj-Gen Myint Maw, Vice Chairman of CB Bank U Yan Aung and President of Myanmar Golf Federation and Myanmar PGA U Ko Ko Aye teed off at the opening ceremony. Altogether 34 professional golfers and 119 amateur golfers, totaling 153 participate in the golf tour up to 30 August. The gold tour was sponsored by CB Bank Ltd for turning out talented new generation golfers. —GNLM

Warriors defeat Home Affairs in basketball championships

By Ko Moe

YANGON, 28 Aug. — The Warriors took home the trophy at this year’s basketball championships after scoring a 69-53 victory over Home Affairs in the final played at Yangon’s Aung San Gymnasium on Friday. Blank Club won the men’s U-19 event, which was won by Sagaing Region in the women’s U-19 competition. Home Affairs women’s team won the championship trophy in the open class, with runners-up going to the Ladies Club. A cash prize of K600,000 and the championship trophy went to the Warriors club, while K500,000 went to the Home Affairs women’s team, K400,000 and trophy to the Blank men’s U-19 team and K300,000 and trophy to the Sagaing Region women’s team.

Best player awards went to Jason from the Warriors in the open event, Aung Aung from Sagaing Region in the men’s U-19 event and Su Sandi Tun from Sagaing Region in the women’s U-19 event.

Altogether 19 teams participated in the men’s open event, three in the women’s open event, 11 in the men’s U-19 event and four in the women’s U-19 event. —GNLM

Bolt and Gatlin headed to Brussels, but will not meet

BEIJING, 28 Aug — Usain Bolt and Justin Gatlin will race again in Brussels next month, but not against each other, organisers of the Van Damme Diamond League meeting said on Friday.

“No chance for rematch,” meeting director Wilfried Meert told Reuters in an email. “Will be Gatlin in the 100 and Bolt in the 200.”

Bolt ended American Gatlin’s two-year unbeaten streak with victories in both the 100 and 200 metres at the Beijing world championships, though his participation at the Sept. 11 meeting in Brussels is contingent on fitness, his agent said.

“Usain’s only scheduled race this year after Beijing is Brussels provided he comes through this meet fit and healthy,” Ricky Simms said in an email to Reuters.

“When he gets back to Europe next week we will see how he recovers from the exertions of the past week. “The big goal is Rio.”

Bolt is expected to seek his third consecutive set of triple Olympic gold medals in Brazil next year.

Prior to Beijing, Bolt and Gatlin had not met since September 2013 when the Jamaican won the 100 metres and Gatlin finished fourth in Brussels. Overall, Bolt holds an 8-2 advantage in career clashes. —Reuters

Chelsea pursuing China defender Zhang

LONDON, 28 Aug. — Chelsea have made an offer for China and Guangzhou Evergrande defender Zhang Linpeng, Chinese media reported on Friday.

The Premier League champions sent a contract on Wednesday and hope to secure the 26-year-old right back before the summer transfer window closes on Sept. 1, Titan said.

“I am very happy and very excited to finally have this formal invitation,” the newspaper quoted Zhang as saying. “I’ve worked hard and waited these five-six years for my dream of playing overseas, and finally have recognition from the English Premier League.”

Chinese Super League champions Guangzhou were not contactable to verify the report.

Zhang and the clubs were working through the terms of his transfer, Titan said. Even if were to go ahead, Zhang said he did not expect to get straight into Premier League football.

Players from non-European Union countries are subject to tighter work permit requirements in Britain, and Chelsea might elect to loan the defender to a European side for a period of time to pave his way into the league.

“Although I’m unable to play Premier League directly, I believe (Chelsea) will have the most professional arrangements regarding my permit,” Zhang added.

“I have no worries at all about the negotiations.”

Technically proficient and solidly built, Zhang has been a key player in Guangzhou’s success in China and their run to the 2013 Chinese Super League title. He carries the nickname “Zhangmos” in China in a nod to Real Madrid’s stalwart defender Sergio Ramos. Chelsea have endured a sketchy start to their English title defence, shipping an unusually high seven goals in their first three matches. —Reuters