INVESTMENT APPROVALS

Myanmar Investment Commission gives nods to 17 local, foreign firms in September

A manufacturing plant in Hlinethayar Township, where some industrial zones are located. PHOTO: YE MYINT

THE Myanmar Investment Commission has given the green light to 17 local and foreign firms to conduct business in the country as joint ventures, locally owned firms or wholly foreign-owned enterprises so far this month, according to a statement issued by the commission this week.

The businesses approved at the commission’s 16/2015 meeting include those involved in the manufacturing and marketing of wood-based products, construction materials, hospital equipment, garments, power transformers, footwear, plastic and jet fuel products, marine product processing and production, rearing of oysters and cultural pears, hotel services, upgrading of jetties and container terminals, private clinics and diagnostic services.

In a sign of continuing investments in the country’s hospitality industry, San Yamon Co., Ltd will build a hotel on 13 acres of land in Nay Pyi Taw’s hotel zone while Family Business Group Hotel Limited will engage in hotel services in Yangon.

As part of further expansion of the country’s garment industry, three companies—Simon Labels Myanmar, Pathein Just and Able Glad Myanmar—will establish clothing manufacturing businesses in industrial zones in the Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions. The three firms will be operated as wholly foreign-owned investments.

In addition, Myanmar Sule Terminal Limited will undertake jetty upgrading and construction of a container terminal in Yangon Port as local investment while Bumrungrad Myanmar Company Limited will as a form of joint venture investment provide diagnostic services at its private clinic in Yangon.

Other enterprises operated by an approved manufacturer in Yangon will produce various kinds of goods including construction materials, hospital equipment, plastic and footwear products and conduct fish and shrimp processing and production.

One of them will establish a manufacturing, installation, repair and maintenance plant for transformers, switchgears and related accessories in Yangon while another company will conduct artificial breeding of oysters to culture pearls in Taninthayi Region.

Among the firms, National Energy Puma Aviation Services Co., Ltd was allowed a temporary permit to be a joint venture with Ministry of Energy. With its location at No (1) Refinery and Yangon International Airport in Yangon, the enterprise will conduct management and marketing of jet fuel products including importation, storage, distribution, transportation and fueling.

According to informed sources, the country’s manufacturing, telecommunications and hospitality sectors are set to be prioritized in allowing investment permits to local and foreign firms this fiscal year.

Myanmar has a full-year target of USD6 billion FDI for 2015-2016, and has already attracted USD2.4 billion in the first three months of this budget year from 1 April to 30 June.—GNLM
More than 60 works by late art master Kin Maung Yin showcased to public

A visitor looks at art works of Kin Maung Yin at Gallery Sixty Five. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

Tamil Hindu Foundation (Central) of Myanmar donates to flood-hit delta village

Tamil Hindu Foundation (Central) of Myanmar hands over relief items worth K 11 million to flood victims in Nyaungdon Township, Ayeyawady Region. PHOTO: SOE WIN

Preventive measures taken against dengue fever

Dengue preventive measures taken in Tatkon. PHOTO: TN SOE LINN

Carlsberg Beer Academy Launches to Support Local Partners

Carlsberg Beer Academy aims at delivering the best possible beer experience. PHOTO: CARLSBERG

Rural Development Department active in digging wells

Rural Development Department under the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development Department in Dawei, Taninthayi Region, spent nearly K400 million to dig wells in 40 villages in the region. Under the program, the department dug 6 wells in five villages spending K23.76 million. The program was supervised by U Pyi Phyo Hein, a local businessman. PHOTO: PHO SHWE THUN (DAWEI)
Tatmadaw’s role in national politics must be valuable: Senior General Min Aung Hlaing

THE role of the Tatmadaw in carrying out the national politics must be valuable, said Commander-in-Chief of Defence Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

At a meeting with personnel of local regiments and battalions under the Eastern Command in Taunggyi Saturday, the Senior General urged them to strive for reliability for the people by keeping the disciplines and in obedience to the instructions as they are carrying out the duty of defence and national politics.

To achieve the goal of stability and development of the country, armed conflicts should be ceased and activities on the road to democracy and efforts to establish the rule of law in the country should be in conformity with the law, he added.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing also urged the personnel of the Tatmadaw to protect the interests of the people and to follow dos and don’ts in order not to cause any wrongs with the peoples in order to secure the unity of the national peoples and peace.

The Tatmadaw is planning to honour its members who did their duty with loyalty to the country as part of efforts for bringing the country on the path to democracy.

During his visit to the Tatmadaw Hospital in Taunggyi, the Senior General greeted local people who received eye operation there.

He also held talks with U Aung Kham Htii, the Patron of Pa-O National Federation, over peace and development of the Pa-O Self-Administered Zone.—GNLM

What they stand for: campaigns aired

Outstanding children of writers honoured by Myanmar Writers’ Association

UNION Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Myint Aung pledged his party would emphasise the improvement of transport infrastructure as it could pave the way for socioeconomic development. The party viewed the renewed spirit of fraternity would ensure simultaneous growth in all parts of the country, with the CEC member pledging that encouragement would be given to promotion of education, health, sport, culture and freedom and faith.

ANDP’s Central Executive Committee member U Thel Yel said that his party would emphasise the improvement of transport infrastructure as it could pave the way for socioeconomic development. The party viewed the renewed spirit of fraternity would ensure simultaneous growth in all parts of the country, with the CEC member pledging that encouragement would be given to promotion of education, health, sport, culture and freedom and faith.

KUDP’s Chairman U Saw Daniel said this party would strive for the emergence of a federal system that could cement national consolidation and guarantee equality. He pledged his party’s cooperation with people from all walks of life in a bid to realize a political system that could satisfy the common social needs in health, education, agriculture and transport sectors.

NPP’s Chairman U Win Myint Aung pledged his party would initiate a culture of cooperation between the government and the people in the interests of the country and the people. The chairman added that his party had plans to enable the country to be on a par with its neighbours and world’s nations in terms of sectorwide development. He assured a society where reciprocal trust, friendship and respect prosper.—GNLM

Union FM discusses elections, signing of nationwide ceasefire agreement, matters relating to migration with UN chief

UNION Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Myint Aung, who is currently in New York, the United States of America, to attend the 70th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), held a talk at the invitation of the Council on Foreign Relations, an American publisher and think tank, in their headquarters in the afternoon of 24 September 2015.

The Union Minister responded in details to the questions on Myanmar’s relations with its neighbours, signing of nationwide ceasefire agreement, the current and future role of Tatmadaw, enactment of laws including Myanmar Buddhist Women’s Special Marriage Law, social and economic development and flow of foreign investment to Myanmar, among others.

The Union Minister met with the United Nations Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon in the afternoon and exchanged views on voting rights in forthcoming elections, signing of nationwide ceasefire agreement, matters relating to migration and support to the United Nations Summit for the adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.—MNA

Outstanding children of writers honoured by Myanmar Writers’ Association

MYANMAR Writers’ Association on Sunday honored the outstanding offspring of writers who had passed the previous (2014-2015) matriculation exam with flying colours. It is the association’s fourth time of honoring the outstanding children.

Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Information U Tin Swe, who attended the occasion, encouraged the students to follow their dreams, choose their own profession and make it happen with courage.

The association’s president U Tin Hlaing (pseudonym -La- etwinta-Saw Chit) urged the students to pursue further studies and serve their country and its people. He warned them against loosing national identities.

The 23 outstanding students across the country, included one student who got six distinctions (all subjects), one five-distinction winner, 4 four-distinction winners, and 4 three-distinction winners.

Donations to the association were also presented at the event, where Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy-Speaker U Nanda Kyaw Swa, Yangon Region minister U Nyan Tun Oo and MWA members attended. Besides honoring the outstanding students, the association also holds respect paying ceremonies to doyen writers and opens writing courses to new generation of enthusiasts.—Myat Sandy Thin Zaw

Media slots for three political parties announced

NAY PYI TAW—MRTV, Hluttaw channel, MWD (Variety), Myanmar Radio and Shwe FM will broadcast campaign speeches by representatives from Kachin State Democracy Party, The Kachin National Congress for Democracy and Lahu National Development Party (L.N.P.P) on 27 September.—GNLM

ELECTION COUNTDOWN

Make your voice count. Cast your vote. 42 DAYS
Singapore presses Asia Pulp & Paper for information on forest fires

SINGAPORE — Singapore has called on Asia Pulp & Paper Co Ltd (APP) to check whether its subsidiaries and suppliers have any connection with the recent forest fires in Indonesia, which have caused a thick smog to envelop the city state.

Singapore’s National Environment Agency (NEA) also said in a statement that it has separately sent notices to four other Indonesian companies, accusing them of contributing to the pollution.

Unlisted APP, a member of Indonesia’s Sinar Mas group, is a major supplier of paper, pulp and packaging in Asia.

A spokeswoman for APP in Jakarta said it has not received a notice from Singapore to date.

The announcement came after Singapore shut primary and secondary schools on Friday as worsening pollution caused air quality to deteriorate, and authorities said the topsoil had parched due to the prolonged dry season in Indonesia.

“Ultimately, errant companies must know that there is a price to be paid for damaging our health, environment and economy,” the statement quoted Minister for the Environment and Water Resources Vivian Balakrishnan as saying. Singapore passed a cross-border air pollution law last year that makes those who cause haze both criminally and civilly liable.—Reuters

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Thai police lead key suspects to Bangkok bomb site for re-enactment

BANGKOK — Police in Thailand led two suspects to the scene of last month’s Bangkok bomb blast for a re-enactment of their alleged crimes on Saturday, a day after police said one of the men was responsible for planting the bomb that killed 20 people.

Fourteen foreigners were among those killed in the attack, the worst incident of its kind in Thai history. It dealt a fresh blow to Thailand’s important tourism industry, which had just begun to recover after political protests last year.

Police escorted the two men to the shrine and a nearby shopping mall in the Thai capital. The men, handcuffed and wearing body armour, walked through the re-enactment, a standard Thai police procedure, while bystanders were kept at a distance.

National police spokesman Prawut Thawornsiri said on Friday one of the two men was the same yellow-shirted man seen in security footage placing a backpack at the shrine moments before the blast.

Prawut told reporters at the shrine on Saturday that the first arrested suspect, who has been referred to both as Bilal Mohammed and Adem Karadag, the name on a Turkish passport he held, is responsible for the bombing.

Authorities had earlier said it was unlikely that either of the two men detained over the 17 August blast were the bomber in what has been an often contradictory police investigation.

Police had also said they believed Mieraili conspired in the attack but did not detonate the bomb.

Karadag’s lawyer, who says his client’s real name is Bilal Mohammed, said Karadag maintains he is innocent and had last visited him on 15 September.

“The appearance of the yellow shirt man [in CCTV footage] and Adem do not match. I do not believe Adem would confess,” lawyer Chuchart Kampha said. The motive for the attack remains unclear.—Reuters

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Philippines lead new climate finance group for most vulnerable countries

PHNOM PENH — The Philippines will lead 19 other countries next month in establishing a group to mobilize funds to help nations most vulnerable to climate change to become more resilient to the effects of global warming, the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) said on Friday.

Philippines Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima will chair the inaugural meeting of the Vulnerable 20 (V20) group of finance ministers on 7-8 October in Lima, Peru, ahead of the annual gatherings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The Philippines is among the world’s 10 countries most affected by climate change-induced disasters, according to the Global Climate Risk Index 2015.

The V20 will “enable vulnerable countries to steer a high-level policy dialogue” on climate change and promote climate resilience and low carbon dioxide emissions, according to a statement by the CVF, a platform for vulnerable countries to address issues related to global climate change.

The V20 aims to develop new approaches to climate finance and strategies to improve how public and private funds are disbursed after disasters, the CVF said. It also aims to share best practices on dealing with disasters and their economic impact.—Reuters
UN sees refugee flow to Europe growing

GENEVA — The United Nations said on Friday it could see no easing of the flow of refugees into Europe, with 8,000 arrivals daily, an almost irrefutable number now facing governments may turn out to be only “the tip of the iceberg.”

Hungary, which lies in the path of the largest migration wave Europe has seen since World War Two, said it was seeking support to halt an influx from Croatia after sealing its border with Serbia by building a 3.5-metre-high steel fence.

Amin Awad, regional refugee coordinator for the UN refugee agency UNHCR, told journalists in Geneva the body’s past warnings were in the scale of the problem had not been taken seriously.

“I don’t see it abating, I don’t see it stopping. If anything, it gives an indication perhaps that this is the tip of the iceberg.”

“This is the big question of the next few days and weeks, I am trying to seek supporters for this.”

— Prime Minister Viktor Orban

World leaders adopt expansive UN goals to tackle global woes

UNITED NATIONS — World leaders on Friday adopted the most sweeping agenda ever of global goals to combat poverty, inequality and climate change, described by the United Nations secretary-general as “a to-do list for people and planet.”

Adopted in the shadow of the worst refugee crisis since World War II, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs, as they are known, aim to end shared peace and prosperity and cap three years of debate and discussions.

The ambitious agenda addressing issues from education to the environment is to be implemented over the next 15 years with a big push globally to win better public and political support for the goals.

The 193 UN member nations formally adopted the goals after an address to the United Nations by Pope Francis, who called the adoption “an important sign of hope.”

“Solemn commitments, however, are not enough, even though they are a necessary step toward solutions,” said the Pope as the Vatican flag flew for the first time outside the United Nations where security was heightened for his visit.

He said world leaders must follow through with a “will which is effective, practical, constant, with concrete steps and immediate measures” to protect the environment and end social and economic exclusion.

“The simplest and best measure and indicator of the implementation of the new Agenda for development will be effective, practical and immediate access, on the part of all, to essential material and spiritual goods,” he said. The objectives replace the previous UN action plan, the Millennium Development Goals, that were adopted in 2000. Supporters say the SDGs go much further by addressing root causes of issues such as poverty and looking at means as well as ends. They also are intended to be universal, not just for the developing world.

“They are a to-do list for people and planet, and a blueprint for success,” said UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon after an opening ceremony with performances by Colombi- an singer Shakira and Be- nina’s Angélique Kidjo, UN goodwill ambassadors.

Nobel peace laureate Malala Yousafzai, repre- senting youth at the United Nations, urged the gath- ering of world leaders to “keep your commitments and invest in our future.”

“Promise peace and prosperity,” said the teen, a prominent activist for girls’ education who was shot on a school bus in Pakistan in 2012 by the Taliban for advocating girls’ rights.

Supporters say the hefty task that lies beyond the three-day SDG summit that concludes on Sunday is implementing the 17 goals and their 169 accompanying targets into programs, policies and parliaments in member nations.

Such implementation, requiring trillions of dol- lars in investment, will be monitored and reviewed using a set of global indicators to be agreed by March 2016. — Reuters

ADB says to double funds for Asia-Pacific climate mitigation by 2020

MANILA — The Asian Development Bank said on Friday it will double to $6 billion a year by 2020 its financing of projects to help Asia-Pacific countries mitigate the impact of climate change.

“Nowhere is tackling climate change more crit- ical than in Asia and the Pacific, where rising sea levels, melting glaciers, and weather extremes like floods and droughts are damaging livelihoods and taking far too many lives,” ADB President Takehiko Nakao said in a statement.

Six of the 10 nations most vulnerable to climate change are in the Asian-Pacific region, the ADB said, making it highly sus- ceptible to environmental shocks and disasters.

The ADB said South Asia could lose 8.8 per- cent of its annual gross domestic product by 2100, while Southeast Asia could lose 6.7 per- cent of its GDP a year, if it fails to combat the effects of climate change.

Out of the $6 billion financing, $4 billion will be dedicated to mitigation through scaling up sup- port for renewable energy, energy efficiency and sustainable transport, as well as for building smart cities.

The rest will be for adaptation through more resilient infrastructure, climate-smart agriculture, and better preparation for weather-related disasters, the Manila-based lender said.

The ADB said it would also explore co-financing opportunities with public and private partners to help the region adapt to glo- bal warming, adding it would adjust its procure- ment systems to integrate cleaner technology in its projects. — Reuters
Residents of Russian-held isles disputed by Japan await diplomatic resolution

KUNASHIR — Russian residents of an island chain at the centre of a dispute between Japan and Russia that has held up a treaty to formally end World War Two hope a diplomatic solution will lure tourists and investment to help refurbish rickety infrastructure.

Ties have been sour since the waning days of the war, when Soviet forces seized the Pacific islands known in Russia as the Southern Kuriles, but which Japan calls the Northern Territories, and forced out 17,000 Japanese residents.

In an effort to improve relations and narrow differences over the dispute, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe plans to hold a summit meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly next Monday.

“We need to attract people to this island,” said Gennady Berezyuk, a 63-year-old freelance journalist who lives on Kunashir island, known in Japan as Kunashim. “We need to build, if not Disneyland, then something that will make people come.”

Japan calls the island dispute a barrier to closer economic ties. Despite that, trade and investment between the two countries have grown as Japanese firms invest in the resource-rich Russian Far East, although not on the disputed islands.

“We invited Japanese to invest here to create a special economic zone, but they declined because they consider this as their own island,” said a 64-year-old resident of the island, who gave only his first name, Nicolay.

The island lies just 15 km (9 miles) off Japan’s northernmost main island of Hokkaido, which is visible on a clear day. It is impossible to resolve the Northern Territories issue without dialogue between leaders,” Abe told reporters on Friday. “I plan to have talks with President Putin at the United Nations and hold a face-to-face discussion on the dispute.”

US government finds new emails Clinton did not hand over

WASHINGTON — The US Defence Department has found an email chain that Hillary Clinton did not give to the State Department, the State Department said on Friday, despite her saying she had provided all work emails from her time as secretary of state.

The correspondence with General David Petraeus, who was commander of US Central Command at the time, started shortly before she entered office and continued during her first days as the top US diplomat in January and February of 2009.

The Defence Department provided the emails to the State Department “in the last several days,” State Department spokesman John Kirby said in a statement. The exchange of 10 or so emails, the existence of which were first reported by the Associated Press on Friday, largely dealt with personnel issues, according to the State Department.

Clinton’s use of a private email account connected to a server in her home instead of a government-issued email address came to light in March.

News of the previously undisclosed email thread only adds to a steady stream of revelations about the emails in the past six months, which have forced Clinton to re-examine her account of the setup which she first gave in March. Nearly a third of all voters think Clinton is lying about her handling of her emails, according to a Fox News poll released this week.

The email arrangement has drawn criticism from political opponents who accused the Democratic presidential front-runner of sidestepping transparency and record-keeping laws and of potentially exposing classified information to hackers.

The controversy has cut into Clinton’s lead in the race for the Democratic nomination for the November 2016 election.

Jamal Ware, spokesman for the House Select Committee on Intelligence, said that “all of them.”

Pragmatic Catalans cool over independence before vote

OLOT — Over the past 40 years, Xavier Espuna has made his ham and cold cuts business grow from a small venture in Spain’s northeastern region of Catalonia into an international business exporting as far away as Japan and Argentina.

Like most Catalans, Espuna is swept up by the movement to split his region off from the rest of Spain. But he is not worried about the consequences that secession from Europe’s fourth-largest economy would mean for his business.

The reason — he does not think it will happen any time soon.

“I am focused on making good ham. I am not focused on politics,” said the jovial 61-year-old, whose family-owned company is based in Olot, a pro-independence bastion.

Catalonia, a region that speaks its own language and accounts for about one fifth of Spanish economic output and population, votes on Sunday to elect a new parliament. Separatist parties running on a joint ticket are expected to win a majority of seats, according to polls. They say they will unilaterally declare independence within 18 months if they win.

Yet the prospect of independence remains a theoretical issue for Catalans, surveys show. Only 20 percent of Catalan voters actually believe the separatist campaign will lead to a split, according to an opinion poll in local paper La Vanguardia.

A separate survey from the Centre d’Estudis d’Opinió, a body backed by the regional government, showed the issue ranked only fourth in a list of Catalonia’s main woes, below unemployment, dissatisfaction with politics and the state of the economy.

“I don’t think the elections will have any impact on my business,” said Espuna as he walked around his small ham factory dressed in a white butcher’s coat.

The apparent ambivalence of the Catalan population about independence before Sunday’s vote suggests that, despite the public statements of Catalan politicians, people believe the goal of a separatist drive that began in 2012 is now a more pragmatic effort to win concessions from the central government.

The head of Catalonia’s regional government said this week that only secession remained on the table. The Spanish centre-right government of Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy has ruled out a Catalan breakaway and opposed any attempt to hold a referendum on secession. It has also dug in its heels on a deeper political and economic dialogue with the region.

But talks on a new and more beneficial tax regime for Catalonia are due to start after a national general election in December. Also on the cards are discussions over increased central government spending on infrastructure projects.

Depending on what party or parties will rule in Madrid after the general vote, there could even be a constitutional change that could include recognition of Catalonia as a nation within the Spanish state.

“People are saying they want things to change in Catalonia but at the same time neither they want independence nor they think it’s possible,” said Josep Borrell, a former socialist minister and president of the European Parliament.

“They simply want to have a better bargaining hand with the central government.” — Reuters
Saudi suggests pilgrims at fault over haj deaths, Iran angry

MINA — Saudi Arabia on Friday suggested pilgrims ignoring crowd control rules bore some blame for a crush that killed over 700 people at the haj pilgrimage in the annual event’s worst disaster for 25 years.

The kingdom’s regional rival Iran expressed outrage at the deaths of 131 of its nationals at the world’s largest annual gathering of people, and politicians in Tehran suggested Riyadh was incapable of managing the event. Hundreds of demonstrators protested in the Iranian capital, chanting “Death to the Saudi dynasty.”

With pilgrims frantically searching for missing compatriots and photographs of piles of the dead circulating on social media, the tragedy haunted many on the haj a day on.

“There were layers of bodies, maybe three layers,” said one witness who had to be evacuated. “Some people were alive under the pile of bodies and were trying to climb up but in vain, because their strength failed and they dropped dead.

“I felt helpless not to be able to save people. I saw them dying in front of my eyes,” he told Reuters.

An Algerian pilgrim told Algeria’s al-Shurouk television: “We saw death: People were stepping over the mutilated bodies in front of you, four or five on top of each other.” Saudi King Salman ordered a review of haj plans, and

“...without following instructions by the relevant authorities,” the minister said in a statement.

The kingdom’s critics were likely to see the statement as an attempt to deflect responsibility. Safety during the haj is highly sensitive for the ruling Al Saud dynasty, which presents itself internationally as the guardian of orthodoxy Islam and custodian of its holiest places in Mecca and Medina. The effort to uncover the facts and assign blame was likely to grow more acute and possibly more political.

A pilgrim who gave his name as Abu Abdullah said security forces appeared on high alert after the deaths. “What happened is a tragedy and many people...are terrified, but in the end we can only pursue our haj duties,” he said.

Hakim, from Morocco, said: “It is simply scarry to hear how people crushed one another. More frightening is that we do not know how it happened.”

The Saudi civil defence service reported on Twitter that a fire had occurred in three storage facilities in Mecca’s al-Maaseem neighbourhood, and 10 fire and rescue units were in attendance.

No further details were immediately available.

Iran’s President Hassan Rouhani, in New York to attend the UN General Assembly, echoed Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in blaming Saudi Arabia for the incident.

“I ask the Saudi Arabian government to take responsibility for this catastrophe and fulfill its legal and Islamic duties in this regard,” Rouhani said in a statement.

Iranian state television said the demonstrators in Tehran were showing their anger at “Saudi in-capability and incompetence to run the haj”. “The world will not accept excuses like the weather was hot or the pilgrims were disorganized.”

— Prayer leader Mohammed Emami Kashani

Health Minister Khalid al-Falih said an investigation would be conducted rapidly and a final toll of dead and wounded calculated.

At least 863 pilgrims were injured in the disaster, in which two big groups of pilgrims collided at a crossroads in Mina, a few km (miles) east of Mecca, on their way to performing the “Stoning of the Devil” ritual at Jamarat.

The stampede was “perhaps because some pilgrims moved without following instructions by the relevant authorities,” the minister said in a statement.

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Htun Tin Htun

Our planet has many unexploited tourist destinations. Many people around the world participate in World Tourism Day, which is on September 27th of each year. The day seeks to foster awareness among international community of the importance of tourism and its social, cultural, political and economic values.

World Tourism Day recognizes the importance of tourists and the tourism industry across the globe. World Tourism Day recognizes the importance of tourists and the tourism industry across the globe.

Noteworthy of the significant fact that world tourism is rapidly growing from time to time. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) invites people worldwide to participate in World Tourism Day on September 27th of each year. The UNWTO Secretary-General annually sends out a message to the general public to mark the occasion. Many tourism enterprises and organizations, as well as government agencies with a special interest in tourism, celebrate the event with various special events and festivities.

Building capacity and capability of human resources in tourism sector is of paramount importance. Tourism has experienced continued growth and deeper diversification to become one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world. Modern tourism is closely linked to development and includes more new destinations for tourists. These dynamics have turned tourism into a key driver for socio-economic progress. Tourism has become sceptically important players in international commerce, and represents at the same time one of the main income sources for many developing countries.

International Tourism Day reminds us that development of tourism can help reduce poverty and create more employment in both developed and developing countries. The UNWTO decided in late September 1979 to institute World Tourism Day, which was first celebrated on September 27th, 1980. September 27th was chosen as the date for World Tourism Day because that date coincided with an important milestone in world tourism – the anniversary of the adoption of the UNWTO Statutes on September 27, 1970.

Love to travel, meet the people, note the wonders, our world therefore becomes a global village. The UNWTO believes that the date for World Tourism Day is appropriate because it comes at the end of the high tourist season in the northern hemisphere and the start of the tourist season in the southern hemisphere. When tourism is of topical interest to many people worldwide, particularly travelers and those working in the tourism sector.

To pay lip service to democratic reform, but it is quite another to display it with the votes. The onus is therefore on all of the voters to advance democratic participation in all areas of life and act on pressing challenges facing the country.

The updated forecast has been enriched with an analysis of the social, political, economic, environmental and technological factors that have shaped tourism in the past, and which are expected to influence the sector in the future.

Our lack of interest in voting on 8 November is a broad research of the development of tourism forecasts. Key outputs of Tourism Towards 2030 are quantitative projections for international tourism demand over a 20-year period, with 2010 as the base year, and ending in 2030.

Opportunities are plenty for all citizens if eco-friendly and green tourism develops and expands. International tourism (comprising travel and passenger transport) accounts for 30% of the world’s exports of services and 6% of overall exports of goods and services. As a worldwide export category, tourism ranks fourth after fuels, chemicals and food, and ahead of automotive products, and even ranks first in many developing countries.

Income can be generated through various tourism activities and events. The top four places in both the ranking by international arrivals and by receipts are taken by the same countries, albeit in a different order. In 2014, France continued to maintain the ranking of international tourist arrivals with 84 million tourists, and came 4th in terms of international tourism receipts with US$ 55 billion. The United States ranked 1st in receipts with US$ 177 billion, and 2nd in arrivals with 75 million. Spain was 2nd in tourism earnings worldwide (1st in Europe) with US$ 65 billion in 2014, and 3rd in arrivals with 65 million overnight visitors.

Once we visit, we would like to come again and share the feelings and experiences with our relatives and friends. Most tourists visit destinations within their own region. The large majority of international travel takes place within travellers’ own regions, with about four out of five worldwide arrivals originating from the same region. Source markets for international tourism have traditionally been largely concentrated in the advanced economies of Europe, the Americas and Asia and the Pacific. However, with rising levels of disposable income, many emerging economies have shown fast growth over recent years, especially in the markets of Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America.

Long-term outlook of UNWTO Tourism Towards 2030 and an assessment of the development of tourism over the two decades from 2010 to 2030. It is a broad research project, building on UNWTO’s ongoing work in the field of long-term forecasting which was initiated in the 1990s. This study replaces the earlier Tourism 2020 Vision, which has become a worldwide reference for international tourism forecasts.

One Billion Tourists: One Billion Opportunities

Ngapali beach, one of the most beautiful beaches in the world. PHOTO: YE MYINT (GNLM)

About the author
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Freelance Management and Development Consultant, former International UNV UNCHS/ILO/UNIDO Cooperative and Small Business Specialist in Malawi and Kiribati /UNDP Community Empowerment and Development Specialist in Bangladesh

We found it! We found it!

Our entire family are on the list! Golly!

Hla Htun OO

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email wallace.ttn@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.
Additional Emergency Assistance to Myanmar in Flood Response

ON Wednesday, September 24, the handover ceremony of mosquito nets for the flood affected people was held at Yangon International Airport. H.E. Mr. Tateshi HIGUCHI, Ambassador of the Embassy of Japan handed over the relief goods to Dr. Than Win, Deputy Director General, Department of Public Health, Ministry of Health. Officials of the Embassy of Japan and JICA Myanmar Office were also present at this handover ceremony.

The Government of Japan decided on September 17 to provide 10,000 mosquito nets (LLIN: long lasting insecticidal net) as emergency relief goods to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in response to the appeal from Myanmar following the recent floods.—GNLM

Myanmar, Asia-Pacific scout associations meet

THE Myanmar Scout Federation and the Asia-Pacific Scout Region (World Organization of the Scout Movement) had a joint coordination meeting on Saturday in Yangon.

The MSF explained its scouting movements, organizational structure and functions to Asia-Pacific Regional Director Mr J Rizal C Pangikinan. They visited No.1 Basic Education High School in Dagon Township to observe the scouting skills and activities including first-aid services, methods of joining ropes and materials made by the school’s scouts. The meeting continues on 27 and 28 September at University of Yangon, with plans to visit the Practising High School at the Yangon Institute of Education, the University of Yangon and No.2 Basic Education High School in Kamayut Township.—MNA

Firefighters complete training

COURSE completion ceremony was held in Longon, Dawei District in Taninthayi Region on Friday. As now is a time ushering into the open season, preemptive measures are being taken to prevent fire. The firefighters practiced military drill at the course which covers firefighting, search and rescue and life-saving at sea. The course lasted nearly one month from 31 August to 25 September.—Pho Hwe Than (Dawei)

Prevention is better than cure: Firefighters in Launglon concentrate on life saving at sea. PHOTO: Pho Shwe Thun

Ancient monastery in Htihlaing (East) village conserves Myanmar’s heritages

A monastery in Htihlaing (East) village, Wundwing Township, Meiktila District, was built over 140 years ago. The monastery is shouldered by 124 wooden posts and its interior is decorated with Myanmar crafts. It also houses ancient bronze bell donated by West Hall Queen of King Mindon Ashin Thiri Maha Thu Sandar Yadana Devi, according to the abbot of the monastery. Ancient empty wooden box on which the English numerals 1794 were carved can be seen at the monastery. Moreover, the monastery conserves a concoch use in the times of Myanmar kings, and boxes which kept ancient palm leaf inscriptions. Before 2010 the monastery was one of the tourists’ attractions but after 2010 it was forgotten.—Chamba (Meiktila)

The lost sheep return home

MYANMAR Police Force held a ceremony to hand over the two teenage girls to their parents in Pobabahiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw. As the two girls have not returned home on 18 September after the school, their parents made a complaint to Kyidaungkan Police Station and on Wednesday the girls were taken back to their homes. At the handing over ceremony the police inspector warned against the human trafficking.—Min Min Latt (Mandalay University)

Awareness on human-trafficking should be raised among the public. PHOTO: Min Min Latt

Seminar to focus on future of Myanmar’s property industry

Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) in Yangon to discuss the current and future prospects of the country’s property market.

“The aim of the seminar is to promote investment in the real estate industry and create more links between businesses,” said Managing Director of House.com.mm Mr Balaji Ramaswami.

Research on the latest market trends and the effects of the shift online for the real estate industry, Myanmar’s mortgage loan system and future of affordable housing and future development plans of Yangon will be discussed during the conference, which is free to attend.

Managing Director of Construction Housing and Development Bank U Win Zaw and Director of Urban Planning of the Yangon City Development Committee Dr Toe Aung will share their knowledge and insights with conference attendees.—GNLM

Khaing Thanda Lwin
PROPERTY website House.com.mm will host a real estate conference on 10 October at the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) in Yangon to discuss the current and future prospects of the country’s property market.

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Facebook rebrands free Internet service, expands

WASHINGTON — Facebook has changed the name of its programme offering free Internet to developing countries to “Free Basics” and added more services.

It used to be a service within Facebook’s broader Internet.org initiative, which seeks to expand online access around the world.

It comes after criticism of the limited service for the free programme — which some say flies in the face of Facebook’s commitment for “net neutrality,” or equal treatment for all online services.

Earlier this year, Facebook opened the initiative to outside applications after news organisations in India withdrew their websites.

In a statement late Thursday, Facebook said that with its latest update, “more than 60 new services are available across the 19 countries where free basic services are available.”

Facebook has said it would be impractical to offer the entire Internet for free through the programme, which works through mobile carriers in various countries.

But it said that the programme can provide important services for health, education and jobs to as many as one billion people in the 19 countries where it is available.—AFP

Apple under fire for factory conditions as iPhone launches

HONG KONG — A labour rights group marked the launch of Apple’s latest iPhone Friday with a report accusing one of the smartphone giant’s Chinese suppliers of exploiting factory workers.

Hong Kong-based Students and Scholars Against Corporate Misbehaviour (SACOM) say Lens Technology, which makes touchscreen glass, used “unacceptable working conditions” and denied any wrongdoing, saying overtime is not mandatory, and that it ensures employees actually raise their hands to work overtime to earn more.

The hundreds of customers who had pre-ordered one of the new phones were largely oblivious to the allegations.

“I think bad conditions happen to all brands,” said James Leung, 30, who was waiting to pick up a rose-gold phone for his wife, which he said cost HK$5,400 ($645).

“For me, I need a phone, so I’ll get a new phone.” Lens Technology adds supplies Samsung and other leading tech firms.

SACOM spokeswoman Liang Pui-kwan said the group was not only targeting Apple.

“But Apple is the richest and has the biggest ability to make change and bring the industry forward,” she said. Apple was not immediately available for comment. The iPhone 6S features a new “3D Touch” feature that allows users to differentiate between a light touch and a harder tap, with the phone reacting differently to each.

In Asia-Pacific, the phone was launched in Australia, China, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand and Singapore on Friday.—AFP

BlackBerry unveils Android phone in new reboots

WASHINGTON — BlackBerry announced plans Friday to sell an Android-powered smartphone, in the latest reboot effort from the faded star of the sector.

The Canadian firm said its would begin selling “Priv,” described as “a flagship handheld device that will run on the Android operating system with BlackBerry security,” expected to be available later this year.

“Priv combines the best of BlackBerry security and productivity with the expansive mobile application ecosystem available on the Android platform,” said John Chen, executive chairman and chief executive.

BlackBerry said however it “remains committed to the BlackBerry 10 operating system, which enables industry-leading security and productivity benefits.”

The company said it “will continue to develop and enhance the BlackBerry 10 operating system and confirming plans to release platform updates focused on security and privacy enhancements,” in March 2016.

The BB 10 operating system was unveiled in 2013 as part of an effort to regain market share lost as consumers around the world shifted to devices running on Google Android and Apple’s iOS.

But the operating system’s share has fallen further, and now represents less than one percent of smartphone users.

BlackBerry, one of the early pioneers of smartphone users, has been struggling for years. It has made several efforts to find new customer niches, with low-cost devices, tablets and by shifting its emphasis to software and services.

In releasing its quarterly results, BlackBerry said it swung to a profit of $51 million for the three months to August 29, compared with a loss of $207 million in the same period a year ago.—AFP

Dollar higher after Yellen points to rate hike

NEW YORK — The US dollar picked up strength Friday after Fed chair Janet Yellen said a first rate hike is still likely by the end of the year.

The dollar rose to as much as $1.1117 per euro before pulling back to $1.1202. It pushed to 120.49 yen and to $1.3190 per pound.

In her first comments since 17 September when the Fed again put off the long-flagged first rate increase in over nine year, Yellen said late Thursday that US economic conditions supported the move.

Most of Fed monetary policymakers “currently anticipate that achieving these conditions will likely entail an initial increase in the federal funds rate later this year, followed by a gradual pace of tightening thereafter,” Yellen said.

She nevertheless hedged her comments, saying that “if the economy surprises us, our judgments about appropriate monetary policy will change.”

Boris Schlossberg of BK Asset Management called Yellen’s speech “much more hawkish” than her news conference comments after the Federal Open Market Committee policy meeting last week. “It may have been also an attempt by Ms Yellen to clarify the FOMC position and make sure that the market fully appreciates that the Fed intends to normalize policy over the near term horizon,” he said.—AFP

Traders are pictured at their desks in front of the DAX board at the stock exchange in Frankfurt, Germany on 23 September, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

“Apple is the richest and has the biggest ability to make change and bring the industry forward.”

—SACOM spokes woman Liang Pui-kwan

(SACOM) say Lens Technology, which makes touchscreen glass, used forced overtime, withheld wages and risked workers’ health after a months-long investigation into three of its factories.

Company founder Zhou Qunfei, herself a former factory worker, became China’s richest woman after Lens Technology’s debut on the Shenzhen stock exchange in March.

As the iPhone 6 went on sale in markets including Hong Kong, Japan and mainland China on Friday, SACOM called for Apple to “apply immediate measures to rectify exploitations in its supply chain”.

“The urge Apple Inc to take at least one rest day per week, two hours a day and work strictly limits overtime to mandatory, and that it denies any wrongdoing, saying overtime is not mandatory, and that it ensures employees actually raise their hands to work overtime to earn more.”

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In Asia-Pacific, the phone was launched in Australia, China, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand and Singapore on Friday.—AFP

A customer holds an iPhone 6s during the official launch at the Apple store in central Sydney, Australia on 25 September, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

TRADERS ARE PICTURED AT THEIR DESKS IN FRONT OF THE DAX BOARD AT THE STOCK EXCHANGE IN FRANKFURT, GERMANY ON 23 SEPTEMBER, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS
WELLINGTON — New Zealanders are rapidly developing a taste for a tax on sugary drinks to offset the public health costs of obesity, according to research out Friday.

“Significant shift has occurred in New Zealanders’ appetite for a tax on SSBSs, if the funds collected from the tax are to be used to prevent childhood obesity,” Sundborn said in a statement.

In the first of two polls, 18 months apart, in February last year, 44 percent of respondents supported a tax on sugary drinks, and in the second poll in June this year support was up to 52 percent — provided the funds from the tax were used to address childhood obesity.

WASHINGTON Two million-year-old fossils including the three tiny bones of the middle ear are helping scientists figure out the auditory abilities of early human ancestors at a time when they were beginning to hear more like a person and less like a chimpanzee.

A study published on Friday involving two species from South Africa, Australopithecus africanus and Paranthropus robustus, showed they boasted better hearing than either chimps or people in a frequency range that may have facilitated vocal communication.

Both species featured a mixture of ape-like and human-like anatomical traits and inhabited grassland ecosystems with widely spaced trees and shrubs, as opposed to the forests of earlier members of human lineage.

In both species, maximum hearing sensitivity was shifted toward slightly higher frequencies compared to chimpanzees, and both had better hearing than chimps or humans in the range from about 1.0-3.0 kilohertz, paleoanthropologist Rolf Quam of Binghamton University in New York said.

Sounds in that range include vowels and some consonants, Quam said.

“It turns out that this auditory pattern may have been particularly favorable for living on the savanna. In more open environments, sound waves don’t travel as far as in the rainforest canopy, so short-range communication is favored on the savanna,” Quam said.

The lateral view of the Paranthropus robustus skull SK 46 is shown from the site of Swartkrans, South Africa. Photo: Reuters

I’m all ears: fossils reveal human ancestors’ hearing abilities

PHOENIX — A salmonella-tainted salad served at a northeastern Arizona prison caused 241 inmates and three employees to become ill this month, a spokesman said on Friday.

Health officials determined lettuce or cabbage served on 31 August, to inmates inside two units at the Arizona State Prison Complex-Windows was responsible, said corrections department spokesman Andrew Wilder.

“They are restricted to their housing quarters for at least 24 hours, and on-site work details for minimum-security inmates were canceled,” officials said.

“35 percent from 49 percent in February 2014 to 32 percent in June 2015,” he said.

That indicates a significant shift in public attitude towards taxation of SSBSs, because a quarter of respondents moved to a more supportive, or less opposed, stance about the introduction of an SSBS tax. The speed at which public opinion has shifted in favor of an SSBS tax indicated that New Zealanders were increasingly aware of the harms SSBSs posed to health, especially for children.

“Strong media attention around SSBSs may have facilitated this change as over the last two years, the harm that SSBS intake poses to health, and the notion of a tax on SSBSs, has been profiled regularly in mainstream media,” he said.—Xinhua

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ABIDJAN — From Abidjan’s packed arrivals hall to the hotels and plush villas mushrooming across the city, Ivory Coast is booming, a rare African bright spot as the world’s biggest cocoa producer bounces back from years of turmoil and civil war.

With elections due in a month, many Ivorians had expected a pause in the post-conflict growth spurt, but such is the confidence in a smooth vote and a specified term for incumbent Alassane Ouattara that the expected blip has not materialized.

The government is predicting growth of 9.6 percent this year, making the former French colony the stand-out performer on a continent being hammered by a slump in commodity prices, capital outflows and tumbling currencies.

The International Monetary Fund’s assessment is only marginally less bullish, while the bustle on the streets of the commercial capital attests to the turnaround in the four years since the nation’s second civil war in less than a decade killed 3,000 people. “There are many European businessesmen arriving these days,” airport taxi driver Fabrice Toha said with a smile. “All the taxi drivers can see that the country is doing well and many of us think that Ouattara has a good chance of another term.”

The airport had 1.3 million passengers in 2014, double the tally from four years ago.

A stone’s throw away, dozens of construction workers swarmed around the inside and outside of the 261-room Radisson Blu Abidjan, one of several high-end hotels due to open before the end of this year.

Kome Cesse, the entrepreneur behind the project, said the investment was based as much on faith in the government’s record since the war as the rosy outlook for Francophone West Africa’s largest economy.

For Cesse, fears of any repeat of the mayhem that followed 2010 elections, when then-president Laurent Gbagbo — now in The Hague accused of crimes against humanity — refused to accept defeat at the hands of Ouattara, are overblown.

“All over Africa, whenever there are elections, there’s tension,” he said, raising his voice over the din of construction work. “But for African investors like us, we are used to it and we deal with it.”

Elsewhere, in the capital’s chic Cocody neighbourhood, Sofitel’s lavish Hotel Ivoire — the pre-eminent symbol of Abidjan’s post-colonial 1960s heyday — has undergone a face-lift. Its rooms, starting at over $250 per night, are regularly fully booked.—Reuters
Japanese trailblazer, soft bread evangelist in Switzerland

Hironori Takahashi, who has more than 20 shops in the major Swiss cities of Zurich, Bern, Geneva and Lausanne, has special and the texture is so

When I opened my own bakery, 80 percent of customers were Japanese living in Switzerland because Swiss people seemed to shun the concept of breads being soft.”

— Hironori Takahashi, Japanese baker

California draws $10 million from reserves for wildfire debris removal

SAN FRANCISCO — California Governor Jerry Brown on Friday directed $10 million from the state’s budget reserve to help pay for the removal of huge amounts of burned debris left in the wake of two massive wildfires, the administration said.

In a letter to leaders of the legislature’s budget and appropriations committees, the Brown administration said the debris poses a threat to lives, public health and safety. “Fast debris removal is also necessary to enable community rebuilding and economic recovery of impacted communities,” administration officials said in the letter.

The Valley and Butte fires together have burned more than 145,000 acres, killed three people, seriously injured four firefighters and destroyed 1,713 homes.

The administration told lawmakers that while additional funds will be needed to do the job for the effort, it noted that the Obama administration’s major disaster declaration will mean that a significant amount of the costs may be eligible for federal reimbursement.

Up to 10 million people in Iraq to require humanitarian aid, UN says

UNITED NATIONS — Up to 10 million people in Iraq, including vulnerable people in areas currently controlled by the Islamic State (IS), will require some form of humanitarian assistance by the end of 2015, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric told reporters here Friday.

Some 3.2 million people in Iraq have fled their homes in multiple waves of internal displacement since January 2014 and up to now, an estimated 8.6 million people need humanitarian support, Dujarric said at a daily news briefing here.

“The crisis has accelerated since last year, cholera has broken out, basic services are not functioning, and food rations and water supplies have been decreased in part due to lack of donor support,” he said.

The UN Humanitarian Response Plan requesting some 500 million US dollars is only 40 percent funded, according to the spokesman.

The IS fighters swept through north Iraq last June, but their advance was contained by Shi’ite militias and Kurdish peshmerga fighters, backed by US-led air strikes, reports said.

Weather report

BAY INFERENC: Weather is partly cloudy in the North Bay, monsoon is strong in the Andaman Sea and South Bay and weak elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 27TH 2015: Rain or thunderyshowers will be widespread in Taninthary Region, fairly widespread in Lower Sagona Region, Kayin and Mon States, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Upper Sagona, Mandalay, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawaddy Regions, Shan, Rakhine, Kayah and Kayin States and isolated in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavy falls in Lower Sagona and Taninthary Regions. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Indian waters.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of thunder activities in the Deltaic areas.

FORECAST FOR KYAINGTON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27TH SEPTEMBER, 2015: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MYANMAR AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27TH SEPTEMBER, 2015: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27TH SEPTEMBER, 2015: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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Emporio Armani presents breezy line for next spring

MILAN — Italian designer Giorgio Armani presented fluid silhouettes and overlapping layers in shades of pink inspired by a “summer breeze” on Friday as he showed next spring’s Emporio Armani collection for women at Milan Fashion Week.

Armani, who celebrates four decades in fashion this year, sent out his first models in grey coats and patterned trousers with dabs of pink such as a T-shirt with a smiling emoticon. He also showed mid-calf length boots in peep-toe booties. They carried scarves and transparent socks.

His spring/summer 2016 collection brought an asymmetrical look to the runway. Tops, dresses and jackets had asymmetrical cuts that emphasized their fluidity. Armani is known for his clean cut and elegant collections.

Tops and jackets were ribbed and he added flower and petal appliqués onto dresses. Some designs were slashed on the hips. Most of the line came in rosy colors with dabs of cinnamon, blue-grey and dark orange also seen.

The designer presented long chiffon tops over trousers, continuing a trend of see-through clothing seen at several Milan fashion shows this week.

Models wore small neck scarves and transparent as well as peep-toe booties. They carried bowling bags and summer hats. Jewelry was chunky.

Armani will show his main Giorgio Armani line on Monday.

— Reuters

Sam Smith’s new Bond theme released to mixed reviews

LONDON — The new James Bond theme song, “Writing’s On The Wall,” was released Friday, with fans of singer Sam Smith hailing it as a classic, though others have been less complimentary.

The release comes a month before “Spectre,” starring Daniel Craig as Bond, is released in Britain and Ireland on 26 October before a worldwide release on 6 November.

Acting legend Roger Moore, who starred in seven of the films, praised Smith on Twitter for his “very haunting and wonderfully orchestrated” song.

But a number of critics likened the song to Michael Jackson’s “Earth Song” and commented disparagingly on Smith’s claim that it only took 20 minutes to write.

Grammy award winner Smith is the first British male solo singer to sing the Bond theme since Tom Jones sang “Thunderball” in 1965.

“The pressure to deliver a Bond song that stands against all the rest feels quite intense,” the British singer told The Sun newspaper in an interview Friday.

The 23-year-old added that the movie’s director Sam Mendes had a say over the song’s lyrics and made sure that Bond “didn’t sound weak, that he still sounded powerful.”

Ajay Chowdhury of the Entertainment Weekly disagreed, saying that “You Only Live Twice” is an example and finally, the dynamic rock anthem like Paul McCartney’s “Live And Let Die,” he said.

“Sam Smith’s song belongs to the second of these categories.”

Meanwhile, Stephen Jones, a music commentator, tweeted: “I alone in thinking the new Sam Smith Bond theme is reminiscent of Michael Jackson’s Earth Song?”

Numerous other tweets suggested that he was not.

— AFP

Caitlyn Jenner has name, gender change officially approved in California

LOS ANGELES — Olympic gold medalist Caitlyn Jenner, who is one of the biggest stars in reality television, had her name and gender change officially approved on Friday by a Los Angeles County judge.

A court spokeswoman said Superior Court Judge Gerald Rosenberg gave the approval.

Jenner is a 1976 Olympic decathlon gold medalist who had been known as Bruce before she became the highest-profile American to transition publicly from male to female this year.

The 65-year-old Jenner starred in the television documentary series “I Am Cait,” and before that was known to reality TV audiences for years as part of the celebrity Kardashian family.

She filed paperwork this month seeking to make her name and gender change official.

Caitlyn Jenner is seen on a TV set in the press room during the 2015 ESPY’s award show at Nokia Theater.

— Reuters

Hollywood star Laura Dern tackles sub-prime crisis in new film

LOS ANGELES — The US sub-prime mortgage crisis that spelled ruin for thousands and left many homeless is not exactly a catchy subject for a Hollywood movie.

But in a new drama — “99 Homes” — Oscar-nominated actress Laura Dern tackles the financial meltdown that touched millions and sent ripples across the globe.

Dern, 48, whose film resume includes “Rambling Rose,” “Sailor and Lula” and “Blue Velvet,” sat down with AFP to discuss the movie — which has garnered rave reviews — and life in general.

In “99 Homes,” she plays a woman whose family is forced out of home by an unscrupulous real estate broker after they are unable to make mortgage payments.

Dern said the movie aims to highlight “the level of rage in American families when they are now living in their car because they can no longer afford a motel.”

“We’re very busy as a culture, thinking about the Kardashians or whatever the new topic is,” she said.

“It takes us away from the BP oil spill still leaking, bank crisis and people still losing their homes.”

“IT is amazing to consider who we throw away, and often we throw away the people we’ve promised the most to.”

“I feel like I’m lucky because my focus isn’t that, because it’s not my language… it isn’t what defines me,” Dern said of social media.

“I’m not of a generation that thinks that if I haven’t a certain number of followers, I am or I am not liked or popular, because I didn’t grow up that way.”

“I feel like I’ve grown… I’m not braver, bolder, wilder, boundary-less, without any predisposition to what it’s supposed to look like,” she added.

“I hope to be complicat-ed, sexy, kind, broken and all the things a woman should be in her 50s. I look forward to that.” — AFP
For a Major League hair cut, baseball players pick Miami’s Juice

MIAMI — Before Miami Marlins ace Jose Fernandez takes the mound Friday night seeking to make pitching history, his pre-game ritual will involve a trip to the barbershop.

Not just any barber, however. Fernandez will visit Hugo “Juice” Tandron, the heavily tattooed son of Cuban exiles who operates Major League Baseball’s only private stadium barbershop out of a converted storage room at Marlins Park.

There is no set price to sit for a cut from Tandron, but business — and the tips — are good. A bald man with a long black beard, Tandron has such a steady stream of players, their relatives and team staff as clients that he is open six hours ahead of each home game and makes house calls during the off-season.

“He’s family,” said second baseman Dee “Flash Jr.” Gordon, who recently had Tandron add a lightning bolt to the side of his head.

Tandron was plucked from obscurity by the Marlins thanks to a mixture of hard work, an affable street cred and talent. His motto is, “no two cuts are the same,” and his reputation is for unique and meticulous hair styling.

Some of the game’s legends, including Reggie Jackson and Andre Dawson, as well as former Atlanta Braves’ pitchers Greg Maddux and John Smoltz, are among those who have sought out Tandron, 45, for a trim.

Last year during the play-offs, Los Angeles Dodgers outfielder Carl Crawford flew Tandron first class to California.

“He put me up at the W (hotel), for one cut,” said Tandron.

The success may seem unlikely for a man who recounts a youthful predilection for fighting and a series of run-ins with police. He credits his beautician mother, and his early interest in her clippers, with straightening him out.

At first he cut hair for beer and cigarettes before setting up a makeshift shop in the laundry room of his home, with a 13-inch TV and rap recordings to entice clients. He said his big break came in 1993 when a rapper friend directed Marlins slugger Gary Sheffield to Tandron’s barbershop in Carol City, one of north Miami’s roughest neighbourhoods.

Soon other players came calling, and he started doing clubhouse visits.

In 2001 he opened his own shop, Head Up, where he spends mornings before driving over to the stadium on game days.

When the Marlins moved to a new $500 million stadium in 2012, some of the players pressed the team to reserve a space for Tandron. While other teams may occasionally invite barbers in, Tandron’s is the only ballpark shop, players and team officials say.

Clips pay what they see fit. Former Mariner pitcher Dontrelle Willis bought Tandron a 1974 Chevy Caprice convertible, for $21,000.

“He made me cry. That was a dream come true,” the barber said.

Tandron says his clients open up to him about their private lives. But don’t ask him to divulge any secrets.

“What’s said in a barber’s shop stays in a barber’s shop,” he said.

His roster of clients one afternoon this week included Gordon, All-Star outfielder Giancarlo Stanton and closer A.J. Ramos, as well as some visiting Philadelphia Phillies.

Fernandez, 23, was there, too, getting a trim and already thinking ahead to his hopes of breaking a Major League Baseball record for the most home wins without a loss to start a career. The current mark has stood since 1914.

“Friday, you gotta be here,” Fernandez whispered as Tandron looked over him in the chair putting the finishing touches with a razor to his twice to his twice.

His barber was quick to reassure him.

“When have I ever failed you?” Tandron said.—Reuters

Teacher who hid students during Newtown shooting writes book

NEWTOWN — The Sandy Hook Elementary School teacher who saved 15 first-grade students during one of America’s worst mass shootings has written a book about the experience, hoping it will inspire readers to stay positive through life’s worst challenges.

In excerpts from the book “Choosing Hope: Life’s Darkest Hours,” written by the school’s third-grade teacher, Kristen Parlitt, who hid students during Newtown shooting writes book.

She said she used a storage unit to barricade the door.—Reuters

(27-9-2015 07:00 am – 28-9-2015 07:00 am) MST

Today Fresh
07:03 Am News
07:25 Am A visit to Hamil House A Miraculous Place
07:52 Am Next Weekend
08:03 Am News
08:26 Am One Heritage A One Festival
08:41 Am Mandalay Golden Palace A Treasured Legacy Of Golden Days
09:03 Am News
09:26 Am Cruising To Precious Islands (Part-2)
09:48 Am Myanmar Alternative Medicine (Nobi)
10:03 Am News
10:26 Am Entrepreneur Dr. Thant Thaw Kaung
10:36 Am Tipitaka Bhumi (Pali): (Part-3)
10:53 Am Black Gold (Part-III)

Prime Time
07:03 Pm News
07:25 Pm Let’s Cook (EP-3) Scrambled Eggs & Cutie Pancake
07:53 Pm Today Myanmar: The New Automobile Law
08:03 Pm News
08:26 Pm The Writer ‘Chi Oo Nyio’ (Part-2)
09:09 Pm (00:00 Pm - 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am - 11:00 Am)
09:00 Pm (00:00 Pm - 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am - 11:00 Am)
09:35 Pm (00:00 Pm - 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am - 11:00 Am)

(For Detailed Schedule – www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)
Women footballers to take part in League match

Ko Moe

FOR the National Women Football Team to gain victories at international matches, the Myanmar Women Football League is to be held during the football season of 2016, said president of Myanmar Football Federation U Zaw Zaw.

"The season is to start with semi-professional matches", he added at the federation’s press conference of MFF Congress 2015, at Novotel Hotel on September 26. The participating eight teams will be from government ministries, sport institute, and local clubs.

Myanmar’s National Women Football Team ranks fourth among ten ASEAN countries and ranks much lower among Asian teams.

The Myanmar team fetched only third prizes during 2007, 2009 and 2013 SEA Games.—GNLM

Tottenham put four past Man City in comeback win

LONDON — Leaders Manchester City suffered their second successive Premier League defeat when Tottemham Hotspur produced a stunning fightback to win 4-1 at White Hart Lane on Saturday.

Goals from Eric Dier, Toby Alderweireld, Harry Kane and Erik Lamela left City reeling after the visitors had dominated early on and taken a 25th-minute lead through record signing Kevin de Bruyne.

Coming a week after a 2-1 home defeat by West Ham United that halted City’s 100 percent start to the season, City’s second-half collapse in siny north London means they could lose top spot after Saturday’s later matches.

Manchester United will go top if they beat Sunderland.

Lamela saved well from Son Heung-min the ball was drilled back into the net by Dier. They seemed no hint of what was to come when City broke quickly in the 25th minute through the marauding Yaya Toure who fed De Bruyne to slot past Hugo Lloris.

If there was a hint of off-side about that goal, Tottenham’s equaliser on the stroke of halftime was even more controversial.

Clearly off-side, Kyle Walker crossed low into the area and although City keeper Willy Caballero saved well from Son Heung-min the ball was drilled back into the net by Dier.

Tottenham went ahead five minutes after the break when Lamela’s free kick was headed in by Alderweireld. Eleven minutes later they broke their season-long goal famine for his club when he coolly clipped in a rebound after Christian Eriksen’s free kick struck the crossbar.

The impressive Lamela completed the scoring when he showed great composure to fire past Caballero.—Reuters

Rosberg on pole in Japan after Kvyat crashes

NICO Rosberg put Formula One world champions Mercedes on pole position for the Japanese Grand Prix on Saturday after Red Bull’s Daniil Kvyat crashed heavily and brought qualifying to an early close.

The German secured his first pole since Spain in May when the red flags came out with 36 seconds remaining, leaving team mate and championship leader Lewis Hamilton no chance of claiming a 12th pole in 14 races.

Hamilton, who has a 41-point lead over Rosberg with six races left, missed out by 0.076 seconds but made sure of an all-Mercedes front row to the relief of a team that was eclipsed in Singapore last weekend.

"A good comeback for the team after such a difficult weekend in Singapore. We really turned things around... I pretty much nailed my laps today, I’m really pleased with the way it went," said Rosberg.

"At times today I had the perfect car."

The front row was a repeat of last year’s at Suzuka, a wet race overshadowed by French driver Jules Bianchi’s tragic accident in the closing stages and that Hamilton won on his way to a second world championship.

Finland’s Valtteri Bottas qualified third for Williams on a dry track after Friday’s rain with Ferrari’s Sebastian Vettel, victorious in Singapore and a four times winner in Japan, lining up in fourth place.

"The first lap I lost a bit of time into Turn 11 and I think in the last corner," said Hamilton.

"Nico is driving well this weekend but I definitely felt pretty good on that last lap, but the main thing is that Kvyat is OK."

The Russian was unhurt in his dramatic crash, losing control of the rear of his car after going wide onto the grass as he approached the hairpin.

Snapping sideways, the car was pitched into a tyre wall and flipped over before coming to rest with the wheels torn off the left side. Kvyat assured the team he was OK and then slowly extricated himself unaided. “It was a big impact, but the main thing is he is fine. A little bit winded,” said Red Bull team principal Christian Horner.

Brazilian Felipe Massa qualified fifth for Williams, with Ferrari’s Kimi Raikkonen sixth and Australian Daniel Ricciardo seventh for Red Bull.

McLaren’s Jenson Button failed to make it through the first phase of qualifying, on a dismal afternoon at engine partner Honda’s home circuit, and starts 16th with Spanish team mate Fernando Alonso 14th.

Button might have squeezed through but the yellow warning flags denied him a final quick lap after Dutch teenager Max Verstappen’s Toro Rosso was left stranded on track at the hairpin exit.—Reuters