Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye, centre-right, accepts a cash donation for families residing at temporary relief camps due to flash floods occurring in their homes in Mottama of Mon State. PHOTO:MNA

Mon State faces flash floods

UNION MINISTER for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye yesterday visited Mawlamyine and Mottama of Mon State that is facing flash floods due to continuous downpour since 16 June.

Accompanied by Chief Minister of Mon State Dr Aye Zan and officials he visited the places damaged by floods in the two towns.

First, the union minister and the chief minister and delegation arrived at a station hospital and a school in Mottama and made arrangements to repair the damaged parts of the buildings.

Later, the union minister and delegation looked into the requirements of Tatmadaw members, police officials, fire brigade members and departmental personnel, who were in charge of clearing the debris.

The union minister and delegation then provided cash aid to family members of homes damaged by the floods and wind in the town.

In Mawlamyine, the capital of Mon State, they coordinated with technicians to restore the Kyaikthalan Pago-da, which faced landslide and flood damage.

They then visited the flood victims at the temporary relief camp set up at a school and provided food supplies.—Myanmar News Agency

Rain forecasted to increase in Mon State, other southern parts in next two days

Admit the downpours and floods in certain parts of the country, especially in Mon State, there is a continuation of increase of rain in Mon and Kayin States and Taninthayi Region in the southern parts of the country in next two days as monsoon is vigorous over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and weak to moderate elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal, according to the Myanmar Daily Weather Report issued by the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology yesterday.

Forecast for the capital Nay Pyi Taw and neighboring areas for today is isolated rain and the degree of certainty is 100 per cent, Yangon, the commercial city and neighboring areas is one or two rain and the degree of certainty is 100 per cent whereas Mandalay the cultural city in central Myanmar and neighboring areas is isolated rains and the degree of certainty is 80 per cent.

Squalls with rough sea are likely at times in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, and off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40) m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters.

Wave height will be about (9 - 12) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama and off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts and about (6 - 8) feet in off and along Rakhine Coasts.

—GNLM
Eid festival, interfaith dinner held at Yangon’s Strand Hotel

Foreign ambassadors, members of interfaith and humanitarian organizations, religious leaders, entrepreneurs, businessmen, and other invited guests at the Eid festival and interfaith dinner party at Strand Hotel. PHOTO: MNA

No passengers injured in train derailment in Mohinyin

NO passengers were injured after a Myitkyina bound special train was derailed in Mohinyin Township, Kachin State.

The accident occurred when a special train operated by locomotive driver identified as U Maung Maung Naing derailed at milestone No. 645/18 and milestone No. 645/199 between Nanmar and Myothit Halay railway stations this morning.

The cause of the derailment is still unknown.

Officials from the Myanma Railways rushed to the scene to evaluate the situation and investigate the accident.

The train services resumed their normal schedules starting from 9:20 am.—Mohinyin (IPRD)
Honouring the outstanding doesn’t mean ignoring those who failed: Thura U Shwe Mann

The government and the people of the Ayeyawady Region presented 44 homes, a road and hand-pumps to the Mro people of Thittonnar-khwahson village, Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State, yesterday.

Chief Minister of Rakhine State U Nyi Pu and Chief Minister of Ayeyawady Delta people provide homes to Mro villagers

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Delta people provide homes to Mro villagers

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Chief Minister of Rakhine State U Nyi Pu and Chief Minister of Ayeyawady

Region U Hla Moe Aung attended the ceremony at Pyu, a town in Bago north of Yangon, in which students of the town who had passed with distinction, as well as schools having high pass rates in the matriculation examination for the academic year 2017-2018, were honoured.

Some prominent people in the world never passed the high school examination, but they developed and prospered through their own efforts and ways, he said, providing words of encouragement to students who had failed in the examination. Even as successful students have the opportunities to pursue higher learning, those who failed also have a bright future as their life does not end here, he noted. So, with a firm spirit they must find ways to achieve success, he said, calling for teachers to provide inspiration and support to the students.

The most basic requisite for the development of a region or a town and the economic, education, social and other sectors, as well as the enforcement of the rule of law, is the involvement of grassroots, he said, highlighting the importance of all-inclusive efforts for all stakeholders to reach this end.

Thura U Shwe Mann, Speaker of Bago Region Hluttaw U Khin Maung Yin, Region Cabinet Minister Daw Nyunt Nyunt Huay, MPs U Than Nyunt, Daw Cho Cho, Dr Mya Thaung and U Min Oo, and members of the region parliament presented gifts and certificates of honour to students who passed with distinction in the examination. The principals of the schools with high pass rates were also awarded.

A five-distinction winner and a school head gave the words of thanks. Thura U Shwe Mann then explained the structure, goals and responsibilities of the commission he chairs, adding the commission would assign its members with specific duties to assess the legal affairs, policies and objectives, in connection with the education sector.

“We must know the means, the length of time and the degree of modifications needed to rescue the country’s education system after determining its weaknesses and faults,” said Thura U Shwe Mann. He then cordially conversed with the attendees, including education officers, officials, members of the Myanmar Women Affairs Federation, Myanmar Red Cross Society and fire brigades, school heads, students, ward/village administrators and other guests.—Myanmar News Agency

EARTHQUAKE NEWS

A slight earthquake of magnitude (4.6) Richter Scale with its epicenter inside Myanmar (about 235/kilometers southwest of Ppyu) latitude 18.23°N, longitude 96.17°E, depth (10) kilometers about (51) kilometers southwest of Taungoo seismological observatory was recorded at (20)hr (12)min (36)sec M.S.T. on 17th June, 2018.—DMH

Landslide hit Mon State, no casualties reported

A LANDSLIDE destroyed two houses and a monastery in Chaungzone Township, Mon State early this morning.

No casualties were reported in the accident that occurred after heavy rains struck the area. A wooden house which belongs to U Thein Tan from Nyaunglan Village and a home built of brick which is owned by U Nyunt Haing and a monastery from Apyaing Village were damaged by the landslide. The estimated loss of property in the incident is worth more than Ks. 1.5 million. Local authorities and social organization members went to the scene to carry out rescue operations and the disaster affected victims are being given necessary assistance by the village officials.—Township IPRD

Homes submerged, residents evacuated after heavy rains hit Mudon

AROUND 35 houses in Ward-4, Mudon Township in Mon State were submerged in floodwaters and about 150 residents were evacuated to a government school after heavy rains drenched the area early this morning.

Food for the flood victims was provided by the ward administrator. Some rural bridges in the region were also drowned by floodwaters and a fence in a government school collapsed due to severe rains.

The local authorities, policemen, firefighters and residents are carrying out rescue operations in the flood affected areas.—Mudon (IPRD)
Shwe Property expo to showcase nearly 4,000 fair-cost apartments on 22nd June

A three-day expo organized by Shwe Property will be held from 22nd to 24th June, showcasing nearly 4,000 fair-cost apartments, according to Shwe Property.

Over 30 construction companies will join this expo. Apartments worth Ks20 to 100 million per unit can be purchased through AYA bank’s long-term home loan plan. Those apartments in various townships of Yangon are ready to accommodate.

We have a regular sales for those apartments worth Ks20 to 100 million linked with bank’s home loan, said Director U Kaung Thu Win of Shwe Property.

“About 40 to 50 units were sold at both property expos presented by AYA and Yoma banks”, he maintained.

Shwe Property’s the Biggest Home Loan Expo brought to you by AYA Bank was held at Hotel Novotel Yangon Max Hotel on 9th and 10th June. —Nyein Nyein

Myanmar exports 242 tonnes of tamarind to Singapore, Thailand by sea in one week

MYANMAR exported 242 tonnes of tamarind to Singapore and Thailand through the sea route in the period a tonne of fresh tamarind is worth approximately $380-400, while the previously harvested tamarind was sold for some $200 per tonne.

In the previous week starting 29 May, the country exported more than 290 tonnes of tamarind to importers.

In the domestic market, growers continued to receive a handsome price for ripe tamarind due to the high demand. Ripe tamarind is currently sold at Ks1,800 per viss (3.6 lbs) in the wholesale market, whereas a viss of tamarind is worth Ks2,500 in the retail market. The current prices of tamarind remained unchanged compared to the previous week.

Trade with ROK exceeds $46 mil. in April

EXTERNAL trade between Myanmar and the Republic of Korea (ROK) this April was US$46.8 million in total, a slight decrease in value by $2.5 million matched against last April, the Commerce Ministry reported.

Myanmar’s imports outdid exports in bilateral trade in the first month of this FY. Myanmar exported $19.4 million worth of domestic products and imported $27.4 million worth of Korean products. When compared with last April, this year saw an increase in value of exports by $0.716 million while the bilateral import value decreased by $3.2 million.

Last fiscal year, Myanmar-South Korea trade was $798 million, a decline by $68.28 million than that of the previous 2016-2017 FY. The bilateral trade reached its peak of $1.57 billion in 2013-2014 FY. It decreased to $862 million in 2014-2015 FY and $656 million in the following FY.

Cosmetics, foodstuff, electronic equipment, mobile devices and other commodities are usually imported from South Korea while Myanmar exports agricultural products, including cashew nuts, mangos, rice, beans and pulses, and miscellaneous products to the East Asian country.

South Korea’s investments in Myanmar at the end of May this fiscal year reached $6.98 million, according to a report of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration. Its investment in Myanmar last fiscal year was worth $253.9 million.

As part of efforts to promote bilateral trade and investment, a project to develop Korea-Myanmar industrial complex has been implemented in Hlegu Township in commercial hub Yangon. With the aim of helping Korean companies enter Myanmar market, the project was signed by the two sides last June.—Khine Khant
Bilateral trade with Japan worth US$150 million in April

MYANMAR’s trade value with its development donor Japan in April during interim period prior to next fiscal year 2018-2019 was recorded at US$150.6 million, according to the figures released by the Commerce Ministry.

Myanmar’s export to Japan fetched $97.4 million whereas import was worth $53.2 million. Bilateral trade value with Japan was worth $1.92 billion in 2011-2012 FY, $1.8 billion in 2012-2013 FY and $822 million in 2013-2014 FY, $1.49 billion in 2014-2015 FY, $2.3 billion in 2015-2016 FY, $2.3 billion in 2014-2015 FY, $1.8 billion in 2013-2014 FY, $1.49 billion in 2012-2013 FY and $822 million in 2011-2012 FY.

Agro products including rice and broken rice, various peas, soy bean, sesame seeds and ginger, fruits and apparel from garment sector on Cut-Make-Pack basis are exported to Japan.

MYANMAR-Bangladesh border trade reaches almost $4.4 million in present FY

MYANMAR-Bangladesh border trade topped US$4.37 million in the current interim financial year, according to the statistical report of the Commerce Ministry.

Border exports from Myanmar to the People’s Republic of Bangladesh are always greater than its imports. Over the first 69 days of this FY, Myanmar exported locally produced commodities worth $4.35 million to the South Asian country and imported only $0.02 million worth of goods.

Both countries conduct bilateral border trade primarily through Sittway and Maungtaw border trade camps. Between 1 April and 8 June this year, trade via the Sittway gate was $2.093 million, including $0.02 million in the imports whereas trade via the Maungtaw trade station was $2.278 million. During the period, there was no import through the Maungtaw point.

This FY saw an increase in value of Myanmar-Bangladesh trade by $1.74 million in comparison with the same time last year when the bilateral border trade was $2.63 million.

Saltwater prawns and fish, bamboo, ginger, peanuts, mung beans, dried plums, garlic, rice, blankets, candy, plum jams, footwear, frozen foods, chemicals, leather, jute products, knitwear, beverages, tobacco, plastics, wood and products made from human hair are the marketable items at the Myanmar-Bangladesh cross-borders.

Bangladesh imported 267 tonnes of Emahta rice from Myanmar via the Maungtaw gate last month.—Shwe Khine

Over 9,700 motorbikes imported in late May

BORDER traders imported 9,720 motorbikes valued at US$5.103 million from China, India and Thailand in the week starting 25 May, according to trade authorities.

The current import figures showed a decrease by 148 motorbikes compared to the previous week ending 25 May, when Myanmar imported 9,868 motorbikes.

Between 26 May and 1 June this year, the country bought 23 motorbikes worth $24,000 through the Tamu border trade camp, 275 motorbikes worth $50,000 through the Kanpakhtee border gate, 451 motorbikes worth $70,000 through the Myawady border station and 8,050 motorbikes worth $2.756 million through the Muse border point of entry. During the same period, local importers bought 363 three-wheel motorcycles from China through the Muse 105th mile trade zone.

The week saw a decline in the imports of motorbikes from the Myawady gate. However, the imports of the same through the Kanpakhtee border station showed an increase in quantity compared to the previous week. —Kyu Kyu

Over 1,000 tons of goods exported to China through Mongyu in May

A total of 1,089 tons of goods were sent to China through Mongyu Township in Tachileik District in May.

The export items are 600 tons of Tissue-culture banana, 269 tonnes of pumpkin, 28 tons of raw rubber, 24 tonnes of corn without corncob, two tonnes of watermelon and 106 tonnes of industrial used lime.

Earlier, there was only illegal trade channel from Mongyu to China. In 2016, to combat against illegal trade and inspect border gate, Shan State government assigned a representative. After that, legal trade has improved in this area and the state’s revenue also increased. —Min Aung (Taunggyi)
Freedom of creativity imperative for films

FREEDOM for film creators is imperative for the new Film and Video Censor Board, said Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint in Yangon yesterday.

Speaking to members of the newly formed board, the union minister stressed the importance of ensuring this freedom. Appropriate means should be taken through coordinated measures if their work or creation may harm the human society or certain parts of society or specific groups, he warned.

Director-General of Information and Public Relations Department U Ye Naing was elected as the chair of the board, which has given the green light to 421 scripts, 295 Myanmar films, 239 foreign films, 1,545 video plays, 422 MTVs, and nine other video clips censored by the previous body.

D–G U Ye Naing also explained the formation of the new board with 15 members under the existing laws and rules, the accomplishments of the former board, censoring of Myanmar subtitles for foreign TV series, and the pros and cons and efforts of the new board to work while the film laws are being amended.

U Kyi Soe Tun, patron of the Myanmar Film Association, and Chairman U Zin Wine shared their experiences after the self-introduction session for the new members including U Kyaw Oo, Daw Swe Zin Htalik, Daw Mya Kyi and Daw Myo Myo May. The board will serve for two years from 1 April 2018 until 31 May 2020. In the afternoon, the union minister visited IPRD offices and libraries in Bahan, Yankin, South Okkalapa, Thingangyun, Hliine and Ahlon townships of the Yangon region. —Myanmar News Agency

Group art exhibition held in Mandalay

THE Mandalay Hill Art Gallery is currently hosting a collective art exhibition, showcasing 120 works created by 93 artists who are members of the Mandalay Hill Art Gallery, according to the event organisers.

The group exhibition began on June 16 and will last through June 22, featuring oils, acrylic and watercolour paintings. Subject matters include landscapes, still-life historic pagodas and other traditional structures in Mandalay Region. The event organisers have invited enthusiasts to visit the gallery and enjoy the artworks of those artists during the one-week event. The gallery opens its doors between 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.

The Mandalay Hill Art Gallery is located at the base of Mandalay Hill near the prominent lion statues of Aungmyet-hazan Township.—Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Damaged Yenantha Bridge rebuided in Magway Region

CONSTRUCTION authorities on Sunday started repair Yenantha Bridge, an important hailey bridge on Magway-Thayet-Kamna-Pyay route, which was recently destroyed by heavy rain.

The Yenantha Bridge crossing Mindon Creek is located at mile post No. 20/0 in the north of Yenantha Village on Thayet-Kamna road in Kamna Township, Thayet District, Magway Region. Experienced engineers and skilled workers are putting forth concerted efforts to rebuild the damaged bridge, working to upgrade the bridge as quickly as possible.

The 729-foot long and 13-foot wide hailey bridge was firstly opened on 26 September, 2009.—Kyaw Zeya Win (IPRD)

Over 38,000 acres of community forest to be developed in Sagaing Region

SAGAING Region Forest Department said it is working to establish over 38,000 acres of community forests in six districts in the regions within the current 2018-2019 fiscal year.

According to the project, the forest authorities will develop a total of 38,789 acres of community forests, including 21,095 acres in two townships in Knai-baloo District; 2,711 acres in four townships in Shwebo District; 9,620 acres in seven townships in Katha District; 190 acres in two townships in Monywa District; 2,978 acres in four townships in Yinnanbin District and 2,194 acres in three townships in Kalay District.

The key objectives of the establishment of the community forests are to conserve the country’s natural environment, biodiversity and ecosystem. It also aims to improve the forests, to arrange the cutting in order to keep well within the productive powers of the forests and to ensure a permanent and sustained yield from them.

A member of the department said that public involvement plays a very important role in preserving the forests. The people-centered tree-planting project is aimed at raising public awareness over the sustainable growth of the natural environment, benefits of planting trees and their economic importance.—Win Oo Zeyataing
Interview with SWRR Deputy Minister U Soe Aung concerning boat crash survivors in Yathedaung Township

By Min Thit (MNA)
Photo: Nay Lin

An independent local media group gathering news in Maungtaw Township on 14 and 15 June interviewed Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, U Soe Aung, who is in Nga Khu Ya Reception Centre to supervise assistance given to the boat crash survivors from last week.

Q: Can you tell us about the resettlement progress for the boat crash survivors? We’ve heard some of them are Bangladesh citizens, so how will you deal with that too?
A: Authorities found 104 boat crash survivors on 11 June and brought them to the reception centre. We know that 12 are from Bangladesh and 92 have previously lived in either Buthidaung or Maungtaw Township.

For the twelve people who claimed to be from Bangladesh, our Immigration Director contacted the Bangladesh Consulate in Sittway. The consul talked with them through a phone but said he wasn’t satisfied and will come interview them at an undefined date after 17 June. The twelve Bangladeshis citizens claim they have ID cards and if the consul approves after the interview then we will follow proper diplomatic protocol.

For the remaining 92 people, they have different objectives. Some of them say they were returning from Bangladesh, some were going to Malaysia to work; all twelve Bangladeshis were going to find work in Malaysia; and they had to pay Bangladesh taka (BDT) 20,000 each to the boatmen. The total cost for each of them is said to be BDT 200,000 (approx. MMK 3,221,275).

We think the boat was damaged from bad weather and the boatmen docked at the nearest coast. We have reason to believe the people who claim they are from Buthidaung and Maungtaw have stayed in camps on the Bangladesh side.

We asked them what they would like to do next and they replied they want to resettle back here. But most of them say they still have relatives back in the camps in Bangladesh. So we are contacting their nearest relatives in other villages.

The next step would be building houses for them in the village they are resettling and working with Bangladesh to repatriate their relatives from the camps over there.

Q: When we were talking with the boat crash survivors they told us they didn’t receive the repatriation forms from Myanmar during their time in the camps. Can you comment on that?
A: Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye faced a similar issue when he visited the camps in Bangladesh. The displaced persons at the camp there told him they didn’t receive any sort of forms for repatriation, so the union minister explained it to them.

We have included these forms for repatriation in Myanmar and Bangladesh’s agreements and we have sent the forms to Bangladesh as well. We contacted them and took diplomatic actions to remind them of the importance of the form and distributing them. The previous batch that arrived here are already in the process of resettling in their native towns with the aid and support we agreed to give.

Q: We know that you have build houses for the Mro ethnic people but when we met with people from the Islamic community they said no one’s come to rebuild their burned down houses. What is your response to that?
A: We’ve completed rebuilding the 22 houses burned down in Pantawpyin near Maungtaw and in fact people are already living there. Then there’s the ongoing construction of 60 houses Kyainchaung Taung. We signed an MOU with India for the project and the Indian Government selected the company to head the project. We help people rebuild their house as close to their native town as possible.

Q: Can you tell us how many people have returned from Bangladesh, both legally and illegally?
A: Currently no one has returned from Bangladesh legally. A family of five returned of their own choice. A group of 62 people returned sometime ago and now there are 92 people at the centre here. These people were not returned by the Bangladesh government. They returned of their own choice.

Flash floods in Taninthayi, Mon State, due to intense rain

THE towns and villages of Mon State and Taninthayi Region were flooded yesterday, the meteorology and the respective information and public relations departments (IPRDs) reported.

Owing to the heavy rain and wind yesterday, floods were seen in the Taungwae quarter of Mawlamyaing Town. Many houses were flooded, and over 100 people, including children and old men, were stranded in some buildings. Rescue measures were undertaken to help them.

Similarly, floods were witnessed around Mawlamyaing University, Mawlamyaing General Hospital and some government offices. Patients in the General Hospital were successfully shifted to safety, according to officials.

The floods damaged electric lamps and trees, while the Thanyin Bridge (Mawlamyaing) was closed to the public.

Floods also occurred in Thanbyuzayat, Paung and Ye townships in Mon State. The public was rescued by government officials, according to the information and public relations departments in the flooded townships. In Thaninthayi Region, floods due to intense rain were reported in Kampani Village in Kyauksin Village-tract.

A dam in the region broke owing to the intense rain. Likewise, in Kalein Aung Town in Dawei District in Thaninthayi Region, a road near milepost 3 and one furlong was flooded by Dawei River. The public experienced traffic problems in the town. The losses incurred because of the floods could not be estimated, according to the Thanbyuzayat IPRD.

—Townships IPRD
The Important Project for Facilitating Connectivity between Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Myanmar

By Swan Pyae (MMRD)

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Myanmar's Geographic Advantages and Opinions

Myanmar is located in the strategic region of the Asian continent which can connect various routes of South and East Asia, South and South East Asia, and the ASEAN countries. Myanmar is a country with two most thriving economies: China and India, and its geographic location plays a pivotal role in attracting the attention of the economic giants to connect their services to South East Asia. Considering its geographical position, Myanmar has a huge potential to gain the economic advantage by strengthening connectivity with its neighbors. However, despite of proximity to India and Bangladesh, Myanmar's connectivity with these countries has been limited. While the products of China and ASEAN countries have been massively flowing into Myanmar through land-custom stations, the flow of products from India and Bangladesh has been minimal. To balance this trade situation, Myanmar has to pay attention to connectivity domains and fully utilize connectivity with the West.

For Study on BBIN Connectivity

Bangladesh Marketing Research & Development (MMRD) in partnership with Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS), an organization with 35 years of experience in the field of social sciences, reviewed the BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal) project. Since April 2017, MMRD has been conducting the study to identify the core issues of the related government agencies for the cross-border transport agreement. The broad objectives of the study are: (1) to identify the corridor-specific impediments to the cross-border transport, (2) to mitigate the root cause of the impediments by identifying possible solutions, (3) to understand the current state of the border, (4) to find out the major import and export items crossing the border, (5) to analyze the actual practice of formal banking system in the border and (6) to find out the security threats, if any.

Findings of the Borders and Payment Transactions

MMRD finds that there are still many corridor specific impediments in the studied corridors. In the Myanmar – India corridor, there are issues of border instability and frequent border shutdowns. Likewise, Myanmar – Bangladesh corridor is exposed to security threats. The study finds that border stability plays a pivotal role in facilitating cross-border movement of cargo and passengers.

Another overarching issue facing the study is the limited use of formal bank-to-bank payment system in the borders. To enforce formal banking system through the borders, the Myanmar – India corridor has been maintained under the Multi-Model Transit Transport Agreement that can enable both countries to use formal banking system.

Infrastructure Issues

There are also issues at the border and off-the-border infrastructure gaps. Tamu, Myanmar’s border crossing point has been underdeveloped. Tamu harbor is used as free trade zone for international trade. The government of Myanmar has already named Maungdaw – Sittwe – Yangon for transport up to $10,000 worth of trade per bank draft and to trade under Letter of Credit (LC) if the amount exceeds $10,000 in a trade transaction at the border. The respective USD and Rupee bank accounts of MMEB have been opened at UBH’s Multinational office for traders to conduct formal bank payment. Similarly, ADB accounts in Myanmar’s Bani Bank Ltd and Myanmar’s MEB have been opened for formal payment system between Myanmar – Bangladesh border trade. Despite these agreements, the actual practice of formal banking system is still very limited and the traders are still heavily relying on informal transactions.

Climate Change and Adaptation

The report states that in 2017, 101% of the fund flows to developing countries and emerging economies was allocated to climate mitigation projects. The report also provides an overview of the progress made by developing countries and emerging economies in developing and implementing their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). The report emphasizes that in 2017, 2012-2017, 91% of the aggregate climate finance in developing countries and emerging economies supported climate adaptation projects.

ADB’s climate change financing through the Green Climate Fund to date. It also continues to establish methodologies to track climate finance. This report’s methodology is to exclude co-financing and co-benefits from the climate finance tracking. The report also highlights the contribution of the Green Climate Fund to the global climate finance tracking initiative.

The MDBs’ climate finance tracking also highlights the importance of the Green Climate Fund in global climate finance tracking. It is estimated that the Green Climate Fund will contribute approximately $10 billion per year to climate change adaptation and mitigation activities. The report highlights the importance of the Green Climate Fund in global climate finance tracking.

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Over 130 victims trafficked in five months

By May Thet Hnin

A total of 133 persons were victims of human trafficking in 85 cases from January through May 2018, according to the anti-human trafficking police force.

Of the 133 victims, 119 were women and 14 were men. A total of 231 offenders were involved in human trafficking in the five months, of which 71 were men and 160 women.

Among the cases investigated by the police, 26 were reported from Shan State, 23 from the Yangon Region and 13 from the Mandalay Region, with the remaining cases registered in other states and regions. Myanmar registered 85 cases of human trafficking in January and May, and of these, 35 were related to forced marriages with Chinese men. In other cases, 11 women were forced into prostitution in the country, while three were related to job exploitation.

The anti-human trafficking police force is seeking more offenders involved in these cases. Experts have identified political instability and poverty as the root cause of human trafficking. Human trafficking has become rampant because of the small amount of money needed, simple transportation and easy means of communication.

Myanmar cooperated with Thailand and China to combat trafficking by opening cooperation offices. Myanmar is one of the anti-trafficking actors in the region and Great Mekong sub-region, said Police Major Khin Maung Kywe from the No. 6 anti-human trafficking police force in Yangon.

“The traffickers target those who lack knowledge and are poor. Many fall prey to fraudsters in their quest for better living standards. Most traffickers directly approach the targets. A woman must be cautious and discuss with this with her parents before believing anyone,” he added.

According to the 2006 Anti-Trafficking in Person Law, people who traffic women and children shall be given a minimum 10-year imprisonment or maximum life imprisonment, or fined. Money or property received through trafficking will be confiscated by the government.

According to the 2016 Trafficking in Persons Report, there are seven types of trafficking crimes, with 69.7 per cent of the trafficking carried out for forced marriage, 13.6 per cent for the sex trade, 10 per cent for labour exploitation and forced labour, 4.8 per cent for child trafficking, 1.4 per cent for slavery, 0.3 per cent for forced fostering and 0.2 per cent for sexual exploitation.

According to reports on transnational human trafficking, 80 per cent of the victims are sent to China, 10 per cent to Thailand and 6 per cent to Malaysia. Some 4 per cent of the human trafficking cases have increased each year. The government should conduct anti-human trafficking activities, in cooperation with the Hluttaw, civil society organisations and the public.

The government has also assigned an anti-human trafficking police force unit in the border area. The anti-human trafficking police force took legal action against traffickers under the 2006 Anti-Trafficking in Person Law. The Anti-Trafficking in Person Law is being amended, and the new law will be enforced soon.

Multiple drug dealers seized in Mandalay, Shan State

From left to right, Kyaw Hla, Shanladwe, and Lawchat seen with their confiscated drugs. PHOTO: Supplied

Acting on a tip-off, a combined team of an anti-drug squad and the local police searched a home in Tharayee Ward, Kyaukpadaung Township on 15 June and discovered 3,427 tablets of an anti-narcotic drug and Ks291,100.

Similarly, another team searched a motorcycle driven by Saw Htoo at the corner of Manawhary Street and 49th Street, Htonny Dagon Ward, Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay Region. The police seized 145 yaba pills and a mobile phone. A confession from Saw Htoo led the police to another suspect Tin Maung Win (a) Yusup, from whose motorcyc- le they seized 315 yaba pills, Ks72,000 cash and a mobile phone.

Next, on 16 June, the police searched Kaung Myat San (a) Fatty (a) Lin Lin at the corner of Thayawdy Min-gyi Street and 73rd Street, Ka Ward, Pyigigatagon Township. They seized 15 yaba pills and a mobile phone.

In Shan State, a combined team, including the No. 22 anti-narcotic drug squad from Muse Town, intercepted a motorcycle driven by Han Maw, accompanied by Shanladwe, on the way to Mahnaung Village Namkhahn Township at 3 p.m. on 16 June. The police found 12 grams of heroine and 400 yaba pills in their possession.

Acting on the information provided by them, the combined team then raided Lawchat’s house in Monwet Village, Kaungkat Village-tract, Namkhahn Township. The police discovered heroin weighing 108 grams in nine cups, 2,800 yaba pills and Ks400,000.

At 5.30 p.m. on the same day, a combined team, including the No. 28 anti-narcotic drug squad from Kungtong Township, intercepted a motorcycle driven by Kyaw Hla and found 413 yaba pills in his bag. He was on the way to Wawpood Village, Kungtong Township.

Charges have been filed against all the offenders under the anti-narcotics act by the local police.

Bus catches fire; no casualties reported

A bus caught fire near Kwinchaung Yekyaw Bridge at milepost No. 125/3 on Shwebo-Myitkyina Road, 17 miles south of Indaw Township in Katha District, Sagaing Region, early Saturday morning.

The cause of the fire was reported to be excessive heat, because of which the bus’s rear tyre burst.

The bus then caught fire. The accident occurred around 5 a.m. when the bus was plying 32 passengers to Monywa from Myitkyina.

The fire was extinguished by Indaw Township Fire Service Department with the use of three fire engines and two water browsers. A farmer from Kwinchaung village who was irrigating his plantation also helped put out the fire.

No one was injured in the accident, according to firefighters.

The Township Fire Service Department and the police station have filed a case against the bus driver for reckless driving, according to the relevant sections of the Penal Code.—Han Myo Kyaw (IPRD)

Police seize 2,000 yaba pills in Kyaikmaraw Township

THE police arrested a man working at a rubber plantation in Kyaikmaraw Township, Mon State, after he was found in possession of a cache of yaba tablets on Saturday.

After receiving a tip, the anti-drug squad raided a house belonging to Ye Win, a farmer at Uchaykkyi rubber plantation, near MCL cement plant in Gadonsi Village, on 16 June. They found a cache of 2,000 yaba pills hidden in a basket and confiscated the drugs.

The suspect has been charged with drug trafficking under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. The township police are carrying out further investigations to apprehend others involved in the case.—Township IPRD
Aquarius migrants finally land in Spain after week-long odyssey

VALENCIA — The 630 migrants whose rescue sparked a major migration row in Europe began disembarking in Spain on Sunday after a turbulent week that saw Italy turn them away.

The first of three ships transporting the group, an Italian Navy guard vessel called the Dilullo, pulled into Valencia harbour just before 6:30 am (0430 GMT) with 274 migrants on board, according to the Red Cross.

The Aquarius itself, the rescue ship charted by a French NGO which has been at the centre of the crisis, pulled into port some four hours later under a clear blue sky at the port in southeastern Spain.

As it neared port, those on board had danced and sang, their excitement captured in footage released on Twitter by SOS Mediterranea which operates the vessel together with Doctors Without Borders (MSF). The third boat, the Italian navy ship the Orione, was due to arrive late on Sunday, regional authorities said.

After the first boat docked, medical staff wearing white overalls, gloves and masks went on board to carry out initial medical checks before the migrants disembarked in groups of 20. The migrants, most of them from Africa, were welcomed by a team of more than 2,000 people, including 470 translators and 1,000 Red Cross volunteers who distributed basic items such as blankets, clothes and hygiene kits.

High waves and winds had forced the naval convoy to take a detour on its 1,500-kilometre (930-mile) voyage to Spain, ending a week-long odyssey in the Mediterranean.

‘Welcome home’

At the port, a huge banner reading “Welcome home” in various languages including Arabic.

“Today is a historic day,” said Father Angel Garcia Rodriguez, a well-known priest who heads the Messengers of Peace NGO which is helping migrants at the port.

“It will be for Spaniards not to smile when they see these children disembark,” he said.

Among the passengers are 450 men and 89 women — at least seven of them pregnant — as well as 89 adolescents and 11 children under the age of 13, figures released by the Valencian authorities show.

They come from 26 countries, mainly from Africa but also Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, MSF said.

Those with injuries — mainly scratches and burns — were taken to hospital along with the pregnant woman, local health officials said.

‘Follow suit’

Red Cross Secretary General Elhadj As Sy thanked Spain “for opening their arms at times when many reject and are not showing solidarity.”

“We call on all other countries to follow suit in helping those in need,” he told AFP in Valencia.

The Aquarius rescued the migrants off Libya’s coast last weekend but Italy’s new populist government and Malta both refused to let it dock, accusing each other of failing to stick to international and EU commitments.

Spain eventually stepped in and agreed to receive the refugees as a “political gesture” to “oblige Europe to forge a common policy to a common problem,” Foreign Minister Josep Borrell said.

Said Madrid on Saturday it had accepted an offer from France — who had angered Rome by brandishing it irresponsible — to welcome Aquarius migrants who “meet the criteria for asylum”. Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez thanked French President Emmanuel Macron for his gesture, saying it was “exactly the kind of cooperation Europe needs” at this hour.

‘Voyages of death’

The plight of the Aquarius has again highlighted the failure of EU member states to work together to deal with the influx of migrant arrivals since 2015.

Afer Rome’s decision to ban the Aquarius, Macron and Italian premier Giuseppe Conte met on Friday and agreed that the EU should set up asylum processing centres in Africa to prevent “voyages of death” — AFP.

UN envoy in Yemen for Hodeida crisis talks

SANAA — The UN envoy for Yemen was in rebel-controlled capital Sanaa for a second day on Sunday to hold emergency talks over the key aid port of Hodeida, where a regional coalition is battling Houthi rebels.

Martin Griffiths was believed to be pushing a deal for rebel leaders to cede control of the Red Sea port to a UN-supervised committee and halt heavy clashes against advancing government troops backed by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

The envoy did not make any statement on his arrival at Sanaa international airport on Saturday.

UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash on Twitter backed “the envoy’s efforts to facilitate the safe handover of Hodeida to the legitimate Yemeni Government”.

“The people of Hodeida urgently want to be liberated. The coalition will continue with its military and humanitarian preparations to achieve this urgent result,” Gargash wrote.

More than 70 per cent of Yemeni imports pass through Hodeida’s docks and the fighting has raised UN fears of humanitarian catastrophe in a country already teetering on the brink of famine.

Yemen’s government and its allies launched their offensive on Wednesday, with at least 139 combatants killed in the days since. PHOTO: AFP
When it comes to North Korea, no one puts Beijing in a corner

BEIJING — China may not have been at the table for Donald Trump and Kim Jong Un’s historic summit, but it still scored a strategic victory and sent out a clear message: no one puts Beijing in the corner.

Just months earlier, it seemed as though the US might cut China out of its negotiations with the North altogether, as direct contact was established between Pyongyang and Washington.

But Beijing was not about to allow itself to be left out of the action on the Korean peninsula, where it has long claimed security and economic interests, and Chinese officials moved quickly to remind both the US and North Korea that Beijing was indispensable.

And after the summit, when Trump made the shock announcement that the US would stop its massive war games with South Korea — a longtime Chinese goal — it was clear that Beijing had made its mark on the proceedings.

The dramatic turnaround was further cemented when US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo rushed to the Chinese capital to meet with China’s constant senior Asia advisor at the US military presence in South Korea.

But Beijing could not ignore Pyongyang’s repeated nuclear and missile tests last year, and chose to support UN sanctions — cutting off the flow of coal, textiles, and other goods from North Korea.

With those concessions in hand, the US seemed intent on moving ahead with serious talks on denuclearisation of the peninsula and the establishment of a peace mechanism for the Korean peninsula. But Beijing’s influence on the summit’s outcome was far from a foregone conclusion.

For years, China has propped up the North Korean economy in the face of international pressure, worried about a possible collapse of the Kim regime, which it sees as a strategic buffer against the US military presence in South Korea.

Beijing’s influence on the summit’s outcome was far from a foregone conclusion. After years of being persona non grata, Kim suddenly made his first state visit to Beijing, closely followed by a second meeting with Xi in the Chinese port city of Dalian.

Up to that point, the North “really did not prioritise the ending of exercises by the US and South Korea,” said Bonnie Glatzer, senior Asia advisor at Washington’s Center for Strategic and International Studies.

“Then Xi Jinping met with Kim in Dalian and all of a sudden, we had an about face by the North Koreans.”

The Dalian meeting last month was the second time the two leaders met in six weeks, following Kim’s trip to Beijing.

“The whole thing looks to be not just a win for Kim, but also very much a win for Xi-Jinping,” she added.

“The Chinese have long believed that if they could actually dislodge US troops from the region that would be the key to eliminating or severely diminishing US influence in the region and accelerating the creation of a more China-centric region.”

“Enormous power”

Following the Singapore summit, China has made it clear it intends to play a leading role in the negotiations, couching that insistence in diplomatic offers to lend its assistance.

The US likely has no chance but to play along.

“Ultimately, if there is to be a successful settlement between the US and North Korea, China has to be involved,” said Charlie Parton, a former British diplomat in China now working at the UK-based think tank Royal United Services Institute (RUSI).

“You can’t ignore an enormous power with a land border and a determination to make North Korea its business.”

Wu agreed: “Without China’s support, North Korea cannot safely promote denuclearisation and couldn’t smoothly transfer the country’s focus to economic development.”

Now that China has successfully brought itself back into the negotiations, it could use its position for leverage in other areas of its relationship with the US, he said.

“We hope to treat political issues and economic issues separately, but if China and the US really open up a trade war, it will have an impact on the entire Sino-US relationship, including future Sino-US relations on the North Korea issue,” Parton warned.

“It will inevitably make the coordination between the two countries on North Korea issue more complicated.”

—AFP

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE
MV YANTRA BHUM VOY.NO. (1008W)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV YANTRA BHUM VOY.NO. (1008W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18-6-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MIP where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

M. V. YANTRA BHUM VOY.NO. (1008W)

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
New Yangon Development Company Limited (COI No. 1SC/2017-2018), invites eligible local and/or international consultants to indicate their interest in providing following consultancy:

1. Master Plan and Strategic Plan
2. Traffic and Transport Study
3. Strategic Environmental Assessment
4. Quantity Surveying (QS) Services for the New Yangon City Development Project.

Consultants passing the prequalification will be invited to prepare the proposals.

For further information, please contact below address between 9:00am to 4:00pm on 20 June 2018 and 21 June 2018.

New Yangon Development Company Limited
56, Chindwin Road, Kayantay Township, Yangon, Myanmar
Phone: 09402111115

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE
MV TOVE MAERSK VOY.NO. ( )
Consignees of cargo carried on M.V TOVE MAERSK VOY.NO. ( ) are hereby notified that their vessel will be arriving on 18-6-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANNA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

18 JUNE 2018
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
Invest in North Korea: money pit or golden opportunity?

PYEONGYANG (NORTH KOREA) — Donald Trump dangled the carrot of foreign investment in front of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un at their nuclear summit, but analysts say few will want to put money into one of the highest-risk business environments in the world. The US president showed Kim a movie of bright lights, high-speed trains and soaring tower blocks — pitching a future that could be possible if Pyongyang gives up its weapons. Optimists say that with mineral wealth, cheap labour, and a helpful geographical location, the North has huge potential. But the history of overseas firms who have tried to set up operations in the isolated, impoverished country is a long and sorry one. Rules that can change on a whim, bills that are never paid, and the threat of expropriation hang over foreigners who step into the wildest of wild east investment destinations.

For now, dozens of restrictions apply under the various sanctions regimes imposed on the North over its nuclear ambitions. Joint ventures are banned by the UN Security Council, the European Union blocks financial transfers of more than 5,000 euros, and US regulations mean international banks are loath to enable transactions of any kind — so much so that even humanitarian organisations struggle to fund their activities.

And even if they are lifted, there are major challenges to working in the North. Infrastructure is poor, and analysts say corruption is widespread. Crucially, said a diplomat in Pyongyang, “legal guarantees for business are very weak.”

“Huge cultural gaps”

During the Sunshine Policy, a previous period of warmer ties, South Korean conglomerate Hyundai poured hundreds of millions of dollars into a tourist resort for Southerners to visit the scenic Mount Kumgang.

But the trips came to an abrupt halt when a North Korean soldier shot dead a woman from the South who strayed into a forbidden zone.

Many South Korean firms set up operations in the joint-venture Kaesong Industrial Complex where they employed cheap labour from the North, but Seoul closed the project in 2016 over Pyongyang’s weapons programmes.

Construction giant La-fargeHolcim last year disposed of its stake in a North Korean cement plant for an undisclosed sum, nursing significant losses.

“Governance is weak, information is lacking and there are huge cultural gaps with local partners,” said Geoffrey See, founder of Choson Exchange, a non-profit that trains entrepreneurs and economic policymakers in the North.

The most successful foreign firms in the North, he added, focus on trading activities to avoid having assets in the country that are vulnerable to seizure.—APF

INVITATION FOR TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL PROPOSALS
THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation

CONSULTING FIRM FOR PROJECT BASELINE SURVEY AND M & E

The Department of Rural Development (DRD) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation as implementation agency (IA) of Myanmar, is jointly implementing the China-aided Pilot Project of Poverty Reduction Cooperation in Myanmar. The project aims to share China’s successful experiences in poverty reduction and to enhance cooperation and exchange in poverty reduction and rural development between China and Myanmar by conducting poverty alleviation activities in two rural villages in the Nay Pyi Taw territory.

The Joint Project Management Office (JPMO) intends to apply part of the grant provided by the Chinese Government. The project aims to share China’s successful experiences in poverty reduction and to enhance cooperation and exchange in poverty reduction and rural development between China and Myanmar by conducting poverty alleviation activities in two rural villages in the Nay Pyi Taw territory.

The Joint Project Management Office (JPMO) intends to apply part of the financing to recruit a qualified local Consulting Firm or Chinese Consulting Firm with branches in Myanmar to provide the services for project baseline survey and M&E in the two project villages and the two comparative villages.

The services shall include baseline survey in 2018 and comprehensive M&E works for the villages for 3 years starting from 2018 to 2020. The assignment is expected to start in July 2018. The TOR including detailed tasks and deliverables to be provided under the services can be obtained through the address mentioned hereunder.

The Joint Project Management Office (JPMO) now invites eligible Firms/Companies/NGOs to submit the technical and financial proposals.

The Proposals must be submitted in scanned/PDF version or in sealed envelope by person to the address below by 16:00 PM Wednesday 4 July 2018.

Attn: U Ye Khaung, Deputy Director
Joint Project Management Office (JPMO), Department of Rural Development,
Office No.36, Nay Pyi Taw.
Tel: +95-67418619
Fax: (+95-674)186171
E-mail: chinamyannarjpmo@gmail.com

PACIFIC HUNT ENERGY

Pacific Hunt Energy Completes Seismic Acquisition for Dry Season 2017-2018 on PSC H

Pacific Hunt Energy (PHE), a Canadian oil & gas company, has safely acquired 210 line kilometres of 2D land seismic data on offshore PSC H in Bago Region with its seismic contractor BG2P Geophysical Myanmar. Pacific Hunt Energy has started the processing, and interpretation of a 2D seismic data set. The data acquired is of good quality and the project was completed with zero lost time injuries. “The project was successful and we are happy with the results”, said Grant Petersen, Managing Director of Pacific Hunt Energy. The Company has further seismic acquisition plans scheduled for the next dry season.

Prior to commencement and during the seismic campaign PHE conducted extensive public consultations with thousands of stakeholders in five townships of Bago Region namely, Bago, Daik U, Kyaukhtaya, Thanet Pin and Waw townships. Land and Crop compensation payment ceremonies are ongoing under the supervision of local authorities and MOGE. As part of its CSR campaign, Pacific Hunt Energy has completed a three-month long mobile clinic program. A doctor together with two health care assistants provided free medical services in the villages located in the proximity of the seismic camps. During the CSR campaign over 2,800 people visited the mobile clinic and received good quality treatment for a variety of diagnoses such as muscular pain, hypertension and gastrointestinal issues. Health talks during which visitors to the clinic could learn about liver health and how to improve liver health in their daily lives, were held by the treating doctor during clinic opening hours. The health talks were part of a Liver Review which focused on identifying those in risk groups and testing them for liver abnormalities such as Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C. Further Pacific Hunt Energy CSR campaigns with focus on schools and clean drinking water are currently under execution and will continue to be implemented during 2018-2019.

Pacific Hunt Energy was awarded onshore blocks PSC H and PSC C-1 as a result of the Second Onshore Bidding Round in Myanmar in 2014. The Company began its first seismic campaign on PSC H in Myanmar in the last quarter of 2017.

For more information visit: www.pacifichuntenergy.com
Or contact us at: info@pacifichuntenergy.com
For feedback about our seismic or CSR campaign please contact Pacific Hunt Energy Community Call Centre at: 99-01146388.

PHOTO: AFP

The most successful foreign firms in the North, he added, focus on trading activities to avoid having assets in the country that are vulnerable to seizure. — APF
PARIS— Iconic supermodel Naomi Campbell and Italian star Monica Bellucci on Saturday injected Hollywood-octane compé to the second day of Milan men's fashion week, sporting sizzling men's suits teamed with skyscraper stilettos for Dolce&Gabbana.

With an over-the-top gilt and baroque decor glittering in the background, the 46-year-old Campbell was a vision from top to bottom from her elegant black hat with a white band to her sparkling silver heels. She wore a classic pinstripe suit with a carefully mismatched bow tie adorning her crisp white shirt.

The catwalk celebrated love in all shapes and sizes — heterosexual, gay couples with children, cougars and sugar daddies — sending women and men, women and boys and older men and their trophy conquests down the ramp in eye-popping colours screaming Florida.

Bellucci showed off a three-piece coal black suit with a wide lapel, teetering on vertiginous heels with her hands in her pockets.

The younger models were heartthrobs of the Millennials — a target group for the house — including actor Cameron Dallas, Chinese singer and actor Karry Wang and Kailand Wander, the son of US music legend Stevie Wonder.

Apart from Campbell and Bellucci's suits, the other offerings bore the quirky, sassy D&G stamp: suits encrusted with precious stones or layered with dazzling silver and gold embroidery that the maison put down to a "Gothic inspiration." Snakes motifs and neon shades

Versace also opted for full-blast — but far younger — star power, leading with current top model Bella Hadid. Both the boys and girls wore outfits bearing the brand's trademark snake motif, as well as head-to-toe fluorescent green and pink combinations.

Dressers were in plaid and shorts were both baggy or tight and some were asymmetrical. There were letter box red cardigans emblazoned with a crown and Donatella Versace said the collection catered to three kinds of men: a "street style" for stars, another for dandies and a third for "leaders." "The Versace man is not ordinary, he is watched and spoken of," she said.

Milan will showcase 28 ready-to-wear collections to reveal the Spring/Summer 2019 lines.

Among the major Italian names showing between now and Monday are Versace, Dolce&Gabbana, Prada and Giorgio Armani.

The overseas fashion houses taking part include Britain's Stella McCartney, Canada's Dsquared2 and Germany's Philipp Plein.

McCartney is returning to Milan after a four-year absence and will close the fashion week on Monday evening. — AFP

NEW YORK— Jay-Z and Beyoncé late Saturday released “Everything is Love,” a surprise album after years of speculation that they were working on a joint project.

The album — which came two years after Beyoncé revealed Jay-Z's infidelity through lyrics — again offers plenty of tidbits into the lives of music's most famous couple.

Here are some highlights:

**No love child**

Jay-Z shot down rumors that he has an illegitimate child. Aspiring rapper Rymir Satterthwaite has alleged for years that he is the superstar’s son due to his mother’s purported fling with the then little-known Shawn Carter in 1992.

"Billie Jean in his prime / For the thousandth time / The kid ain’t mine," Jay-Z raps on "Heard About Us," referencing the rapper's affair with the then little-known Shawn Carter.

**Recovered from infidelity**

“Everything is Love,” as the title implies, speaks much about the strength of their marriage after highly public troubles. Beyoncé on her 2016 album "Lemonade" revealed infidelity by Jay-Z, who apologized a year later on his own album "4:44.

On the joint album's boisterous closer “Lovehappi,” the two say that they have patched up. "You did some things to me / You do some things to me," Beyoncé sings with brass in her voice. “But love is deeper than your pain and I believe you can change.”

**Angry at legal action**

Jay-Z vents frustration several times on the album about legal action against him. Most recently the Securities and Exchange Commission ordered the rapper to testify as part of an investigation into his sale of his Rocawear clothing line.

On "Nice," Jay-Z denounces the subpoena and suggests he is being targeted because he is a successful African American, wondering why he did not face such scrutiny in his earlier life as a Brooklyn drug dealer.

“Time to remind me I'm black again, huh? / All this talking back. I'm too arrogant, huh?" Later on the album he professes his innocence in disputes with authorities — so often known by their agencies' acronyms — as he raps: "I pass the alphabet boys like an eye test."

**No to Super Bowl**

Jay-Z appeared to confirm a report that he turned down an offer from the National Football League to perform at this year’s Super Bowl, the most watched event on US television.

Jay-Z is an outspoken supporter of Colin Kaepernick, the now-unemployed quarterback who stirred a nationwide discussion by kneeling during the national anthem to protest racial injustice. He alludes to the racial imbalance in American football, where team owners are almost entirely white and players mostly African American.

“I said no to the Super Bowl / You need me, I don’t need you," Jay-Z raps.

“Every night we in the end zone / Tell the NFL we in stadiums, too.” — AFP

**What we learned from Jay-Z, Beyonce album**
Japan Embassy’s 2nd Secretary transfers data for library in Letpadan

SECOND Secretary of the Embassy of Japan Mr. Iwase Keita transferred data at a ceremony to mark the opening of a school library at Kyay Ni Basic Education Affiliated High School in Letpadan Township, Bago Region, on Friday.

During the ceremony, Township Administrator U Zaw Moe Aung and Township Education Officer Daw Aye Than delivered speeches, followed by discussions by Mr. Iwase Keita, Second Secretary of the Embassy of Japan, and Mr. Aki San, Director of Shanti Volunteer Association, on the purpose of providing support to school libraries.

Later, Daw Mya Mya Htwe, headmistress of the school, gave a note of thanks, followed by officials cutting a ribbon to mark the opening of the library.

Mr. Iwase Keita then handed over the signboard commemorating the donors’ names to the headmistress.

The ceremony was attended by educational officers and teachers, led by U Zaw Moe Aung and Daw Aye Aye Than, together with parents of the school children.— Mg Shwe Win (Pyay)

Embracing difference, Tokyo short film is a picture of inclusion

TOKYO — The scene: Tokyo. The plot: an Australian fan of Shakespeare with Down syndrome who sets out on a solo adventure to discover the city and escape the watchful eyes of his domineering older brother.

“Shakespeare in Tokyo” is the latest film by Australian director Genevieve Clay-Smith, a project she says aimed to open doors for the inclusion of marginalized groups in the filmmaking process.

The film casts Australian actor Gerard O’Dwyer in the lead role, alongside Japanese actors Sonny Chiba and Shioli Kutsuna, as well as participants in a workshop geared at people with Down syndrome that prepared them to be part of the filmmaking process.

O’Dwyer, who has Down syndrome and is from Sydney, Australia, was awarded best male actor at the ’Tropfest Film Festival for his role in “Be My Brother” in 2009. He was nominated for best actor at St. Kilda Film Festival for “The Interviewer” in 2013.

“When I first met (O’Dwyer), he recited the entire balcony scene from Shakespeare’s ‘Romeo and Juliet’ and I knew that he could do it, he could be an actor,” Clay-Smith recalled in a recent interview with Kyodo News in Tokyo. “It’s so easy to be inclusive. If I can do it in the film industry, we can do anywhere,” she said. Several months earlier, a group of colorfully clad people had gathered at a studio in Tokyo for the workshop in preparation for this month’s Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia in Japan.

Kenta Abe, 30, was among six Japanese with Down syndrome with acting or other stage experience taking part in the workshop. Abe appeared in the film as an extra.

Clay-Smith has won over 50 international awards for her films, including the Audience Award for “The Interviewer” at the Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia in 2013.

“I enjoyed it very much,” said Abe after the workshop, saying he was “nervous at first” but relaxed later and was able to look forward to the filming.

O’Dwyer came to the three-hour workshop, where Clay-Smith, an actor herself, explained about makeup, costumes and other aspects of the filmmaking process.

“Filmmaking is not just about turning on cameras,” she told the participants. She explained the film’s story, its lessons and issues each character faced. The film was shot at various venues in Tokyo, including Shibuya and Hama-rikyu Gardens.

The roughly 20-minute film takes the audience through the Japanese capital as O’Dwyer, playing the part of Ben, escapes his brother to view the city on his own, encountering various people and attractions while also offering the people he meets his own perspective.

The film was created under a project sponsored by the Tokyo government for a special screening at the annual Short Shorts Film Festival and for the promotion of the city’s tourism. The Tokyo film festival, celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, runs through 24 June.

As the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games approach, Japan has pledged to become a more “inclusive society.” Some experts believe the film can help educate people about inclusiveness across a range of disabilities ahead of these major international events.

“The Paralympics tend to draw people’s attention to those with physical disabilities, but the film is great in that it allowed people with intellectual disabilities to be a part,” said Mayumi Mitogawa, a board member of the Japan Down Syndrome Society, who was involved in the project.

JDS is a nonprofit organization helping people with Down syndrome, also known as trisomy 21, and their families. It has around 6,000 members.

Mitogawa said the workshop made it easier for participants to get involved in filmmaking and hopes the Japanese film industry will allow other people with disabilities to have such experiences.

“Although we cannot make direct comparisons, Japan is still behind other countries (in being inclusive), so we hope the film will serve as a catalyst to bring about change,” Mitogawa said, adding that introducing foreign culture to Japan through O’Dwyer’s character also offers an enlightening perspective.

Those with disabilities have faced severe discrimination in Japan in the past, particularly under the eugenics protection law, which authorized the sterilization of people with mental disabilities and illness or hereditary disorders to prevent the birth of “inferior” offspring. It also allowed for forcible abortions.

The legislation, which drew on a similar Nazi Germany law, was scrapped in 1996 and replaced by the maternal protection law on abortions, but people who have been subjected to forcible sterilization have recently come forward to file lawsuits against the state in a sign of social change.—Kyodo News

Ppay Town awards new generation writers in short story competition

Next generation writers received awards for competing in a short story competition held by Ppay Township Writer Association at a ceremony in Yan Aung Mingala Kinn Pagoda in Ppay Town.

Maung Paing Zay Min Tun who got the second prize in the competition received his award from Chairman Dr. Yin Wai Lwin.— 017

Second Secretary of the Embassy of Japan Mr. Iwase Keita hands over the signboard commemorating the donors’ names to the headmistress Daw Mya Mya Htwe.

PHOTO: MG SHWE WIN (PYAY)
Royal Thanlyin FC to step up to MNL I

After completion of the Week-10 matches of the Myanmar National League (MNL) II 2018, Royal Thanlyin FC could be promoted to MNL I by earning a total of 18 points after playing eight matches with five wins and three draws. Dagon FC is placed second with a total of 13 points, having played nine matches with three wins, four draws and two losses. University FC is in the third place with two wins, six draws and one loss, while Kachin United FC is in the fourth place with 12 points through three wins, three draws and two losses. Meanwhile, Mawyawadi FC and Silver Stars FC are placed in the fourth and fifth places with nine points each. Mountain Lion FC stands in the bottom-most place with five points.---Lynn Thit (Tgi)

Yangon United beat Zwekapin 2-0 in MNL


As the Zwekapin players seemed exhausted from their previous matches, Yangon kept Zwekapin on their toes with a speedy display. Yangon scored the first goal in the 30th minute by a groin injury, but the Bayern Munich centre-back was on the alert inside 60 seconds to thrust himself desperately in front of a Lozano effort. A remarkably open start saw Timo Werner sprint in behind the Mexico defence before dragging across the face of goal, while Mats Hummels shot straight at Guillermo Ochoa after a botched clearance.

Neuer held well twice in subsequent claim from Ochoa before finding a charging Lozano, but their goal arrived 10 minutes after a teasing cross into his own net, while Timo Werner had Neuer come up for a corner, but a towering header by a thunderous effort from Hector Moreno’s header, as Mexico attacked the Germany backline with regularity. Carlos Salcedo nearly diverted a teasing cross into his own net, while Timo Werner sought to invigorate a struggling side, while 39-year-old Rafael Marquez became just the third player to feature at five World Cups as he was brought on the hour as Loew allowed Mexico to close out an unforgettable triumph.---AFP

World Cup holders Germany crash to Mexico defeat

MOSCOW — Defending champions Germany crashed to the first defeat in their opening game of a World Cup since 1982 as Hirving Lozano’s clinical finish earned Mexico a shock 1-0 victory on Sunday.

The highly-rated PSV Eindhoven forward struck the winner on 35 minutes after a blistering counter-attack at the Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow as Mexico beat Germany for just the second time in history.

Germany’s preparations for the tournament were plagued by poor results and controversy, and their problems were magnified in the Russian capital, leaving their proud record of never being eliminated in the group stage of a World Cup already in danger.

Joachim Loew started eight of the nine 2014 World Cup winners in his squad, with Mesut Ozil returning from a knee injury and Manuel Neuer back in goal following his lengthy absence for the Group F clash.

Jerome Boateng’s build-up to the finals was also hampered by a groin injury, but the Bayern Munich centre-back was on the alert inside 60 seconds to thrust himself desperately in front of Hervín Lozano scored the goal that stunned Germany. PHOTO: AFP

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