President: Present reforms need to be conducted in a timely manner, without any anxiety

PRESIDENT U Win Myint met with Yangon Region administrative, legislative and judicial officials in the Yangon Region government office meeting hall yesterday morning.

Present at the meeting were Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win, Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe, Union Minister for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Region Ministers, Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun and Region Hluttaw representatives, Yangon Region Chief Justice U Win Swe and judges, Chief of Myanmar Police Force Police Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo, along with district and township level departmental officials.

In his speech, the President said the meeting was held to raise the momentum of reforms carried out by the government. Reforms need to follow global trends. If reforms are not conducted, the country’s development will lag behind. Reforms need to be conducted in a timely manner. The government and all who are responsible are determined to establish a democratic federal union.

Only through the establishment of a democratic federal union can there be peace in the country, can the states and regions develop proportionately and in tandem, can the union develop and exist forever. That is why the aim is to establish a democratic federal union. It can be seen that the people in the country want democracy. In addition to freedom, justice and equality in a democratic system, there are both mental and physical security of the people as well as development, stability and peace of the country, and thus all are striving toward implementing it.

Time factor is not to be ignored in establishing a democratic federal union. Time is very important. Time and tide wait for no man. Thus, present reforms need to be conducted in a timely manner. There shouldn’t be any anxiety in conducting reform works. Now is a good chance to do this. It is also a rare chance and it should be done effectively.

The administrative sector needs to support rule of law and should be according to the laws. It should serve the people, safeguard and protect the people and protect human rights.

When the legislative sector prepares a bill, it must benefit the people and the country. It must be in accord with the country’s situation. It must be up to the human rights and democratic norms. Hluttaw representatives must study and understand the legislative duties of the Union and the state/region clearly.

The judicial sector needs to be free from bias and corruption. All levels of the judiciary need to be managed properly. Rule of law is to be conducted according to the laws. All are equal in the face of the law whether they are rich, poor, with or without power or authority. Rule of law is important in a democratic system of government and if democracy is desired, there should be mutual respect for one another, one group to another and all need to abide by and respect the law.
Cash, food, encouragement provided to flood victims in Mon State, Bago Region

NATIONAL Disaster Management Committee Vice Chairman Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye, accompanied by Mon State Chief Minister Dr. Aye Zan, went to flood relief centres in Bilin Township, Mon State, on the afternoon of 28 July to provide encouragement and necessary support, including food and cash assistance, to the people affected by floods, provided cash assistance to three missing Tatmadaw personnel who were conducting flood relief work, provided five motor boats and made arrangements for the construction of two cyclone shelters.

Next, the union minister and party also went to relief centres opened at a monastery and No. 1 Basic Education High School in Bilin Township to provide cash, cooking oil and canned fish to the flood victims and also provided cash assistance to expecting mothers and children.

Yesterday morning, the union minister and party went to Sey Chaung Wa Monastery in Kwin Chaung Wa Village, Penwegan Town, Kyaukdaga Township, Bago Region, and met with flood-affected people and provided cash for food and cash assistance for expecting mothers and children. More than Ks11 million worth of cash assistance was provided, it is learnt.

Next, the union minister and party inspected the embankment along Sittoung River in Nat Tan Kwin Town, Kyaukkyi Township, and thanked the people helping to maintain and strengthen the embankment. Later, the union minister and party visited a flood relief centre opened at a monastery in Kyaukkkyi Township and provided more than Ks5.9 million worth of cash support to the flood victims. —Myanmar News Agency

Relief aid reaches flood victims in various places

PEOPLE living near river banks and in lowland areas should move to safe places, suggested the National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC) yesterday.

The NDMC urged residents near river banks and low-lying areas in Hpa-an, Bago, Bilin townships and Madauk town to move to higher grounds where they would be safe from floods, and warned those in Toungoo, Shweyin and Thabaung townships to be alert over any rising water levels.

The Kayin State government is providing meal boxes to flood victims taking refuge in basic education schools, cyclone shelters and a religious school in Hpa-an twice a day, apart from providing soy milk, eggs, bread, and various kinds of snacks.

Flood victims, including expecting mothers and infants, of Kyauktaga and Penwegan townships of Bago Region staying at a village monastery received over Ks11 million worth of foodstuffs.

Relief aid including rice, cooking oil and canned fish was transported by five boats to a temporary shelter in Bilin, and plans are underway to set up two more cyclone shelters, particularly for expecting mothers and children.

Cash awards were presented to people who were collectively reinforcing the embankment of Sittoung River in Natkwin town, Kyaukkyi Township. In Kyauktalo Town, flood victims are taking shelter at four relief camps. Moreover, 1,620 victims at a monastery in Kawsan and 571 victims at an affiliated high school in Taungthusu town received over Ks237300, 113 victims at a primary school in Taunglove Town reached a danger level.

Food, purified water provided to flood victims in Bago, Bilin

RICE and curry and foods packed with banana leaves were provided to those affected by the floods in Bago and Bilin townships by the Prevention and Degradation of Parentless Children Association (Myanmar) and Shin Saw Pu Women’s Philanthropic Association yesterday.

With the donations of volunteers, they could donate 1,200 packs of rice and curry and 1,200 bottles of purified drinking water at the flood relief camp at Kyay Ni Kan Tike Ouk Monastic School, Bago and 3,800 packs of rice and curry and 4,800 bottles of purified drinking water for flood victims in Bilin Township, it is learnt.—MNA

Madauk embankment remains safe despite rising water level

SITTOUNG River in Madauk Town reached a danger level of 1,279 centimetres, but the Madauk embankment remained safe, it is learnt.

Due to continuous rain, houses and roads were inundated, but at the moment, Madauk embankment is still holding strong.

Sand bags were placed to further strengthen the embankment, said Nyaunlebin Township Irrigation and Water Utilisation Management Department head U Nyunt Lwin. Five flood relief centres were opened in Madauk town and were providing food and health care services to persons displaced because of the floods, while the public and donor organisations were donating rice packets and dried rations, it is learnt.—District IPRD
President: Present reforms need to be conducted in a timely manner, without any anxiety

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The reason for coming to the meeting is to know the true situation of the legislative, administrative and judicial sectors in states and regions and to straighten things up, so all need to submit the true situation clearly, said the President.

Next, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein explained about the status of the government’s oversight of regional development work and future work.

Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun then explained about legislative work being conducted, and to be conducted followed by Yangon Region Chief Justice U Win Swe explaining about past, present and future judicial work.

Afterwards, President U Win Myint commented on the strengths and weaknesses of the explanations and reports on the administrative, legislative and judicial sectors. To become a good administrative system, duties and responsibilities need to be taken, transparency, foresight and cooperation required. The government is implementing a good administrative system through setting up policies.

But these policies could not be implemented by one sector of the government only. Officials from the legislative, administrative and judicial sectors, departmental officials and the people need to cooperate. Only then, can there be a movement that we all desire.

Public servants are enjoying the salaries and wages from the Union budget and along with these benefits, public servants need to take responsibility for their work. Rights are to be obtained, while duties are to be performed responsibly. Public servants enjoying salaries and wages from public funds need to perform their duties and responsibilities according to the law, and they are to serve and provide service to the people.

It is very important not to become a machinery that oppresses the people. The country will be good only when the public servants are good. Only when all public servants are good can they all participate together and reforms will be successful. If reforms are not conducted in a timely manner, our country will lag behind.

With regards to corruption, the anti-corruption commission is taking effective action according to the laws. Corruption Prevention Units (CPUs), working to control corruption, are planned to be formed at the ministry level. All need to participate to become corruption free. Actions in accordance with the laws against corruption are taken, regardless of position or status. Work is ongoing, in a bid to become a corruption-free society.

All that can be done is being done to alleviate difficulties the public servants are facing. Livelihood problems and difficulties of the public servants are well understood. But these difficulties and problems shouldn’t be pushed to the front, and illegal rights should not be considered as opportunities. Public servants are urged to work toward easing the suffering and hardships of the people, aiming for their long-term future benefit, instead of only trying to ease one’s own temporary sufferings and inconveniences.

After the meeting, President U Win Myint cordially greeted those attending the meeting.—Myanmar News Agency

Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo attends AJP, 6th CACJ meeting

ON the morning of 27 July, Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo attended the launch ceremony of the ASEAN Judicialities Portal (AJP) and the 6th Council of ASEAN Chief Justices (CACJ) meeting held in the Republic of Singapore.

The launch of AJP was conducted at the 6th CACJ meeting, and present at the event were ASEAN secretary general, Singapore ministers, Norwegian representative to the ASEAN, ASEAN chief justices, senior judges and representative groups.

AJP is an internet portal that provides information on the laws of ASEAN countries and judiciary matters in a single location and was established with the support of the Norwegian government for close cooperation between ASEAN judicial organisations.

The 6th CACJ meeting was attended by ASEAN chief justices, senior judges and work group representatives. At the meeting, work groups submitted reports on judiciary matters. ASEAN chief justices and senior judges then discussed the reports, future work and issued a “Singapore Declaration”.

The Union Supreme Court is conducting judicial reforms in Myanmar together with judicial cooperation work in the ASEAN region, it is learnt.—Myanmar News Agency
Prices of gum sterculia drop by half in domestic market this monsoon

THE production of gum sterculia (locally called sekalama) declined this season, with growers facing a continuous decline in the prices of the product, according to growers. Growers in Yesagyo, Pakokku and Mynaing townships in Magway Region produce gum sterculia on a commercial scale because it is marketable. Growers got a good yield and reaped a healthy profit from the sale of gum sterculia last year. The production this year is significantly lower than that of last year and the prices have also dropped by nearly half this monsoon. At this time last year, the price of high quality gum sterculia was over Ks55,000 per viss (0.6 lb) at the Mandalay and Muse wholesale markets. This year, the price of gum sterculia went down to some Ks30,000 per viss. A local grower said, “Last year’s production of gum sterculia was better than that of this year. This may be linked to climatic conditions.”

Due to continuous rain in June and early July this year, some gum sterculia were damaged and low quality products were sold to wholesalers at a cheaper price. U Aung Myo Htwe, one of the growers, said that the weather strongly affected the gum production. It is difficult to extract gum from plants even on sunny days. Previously, a plant could produce gum on alternate days. At present, a plant produces gum only once every five days.

Gum sterculia comes from a perennial plant that starts to produce gum after about three years.—Ei Mon Swe (Yesagyo)

Pyu bead necklaces popular among foreign visitors

Pyu bead necklaces, also known as Chin beads, are selling well in Natogyi Township in Mandalay Region, with a majority of buyers being foreign travellers, according to local handicraft manufacturers.

In the domestic market, a Pyu bead necklace is currently sold for Ks10,000, whereas a large necklace consisting of 100 beads is worth Ks20,000 and a bead bracelet is valued at Ks.$5,000 per item. The Pyu bead necklace industry in Phayagyi Village in the township produces necklaces and armlets made from petrified wood. The craft-making site in the village is a tourist attraction and is usually packed with international visitors.

In the past, only handmade necklaces were sold. But now, craft makers use modern machines to produce necklaces. The production process involves cutting petrified wood using machines, drilling holes and polishing and dyeing it step-by-step.

In Mandalay, there are small-scale traditional handicraft production businesses manufacturing earthen pots, lacquerware, bamboo-based products, hand puppets and other kinds of traditional products.—Nwai Nadi (Myitnge)

Sugarcane crop thrives in Meiktila Township

WITH financial support from Action Aid Myanmar (Meiktila), farmers in Meiktila Township in Mandalay Region have started to grow three acres of sugarcane plantations in Tehla Village on a trial basis. The Township Agriculture Department provided technical assistance to sugarcane growers who requested the authorities to help them cultivate sugarcane in the village for the first time. Action Aid Myanmar (Meiktila) offered soft loans to the farmers to implement the project. The sugarcane species planted in Meiktila was bought from Setsetyo farm in Nay Pyi Taw; said U Myo Nyein Zaw, deputy head of the department.

U Tin Win, a grower from Tehla Village, said that the pilot project was started in January this year by three growers. Now, the project is producing a fruitful result and sugarcane is thriving here. Some growers said they are interested in developing this kind of perennial crop next season as well. An acre of sugarcane plantation has the capacity to produce between 30 and 40 tons. In the local market, a ton of sugarcane crop is sold for Ks40,000-Ks50,000 based on its quality and freshness. —Chun Tha (Meiktila)
Only regular demand of mung bean, pigeon pea seen in market

By May Thet Hnin

MUNG beans and pigeon peas are only on a regular demand as there is a glut in the market, resulting in price stability.

In early May, the Indian government released an official statement allowing an import quota of 150,000 tons each of mung beans and green grams and 200,000 tons of pigeon peas. Myanmar resumes its exports to India starting from the first week of June. At that time, prices were high due to high demand from Pakistan, Nepal and Dubai.

In early June, mung bean fetched Ks425,000 per ton, while pigeon pea got Ks500,000 per ton. At present, with a glut of pulses in the market, mung bean is worth around Ks425,000 per ton, while the price of pigeon peas is Ks485,000 per ton.

"India put a regular demand on pulses from Myanmar. However, as the supply is high, the price remained low. With widespread flooding in Myanmar, the prices of pulses has increased a bit", said U Min Ko Oo, secretary of Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Merchants Association.

Currently, there is a regular demand from India, Pakistan and Dubai. Sri Lanka and Bangladesh also purchased small volume.

Out of India’s quota of 150,000 tons of mung beans and 200,000 tons of pigeon peas, it purchased about 90,000 tons of mung beans from Myanmar in June and July, while about 60,000 tons of pigeon peas were also bought in the two months. “A certain quantity of bean stock might be left beyond after reaching India’s quota", said U Min Ko Oo.

Myanmar constitutes 70 per cent of India’s mung bean import and so, there is no market competition for it. Nevertheless, Myanmar got market shares of only 30 per cent for pigeon peas. That makes pigeon pea market uncertain. This being so, the commerce ministry has already informed growers not to grow pigeon peas in the coming pulses season.

India’s demand will not affect Myanmar’s green gram as it has the markets of China and other foreign countries. The prevailing price of green grams is Ks1.2 million per ton, remaining on the high side. Various pulses which have foreign markets are also getting a good price.

Myanmar-Thailand border trade exceeds $400 million this FY

BILATERAL border trade between Myanmar and Thailand this financial year totalled US$415.9 million, with exports worth $123 million and imports worth $292.9 million, according to the official statistics issued by the Ministry of Commerce.

The current trade figures increased by over $27 million against the same period last year, when border trade between the two nations was $358 million.

The country exports agricultural, forest and animal products, minerals, manufactured goods and other miscellaneous products to neighboring Thailand. Its import covers medicines, cosmetics, food and beverages, stationery, footwear, clothing, machinery and other commodities.

Myanmar exports goods to Thailand through its sea routes as well as cross-border gates.

Myanmar-ROK trade declines by $11 million in two months

TRADE between Myanmar and the Republic of Korea (ROK), within the first two months of this financial year, reached US$109 million, which showed a slight decrease in value by over $11 million against last year, the Ministry of Commerce reported.

Myanmar’s exports outperformed exports in bilateral trade this year. The country exported local commodities worth $43.8 million and imported Korean products worth $65.5 million in April and May this year. At the same period last year, the Myanmar-South Korea trade was valued at $120.5 million, including $37.5 million in exports and $83.2 million in imports.

Compared with last year, this year saw a small increase in the value of exports by $6.23 million, while the bilateral import value decreased by $17.6 million.

Myanmar imports cosmetics, foodstuff, electronic equipment, mobile devices and other commodities from South Korea, and exports agricultural products, including cashew nuts, mangoes, rice, beans and pulses, and other miscellaneous products to the East Asian country.

According to the annual trade data, Myanmar-ROK trade in the last fiscal year 2017-2018 was $179.4 million in total.

Trade between the two countries reached its peak of $1.57 billion in the 2013-2014 FY. It decreased to $862 million in the 2014-2015 FY and $656 million in the following FY.

According to a report of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, South Korea’s investments in Myanmar at the end of June this year reached $7.8 million from two projects. Its investment in Myanmar last fiscal year was worth at $233.9 million.

Efforts are being made by the two governments to enhance the bilateral exports and imports.—Swe Nyetin

Ice apple from central Myanmar penetrates export market

MYANMAR’S ice apple (also called sugar palm or toddy palm seed) will be placed at Chinese market this month.

An entrepreneur has opened a processing factory at Myingyan Economic Zone in Mandalay Region, with a view of exporting the ice apple to international markets.

The central region where toddy palm trees are common is faced with a shortage of toddy palm tappers. Jaggery price is also declining with some local people from the central part of the country struggling to survive from production of only jaggery and palm juice. Sometimes, palm fruits are used as snacks as well as feed stuff. It was considered a low-grade product. Some trees were even cut down to be used as firewood.

“Toddy palm seeds in preserved can when I was in Europe. With the help of Chinese technology, I started up this business,” said U Thet Zaw, Green Momentum toddy palm seed processing frozen factory owner.

China contracted with the factory to purchase the toddy palm seeds. This enterprise allows the local people to earn a living. “We chose Myingyan economic zone and planned to start running the business prior to Thingyan festival. However, we ran it late due to delay in machinery. The season of palm seeds is nearly due to end. We have stockpiled two tons of value-added palm seeds. We have a plan to export about 20 tons. Next year, export volume will boosted to 60 tons,” he maintained.

—Than Htille

PHOTO: MMAL

PHOTO: MMAL

PHOTO: MMAL
Dams and reservoirs with water overflowing from the spillway

FOLLOWING are the 37 dams and reservoirs in Kayin State, Chin State, Sagaing Region, Bago Region, Magway Region, Mon State, Rakhine State, Yangon Region and Ayeyawady Region where waters were overflowing from the spillway, as of yesterday.

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**Notice for breaching of Mukhamu embankment**

MUKHAMU embankment in Nyaunglebin Township was reportedly breached and there is a possibility of nearby villages of Nga-kyi Aing, Bhamawtaw, Eko, Chaung Kyo, Sipin and Lay Ein Su being inundated.

People in these villages are being notified to prepare for moving to higher grounds and to be reported in a timely manner of situation.

The government is cooperating and working together with relevant departments and civil society organisations, said the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

— Myanmar News Agency
Meeting held to accelerate healthcare in flood-hit areas

A MEETING in Nay Pyi Taw sought means to further accelerate healthcare in flood-hit areas around the country, which saw the participation of Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe.

At the meeting, Assistant Director Dr Kyaw Khaing San of the Public Health Department explained the distribution of medicines and medical equipment, including anti-snake venom, water-purifying pills, water-purification devices and insecticide-treated nets, the provision of healthcare services at temporary flood relief camps and mobile flood relief camps and monitoring of disease outbreaks. Meeting attendees then discussed ways and means to accelerate healthcare work in flood-hit areas around the country.—Myanmar News Agency

Gurkhas donate Ks 10.1m for Eternal Peace Pagoda

ALL Myanmar Gurkha Hindu Federation donated Ks 10.1 million for Eternal Peace Pagoda in Yangon yesterday.

At the donation ceremony Chairman U Maung Win and officials of the federation handed over the donation through Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Koe, who, in return, presented certificate of honour to them.

The donation ceremony for the pagoda, located in Dekkina Thiri, Township in Nay Pyi Taw was held at the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture (Yangon branch).—Myanmar News Agency

Flood Bulletin

(Issued at 15:00 hrs MST on 29-7-2018)

**Flood condition of Sittoung River**

According to the (14:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Sittoung River has exceeded by about (5) feet at Taungoo above its danger level. It may remain above its danger level during the next (2) days.

According to the (14:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Sittoung River has exceeded by about (7) feet at Madauk above its danger level. It may fall about (½) foot during the next (1) day and may remain above its danger level. The water level of Sittoung River at Madauk (1282 cm) observed at (20:30) hr MST observation on (28.7.2018) is the highest of (53) years recorded. It has fallen about (2) inches on the highest recorded water level.

**Flood condition of Shwegyin River**

According to the (14:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Shwegyin River has exceeded by about (4) feet at Shwegyin above its danger level. It may fall about (½) foot during the next (1) day and may remain above its danger level.

**Flood condition of Bago River**

According to the (14:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Bago River has exceeded by about (6) feet at Bago above its danger level. It may fall about (½) foot during the next (1) day and may remain above its danger level.

**Flood condition of Thanlwin River**

According to the (14:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Thanlwin River has exceeded by about (6) feet at Hpa-an above its danger level. It may continue to rise about (½) foot during the next (1) day and may remain above its danger level.

**Flood condition of Bilin River**

According to the (14:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Bilin River has exceeded by about (2½) feet at Bilin above its danger level and may remain above its danger level during the next (3) days.

Advisory

It is especially advised that people who have settled near the river banks and low-lying areas in Hpa-an, Bago, and Bilin townships and Madauk, to avert due to the rise of water level, and in Taungoo and Shwegyin townships, to take precautionary measures.

U Soe Lynn Han appointed as Ambassador of Myanmar to Belgium

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Soe Lynn Han, Director-General of Planning and Administrative Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Kingdom of Belgium.—Myanmar News Agency
The National Disaster Management Committee has urged caution and encouraged the public to be alert to changing conditions, especially in low-lying areas.

The authorities in the flood-hit regions are also alert to potential hazards such as rising waters.

In a weather forecast, the National Disaster Management Committee has alerted people living near the rivers and low-lying areas of Taungoo in Bago Region and Bilin in Mon State to be alert to floods and to keep informed of rising waters.

Meanwhile, many parts in Bago, Bago-an, Shwegyin, Mandalay, Taungoo and Bilin are under water, and many families still have not been able to move back into their homes.

### Leadership

1. **Active (2) Alert (3) Sympathetic (4) Unofficially translated into English**
2. **1.Responsive (2) Reflective (3) Reflective**
3. **1. Democratic (2) Righteous (3) Statist (4) Ensuring**
4. **1. Democratic (2) Reasonable (3) Reasonable (4) Preserving**
5. **1. Democratic (2) Reasonable (3) Reasonable (4) Preserving**
6. **1. Democratic (2) Reasonable (3) Reasonable (4) Preserving**
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9. **1. Democratic (2) Reasonable (3) Reasonable (4) Preserving**
10. **1. Democratic (2) Reasonable (3) Reasonable (4) Preserving**

### References

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- Monthly Weather Forecast on August (Issued on 28-9-2018)
- Myanmar Daily Weather Report
- Monthly Weather Forecast on August (Issued on 28-9-2018)
- Myanmar Daily Weather Report
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- Myanmar Daily Weather Report
- Monthly Weather Forecast on August (Issued on 28-9-2018)
- Myanmar Daily Weather Report
- Monthly Weather Forecast on August (Issued on 28-9-2018)
- Myanmar Daily Weather Report
- Monthly Weather Forecast on August (Issued on 28-9-2018)
Iran FM to visit Singapore to join ASEAN treaty

TEHRAN—Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif will visit Singapore soon to sign documents on Iran's joining the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), official IRNA news agency reported Saturday. Ministers of foreign affairs of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will convene in Singapore on Monday for six days to discuss regional and trans-regional issues related to ASEAN and the TAC. According to IRNA, there is a consensus among Southeast Asian countries to accept Iran as a party to the treaty. This is an indication of the significance of interaction with Iran as an influential country in regional and international equations, it said. Iran is an observer state in the TAC and part of the upcoming meeting will be about the full membership of the observer states including Iran.—Xinhua

Fraud risk looms over Zimbabwe’s post-Mugabe election

HARARE—Zimbabwe goes to the polls on Monday in its first election since authoritarian leader Robert Mugabe was ousted last year, with allegations mounting of voter fraud and predictions of a disputed result.

President Emmerson Mnangagwa, Mugabe's former ally in the ruling ZANU-PF party, faces opposition leader Nelson Chamisa of the MDC (Movement for Democratic Change) party in a landmark vote for the southern African nation.

Zimbabwe’s military generals shocked the world in November when they seized control and ushered Mnangagwa to power, ending Mugabe’s 37-year reign in a few short days.

Mnangagwa, 75, who promises a fresh start for the country, is the front-runner with the nation state law of the Jews and says they have the independent Arabs.

The new legislation on July 14, 2018, before the bill was passed by the Knesset chamber. “I shall not go back,” he said on Reshet TV, in reference to the law with the country’s Supreme Court.—AFP

Leading economic indicators for Zimbabwe ahead of Monday’s presidential poll.

PHOTO: AFP

Zimbabwe’s economy

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<tr>
<td>GDP per capita</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The public sector accounts for 50% of GDP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of government revenue is used to pay state workers’ wages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inflation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
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The next government must tackle mass unemployment and an economy shattered by the Mugabe-backed seizure of white-owned farms, the collapse of agriculture, hyper-inflation and an investment exodus.

Previously solid health and education services in the 1985 level of 61 years.

“Life expectancy has only just recovered to its 1985 level of 61 years. “We need to see jobs,” said Rest Maphosa, one of the residents of the capital Harare.

Fraud risk looms over Zimbabwe’s post-Mugabe election

Leading economic indicators for Zimbabwe ahead of Monday’s presidential poll.

PHOTO: AFP

Irish Arab lawmaker quits ‘racist’ parliament over law

JERUSALEM—An Israeli Arab lawmaker resigned on Saturday and branded the parliament “racist” after it passed a controversial new law which declares Israel the nation state of the Jewish people.

The new legislation speaks of Israel as the historic homeland of the Jews and says they have a “unique” right to self-determination there. It also revokes the longstanding status of Arabs as an official language alongside Hebrew.

Zouheir Bahloul, of the opposition Zionist Union party, said he could not face telling his grandson that he remained part of the same chamber that passed the law.

“I am resigning from the Knesset,” he said on Reshet TV, in reference to Israel’s parliament.

“The nation state law officially, constitutionally, removes the Arab population from the path of equality in Israel,” he said.

In Hebrew: “Should I sit on the fence? Should I give legitimacy to this destructive, racist, extremist parliament?”

Bahloul said that his resignation would officially take effect when parliament returns from its summer recess in September but he pledged not to reconsider in the meantime.

“I faithfully promise that I shall not go back,” he said. After the law was approved earlier this month Arab members of parliament branded the legislation “racist” and ripped up copies of the bill in the Knesset chamber.

Arab citizens make up some 17.5 percent of Israel’s more than eight million population.

The law makes no mention of equality and Israel’s democratic character, implying the country’s Jewish identity takes precedence.

Leaders of Israel’s 130,000-strong Druze Arab community, which unlike Muslims and Christians is subject to the military draft, has filed a challenge to the law with the country’s Supreme Court.—AFP
Trump hails US economic growth spurt, promises more ahead

WASHINGTON— President Donald Trump on Friday hailed roaring US economic growth as a “miracle,” and said the quickest expansion in almost four years was a vindication of his economic agenda.

With the size of the American economy now surpassing $20 trillion, GDP expanded by 4.1 per cent in the April-June quarter, making the United States the fastest-growing of advanced countries, according to a government report.

“We’re on track to hit the highest annual average growth rate in over 13 years,” Trump said in remarks at the White House. “Everywhere we look, we’re seeing the effects of the American economic miracle.”

The second quarter acceleration came in part after the injection of stimulus and Republican tax cuts.

But economists warned it could be a blip caused by temporary factors, including a one-off bounce produced by Trump’s trade confrontation with China.

The robust results put growth in the first half of the year at just over three per cent, matching a White House target and faster than the trend in previous years.

Trump said the United States was “the economic envy of the world,” and “As the trade deals come in one by one, we are going to go a lot higher than these numbers and these are great numbers.”

His jubilation did not extend to Wall Street, where stocks closed down markedly as investors feared the economy has peaked and amid dis- appointing earnings and trade war fears.

In the April-June period, consumer spending had its biggest bounce in nearly four years, with Americans buying more cars and spending more liberally on health care, housing, utilities, restaurants and hotels, according to the Commerce Department report.

Purchases of goods jumped 5.9 per cent — with the largest contribution coming from booming auto sales — while services rose 3.1 per cent.

But the report got another boost from an unusual source: strong exports which leapt 13.3 per cent, driven higher by foreign sales of oil and soybeans, which now face stiff Chinese tariffs.

Analysts said that increase was due to stockpiling by Chinese importers before Beijing’s retaliatory tariffs on US goods hit in July, which means trade is likely to fall off in the third quarter, dragging down the growth rate. —AFP

LIMA — Peru will hold a referendum to “legitimize” judicial reforms, including the creation of an anti-corruption office and sanctions on corrupt judges and lawyers, following reports of judges offering lenient sentences for a price, President Martin Vizcarra said Saturday. “The system for administering justice has collapsed,” Vizcarra said in remarks delivered on Peru’s Independence Day. “We will open a referendum process for judicial reform.”

Vizcarra, an engineer by training, took office four months ago after his center-right predecessor, Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, resigned amid a swirl of corruption allegations.

The president said Peruvians would also vote on constitutional changes to set term limits for legislators, re-establish a bicameral Congress for the first time since 1993 and increase transparency in court decisions. “With these measures we will significantly reduce corruption in the administration of justice,” Vizcarra said.

“Enough with the pardons in exchange for money,” Analysts said there was some doubt Vizcarra would be able to carry out the full slate of ambitious reforms, since he lacks a strong base of support in Congress, which is dominated by the far-right opposition party of Keiko Fujimori, daughter of former president Alberto Fujimori.

The nation’s judiciary has been mired in scandal since investigative website DLD-Reporteros early this month released more than 20 tapes on which several judges appear to discuss arranging lenient treatment for defendants in exchange for cash or favors.

The scandal has led to the resignation of the president of the Supreme Court, Duberli Rodriguez, of Justice Minister Salvador Heresi and of Orlando Velasquez, head of the National Council of Magistrates, which appoints judges and prosecutors. —AFP

US government approves aid as California battles raging wildfires

REDDING (United States)— The US federal government approved aid Saturday for California as thousands of firefighters battled to contain a series of deadly raging wildfires that have killed six people, including two young children and their great-grandmother, and destroyed hundreds of buildings.

The largest of the fires menacing the state has nearly doubled in size, while another pushed thousands of people to flee and a third forced the partial closure of the popular Yosemite National Park.

A huge column of smoke rotated rapidly above the massive Carr Fire with such strength it looked like a tornado in a fire whirl sometimes dubbed a “Tornado.”

Melody Bledsoe, 70, and her two great-grandchildren James and Emily Roberts — aged just five and four respectively — died as the fire consumed their rural trailer home. The blaze also killed two fire workers, Cal Fire said. Another firefighter died in the Ferguson Fire.

In declaring an emergency in California, President Donald Trump ordered federal assistance to supplement state, tribal and local response efforts due to the emergency conditions resulting from a wildfire beginning on 23 July, the White House said. The Federal Emergency Management Agency “is authorized to identify, mobilize and provide at its discretion, equipment and resources necessary to alleviate the impacts of the emergency,” it said.

The Carr Fire in northern California — which began on 23 July — has consumed 89,906 acres (362,749 hectares), up from 48,312 on Friday, according to Cal Fire, the state’s Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

“Winds, high temperatures and dry vegetation still have the potential to fuel fire growth. Fire spread has been active in all directions and has made significant runs,” Cal Fire said.

Governor Jerry Brown on Friday asked for federal assistance “to save lives and to protect property,” his office said in a statement. — AFP

Peruvian President Martin Vizcarra announced plans for a referendum “to legitimize” proposed judicial reforms, following a scandal over crooked judges. —PHOTO: AFP

US President Donald Trump and his economic team cheered the 4.1% surge in GDP in the second quarter although economists caution it is likely to slow the rest of the year. PHOTO: AFP
Record drought grips Germany’s breadbasket

A plant is pictured at the dried out riverbank of Elbe in Magdeburg. PHOTO: AFP

The German government has declared a state of emergency on Germany’s breadbasket, which has been hit by a severe drought. The authorities have warned that the drought could lead to a decrease in crop yields and a rise in food prices.

**NIEDERDODEL-EBEN (Germany)** - Withered sunflowers, scorched wheat fields, stunted cornstalks - the farmlands of northern Germany have borne the brunt of this year’s extreme heat and record-low rainfall, triggering an apocalyptic drought.

As the blazing sun beats down, combine harvesters working the normally fertile breadbasket of Saxony-Anhalt in former communist East Germany kick up giant clouds of dust as they roll over the cracked earth.

“It hasn’t really rained since April and that’s the main growth period for our grains and the other crops - we’ve never seen anything like it,” said Juliane Stein of Agro Boerdegruen, a farming conglomerate formed after German reunification in 1990.

“We’ve reached the point here in Germany where we’re talking about a natural disaster that’s a threat to our livelihood.”

A natural disaster is declared by German authorities during a drought when at least 30 per cent of the average annual harvest is destroyed.

**Given the massive losses feared by the sector this year, the German Farmers’ Association (DBV) has called crisis talks on Tuesday to discuss urgent state aid.**

While southern Germany has seen largely normal rainfall this year, the north has been in the grip of an unrelenting high-pressure system creating weather conditions more familiar in southern France or Italy.

“We expect billions in losses,” DBV president Joachim Rukwied told German media last week. “As flammable as straw”.

The grain crop alone has shrunk by up to eight million tonnes or around 18 per cent this year, stripping 1.4 billion euros ($1.6 billion) from revenues so far.

“The government needs to declare a state of emergency so that farmers in areas hit hardest by the drought can be helped directly with cash aid,” Rukwied said.

While the sunshine has fostered larger and sweeter fruit than usual, sugar beets, raspberries, potatoes and corn crops have been decimated in the drought, prompting farmers to cut their losses and harvest two to three weeks earlier than usual.

“The cornstalks are knee-high” and are sprouting smaller cobs or none at all, said Stein of Agro Boerdegruen, located about 150 kilometres (90 miles) west of Berlin.

“Normally they should be over two metres by now.”

Stein said that to grow crops like potatoes - a staple of the German diet - her farms have long relied on watering systems because the region, in the rain shadow of the Harz Mountains, is generally too dry.

However it is too late to expand such systems to other fields this year, and in the long run would be too expensive to justify with other crops. Meanwhile the knock-on effects of the grain shortage have already been dramatic, depleting farmers of animal feed and sending prices soaring.

Many dairy farmers have responded by selling their livestock. The number of slaughtered cows and heifers surged 10 per cent in the first two weeks of July according to figures from the Federal Agriculture and Nutrition Agency.

While Sweden and Greece have been ravaged by devastating forest fires, Germany has been less affected due to its less vulnerable types of vegetation and higher concentration of fire brigades.

However grain fields mark an exception as Saxony-Anhalt has seen wide swaths of farmland go up in flames. – AFP

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**Over 1,200 migrants rescued off Spanish coast in two days**

**MADRID** - Spain said Saturday it had rescued more than 1,200 migrants from the sea in two days as the country’s interior minister called for a European-wide solution to illegal immigration.

Fernando Grande-Marlaska, the Interior Minister, said the rescue mission on Friday had rescued 314 people from 17 boats.

On Friday coastguards picked up 888 people in a single day. “It was to be expected,” minister Grande-Marlaska said, criticising the previous conservative government of Mariano Rajoy for a “lack of foresight”.

He said the government was working against the clock to open “a centre” in the port of Andalusia with room for 600 people.

Earlier this week, more than 600 African migrants reached the Spanish territory of Ceuta after storming a double border fence with Morocco and attacking police. The scramble over the barbed wire-decked barrier is Thursday the biggest in Ceuta since February 2017, when more than 850 migrants entered the Spanish overseas territory over four days.

The incident further increases pressure on Spain, which has now surpassed Italy as the number one destination for migrants crossing the Mediterranean by boat.

More than 19,580 people have landed on Spanish shores so far this year, according to the International Organization for Migration—AFP
**M6.4 quake strikes Indonesia’s Lombok, 10 killed, 40 hurt**

JAKARTA — An earthquake with a magnitude of 6.4 struck eastern Indonesia on Sunday, leaving 10 people dead and 40 others injured as well as damaging dozens of buildings, the US Geological Survey and Indonesian authorities said. The USGS said the quake occurred about 1 kilometer south-west of the resort island of Lombok near Bali at 6:47 a.m. local time (5:47 a.m. Jakarta time), at a depth of 7.5 km. The area hit by the quake is about 1,320 km east of the Indonesian capital. National Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesman Sutopo said the deaths and injuries have been confirmed in Lombok’s Sumbella District, adding “we still continue to collect data” about human casualties.

“We have also temporarily banned the climbing of Mt. Rinjani due to serious landslides on the volcano,” the senior government official said, referring to the 3,726-meter active volcano on Lombok that is popular among international and local tourists. Dust that flew upward from the slopes suggested that landslides likely occurred at the volcano, Sutopo said. Foreign tourists staying at Rinjani Lodge on the volcano’s slopes became panicked when the earthquake shook the lodge, he said. Rahmat Triyono, head of the Earthquake and Tsunami Center at Indonesia’s Meteorological, Climatological and Geophysics Agency, said that as of 10:20 a.m. local time, 66 aftershocks with magnitudes of up to 3.7 had been observed. Indonesia is situated in one of the most active seismic regions in the world, the Pacific Ring of Fire — an area in which a large number of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur. — Kyodo News

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**Typhoon crosses western Japan, flood-ravaged areas on guard**

OSAKA — A weakening typhoon is crossing through western Japan on Sunday, with heavy rain and thunderstorms expected in some areas through Monday, putting regions ravaged by flooding and landslides earlier this month on guard.

No injuries or damage due to Typhoon Jongdari were immediately reported from the disaster-hit areas still reeling from the aftermath of torrential rains. The government issued a rare warning for affected residents to evacuate early as a precaution.

The typhoon made landfall in central Japan in the early hours of Sunday. At least 15 people in eastern and central parts of the country were slightly hurt due to falling objects.

Elsewhere, a worker fractured his left foot after falling from the roof of a house in Higashiosaka city during renovation work early Sunday, police said. Roofs were also blown away by the strong wind.

With the typhoon taking an unusual route toward the west, the disaster-struck areas remained on high alert as the weather agency warned of further flooding and landslides, as well as storms and high waves. Evacuation advisories were issued for some areas.

Typhoon Jongdari is slowing down as it continues its westbound movement, moving at a speed of 35 kilometers per hour. As of noon, it was near Hiroshima city, and packing winds of up to 108 kph, the Japan Meteorological Agency said.

Transportation has also been affected, with some Japan Airlines and All Nippon Airways flights connecting Tokyo to western Japan canceled.

West Japan Railway Co. and private railway operators said some of their train services were either delayed or halted.

On Saturday night, in Odawara, Kanagawa Prefecture, near Tokyo, 15 vehicles including an ambulance became stuck on a water-covered road near the ocean due to high waves, and were eventually caught in the waves. About 30 people were evacuated to higher ground.

The same night, five people staying at a hotel in Shizuoka Prefecture, central Japan, were slightly hurt due to broken window panes apparently caused by high waves triggered by the typhoon.

Rain will continue in some areas, even after the typhoon passes. Radar data showed there was rainfall of more than 120 millimeters per hour in Sakurai, Nara Prefecture, in western Japan.

In an unusual course, the typhoon was expected to pass through the country’s western regions, and likely reach Kyushu in the southwest on Sunday night.

Typhoons typically approach the Japanese archipelago from the south-west, and many follow a southwest-to-north-east course due partly to the effect of the westerly jet stream and high pressure over the Pacific.

The unusual course prompted Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to warn Friday about the weekend storm, particularly for those affected by the massive flooding in western Japan that killed 224 people and destroyed tens of thousands of homes earlier this month.

Temperatures are also expected to rise after the typhoon, bringing back the risk of heatstroke and heat exhaustion.

The country has been gripped by a heat wave that immediately followed the rain disaster and which the agency has declared a “natural disaster.” Extreme heat pushed the mercury to a record high 41.1 °C on 23 July and claimed dozens of lives, mostly elderly people, from heatstroke.

In the 24-hour period through noon Monday, 200 mm of rain may fall in some areas in western and southern Japan. — Kyodo News

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**The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Industry No.(3) Heavy Industrial Enterprise Invitation of Expression of Interest (EoI) for Cooperation in the area of Eco-Industrial Park (Thaton) Eco-Industrial Park (Thaton), located in Inn Shae Village, Thaton Township, Mon State, under No.(3) Heavy Industrial Enterprise, Ministry of Industry is intended to invite the investors who are interested to operate any type of industries and businesses in the area of Eco-Industrial Park (Thaton). The investors who interested in those cooperation are required to submit their Expression of Interest (EoI) Proposal, in which mentioning kinds of business, to Technology Development Department, No.(3) Heavy Industrial Enterprise, Ministry of Industry at Office No.(37) Nay Pyi Taw, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, not later than (16:00) pm (Myanmar Standard Time) on (28-9-2018).

Base Line Data concerning the Eco-Industrial Park (Thaton) are available at above office from the date of (30-7-2018) and interested entities can submit the Draft Proposal by presenting the following documents of company:

- Cover Letter expressly stating the interested investor’s interest in the Project
- Valid Certificate of Incorporation
- Memorandum of Association & Articles of Association (MoA & AoA) Constitution
- Information of Foreign Technical Cooperation (if it is Local Company)
- Experience of Investor to operate in the Project.
- Contact Person Name, Occupation, Address, Phone, Email

For more information, please contact phone number:+95 67408129, 09254557887 E-mail : mpcipl@gmail.com.

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**Engagement Announcement**

The Engagement of Thiha and Nwet Darly Htun Oo is being announced by the couple’s parents, U Kyin Saung & Daw Lao Lao Win of Mandalay, U Htun Htun Oo & Daw Nwe Ni Oo of Mandalay.

Thiha is 2013 graduate of Mandalay University with a Master's Degree in English. He is currently employed as a Staff Officer at the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor.

Nwet Darly Htun Oo is 2012 graduate of University of Computer Studies Mandalay and currently employed as a Staff Officer at Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population.

The couple will be married on December 2018.

Thiha & Nwet Darly Htun Oo
Into The Void: hyper-real ‘Star Wars’ VR makes you the hero

ANAHEIM (United States) — Imagine putting on a helmet, lowering the visor and being transported immediately from your humdrum day-to-day existence into your own “Star Wars” adventure.

Well, holster that blaster because the kind of fantasy that could once only be woven into the dreams of the young is coming to a theme park or shopping mall near you – perhaps sooner than you think.

The Void is the latest in a flood of businesses offering whole-body, fully immersive virtual reality experiences for about double the price of a movie ticket.

The company’s “Star Wars: Secrets of the Empire” scenario instructs players that their mission is to recover Imperial intelligence critical to the survival of the Rebellion – yes, that Rebellion, of Luke Skywalker and Princess Leia.

In reality, the players are in a room full of cameras, movement sensors and other gadgetry in the shadow of Disneyland in southern California.

As far as they are concerned, they are rebels disguised as Imperial stormtroopers on the molten planet of Mustafar, battling giant lava monsters and generally taking care of business.

Wearing vests weighed down by high-tech hardware, the players can reach out and touch what they are seeing in their visors, feel the breeze on their faces and hear creatures scuttling around them.

Designed in partnership with Disney-owned Lucasfilm, which makes the “Star Wars” movies, the experience involves all the senses, says marketing director John Kirkpatrick.

“I really felt like I was in the movie,” says player Sean Oshia, 29, a technology consultant.

“I was really amazed by this technology. You can really feel the agents shooting you.”

Cusp of a boom

The experience — typically enjoyed in groups — costs about $30-35 for 10 minutes, and gets about 500 visitors a day in Anaheim.

There are locations in North America, the Middle East and Europe and the company is still growing, with other scenarios including a narrative tour around the movie “Ghostbusters,” and a haunted house experience.

Without the bells and whistles, the interior is much as you might expect — a room measuring about 10 square meters (110 square feet), partitioned here and there to guide players through the attraction.

The cutting-edge tech works in tandem with run-of-the-mill radiators and fans varying the atmospherics, while foam mats double as magma and scent diffusers provide the “smell-o-vision.”—AFP

Classic Chinese paintings inspire youth to create music

BEIJING — The Palace Museum is encouraging young people to come up with musical ideas to convey the notations of ancient paintings in an event called “Singing Paintings.”

The event, jointly initiated by the Palace Museum, Tencent Next Idea and QQ Music, “is a new approach to cultural innovation which integrates art, music and technology, aiming to teach youth about the beauty of traditional art,” said Shan Jixiang, curator of the museum. The museum authorized 10 paintings from its collections to serve as sources of inspiration, including “A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains” and “Along the River During Qingming Festival,” all of which are masterpieces of their dynasties.

The theme song for the event, which was inspired by “A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains” from Song Dynasty and sung by Jackson Yee, member of Chinese boy band TFBOYS, was released Wednesday.

The music inspired by the paintings will be included in a digital album and promoted across all platforms through QQ music.—Xinhua

Abroad’s biggest stars are doing shows on Netflix, India is behind: Esha Gupta

MUMBAI — Esha Gupta, who has acted in films and even explored the small screen with a dance show, says she is keen to venture into the digital space.

“The whole world is going digital, it is a new wave. Even our TV shows and films are coming on the digital platform. It is a new way forward. I am getting a few offers and they are really amazing. I would definitely take it up.”

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Life on Mars: Japan astronaut dreams after lake discovery

TOKYO — Japanese astronaut Norishige Kanai came back to earth last month but is still dreaming of space, especially after the discovery of an underground lake brought mankind one step closer to unravelling the mystery of life on Mars.

“I was so excited about the news,” the 41-year-old doctor told AFP in an interview on Friday, calling it “a major discovery that inspires dreams”.

International astronomers announced Wednesday they had detected the largest body of liquid water ever found on the Red Planet, a breakthrough that may hold clues to whether life has ever formed on Mars — or even exists today.

Kanai, who spent 168 days on the International Space Station, is firmly convinced that there is life out there.

“If you’re a scientist, you can’t help but believe,” he said.

Kanai blasted into space for the first time in December. PHOTO: AFP

Aussie researchers identify new genetic markers for glaucoma

SYDNEY — Australian researchers said Saturday they have identified 40 new genetic markers that increase a person’s risk of developing glaucoma, pointing to improvements in testing and predicting the risks of getting the eye disease.

“The discovery of these previously unknown genetic markers for glaucoma will be important for improving our ability to test for and predict a person’s risk of the disease,” Associate Professor Stuart MacGregor, head of the QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute’s Statistical Genetics laboratory, said in a statement about its study.

“Although a predictive test for glaucoma is not available yet, our discovery is very promising.”

“The genome-wide study covered more than 134,000 people linked to fluid pressure in the eye, a condition known as intraocular pressure. High intraocular pressure is commonly associated with an increased risk of developing glaucoma. The study found that individuals with a large number of the genetic markers had an almost sixfold increased risk of developing glaucoma compared to someone who had fewer genetic variants, said MacGregor.

A person’s risk of developing glaucoma - which damages the optic nerve and leads to a gradual loss of the peripheral vision - increased with age, but the high eye pressure commonly associated with glaucoma can be treated with drugs and even surgery, he said.

The study, which was conducted in collaboration with multiple clinicians, hospitals and institutions across Australia and New Zealand, has been published in scientific journal Nature Genetics. The findings dramatically increased the current understanding of which genes cause glaucoma and high eye pressure, said Professor Jamie Craig, director of the Flinders Centre for Ophthalmology, Eye and Vision Research.—Xinhua

Argentina prepares for launch of satellite into space

BUENOS AIRES — Argentina is preparing for the launch of the first of four satellites into space to help monitor geophysical conditions and manage disasters, according to its national space agency.

Argentina’s Microwave Observation Satellite, the SAOCOM 1-A, will be shipped later this month to the US Vandenberg Air Force Base in the southern state of California, where it is to be launched in September, according to the National Space Activities Commission (CONAE).

The satellite, designed and built by the prestigious state-owned high-technology firm INVAP, will contribute to a number of tasks, CONAE spokesperson Josefina Peres told reporters during a tour of INVAP’s headquarters in Bariloche, in southern Rio Negro province.

With an expected operational life of 5.5 years, the satellite will orbit some 620 km above the earth’s surface. Its powerful antenna is capable of sensing up to two meters below the earth, to collect data useful for agriculture, fishing, mining, geology, urban development and disaster management.

“The SAOCOM ... will be capable of capturing 500 images as it orbits 15 times a day,” Peres said.

Its mission, she said, will focus on two aspects: measuring soil humidity in the Argentine Pampas, or lowlands; and detecting and helping to manage natural and human disasters, such as floods, landslides, oil spills, fires, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

Once in orbit, the satellite will mark CONAE’s fifth space mission, as it joins the country’s two prior orbiting satellites ARSAT-1 and ARSAT-2, which were built by Argentine satellite maker Arsat and launched in 2014 and 2015, respectively.

SAOCOM 1-A features six computers that work in synchronicity and weighs some 3,000 kg. Its antenna, designed in central Cordoba province, is composed of 140 smaller antennas.

As many as 600 Argentine professionals have worked on the 500-million US-dollar satellite since 2011, in fields ranging from aeronautical engineering to mechanics.

“Physicists, engineers, agronomists and aeronautical technicians have worked on this project. It’s quite enormous,” Peres said, adding that university students also took part in the initiative.—Xinhua

To help monitor geophysical conditions and manage disasters, Argentina prepares for the launch of the first of four satellites into space. PHOTO: XINHUA
Sub Silva scores twice as Man City rallies to beat Bayern

MIAMI — Pepe Guardiola finished Manchester City’s US tour with a deserved 3-2 victory over former club Bayern Munich, but his evening was soured with an injury to new signing Riyad Mahrez.

Two goals from substitute Bernardo Silva helped Manchester City come from 2-0 down to end a run of two defeats in this International Champions Cup campaign with youngsters Lukas Nmecha scoring in between.

Mahrez, however, went down twice with what looked like an ankle problem. He was eventually forced off after just 27 minutes and looked in discomfort. With the traditional English season opener - the Community Shield - taking place next Sunday at Wembley against Chelsea, coach Guardiola will assess the Algerian’s fitness as the start of the Premier League campaign looms into view.

Meanwhile Guardiola’s squad flew back to Manchester at the end of the Saturday match. City’s opening games against Borussia Dortmund and Liverpool had both ended in narrow defeats, but with Guardiola opting for familiarity — eight players in the starting lineup here had begun all three games of this US tour — it was another young side full of running.

“We analyzed our mistakes in the previous games and it did better against Bayern Munich,” said Guardiola. “We were able to play good and overcome the situation when we were 2-0 down.”

Bayern’s main men Arjen Robben and Franck Ribery looked dangerous on the ball, yet with Mahrez afforded plenty of space in midfield the English champions dominated the early stages and really should have opened the scoring.

Mahrez, who had already spent a few minutes getting his feet back after being challenged, sent German-born City striker Nmecha through only for his shot to be saved by Sven Ulreich.

It wasn’t long before Nmecha had the opportunity to make amends as another classy through ball from Mahrez set him free, but this time he was denied by the post.

That was to prove a costly couple of misses because on 14 minutes, Bayern were ahead...— AFP

Chelsea edge past Inter Milan on penalties

NICE — Chelsea beat Inter Milan 5-4 on penalties as goalkeeper Willy Caballero saved from Milan Skriniar in the shootout following a 1-1 draw in their opening game of the International Champions Cup.

Spain international Pedro struck after just eight minutes in Nice, slotting in a rebound after Inter keeper Samir Handanovic failed to save from a lively Alvaro Morata.

It was a second goal in as many games for Pedro, who celebrated his 31st birthday on Saturday, almost snatched a winner for the Italians in stoppage time when his sharp first-time strike was well kept out by Caballero.

Caballero, who was dropped at the World Cup following a 3-0 group stage loss to Croatia, saved from Skriniar with his legs in the shootout before his fellow goalkeeper Giorgi Dzhaparidze converted the decisive spot-kick.

Chelsea play Premier League rivals Arsenal in Dublin on Wednesday before wrapping up their pre-season campaign at home to Lyon on 7 August, two days after facing Manchester City in the Community Shield. — AFP

Chelsea shines in debut as Liverpool rout United

CHICAGO — Liverpool scored three second half goals as they wrapped up their pre-season tour of America on Saturday with a dominating 4-1 victory over Manchester United at Michigan Stadium.

Xherdan Shaqiri put a stamp on his Liverpool debut with a spectacular bicycle-kick goal to round out the scoring in the International Champions Cup match in front of a crowd of 101,000.

Shaqiri, of Switzerland, was one of five recent high profile signings which saw Liverpool shell out more than 200 million pounds ($260 million US) in an attempt to close the gap on Premier League champions Manchester City.

It was a nice way for the Reds to finish up their US exhibition swing as they now travel back to Merseyside after continuing their preparations for the season with a training camp in France beginning next week.

Sadio Mane converted a penalty to open the scoring for Liverpool in the 38th minute.

Manchester United’s 22-year-old midfielder Andreas Pereira tied the game 1-1 in the 31st minute off a free kick.

But Jurgen Klopp’s Liverpool squad seized command in the second half, starting with Daniel Sturridge’s 66th-minute strike.

Shaqiri, 26, did the heavy lifting on the play, outmuscling a United defender and then slipping a pass back to Sturridge who made it 2-1.

Sheyi Ojo then scored off a spot-kick in the 74th minute. That set the stage for Shaqiri to bring the packed stadium to its feet eight minutes later with his overhead kick from inside the box off a nice feed from Ben Woodburn.— AFP

Institute of Sports and Physical Education (B) team wins MNL (U-20) 2018 trophy

THE Institute of Sports and Physical Education (ISPE) (B) team has won the championship title of the Myanmar National League (U-20) 2018 after beating Dagon U-20 FC 2-1 at the final match of the tourney on Saturday.

The team secured a total of 31 points, which is just a point higher than the points won by second-placed team Dagon U-20 FC.

At the awards ceremony of the tourney held at the damnedar Stadium, Yangon, on Saturday, the winning team, ISPE (B), was awarded Ks10 million as the first prize, while second placed Dagon U-20 FC was awarded Ks7 million and the third-placed team, University U-20, was awarded Ks3.3 million.

There were altogether seven teams participating in the MNL U-20 tourney. The Royal Thawlyin team secured the fourth place with 10 points, the Mawyawadi team took the fifth place with 8 points, Kachin United came cured the fourth place with 7 points, Kachin United came the third-placed team, University U-20, was awarded Ks3.3 million.

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ISPE (B) team celebrates victory as it wins the Myanmar National League (U-20) Trophy. PHOTO: MNL