Anti-corruption

* The Union Government has established a four-year (2018-2021) strategic plan for anti-corruption reforms and initiatives to reduce the erosion of state funds and bring bribery and corruption under control.
* The government’s plans are now in place to implement the strategic plan for anti-corruption and bribery. At the same time, in order to protect individual rights and the basic rights of citizens, the protection of human rights is being implemented as a matter of great importance.

(Excerpt from the report on the current work of the Union government, delivered at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 19 September 2018)

Sixth coordination meeting of National Level Environmental Conservation Committee held

PATRON of the National Level Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Central Committee Vice President U Myint Swe delivered an address at the sixth coordination meeting of the National Level Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Central Committee held in in the meeting hall of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The meeting was attended by Central Committee Chairman Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win, Central Committee members including Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw and Deputy Attorney-General U Win Myint, environmental conservation and climate change supervisory chairman Nay Pyi Taw Council member, states/regions government ministers, officials from six work committees, Permanent Secretaries, Directors General, representatives from non-government organizations and civil society organizations, and officials.

In his address, the Vice President said emphasis must be placed towards achieving the common aim of “coordinating environmental conservation sectors for sustainable development” by balancing the social, economic and environmental conservation for socio-economic development of the State.

It is important that the eco-system and natural environment is not harmed or spoiled by natural resource-based local and foreign investments. It is important that the land, water and air qualities are not affected by industries and expansion of urban areas.

The bad effect of climate change faced every year by Myanmar is a huge challenge for the country’s socio-economic development. Preventive works and preparations against climate change is our main work process. As such “a strong natural environmental management system to coordinate sustainable development works” needs to be established for the benefit of the country and the people.

SEE PAGE-3
Union Minister
U Kyaw Tint Swe meets
US Senate Majority
Leader Mitch McConnell


At the meeting, democratic transition, peace and national reconciliation processes and Rakhine issue, including repatriation and formation of the Independent Commission of Enquiry were discussed.—MNA

Union Minister Dr. Aung Thu addresses 12th World Rabies Day Ceremony

RAPIES is a deadly virus spread to people from infected animals in Myanmar and to fulfill the global goal of reducing rabies infection to zero by 2030, close cooperation between Government, ministries concerned, parliaments, private sector, animal breeders and international supporters is needed, said Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Aung Thu at the 12th World Rabies Day ceremony held in Nay Pyi Taw Office No. 36 yesterday.

The theme of the 12th World Rabies Day was “Rabies: Share the message. Save a life.”

The ceremony was attended by Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Aung Thu, Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Aye Maung Sein, officials from Hluttaw affairs committees, permanent secretaries, directors general, representatives from WHO, FAO, OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health), FOUR PAWs International and international partner organisations, veterinarians and departmental officials.

After Union Minister Dr. Aung Thu delivered the opening speech, the Union Minister and ceremony attendees visited the displayed exhibits. Following this, they observed the anti-rabies injection administered by Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department and OIE.

According to WHO figures, a person in the world is affected with rabies every 15 minutes causing 55,000 to 70,000 fatalities, annually.

Myanmar is also a country that is infected by rabies and relevant ministries are cooperating with international organisations such as OIE, WHO, FAO to reduce and eradicate rabies.—MNA

Union Minister U Kyaw Tin attends Informal ASEAN-US Ministerial Meeting

UNION Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin, who has already arrived in New York, the United States to attend the 73rd General Assembly of the United Nations, attended the Informal ASEAN-US Ministerial Meeting at Lotte Hotel in New York yesterday afternoon. During the meeting, Lao Prime Minister Saleumxay Kommasith and United States Deputy Secretary of State John J. Sullivan acted as chairpersons. They discussed promoting bilateral relations between ASEAN-US along with exchanging views on local and international issues.—MNA

Union Minister for Int’l Cooperation meets with IFRCRCS Chair, Norwegian counterpart in NY

UNION Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin, who is attending the 73rd General Assembly of the United Nations in New York, met with Chair of International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRCRCS) Dr. Jemilah Mahmood at the UN Headquarters in New York yesterday.

At the meeting, they discussed issues related with repatriation, resettlement and rehabilitation of the displaced people in Rakhine State.

Similarly, the Union Minister also met with Mr. Nikolai Astrup, Norway Minister for International Development at the UN Headquarters at 11.30 am local time yesterday.

At the meeting, they discussed democracy, peace and national reconciliation processes in Myanmar, repatriation, resettlement and rehabilitation of displaced people in Rakhine State and formation of Independent Commission on Enquiry (ICOE) for solving Rakhine issue.—MNA
Sixth coordination meeting of National Level Environmental ...
Myanmar Investment Commission’s work in July and August of (April to September) fiscal year 2018

1. Myanmar Investment Commission is permitting local and foreign investments, according to Myanmar Investment Law.

2. Myanmar Investment Commission had permitted in July 2018 total foreign investment, including increased investment, valued at US$434.889 million, and in August 2018 total foreign investment, including increased investment, valued at US$436.921 million.

3. Foreign investments permitted during July and August of 2018 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>August</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Transportation and communications sector</td>
<td>140,048*</td>
<td>130,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Industrial sector</td>
<td>107,404*</td>
<td>113,578*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Housing and building construction sector</td>
<td>22,500</td>
<td>170,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>Hotels and tourism sector</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>Animal husbandry and fishery sector</td>
<td>10,514</td>
<td>7,874*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>Other services sector</td>
<td>121,423 *</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>Industrial zone construction sector</td>
<td>28,000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>Agriculture sector</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Increased investment was included in the investment amount.


5. Myanmar national investments permitted during July and August 2018 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>August</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Housing and building construction sector</td>
<td>2,490,422</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Industrial sector</td>
<td>7,641,598</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Hotels and tourism sector</td>
<td>59,622,260</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>Mining sector</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>Animal husbandry and fishery sector</td>
<td>3,682</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>Agriculture sector</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>Other services sector</td>
<td>13,524,450</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Increased investment was included in the investment amount.

6. Increased number of jobs created sector-wise by foreign investments during July and August 2018 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>August</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Agriculture sector</td>
<td>170</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Animal husbandry and fishery sector</td>
<td>122</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Industrial sector</td>
<td>14,442</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>Hotels and tourism sector</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>Housing and building construction sector</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>Industrial zone construction sector</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>Other services sector</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Increased number of jobs created sector-wise by Myanmar national investments during July and August 2018 fiscal year are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>August</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Industrial sector</td>
<td>964</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Hotels and tourism sector</td>
<td>159</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Housing and building construction sector</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>Animal husbandry and fishery sector</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>Agriculture sector</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>Other services sector</td>
<td>309</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 1,541 794
Experts, technicians to inspect Yangon Region flyovers

By Nyein Nyein
IN response to a question raised by Yangon Region Hluttaw representative Daw Yin Yin Myint of Ahlone Township constituency 1 at the 11th meeting of the seventh regular session of the Second Yangon Region Hluttaw, held on 27 September, Yangon Mayor U Maung Maung Soe said a committee led by Yangon Region government is being formed with experts and technicians to inspect flyovers in Yangon Region.

Daw Yin Yin Myint was asking if there is a plan to conduct regular inspection of the overpasses in Yangon Region.

“For flyovers to be used their full lifespan they need to be inspected regularly by experts and technicians, at least once a year. Yangon Region government is forming a committee for this. This committee will include experts and technicians from Myanmar Engineering Council, Myanmar Engineering Society, Ministry of Construction’s Department of Bridge, Ministry of Transport and Communications’ Myanma Railways, Yangon City Development Committee and Yangon Technological University,” said U Maung Maung Soe.

He added further that most of the bridges in Myanmar were constructed under the specifications of American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). In addition to this, the loading and design of bridges differ from one another, so the lifespan is also not the same. However, in general, calculated load is from 60 to 75 tons and the maximum lifespan is mostly 50 years, said the Yangon mayor. In Yangon Region, there are a total of 70 bridges (flyovers), of which 36 have length 180 ft. and above, a railway crossing bridge maintained by Ministry of Construction, 26 by Yangon Railways and seven by Yangon City Development Committee.

Local rubber price riding rough due to unstable dollar exchange rate

By May Thet Hnin
THE current instability of dollar exchange rate has led to a rough ride for local rubber price, said U Khaing Myint, secretary of Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association.

“The prevailing local rubber price is not that different, compared to global rubber price. However, dollar exchange rate fluctuation in local currency market causes a rough price pattern for local rubber”, he said.

At present, a ton of RSS3 (rubbed smoked sheets) rubber is worth US$1,300 in global market, whereas local rubber fetches Ks1,640 last week, the price of rubber reached a high of Ks1,890 per pound.

Rubber production was halted during the rainy season. It was resumed this month and the price turned to the high side. Nevertheless, production is still less, since the rainy season has not ended, said U Khaing Myint.

“Last rainy season witnessed the fall of rubber price to Ks700 per pound. The opening price in the early rubber tapping season is on the high side”, he maintained.

Rubber price is usually on high side when the rubber tapping season starts. Last year, rubber fetched above Ks900 in the opening season. This being so, this year’s price is lower than last year’s. Rubber trading is still slow. Last year, it fell to a low of Ks500 per pound, forcing some rubber farm owners to shut down their businesses without tapping latex, as they cannot cover labour wages. The prevailing price is pretty high, Daw Lin Lin Tun, rubber producer from Hlaingthwe Township said.

Rubber price hit the highest record in 2011 with Ks1,800 per pound and $6,000 per ton. Rubber price can vary depending on dollar price, global crude oil price and global political climate. Currently, global rubber demand is moving slow, resulting from escalating trade war between the US and China. Therefore, largest rubber producers such as Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia are reducing their production, with a falling demand on global market. Myanmar, being a low producer of rubber, will not be affected from this.

Seventy per cent of Myanmar’s rubber production goes to China market. It is also shipped to Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, South Korea, India, Japan, etc. Myanmar’s rubber is primarily produced in Mon and Kayin states and Taninthayi, Bago and Yangon regions. There are 1.63 million acres of rubber plantations in Myanmar of which over 700,000 acres can produce rubber latex. About 150,000 tons of rubber were exported in the 2017-2018 fiscal year.

As Myanmar’s rubber is a standard, there is a price gap of $400 per ton between global and local rubber prices.

All stakeholders in the rubber supply chain are exerting concerted efforts to produce profitable quality rubber. At present, Rubber Law is still being drafted. The government and rubber associations are endeavouring to set up a rubber central market after the Rubber Law comes into effect.

Export of forest products continues to decline

MYANMAR’s export of forest products over the first 174 days in the current six-month inter-fiscal year totalled US$90.561 million, decreasing by $17 million against the same period last year, the Ministry of Commerce reported.

The total figures included $6.78 million from the public sector and $83.48 million from the private sector. This year saw a decrease in value of forest products by nearly $28 million, compared with this time last year when the sector exported $103.08 million worth of the same product. Despite a decrease in the private sector export of forest products, public sector exports of the same increased by $2.5 million against last year; the data showed.

From 1 April through 21 September this year, the country earned $7.9 billion from overall exports of local products, consisting of agro products worth $1.236 billion, animal products worth $171 million, marine products worth $281 million, minerals worth $587 million, manufactured goods worth $4.14 billion and miscellaneous goods worth $1.651 billion. The export of forest products in the last 2017-2018 financial year was $122 million, decreasing by $34.9 million matched against that of the previous year’s total of $257 million.

According to the yearly report of the ministry, exports of forest products by the two sectors were $641.9 million in the 2011-2012 FY, $596.5 million in the 2012-2013 FY, $948 million in the 2013-2014 FY, $944.4 million in the 2014-2015 FY and $821.9 million in the 2015-2016 FY—Shwe Khine

Trade deficit decreases by over $900 million

EXTERNAL trade between Myanmar and partner countries between 1 April and 21 September this year exceeded US$17 billion, registering a trade deficit of $1.4 billion, according to a trade report issued by the Ministry of Commerce on 28 September.

The current trade deficit decreased by $911 million, as against the same period last year, when the trade deficit was $2.3 billion. Over the 174 days of the present six-month fiscal period, Myanmar exported domestic products with a value of $7.9 billion and imported foreign commodities amounting to $9.399 billion. This year saw an increase in value of both export and import, compared with last year. Compared with the similar period last year, the country’s exports went up by $1.6 billion, while its imports rose by $720 million.

The data shows that the country’s international trade covered over $13 billion from maritime routes and over $4 billion from borders. In the last 2017-2018 fiscal year, the country suffered a trade deficit of more than $3.97 billion, decreasing by over $1 billion, matched against that of the trade deficit of $5.2 billion in the previous 2016-2017 FY, according to the annual trade report. Authorities are reducing the trade gap by boosting the country’s productivity in anticipation of a healthy export. —Swe Nyein
Myanmar Investment Commission Meeting (16 / 2018) convened

THE Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) meeting (16 / 2018) was convened at the meeting of MIC in Yangon on 28 September, and reviewed investment proposals consistent with the Myanmar Investment Law.

U Thaung Tun, Chairman of MIC and 11 members of MIC attended the meeting.

The submission of proposals and endorsement applications from investors and post-permit activities of MIC-permitted companies were discussed in the meeting.

The MIC meeting (16 / 2018) decided to issue 7 investment permits and 12 endorsements in relation to the investment proposals.—MNA

Local, foreign journalists meet with displaced people at boundary line

LOCAL and foreign journalists met with displaced people staying near the boundary line between Myanmar and Bangladesh yesterday.

They interviewed the displaced people about their condition and plans for returning to Myanmar.

Before meeting with the displaced people, the journalists visited the Taungpyo Letwe Reception Centre and met with authorities.

At the camp, authorities briefed them about repatriation readiness, plans for providing humanitarian assistance to returnees. The officials of the camp also replied to questions raised by journalists over scrutinizing process.

Following the meeting, the journalists visited the camp’s offices for repatriation and the border bridge.


The local and foreign journalist groups visited Rakhine State for 26 times after the terrorist attacks in October 2016.

They visited the conflict areas one time in 2016, eight times in 2017 and 17 times in 2018, totalling 26. The visits came under the arrangement of the Committee for Implementation of Recommendations on Rakhine State.

—Thura Zaw

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye receives UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye received United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Mr. Knut Ostby at his office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning. During the meeting, current issues of the Rakhine State, issues about IDP camps, creating job opportunities for people along with their social economic development, promoting skills of women with launching of vocational training courses for women, UN’s cooperation in implementations of the advises of Rakhine State and IDPs to be closed systematically were cordially discussed.—MNA

Ordinary passport holders from Japan, South Korea, China, Macao and Hong Kong will be visa relaxed

WITH the aim of increasing tourism business in Myanmar, ordinary passport holders from Japan, South Korea, China, Hong Kong and Macao will have visa entry relaxed as 1 year of probation period from 1 October 2018 to 30 September, 2019.

Travellers from Japan, South Korea and China’s Administrative Regions: Hong Kong, Macao will be allowed with visa exemption to enter and leave Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw international airports, Yangon international harbor, Tachileik, Hveekhee and Kawthoung international airport (Myanmar-India).

Tourists can visit with only tourist visa and live a total of 30-day stay with visa exemption. Ordinary passport holders from China can enter Yangon, Mandalay, Nay Pyi Taw international airports with visa on arrival system and 30-day stay by paying US$50 visa on arrival fee.

Travellers who enter from Japan, South Korea, Macao and Hong Kong with visa exemption on arrival can freely go other places in compliance with current laws and procedures during 1year probation period.

Tourists will be screened by security department, organizations and immigration department.—MNA

Myanmar-Bangladesh conduct coordinated patrol

A COORDINATED patrol between Myanmar and Bangladesh was conducted at border mile posts 41/2 to 42 from 10:35 am to 11:35 am on 27 September.

The Myanmar patrol was led by Police Captain Aung Kyaw Kyaw from No.1 Border Police sub-division (Aung Thabyue), Area 2, Maungtaw Township, and the Bangladesh patrol was led by Subedar Md. Shajahan of No. 11 Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB).

Similarly, on the same day, another coordinated patrol between Myanmar and Bangladesh was conducted at the border mile posts 53 to 54 from 11:00 am to 1:45 pm.

The Myanmar patrol was led by Police Major Zaw Lin Aung from No.1 Border Police sub-division, Area 5, Maungtaw Township, and the Bangladesh patrol was led by Naib Subedar Md. Shajahan of No. 34 BGB.—Police Information
Ceremony held to observe 2018 International Day of Older Persons

FROM PAGE-3

Our Myanmar society has a long history of honoring and respecting older persons. Traditionally, three generations, father-son-grandson (mother-daughter-granddaughter), live and care for each other. But due to changing social and economic situation, the tradition of grandparents, parents and children living and caring for each other is decreasing and disappearing. The traditional way of caring for older persons is no longer covering all older persons. In addition to the family caring for older persons, other community-based elderly person care and day care of older persons need to be widely practised.

Older persons in our country face insufficient income and health care problems as well as living an isolated and lonely life. With an aim to support income security of older persons, the government started a social pension program, a financial support system, starting from fiscal year 2017-2018. When it was started, the beneficiaries were set to be older persons 90 years and above, but starting from fiscal year 2018-2019, it was reduced to 85 years and above. In the initial plan, there were 43,439 beneficiaries to social pension and this will be increased up to 140,000 with the new plan. Relevant ministries are to strive toward implementing the older person health care as per older person rights, enacted in the Older Persons Law. Health care for older person is not only normal and traditional health care but also long-term care and for those who do not need this, a prevention-long-term care said, the Union Minister.

The theme of this year’s International Day of Older Persons is “Celebrating Older Human Rights Champions.”

Next, message of United Nations Secretary General was read by UNDP resident representative and humanitarian coordinator Mr. Knut Ostby. Afterwards, sector-wise outstanding older persons and honored older persons were presented with honorary documents by Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khai Tha Than, Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung and Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye. Union Minister Lt. Gen Kyaw Swe, Union Minister Nay Thet Lwin, Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Aung Myin Tun, Pyithu Hluttaw health and sports development committee chairman Dr. San Shwe Win, Amyotha Hluttaw women and children affairs committee chairman Dr. Tin Tin Win, Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Chairman U Win Mra and Help Age International (Myanmar) Country Director Mr. God Fred Paul presented medicine and cash donations.

Representatives from Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Ministry of Electricity and Energy, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Health and Sports, Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation (MWAF), Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMC- WA), Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) and Help Age International then donated cash, which was accepted by Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye, who in return presented documents of honor.

Following the singing of a song in honor of the older persons, showing of a video depicting care of older persons in Myanmar, care of older persons by older person group chairperson herself, being an older person saying words of thanks, the ceremony came to a close. After the ceremony, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Union Ministers and guests observed the photo display, showing older person care conducted by ministries, MWAF, MMCWA, MRCS, Help Age International, states and regions.

Myanmar is promoting bilateral relations

THE signing ceremony of the Plan of Consultations (2018-2020) between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation was held at 1 pm on 28 September at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw, and U Myint Thu, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar and H.E. Dr. Nikolay Listopadov, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Myanmar, signed on behalf of the respective Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In accordance with the Plan of Consultations, the two Ministries of Foreign Affairs will conduct series of consultations on bilateral, regional and international matters of common interest.

Also present at the signing ceremony were Directors-General, Deputy Directors-General and responsible officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Russian Embassy in Yangon.—MNA

Myanmar, Russia to promote bilateral relations

OFFICIALS from ASEAN disaster management bodies gathered at the Ninth Meeting of ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) Working Group on Recovery in Mandalay yesterday.

Speaking at the meeting, Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Aung said more than 50 per cent of global disaster mortalities occurred in the ASEAN region. “Every year, on average, the ASEAN region experiences losses related to natural disasters estimated at US$4.4 billion,” he said the deputy minister. Myanmar and Indonesia, with the cooperation of other ASEAN countries, is promoting the capacity for rehabilitation sector in ASEAN region and finding tools for the recovery after disasters in the region, said U Soe Aung.

“Recent floods in two regions and two states of Myanmar rang the alarm for impacts of climate change in Myanmar,” he said. “Of them, Mon State and Taninthayi Region were hard hit by disasters in the past.”

Myanmar is stepping up its efforts for rehabilitation of flood victims in the areas with the guidance of the National Disaster Management Committee. He also expressed Myanmar’s readiness for fulfilling pledges for rehabilitation in the region. Following his speech, the meeting continued and the participants at the meeting discussed and approved the priorities for 2019. The meeting was participated by representatives from Myanmar, Indonesia, Brunei, Laos, the Philippines and Thailand and also representatives from AHA Centre, UNDP and ADB.—MNA

ASEAN Ninth Meeting of ACDM Working Group on Recovery held in Mandalay

Permanent Secretary U Myint Thu and Ambassador Dr. Nikolay Listopadov at the signing ceremony. PHOTO: MNA

After the ceremony, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Union Ministers and guests observed the photo display, showing older person care conducted by ministries, MWAF, MMCWA, MRCS, Help Age International, states and regions.

At the ceremony, outstanding older persons and honored older persons were each presented with Ks 100,000 and Ks 50,000 respectively, as well as gifts, it is learnt. — MNA
OPINION

U.S. President Donald Trump accessed the UN-backed International Criminal Court-ICC of lacking any legitimacy, saying “it violated “all principles of justice.” The ICC’s claim on universal jurisdiction over the citizens of every country, violating all principles of justice, fairness, and due process. We will never surrender America’s sovereignty in an unchecked, unaccountable global bureaucracy,” said Trump at the General Assembly of the United Nations on Tuesday. He also called on the world’s states to defend sovereignty, not just from global governance, but also from new forms of coercion and domination.

About one week ago before Trump’s tough stance against the UN-backed International Criminal Court, ICC released a one-sided report of its Fact-Finding Mission interfering in our internal affairs in relation to Rakhine State. Not only is this report detrimental to social cohesion in Rakhine State, it also undermines the Government’s efforts to build peace, national reconciliation and development in the entire country.

There are many obvious reasons to question the impartiality and objectivity of the FFM’s report. The UN Human Rights Council voted yesterday to set up a body to prepare evidence of human rights abuses in Myanmar. But, the resolution they made was based on the report of a UN fact-finding mission-FFM that the Myanmar government had categorically rejected, and which was unbalanced, one-sided and encouraged division of the country.

The report is based on a one-sided perspective of Myanmar’s history without consulting any of the many studies about the history of the conflict. This is a new matter of our country’s sovereignty, which is every country’s right to be free from interference from foreign entities. It’s in the UN Charter too. But due to various reasons such as terrorist groups killing civilians and destroying villages, the military had to intervene. Without security forces, everyone could be in trouble. Every country has the Right of Defence, and it will defend its people from terrorism.

No country can condone terrorism under any form and any circumstances. The provocative terrorist attacks of October 2016 and August 2017 have affected.

May each and every heart be healthy

By Professor Noe Noe
Professor and Head of Cardiology Department
Yangon General Hospital University of Medicine (YGMU)

On World Heart Day take place on 29 September, the slogan of World Heart Day 2018 is “My Heart, Your Heart”. Myanmar also participates in global activities on heart health. Seventeen million and five hundred thousand people die every year due to cardiovascular diseases each year. It is estimated that the mortality toll could go up to 21 million by 2030. Between the ages of 10 and 79, there are over 100 million adults with cardiovascular diseases, and 31% of all deaths is due to cardiovascular diseases as well. 2018 commemorates the 40th anniversary of the formation of the World Heart Federation. In collaboration with more than 200 member countries, World Health Federation is taking initiatives in combating cardiovascular diseases. It focuses on eliminating the use of tobacco and tobacco, reducing lack of treatment and eradication of rheumatic heart disease which demands the hundreds of thousands of children’s lives.

The main aim of celebrating World Heart Day is to reduce the global mortality rate caused by heart diseases. The most threatening causes of cardiovascular diseases and stroke include: failing to control high blood pressure, high sugar level in blood, smoking, lack of taking nutritious food, insufficient eating of fruits and vegetables, gaining weight and obesity. World Heart Day effectively draws people’s attention to heart illness as a major cause of death globally.

Myanmar also participates in such efforts, fulfilling World Health Organization’s aim of reducing premature death due to cardiovascular diseases by 2025. We will be able to have a happier and healthy life just by changing and adopting certain practices of lifestyle for the heart’s health.

Therefore, to obtain a healthy and heart, let’s make our resolution to change certain practices and adopt these healthy lifestyle styles starting from this year’s World Heart Day.

1. Take only healthy food
- Take water and juice with very little sugar. Instead of sugary juice and fruit juice.
- Take fresh vegetables instead of meat.
- Eat a fistful of fruits and vegetables three times per day. You may eat fresh ones or from cold storage or tinned ones or dried fruits.
- Avoid taking alcoholic drinks. Otherwise, drink moderately.
- Reduce taking foods which are prepared with plenty of sugar, salt and fats.
- Prepare healthy lunch to be taken at work or school.

Do exercises
- Do moderate-intensity exercise 38 minutes per day, 5 days per week. You could do vigorous-intensity exercise, do 75 minutes per week at different time.
- You can also do jogging, walking, house chores and dancing.

- It is essential to adopt an active life style on a daily basis. Instead of taking the lift, use the stairs at work. Either take a bicycle or walk, instead of driving the car.
- Watching exercise programs from the Internet, and using the pedometer could let you know the progress of your exercises.
- Do exercise with family members or friends gives you more fun and makes you more active.
- Encourage children to live an active life.

Do not smoke
- Avoiding smoking is truly beneficial for heart and healthy life.
- Quitting smoking or non-smoking is beneficial for your health as well as the health of those who share your environment.
- Consult a doctor and take advice from him, if you are in need of professional assistance.
- Encourage those you love to quit smoking.
- Work towards a smoke-free environment.
- In addition, rising blood sugar is a marker of diabetics. A majority of diabetic deaths are due to cardiovascular diseases. A person who does not know they have diabetes or a diabetic who ignores medical treatment are at risk of acquiring cardiovascular diseases and stroke.

Hypertension is also the main culprit, causing cardiovascular. An hypertension does not show disease symptoms you may not know that you have hypertension. If you cannot control hypertension condition or fail to take treatment, it could lead to a series of diseases, such as narrowing of blood vessels, heart failure, stroke, kidney failure, and degenerative vision. Therefore, if you have hypertension, it is pivotal to consult the doctor on a regular basis and take the prescribed medicine regularly.

Approximately, four million people die of high cholesterol. It is essential to check your weight, body weight and body mass index (BMI) to know whether you are at risk of getting heart diseases. In case of need, you should take advice and treatment from professional doctor.

Therefore, to welcome the World Heart Day, do follow the appropriate practices for heart health and share this knowledge with others. May all human beings possess a healthy heart.

By Professor Noe Noe

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Order 13/2013
4th Waning of Thaw Thaline ME 1380
(29 September 2016)

Appointment of Yangon Region Advocate General

In accordance with the provisions stated in Article 288 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar; Section 2 of Union Government Law, Section 31 of Union Attorney General Law, President, Win Myint has appointed Dr. Khin Myo Kha as Yangon Region Advocate General.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

Summary of Observations Recorded at 09:30 hrs MST:

During the period 24hrs, sound weather prevails in the East Central Bay of Bengal and Deltaic areas of Myanmar. Weather has been cloudy in Lower Sagain Region and Eastern Shan State, but rain in thunderstorms have been widespread in Kachin State, fairly widespread in Southern Shan State, scattered in Upper Sagain Region and Chin State and isolated in the remaining regions and states. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded were: Shamo (1.490) inches, Machancar (0.937) inches, Myitkyina (0.317) inches, Dawei (0.475) inches, Katha and Taungbeng (0.421) inches and Pathein (0.287) inches.

Bay Influence: Monsoon is weak over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and weather is partly cloudy elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast Valid Until Afternoon on 29 September 2018: Rain or thunderstorms will be fairly widespread in and around the Andaman Sea, Kachin and Southern Shan States, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Sagain, Mandalay and Bago regions, Chin and Kayah states, and isolated in the remaining regions and states. Degree of certainty is 90%.

State of the Sea: Sea will be slight in Myanmar waters, Wave height will be about 1-6 feet off and along Myanmar Coast.

Outlook for Subsequent Two Days: Weak monsoon will continue over the Andaman Sea and Southern Myanmar.

3rd Weather Report

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(29 September 2016)
Seven soldiers, one civilian killed in Mali bomb blast

BAMAKO — Seven soldiers and a civilian driver were killed in central Mali when their vehicle hit explosives in the latest attack in an area riven by jihadist violence, the defence ministry said Thursday.

Wednesday’s “cowardly terrorist attack” took place between the northern city of Timbuktu and Mopti in the centre, a statement said, adding that the soldiers were on an escort mission.

“Two escort vehicles of the Malian army hit improvised explosive devices between Bambara-Maoude and Douentza,” it said.

A total of 120 French soldiers meanwhile landed Thursday by parachute in the north-eastern region of Menaka, a particularly volatile region near the border with Niger, to boost counter-insurgency operations, French military spokesman Colonel PatrikSteiger said.

“We are combining our capacities to create a surprise effect for the armed terrorist groups and to show to locals that we are capable of arriving quickly,” he said.

Mali’s unrest stems from rising which was exploited by jihadists in order to take over key cities in the north.

The extremists were large driven out in a French-led military operation launched in January 2013.

But large stretches of the country remain out of the control of Malian, French and UN forces, which are frequent targets of attacks.

Jihadist violence, meanwhile, has spread from northern Mali to the centre and south and spilled into neighbouring Burkina Faso and Niger, often exacerbating communal conflicts. —AFP

Niger flood death toll up to 42: UN

NIAMEY(Niger) — Forty-two people have died in flooding in Niger since the start of the rainy season in June, most of them in northern desert areas, according to a UN report released Thursday.

Nearly 205,000 people have been affected by the floods, which have destroyed 16,392 houses, said the report by the UN’s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

Some 31,130 head of cattle and 7,579 hectares of crops have been lost in the floods as of 16 September, the report said.

The UN’s last assessment on 28 August reported 36 dead.

The rainy season, which lasts up to three months, is almost over.

The West African country’s capital Niamey was almost completely spared from the floods this year, which some residents put down to the construction of dams that spared thousands of residents from the worst of the River Niger bursting its banks.

Last year, around 20 people died in the capital during the rainy season.—AFP

South Africa changes mining code to boost black ownership

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa on Thursday unveiled a raft of changes to a controversial mining bill which is to raise black ownership of mining companies from 26 percent to 30 percent.

Mineral Resources Minister GwedeMantashe revealed details of the mining charter, intended to transform the key industry and address long-standing racial inequality in the sector.

The 30 per cent black-held equity will be distributed between employees, mine communities and entrepreneurs, Mantashe said at a news conference in Pretoria.

An impasse between government and business over key provisions of the legislation had in recent years created uncertainty within the industry, a cornerstone of South Africa’s economy.

Mantashe told reporters that the document will “entrench regulatory certainty for investors, and provide security of tenure for investments”.

The government had been criticised over the slow pace of change in the sector which contributes eight percent of GDP.

The charter includes a raft of other reforms including mandatory workers’ housing and quotas for black representation on boards. More than 460,000 people are employed in South Africa’s mining industry.

Mantashe said the charter will also help stimulate the sluggish economy, cut poverty, reduce inequality and create jobs.

“It aims to create regulatory certainty, sustainable growth and a competitive and transformed mining industry,” he said.

But the main opposition Democratic Alliance party, while applauding the new version of the charter as an improvement, said it “still amounts to a tightening of the rules governing investment”.

The Minerals Council, an association representing big mining companies, acknowledged that government “had a difficult task balancing the inputs from the various stakeholders”.

South Africa, the continent’s most advanced economy, slipped into a recession in the second quarter of this year and last year suffered two ratings downgrades.—AFP
‘Major terrorist attack’ foiled in Netherlands, 7 arrested

THE HAGUE — Dutch police arrested seven men Thursday suspected of plotting to carry out a “major terrorist attack” at a public event using explosive belts and an AK-47 assault rifle, the public prosecutor’s office said.

“The police arrested seven men on Thursday... suspected of being at a very advanced stage of preparation for a major terrorist attack in the Netherlands,” it said in a statement, adding one of the suspects had wanted to kill “many victims”.

Prosecutors and investigators were “convinced that a terrorist attack was prevented” as a result of the arrests in the cities of Arnhem and Weert which followed a months-long police operation.

Officers had placed a group of people under surveillance, a central figure being a 34-year-old man of Iraqi origin convicted in 2017 of attempting to reach territory controlled by the jihadist Islamic State group, the statement added.

Those arrested by elite special anti-terrorist police teams with helicopter support ranged in age from 21 to 34. The suspects came from Arnhem, the port city of Rotterdam and villages close to those two cities. Two others in the group also had convictions related to attempts to travel to Iraq or Syria.

“One of the men from Arnhem wanted to commit an attack with a group at a major event in the Netherlands and kill many victims, according to the Dutch Intelligence Service (AIVD),” the prosecutor’s office said.

Police had yet to identify the target of the planned attack which the prosecutor’s office said was to have included a separate car bombing.

The suspects, who investigators said were in possession of small arms when they were detained, are expected to appear in court in Rotterdam on Friday.

“They were seeking AK-47 assault rifles, grenades, explosive belts and raw materials with which to make other bombs,” investigators said.

Dutch on alert

The arrests came three months after two men were arrested in Rotterdam on suspicion of preparing attacks in France and in the Netherlands. Prosecutors said earlier this month they were “close” to launching their preparations for a major terrorist attack.

Police officers conduct an investigation at the residence of an alleged jihadist in Rotterdam on September 27, 2018. PHOTO: AFP

Italian government agrees on 2.4-per cent deficit of GDP in 2019

ROME — Italy’s populist government agreed Thursday on a deficit of 2.4-per cent of gross domestic product in 2019, the leaders of the coalition parties announced.

“We’re satisfied, this is the budget of change,” joint deputy prime ministers Matteo Salvini and Luigi Di Maio said in the statement quoted by Italian media.

The figure, vastly higher than the 0.8 per cent forecast by the previous, centre-left government, could spark panic on the markets over the country’s already mammoth debt burden — currently 131 per cent of GDP, the biggest in the eurozone after Greece. All eyes had been on whether Western Europe’s first anti-establishment leadership would defy Brussels or toe the line with its first budget.

“Today is a historic day! Today Italy changes! For the first time the state is on the people’s side. For the first time it is not taking away, but giving,” Di Maio said in a message on Facebook.

He had previously said his anti-establishment Five Star Movement would not support the budget if the finance ministry did not find the money for projects, including a basic income grant promised in March elections.

The deputy prime minister said there were 10 billion euros ($11.5 billion) earmarked for the income in the budget, which “for the first time in the history of this country will eradicate poverty”.

German federal police chief faces kidnapping probe

BERLIN — German prosecutors said Thursday they are investigating the head of the federal police for kidnapping, after he travelled in person to Iraq to secure a rape-murder suspect who had fled there.

Several people filed complaints against top officer Dieter Romann, whose expedition to Iraq in spring — accompanied by reporters from top-selling newspaper Bild — caused an uproar.

He travelled to the Kurdish-controlled region of northern Iraq to arrest a young Iraqi asylum seeker, Ali Bashar, suspected of raping and strangling to death a 14-year-old German girl.

The suspect, who lived in refugee housing in western Germany, was arrested near the Erasmus Bridge, the country’s second largest.

On 31 August, an Afghan gave an anonymous call for attacks on Dutch troops after far-right Dutch politician Geert Wilders organised a Prophet Muhammad cartoon competition.

Many Muslims consider images of the prophet to be blasphemous.

The likelihood of a terror attack in the Netherlands “remained substantial”, the Dutch anti-terror agency NCTV said last week, with terror threat levels remaining at level four out of five. — AFP

Italian Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini and his joint counterpart Luigi Di Miao say they are ‘satisfied, this is the budget of change’. PHOTO: AFP

— The Global New Light of Myanmar
**China, EU vow to enhance cooperation, Eurasian connectivity**

UNITED NATIONS — Top Chinese and European Union (EU) diplomats said on Thursday that the two sides are willing to strengthen cooperation and enhance Eurasian connectivity.

China welcomes the EU to participate in the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and is willing to promote the alignment of the BRI with the EU-proposed connectivity plan, said Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

Wang made the remarks during his meeting with High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini. Both diplomats are attending the United Nations General Assembly.

Both China and the EU advocate multilateralism and resolving international disputes through peaceful settlement, Wang added, noting that maintaining and enhancing China-EU relations is the shared responsibility of both sides.

Mogherini said the newly-released European Commission plan that calls for a comprehensive, sustainable and rule-based connectivity goes along with the BRI and will contribute to bilateral cooperation.

She said it is important for the two sides to exchange opinions on strategic issues of common concern. — Xinhua

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**Six dead in Kashmir violence ahead of polls: Indian officials**

SRINAGAR (INDIA) — Six people were killed in mounting violence ahead of local elections in Kashmir as Indian authorities imposed a curfew and suspended mobile internet services in the disputed territory on Thursday.

There were at least four separate shootings in the restive Himalayan region, where an armed insurgency against Indian rule has raged for three decades, costing tens of thousands of lives.

An army spokesman, Colonel Rajesh Kalia, said three militiants and one soldier died in separate shootout in Budgam district and Anantnag district.

Elsewhere, a road-construction labourer was shot and killed by soldiers, said a police officer who spoke on condition of anonymity and could not provide further details.

In the main city of Srinagar, government forces shot dead a man during an early morning patrol, sparking public unrest.

Thousands defied the government curfew to attend his funeral, chanting slogans against Indian rule in the mountainous area where half a million soldiers are deployed.

Kashmir has been divided between India and Pakistan since 1947 but both nuclear-armed rivals claim the territory in full, and have fought three wars over its control.

Tensions have been rising ahead of local elections in October and November. New Delhi has deployed an additional 40,000 troops to the region to maintain order.

Both pro-Indian parties and separatist groups fighting for self-determination have called for a boycott of the upcoming polls.

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**5.0 magnitude earthquake rocks Indonesia’s Aceh**

JAKARTA (Indonesia) — A 5.0 magnitude earthquake rocked Indonesia’s western Aceh province early Thursday, the US Geological Survey said, but there were no immediate reports of damage or casualties.

The shallow quake struck shortly before 1 a.m. local time with its epicentre 28 kilometres northwest of the city of Langsa.

No tsunami warning has been issued.

Indonesia, one of the most disaster-prone nations on earth, straddles the so-called Pacific “Ring of Fire”, where tectonic plates collide and many of the world’s volcanic eruptions and earthquakes occur.

In 2004 a tsunami triggered by a magnitude 9.3 undersea earthquake off the coast of Sumatra in western Indonesia killed 220,000 people in countries around the Indian Ocean, including 168,000 in Indonesia.

A series of quakes and aftershocks on the Indonesian holiday island of Lombok through July and August killed about 300 people and forced hundreds of thousands into evacuation shelters or tents.

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**Plane ditches into Pacific Chuuk lagoon**

WELLINGTON (New Zealand) — Passengers were forced to swim for their lives Friday when an airliner ditched into a lagoon after missing the runway on a remote Pacific island and immediately began sinking.

The Air Niugini Boeing 737 was attempting to land at Weno airport in Micronesia but ended up half submerged in Chuuk lagoon after missing the runway on a Friday.

Pictures and video posted on social media showed locals up half submerged in Chuuk lagoon.

The Air Niugini Boeing 737 that all 36 passengers and 11 crew had been taken to hospital.

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**Tensions have been rising in Kashmir ahead of local elections in October and November. PHOTO: AFP**

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Pictures and video posted on social media showed locals scrambling in small boats to rescue the passengers and crew. PHOTO: AFP

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Wetlands disappearing three times faster than forests

GENEVA — Wetlands, among the world’s most valuable and biodiverse ecosystems, are disappearing at alarming speed amid urbanization and agriculture shifts, conservationists said Thursday, calling for urgent action to halt the erosion.

“We are in a crisis,” Martha Rojas Urrego, head of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, told reporters in Geneva, warning of the potential devastating impact of wetland loss, including on climate change.

The convention, adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar nearly a half-century ago, on Thursday issued its first-ever global report on the state of the world’s wetlands.

The 88-page report found that around 35 per cent of wetlands — which include lakes, rivers, marshes and peatlands, as well as coastal and marine areas like lagoons, mangroves and coral reefs — were lost between 1970 and 2015. Today, wetlands cover more than 12 million square kilometres (4.6 million square miles), the report said, warning that the annual rates of loss had accelerated since 2000.

“We are losing wetlands three times faster than forests,” Rojas Urrego said, describing the global Wetland Outlook report as a “red flag”.

While the world has been increasingly focused on global warming and its impact on oceans and forests, the Ramsar Convention said wetlands remain “dangerously undervalued”. Thursday’s report, released in advance of a meeting of the parties to the convention in Dubai next month, stressed the importance of wetlands to all life on Earth. — AFP

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE
MLV KUO TAI VOY. NO. (110NS)
Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KUO TAI VOY. NO. (110NS) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 29-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.
Damaged 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.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS SILKAGO LOGISTICS PTE LTD
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE
MLV OCEAN FAITH VOY. NO. (1)
Consignees of cargo carried on M.V OCEAN FAITH VOY. NO. (1) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on ETA. 29-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.
Damaged 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.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS TOKO KAUN KAISHA
Phone No: 2301191, 2301178

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE
MLV HUNSA BHUM VOY. NO. (425W)
Consignees of cargo carried on M.V HUNSA BHUM VOY. NO. (425W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 29-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.
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SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES
Phone No: 2301185
Neymar and Mbappe satins are Paris fashion must-haves

PARIS — Football's biggest stars burst onto the Paris fashion runway Thursday with Neymar, Kylian Mbappe and Edinson Cavani popping up on T-shirts and satin bomber jackets by Indian designer Manish Arora. The flamboyant creator has linked up with their club, Paris Saint-Germain, to produce a line of women's clothes inspired by its stellar trio of strikers, including vertiginous stiletto football boots in a mix of hot pink, lime green and gold aertex.

In the most colourful and joyous catwalk show of the week so far, Arora remade the team's crest with the footballers' faces surrounded by adoring hearts in Indian Zardosi metal embroidery.

A kaleidoscopic portrait of PSG's dishy Brazilian defender Thiago Silva adorned another top, while Neymar’s featured on the shiny scarlet tongue of Dayley rainbow trainers. A kaleidoscopic portrait of PSG's dishy Brazilian defender Thiago Silva adorned another top, while Neymar's featured on the shiny scarlet tongue of Dayley rainbow trainers. Neymar's featured on the shiny scarlet tongue of Dayley rainbow trainers.

The show went down a storm with critics, with the style bible Women's Wear Daily hailing Arora for “reaching out to a global audience” and nudging his clothes “upmarket a notch, trimming away some of the excess without losing any of its punch”. It is not the first time that PSG has inspired Paris designers. Last year the young French brand Koche send out a line of re-imagined silky PSG tops. The official link-up with Arora, however, is part of PSG’s strategy to become a global entertainment industry brand, with a capsule collection drawn from the show due to go into the shops in China and India in February. —AFP

Great indoors: eSports gains foothold in Australia

SYDNEY — Outdoor sport is almost like a religion in Australia, with kids packing into cars each weekend bound for organised chaos at parks and ovals, while millions diligently follow rugby and cricket on TV or at stadiums. The rituals help explain why eSports has been slow to catch on Down Under.

But the Aussie passion for competition has gaming pioneers convinced that eSports has a future in the country — even if the profile so far remains low.

“There is still a general unawareness with what actually eSports is, so there is an education process that a lot of tournament organisers, or teams and clubs, are working through,” GInfinity Australia chief executive Dominic Remond told AFP.

The firm ran their maiden eSports Elite Series in June and July, with teams from major cities in Australia playing Counter Strike Global Offensive, Street Fighter V and Rocket League.

The event was held at Sydney’s first eSports stadium — which doubles as a TV show set — with teams stationed above giant gaming screens and commentators positioned in front of cameras below. —AFP

1,001 ways to lose a Nobel Prize

OSLO — It’s easier to lose a Nobel Prize than to win one.

Smuggled out to impress girls in a bar, or dissolved to prevent the Nazis from getting their hands on one, the precious gold medals have gone missing in crazy, tragic or spectacular ways over the more than hundred year history of the Nobel Prize.

Here are some of them:

Dissolved in acid

When the Nazis invaded Denmark in April 1940, scientists at Niels Bohr’s Institute for Theoretical Physics began to worry about the 1914 and 1925 Nobel Physics Prize gold medals that two German laureates — Max von Laue and James Franck — had placed there for safekeeping.

“In Hitler’s empire it was almost a capital offence to send gold out of the country, and, Laue’s name being engraved into the medal, the discovery of this by the invading forces would have had very serious consequences for him,” Hungarian chemist George de Hevesy, who was working at the Institute, wrote in 1962.

After being persuaded not to bury the medals as they could be unearthed, de Hevesy decided to dissolve the two 23-carat-gold discs with aqua regia acid mixture, the only solution able to do so. Stored high up on a shelf in his laboratory, the orange-coloured liquid went unnoticed by the Nazis. After the war was over, de Hevesy — who won the Nobel Prize himself in 1943 — turned the gold back into a precipitate in 1950. He gave it to the Nobel Foundation so it could be recast into two medals which were presented to the men in 1952.

In a less triumphant moment, Norwegian writer Knut Hamsun gave his Nobel Literature Prize medal to Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels in 1943. A strong supporter of the Nazis, Hamsun was convicted of treason in 1947 and spent the rest of his life in mental institutions.

It is not known what became of his medal.

Under the Hammer

Sometimes, because of acts of charity, inheritance disputes or just because life can take odd turns, the Nobel medals end up for sale at auctions.

With varying results.

The Nobel Peace Prize won by Frenchman Aristide Briand in 1926 for his role in France and Germany’s short-lived post-war reconciliation was sold for the modest sum of just 12,200 euros ($14,000) in 2008.

Six years later, US scientist James Watson, who won the 1962 award for his co-discovery of the structure of DNA and who has made controversial remarks about Africans, sold his medal for a record $4.1 million excluding taxes. A bonanza for the US biologist — especially after the buyer, Russian billionaire Alisher Usmanov, returned the medal to him.

Stop, thief

There have also been times when medals have just disappeared. France’s Heritage Museum Ecomusee of Saint-Nazaire only had Aristide Briand’s medal in its possession for a few years before buying it so cheaply: it was stolen in 2015 and has yet to be recovered.

And in India in 2017, robbers made off with the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize medal won by Kailash Satyarthi. Or so they thought. The medal was a replica — the real one is on display in a museum — and it was quickly recovered.

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Chinese scientists find vaccine effective in combating bird flu, but new risks among ducks

WASHINGTON — Chinese scientists found that vaccine for chickens in 2017 effectively worked to curb bird flu pandemic starting in 2013 in China, but new risks now went on in ducks that demanded more vaccination.

The study published on Thursday in the journal Cell Host & Microbe revealed that vaccination of chickens successfully prevented the spread of the H7N9 virus in China as human infection has not been detected since February 2018, indicating that consumers of poultry have been well-protected from H7N9 infection.

Researchers collected over 37,928 chickens and 15,956 duck genetic samples 8 months before and 5 months after the vaccine’s introduction. They isolated 304 H7N9 viruses before the vaccine’s release, and only 17 H7N9 viruses and one H7N2 virus afterwards.

But the findings also suggested that two new genetic variations of the H7N9 and H7N2 subtypes had been detected in unvaccinated ducks.

“It surprised me that the novel, highly pathogenic subtypes had been generated in and adapted so well to ducks, because the original highly pathogenic form of H7N9 has very limited capacity to replicate in ducks,” said Chen Hualan, a senior author on the paper and an animal virologist at the Harbin Veterinary Research Institute. The bird flu virus replicates in host cells and often mutates and reassorts over time. When Chen’s team looked closely at the genetic types of the disease-causing strains in ducks, they found that an H7N2 and an H7N9 virus had picked up certain gene segments from other duck influenza viruses, improving their ability to infect ducks.

“Influenza viruses mutate as long as they replicate, but it’s very difficult to predict when the H7N9 virus will obtain a particular harmful mutation,” said Chen. “It is possible that the virus may adapt in other species in the future if it cannot be eliminated soon.” Chinese eat roughly three billion ducks per year and 14 billion chickens. To prevent further human infection, Chen suggested that the virus should be eliminated in ducks as soon as possible. “Our study indicates that the current vaccine will work well in ducks, so we do not need to develop a new one,” said Chen. —Xinhua

Global research team date millennia-old magnetic storms using tree rings

BEIJING — China’s Tiangong-2 space lab is functioning normally and will de-orbit safely after July 2019, according to a briefing on China’s space projects Wednesday.

“It will conduct compressor life tests and space science application tests in the future,” Lin added. Zhi Congpeng, chief designer of the space lab, said that Tiangong-2 was designed with several safety control modes to deal with emergencies and ensure it can safely leave orbit.

“We have also made more than 300 fault countermeasures to ensure its safe operation,” Zhu said. Launched on 15 September, 2016, Tiangong-2 has been in orbit for more than two years.

—Xinhua

MOGOW — A global team of scientists, along with the employees of the Krasnoyarsk Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences’ Siberian Branch and the Siberian Federal University managed to recover data on magnetic storms from thousands of years ago, the Russian Ministry of Science and Higher Education’s press service reported. The study was published in the Nature Communications journal.

An international group of researchers, with the participation of the Krasnoyarsk Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences’ Siberian Branch and the Siberian Federal University have managed to pinpoint an increased concentration of stable carbon isotopes in tree rings from several samples of trees located on five continents, from 774 and 993 AD. These dates coincide with historical evidence indicating unusually bright northern lights (aurora borealis). This discovery not only proves the accuracy of the tree rings’ date patterns, but also, in the long run, it will help detect the frequency of abnormal magnetic storms of the past, “the message reads.

Earlier, Japanese scientists discovered that solar flares causing magnetic storms leave traces on tree rings. Heavy charged particles called protons enter the atmosphere and “enrich” the chemical elements forming part of it. Radiocarbon (a “heavy” carbon isotope 14C) is one of the products of this “enrichment”, which then becomes part of the carbon cycle on our planet: namely, it accumulates in trees. The researchers suggested that tree rings from the years with higher solar activity would include higher amounts of heavy carbon. —Tass
Mourinho’s Pogba feud takes spotlight, Hazard set for Liverpool rematch

LONDON — Jose Mourinho’s astonishing feud with Paul Pogba will take another twist when Manchester United’s warring duo head to West Ham, while Chelsea’s Eden Hazard bids to inflict more misery on Liverpool.

On any other weekend, the showdown between Premier League leaders Liverpool and title rivals Chelsea at Stamford Bridge would be the centre of attention. But United manager Mourinho is embroiled in a clash of egos with France midfielder Pogba that threatens to derail his side’s season.

Mourinho and Pogba were filmed in a heated discussion at United’s training ground on Wednesday, just 24 hours after the World Cup winner was told he would no longer be the team’s vice-captain. The volatile Pogba reportedly infuriated Mourinho by making it clear he wants to join Barcelona and poured fuel on the fire when he criticised the manager’s cautious tactics in last weekend’s draw with Wolves.

With United players said to be taking sides on the row, Mourinho is facing a toxic situation that could divide the club.

There was further woe for Mourinho on Tuesday as United, with the rested Pogba watching from the stands, were dumped out of the League Cup third round in an embarrassing defeat against second tier Derby.

United are already eight points behind Liverpool and cannot afford another setback in an already traumatic campaign. Against that tense backdrop, the announcement of United’s team-sheet at West Ham on Saturday will be eagerly awaited to see whether Pogba will be recalled or consigned to exile.

Regardless of Pogba’s presence, United must raise their effort levels, according to their veteran defender Ashley Young.

“I think they had more intensity than we did,” Young said of the Derby defeat.

“You have to show that intensity and go further than the opposition. We didn’t do that and I think we got punished.”

Once the latest chapter of Mourinho’s row with Pogba is out of the way in east London, all eyes will turn to the west side of the capital where Chelsea star Hazard plans to aims repeat his midweek heroics against Liverpool. Belgian playmaker Hazard came off the bench to knock Liverpool out of the League Cup with a superb solo strike at Anfield on Wednesday.

Hazard’s stunning late goal capped Chelsea’s come from behind 2-1 victory, making them the first team to stop Liverpool winning this season.

That drama finale set the stage for Saturday’s rematch at the Bridge, where Liverpool will put their six-match winning run in the league on the line against unbeaten Chelsea, who are two points behind in third place.

If Chelsea are to deal another blow to the Reds, they will surely need another memorable contribution from Hazard.

With five goals in his first six league games, Hazard has started the season in fine form, prompting Chelsea team-mate Ross Barkley to hail him as the world’s best. Asked if Hazard compared to Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo, Barkley said: “They are probably a lot more selfish than Eden is. He is not a selfish player.” — AFP

Cavani, Neymar on same wavelength as PSG target eighth straight win

PARIS — Paris Saint-Germain coach Thomas Tuchel says he has done nothing special to improve the relationship between star forwards Neymar and Edinson Cavani, despite the pair playing a key role in helping the French champions enjoy their best ever start to a season.

Cavani, despite the pair playing a key role in helping the champions enjoy their best ever start to a season, scored twice and won a penalty that was converted by Neymar as PSG came from behind to beat Reims 4-1 on Wednesday, making it seven wins from seven games this season.

Neymar’s first season in Paris following his world record transfer from Barcelona was brought to a premature end by a foot injury. But before that there were concerns the Brazilian had a frosty relationship with Cavani, with the duo notably buckering over penalty-taking duties.

There were no such problems on Wednesday, as the pair led PSG to another victory in the absence of the suspended Kylian Mbappe.

“I haven’t done anything special. It is important that they exchange with one another,” said Tuchel, whose team are already eight points clear at the top of Ligue 1.

“They play in the same team don’t they? I haven’t done anything. They are grown ups and, above all, they are pros.

“I also get the feeling that along with Kylian Mbappe and Angel Di Maria they are a quartet who want to win trophies and improve together.”

PSG go to Nice on Saturday looking for an eighth win out of eight in the league — if they do that they will match the best ever start to a season by any French club, set by Olympique Lillois in 1936.

Mbappe back

The good news for Tuchel is that Mbappe can return having completed his three-match ban, and the France star will surely feature ahead of next Wednesday’s Champions League meeting with Red Star Belgrade. — AFP

Barcelona eye record revenues, aims for 1-billion-euro turnover by 2021

BARCELONA — Spanish champions Barcelona claimed Thursday that they were on course to set a new record turnover of 900 million euros for the 2018/19 season with a net profit of 11 million euros.

According to the budget estimate approved by the club’s board of directors, in the 2017/18 season, Barcelona had a turnover of 914 million euros, exceeding its forecast of 897 million euros, for a profit of 32 million.

For the current season, expenses are expected to increase to 929 million euros, but will be offset by the increase in revenues, said a statement by the club, which added the target of a one billion euro turnover by 2021 is still within reach.

“The club is very serious (in its management). We have more planned spending, but also more expected income. What we do will never endanger the viability of the club,” said club spokesman Josep Vives.

Meanwhile, Barcelona also announced plans to redesign its club crest which will see the acronym "FCB" dropped to further highlight the ball and the Catalan regional flag, and “adapt to a new era.”

The initiative responds to “one of the main objectives of the FC Barcelona Strategic Plan, which is the enhancement of its brand internationally,” the club said in a statement. — AFP