STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who is on a working visit in Tokyo, Japan, attended the Myanmar Silk Promotion Event facilitated by the ASEAN-Japan Centre and the Myanmar Investment Conference discussing under the topic ‘Strengthening the Bond Between Myanmar and Japan’, both held yesterday.

The State Counsellor and her entourage made their way to the ASEAN-Japan Center at 1pm local standard time and were welcomed by Mr. Ichiro Aisawa, Chairman of the Japan-Myanmar Parliamentary Friendship Association, Mr. Hiroto Izumi, Special Advisor to the Japanese Prime Minister, Mr. Hideo Watanabe, Chairman of Japan-Myanmar Friendship Association, Mr. Keiji Fuji, Chairman of Daimatsu, and Mr. Masa-taka Fujita, Secretary-General of the ASEAN-Japan Centre.

The State Counsellor and Union Ministers U Thaung Tun and U Kyaw Tin, and their welcoming party then cut the ceremonial ribbon to open the Myanmar Silk Promotion Event. They toured the displays of clothing sewn with Myanmar silk while officials gave explanations.

The State Counsellor then received souvenirs from the ASEAN-Japan Center officials and took a documentary photo. The ASEAN-Japan Center was established on 25 May 1981 and Myanmar became a member on 27 April 2006. The center promotes trade, investment and tourism in and between ASEAN countries and Japan as well as developing human resources.

The State Counsellor and her entourage next went to Meiji Kinenkanto to attend the Myanmar Investment Conference held there, under the title ‘Strengthening the Bond Between Myanmar and Japan’. They were welcomed by Japan External Trade Organization – (JETRO) Chairman and CEO Mr. Hiroyuki Ishige and Vice President Ms. Yuri Sato.

Mr. Hiroyuki Ishige and the Japanese Vice-Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Mr. Hirofumi Takinami delivered separate addresses. This was followed by an opening speech from the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, in which she said that given the close relationship between Myanmar and Japan, a majority of the investors and business people participating in this event will bring with them a deep understanding of Myanmar, informed by the historical ties which connect the two countries. She said she was equally certain that these same investors and business people are also taking a keen interest in recent positive changes to Myanmar’s investment environment. New investment and company laws recently in effect provide a much-improved legal framework for investors, she said.

Myanmar has been undergoing multiple, simultaneous, complex transitions throughout recent years.
State Counsellor calls for Japanese Investment

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These transitions have affected all aspects of the country’s social, political and economic life. Very few of our people remain untouched by these transitions, she said.

As Myanmar has only recently emerged from a lengthy period of self-imposed isolation, many of the reforms that are now underway are focused specifically on addressing ‘legacy issues.’ She said, the legacies are more on the negative than the positive side, so we have to struggle very hard to cope with that. This social, economic and political ‘housekeeping’, much of which occurs out of the spotlight, behind closed doors at times, is essential if we are to create an enabling environment which will permit many of the newer, pipeline reform initiatives to go forward, she said.

The State Counsellor said that since the incumbent government took office in 2016, it has been fully committed not just to the pursuit of economic development, but also to striking the right balance between development and stability – both economically and politically – and one cannot survive without the other. Striking the right balance is never easy. In Myanmar, we have boldly decided against taking a populist approach to macroeconomics and chosen to favour the less glamorous but still fundamentally important work required to reform and strengthen the management of our economy; increase resilience to shocks, and to stabilize macroeconomic foundations, such as bringing inflation down from the double-digit figures we saw, faced in 2013-2016, said the State Counsellor.

As a result of our collective efforts, inflation has been tamed at around 5 per cent, for the present, which has allowed our economy to grow at a decent rate of 6 to 7 per cent, amongst the fastest in Asia. Which, I do not think is good enough, but it’s not bad, she said. Thanks to these and other reform efforts, there has been per-capita incomes risen by 50 per cent. Poverty rates have fallen from above 40 per cent to 30 per cent today. Furthermore, as a result of our combined efforts, earlier this year, for the first time, Myanmar fulfilled all eligibility criteria to graduate from Least Developed Country status, she said.

The State Counsellor said that despite all these very positive developments, there is still ample room for improvement and of course the expectations of the people are rising, and will always be rising. As we are all aware, the global economy has, since 2008, been recovering from a decade long fever. Thanks partially to relative isolation, Myanmar managed to evade that particular fever, she said. Ten years on, global economic growth is now expected to remain robust at 3.1 per cent in 2018, with some Central Banks having begun gradually removing monetary stimulus put in place to combat economic downturns.

Unlike ten years ago, Myanmar today is exposed to these global macroeconomic shifts in ways never before experienced. For example, unlike in the past, the gradual removal of monetary stimulus in some big economies could have undesirable direct or indirect impacts on an emerging economy like ours. This is a challenge we have to be prepared to face.

Luckily, despite global challenges, the growth outlook for developing Asia in 2018 was recently upgraded to 6 per cent, or 0.1 percentage points higher than the rate envisaged in September 2017 by the Asian Development Bank. As part of this developing Asia, Myanmar’s economic trajectory is promising.

The State Counsellor said that the Government of Myanmar is steering a careful course through waves of multiple, complex and simultaneous transitions that are social, political and economic in nature. Despite multidimensional risks, external and internal pressures, and the monumental complexity of the issues we must deal with, our commitment to be a responsible member of the global community has not wavered, she said.

The Government of Myanmar has confirmed its commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals which have now been integrated into Myanmar’s planning, budgeting and monitoring frameworks consistent with the conditions and needs of the country. We have developed a comprehensive social, economic and environmental policy reform agenda, the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan, or MSDP which provides a unifying and coherent roadmap for our future reforms, she said.

Structured around 5 Pillars, 5 Goals, 28 Strategies and 251 Action Plans, the MSDP can be seen as the expression of our national development vision; a vision which finds resonance in the global sustainable development agenda.

The first MSDP goal focuses on peace and national reconciliation, key elements for achieving political stability; and of course, there are the greatest number of challenges in that sector and that has to do with the aforementioned ‘legacy issue’, said the State Counsellor. She said the second goal emphasizes macroeconomic management, with a focus on achieving and then maintaining economic stability, without which broader, multi-sector development cannot begin to materialize. The third goal relates to job creation and private sector growth, the fourth goal focuses on human capacity and social development, including expanding access to quality education and healthcare.

The fifth goal – natural resources management and environmental protection – highlights our commitment to play our part to protect our planet through sustainable environmental and natural resources management, she said. The State Counsellor said MSDP Goal 3 demonstrates our commitment to creating a favorable investment and business environment. In line with this commitment, the Myanmar Investment Commission, under its new Chair Union Minister U Thaung Tun, is now reviewing all processes not only within the MIC itself but also within other government agencies, with a view to establishing simple, clear and predictable Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who is in Japan separately received New Komeito Party leader Mr. Yamaguchi Natsuo, Special Envoy of the Government of Japan for National Reconciliation in Myanmar Mr. Yohei Sasakawa, JETRO Chairman and CEO Mr. Hiroyuki Ishige and Mrs. Akie Abe, wife of the PM of Japan, yesterday.

The State Counsellor received a group led by New Komeito Party leader Mr. Yamaguchi Natsuo at Hotel New Otani Tokyo, Tokyo in the morning and discussed promoting bilateral friendship and relations, matters relating to Myanmar’s transition to democracy, economic development and human resources development.

Next, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi received a group led by Special Envoy of the Government of Japan for National Reconciliation in Myanmar Mr. Yohei Sasakawa in the same hotel later in the morning. During the meeting between the State Counsellor and Mr. Yohei Sasakawa, matters relating to the Myanmar peace process, national reconciliation process, progress in eradicating leprosy and constructing schools in Rakhine State were discussed.

Afterwards, the State Counsellor met with JETRO Chairman and CEO Mr. Hiroyuki Ishige in Meiji Kinenkan. In the meeting Mr. Hiroyuki Ishige gave a briefing about the support being given by JETRO to Japanese businesses investing in Myanmar, Japanese companies investing in agriculture, forest and aquatic sectors of Myanmar where there are many good prospects. Of the close to 100 businesses in the Thilawa Economic Zone that created over 10,000 jobs, more than half are from Japan. Due to the enactment of a new investment law in Myanmar, it has become easier to invest in Myanmar and the investment amount from Japan has reached record levels in 2017.

They also discussed about Japan and Myanmar at the moment cooperating to plant Japonica rice in Myanmar and to export to a third country and of making more efforts towards putting in more investment in Myanmar as she has good prospects in the Asia region.

Present at the meetings were Union Ministers U Thaung Tun and U Kyaw Tin, Deputy Ministers U Min Thu and U Set Aung, Myanmar Ambassador to Japan U Thurein Thant Zin, Ambassador of Japan to Myanmar Mr. Ichiro Maruyama and officials. Later in the evening, the State Counsellor received Mrs. Akie Abe, wife of the Japanese PM, at Hotel New Otani Tokyo, in Tokyo. — MNA

Rakhine State issue

In order to handle the Rakhine issue, peaceful coexistence through diversity will be implemented. However, if mind-sets and perspectives remain the same as when the conflicts and tension occurred, we will not be able to resolve these issues. Thus, the issue should be addressed with a new approach, taking into consideration regional and international perspectives, in accordance with 21st century globalisation. We will only be able to overcome the unfair challenges and pressures with the unity of our citizens.

(Excerpt from the report on the current work of the Union Government, delivered at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 19 September 2018)
The 53rd Meeting of ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (ASEAN-COCI) organizing steering committee’s coordination meeting was held at the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The coordination meeting was attended by Permanent Secretaries, Directors-General, Rectors, Deputy Directors-General, Pro Rectors and officials from Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Home Affairs, and Ministry of Health and Sports.

At the meeting, 53rd ASEAN-COCI Meeting organizing steering committee chairman Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko said the 53rd meeting will be held in Myanmar in November and the meeting will be attended by representatives from ASEAN countries. The coordination meeting of the 53rd ASEAN-COCI Meeting organizing steering committee was held in order to successfully hold the 53rd ASEAN-COCI Meeting, said the Union Minister.

The upcoming ASEAN-COCI meeting is held under the framework of ASEAN Charter and is alternatively hosted by ASEAN member countries. The 53rd ASEAN-COCI Meeting hosted by Myanmar will be held from 12 to 16 November. All related ministries are urged to work together towards successfully hosting the meeting, said the Union Minister.

In addition to nurturing mutual understanding and unity among ASEAN citizens and to successfully establish an ASEAN community in 2025, ASEAN-COCI is striving toward effectively increase cooperation in culture and information sector among ASEAN countries by drawing up projects and implementing work processes.

That is why departmental officials who took up responsibilities in each sub-committees need to work together towards the successful holding of the 53rd ASEAN-COCI Meeting and are invited to discuss and make suggestions, said theUnion Minister.

Afterwards, meeting organizing work committee chairman Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture Permanent Secretary U Htun Ohn, organizing work committee deputy chairperson National University of Arts and Culture (Mandalay) Rector Prof. Daw Khin Kyi Pyar and Myanmar Radio and Television Deputy Director-General U Myo Myint Aung attending on behalf of meeting organizing work committee deputy chairman Myanmar Radio and Television Director-General explained about sub-committees formed, preparation works conducted and future works to be done for the successful holding of 53rd ASEAN-COCI. Afterwards, the chairmen and officials of the sub-committees explained about sub-committee-wise work processes. Organizing Steering Committee Chairman Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko coordinated on the discussions made and concluded the meeting after delivering a closing speech.

After becoming a member of ASEAN in 1997, Myanmar had hosted 35th ASEAN-COCI Meeting in Yangon in 2000 and 43rd ASEAN-COCI Meeting in Nay Pyi Taw in 2008 with Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture chairing the meetings.

Myanmar is hosting the 53rd ASEAN-COCI Meeting from 12 to 16 November 2018 in Nay Pyi Taw and the meeting will be beneficial in implementing cooperation and communication projects to increase awareness of ASEAN, establishing positive views on ASEAN and increasing the holding of culture and art shows, it is learnt. —MNA

Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe attends opening ceremony of Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory

UNION Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe attended an opening ceremony of Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory at 1000-bed General Hospital in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Speaking at the ceremony, Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe said cardiac related diseases are not like any other diseases as without timely and systematic treatment, patients can lose their lives. Hence, the opening of Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory and treating cardiovascular diseases is an important occasion because it will bring huge benefits to the people. He then thanked and put on record the efforts of the superintendent, doctors, nurses, technicians and staffs of 1000-bed Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital, specialists and officials from Yangon General Hospital, University of Medicine (Mandalay) and North Okkalapa General Hospital.

The Union Minister also told of the requirement to train next generation doctors, nurses and experts to use and maintain the equipment and machinery in the laboratory. A training room full of learning aids should be established in Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital to conduct medical subject training and the ministry will provide the necessary support. He said contact should be established with international universities and organisations for further development of Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital and all should think out of the box and work toward for both short term gain and long term gains. Next, hospital superintendent Dr. Pa Pa explained about establishing the Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory.

Afterwards the Union Minister, Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Tin Htun, Ministry of Health and Sports Permanent Secretary Dr. Thet Khaing Win and officials cut the ceremonial ribbon to open the Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory. They then toured the laboratory and encouraged patients in cardiac intensive care unit.

Cardiac catheterization machine was established at a cost of Ks 1.44 billion on 30 September and 8 cardiovascular disease patients had been successfully operated with the machine on 4 and 5 October it is learnt. —MNA
State Counsellor calls for Japanese Investment

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She said there is anticipation that this exercise will contribute to the development of a single window system for use by all investors and businesses who may or may not be registered under the MIC.

The State Counsellor was pleased to say that a single window system is already in use at the Thilawa Special Economic Zone and that it provides a strong and positive precedent. She said Thilawa is the great success story of cooperation between Myanmar and Japan. She hopes it will be seen as an indication of future possibilities. It makes us confident that the roll out of similar systems elsewhere, starting with the MIC, should not be too difficult, she said.

The State Counsellor gave an example of a next step, which will involve migrating many existing manual processes online so that investors do not even need to come to a physical single window to have their needs addressed. One excellent example of such a system already in use is the MyCo system used by our Directorate for Investment and Companies Administration, she said. MyCo is an electronic registration system through which companies can now be incorporated online without needing to be physically present at the registrar’s office. This is the type of progress we are now focused on, and replicating and expanding.

The State Counsellor expressed her personal and sincere appreciation to the Government of Japan and to JICA for their instrumental support towards the development of the Myanmar Investment Promotion Plan, which will promote even greater foreign direct investment in Myanmar, and which will play a significant role in supporting the Myanmar Japan Joint Initiative (MJJI) programme, in part by identifying, and then resolving, impediments faced by investors, and providing further policy recommendations. She also thanked JICA for being very careful in coordinating their work to our development aims. It is very important that we should all coordinate and cooperate if we are to make the fastest progress possible in a country that has fallen behind others in our region, she said. She said Myanmar has the advantages of the late comer in the sense that there is much to learn from the mistakes as well as the successes of others who have gone before us.

The State Counsellor said further policy recommendations will assist us in creating an enabling environment that will enhance opportunities for the ability of our Japanese investors to do business in Myanmar comfortably, efficiently, and in a predictable and transparent manner, underpinned by the Agreement on Liberalisation, Promotion and Protection of Investment signed between our two governments. The Agreement ensures an easy entry into a wide range of economic sectors as well as protection and security for Japanese investments.

She said another success story which highlights the type of positive partnership that can be achieved between our respective public and private sectors is the Thilawa SEZ. The State Counsellor said, as she mentioned earlier, that we are very proud of the successful example of Japanese-Myanmar cooperation. Thilawa SEZ has become a crowning success in a very short period of time, receiving a total investment of USD 1.491 billion, a figure which reflects the dollar value of those investments actually entering the economy. Investors from countries such as Japan, the United States, Germany, France, Sweden, Australia, China, India, Singapore, Thailand and Taiwan have each invested in the Thilawa SEZ, with many more investors eager to invest in Zone B of the SEZ.

The State Counsellor said that to assist investors in the process of identifying infrastructure priorities in a more strategic, transparent and open manner, we are developing a Project Bank, that is to say: a rolling databank consisting of major, transformative projects that have been screened, appraised and prioritized such that they are ready for implementation with the most appropriate source of financing, be it from the government budget, development assistance or even private sector financing by way of Private-Public-Partnership (PPP) mechanisms.

The opening of Myanmar’s markets is now in full swing, she said. In what has been referred to as Southeast Asia’s final frontier market, investment opportunities are everywhere in the country. Some are plain to see, others are waiting to be found.

The Government of Myanmar is wholly committed to a continued improvement in Myanmar’s investment environment. All we ask of our investors is that they ensure that their investments are responsible by incorporating environmental, social and governance factors (ESG in short) in their enterprises.

She said it is also important that the rights of stakeholders, including employees through the creation of fair and favorable working conditions are prioritized as part of this responsible investment approach. She said Myanmar’s long close relationship with Japan has left no doubt as to Japan’s capacity for ensuring responsible investment in Myanmar. We welcome your investment with enthusiasm and confidence, she said.

The State Counsellor was also pleased to inform that both business people and tourists from Japan can now enjoy visa free access to Myanmar. She invited them to visit and soak up an atmosphere brimming with opportunities and witness the newfound economic vibrancy with your own eyes.

If you have concerns or worries, please discuss this openly with us and please keep an open mind. Unless you keep an open mind, you will not be able to see what the true situation is like.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi observes a silk loom and silk cocoon display at the Myanmar Silk Promotion Event held at the ASEAN-Japan Centre yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi poses a documentary photo with attendees at the Myanmar Investment Conference in Japan. PHOTO: MNA
100 years old cameras to be exhibited in Yangon

A PRIVATE collector will exhibit 150 antique cameras from 19 to 21 October in Yangon Gallery.

“This is the first antique camera exhibition in Myanmar. At the exhibition, we will display 150 cameras out of 500 cameras that we had collected. Some cameras on exhibition will be more than a hundred years old. Pictures of the cameras that we could not display will be shown. The exhibition may not be complete but we will shown the best we can,” said U Kyaw Thet Min the organizer of the exhibition, said the press conference at the Orchard Hotel in Yangon on 7th October.

“Actually I would like to show the cameras I collected in a small museum but there is difficulty to find even a small place in Yangon. It wouldn’t be easy. That is why I’m holding this exhibition to show the cameras and for interested people to observe them,” he added.

At the exhibition, about 150 cameras will be showcased including cameras used circa 1900. The event organizer starts collecting the cameras 15 to 16 years ago. To date he collected over 500 cameras of over 40 different types. The three-day exhibition will exhibit the history of the cameras, cameras collected yearly, photos of rare ancient cameras and other knowledge about cameras, it is learnt.— Thi Thi Min

Ancient engraving can be explored at Kyay Myin Monastery in Mandalay

Kyay Myin Monastery donated by King Mindon’s queen is featuring ancient engraving arts and those enjoying historical site can explore its finest ancient works and unique arts. The monastery’s roof is three-tiered and engraving works on the entrance stairs are impressively featured. Wooden columns traditionally carved can be seen. The visitors can also explore the antique furniture such as bronze bed, old lamps, cupboards. It is famous for its unique arts in the original owner was the Yandabo Ywarsar (a village-head entitled to a portion of revenue of the village) but it was restored by King Mindon’s queen.

Kyay Myin Monastery is located on 62nd Street and the entrance is at the end of a narrow lane off the street.

—Taintaman

Plastic factory fire losses set at K80 million

A FIRE broke out at a plastic factory in the Shweihnban Industry Zone in Yangon on 7 October morning.

The fire started at 7:40 am and was put under control by firefighters after one hour, according to the Department of Fire Services.

“The plastic factory owned by U Zeyar Min is closed at night. On 6 October evening, a driver of the factory switched on an electric pot to boil water but he forgot to switch off. After work, all main switches were shut down. When all main switches were up at 6 am next morning, the electric pot was overheated and caused the fire spreading to nearby chemicals and plastic pellets,” said a firefighter.

The fire destroyed a steel structure building and 500 bags of plastic pellet, leave losses amounting to K80.5 million.

The Department of Fire Services and 43 fire engines together with 38 supporting vehicles were used to put down the fire. A case was opened against Ko Soe Min Aye, 26-year-old driver of the factory, at the Hlithethaing Myoma Police Station. The Department of Fire Services and 47 fire engines together with 19 other supporting vehicles were used to put down the blaze. — GNLM
Cotton price hits high of Ks1,750 per viss

COTTON price hit its highest level reaching Ks1,750 per viss in past 20 days increasing from Ks1,250, according to the cotton growers in Monywa.

The pre-monsoon cotton price has been spirally upward since 20 days ago and reached peak yesterday due to higher demand from China.

Farmers collect cotton. PHOTO: AFP

The pre-monsoon cotton are planted in March before the rainy season and harvested in July.

“The prevailing cotton price is Ks1,600 per viss for those cotton that has moisture content due to rain. The dried cotton fetches higher price. The global cotton price is around Ks5,000-6,000 per viss. Therefore, cotton price is likely to remain on the high side. It can receive Ks1,500 per viss when there is an excess supply in the market during harvest season”, said U Tun, a cotton grower.

Insect-protected cotton seeds imported from India are distributed among local growers.

The corn yield average of 1,000 viss per acre with irrigation water and from 400 to 700 viss from rain-fed field.

A grower can earn K1.6 million from per acre yield of cotton from a farmland with irrigation if it is calculated with current market price.

The cultivation cost is around Ks400,000 per acre, said the growers.

“China is main buyer of Myanmar’s cotton. China re-exported Myanmar’s cotton to Viet Nam and Hong Kong. However, we cannot be solely reliant on single market. We have joined hands with India’s merchants. India offers price depending on global cotton price. Meanwhile, China offers lower than actual price and it often manipulates the market with non-competitive practices whenever there is another buyer country. Cotton price is possibly around Ks1,500 per viss. If moisture content will become higher due to unseasonal torrential rain, it might drop to Ks1,300”, said U Than Tun, Sagaing Region agriculture expert. —Myo Win Tun (Monywa)

Myanmar’s fruit exporters face difficulties with China’s quality inspections

DESPITE China’s demand for Myanmar’s fruits, Myanmar still has not received approval from food safety inspection mechanism the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) of the People’s Republic of China for imported fruits and Myanmar’s exporters are experiencing hardship in export, according to Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producer and Exporter Association (MFVP).

There is China’s demand for Myanmar’s Sein Ta Lone mango (Diamond Solitaire), avocado and muskmelon.

“Without AQSIQ’s registration, Myanmar cannot export the fruits legally. Seeking AQSIQ process can be made between the two governments. The AQSIQ’s approval is crucial in exporting the fruits through legal trade channel”, said Dr. Myint Sein, vice chair of MFVP.

Elephant foot yam and cardamom were previously restricted for export as they were included in the list of forest products. Now, the restriction has been lifted and they are available for export. Traders from China and Canada showed their interest in them, MFVP stated.

MFVP showcased their products at 15th China-ASEAN Expo held in Nanning city. They also offered to buy dried Kayan chilli.

Nevertheless, Myanmar cannot seek China’s AQSIQ registration. Therefore, MFVP called for government to government discussion for this between the two countries. Additionally, he also requested to set respective zone areas for each vegetable to produce quality vegetables and fulfill the market’s demand. —Minhtut / Ko Htet

Farmers check the Myanmar’s mangoes and fruits at Muse 105 mile check-point. FILE PHOTO: THAN TIN (MUSE)

930 acres of forests to be established in 17 townships in arid zone this FY

DRY Zone Greening Department in Sagaing Region said it is working to establish 930 acres of forest plantations in 17 townships in four districts in the region in the present 2018-2019 fiscal year.

To conserve the natural environment, four different species of plants, which are suitable for the region, will be included in the plantations to be developed in Shwebo, Monywa, Sagaing and Ywnminhla districts that are located in the country’s dry zone. The new forest plantations will cover 930 acres of village supply plantations, 230 acres of watershed plantations and 70 acres of other plantations.

U Ba Lwin Oo, director of the department, elaborated on the benefits of trees that leaves of trees release water into the atmosphere and bring rain to the region and big trees are better than bushes and hedges to cause rain. This is why the department targets to mainly develop green trees in the dry areas that will reduce heat and help cool the environment. —Win Oo (Zeya Taing)

Farmer collecting cotton. PHOTO: AFP

Manager check the Myanmar’s mangoes and fruits at Muse 105 mile check-point. FILE PHOTO: THANT ZIN (MUSE)
In fact, we cannot achieve our aspirated goal without changing the mindset and habits of the people, government employees, and civil servants which is the most important and hardest part of the transition process.

Myanmar: Boosting productivity key to fostering economic development

By Dr. Maung Aung

GENERALLY, a country’s economic development can be basically divided into agricultural, industrial, service, and tourism sectors, which are components of the private sector. GDP is a very telling indicator of economic progress. In general, if a country’s GDP has a high ratio of agriculture, it can be regarded as a developing country. But if a country’s GDP has maintained a high ratio in the service sector, we can regard it as a rich developed country. It is because the service sector makes a higher contribution to GDP as developed countries than the industrial and agricultural sectors.

The service sector is one of the main sources that earn foreign currency. Service industries include the tourism industry, real estate services for foreigners, transportation, banking, insurance, technology, tourism-related healthcare services, foreign firms, people who work for international agencies, and e-commerce and those who are working in foreign companies. Out of many service export industries in the countries, related measures have been taken to set up the National Export Strategy that includes tourism industry aiming to promote nature-based tourism and adventure tourism. Myanmar is the largest mainland country in the South-East Asia region that has different geographical features, mountains, unexplored areas along the countries, rivers, lakes situated on highlands, different ethnic tribes, customs and architectural styles and so on. That’s why Myanmar is listed as one of the most amazing nations with promising tourism destinations in the world. In order to promote the tourism industry, arrangements have been made to emerge into the world market. Karunaratne had also stated the same rules including show money cases and to abolish arrivals and departure cards, aiming to facilitate the tourism industry. The Myanmar tourism industry has been expected to attract tourists to enter the country through airlines and waterways. As a result, it is found that a huge number of tourists from many countries including Thailand, China, and India are visiting through the border gates.

Challenges

In the case of mass tourism, Myanmar’s tourism boom is set to slow down due to false news and instability in Rakhine State, which can potentially hamper the tourism industry. In order to improve the tourism sectors, efforts are needed to restore peace and stability, to provide safe environments, smooth transportation and reasonable hotel rates for globetrotters. As for the hosts, they should welcome and treat the tourists with open arms and good hospitality. Cooperation is also needed for to create good environments for tourists to enjoy a safe and pleasant stay in Myanmar.

Developing new service industry

Authorities concerned should try to create new environments in order for tourists to spend more money. It is found that majority of them are in the transportations such Yangon, Mandalay, Bagan, Inle, and the Kyaukmyaung. According to the data on tourist arrivals in Asia, China sees the largest number of tourists, followed by Thailand, which is a major source of foreign currency income, and the country isillness and unemployment. Myanmar has not become a complete democratic country yet. It is a country in its reforms to adopt a suitable democracy system. So, we need all-inclusive measures and efforts of the reform process. As the objectives President U Win Myint explained at his meet- ing with officials, and its government, we can do. In fact, we are the essence of his inaugural speech. As the instructions of the President are the essential needs of the democratic transition, the recent public meeting is a result of those instructions.

"A vital requisite for the smoothness and success of the democratic transition is the change in the mindsets and habits of the people, government employees and civil servants. Tighter management is a mandatory for departments which is left behind in the reform process, whereas the judicial sector must be strengthened. We must combat corruption and protect human rights, eradicates more of political torture. We need proper management and system to prevent loss of public funds. There must be a systematic process to return the illegally seized land to the owners or provide them with compensations, said the President.

We are effective in realizing some of the democratic reforms that deserve recognition and praise. We also need substantial improvement in driving away those out-date ways and thoughts, and anyone who sticks to them must be removed or dismissed.

We believe that our reform process is in its current way under the guidance of the President. As the reforms are towards the goal of the country we all must partake in them out of our own will. Only then will we be able to accelerate our pace towards a peaceful and developed democratic state.
State Counsellor calls for Japanese Investment

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She said that as we move our business-to-business engagement forward, we will also promote our people-to-people relationship which is founded on a deep, steadfast and mutually beneficial friendship that brings peoples and business together for the benefit of all.

In her final remarks, the State Counsellor said that as between friends, she was ready to acknowledge that Myanmar has challenges to face, particularly with regard to the Rakhine and with the struggles Myanmar has on the peace front. She said we are aware of the difficulties, we are not hiding this fact from our friends but we are confident that if we stand firm in the interest of all who live within our frontiers and who are all dependent on Myanmar for their security and their prosperity, we shall not fail to go forward. Peace and prosperity go together, we cannot have one without the other, she said. She said we understand that peace, reconciliation, harmony, stability, rule of law, human rights—all these have to be taken into consideration when we are looking for more investors, for greater economic opportunities, and when we are looking to our friends to come and join us in our economic ventures. It is not simply an economic venture; it’s a national venture which incorporates many, many strands—social, economic, political, she said. The State Counsellor expressed her wish to be very open and transparent with our friends. She requested that if there were any concerns or worries, to please discuss openly with us and to please keep an open mind. Unless you keep an open mind, you will not be able to see what the true situation is like, she said. She continued, saying, and while we are prepared to discuss openly with you, I think it is also important that you are prepared to listen and to consider seriously in what way we can work together not just to make bilateral trade and investment relations between Japan and Myanmar better but to improve relations between our two peoples, and to contribute better relations throughout the world.

The State Counsellor then took a documentary photo with all in attendance. The conference was attended by more than 400 Japanese business owners, Myanmar business owners and invited guests.

JETRO is supported by the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and works to promote mutual trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world, and has a branch office opened in Myanmar.

JETRO was first established under the name Japan Export Trade Research Organization in Osaka in 1952, with the initial aim to consolidate Japan’s efforts in export promotion. Later, JETRO’s role shifted to encompass more varied activities such as furthering understanding with trade partner countries, promoting imports and exports, creating markets for small and medium enterprises, supporting foreign investors to Japan and to Japanese investors investing in foreign countries.

JETRO has 75 offices around the world, which include 27 in Asia, 2 in the Pacific Region, 8 in North America, 9 in South and the Mid-American Region, 14 in Europe, 3 in Russia, 5 in the Middle East, and 7 in the African Region. Later at night, the State Counsellor attended a banquet dinner hosted by Japanese Prime Minister Mr. Shizo Abe.
Pompeo says Kim ‘ready’ to invite inspectors to nuclear site

SEOUL (South Korea) — International inspectors will be allowed into North Korea’s dismantled nuclear testing site, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Monday, after a meeting with Kim Jong Un in which he said “significant progress” was made towards denuclearisation.

Pompeo met with the North Korean leader in Pyongyang on Sunday to rekindle stalled denuclearisation talks following a landmark summit between Kim and US President Donald Trump in Singapore.

“Chairman Kim said he’s ready to allow them to come in” to see the dismantled Punggye-ri nuclear test site, Pompeo said.

North Korea took apart the Punggye-ri facility in the country’s northeast in May but has yet to allow international observers into the site to verify its claims.

The facility, buried inside a mountain near the border with China, was the staging ground for all six of the North’s nuclear tests.

Venezuela says Colombia’s president shielding Maduro’s attackers

CARACAS (Venezuela) — Venezuela kept up its war of words on neighbour Colombia on Sunday, saying its president Ivan Duque was shielding the authors of an alleged attempt to assassinate its president Nicolas Maduro.

Duque had on Friday rejected statements by Maduro who referred to Duque as a “devil who hates Venezuela”. He accused the right-wing Colombian leader of “conspiring daily” against his socialist government and its armed forces.

Since his arrival in power on 7 August, Duque has continued to call for international pressure against the Maduro government, and joined his predecessor Juan Manuel Santos in calling it a “dictatorship.”

Maduro accused Santos of being behind the explosion of two drones that disrupted the Venezuelan president’s speech to an 4 August Caracas military parade.

Duque had rejected Maduro’s demand that Colombia extradite the exiled former Venezuelan parliament speaker Julio Borges, who he accuses of participating in the drone attack.

Colombia has taken in more than half the 1.9 million refugees the United Nations says have fled Venezuela since 2015 as the collapse of the economy — under an increasingly authoritarian Maduro — led to dire shortages of food and medicine. — AFP

US needs answers on Saudi journalist: Washington Post

WASHINGTON (United States) — The United States should “demand answers” from Saudi Arabia about the disappearance and alleged killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

“The United States must make a concerted effort to determine all the facts about Mr Khashoggi’s disappearance,” the Post said.

Khashoggi, a contributor to the Post who has been critical of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, vanished after an appointment with Saudi officials on Tuesday at the consulate in Istanbul. A Turkish government source has said that police believe the journalist was murdered — a claim denied by Riyadh.

“Mr Khashoggi’s whereabouts. ‘If the crown prince does not respond with full cooperation, Congress must, as a first step, suspend all military cooperation with the kingdom,’ ” the Post said.

Russia wins 1st round Brazil vote: exit poll

RIO DE JANEIRO (Brazil) — An exit poll after the first round of presidential elections in Brazil on Sunday suggested the far-right favorite, Jair Bolsonaro, won 45 per cent of votes to 28 per cent for his nearest rival, former President Fernando Haddad. — AFP

China says former Interpol chief accepted bribes

BEIJING (China) — The former Chinese head of Interpol, who went missing last month, has been placed under investigation for accepting bribes, China’s public security ministry said on Monday.

Meng Hongwei, who resigned on Sunday, “accepted bribes and is suspected of violating the law”, the ministry said in a statement, adding that any others who took bribes would be investigated. — AFP

20 killed in New York state two-car crash

NEW YORK (United States) — Twenty people have been killed in a two-car crash in New York state, police said, with local media reporting that one of vehicles slammed into a crowd of pedestrians at a country store.

Police said the accident occurred at Saturday when two cars collided in Schoharie County, near the state capital, Albany.

The Albany Times Union cited police as saying a SUV-style stretch limousine involved in the collision sped down a hill, crushing into pedestrians outside the Apple Barrel Country Store and Cafe. — AFP

Brief in News
Japan, Viet Nam agree on cooperation to secure peace in S China Sea

TOKYO — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his Vietnamese counterpart Nguyen Xuan Phuc agreed Monday to hold a second summit with US President Donald Trump “as early as possible”, following a meeting with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in Pyongyang.

“It comes a day after the North Korean leader agreed to hold a second summit with US President Donald Trump “as early as possible”, following a meeting with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in Pyongyang.

“Separately from the second US-North Korea summit, Chairman Kim Jong Un’s visit to Russia and President Xi Jinping’s visit to North Korea are expected to take place soon,” Moon told a cabinet meeting.

The possibility of a summit between Kim and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is also “open”, Moon said, adding: “A new order is being created from Russia.

Kim and Xi have met three times in China this year as the two countries seek to repair relations frayed by tensions over the North’s nuclear activities and Beijing’s backing of United Nations sanctions against its Cold War-era ally.

The North Korean leader has yet to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has previously invited Kim to Moscow.

Japan has historically taken a hard line on Pyongyang and stressed the need to maintain pressure on the regime. More recently, however, Abe has expressed interest in a face-to-face meeting with former international rival Kim.

The latest chapter in the diplomatic flurry comes as Trump sent Pompeo on a whirlwind trip to the region to rekindle stalled denuclearisation talks with Pyongyang.

Pompeo tweeted on Monday that he was heading to China to work on a “final, fully-verfied” denuclearisation of North Korea.

NEW DELHI — India is pursuing an independent policy and will continue to purchase defence systems from Russia despite Washington’s threats to slap sanctions on New Delhi, Chief of India’s Army Staff Bipin Rawat has said.

“You (Russia) can be rest assured (that) while we may be associating with America in getting some technology, but we follow an independent policy,” Indian media outlets quote Rawat as saying on Monday.

His comments came after the United States warned its allies and partners about the potential sanctions under the Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) following the signing of the Russian-Indian contract on S-400 missile systems supply. Rawat added that India is ready to purchase the Kamov helicopters and other weapon systems from Russia.

The Indian general noted that Russians were keen on associating with the Indian army, because “they do understand that we are a strong army capable of standing up for what is right for us, based on our strategic thought process,” he has been quoted as saying.

A contract for supplying India the cutting-edge air defence missile system S-400 Triumph was signed on Friday during Russian President Vladimir Putin’s visit to India. Under the contract, New Delhi will get five regimental sets of S-400s for $5 billion.

The Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) was signed by US President Donald Trump in August 2017. The Act toughens sanctions on Russia, Iran and North Korea. It also provides for US sanctions against third countries cooperating with Russia’s defence and intelligence sectors. New Delhi hopes Washington will make an exception for it, because it does not want to lose the Indian defence market.

—TASS

India to purchase Russian defence systems despite US threats to slap sanctions

One Indian tourist killed, one seriously injured by gunfire in Bangkok

BANGKOK — One Indian tourist was killed and another was seriously injured following a brief shoot-out in a busy district of Thailand’s capital Bangkok on Sunday night, police said. A few adolescents had opened gunfire on a gang of teenagers from an alley next to a parking lot of Central Watergate Pavilion shopping mall in Pratunam area but it hit the two Indian tourists and three others, said Metropolitan Police One commander Pol Maj Gen Sutthiporn Samranthumkrit.

The unidentified young men were believed to arm themselves with AK-47 assault rifles and fired on their enemies who were running for cover in the parking lot area. They incidentally killed the 42-year-old male and seriously wounded the 45-year-old male, according to the police general.

Besides, two Thai males and one Lao male were injured by gunfire and rushed to hospitals nearby. The police have launched investigation into the rare street fight with the use of war weapons in Bangkok.

—Xinhua

Kim expected to meet ‘soon’ with leaders of China, Russia

SEOUL (South Korea) — South Korean President Moon Jae-in said on Monday he believed North Korea’s Kim Jong Un would soon meet with the leaders of China and Russia as part of an ongoing diplomatic effort to reduce tensions on the Korean peninsula.

It comes a day after the North Korean leader agreed to hold a second summit with US President Donald Trump “as early as possible”, following a meeting with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in Pyongyang.

“Separately from the second US-North Korea summit, Chairman Kim Jong Un’s visit to Russia and President Xi Jinping’s visit to North Korea are expected to take place soon,” Moon told a cabinet meeting.

The possibility of a summit between Kim and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is also “open”, Moon said, adding: “A new order is being created from Russia.

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—AFP

Jieun Park

A contract for supplying S-400 air defence missile systems to India was signed on 5 October.
UN experts warn time is running out to avert global climate chaos

INCHEON (South Korea) — Avoiding global climate chaos will require a major transformation of society and the world economy that is “unprecedented in scale,” the UN said on Monday in a landmark report that warns time is running out to avert disaster.

Earth’s surface has warmed one degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit) — enough to lift oceans and unleash a crescendo of deadly storms, floods and droughts — and is on track toward an unlivable 3C or 4C rise.

At current levels of greenhouse gas emissions, we could pass the 1.5C marker as early as 2030, and no later than mid-century, the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) reported with “high confidence.”

“The next few years are probably the most important in human history,” said Debra Roberts, head of the Environmental Planning and Climate Protection Department in Durban, South Africa, and an IPCC co-chair, told AFP.

A Summary for Policymakers of the 400-page tome underscores how quickly global warming has outstripped humanity’s attempt to tame it, and outlines paradigm-shift options for avoiding the worst ravages of a climate-adjutted future. Before the Paris Agreement was inked in 2015, nearly a decade of scientific research rested on the assumption that 2C was the guardrail for a climate-safe world.

The IPCC report, however, shows that global warming impacts have come sooner and hit harder than predicted.

Pay now or pay later

“Things that scientists have been saying would happen faster in the future are happening now,” Jennifer Morgan, Executive Director of Greenpeace International, told AFP. To have at least a 50/50 chance of staying under the 1.5C cap without overshooting the mark, the world must, by 2030, become “carbon neutral,” according to the report.

“That means every tonne of CO2 we put into the atmosphere will have to be balanced by a tonne of CO2 taken out,” said lead coordinating author Myles Allen, head of the University of Oxford’s Climate Research Programme.

Drawing from more than 6,000 recent scientific studies, the report laid out four “illustrative” pathways to that goal. The most ambitious would see a radical drawdown in energy consumption coupled with a rapid shift away from fossil fuels and a swift decline in CO2 emissions starting in 2020. It would also avoid an “overshoot” of the 1.5C threshold.

A contrasting “pay later” scenario compensates for a high-consumption lifestyles and continued use of fossil fuels with a temporary breaching of the 1.5C ceiling. It depends heavily on the use of biofuels. But the scheme would need to plant an area twice the size of India in biofuel crops, and assumes that some 1.200 billion tonnes of CO2 — 30 years’ worth of emissions at current rates — can be safely sucked away underground. “Is it fair for the next generation to pay to take the CO2 out of the atmosphere that we are now putting into it?”, asked Allen. “We have to start having that debate.”

‘Hail of silver bullets’

The stakes are especially high for small island states, developing nations in the tropics, and countries with densely-populated delta regions already suffering from rising seas.

“We have only the slimmest of opportunities remaining to avoid the unthinkable damage to the climate system that supports life as we know it,” said Amjad Abdulla, chief negotiator at UN climate talks for the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). “Historians will look back at these findings as one of the defining moments in the course of human affairs.” — AFP

UN warns paradigm shift needed to avert global climate chaos

WASHINGTON — The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) said on Monday that a study commissioned by the EPA found that the world’s top carbon emitter, China, has met its goal of reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

China has pledged to peak carbon dioxide emissions by 2030 and achieve a carbon neutral future by 2060, according to the EPA.

The study, conducted by the NREL, found that China has met its goal of reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 2020.

China’s emissions have decreased significantly since 2012, the EPA said, thanks to a combination of policies and economic growth.

The study also found that China’s emissions are projected to continue to decline, with a 3% decrease expected by 2025 and a 10% decrease by 2030.

The EPA said the results are encouraging, given that China’s emissions are responsible for 25% of the world’s total carbon dioxide emissions.

US cruise ship captain on trial over French pollution charges

Marseille — The US captain of a massive cruise ship faces trial in Marseille on Monday accused of using fuel with sulphur levels above European limits, as the Mediterranean port city grapples with the polluting effect of its drive to increase boat tourism.

The Azura, capable of carrying more than 3,000 passengers, is one of the largest in the fleet operated by P&O Cruises, whose parent company Carnival is also being charged.

Prosecutors in Marseille say it is the first time pollution charges have been lodged against a ship’s captain on France’s Mediterranean coast.

The city has wrestled with increased smog in recent years, as it seeks to attract more lucrative cruise tourism.

Authorities say shipping could be responsible for 10 to 20 per cent of the damaging particulate matter in Marseille’s air, which can cause respiratory problems and lung disease.

A spot check onboard the Azura in March found it was burning bunker fuel containing 1.68 per cent sulphur; above the 0.5 per cent limit. High-sulphur fuel, which is cheaper than cleaner versions, produces sulphur oxides which contribute to acid rain and the acidification of oceans.

The ship’s 58-year-old captain, whose name has not been disclosed, faces up to one year in prison and a 200,000 euro ($230,000) fine.

The southern French city of Marseille has been wrestling with growing air pollution as it seeks more of the lucrative cruise tourism business. — AFP

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The southern French city of Marseille has been wrestling with growing air pollution as it seeks more of the lucrative cruise tourism business. — AFP
Taylor Swift — shown performing in Houston, Texas on 29 September, 2018 — has come out against her Republican congresswoman, Marsha Blackburn.

WASHINGTON — Pop star Taylor Swift is not really known for making political statements, but the “Bad Blood” singer is no longer holding back ahead of the midterm elections in November.

In a lengthy post on Instagram, where she has 112 million followers, the 28-year-old Swift says while she has been “reluctant” to share her political views in the past, she has changed her mind.

She endorsed the Democrat running for the US Senate in her home state of Tennessee, and unleashed a fierce attack on his opponent, Republican Marsha Blackburn, who currently serves in the House.

“As much as I have in the past and would like to continue voting for women in office, I cannot support Marsha Blackburn. Her voting record in Congress appalls and terrifies me,” Swift said.

“She voted against equal pay for women. She voted against the Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, which attempts to protect women from domestic violence, stalking, and date rape.”

Last year, Swift won a lawsuit against a former radio DJ she accused of groping her.

Blackburn “believes businesses have a right to refuse service to gay couples. She also believes they should not have the right to marry,” Swift added.

“These are not MY Tennessee values. I will be voting for Phil Bredesen for Senate and Jim Cooper for House of Representatives.”

She urged her fans to register to vote, saying: “Please, please educate yourself on the candidates running in your state and vote based on who most closely represents your values.

“For a lot of us, we may never find a candidate or party with whom we agree 100% on every issue, but we have to vote anyway.”

Instead of #MeToo, it should be #YouToo for men: Shilpa

MUMBAI — Actor Shilpa Shetty on Sunday said it is time women spoke about their harassment but not under the hashtag ‘MeToo’ but ‘YouToo’ as it is the men who are at fault. Shilpa applauded Tanushree Dutta for speaking up about the alleged harassment she faced from Nana Patekar on a film’s set ten years ago and said it has kick-started a movement.

“In any milieu, actors, entrepreneurs, the working environment should feel safe. That should be a prerequisite. This entire movement which has been initiated by Tanushree Dutta, my heart goes out to her, as a woman and on a human level because something like this was brushed under the carpet,” Shilpa told PTI.

Patekar has denied the allegations of sexual harassment.

Shilpa said women should not feel weak or blame themselves and should rather be strong today. “We don’t know the nitty gritties of the goings on but it has kick-started a movement. People have suffered. It’s time women wake up and take charge. It shouldn’t be hashtag MeToo, it should be YouToo, for the men. It shouldn’t be the women, cowering down and saying oh #MeToo,” she added. Shilpa was speaking at the Skechers Mumbai Walkathon here.

The actor said she always believed in staying fit and going to the gym at a time when even her contemporaries were not into it.

“When I entered the industry back in the day, nobody was into fitness as much. They were into looking good. I don’t think any heroines also went to the gym 25 years ago, I used to be one of those who used to go! It started way back and I slowly transitioned from an actor to wanting to become a health enthusiast.”

Shilpa said it was not that because she was an actor that she chose to stay fit and says she was always a fitness enthusiast, thanks to her father.

“If I wasn’t an actor also, I would’ve led my life like this, focusing on fitness. Sometimes I feel agitated that I can’t give fitness enough time because there are things to balance and I also have a beautiful family life,” she said.

LOS ANGELES (United States) — Superhero blockbuster “Venom” saved the day at the North American box office this weekend, pulling in an estimated $80 million in ticket sales, industry tracker Exhibitor Relations reported on Sunday.

The first movie in Sony’s Marvel Universe, it stars Tom Hardy as a journalist who becomes the host for an alien symbiote that gives him superpowers as the popular “Spider-Man” character.

“Venom” was panned by critics, but comfortably broke the October opening weekend record by over $20 million, according to Box Office Mojo figures.

In second was another new release, musical romance “A Star Is Born,” which took in $41.2 million. The third remake of the 1937 film of the same name, it marks the directing debut of Bradley, who stars as a musician who discovers and falls in love with a young singer played by pop superstar Lady Gaga.

Third place went to Warner Bros.’ “Smallfoot,” with earnings of $14.9 million in its second weekend. The comic family animation tells the story of a group of Yetis who come across a human, with voicing by Channing Tatum, LeBron James and Danny DeVito.

Coming in fourth was last weekend’s champion, Universal’s “Night School,” whose earnings dropped nearly $16 million to $12.3 million this weekend.

The raucous comedy stars Kevin Hart as one student in a class of misfits working toward high school diplomas under the firm tutelage of Tiffany Haddish.

Fifth place went to Universal’s family-friendly offering “The House With a Clock In Its Walls,” which slipped from third place last weekend with takings of $7.2 million.

Rounding out this weekend’s top 10 were:


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US ‘green growth’ duo win Nobel Economics Prize

STOCKHOLM — US economists William Nordhaus and Paul Romer on Monday shared the 2018 Nobel Economics Prize for constructing “green growth” models that show how innovation and climate policies can be integrated with economic growth.

Working independently, they have addressed “some of our time’s most basic and pressing questions about how we create long-term sustained and sustainable growth,” the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said in a statement.

Nordhaus is a professor at Yale University. Romer is a former World Bank chief economist now at New York University’s Stern School of Business.

The academy said their models, both developed in the 1990s, have “significantly broadened the scope of economic analysis”.

The prize announcement came as the UN warned in a landmark report that an “unprecedented” transformation of society and the world economy was needed to avoid global climate chaos.

It said time was running out to avert disaster, noting that our planet’s surface has already warmed one degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit).

Romer told the Swedish academy in a live phone interview at the prize announcement that he was confident the world could reduce greenhouse gas emissions and still improve standards of living in the future.

“We can absolutely make substantial progress to protecting the environment, and without giving up the chance for sustained growth,” he said.

“One of the problems with the current situation is that many people think that dealing with protecting the environment will be so costly and so hard that they will ignore the problem and deny it exists,” he said.

“I hope the prize will help people see humans are capable of amazing accomplishments when we try to do something.”

Achieving sustainable growth

The jury said that while Nordhaus and Romer “do not deliver conclusive answers... their findings have brought us considerably closer to answering the question of how we can achieve sustainable and sustainable global economic growth.”

Nordhaus, 77, was specifically honoured for “integrating climate change into long-run macroeconomic analysis.”

His “integrated assessment model” was created in the 1990s and combines theories and empirical results from physics, chemistry and economics.

It is now widely “used to simulate how the economy and climate co-evolve.”

It is used to examine the consequences of climate policy interventions, for example carbon taxes.

Nordhaus’s research shows that the most efficient remedy for problems caused by greenhouse gas emissions is a global scheme of carbon taxes uniformly imposed on all countries.

Countries refusing to take part in the scheme could be subjected to customs tariffs.

The 62-year-old Romer meanwhile won the prize for “integrating technological innovations into long-run macroeconomic analysis.”

Complementing Nordhaus’ research, Romer laid the foundation for “endogenous growth theory”, which explains how ideas are different to other goods and require specific conditions to thrive.

His research demonstrated how economic forces govern the willingness of companies to produce new ideas and innovations.

“They [the laureates] show and they have taught us how the economic situation is dependent on technological development, environmental changes, so they integrate economics with major issues facing mankind,” Goran K. Hansson, secretary general of the Royal Swedish academy for sciences, told AFP.

Romer resigned from the World Bank in January 2018 after raising questions about how the institution was ranking countries.

December 10 ceremony

Both Nordhaus and Romer have been tipped as frontrunners for the Nobel Prize in recent years.

The pair will share the nine million Swedish kronor (about $1.01 million or 860,000-euro) prize.

Last year, the honour went to US economist Richard Thaler, a co-founder of the so-called “nudge” theory.

That theory demonstrates how people can be persuaded to make decisions that leave them healthier and happier.

Unlike the other Nobel prizes which were created in Swedish inventor and philanthropist Alfred Nobel’s will and first awarded in 1901, the economics prize was started by the Swedish central bank in 1968 to mark its tricentenary. It was first awarded in 1969.

The prize, which also consists of a diploma and a gold medal, will be presented at a formal ceremony in Stockholm on 10 December.

The economics prize wraps up the 2018 Nobel awards season, notable this year for the lack of a literature prize.

That award was postponed by a year for the first time in 70 years over a rape scandal that came to light as part of the #MeToo movement.

The awards for medicine and chemistry were announced last week as was the most highly-anticipated Nobel, the peace prize. It went to Yazidi women’s campaigner Nadia Murad and Congolese doctor Denis Mukwege for their work in fighting sexual violence in conflicts around the world. —AFP

China develops lower-limb rehabilitative robot

BEIJING — China has developed a lower-limb rehabilitative robot which will soon be put into clinical use, according to the China Science Daily on Monday.

The robot was developed by Avicrobot, a high-tech company focusing on service robot development and a subsidiary of the Aviation Industry Corporation of China.

According to He Chen, general manager of Avicrobot, this robot integrates aviation technologies with traditional rehabilitation treatment. It can monitor patients in real time, which helps optimize rehabilitation therapy.

It also uses flexible composite materials and 3D printing technology, allowing patients to customize it and use it to sit, stand, and walk. “The robot is about one-fourth cheaper than imported ones,” He said.

The robot has completely independent intellectual property rights including the appearance, the control method, and the software design. —Xinhua

NASA probe on brink of solar system detects cosmic ray increase

WASHINGTON — American space agency NASA’s probe, on a way to interstellar space, detected an increase in cosmic rays that originated outside the solar system, according to NASA’s recent statement.

In May 2012, Voyager 1 experienced an increase in the rate of cosmic rays approximately three months before Voyager 1 crossed the heliopause and entered interstellar space.

However, the increase in cosmic rays is not a definitive sign that the probe is about to cross the heliopause. Voyager 2 is in a different location in the “heliosheath” or the outer region of the heliosphere than Voyager 1 had been, and possible differences in these locations points to the fact that Voyager 2 may experience a different exit timeline than Voyager 1, partly because the heliopause moves inward and outward during the Sun’s 11-year activity cycle. —Xinhua

Funeral Notice

U Sein Maung
Aged 88 years

Hinthar Kyun Village, Yae Sa Kyo Township.

Our beloved father passed away peacefully 29th September, 2018. Family and Friends are invited to attend memorial services scheduled on 6th October, 2018 at Hinthar Kyun Village, Yae Sa Kyo Township, Magwe Division.

Tin Soe (Electrician, Los Angeles)
Yuliana Soe (MD, Los Angeles)
MFF releases lineup for warm-up match against Indonesia

THE Myanmar Football Federation released a lineup of Myanmar national men’s football squad made up by head coach Antoine Hey on 7 October.

Head coach Antoine Hey chose 27 out of 27 players who were intended to be prepared for Suzuki Cup. The opted lineup was aimed at making use of the warm-up match against Indonesia on 10 October.

The players who were ruled out for the match against Indonesia will be in practice session together with Myanmar U-21 men’s football squad.

Striker Aung Thu, a Myanmar football star, who is playing for Thai club Police Tero as loan, is going to join his home team of Myanmar national football squad on 11 October.

The warm-up match against Indonesia will be the second international friendly one for head coach Antoine Hey.

The line up is comprised of Kyaw Zin Htet (goalie) and Hsan Zin Htet (goalie); David Dan (defender), Htike Htike Aung (defender), Win Moe Kyaw (defender), Nanda Kyaw (defender), and Thein Than Win (defender); Hlaing Bo Bo (midfielder), Sithu Aung (midfielder), Ye Ko Oo (midfielder), Myo Ko Tun (midfielder), Myat Maung Khant (midfielder), Than Htet Aung (midfielder), Lwin Moe Aung (midfielder), Maung Maung Soe (midfielder), Maung Maung Lwin (midfielder), and Yan Naing Oo (midfielder); Kaung Hset Naing (forward) and Htet Phyoe Wai (forward). —Htute Htut (Twantay) ■

Li Na says Osaka needs ‘desire’ to go further

SINGAPORE — Chinese tennis great Li Na said US Open champion Naomi Osaka can go on and win multiple Grand Slam titles — if she can find the inner desire to match her physical abilities.

Osaka has admitted feeling burdened by expectations after last month’s stunning victory in New York, saying she puts pressure on herself to “do more, do better”. The 20-year-old world number six was also in tears after her “bittersweet” US Open win, which was marred by Serena Williams’ explosive row by the chair umpire.

“I believe with her abilities and strength, she can win many (Grand Slam titles) — that is if she really has the desire to be a champion,” Li told AFP ahead of the Hong Kong Open.

Osaka, Asia’s second Grand Slam singles champion after Li, has pulled out of the Hong Kong tournament with a back injury.

Williams, 37, brought a halt to her season after the US Open final, where her latest attempt at a record-equalling 24th major title ended in acrimony. But Li, the former French Open and Australian Open winner who retired in 2014, cautioned that it was unwise to judge Williams, who is back on the circuit after becoming a mother last September.

“Looking at the players from the sidelines, we might not really understand some of their psychological goings-on on the court,” said Li. “I’ve always thought she is a very strong player. There are very few players who can give birth and then immediately come back out,” she added.

“For me, it’s really hard to find a balance between family and the tennis court, but she very quickly got into the US Open final.” Li is often credited with igniting tennis interest in Asia and especially in China, but she said the sport still had a long way to go. — AFP ■

Mahrez misses late penalty as Liverpool and Man City share goalless draw

LIVERPOOL (United Kingdom) — Manchester City’s record signing Riyad Mahrez blazed an 86th-minute penalty over the bar to preserve Liverpool’s unbeaten Premier League record as both sides failed to lay down an early marker in the title race with a disappointing 0-0 draw at Anfield.

City remain top of the table on goal difference, but both teams are now locked with Chelsea, who are 3-0 winners earlier at Southampton, on 20 points from eight games.

Unlike the four enthralling encounters between the two last season when Liverpool beat the English champions three times, a highly-anticipated clash proved to be a disappointment with both sides managing to register a shot on target until after the hour mark.

City had the golden chance four minutes from time when substitute Leroy Sane was upended by Virgil van Dijk and referee Martin Atkinson pointed to the spot after waving away two earlier strong appeals from the visitors for a penalty.

With Sergio Aguero replaced on the hour mark, Mahrez, a £60-million ($78.7 million) signing from Leicester in July, took responsibility but fired high over the bar to Liverpool’s relief as City’s wait for a first win at Anfield since 2003 continued.

After starting the season with seven straight wins, though, Liverpool have now failed to win in any of their last four matches as the upcoming international break comes at the right time for Jurgen Klopp’s men.

Pep Guardiola had lost on all three of his previous visits to Anfield as City manager and the champions looked unnerved from their recent experiences early on.

Goal-shy Salah

Ahead of the game, Klopp tried to play down Mohamed Salah’s slump in form after an incredible 44-goal debut season at Anfield.

But the Egyptian again looked far from his best and snatched at the sort of chances he buried last season.

Salah had the first opening after just three minutes when he pulled his shot wide after jinking inside John Stones. That was as clear a chance as there was before half-time as both teams’ exertions during Champions League games in midweek seemed to take their toll in a first 45 minutes lacking the intensity of their meetings from last