Permanent Representative to UN delivers rebuttal statements on reports of Special Rapporteur on Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar, International Fact-finding Mission on Myanmar

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker attends ceremony to donate dry ration to Members of the Sangha in Myawady

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mann Win Khaing Than and wife Daw Nant Kyin Kyi attended a ceremony to donate dry rations including rice and offertories to members of the Sangha in Myawady yesterday.

The ceremony was held at the Shwe Myin Wun Pagoda in Myawady Township, Kayin State, marking the full moon day of Thadingyut and end of the three-month Rain Retreat of Buddhist monks.

First, Myawady District Administrator U Tay Zar Aung, officials, donors and well-wishers offered “soon” (day meal) to monks at the Sasana Beikman building.

Then, a Paravana of rite of members of the Sangha was followed at the ordination hall of Phayar Gyi Monastery.

Next, the Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker and his family donated offertories to 3,079 monks, nuns and novices from 332 monasteries in Myawady District on the platform and passageway of Shwe Myin Wun Pagoda. The regional regiment’s high ranking officers and families, departmental officers and families from districts and townships, political parties, members of the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, social and religious organizations, members of the Myanmar Red Cross Society, members of the local fire brigade, donors and local people also gave offertories.—Htain Lin Aung (IPRD)

People celebrated the end of the three-month Buddhist Rain Retreat on the Thadingyut Full Moon Day yesterday donating offertories to Members of the Sangha and offering lights at pagodas in Nay Pyi Taw. During the daytime, people donated rice to monks and nuns, charity food to pilgrims, recited Dhammacakka, Parittas and Pathana, took the Precepts, and paid respects to elders.

At night, Buddhist devotees offered candle lights at pagodas in Nay Pyi Taw and also enjoyed the Thadingyut festival. —SEE PAGE-3

Abhidhamma Day celebrated at pagodas on Thadingyut Full Moon

Uppatasanti Pagoda marks 10th Abhidhamma Day Ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw
PEOPLE celebrated the end of the Buddhist Rain Retreat, a holy period for Buddhists, on the full moon of Thadingyut yesterday, and pagodas across Myanmar were packed with devotees.

The full moon day of Thadingyut is also the Significant and Noble Day of Abhidhamma Day, marking the day when the Buddha descended from a celestial abode after preaching Abhidhamma (Ultimate Truth) for three months to His deceased mother who was re-born in the celestial abode.

A ceremony to mark the Abhidhamma Day was held at the Shwedagon Pagoda yesterday with several activities since early morning.

At night, 50,000 oil lamps were lighted up by religious associations and devotees at the Shwedagon Pagoda.

Similarly, people celebrated the Abhidhamma Day and the Thadingyut festival at the Sule Pagoda and religious associations will offer 50,000 oil lamps for three days.

Religious associations and people offered lights, food and flowers and recited religious verses celebrating the Abhidhamma Day since early morning yesterday at Maha Wizaya Pagoda, Thiri Mingalar Kaba Aye Pagoda, Shwe Phone Pwint Pagoda and Botataung Pagoda in Yangon.

On this auspicious day, Buddhists perform meritorious deeds at the pagodas and monasteries across the country.

People are enjoying the three-day holiday, visiting pagodas, donating alms to the Members of the Sangha, offering candle lights and paying respects to elders.

Buildings are illuminated at night.—Yi Yi Myint

Buddhist devotees are seen at the Shwedagon Pagoda on the Abhidhamma Day yesterday. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

Monks and novices light candles on the night of the Thadingyut Full Moon at the Shwedagon Pagoda yesterday. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

People take part in a Thadingyut Festival celebration in front of Yangon City Hall. PHOTO: TIN SOE

People take part in a Thadingyut Festival celebration in Yangon. PHOTO: TIN SOE (MYANMA ALINN)
Three objectives of the State Government

(Government Mission)

1. Ensuring the rule of law and promoting socio-economic development;
2. National reconciliation and internal peace; and,
3. Amending the Constitution, which is the basic foundation for building a Democratic Federal Union.

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

Uppatasanti Pagoda marks 10th Abhidhamma Day Ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw

A ceremony was held at the Uppatasanti Pagoda, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday morning for 10th Abhidhamma Day ceremony, the successful conclusion of the 107th non-stop recitation of Pa Htan (Pattana) and the 1st Tripitaka puja ceremony.

Pagoda Ovadacariya Sayadaws and members of the Sanghas led by State Ovadacariya Pyinmana Maha Visutarama Zaygon Monastery Presiding Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maharattha Guru Bhaddanta-ka Vihara, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko and officials offered offertories to the Sayadaw and Sanghas and offered “soon”, a day meal, to the Sanghas reciting Parittas.

As the day was the Full Moon Day of Thadingyut, devotees flock to pagodas in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area and many religious organizations recited Dhammacakka Sutta and chanted religious verses while offering oil lamps before the images of the pagodas. — MNA

Pagodas in Nay Pyi Taw crowded with people on Thadingyut Full Moon Day

FROM PAGE 1

Nine thousand lights festival was held at the Uppatasanti Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area and crowded with pilgrims. The Centenary of the conveyance of the 28 Buddha Images for public obeisance in Pyinmana and the Centenary of the Pyinmana Thadingyut Lights Festival were grandly held around the Shan Kan in Pyinmana Town. Shwe Lat Hla (Yan Aung Myin) Pagoda, Datuasya Pagoda, Sansara Nyein Aye Pagoda, Koe Khan Gyi Pagoda, Maha That Kya YanThi Pagoda and Thatta Thattahama Maha Bodhi Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area are crowded with people at night. — MNA

Monks and people set off a hot air balloon on the night of the Thadingyut full moon day. PHOTO: MNA

Devotees fill the Uppatasanti Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw on full moon day of Thadingyut. PHOTO: MNA

Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko and wife donate an offering to a Sayadaw at the Uppatasanti Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA
Free medical care given at Thandwe People’s Hospital

A medical team led by professors and specialists are providing free medical services at Thandwe People’s Hospital from 23 to 25 October 2018. The free treatment project was jointly conducted by the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Rakhine State Government. The medical team comprising of 30 professors, surgeons and doctors from Yangon Region and 30 staff from Rakhine State Public Health Department performed the free medical care.

The medicines and medical equipment were supported and provided by Rakhine State Government. On 23 October, about 1,500 patients received free medical treatment. Zee Kyaung Thar Construction Company also provided lunch boxes to the patients, said Dr. Kyaw Naing Win, Superintendent of Thandwe District People’s Hospital.

Rakhine State Social Affairs Minister Dr. Chan Thar visited and encouraged the patients while the free treatment were conducted.—Phyo Wai Lin (IPRD)

Customs Department seizes illegal goods in Yaypu, Mayanchaung checkpoints

THE Customs Department has reportedly seized illegal jade stones at Yaypu checkpoint on 23 October. A combined team comprising of officers and staff from the Customs Department stopped two AD Van cars and a Nissan Wingroad car at Yaypu checkpoint and found illegal jade pieces weighing 1,164 kilograms which were hidden beneath boxes of juice and soaps.

The combined team seized a total of Ks 94.2 million worth of illegal jade and the three vehicles, according to Customs Department.

Yaypu and Mayanchaung checkpoints were reopened on 1 March to control illegal goods. On 23 October, Yaypu checkpoint seized the illegal goods worth Ks 94.6 million in seven cases. There were 451 exported vehicles and 305 imported vehicles along Mandalay-Muse Pyidaungsu road on 23 October.—IPRD

CRIME NEWS

Bus overturns in Kyonpyaw, kills one, injures 29

A passenger bus, owned by Pyon Pan Thayar bus line, en route to Yangon from Kyonpyaw and driven by Soe Htet, overturned outside of Kyonpyaw Town yesterday, leaving one dead and 29 passengers injured.

According to investigations, the passenger bus tried to avoid a motorbike coming from the other side of the road and overturned. The bus was damaged badly. A female passenger succumbed to the injuries at the scene while 12 passengers were seriously injured and 17 passengers sustained minor injuries.

At present, they are undergoing medical treatment at Kyonpyaw Hospital.

The reckless driver has been charged under section 304 (A), 338 and 337 of the Penal Code.—Min Zaw Oo (Okyi)
Myanmar imported commodities reported. The Ministry of Commerce bilateral export was over $43 million, increasing by $69.3 million in the fiscal year, topped US$112 million zone over the first 12 days of this year through the Muse 105 mile trade. MYANMAR’S export to China increases by almost $70 million this FY.

Security guards stand near a tanker carrying aviation fuel during the opening ceremony of Puma Energy fuel storage facility at Myanmar International Terminal Thilawa outside Yangon on 6 May 2017. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Puma Energy JV expands $10 mln capital for aviation fuel services in Myanmar

By Nyein Nyein

NATIONAL Energy Puma Aviation Services Company, which is joint venture between Singapore-based Puma Energy and Myanmar Petroleum Products Enterprises under the Ministry of Electricity and Energy, made capital expansion of over US$10.294 million in aviation fuel import, storage and distribution businesses, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

“The government holds more shares in this joint venture”, said U Than Aung Kyaw, Deputy Director-General of DICA.

The company will execute aviation fuel import, storage and distribution business in Thanlyin Liquidified Petroleum Gas terminal. The JV was permitted on 26 March 2016, with a capital of $106.02 million, said U Kyaw Win Tun, Director of DICA.

They need to seek approval from the Ministry of Electricity and Energy, according to DICA.

Previously the Ministry of Electricity and Energy wholly executed aviation fuel import, storage and distribution business and soon after invited foreign investors to set up a JV in 2014.

The foreign direct investments of $31.847 million including expansion of capital flowed into the country during the first two weeks of October, according to figures from DICA.

Six foreign enterprises received endorsements with capital of $17.92 million at the Myanmar Investment Commission meeting (17/2018) held on 12 October. Those foreign enterprises were approved endorsements by Myanmar Investment Commission and the respective investment committees of Yangon and Taninthayi Regions and Kachin State. They are Myanmar Shoe Dynasty Co. Ltd for manufacturing of shoes on Cutting-Making-Packaging basis, Frontier Pte. Ltd for wholesale and retail business on IT products, Mandolis Co. Ltd for bungalow and restaurant services, Myantex Industrial Co. Ltd for CMP garment, L/F Packaging (Myanmar) Ltd for manufacturing and export of rubber-wood sawn timber by using local rubber wood on contract manufacturing process basis, and Kachin Tain Hu Co. Ltd for cultivation, production and exportation of international quality Brazil banana.

The other three existing companies raising their capital are $10.2 million by National Energy Puma Aviation Services Co. Ltd for aviation fuel services, $3 million by Myanmar Recycle Company Limited for manufacturing and sales of waste recycled products and $0.72 million by CMP Myanmar Co. Ltd for manufacturing of all kinds of bag on CMP Basis.

Six-month interim FY sees 130,000 cattle export

MYANMAR exported about 130,000 cattle to neighboring countries through border gates during the six months from April to September 2018, generating revenue of over US$170 million, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

In Muse border gate, the price of a live cow is between Ks1.7 million and Ks2.1 million while live buffalo is sold for between Ks2.1 million and 2.2 million. According to a local farmer, the price of cattle rose after authorities permitted the legal export of live cattle.

At the moment, 400 local cattle, 265 dairy cows, 160 buffalos, 150 goats and 1,128 pigs are raised in Hlinethaya livestock breeding zone. Country wide, over 174,000 buffalo, 700,000 cows, 130,000 goats, 1,400,000 pigs, 48,000,000 chickens and 4,100,000 ducks were raised.

Career fair to be held in Mandalay next month

ORGANIZED by JobNet.com.mm, an online jobs and career website, a career fair is scheduled to take place at Hilton Hotel in Mandalay on 10 November this year, featuring a wide variety of businesses.

About 20 local and foreign companies will be seeking new employees through this event with hundreds of vacancies, including Huawei International telecom company, Coca Cola worldwide beverage company, CDSG a prominent conglomerate, Wall Street and Austin, the education consultancies, KEB Hana microfinance company, Success Property, a real estate management company, and MEGA, one of Myanmar biggest medical products distributor.

The event is expected to help job seekers find out which professions fit their personality.

Last year, around 4,000 job seekers attended the job fair, with the event organizers saying that more job hunters are expected to visit this year’s event.

Currently there are many job opportunities in sales, marketing, travel tourism, IT and banking, according to one businessman. Despite high demands for staff, local companies are experiencing a scarcity of skilled workers as well as a salary negotiation problem with experienced workers, he added.

Interested job seekers from Upper Myanmar may join the fair free of charge. They are urged to bring a curriculum vitae. Registration for the event is available starting on 19 October through www.jobnet.com.mm.

—GNLM

Exports via Muse border increase by almost $70 mln this FY

MYANMAR’S export to China through the Muse 105 mile trade zone over the first 12 days of this fiscal year, topped US$112 million, increasing by $69.3 million from this time last year when the bilateral export was over $43 million, the Ministry of Commerce reported.

Between 1 and 12 October, Myanmar imported commodities from its neighbouring country amounting to $42.9 million, which saw a slight increase in value by $7.8 million in comparison with the same period in the last 2017-2018 FY.

China-Myanmar border trade is conducted mainly through five land border gates, including the Muse, Lwejel, Kanpikote, Chinchaweh and Kengtung gates, in which the Muse gate, the major trading point, sees the largest volume and value in terms of border trade.

During the period, exports and imports from all China-Myanmar border points totalled $168.9 million, involving $2.2 million from Lwejel, $19.3 million from the Chinchaweh, $1.9 million from Kanpikote and $0.017 million from the Kengtung gate.

Usually, Myanmar exports agricultural, marine and forest products, minerals and manufactured goods to China. Eel, crab, watermelon, mango, rice and live cattle are popular items at Sino-Myanmar borders.

The country normally imports consumer goods, raw materials, construction equipment, automobiles, motorbikes and capital goods from the world’s most populous country.

As a top investor, China’s new investment in Myanmar at the end of September this year reached over $300 million from 28 projects. Its investment in the last 2017-2018 FY was $1.35 billion in total.

—Shwe Khine

—GNLM

LOCAL BUSINESS
25 OCTOBER 2018
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Earnings from aviation fuel storage facility at Myanmar International Terminal Thilawa exterior Yangon on 6 May 2017.

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Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations Ambassador U Hau Do Suu delivers rebuttal
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Nay Pyi Taw, 25 October

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THE Third Committee of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly held two special procedure sessions on Myanmar at the UN Headquarters in New York, the United States on 23 October 2018. During the sessions, Ms. Yanghee Lee, Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar and Mr. Marruki Darusman, Chairperson of the Independent International Fact-finding Mission on Myanmar made presentation on their reports respectively. Ambassador U Hau Do Suu, Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations delivered rebuttal statements in response to their briefings.

In response to the Special Rapporteur’s remarks, Permanent Representative Ambassador U Hau Do Suu explained that Myanmar persistently opposes country-specific mandates which run contrary to the principles of non-selectivity and non-politicization in addressing human rights and has all along extended cooperation to the successive special rapporteurs on Myanmar in line with Myanmar’s policy to cooperate with the UN. Although Myanmar hoped that an independent Special Rapporteur would come up with a balanced report, the Special Rapporteur continues her negative and unconstructive criticisms and allegations based on unverified information, neglecting the government’s relentless efforts to bring national reconciliation and peace, rule of law, and sustainable development for the people of Myanmar. The Government wonders whether or not the Special Rapporteur has the genuine desire to help solve the problems.

He added that Myanmar had extended full cooperation to Prof. Lee, allowing her visits to Myanmar 6 times since her assumption of the post in 2014 until December 2017. However, she had gone far beyond her mandate resulting in public resentment against her. The Government, therefore, had no choice, but to have suspended cooperation with her, requesting the UN for replacement of the Special Rapporteur.

The Permanent Representative stressed that in demonstration of its continuing desire to cooperate with the United Nations, Myanmar welcomed the appointment of Secretary-General’s Special Envoy Ms. Christine Schraner Burgener and has already given its consent to opening of her office in Nay Pyi Taw during her first visit to Myanmar. The Government has also facilitated her third visit to Myanmar from 10-20 October, in a period of 5 months since she took up her position in May 2018. In her end of mission statement on 20 October, the Special Envoy highlighted accountability and inclusive dialogue as the two important pillars for national reconciliation in Myanmar. She said ultimately, only peace and genuine political dialogue can address these problems. She stressed the need for patience and more trust building, and offered herself to help advance the peace process toward a “home grown solution”. Myanmar welcomes the statement and fully concurs with her that to find a sustainable answer to the deep rooted, multi-faceted problems of Myanmar, there is no quick fix and require patience, mutual trust and political solution. Forced imposition of external political agenda will only impact negatively on the current complex situation and affect democratic transition process. The Government is also working closely with the United Nations on issues of concerns relating to human rights, particularly with the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and for Sexual Violence in Conflict.

Permanent Representative Ambassador U Hau Do Suu highlighted that the democratification of government of Myanmar is convinced that lasting peace will be possible only when a democratic federal union is established by political means and ending of ethnic strife and armed conflicts is essential to realize this objective. The government of building peace, national reconciliation, security and governance in Myanmar. The Government of Myanmar is now undertaking with high priority, preparation of necessary conducive conditions for the safe, voluntary and dignified repatriation of the people who had fled to Bangladesh. In accord with the bilateral agreements and arrangements with Bangladesh, Myanmar has been ready to receive the first batch of verified returnees since January this year. We welcome recent statement made by Bangladesh Foreign Minister Ali that Bangladesh will repatriate the first batch of 6000 displaced persons in the near future.

During the high level week of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly, an informal meeting was held among China, Myanmar and Bangladesh. The Secretary-General was invited and present at the meeting. The meeting reached a three-point consensus on resolving the issue of displaced persons. As a result of the consensus, the third meeting of the Joint Working Group will be held on 29-30 October in Dhaka.

The Permanent Representative said that the Government highly appreciates the assistance and cooperation rendered by our fellow ASEAN countries and other neighbouring countries including China, India and Japan for the resettlement and rehabilitation of the returnees. Myanmar has been continuing its close cooperation with the UN and also has been implementing 81 out of 88 recommendations submitted by the Advisory Commission.

"Forced imposition of external political agenda will only impact negatively on the current complex situation and affect democratic transition process."

Permanent Representative to UN

"Forced imposition of external political agenda will only impact negatively on the current complex situation and affect democratic transition process."

Permanent Representative to UN

Regarding the accountability in Rakhine, the Government of Myanmar has established an Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE) and the Commission will submit its report within a year. In Rakhine State, hundreds of new jobs and opportunities have been created for local people through public-private partnerships in recent years.

The Permanent Representative emphasized that the greatest strength of a democratic transition is the unity, determination and active participation of the people under the leadership of State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The international community can best assist Myanmar in realizing its democratic nation building by rendering constructive contribution towards Myanmar’s endeavours based on understanding and mutual respect.

In response to the briefing made by the Chairperson of the Independent International Fact-finding Mission on Myanmar, Permanent Representative Ambassador U Hau Do Suu explained that when the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) on Myanmar was established by the Human Rights Council in March 2017, Myanmar had objected the Mission because of its serious concerns particularly about the advisability of its establishment and the mandate of the Mission. We are also concerned that release of the report based on narratives and not on hard evidence will only serve to inflame tensions further and potentially hinder the Government’s efforts to create much needed social cohesion in Rakhine State. The sincerity of the FFM is also questionable. The methodology of its investigation is also flawed.

The Permanent Representative stressed that the Government has repeatedly explained the fact that the current humanitarian crisis in Rakhine State was ignited by the unprovoked and premeditated attacks against 30 police outposts and a military battalion headquarters by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) terrorist group in August 2017. The ARSA terrorists had massacred security personnel and hundreds of innocent civilians including a hundred of Hindu villagers, other ethnic minorities and pro-government Muslims. The atrocities perpetrated by ARSA had made thousands of innocent ethnic population fled their villages to the other parts of Rakhine State. Likewise, it created a massive exodus of Muslims to the neighbouring country. It is crucial to bear in mind that the present crisis affected not only the Muslim community.
Mandalay celebrates Abhidhamma Day on Full Moon of Thadingyut

TEN thousand lights festivals were held at Maha Muni Buddha Image, Kyauktawgyi Buddha Temple and Mandalay Hill’s Pagoda yesterday at the night of Thadingyut full moon in Mandalay.

The lighting at the pagodas in the town also marked the traditional cultural expression.

The seventh month in Myanmar Lunar calendar corresponds to the Day of the Lord Buddha delivered Abhidhamma teachings (Dhamma Yone) in downtown Mandalay were filled with devotees offering flowers, water, and lights, and taking Precepts.

On this auspicious day of Thadingyut full moon, Buddhists mostly went to the Maha Muni Buddha Image in the early morning to pay homage, offering flowers, water and lights, and also visited other famous pagodas including the Jade Pagoda and the Sacred Tooth Relic Pagoda.

Buddhist religious buildings (Dhamma Yone) in downtown Mandalay were filled with people to receive Precepts from the monks and wellwishers donated food charity to people, rice, and flirtations to the Members of Sangha and nuns on the streets in Mandalay.

The three pagodas at the foot of Mandalay Hill, Kyauktawgyi, Sandamuni and Kuthodaw pagodas were crowded with festival goers.

The present reports of the FFM and the Special Rapporteur are not contributing to ...

FROM PAGE - 6

When we talk about human rights, we should look at human rights of both communities. We are dismayed by the fact that the Mission has deliberately and glaringly discounted ARSA terrorist atrocities which could even be interpreted by many as justifying or condoning the act of Muslim extremist terrorists.

The Permanent Representative has reiterated the Government’s strong commitment to accountability for human rights violations in Rakhine or in any other place in the country. The Government will take action against any perpetrators where there is sufficient evidence.

In this regard, the Government has established an Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE). The Commission will conduct its mandate in the principles of independence, impartiality and objectivity, and will submit its report within a year. In fact, legal actions had been taken against military and police officers and civilians who were found to be in breach of standard operating procedures and rules of engagement following the Inn Din incident.

The Government of Myanmar has resolutely rejected the ICC’s ruling of 6 September 2018 in connection with Rakhine State. Myanmar is not a party to the Rome Statute and the Court has no jurisdiction over Myanmar whatsoever: All countries should be concerned by the recent decision of the International Criminal Court and the various precedents that the Court may be setting by this recent ruling as well as by the way in which it was made. This is a stark warning to all countries particularly to the developing ones.

The Myanmar delegation has categorically rejected inference of “genocidal intent” on the legitimate counter terrorist actions by the security forces in Rakhine. The conclusion is made on unverified circumstances evidence which has no sound legal proof. Putting credibility above all else without regard to other positive developments is a dangerous attempt that will face utter failure. The present reports of the FFM and the Special Rapporteur are not contributing to building peace, harmony, national reconciliation and development in Rakhine State.

The Permanent Representative pointed out that Mr. Marzuki has said “Patience will not help Myanmar’s democratization, it will only help those that seek to derail it”. But, the opposite is true. It is not by revolution that we are building democracy. Our leader State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has chosen a peaceful path through national reconciliation and national consensus which requires tremendous patience and political wisdom.

Special Envoy Ms. Christine Schraner Burgener has also stressed the need for patience and more trust building, and the Government concurs fully with the Special Envoy. This is the way to lead us to realizing our ultimate national goal of building a truly democratic federal union, according to the statement released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—MNA

The Union Minister for Defence departs for China to attend 8th Xiangshan Forum

UNION Minister for Defence Lt-Gen Sein Win and his entourage left for China by air yesterday morning to attend the 8th Xiangshan Forum to be held there.

The Union Minister is accompanied by Director-General Colonel Nyein Chan from the International and Internal Affairs Department under the Ministry of Defence and other officials. —MNA

Rakhine Chief Minister visits free health care at Thandwe Hospital

UNDER the supervision of the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Rakhine State Government, Thandwe District People’s Hospital in Rakhine State is giving free medical treatments to patients till 25 October (today) with the efforts of 60 specialists and surgeons.

Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu went and observed the hospital on Tuesday.

Forty-eight admitted to hospital after food poisoning in Laymyatnar, Ayeyawady Region

Over 48 people in a village in Laymyatnar Township were hospitalized after consuming charity food of fried noodles and amomum herb soup yesterday.

They were rushed to Laymyatnar Township’s Hospital in the afternoon.

Hospital source said the patients suffered food poisoning.

The food poisoning was reportedly a result of eating the fried noodles, containing carrots, cabbage and pork, together with the amomum herb soup cooked with ham broth and black pepper, along with pickled onions and cucumber.

The amomum herb (scientific name Amomum corynos-tachyum) known locally as ‘gon min’ is a type of spice plant used in seasoning.

Patients are currently under the treatment of Township Medical officer Dr. Su Su Hlaing and medical staff. No deaths have been reported. —Tun Zaw Tun (Myanmar Sar)
What is good economic vision?

Roudntable Discussions on Financing for Development of Agricultural Sector and SMEs Sector in Myanmar (Part-2)

By Shin Min and Hmwe Kyu, Photo: Aye Than

T he economic development of a country requires many considerations and one of them is the idea for susta-
inable development. An economic vision can be said to be a rather a vision for favorable long-term interests. What is economic vision or not, we also need to ask if we can and evaluate the long-term economic benefits for a venture. While this is a crucial skill for businesses and entrepreneurs, the same can be said for key political leaders to have a keen economic sense.

A nation’s economy can develop only as long as its stakeholders cast nets where fish bubble and look no further than the wealth of its syllables when conducting busi-
ness. Even worse is a syndrome of policy corruptions; a further imple-
ment to economic access. The short-sighted focus on economic development for the past five years resulted in a wave of across sectors of natural forests and dispersion of natural resources to businesses, as the effects of which is evidently felt by the citizens of today.

People in suburbs and rural areas, on the other hand, have now have no where to escape to nor escape fields to take tempo-
rary shelter in should the economy falter due to disaster strike. In fact, it has reached a worrying situation for the majority of the people living in such areas.

There’s no argu-
ing that having access to basic necessities is important. However, the lack of economic development and the attendant investment for the sake of being wealth can hardly be said to be an economic vision in any sense.

The types of economic plans we ought to welcome are those that visualize future potential hardships and at the same time visualise ways to avoid them.

This is why no matter how much domestic and foreign invest-
ments are sorely needed for economic development, we need to make sure they are responsible investments for the future as well.

The plans and projects implemented today should have a positive benefit effect for the next generation to come in the next ten years or so. This is the proper markup that considers public interest for long-term sustainable economic development.

Continued from previous ar-
ticle covered on 22 October

U Min Thaw: The MNB Two-
Year Plan has been launched since April 2018. Up till now, a total of 133 branches and business units have been opened. The plan covers 32 townships in 16 states and regions. Under the scheme (300 million Kyats) were provided to finance the pipeline. With the approval of the ministry, a survey is underway with arrangements between the Myanmar Insurance and a Singaporean company to launch insurance scheme on buffaloes and cows, and insurance attached to the animals and the survey is going on. If the project is successful, loans would be given out on the guarantee of the animals and the risk of bad debt with the bank would not be there. If this project would be realized, the financing could be fulfilled and the animal breeding industry would be developed. The scheme would be beneficial to the farmers, the bank, and the state; and therefore we are expecting very much.

Low interest loan

Our bank is trying to raise funds for adequate lending. Starting from this year, we have seen the amounts of loans to have increased. For an example, when we are giving out (2000) billion Kyats loan at least, we would not remain (2000) billion Kyats in each year. This is the way to raise the denomi-

nation in the bank. Similarly like JICA, we are planning to get soft loans from international organiza-
tions. Another way is to coop-
rate with local and foreign banks and internatio-
nal organizations. If we could realize this plan, we would be able to rely less on the MEB. We believe that banks are already standing and open, and then become a bank that can finance agriculture and the breeding industry. The farmers as well as agro-based businessmen may contact the Branch Bank of Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank and get the appropriate loans.

Moderator: Please explain about the SME sector and what we are financing the Myanmar Economic Bank so far. What is the future plans regarding the loans.

U Win Naing Oo: Since our bank is State-owned bank, we are financing the SMEs. Finan-
cing under the SME Two-Step Plan has started in 2013 and that 2017-2018 has witnessed the completion of Phase-1. In the Phase-1, the loans are being handed out to export- oriented businesses in accordance with the SME law which is in line with the development of the State.

In the work process, the Myanmar Economic Bank has acted as Executing Agency and systematically chosen the Participating Financial Insti-
tutions, and given out loans to the SMEs. The loans are being facili-
tated in larger towns of the re-
fission, Mawlamyine and Ayeyawady regions enjoyed most of the loans, and the remaining regions and states have not covered so far. It is therefore, plans are underway to provide financial support to other regions and states at the Phase-2 on a broader scale. In the first phase, the majority of SMEs that received the loans were money lending business that has been functioning well. At that time the new startup businesses have missed the op-
portunity to get loans, but they would be financed for the second phase.

Inadequate guarantees

In accordance with the nature of banking procedure, the new startup businesses were deprived of as they are still in uncertain situation. On the other hand, priority has been given to the businesses that could deposit guarantees. Most of the SMEs are not in a position to provide guarantees. At the second Phase, broader aspect would be applied to provide loans. The Phase-2 is being approved by the government and the rifles, and therefore, loans could now be delivered.

In the Phase-2, the amount to be financed would be tripled than the Phase-1 amounting to 130 billion Kyats. The selec-
tions would be made among the experienced business banks and those Participating Financial Insti-
tutions that have networks to handle the matters. One special factor was that in the Phase-1, the Myanmar Economic Bank had not acted as the Participat-

ing Financial Institutions – PFI in the regions and that states so as to serve effectively in the project. In the Phase-2, we have the objectives to offer financing in a broader approach in the re-
gions and the states than the Phase-1. We plan to increase the SME loans to new startup businesses. If and when the SMEs have no adequate guarantees then we would negotiate with the My-

anmar Insurance for its incubation of the “Credit Guarantee Insurance” system and would provide loans in broader sense.

Coordinator: Kindly explain the tasks of the Agricultu-
re Mechanization Department in the agriculture development program in the context of the JICA Two-Step Loan, including the future tasks.

U Khun Aye Naing: As our task is to transform Myanmar’s agriculture sector, there is a need for mechanization, we have two tasks namely the application of more agricultural machinery and the elevation and enhance-
ment of land utilization. Both the tasks need financial aids. We are trying hard on the behalf of the farmers to have the chance to converse with the financial aid agencies and mer-
organisations. When the farmers gain possession of the agricultur-
ality machinery, they are a bit scared in handing new devic-
es to them. On the other side, they also showed them the way to use the machine with safety without help or dam-

age.
Teen killed as Guinea police fire tear gas on banned demo

CONAKRY (Guinea) — A teenager was killed on Tuesday as Guinean police clashed with youths in the capital Conakry and the opposition leader claimed his car was shot at during a banned rally over disputed elections.

Mamadou Samba Diallo, an 18-year-old apprentice plumber, died after being shot by security forces, his uncle Cellou Binani Diallo, a news photographer who works for several organisations including AFP, said.

“My nephew was shot by soldiers in the Cosa suburb. The moment they shot him, he fell and they surrounded him and kicked him,” he said.

“When they were sure he was dead, they got on their pick-up truck and continued on their way,” Diallo said.

Opposition leader Cellou Dalein Diallo denounced “yet another death from the bullets of the security forces,” adding that 97 demonstrators had been killed since 2010 when President Alpha Conde came to power.

“They wanted to assassinate me. The bullet passed between my driver and myself. My driver was wounded,” Diallo said, alleging his vehicle was hit by a police bullet as he was on his way to the protest.

“As soon as the last shots were fired, I drove away,” he added.

AFP, said.

“Tensions have been high in the poor West African country since the death on 16 October of a protester during a two-day campaign aimed at bringing Conakry to a standstill.

Opposition leader Diallo, a former prime minister and key opponent of President Conde, accused the gendarmerie of targeting his vehicle.

AFP could not immediately confirm police had fired live rounds. The police meanwhile rejected the allegation. —AFP

Zimbabwe opposition calls for ‘transitional’ govt to fix crisis

HARARE, (Zimbabwe) — Zimbabwe’s main opposition leader Nelson Chamisa called on Tuesday for a transitional government to resolve the worsening economic and political crisis engulfing the country.

A foreign currency shortage in recent weeks has sparked the worst economic crisis with supplies of fuel, food and pharmaceuticals drying up.

“The first thing is for this nation to go on a path of a political dialogue,” said Chamisa, 40, leader of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) party, who claims to have won the 30 July presidential election.

“We need a national transitional authority so that we resolve this crisis,” he told reporters in the capital Harare.

Chamisa, who lost the vote to President Emmerson Mnangagwa, said he had met religious leaders pushing for a political dialogue between the opposition and the president.

“We are ready to discuss,” he said, while adding that he would not be a fig leaf for Mnangagwa’s government.

“We will ultimately discuss and resolve our national issues as a country,” he said, “(but) we are not ready to be forced (to) legitimise the illegitimate”.

“Our people are suffering. This economic decay is common to all,” he said.

The current shortages and price hikes have not been seen since the 2008 economic and financial crisis spiralled into hyperinflation.

Prices for many staples have more than doubled in less than a month.

The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe has suspended four top managers accused of fuelling the black market trade in US dollars, state media reported on Tuesday.

Their suspensions on Monday followed allegations that they were supplying illicit currency dealers with illegal allocations of hard currency and dollar-pegged local bond notes, the government-run Herald daily reported.

The deepening economic crisis comes just months after Mnangagwa won elections following a brief military takeover that ousted former president Robert Mugabe last year.

“The situation in the hospitals is so shocking,” Chamisa said.

“Our hospitals are sick. Sick hospitals can’t attend to sick people. Our people are dying from preventable diseases such as cholera.”

At least 50 people have died of cholera since September.

“There is an absence of leadership. The nation is orphaned, the nation is parentless,” Chamisa said.

A commission of inquiry is currently investigating the death of six people in post-election violence after soldiers opened fire on protesters who accused officials of delaying poll results. —AFP

‘Thousands’ of Senegalese fishermen have vanished: Greenpeace

DAKAR, (Senegal) — Campaign group Greenpeace urged Senegal on Tuesday to boost security for hard-pressed fishermen, saying “thousands” have disappeared at sea in recent years.

“At least 226 people have officially disappeared or lost their lives” in the past two years, Greenpeace Senior Oceans Campaign Manager Ibrahim Cisse told a press conference in Dakar.

The real number however appears to be much higher.

Bad weather and mechanical breakdowns are other major reasons why fishermen disappear, according to some who participated in the press briefing.

Abdirahmane Faye, who represented fishermen from Rufisque, near Dakar, urged the government to install equipment to locate boats, often just large canoes, that were in trouble.

Cisse said fishermen should be provided with life vests, be registered, and be covered by a national surveillance and rescue network.—AFP

Many fishermen are forced to go far from the Senegalese coast, often in waters belonging to neighbouring Mauritania. PHOTO: AFP

Zimbabwe opposition leader Nelson Chamisa calls on Tuesday to boost security for hard-pressed fishermen, saying “thousands” have disappeared at sea in recent years. PHOTO: AFP

‘We need a national transitional authority so that we resolve this crisis,’ said Zimbabwe’s main opposition leader Nelson Chamisa. PHOTO: AFP
Explosive device found at NY home of billionaire Soros

NEW YORK (United States)—The FBI on Tuesday was investigating an explosive device found in the mailbox at the New York home of US billionaire and liberal donor George Soros, a target of right-wing groups, officials confirmed.

An employee of the residence in Bedford, north of Manhattan, found the suspicious package in the mailbox on Monday afternoon, opened it and found what appeared to be an explosive device, Bedford police said.

“The employee placed the package in a wooded area and called the Bedford police,” the local police department said in a statement.

Soros was not at home at the time and bomb squad technicians defused the device, said police in Bedford, a wealthy enclave that is home to a string of the rich and famous within easy commute of Manhattan.

An “extensive investigation” has been opened and the case has been turned over to the Joint Terrorism Task Force Division of the FBI, police said.

“We are conducting an investigation at and around a residence in Bedford,” the FBI’s New York field office said on Twitter.

“There is no threat to public safety, and we have no further comment at this time.”

Born to a Jewish family in Hungary, the 88-year-old hedge fund tycoon has an estimated net worth of $8.3 billion, making him one of the world’s richest men, according to Forbes magazine.

In 1992, the Wall Street trader became known as “the man who broke the bank of England” when his aggressive speculation against sterling sent it crashing down. His $1 billion short bet against the pound is said to have earned him $1 billion.

He has given away billions to his Open Society Foundations, which promote freedom of expression, justice and equality, and which counter discrimination, focusing in part on Central and Eastern Europe.

The organization on Tuesday condemned the “hateful rhetoric that dominates politics in the United States and so many countries around the world,” noting it “breeds extremism and violence.”

“In this climate of fear, falsehoods, and rising authoritarianism, just voicing your views can draw death threats,” it said, adding that Soros “deplores violence of any kind and urges politicians across the political spectrum to tone down their rhetoric.”

Earlier this month US President Donald Trump accused Soros of paying demonstrators to protest against the nomination of Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh, who was accused of attempted rape in high school.

Soros supported Trump’s Democratic rival Hillary Clinton in the 2016 US election and has been accused by nationalists the world over of sponsoring protests and seeking to push a liberal, multicultural agenda.

Roseanne Barr, the US actress sacked from the revival of her eponymous sitcom for sending a racist tweet about a former Barack Obama aide, called Soros a Nazi earlier this year before later apologizing.

UN committee slams French ‘burqa ban’ for ‘violating’ rights

GENEVA (Switzerland)—The UN Human Rights Committee on Tuesday criticised France’s so-called burqa ban, saying the law “violated” the rights of two women who were fined for wearing full-face veils in public.

The committee called for the women to be compensated and for a review of the 2010 law that forbids people from publicly wearing clothing that conceals their face.

“The French law disproportionately harmed the petitioners’ right to manifest their religious beliefs,” the committee said in a statement.

It added it was not convinced by France’s claim that the ban was necessary for security and social reasons.

The two French women were convicted in 2012 for wearing the niqab, a veil with a slit for the eyes.

“The ban, rather than protecting fully veiled women, could have the opposite effect of compelling them to wear their homes, impeding their access to public services and marginalising them,” the committee said.

Responding to the criticism, the French foreign ministry said covering one’s face was “incompatible with the principle of fraternity and the basic values of a democratic and open society”.

The ministry noted that the European Court of Human Rights had found the ban did not violate niqab wearers’ religious freedom and said it would argue its position in a report to the UN committee on the law.

“Too sweeping”

The UN committee, which is made up of independent experts, ensures countries stick to their human rights commitments but does not have enforcement powers. It said the French ban was “too sweeping” but that governments could still make people show their faces in specific circumstances.

The decision reignites a debate that has raged in France for years over Muslim headwear and other religious clothing.

The debate has regularly pitted supporters of France’s secular constitution against those who argue for religious freedoms.

The 2010 law had strong public support when brought in under former president Nicolas Sarkozy, but many said it targeted a tiny minority of Muslim women in France who wear full-face veils.

Condemned by critics for pandering to far-right voters but backed by many women’s rights activists, the law made France the first European country to ban garments that cover the face.

An estimated five million Muslims live in France and women who ignore the ban can be fined up to 150 euros ($170).

“The vast majority of cases where people have been stopped for checks and have been condemned to fines... have been women wearing the niqab,” committee member Ilze Brands-Kehris told AFP.

“In the context of fewer than 2,000 women wearing the full-face veil in France... (the law) has a vast disproportionate effect on those women.” Other EU countries, including Denmark, Austria and Belgium, have also implemented similar full-face veil bans.

Oppression of women

The committee’s stance contrasts with a 2014 European Court of Human Rights ruling which upheld the French ban.

The court found that France was justified in introducing the ban in the interests of social cohesion as it was “not expressly based on the religious connotation of the clothing”.

In August, the committee also criticised France over the 2008 sacking of an employee who refused to remove her veil at work, arguing it interfered with her right to express her religion. The so-called Baby Loup case, named after the nursery, had already faced multiple legal battles in the French courts.

Canadian rapper dies after falling from plane

OTTAWA (Canada)—A Canadian rapper died after falling from the wing of a flying plane he was walking on during a music video shoot, his management team said.

Jon James, 33, died instantly in the “wing-walking” accident in Vernon, British Columbia, on Saturday, according to a statement.
Vietnamese party chief elected country's president

HANOI — Nguyen Phu Trong, general secretary of the Communist Party of Viet Nam Central Committee (CPVCC), on Tuesday was elected president of Viet Nam at the ongoing sixth session of the 14th National Assembly of Viet Nam, the country's top legislature, Viet Nam News Agency reported.

Trong was elected CPVCC general secretary in 2011, and re-elected general secretary in 2016. On 23 September, two days after Vietnamese former president Tran Dai Quang passed away, Vice President Dang Thi Ngoc Thinh became acting president.

Japan trying to confirm if man freed in Syria is journalist Yasuda

TOKYO — Japan on Wednesday sought to verify whether a man released in Syria and now in Turkey is freelance journalist Jumpei Yasuda, who went missing in the war-torn country in 2015.

The government wants to confirm whether the man is Yasuda "as soon as possible," Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told reporters at his office in the morning.

The 44-year-old was apparently taken captive by a militant group after entering Syria to cover the civil war. Japan was made aware of the situation of the man, an English message to his family and that confirmation of his whereabouts, in late June.

A Syrian man who uploaded the video told Kyodo News he had received it from a go-between for the two countries' efforts. But Suga did not elaborate further on his role, citing the sensitive nature of the matter.

After he went missing, footage apparently of Yasuda reading out an English message to his family and the Japanese public was posted online in March 2016. A Syrian man who uploaded the video told Kyodo News he had received it from a go-between for the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front.

Japan trying to confirm if man freed in Syria is journalist Yasuda

Suzuki Motor to boost exports from Indonesia by 45% up to 2022

JAKARTA — Japanese automaker Suzuki Motor Corp plans to increase automobile and motorcycle exports from Indonesia, making the country its third largest production base after India and Japan.

Its local subsidiary PT Suzuki Indomobil Motor aims at annual exports worth 11.3 trillion rupiah ($744 million) in 2022, up 45 per cent from 7.8 trillion rupiah in 2017, Seiji Iyama, the subsidiary’s president, said on Monday.

QUOTE "To achieve the target, we will push forward investment in human resources and equipment," he said.

The local unit plans to integrate all its production in the country into its main factory in Bekasi Regency, West Java Province. Suzuki’s exports from Indonesia have accounted for more than 30 per cent of local sales since 2016.

Iyama said the company will maintain that level, which is much higher than in Japan, where it is about 20 per cent, and in India where it is less than 10 per cent. Suzuki Indomobil Motor is exporting the fully remodeled Ertiga multipurpose vehicle and the Nex II scooter.

The all-new seven-seater MPV was released in Indonesia in April.

Last month, the subsidiary began exporting the Ertiga 2018 model to the Philippines and other Southeast Asian countries as well as Mexico and Chile.

Driverless hover-taxis to take off in Singapore

SINGAPORE (Singapore) — Test flights of a driverless hover-taxi will take place in Singapore next year, a German aviation firm said, the latest innovation to offer an escape from Asia’s monster traffic jams.

Millions of commuters in the region’s cities have to contend with chronic gridlock every day, sparking a race to develop new ways to avoid the snarl-ups.

While the developed city-state of Singapore does not suffer major congestion, it is seen as a perfect test-bed for new technologies due to its compact size and openness to innovation.

German firm Volocopter said it will conduct the test flights in Singapore in the second half of next year with the support of the government.

Resembling a helicopter, Volocopter’s electric air taxis take off and land vertically. They are based on drone technology and can fly two people for around 30 kilometres (19 miles), the firm said in a statement.

The Singapore tests follow a public demonstration in Dubai last year.

“The Volocopter is designed specifically for inner city missions,” Volocopter said in a statement, adding it can withstand minor turbulence around skyscrapers, allowing for smooth rides.

“It is so quiet that at a flight height of 100 metres (330 feet), it cannot be heard over the typical background noise of a city,” a company spokeswoman said.

A company spokeswoman said the Volocopter can be controlled by a pilot using a joystick, or remotely from the ground.

Apart from the test flights, Volocopter will also set up a product design and engineering centre in Singapore to support its expansion plans.

Volocopter said they are getting ready to roll out their first fixed routes in cities.

The hover-taxis will complement helicopter-hailing services which are already taking off in some cities to beat traffic jams.—AFP
Brazil’s Amazon at risk if Bolsonaro wins presidency: ecologists

RIO DE JANEIRO (Brazil) — Promises by Brazil’s far-right presidential candidate Jair Bolsonaro and his entourage bode badly for the future of the Amazon — called the “lungs of the planet!” — if he wins, environmentalists warn.

The candidate is seen as pliant to the powerful agrobusiness lobby in his country known for putting profit ahead of preservation. One of his most controversial campaign pledges is to merge the agriculture and environment ministries into one.

“Let us be clear: the future ministry will come from the productive sector. We won’t have any more fights over this,” Bolsonaro, who vows to boost Brazil’s fragile economy, told a media conference four days after winning the October 7 first-round in the presidential race.

“If he’s elected, that will be the beginning of the end for the Amazon,” his leftist rival in Sunday’s run-off, Fernando Haddad, said last week. Geraldo Monteiro, a political science professor at Rio de Janeiro State University, said: “As he’s backed by the agrobusiness lobby in congress, which is really strong, Bolsonaro virtually wants to make the environment serve the interests of agribusiness.”

Winding the clock back

Bolsonaro has also several times evoked studies to build hydroelectric power stations in the Amazon, which implies the construction of massive dams that would greatly impact water courses and require communities to be moved.

This issue has long been a contentious one between Brazilian authorities and indigenous tribes — particularly over one project already under construction, Belo Monte, which when finished will be the third-biggest dam in the world. In February, the hard-right candidate said that, if elected, he would not give up “one centimeter more” of land to indigenous communities claiming traditional land. His aim is to end what he sees as “Shiite ecologist activism,” where “Shiite” to him means radicalism, with no religious connotation.

In August, while visiting Roraima state within the vast Amazon, the longterm congressman railed against “Shiite control” over the public environmental agencies ICMBio and IBAMA, saying they “hurt those who want to produce.”

‘Himalayan Viagra’ under threat from climate change: researchers

WASHINGTON (United States) — A prized caterpillar fungus that is more valuable than gold and is nicknamed “Himalayan Viagra” in Asia, where it is seen as a wonder drug, is becoming harder to find due to climate change, researchers said on Monday.

People in China and Nepal have been killed in clashes over the years over the elusive fungus “yarchagumba,” known formally as Ophiocordyceps sinensis. Although it has no scientifically proven benefits, people who boil yarchagumba in water to make tea or add it to soups and stews believe it cures everything from impotence to cancer.

It is “one of the world’s most valuable biological commodities, providing a crucial source of income for hundreds of thousands of collectors,” said the report in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, a peer-reviewed US journal. In recent decades, the fungus has skyrocketed in popularity and prices have soared — it can fetch up to three times the price of gold in Beijing, researchers say. While many have suspected overharvesting can be the reason for its scarcity, researchers wanted to find out more. So they interviewed around four dozen researchers say. While many have suspected overharvesting can be the reason for its scarcity, researchers wanted to find out more. So they interviewed around four dozen researchers.

They also examined previously published scientific literature, including interviews with more than 800 people in Nepal, Bhutan, India and China, in order to understand its apparent decline. Weather patterns, geographic factors and environmental conditions were also analyzed to create a map of yarchagumba production in the region.

“Using data spanning nearly two decades and four countries, (we) revealed that caterpillar fungus production is declining throughout much of its range,” said the report. The finding “is important because it calls attention to how highly valuable species, like caterpillar fungus, are susceptible not only to overharvesting, as is often the focus, but also to climate change,” lead study author Kelly Hopping told AFP.

“This means that even if people start reducing the amount that they harvest, production will likely continue to dwindle as a result of ongoing climate change,” said Hopping, who conducted the work while a postdoctoral research fellow at Stanford University and is currently assistant professor in Human-Environment Systems at Boise State University.

Plastics have entered human food chain, study shows

PARIS (France) — Bits of plastic have been detected in the faeces of people in Europe, Russia and Japan, according to research claiming to show for the first time the widespread presence of plastics in the human food chain.

All eight volunteers in a small pilot study were found to have passed several types of plastic, with an average of 20 micro-particles per 10 grams of stool, researchers reported on Tuesday at a gastroenterology congress in Vienna.

Global plastic production has grown to more than 400 million tonnes a year, and an estimated two to five percent of it winds up in the ocean. PHOTO: AFP

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V KOTA HADIAH VOY. NO. (KHAD 0108N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KOTA HADIAH VOY. NO. (KHAD 0108N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25-10-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to 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 5 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 ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V PATHEIN STAR VOY. NO. (031 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V PATHEIN STAR VOY. NO. (031 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25-10-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MLP 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 CONTINENTAL SHIPPING LINE PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

The scientists speculated that the tiny specks — ranging in size from 50 to 100 micrometres — may have been ingested via seafood, food wrapping, dust or plastic bottles. A human hair is roughly 50 to 100 micrometres in width. “In our laboratory, we were able to detect nine different types of plastics,” said Bettina Liebmann, a researcher at the Federal Environmental Agency, which analysed the samples. The two most common were polypropylene (PP) — found in bottle caps, rope and strapping—and polyethylene terephthalate (PET), present in drinking bottles and textile fibres.

—AFP
BUFFALOES plough through annual Thai racing festival

CHONBURI (Thailand)—Several hefty buffaloes thunder down a dirt track in eastern Thailand, kicking up dust as they are urged toward the finish line by whip-wielding jockeys perched on their backs.

It’s a display of strength and agility from the riders, who risk life and limb in their bid for glory—and a top prize of 8,000 baht ($240).

The race is the highlight of the annual week-long buffalo festival held in the coastal town of Chonburi which is now into its 147th year.

Buffalo trainer Pongsak Khanngern, 44, has entered two of his animals into the contest. “I have trained them for months and I am confident that one of them will win,” he said.

The decades-old tradition started as a way for farmers to blow off steam during the slow moments of an arduous rice-planting season, and over time many superstitions developed around it.

If a buffalo fell sick for example, farmers would pray to the spirits of their ancestors to heal it; if the animal recovered, a race would be offered in thanks.

On Tuesday, some 500 buffaloes were competing.

“There are many youngsters attending and a lot of interest in this event,” mayor Chutharut Parinwachirapud said of the crowds, which numbered in the thousands at the festival.

For centuries, these gentle giants were of immense practical importance—ploughing the fields, providing transport, and even defending villages in times of conflict.

But as farming became mechanised, buffaloes have taken on a symbolic role, acting as a reminder of Thailand’s farming tradition. —AFP

I have too much ‘life experience’, says Julia Roberts

LOS ANGELES—Hollywood star Julia Roberts believes she has too much ‘life experience’ to star in romantic comedies.

The 50-year-old actor, who previously appeared in iconic films such as “Pretty Woman” and “Notting Hill”, has revealed she is unlikely to star in any more rom-coms because she cannot convincingly play a naive character.

‘There came a point in my career where people thought I had turned on romantic comedies, which I love them, I love to be in them, I love to watch them. But sometimes, they just don’t work at a certain point of life experience. It’s not about age, it’s just about what people know that you know,” Roberts told Entertainment Tonight.—AFP

Kanye West donates to little-known Chicago mayoral candidate

CHICAGO—Kanye West made a five-figure donation on Monday to a little-known candidate running to become the mayor of his hometown Chicago, days after she was endorsed by fellow hip hop star Chance the Rapper.

Kanye gave $73,540 to the campaign of Amara Enyia, who wants to be the first black woman to lead America’s third largest city. The amount is the exact figure state election officials fined Enyia’s campaign for a technical violation connected to an unsuccessful 2015 mayoral run.

“The Amara Enyia campaign thanks Chicago native Kanye West for his generous action,” the campaign said in a statement. “The $73,540 debt to the Illinois State Board of Elections has been paid in full.”

Chance, who is also a Chicago native and an outspoken activist in the city, last week endorsed Enyia — immediately raising her profile among a crowded field of contenders that includes a former Obama White House chief of staff. Current mayor Rahm Emanuel last month announced he would not run for a third term in the 26 February election.

“My heart has been in this community,” he said.—AFP

World’s oldest intact shipwreck found in Black Sea

LONDON (United Kingdom) — An ancient Greek trading ship dating back more than 2,400 years has been found virtually intact at the bottom of the Black Sea, researchers said on Tuesday. The vessel is one of more than 60 shipwrecks identified by the Black Sea Maritime Archaeology Project including Roman ships and a 17th-century Cossack raiding fleet.

During the three-year project, researchers used specialist remote deep-water camera systems previously used in offshore oil and gas exploration to map the sea floor.

“A small piece of the vessel has been carbon dated and it is confirmed as the oldest intact shipwreck known to mankind,” the project said in a statement.

The ship, which is lying on its side with its mast and rudders intact, was dated back to 400 BC — a time when the Black Sea was a trading hub filled with Greek colonies.

The team said the vessel, previously only seen in an intact state on the side of ancient Greek pottery, was found at a depth of more than 2,000 metres (6,500 feet). The water at that depth is oxygen-free, meaning that organic material can be preserved for thousands of years.

“A ship, surviving intact, from the Classical world, lying in over 2km of water, is something I would never have believed possible,” said Professor Jon Adams from the University of Southampton in southern England, the project’s main investigator.

“This will change our understanding of shipbuilding and seafaring in the ancient world,” he said.—AFP
New drug slashes death rates among drug-resistant TB patients: scientists

PARIS (France)—A new treatment for a deadly drug-resistant strain of tuberculosis can cure more than 90 per cent of sufferers, according to a landmark clinical trial whose results were revealed exclusively to AFP.

Doctors in Belarus—a country with one of the world’s highest rates of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis—treated 181 patients with the new drug, bedaquiline, in combination with other antibiotics.

Of these, 168—91 per cent—were cured, compared to just over half of people treated with existing drugs, according to the study results.

The success rate was largely replicated in bedaquiline trials in other countries in eastern Europe, Africa, and Southeast Asia, according to trial abstracts due to be unveiled at a major tuberculosis conference later this week, but showed to AFP beforehand.

“The results from this study...that newer drugs like bedaquiline can cure and are game changers for people living with multidrug-resistant and extremely drug-resistant tuberculosis,” Paula Fujimara, scientific director of The International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease commented on the findings.

She was not involved in the research.

Tuberculosis killed at least 1.7 million people in 2017, according to the World Health Organization, making the airborne infection the world’s deadliest infectious disease. PHOTO: AFP.

Despite the huge death toll, tuberculosis received roughly a tenth of the global research funding that goes to HIV/AIDS.

Multi-drug resistant tuberculosis is immune to two of the anti-bacterial drugs most commonly used to treat the disease.—AFP

Tuberculosis killed at least 1.7 million people in 2017, according to the World Health Organization, making the airborne infection the world’s deadliest infectious disease. PHOTO: AFP.
Myanmar Futsal to participate in 2018 ASEAN Futsal Championship in Indonesia

MYANMAR Futsal squad is going to participate in ASEAN Futsal Championship for 2018, said a source of Myanmar Football Federation (MFF).

The ASEAN Futsal Championship also known as the AFF Futsal Championship organized by the ASEAN Football Federation will be showcased in Jogjakarta, Indonesia from 3 to 11 November. Eight teams from eight countries are taking part in the Futsal championship. The Futsal championship was divided into two groups. The group A is comprised of Malaysia, Indonesia and Cambodia while the group-B is made up of Thailand, Viet Nam, Brunei and Timor Leste.

As part of preparation for participating in the AFF Futsal Championship, Myanmar went on a friendly tour to China, took part in Jimo International Friendly Futsal Cup at Zhonglai Lohas Park Sports Center in Qingdao from 16 to 19 October and secured the third-place prize.

Floyd Mayweather (right) throws a right at Manny Pacquiao during their 2015 megafight in Las Vegas. PHOTO: AFP

Mayweather rematch closer as Pacquiao signs to face ‘top PBC fighters’

LAS VEGAS—A potential blockbuster rematch between Manny Pacquiao and Floyd Mayweather moved a step closer as the Filipino icon confirmed he has signed with Al Haymon’s Premier Boxing Champions (PBC). Eight-weight world champion Pacquiao said he would close out his storied career by facing “top PBC fighters” in announcing late Monday the tie-up with influential Mayweather adviser Haymon’s organisation. “My team will work closely with Al Haymon for the remainder of my career to deliver the most anticipated fights with the top PBC fighters,” Pacquiao said in a statement. “Those are the fights the fans want to see and the ones I want to have to close out my career,” he added. Pacquiao said last week that he was “90 per cent” sure a bout with former four-division world champion Adrien Broner would happen in January, possibly in Las Vegas.— AFP

AFC ‘B’ license coaching course to be conducted on 30 October

JOINTLY-organized by Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) and Asian Football Confederation (AFCO), AFC ‘B’ license coaching course will be conducted from 30 October to 18 November, reported the Myanmar Football Federation. A total of 23 trainees are attending the license coaching course recognized by the AFC. The Cambodian instructor will act the course as a trainer cum a lecturer.

Most of women’s coaches

Yangon Utd agrees with goalie Kyaw Zin Htet and forward Ei Soe about contract extension

YANGON UNITED FC, champions of both Myanmar National League and General Aung San Knock-out Shield for the 2018 football season, agreed with goalie Kyaw Zin Htet and forward Ei Soe about contract extension in principles, said a source close to Yangon United. The contracts of both the goalie and the forward will expire at the end of this football season.

Goalie Kyaw Zin Htet moved to Yangon United from Zwekabin United in 2017 and showed his best form in the two consecutive years. He played an important role in an effort to achieve both cups in the 2018 football season.

For that reason Yangon United approached him for extending contract with him. Forward Ei Soe advanced Yangon senior club from the junior one. Yangon Utd will negotiate with him for the contract extension when he returns from the international friendly tour.

Yangon Utd will finalize the contract signing with both players. Yangon Utd will have to field new signing players to further strengthen the squad as it is to defend both local cups and participate in Asian Champion League and AFC Cup in the upcoming football season.—Hut Htut (Twantay)

Ronaldo helps Juve sink Man Utd as Real Madrid win but fail to convince

PARIS (France)—Cristiano Ronaldo marked his return to Old Trafford with a victory as Juventus beat Manchester United 1-0 in the Champions League on Tuesday, while under-pressure Real Madrid got back to winning ways.

Julen Lopetegui’s days as Madrid coach still look numbered despite seeing the reigning European champions beat Viktorija Pizen on a night in which both Bayern Munich and Manchester City won on the road.

It is just one win in seven matches now for Jose Mourinho’s United after they went down to defeat against an accomplished Juventus, who were worthy victors.

After facing uncomfortable questions on the eve of the game over rape allegations made against him in the United States, Ronaldo played his part on the field for Juve back at the ground where he was once idolised.

He played a key role in the winner as it was his cross, aimed at Juan Cuadrado, which ended up falling for Paulo Dybala to tuck home in the 17th minute.

Ronaldo also forced a superb save from David de Gea, while Paul Pogba struck the post for United, who drew another blank at home in Europe after a 0-0 draw with Valencia three weeks ago. Juventus have maximum points after three games in Group H, and host Mourinho’s side in Turin next.

“Juventus is a different level of quality, I have to be honest. A level of quality, stability, experience, know-how,” Mourinho conceded. “I have no complaints with my boys. I have a positive feeling for their effort.”

The good news for United is that they remain second in the group after Valencia were held to a 1-1 draw by Young Boys in Switzerland.

Michy Batshuayi put the Spaniards ahead, but Guillaume Hoarau’s second-half penalty gave Young Boys their first point.—AFP

PHOTO: AFP

Yangon Utd (left) and Manchester United (right). PHOTO: MFF

PHOTO: MFF