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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. V, No. 133, 1st Waning of Wagaung 1380 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Monday, 27 August 2018



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing being welcomed back by officials at Yangon International Airport. **PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES**

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing arrives back from Russian Federation

THE Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation led by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing who attended the opening ceremony of the Army Forum-2018 and the Week of National Security International Forum held in the Russian Federation left Do-

modedovo Airport in Moscow on the evening of 25 August. They were seen off at the airport by Myanmar Ambassador to the Russian Federation U Ko Ko Shein, Myanmar Military Attaché (Army, Navy and Air) Brig-Gen Nyunt Swe and officials.

The Myanmar Tatmadaw

delegation led by the Senior General arrived back at the Yangon International Airport this evening. They were welcomed back by Lt-Gen Maung Maung Aye of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Thet Pon, Deputy Chief of Mission of

the Russian Federation Embassy to Myanmar Dr. Sergey LIZOGUB, Deputy Military Attaché Lieutenant Colonel Alexey N. Yumatov and officials, according to the news released by Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.— Myanmar News Agency ■

Ks 70m, USD 34000 donated for flood victims

“THE government is cooperating with social organizations and the public in its natural disaster protection, relief and rehabilitation programs,” said a union level official yesterday at a ceremony in Yangon where donations were made for flood victims.

Speaking there as the Vice Chair of National Natural Disaster Management Committee Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye thanked the public and the social organizations for their collective contributions, promising all-out efforts for the cent percent arrival of people-to-people aids right into the hands of flood victims.

“As for the immediate resettlement of the flood victims, the National Natural Disaster Management Committee has already formed the coordination committees under it for soonest rehabilitation of the disaster-hit areas, said the union minister.

The union minister was accompanied by Deputy Minister U Soe Aung.

At the ceremony held at the Social Welfare Department of Yangon Region, the union minister and officials accepted the donations including Ks 50 million by Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, USD 20000 by AEON 1% Club Foundation, USD 10000 by AEON Thana Sinsap (Thailand) Public Company Limited,

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Devotees carrying floral offerings at Shwedagon Pagoda at the ceremony to commemorate the Metta Akhadaw Day. **PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT**

Floral offerings at Shwedagon Pagoda

FLORAL offerings were made at the Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon yesterday, the Fullmoon Day of Wagaung or the Metta Akhadaw Day.

Beginning from 5.30 am, the country's famous pagoda saw a series of religious activities including the Metta Akhadaw Day ceremony, the flower offering ceremony and Sabbath keeping ceremony at the respective locations.

First, the members of the Pagoda Broad of Trustees and

various religious organizations offered flowers, water, fruits and incense to the Buddha images at a chamber, followed by the uninterrupted recitation of religious verses at a chamber where ancient Buddha images are kept to the mark the day. Then the devotees went round the pagoda clock-wise, carrying flowers arranged in the design of a pagoda, which were later offered to the Buddha images at every chamber on the pagoda platform.

A congregation then offered day meal to the learned monks, after receiving the Precepts from them.

Similarly, Buddha devotees in Yangon also observed the Metta Akhadaw Day at other pagodas including Botahtaung Pagoda, Kaba Aye Pagoda, Maha Wizaya Pagoda, Shwephonepint Pagoda, Meilamu Pagoda, Mogaung Pagoda, Kyaikkasan Pagoda, Kyaikwaing Pagoda, Ngadatgyi, Chaukhtetgyi and Koedatgyi Pagodas.—Zaw Min Latt ■

Union Minister U Win Khaing observes electrification processes in Yunnan

UNION Minister for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing and his entourage arrived at the Yunnan Power Grid Company Limited's control center in Yunnan Province to observe the production and distribution of electricity yesterday morning. The union minister was first welcomed by China Southern Power Grid Co. Ltd Vice President Mr. Bi Ya Xiong and was then given a tour of the control center by officials.

Yunnan Province produces 87,000 MW which it gets 72 per cent from hydroelectric generation, 16 per cent from heat, 9 per cent from wind power and 3 per cent from solar power.

Yunnan Province itself uses 40,000 MW and distributes the rest to other provinces. Yunnan Province plays a central role for China in trading electric power to other countries in the Greater Mekong Subregion. and also directly trades electric power with Laos and Viet Nam, with potential electric power trade with Myanmar discussed.

Afterwards, the union minister and his entourage received officials from China Datang Overseas Investment Company Limited, and discussed on current cooperating projects.

The union minister arrived in Huaneng Lancang River Hydropower Inc. in the afternoon

and observed information about hydroelectric projects completed by Huaneng Group, followed by a discussion on bilateral cooperation. The union minister also met with officials from the Yunnan Provincial Energy Investment Group Company Limited and UREC Comapny and discussed ongoing projects between the two countries.

Next, the union minister met with the Deputy Governor of Yunnan Province, Mr. Zhang Gouhua and government officials at the HaiGeng Guesthouse in Kunming City. They discussed the electric power sector in Yunnan Province.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Tatmadaw families, well-wishers make donations for monks, nuns

Families of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and well-wishers donated rice, cooking oil, salt, beans, medicines and funds for providing meals to Pariyatti monasteries and nunneries in Tatkon Township at the Ngwedaung Tawya Pariyatti Monastery in Tatkon yesterday morning.

Present at the ceremony were Sayadaws led by leading patron of Maha Thihanada Pariyatti Monastery in Tatkon Sayadaw of the Central Working Committee of the Sangha Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Acinna, nuns, Adjutant-General Lt-Gen Hsan Oo, senior military officers of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, the commander of Nay Pyi Taw command, members of the Nay Pyi Taw Council, well-wishers and members of social organizations and religious organizations.

The congregation received

the Five Precepts from Sayadaw Bhaddanta Acinna, followed by the recitation of Parittas by the monks.

Then families of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and well-wishers donated rice, cooking oil, salt, gram, medicines to the Sayadaw. They then presented cash donations for the trust funds through Lt-Gen Hsan Oo and officials.

Families of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and well-wishers have been making annual donations for monasteries and nunneries in Tatkon since 2006. Up to now they have donated nearly Ks 11 million, 534 bags of rice, 116.2 viss of cooking oil, 1092 viss of beans, 1092 viss of salt, 21000 packages of powered chilli, 1000 boxes of fish paste, spices, medicines and other items, according to the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Families of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and well-wishers present donations through Lt-Gen Hsan Oo. **PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES**

Ks 70m, USD 34000 donated ...

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USD 2000 by AEON Orange company Limited, USD 2000 by AEON Microfinance Myanmar Company Limited, Ks 15 million by the executive committee members, grandpas and grandmas, staff and donors of the Hninzigon Home for the Aged and K 5 million by U Than Htay Maung and Daw Aye Thwe and family in memory of their late fathers U Hla Saw and U Zaw Thaw Po. Certificates of

honour were presented to the well-wishers.

At the region Social Welfare Department, the union minister and party met with members of the committee responsible for the ICT training centre opened for the disabled at the department. He discussed the accomplishments within the first-year period of the project, the establishment of the public private partnership and the formation of a foundation.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development in Rakhine State gets mobile clinic

THE International Language and Business Center (ILBC) Co. Ltd and Care Well Medical Co. Ltd have jointly donated a mobile medical clinic for the Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development in Rakhine State (UEHRD). The ceremony was held at Rupaheidi Electric Car Factory in Industrial Zone 1 in Dagon Myothit (South) Township yesterday.

Attending the ceremony were Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government U Thaung Tun, Union Ministers Dr. Win Myat Aye and Dr. Myint Htwe, Rakhine Chief Minister U Nyi Pu, Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun, Yangon Region ministers, hluttaw representatives and invited guests.

In his opening speech, Dr. Win Myat Aye, who is also Vice-Chair of the UEHRD, said the UEHRD is a union enterprise for implementing three objectives and includes providing humanitarian assistance, which is not just limited to providing food supplies but also encompasses education and medical services. He said the medical services in Rakhine State need a wider outreach which can be supported by mobile medical clinics, and that is something the public has become aware



Union Ministers and officials formally open mobile medical clinic. PHOTO: MNA

of. With people helping people by providing these mobile medical clinics, a practical medical system will emerge, said the union minister.

The UEHRD was formed to help the people in Rakhine State, even though not residing there, by providing beneficial projects there, and is in a way a success for the UEHRD's objectives. He added that citizens currently abroad are also aiding the UEHRD.

Next, UEHRD Chief Coordinator

Dr. Aung Tun Thet gave a speech, saying Rakhine State has the peaceful Ngapali beach and the wonderful Mrauk-U City. He said the focus should not be on the conflicts and difficulties in Rakhine State, but rather on its opportunities and future prospects. He encouraged businesses to be more involved in Rakhine State's development. Rakhine State has international tourism, meat and fish and agriculture businesses. An improved economy is key for

development in Rakhine State, said Dr. Aung Tun Thet. He said he believes that only a prosperous economy will help overcome the difficulties in Rakhine State. He added that Rakhine State has good resources and foundations and asked businesses to cooperate with the UEHRD for Rakhine State's development.

Afterwards, ILBC Co. Ltd Managing Director U Tin Maung Win explained the reason for donating the mobile medical clinic and the electric

car, followed by Care Well Medical Co. Ltd Managing Director Dr. Muya Nyunt explaining about the mobile medical clinic.

ILBC Co. Ltd MD U Tin Maung Win then handed over the official documents for the mobile medical clinic to Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye, and received a congratulatory certificate in return.

Dr. Win Myat Aye then handed over the official documents for the mobile medical clinic to Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe.

Next, ILBC Co. Ltd MD U Tin Maung Win handed over the official documents for the electric car to the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre (NRPC), which was accepted by U Aye Lwin, Head of Supportive Group of the NRPC.

This was followed by the union ministers, Rakhine State chief minister and attendants taking a documentary photo together.

The union ministers and officials then inspected the interior of the mobile medical clinic and the medical equipment installed inside. In yesterday's ceremony, the ILBC Co. Ltd donated a mobile medical clinic to the UEHRD and the KhitsanV-mas series EA4 Station Wagon (electric car) to the NRPC. — Min Thit (MNA) ■

Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko arrives back home from India

UNION Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture, Thura U Aung Ko and party attended 6th International Buddhist Conclave which was held from 22 to 26 August in New Delhi, India and arrived back to Yangon International Airport yesterday morning.

The Union Minister and party were welcomed by Rector of the National University of Arts and Culture (Yangon) U Aung Naing Myint, Director-General of the Religious Affairs Department U Soe Min Tun, pro-rector of International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University (IT-BMU) U Khin Maung Win and responsible officials from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko being welcomed back by official at Yangon International Airport. PHOTO: MNA

Myanmar-Bangladesh Battalion Commander Level meeting held

Myanmar-Bangladesh Battalion Commander Level Courtesy Meeting was held at Zeepin Chaung, Chaungwa Sentry Post yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting, matters relating to sending the buffaloes back to Bangladesh as a check proved that the animals had trespassed into Myanmar territory from Bangladesh, bilateral coop-

eration in anti-drug campaigns, conducting joint patrols through bilateral coordination and real time sharing of information were discussed.

The meeting was attended by seven members of police border guard force of Myanmar, nine members of border guard force of Bangladesh and buffalo owners. —Myanmar News Agency ■



PHOTO: MNA

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.comPrinted and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

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Over 200 buoys to be installed in Mandalay - NyaungU waterway

IN a bid to institute safe boating practice with round the clock service, ten buoys and markers have been installed since 20 August in the waterway between Mingun and Innwa (Sagaing) and over 200 more buoys will be installed in Mandalay - NyaungU waterway, said U Khin Maung Zaw, deputy director of navigation division (Upper Myanmar) under the Directorate from the Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems.

Installation of buoys is a part of AIRABM Project's Component 3 for Ayeyawady riverway improvement financed by the World Bank. With the support of foreign experts and staff of the Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems, the buoys are being placed in the waterway.

"It is to aid night navigation from Mandalay to NyaungU



More buoys and markers have been added to ensure safety on Ayeyawady riverway.

PHOTO: KHINE SET WAI

and it is also first time for inland water transport. There are four types of buoys. The



sailors or seamen have to learn how to read buoys and markers. The department has to follow international Guide Line for navigation buoys. Natural route or maritime trade is the cheapest one compared to road transport and air route. Natural trade route facilitates trading", he continued.

Vessels and ships travelling inland must practice the IALA Maritime buoyage system. The marker colour of striped red and white indicates fairway channel, red for port (left) and green for starboard (right) and isolated danger mark for symbols of hazards.

"Inland water transport

used bamboo poles and other locally made goods at daytime. Having installed buoys, the vessels are safe to travel at night. Later, after carrying out waterway improvement project, container ships can also travel anytime. It will help economic development", said U Aung Myo Khaing, director of Component 3.

In addition to this, internationally recognized buoys and markers are planned to be installed along about 700-kilometer waterway from Mandalay to Yangon by 2020, to ensure round-the-clock safety shipping for vessels.

— Khine Set Wai ■

RBF Myanmar providing Ks 40-80 million to SME from Sagaing and Monywa

RESPONSIBLE Business Fund (RBF) Myanmar from Denmark will provide Ks 40-80 million on average to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) for their development.

RBF Myanmar will provide the financial aid to SMEs from Monywa and Shwebo Townships from Sagaing Region and Magway Township from Magway Region.

RBF Myanmar held discussions over its monetary assistance at Monywa industry

zone management committee and Chaung U town yesterday and is planning to hold further talks in Magway on 26 August and at Shwebo industry zone in Shwebo on 28 August to explain businesses on how to apply for the assistance.

"Arrangements were made for businesses to attend the discussion. The businesses can establish connection with related areas of support provided by RBF Myanmar and gain valuable advantage

for their businesses," said an official from RBF Myanmar.

RBF is a part of the Danish Development Assistance to Myanmar. RBF is Ks 12.5 billion for (3 years) 'Challenge Fund' to "increase the competitiveness and responsible behavior of Myanmar enterprises" by providing partial grants to SMEs for the implementation of innovative projects in the following 7 Eligible Areas: (1) energy efficiency; (2) water use efficiency; (3)

waste treatment and recycling; (4) Occupational Safety & Health (OSH); (5) Food Safety; Managerial & Supervisory Skills; (7) Practical & Technical Skills.

RBF will contribute 65 to 80 percent of Ks 80 million maximum to SMEs in carrying out area (1), (2) and (3). It will contribute 65 to 80 percent of Ks 40 million maximum to SMEs in carrying out area (4), (5), (6) and (7) it is learnt.— Myo Min Tun (Monywa) ■

UMFCCI to report suggestions from B4B Insights Forum to government

By Nyein Nyein

UNION of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) will also submit the suggestions report resulted from the 2nd B4B Insights Forum to the government, according to UMFCCI.

“Forum mainly highlights on current economic climate

and meeting outcome is hoped to bring about benefits for both public and private sector”, said U Zaw Min Win.

A two-day 2nd B4B Insights Forum hosted by UMFCCI held on 25 and 26 August discussed matters from various sectors; tourism, logistic service, industrial enterprises, motor vehicle business, food chain, garment

business on Cutting-Making and Packaging basis, power supply and distribution, health, information technology, exchange rate. Additionally, experts also discussed existing laws, by-laws and policies.

Moreover, the findings of Myanmar Business Sentiment Survey jointly conducted by Private Sector Development Com-

mittee, Myanmar Marketing Research and Development Limited (MMRD) and UMFCCI were also explained by U Moe Kyaw, chair of MMRD at the 2nd B4B Insights Forum.

This year, 2nd time Business Sentiment Survey is collected from a total of 2,535 enterprises. Therefore, it pointed out current economic climate”, said U Moe

Kyaw. Those enterprises which answered the survey are engaged in manufacturing, service and export/import sectors.

With an aim to dealing with barriers and challenges faced by private businesses and promoting local businesses through public-private partnership, UMFCCI held the 1st B4B Insight Forum in May. ■



Export of agricultural products as of mid-August in the six-month interim period reaches US\$1 billion.

PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

Agro export continued to decrease by \$163 million as of mid-August

EXPORT of agricultural products as of mid-August in the six-month interim period prior to the next fiscal year 2018-2019 amounted to US\$1 billion, decreasing by \$163 million compared to the same period in the 2017-2018 FY, according to the trade figures released by the Commerce Ministry.

In the similar period of the 2017-2018 FY, agricultural exports were worth \$1.19 billion.

The decrease in agro exports is attributed to the low demand of rice from China and transportation difficulties caused by extreme weather condition in the recent days. Also, exports of mung beans and pigeon peas are lesser than last year.

In the export sector, the agriculture industry performed the best along with the natural gas export sector. The chief export goods in the agricultural

sector are rice and broken rice, pulses, corn and rubber. Fruits and vegetables, sesame, dried tea leaves, sugar and other agro products are also sent to foreign countries.

The commerce ministry is endeavouring to help deal with the challenges faced by farmers, such as high input costs, procurement of pedigree seeds, high cultivation costs and erratic weather conditions.—Ko Htet ■

Bilateral trade with India reaches \$300 million from April to June

TRADE value between India and Myanmar was registered at US\$300 million in first three months of six-month interim period prior to next fiscal year 2018-2019, according to trade data of the Ministry of Commerce.

Import outdid export in bilateral trade with India, with import worth \$194 mil-

lion and export valued \$106 million.

Myanmar exports mung beans, pigeon peas, green grams, areca nuts, ginger, saffron, turmeric, bay leaves and other fruits and vegetables, fishery and forest products while pharmaceuticals, oil cakes, electronic products, motorbikes, steel and

other construction materials are imported.

Bilateral trade values were recorded \$1.46 billion in 2017-2018 FY, \$1.94 billion in 2016-2017 FY, \$1.7 billion in 2015-2016 FY, \$1.34 billion in 2014-2015 FY, \$1.63 billion in 2013-2014 FY, \$1.32 billion in 2012-2013 FY and 1.37 billion in 2011-2012 FY.—GNLM ■

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Trump hints US and Mexico on verge of trade agreement amid NAFTA renegotiation

WASHINGTON — Donald Trump on Saturday hinted that the US and Mexico were on the verge of finalizing a deal, as negotiators from both sides were holding talks through the weekend to revamp the North American Free Trade Agreement.

The trilateral treaty has been a key target in the US president's aggressive trade strategy and he has repeatedly threatened to scrap it altogether.

But after a year of intense negotiations aimed at salvaging the pact, the US and Mexico now appear to be close to a point where Canada can rejoin the talks.

"Our relationship with Mexico is getting closer by the hour," Trump tweeted.

"Some really good people within both the new and old government, and all working closely together...A big Trade Agreement with Mexico could be happening soon!"

His tweet followed a similarly optimistic message from Mexico's Economy Minister Ildefonso Guajardo, who said on Friday that bilateral meetings with the US were "very far" along.

Guajardo and Mexico's Foreign Minister Luis Videgaray have been shuttling back and



Mexico's Economy Minister Ildefonso Guajardo (R) and US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer have been meeting for five weeks on revising NAFTA. **PHOTO: AFP**

forth to Washington for more than a month for meetings with US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer to try to iron out major bilateral stumbling blocks, such as rules for the auto market, before the end of August.

Foreign Minister Chrystia

Freeland of Canada — the third party to the trade pact — said earlier in the week that she was encouraged by the progress between Washington and Mexico City and would rejoin the talks once the bilateral discussions concluded.

Contentious sunset clause Guajardo declined to go into detail on the topics remaining with the United States but said the agreement could happen at any time. "The idea is that we are staying because we know there are issues to resolve," he said.

"And we have to make sure that everybody feels comfortable with this agreement."

A contentious "sunset" proposal by the United States — to require that the nearly 25-year-old trade pact be reauthorized every five years — is one that must include all three partners, Guajardo said.

Jesus Seade, an economic advisor to Mexico's incoming president, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, has been participating in portions of the NAFTA talks and said the sunset clause "is going out," according to press reports from Mexico City.

The United States and Mexico are keen to seal a new deal before Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto hands over power to Lopez Obrador on December 1, and for that to happen, the US Congress must be notified 90 days in advance.

The three countries have been negotiating for a year to save the free-trade agreement that Trump has previously referred to as a "disaster." NAFTA has been in effect almost 25 years.

Guajardo and Lighthizer began meeting at the end of July after negotiations between the three partners stalled in May. — **AFP**

Kazakh port in decline bids for slice of China trade

AKTAU (Kazakhstan) — With the outlines of its six idle cranes obscured by thick fog and pouring rain, Kazakhstan's Caspian seaport Aktau seems an unlikely stop on China's much-hyped new silk road. But the sleepy port, which has been badly hit in recent years by new oil routes, is vying for a slice of the pie as competition for Chinese trade warms up on the shores of the world's largest inland sea.

China's trillion dollar Belt and Road initiative has been a buzz-phrase in Kazakhstan ever since Chinese leader Xi Jinping unveiled the overland trade and infrastructure vision during a 2013 visit to the capital Astana.

For the moment, evidence of Beijing's economic might is light on the ground at Aktau, more than 2,300 kilometres (1,400 miles) from the China-Kazakhstan border crossing that is a key



Workers load a shipping crate in the Kazakhstan's Caspian seaport of Aktau. **PHOTO: AFP**

entry point for goods bound for Europe overland.

"This used to be an old port in poor condition with old equipment," said Oraz Koptleuov, a native of Turkmenistan who began working at the port of Aktau as a machinist in 1995. "Now we have new technology... But there is not enough work. Let there be more work!" he told AFP of the port where 500 people are now

employed, down from 700 several years ago. During a recent visit, an AFP correspondent saw a corrugated steel container marked China Shipping being unloaded on an otherwise deserted dock.

The container had carried a shipment of engine oil from Turkey to Kazakhstan via Azerbaijan's capital Baku, Koptleuov said, but would make the return journey empty.

Middle Kingdom, middle route

The experience of the Aktau port mirrors broader economic struggles in energy-rich Kazakhstan, which was badly burned by the oil price collapse in 2014 and hopes a trade and transit boom can ease an unstable commodity dependence.

Oil once underpinned business at the port — more than 14 million tonnes of crude passed through annually — before a more economically efficient network of pipelines grew up, reducing the figure tenfold and triggering layoffs.

But port president Abai Turikpenbayev now expects Aktau to emerge as an important overland trade node that can offer an alternative to the better-known northern route to Europe via Kazakhstan and Russia. — **AFP**

Less lock-up shares eligible for trade next week

BEIJING — Lock-up shares worth about 24.56 billion yuan (about 3.61 billion US dollars) will become eligible for trading on China's bourses next week.

Over 2.68 billion shares will become tradable on the Shanghai and Shenzhen stock exchanges from 27 to 31 August, according to information service provider Wind Info.

In the previous week, shares worth 25.9 billion yuan became tradable.

Shenzhen-listed Health 100 will contribute the highest value and amount of lock-up shares, with some 517 million shares worth 8.14 billion yuan becoming tradable on Monday. — **Xinhua**

‘No grass’: Europe’s livestock sector stricken by drought

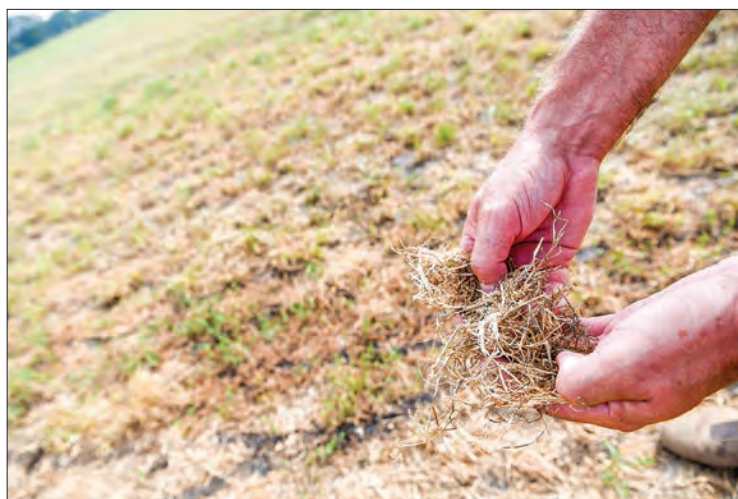
PARIS — “Our cows have been living off hay cut in June, there isn’t any grass,” says Jean-Guillaume Hannequin, a farmer in eastern France, who like his counterparts across much of northern Europe is wondering how he will feed his animals this winter.

Mediterranean countries long ago adapted their farming practices to little rain, but this year it is the north of Europe confronting a widespread drought that could see farmers having to send much of their herds to slaughter due to a lack of feed.

In Sweden, where swathes of territory were burned by wildfires this summer as the country baked under century-high temperatures, the grain harvest is expected to be down around 30 per cent and it is unclear whether recent cooler temperatures will allow farmers to take in more hay.

“The feed shortage will be felt this coming winter,” Harald Svensson, chief economist for the Swedish Board of Agriculture, told AFP, explaining that “most farmers have relied on their winter feed reserves during the drought this summer.”

The situation is similar in Germany, where officials say one



Farmer Christian Sancken shows dried grass in his drought-affected field in Cuxhaven, northern Germany, last month. **PHOTO: AFP**

in 25 farms is at risk of going out of business. In Lower Saxony, a key region for growing fodder crops, the harvest is expected to be more than 40 per cent down from normal years.

In the Netherlands, the deficit for fodder is estimated to be 40 to 60 per cent, according to the agricultural association, with the deficit for grain at 20 per cent.

Price gouging

The English countryside is far from its normal undulating green this year, having not seen a drought like this in 80 years, according to the official Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB).

Milk production is down sharply due to a lack of hay.

In France, “the east has been suffering since the beginning of July, and the rest of the country since August with an extended heatwave,” said Patrick Benezit of the FNSEA umbrella group of French farmers’ unions.

“In many places, even in the Massif Central, the ‘water tower’ of France, there won’t be a second cutting of hay, this is really worrying,” he told AFP.

Benezit also criticised the price gouging for straw.

“Farmers need to buy straw to mix with hay to feed their animals, and the traders are

profiting from the situation” by asking for up to 100 euros (\$116) per tonne, he said, when straw sold for between 60 and 80 euros last year.

As prices for fodder and hay climb higher, farmers are sending animals to the slaughterhouse earlier than usual.

In Britain, the number of cattle slaughtered jumped by 18 per cent in July, with dairy cows making up a large portion, according to the AHDB.

In Germany, where the government has unlocked emergency aid for farmers, there was a 10 per cent increase in animals slaughtered in the first two weeks of July, according to authorities.

The Swedish government has responded by pledging 1.2 billion kronor (117 million euros, \$135 million) in aid for farmers to buy fodder and avoid sending their animals to the slaughterhouse.

French farmers are concerned due to the monopoly on slaughterhouses by the Bigard group. “We are afraid they’ll turn the drought into a bonanza by buying our animals at even lower prices when we already have difficulty surviving,” said one livestock farmer who requested anonymity.

Throwing in the towel?

The situation is dire for dairy farmers, who have already been complaining that they are not being paid enough for their milk to survive.

“The winter risks being catastrophic,” said another French farmer. “To complement the rations of the animals we are going to have to buy grain, the price of which went up this summer, so milk will become more expensive to produce.”

According to Erwin Schoepges, president of the European Milk Board which counts as members more than 100,000 small dairy farmers, “even before this drought, production costs weren’t being covered.”

He said farmers were producing milk at 40 to 45 cents per litre, but able to sell it for only around 30 to 33 cents a litre.

With the drought, their production costs will increase further, he said. The European Commission has promised exceptional aid to farmers, like speeding up aid payments and allowing farmers to cut hay from fallow land.

But French farmer Hannequin is not optimistic.

“There are going to be a massive number of farms abandoned,” he warned. —AFP ■

Chicago wheat futures plunge over seven pct weekly over weak export demand

CHICAGO — Chicago Board of Trade (CBOT) agricultural commodities closed lower over the trading week ending on 24 August, with wheat futures dropping over seven per cent, as investors focused on weak demand of US wheat and shrugged off global production concerns.

The most active corn contract for December delivery fell 16 cents weekly, or 4.22 per cent, to 3.6275 dollars per bushel. December wheat delivery plunged 43.25 cents, or 7.46 per cent, to 5.365 dollars per bushel. November soybeans dropped 37.5 cents, or 4.2 per cent, to 8.5525 dollars per bushel over the week.

CBOT corn futures fell to new lows for the move before stabilizing on Friday. Much like the last two years, US producers are liquidating old crop stocks prior to September delivery. The market was focused on the prospect of

record large US corn yields following the August World Supply and Demand Estimates report.

However, world end stocks reflect just 45 days of use, down from 60 days last year. Argentine corn offers are absent beyond mid-October, and at current prices the US Gulf will have a near monopoly on feed grain exports into next March.

And drought in the EU, Black Sea and Australia look to sharply raise world feed grain demand. CBOT corn prices are in the transition process of shifting to a demand led bull market on record large domestic and export demand. World wheat futures ended the week lower. Seasonal trends for Europe and US futures are weak into September, while the driest areas of East Australia will see light rains this weekend.

Amid the record combined fund length in Kansas City and



Chicago Board of Trade (CBOT) agricultural commodities closed lower over the trading week ending on 24 August, with wheat futures dropping over seven per cent. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Chicago futures, a correction was due. However, traders notice that a longer-term wheat price uptrend remains intact.

Wheat futures since winter have endured similar corrections, only to advance to new highs. The Northern Hemisphere wheat harvest is nearing completion and farmers will hold stocks on

any further market drop.

Analysts maintain that substantial world wheat demand will be funneled to the US late this fall and winter as Russia moves to slow or halt exports and Ukraine reduces the amount of milling wheat that is for sale. Importers are active in securing wheat since mid-August to get ahead of higher

prices.

CBOT soybean futures closed the week lower on chart related selling and large crop prospects. Weekly highs were scored on Monday, and a steady flow of large yield data from the Pro Farmer Crop Tour kept the market under pressure into Friday. —Xinhua ■

Beware of poisoning

THE number of poisoning cases has increased in Myanmar from 23,000 in 2011 to 36,000 in 2016. Many result in deaths.

Poisoning is caused by exposure to a harmful substance. This can be due to swallowing, injecting, breathing in, or other means. Most poisonings occur by accident.

Many of the poisoning deaths are preventable.

Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe said in his opening address at launching of the training on poisoning treatment at the Yangon General Hospital recently, his ministry is committed to promoting treatment on poisoning in Myanmar and would provide aid to research works for poisoning which mostly happened in our country.

Poisoning is a significant global public health problem. According to WHO data, in 2012 an estimated 193,460 people died worldwide from unintentional poisoning. Of these deaths, 84% occurred in low- and middle-income countries. In the same year, unintentional poisoning caused the loss of over 10.7 million years of healthy life (disability adjusted life years, DALYs).

“

... if you think someone has been poisoned, DO NOT wait for symptoms to develop. Get medical help right away. Anyway, immediate first aid is very important in a poisoning emergency.

Temperature is important in eliminating this bacteria when it has contaminated food.

A package does not have a warning label does not mean a substance is safe. You should consider poisoning if someone suddenly becomes sick for no apparent reason.

Symptoms of poisoning may take time to develop. However, if you think someone has been poisoned, DO NOT wait for symptoms to develop. Get medical help right away.

Anyway, immediate first aid is very important in a poisoning emergency. The first aid you give before getting medical help can save a person's life.

The role of nurses is crucial for giving treatment to poisoning. It is necessary to prescribe lessons related with poisoning in the lecture for nurses.

Meanwhile, a public health system with data collection, carrying out research for poisonings in Myanmar, availability of medicines for treatment needs to be in place to support efforts for poisoning prevention and control in the country.

Nearly a million people die each year as a result of suicide, and chemicals account for a significant number of these deaths. For example, it is estimated that deliberate ingestion of pesticides causes 370,000 deaths each year. The number of these deaths can be reduced by limiting the availability of, and access to, highly toxic pesticides.

Concerning with the food poisoning, which occurs when food contaminated with organisms is ingested, proper hygiene and handwashing can prevent this bacteria from entering food that will be eaten. The bacteria which can cause poisoning can commonly be found on people, but when allowed to grow in food this bacteria can produce a toxin that causes illness such as vomiting and diarrhea.

That bacteria can also be found in untreated water.

Cooking at the right temperature

WITH an aim for the emergence of a market economy and enhancing economic development, the State Government has made concerted efforts to promote the socio-economic life of the people and communities in Myanmar. A round-table discussion by officials concerned from the Ministry of Commerce was held at MRTV in Nay Pyi Taw, on August 9. Following are comments made by U Nay Lin Zin, Joint General Secretary of Myanmar Rice Federation, U Khin Han, Chairman of Bayint Naung Commodity Market, and U Yan Naing Tun, Director General of the Department of Trade.

Q: In Myanmar, this year happens to be an intercalated year [in which a 13th month is inserted in the form of a second Waso month in the Myanmar calendar]. This year's monsoon has brought about severe flash flood hazards, including heavy flooding and landslides, to many parts of the country, mainly due to incessant torrential rains. It was learnt that some 700,000 acres of paddy fields have been inundated, while 300,000 acres were destroyed due to the flooding. Can this severe damage affect the rice production? Could you explain more about the status of Myanmar's rice export this year and the market conditions for rice?

U Nay Lin Zin: Regarding flash flood hazards, it is general common for us to suffer flood damage, especially in the years that have a second Waso month. But I think this situation is not as bad as the flooding that occurred in 2015. At that time, some 13 out of 15 states and regions were flooded and the export volume of rice declined by nearly one million tons, with an estimation of a total of 120,000 tons of rice being destroyed. The production of rice last year was 14 million tons. That's why, if we compare the losses occurred last year we can say that there was not that much damage. As usual, the rising costs for rice are caused by flooding every year, and there are valid reasons that the local prices of rice, including Shwebo Paw San, Ayeyawady Paw San and Paw Kywe, have risen during the past month. There remain in stock some different varieties of rice that are not so popular. As a result, I think rice prices have remained stable and there won't be a shortage of rice and increased prices due to the flooding. Myanmar has earned about US\$1 billion from exporting over 3.6

Round-table eco



million tons of rice over the past year, according to the Myanmar Rice Federation. The dollar has hit its highest level against the local currency so far, and we can see that rice prices in Thailand and Viet Nam dropped by US\$50 per ton of rice, and they are also finding it hard to sell out in the local market. Thus, the amount of rice that will be exported next month is expected to reach that of last year. I think the export is expected to reach between 2 and 2.5 million of tons this year. Another thing is, the export of rice during this period is approximately less than 200,000 tons per month.

Q: Are the commodity prices rising higher in Myanmar? Could you discuss the current situation of commodities and the flow of the commodity prices at the Bayint Naung Commodity Market?

U Khin Han: The Bayint Naung Commodity Market is regarded as the lifeblood of basic commodity products in Myanmar.

People should be familiar with the present situation of this market. The Bayint Naung Commodity Market is located in the north-western part of Yangon, and it is

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Being a member of World Trade Organization (WTO) and ASEAN, Myanmar has been made reforms undertaken...

the largest commodity trading market in Myanmar. The market's area is 1200 acres, on which are located about 1,200 shop houses, including 150 wholesale shops for

le discussion on conomics

By Khin Yadana



PHOTO: MAY OO MOE

dried fish and prawns, 200 rice purchasing shops, 500 shops dealing in dried goods, together with 200 storage houses. It is learnt that the total number of trucks carrying the commodities every day is between 800 and 1,200. The timing for trading is different for different commodities. As for dried fish and prawns wholesale shops, the trading time is from early dawn to 11:30am. Onions, potatoes and other groceries are being sold the whole day. People from Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway regions come to buy the majority of the dried goods. People think that the commodity prices are getting higher due to the pay rise [of government employees] and the recently raised daily minimum wage. In my opinion, I do not think it is directly related to cause the rising prices. We also make necessary announcements regarding the daily commodity prices. The prices of onions had bounced back due to the high demand last year. The

prices reached Ks 3,000 per viss [3.6lb] at that time. Cultivators have tried to grow more crops this year; unfortunately, business is not as good as they expected. We can make commodity speculations by making a guess of their flows at the Bayint Naung Commodity Market. As far as I know, there are a total of some 15 commodity purchasing centres in other regions. All of them have to monitor the commodity flow and effects at the Bayint Naung Commodity Market, to be able to know the current trend. What I would like to suggest people is that they should purchase household goods at the Bayint Naung Commodity Market, where they can get goods at reasonable prices.

Q: It is learnt that the government had made announcements to the effect that permit both foreign companies and Myanmar-foreign joint ventures to conduct domestic retail and wholesale businesses in the country. Regarding this

permit, could you explain the responses received from foreign companies, and what kind of benefits will our country get due to the relaxation of these trading restrictions?

U Yan Naing Tun: As for the Ministry of Commerce, efforts are being made to relax relevant rules and regulations, aiming to attract more foreign investment into the country and increasing job opportunities for people across the country. We have to adopt this relaxation systematically, according to procedures. Preparations were being made, since 2013, to grant foreign companies the permission of operating the retail and wholesale enterprises. Being a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and ASEAN, Myanmar has undertaken reforms to boost its economic reorientation in continuing on its path of reintegrating into the global economy.

*Translated by
Win Ko Ko Aung*



Central Body for Suppression of Trafficking in Persons



Myanmar Anti-Trafficking in Persons Day

13th September

**The entire public needs to participate,
Trafficking in persons to eliminate...**

2018 Anti-Trafficking in Persons Day's Objectives

- ❖ To mobilize the participation of all citizens in combating human trafficking as a national duty;
- ❖ To have the public instilled with awareness about and knowledge of trafficking in persons;
- ❖ To protect and care trafficked victims with empathy; and
- ❖ To strengthen cooperation and coordination among all counter trafficking stakeholders – government agencies, civil society organizations, UN agencies, international organizations and general public.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 26th August, 2018)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (18:30)hrs M.S.T today, the low pressure area over Northwest Bay of Bengal and adjoining North Odisha coast and near West Bengal coast (India) still persists. Monsoon is strong over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 27th AUGUST, 2018: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Lower Sagaing and Magway Regions, scattered in Mandalay Region, fairly widespread in (Northern and Southern) Shan State and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with regionally heavy falls in Taninthayi Region and Mon State, isolated heavy falls in Bago, Yangon and Ayeyarwady Regions, Rakhine and Kayin States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with rough seas are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35)m.p.h. Wave height will be about (8-12)feet in off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuations of increase of rain in Taninthayi Region, Kayin and Mon States.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27th AUGUST, 2018: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27th AUGUST, 2018: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27th AUGUST, 2018: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

Flood Bulletin

(Issued at 14:00 hrs M.S.T on 26-8-2018)

Flood condition of Sittoung River

According to the (13:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Sittoung River has exceeded by about (3½) feet at Madauk above its danger level. It may rise about (½) foot from the present water level during the next (2) days and may remain above its danger level.

Flood condition of Thanlwin River

According to the (13:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Thanlwin River has exceeded by about (3½) feet at Hpaan above its danger level. It may rise about (1) foot from the present water level during the next (2) days and may remain above its danger level.

Advisory

It is especially advised to the people who settle near the river banks and low lying areas in Madauk and Hpaan Township, to take precaution measure.

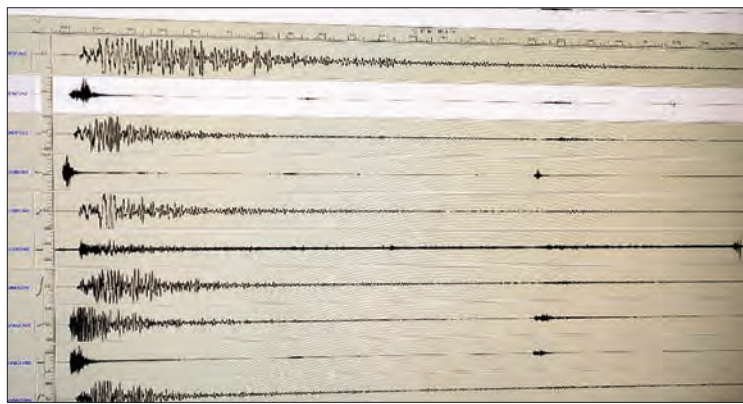
Two dead, 241 injured in 6.0 quake in western Iran: officials

TEHRAN — Two people were killed and more than 200 injured in a strong 6.0-magnitude earthquake that struck western Iran near the border with Iraq early Sunday, officials told local media.

The shallow quake hit 26 kilometres (16 miles) southwest of the city of Javanrud in Kermanshah province, the US Geological Survey said, near the site of a powerful quake last year that killed hundreds.

The head of the emergency department Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences, Saeb Sharidari, told state news agency IRNA that two people were killed and 241 people injured, six critically. Sharidari said the two dead were a pregnant woman and a 70-year-old man who died of a heart attack.

The provincial head of the Red Crescent, Mohammad Reza



Dozens have been injured in a strong 6.0-magnitude earthquake that struck western Iran near the border with Iraq. **PHOTO: AFP**

Amirian, said there had been at least 21 aftershocks. He said there were potential problems with drinking water due to damaged infrastructure in villages, but that it had not yet been necessary to distribute food and tents.

Kermanshah governor Houshang Bazvand told the Tasnim news agency that electricity had been temporarily cut

to several villages.

A crisis centre was set up, with hospitals and relief organisations placed on alert.

But the local director of crisis management, Reza Mahmoudian, told *the Mehr* news agency that “the situation was under control” and no request for help had been sent to neighbouring provinces. —AFP ■

FOCAC summit to focus on agriculture, industry, infrastructure, science and technology: Ethiopian official

ADDIS ABABA—The upcoming Beijing Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) is expected to focus on agricultural transformation, industrial development, infrastructure development and science and technology, an Ethiopian official said on Saturday.

Speaking exclusively to *Xinhua*, Admasu Nebebe, Deputy Minister of the Ethiopia Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation (MoFEC), said the FOCAC summit is expected to see discussions on how China and African countries can strengthen their cooperation especially in these four key sectors.

“African countries need to transform their agricultural sector, engage in vigorous industrial development, invest in their infrastructure and put resources to develop their science and technology if they are to successfully develop their econ-

omies like China,” said Nebebe.

Nebebe further said China-Africa and in particular China-Ethiopia relationship combines elements of hard infrastructure and knowledge-based partnership, with close to 6,000 Ethiopians receiving education in China over the last several years and hundreds more Ethiopians preparing to attend higher learning programs in China.

The FOCAC Beijing summit, scheduled for Sept. 3-4, will run under the theme, “China and Africa: toward an even stronger community with a shared future through win-win cooperation.”

Nebebe said the summit would be a historic event of grand family gathering between China and African countries, three years after the last FOCAC summit was held in November 2015 in Johannesburg, South Africa. —Xinhua ■



Supporters of Malian opposition leader Soumaila Cisse listen to his speech during rally to protest results of presidential runoff vote on 18 August, 2018, in Bamako. **PHOTO: AFP**

Mali opposition supporters protest against poll result

BAMAKO—Thousands of supporters of Mali’s defeated opposition election candidate took to the streets in Bamako Saturday to protest the poll result, organisers said. The demonstrators waved banners with the slogans “No to the declared results” and “IBK (Ibrahim Boubacar Keita) will not steal our victory”. Opposition candidate and former minister Soumaila Cisse, 68, has slammed the August 12 vote that handed a second term to his opponent Keita as marred by fraud.

Cisse polled 32.84 percent of the vote according to the official

count, compared to 67.16 percent for incumbent Keita.

“We want a country that is peaceful, tranquil, stable but not a country in which the president is elected by fraud, ballot stuffing and the falsification of results,” Cisse said during the march in Bamako, which was initially banned but later given authorization by the authorities.

The demonstration, which was flanked by police and held without incident, started with some 5,000 people and swelled to “about 50,000”, according to Cisse spokesman Djiguiba Keita. —AFP ■

DR Congo rolls out prototype Ebola drugs as death toll rises to 67

BENI (DR Congo) — An outbreak of Ebola in eastern DR Congo has killed 67 people this month, authorities said Saturday, as they roll out a battery of new drugs to tackle the virus amid concerns it has spread to a rebel-encircled area.

A total of 105 cases have been reported since the flare-up of Ebola began on August 1 in Mangina in North Kivu province, according to the health ministry, out of which 77 have been confirmed by laboratory

tests. It said 11 people have recovered from the virus and 67 had died. Health minister Oly Ilunga Kalenga travelled to Mangina on Thursday and saw two patients being discharged after they were treated with a new prototype treatment called mAb114. “These two people are among the first 10 patients to have received the therapeutic molecule mAb114,” the ministry said in a statement.

Developed in the United

States, it is the first therapeutic drug to be used in an active Ebola epidemic in the DRC.

Earlier this week, the health ministry said four other experimental drugs had been approved for treating infected patients.

On Friday, the World Health Organization warned that signs the virus had spread to the city of Oicha in North Kivu could frustrate efforts to contain the virus. —AFP ■



A total of 105 cases have been reported since the flare-up of Ebola began on 1 August in Mangina in North Kivu province, according to the country’s health ministry, out of which 77 have been confirmed by laboratory tests. **PHOTO: AFP**

Trump social media 'censorship' claim is fake but widely believed

WASHINGTON — There is little evidence to back up Donald Trump's persistent claim that social media firms "silence" or "censor" conservatives, but the notion has nonetheless gathered widespread acceptance among his considerable following.

The US president returned to the topic on Friday with a tweet saying: "Social Media Giants are silencing millions of people... People have to figure out what is real, and what is not, without censorship!"

The comments marked the second time in a week Trump has attacked tech platforms over alleged political bias.

Days earlier, he tweeted that "Social Media is totally discriminating against Republican/Conservative voices. Speaking loudly and clearly for the Trump Administration, we won't let that happen."

Both Twitter and Facebook deny bias in policing their platforms, and various studies suggest conservatives are thriving on social media.

Still, a Pew Research Center survey released in June found 43 per cent of Americans think major technology firms support the views of liberals over conserva-

tives, and 72 per cent accepted the idea that social media platforms actively censor opposing political views.

Among Republicans and Republican-leaning independents, a whopping 85 per cent said they think social media sites intentionally censor political viewpoints, Pew found.

The blocking of Alex Jones, who operates the conspiracy theory site Infowars, has given ammunition to those claiming motivations behind bans.

And on Friday, a US House committee announced that Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey and other tech executives will appear before a panel on 5 September.

Dorsey acknowledged in a recent CNN interview that the company's bias "is more left-leaning" but that this is not reflected on the platform.

"The real question behind the question is, are we doing something according to political ideology or viewpoints? And we are not. Period," Dorsey said.

'Game the refs'

According to Angelo Carusone, president of the left-leaning media watchdog group Media Matters for America,



President Donald Trump has alleged that social media firms are censoring conservatives despite little evidence backing up the claim. PHOTO: AFP

conservatives are railing at social media firms "to game the refs," and put more pressure on the platforms.

Carusone said this strategy worked in 2016 when Facebook "essentially fell for a fake news story" after claims of bias against conservatives and eliminated its "trending topics" section. Social media firms are to blame in part, because "in

an attempt to mollify their right wing critics they have reinforced and validated the critiques even though they are baseless," he said.

Carusone said a study by his group and another by the social media monitoring firm NewsWhip found no systematic bias on tech platforms and concluded that conservatives had substantial presence on tech platforms.

But the loud complaints from the president and his supporters can still influence public opinion even if the claims are untrue, notes Jeff Hemsley, a Syracuse University professor of information studies.

"Conservatives have long held the view that all media is liberal, so this is an old complaint they're now applying to social media," Hemsley said. —AFP ■

Macron to renew plea for closer Europe

PARIS — With nine months to go before European parliament elections, France's President Emmanuel Macron will on Monday renew his plea for a more integrated EU, against a global wave of nationalism.

Welcomed as a saviour of the European Union on his election last year, the French leader has seen his ambitious plans diluted as the 28 members' interests diverge, with challenges such as Brexit and the ongoing tussle over immigration into the bloc.

In a speech to ambassadors in Paris on Monday Macron is expected to underscore some of his signature projects, such as a single eurozone budget, a European defence force, the taxation of tech giants and a common policy on migrants.

But some of his main ideas clash with new populist governments in Eastern Europe and Italy, with right wing and upstart populist parties on the rise in countries across the region.

"(Since last year) the world has changed a lot with the up-



Welcomed as a saviour of the European Union on his election last year, the French leader has seen his ambitious plans diluted as the 28 members' interests diverge. PHOTO: AFP

surge of nationalism and the crisis of multinationalism. We must be even more dynamic in order to adapt to these developments," said advisors at the Elysee Palace.

Macron has grappled with a damaging domestic scandal over a top aide that has distracted from his push for constitutional reform.

And internationally the French leader, lauded by supporters for his fresh approach, has yet to reap many rewards

from his professed friendship with US President Donald Trump.

The approach has not prevented a burgeoning trans-Atlantic trade war, while Trump has also sought to scupper a landmark deal curbing Iran's nuclear programme and has blasted European nations over their spending on NATO.

"We are more in negotiations on procedures, like the eurozone budget, and less in the grand leap forward," said

Claire Demesmay, an analyst at the German Institute of Foreign Policy.

'Cannot lead alone'

In Europe, the issue of immigration has seen Hungary, Poland and now Italy pushing Eurosceptic and anti-immigration policies.

Migration is a hot-button issue in Italy, where hundreds of thousands of people have arrived since 2013 fleeing war, persecution and poverty in the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

Under EU rules people must seek asylum in their country of arrival, but Rome has increasingly barred boats from docking at its ports, forcing other nations to take some of those on board.

Italy's Deputy Prime Minister Luigi Di Maio on Friday said that his country was prepared to cut its EU contributions over the issue. With Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel also weakened by political crisis, Paris is now seeking a "progressive arc" of allies. —AFP ■

Venezuela, Trinidad, Tobago sign oil agreement

CARACAS — Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago Keith Rowley signed a gas and oil partnership agreement on Saturday after a meeting between the leaders.

"We have signed a very important document that will permit the generation of physical and monetary wealth for Venezuela and Trinidad and Tobago, coming from joint gas fields," Maduro said, describing the meeting as "intense, productive, and positive."

Rowley expressed appreciation to Maduro for agreeing to related negotiations, adding that he hoped "in the very near future, Venezuelan gas will reach the international market where it will be monetized for the benefit of the people of Venezuela and Trinidad and Tobago." —Xinhua ■

Flood toll in India's Kerala rises to 445

KERALA — The death toll from devastating floods in the southern Indian state of Kerala rose to 445 Sunday with the discovery of 28 more bodies as the waters recede and a massive cleanup gathers pace, government officials said.

Around a million people are still packed into temporary relief camps and 15 are reported missing even as the government mounts an operation to clean homes and public places that have been filled with dirt and sand left by the floods.

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan in a tweet said that more than 130,000 flood-hit houses had been cleaned, or nearly a third of those affected.

Authorities are also in the process of restoring electricity connections.

People returning to their homes have been told to stay

alert as receding waters leave behind a glut of snakes. State authorities and wildlife experts have formed teams to come to the aid of those who have found snakes in their home, according to local media.

With death toll rising daily, Kerala authorities said “due process will be followed to ascertain if all these deaths are flood related”.

A 68-year-old man committed suicide Wednesday after seeing the state of his home at Kothad in Ernakulam district. A 19-year-old boy took his own life earlier in the week because his school certificates were destroyed by the floods, police said.

The government says that more than 10,000 kilometres (6,000 miles) of roads have been destroyed or damaged while a legislator said 50,000 houses had been wiped out. —AFP ■



An Indian man cleans the muddy floor of a building in Kochi following widespread flooding in the south Indian state of Kerala on 20 August 2018. PHOTO: AFP

Heavy rain, flooding leave seven dead in central, southern Taiwan

CHINESE TAIPEI — A tropical depression over Taiwan has dumped torrential rain on the central and southern parts of the island, killing at least seven people and injuring 110 more, authorities said Sunday.

Nearly 7,000 people have been evacuated and more than 69,000 families still do not have power, according to the Central Emergency Operation Center.

Among the seven deaths, four were in the southern city of Kaohsiung, including three killed by falling scaffolding, while one each occurred in Tainan City, also in the south, and Chiayi County and Taichung City, both in central Taiwan.

Agricultural losses from the

railfall have totaled NT\$426.3 million (about \$13.89 million), with Chiayi County suffering the heaviest losses at NT\$349.9 million, or 72 per cent of the total, according to the Council of Agriculture.

President Tsai Ing-wen came under fire for visiting a disaster area in Chiayi in an armored vehicle.

Local media reported that Tsai was forced to get out of the vehicle after victims shouted at her demanding her to survey the area on foot.

The Central Weather Bureau said Sunday that it expected another tropical depression to hit the island beginning Sunday evening. —Kyodo News ■



The latest attack in the war-torn country appeared to target a protest camp outside the building in Nangarhar province. PHOTO: AFP

Suicide bomb attack kills two in eastern Afghanistan

JALALABAD (Afghanistan) — A suicide bomb attack killed at least two people Saturday in the eastern Afghan city of Jalalabad, officials said, the latest violence to hit the war-torn country.

The bombing — claimed by the Islamic State group — follows what has already been a bloody month with the Taliban ramping up assaults on security forces across the country and IS targeting the capital Kabul, with hundreds killed according to estimates.

The attack appeared to target a protest camp outside an election commission office where a group of people were rallying in support of a candidate disqualified from parliamentary elections due in October.

Jalalabad is the capital of Nangarhar province, the main IS stronghold in Afghanistan.

The blast “killed two people, and four others were wounded”, provincial governor spokesman Attaullah Khogyani told AFP, adding that it was carried out by a suicide attacker.

Provincial health director Najib Kamawal confirmed the

two deaths.

An eyewitness to the bloody aftermath of the attack said a suicide bomber detonated near a tent full of protesters outside the office, and that security forces had cordoned off the area.

“It was very big blast and it shook our home,” said witness Mirza Amin, who added he lived 50 metres (160 feet) from the site of the explosion.

Earlier this month, Afghanistan’s Independent Electoral Complaints Commission disqualified 35 candidates from running in the upcoming parliamentary election for having direct links to illegal armed groups.

The protest in Jalalabad was against the disqualification of candidate Javed Zaman Ghamsharik, who was barred for allegedly possessing illegal arms and for connections to illicit land deals.

The blast comes nearly a week after President Ashraf Ghani offered a conditional three-month ceasefire to the Taliban, a move welcomed by the United States and NATO after nearly 17 years of war.

The Taliban have yet to officially respond to the offer.

The surge in violence this month comes after Afghans marked an unprecedented nationwide ceasefire between the Taliban and government forces in June, giving some relief to war-weary civilians.

For three days, thousands of insurgents poured into cities across Afghanistan, eating ice cream and taking celebratory selfies with security forces.

The brief respite spurred hopes a new path was opening for peace talks in the country after nearly 17 years of war.

The Taliban have long insisted on direct talks with Washington and refused to negotiate with the Afghan government, which they see as illegitimate.

Earlier this week, Gen. John Nicholson — the top commander for US and NATO forces in Afghanistan — said that warring parties now have an “unprecedented” opportunity for peace, citing the June ceasefire as a step forward.

He stressed, however, that any peace talks must ultimately be “Afghan-led, Afghan-owned”. —AFP ■

Two dozen people missing after boat capsizes in southern Nepal river

KATHMANDU — A boat carrying around 40 people capsized in Nepal’s Rautahat district on Saturday evening, authorities said.

The accident took place in Lalbakaiya River, Chief District Officer of Rautahat Govinda Prasad Rijal told Xinhua.

Rijal said that they have yet

to find out the exact number of people aboard the boat.

According to him, the incident occurred when the boat reportedly hit a pillar of an under-construction bridge and toppled.

“We have already rescued 15 people so far and search op-

eration is underway in coordination with police, army, and locals,” Rijal said from the crash site, which is located 110 km southeast of the capital Kathmandu.

Due to rainfall, rivers in Nepal have gone swollen over the past weeks. —Xinhua ■

Sent packing: Hong Kong's elderly cardboard collectors

HONG KONG — Her fingers are bent from 20 years of collecting cardboard from Hong Kong's streets, but Au Fung-lan says she has no desire to give up the gruelling work.

At 67-years-old she is one of around 2,900 collectors, mainly women over the age of 60, whose frail figures are a familiar sight, guiding trolleys loaded with cardboard through a city clogged with traffic and people.

They pick up discarded packing boxes from shops, markets and residential buildings, selling them for a few dollars to recycling depots, where cardboard is more valuable than plastic.

The depots then ship it abroad — up to 95 per cent of it to mainland China in

2016, according to local authorities — as Hong Kong has no recycling plants of its own to convert it into usable materials.

However, as China closes the door to imported rubbish, even from semi-autonomous regions such as Hong Kong, Au's livelihood is under threat.

Beijing no longer wants the country to be a global trash can and has already started phasing out taking solid waste — a process it expects to complete by 2020.

Pragmatic Au says she tries not to think too much about her work drying up.

She continues to put in 14-hour days so she can afford a carer for herself and her 77-year-old husband, also a cardboard collector,

when they finally decide to give up work.

"Some people think our work is arduous and look down on us. They say: 'You are so old, go home and enjoy life. Why collect cardboard?'" Au told AFP.

"But if I can still work, I don't want to rely on others."

Risky business

Au turned to cardboard collecting after being laid off as a factory worker and courier.

She has three grown-up children with jobs but does not want to depend on them for help.

By working from pre-dawn until dusk, she earns up to HK\$300 (around \$38) daily, selling 300 kilograms of cardboard at HK\$1 (13



Au Fung-lan is one of some 2,900 cardboard collectors, mainly older women, who are a familiar sight in Hong Kong. **PHOTO: AFP**

US cents) per kilo.

It is a phenomenal work rate and much higher than the average collector who makes around HK\$47.30 a day, according to concern group Waste Pickers Platform (WPP).

Au attributes her bent fingers to years of tearing cardboard with her hands

to flatten it.

She has been hit by a car twice, injuring her shoulders and feet as she pushes her trolley along a busy road to the local depot in the residential neighbourhood of Kwai Fong.

Her trolley and cardboard have also been confiscated several times by

government hygiene inspectors.

But she says she enjoys what she calls the freedom of working for herself.

"I'm not afraid. I do it every day," she says. As unofficial freelance workers, collectors like Au have no legal recognition or employment rights. —AFP ■

Tropical Storm Lane heads away from Hawaii islands



People look for storm swells generated by the approaching Hurricane Lane in Waikiki Beach, Honolulu. **PHOTO: AFP**

HONOLULU — Tropical Storm Lane limped away from the Hawaii islands on Saturday after dumping heavy rain that triggered flash floods but caused no known casualties.

Lane, a powerful Category Five hurricane that weakened into a tropical storm as it approached Hawaii, was located about 195 miles (310 kilometers) southwest of Honolulu, the Central Pacific Hurricane Center said in its 0300 GMT Sunday bulletin.

Lane had maximum sustained winds of 50 miles (85 kilometers) per hour, and was moving west into the open Pacific at nine miles (15 kilometers) per hour. The National Weather Service dropped all warnings for Lane, but a local flash-flood warning remained in effect. By Saturday afternoon all Hawaii airports and sea ports were back to normal operations, officials said.

Lane dumped enough rain to trigger landslides

— several of which blocked the main island's Highway 19, a major thoroughfare — and cause severe flooding in many areas. The storm may have moved on, but its effects will be felt for several more days.

"Lingering moisture associated with Tropical Storm Lane will produce excessive rainfall over the main Hawaiian Islands through Sunday, which could lead to additional flash flooding and landslides," the Hurricane

Center warned.

Governor David Ige said that several school and college campuses had been flooded and were expected to reopen on Tuesday.

Wet conditions will continue through much of next week, bringing up to 10 inches (25 centimeters) of additional rain in already saturated lower areas and twice that much at higher elevations, Federal Emergency Management Agency officials said.

Emergency planners however noted that there were no large-scale power outages, and food and water supplies remained sufficient. At the height of the storm rain was so heavy that authorities closed the iconic Waikiki Beach, and hoteliers and store owners piled sandbags outside their businesses.

The last major storm to strike Hawaii was nearly three decades ago, when Hurricane Iniki hit the island of Kauai, leaving six dead and causing billions of dollars in damage. —AFP ■

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Dated 27th August 2018

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John McCain, war hero and political maverick, dead at 81

WASHINGTON—John McCain, a war hero and towering figure in American politics, known for reaching across the aisle in an increasingly divided nation, died Saturday following a battle with brain cancer. He was 81.

The senator's passing marked the end of a storied, 35-year political career that brought the independent-minded Republican within reach of the White House as his party's presidential nominee.

"It's been quite a ride," McCain, who was tortured during five years as a prisoner of war in Viet Nam, wrote in a memoir published earlier this year.

"I've known great passions, seen amazing wonders, fought in a war and helped make peace. I made a small place for myself in the story of America and the history of my times."

McCain, who had been receiving treatment in his home state of Arizona, was surrounded

by his wife Cindy and his family during his final hours.

"He was a great fire who burned bright, and we lived in his light and warmth," said Meghan McCain, one of the late senator's seven children—three of them from a previous marriage.

Near the driveway to his ranch in a rural part of Sedona, Arizona, a sign read "Sen McCain, thank you for your service."

A police escort accompanied the hearse that carried his body, as a fiery sunset cast its last light over the rustic countryside McCain loved dearly, and local residents came bearing flowers for the late political titan.

A steady stream of friends and colleagues had come to bid him farewell at his Arizona ranch in the months since his cancer diagnosis, in July 2017.

US President Donald Trump, who once mocked McCain's war record, said he sent his "deepest



Senator John McCain served in the US Congress for more than 30 years, after a military career. **PHOTO: AFP**

sympathies and respect."

McCain had been a rare and outspoken Republican critic of Trump, accusing him of "naïveté," "egotism" and of sympa-

thizing with autocrats. He made a decisive vote last year that killed Republican attempts to repeal Barack Obama's health care reforms.—AFP ■

The fighting is real at Serbia's medieval chivalry festival on Saturday

DESPOTOVAC (Serbia) — Dressed from head-to-toe in knight's armour, fighters thrashed each other with steel swords in high-octane duels at a Serbian chivalry festival on Saturday.

These were not staged re-enactment shows but full-contact

fighting in a combat sport known as historical medieval battle.

Around 60 fighters from European countries spanning France to Romania participated in the tournament, wielding blunted weapons as they skirmished across a grassy pitch

in the shadow of a 15th century fortress in eastern Serbia.

The intense, highly-physical matches—best described as mixed-martial arts but with medieval weapons—are refereed and scored based on a point system.

"I have a background in box-

ing and I love history, so for me (this sport) is a good mix," said 28-year-old French fighter Victor Rousseau, 28, as he prepared for a group match.

While the fighting is rooted in old traditions, the modern form of medieval battle has only become formalised as a sport in the past decade, helped by the launch of a world championship called "Battle of the Nations."

The tournament in Serbia was part of a three-day medieval festival, called "Just Out", in a river gorge home to the 600-year-old Manasija monastery, which is fortified by massive stone walls and towers. Festival-goers in medieval garb, many carrying swords of their own or bows and arrows, have been camping out in tents for three days of jousting, archery, crafts and meat-heavy medieval meals.

"This fighting and this culture... it's wonderful," said Velimir Birmanac, a Serbian spectator wearing "civilian" medieval dress with a loose shirt and belt holding a dagger, satchel and hollowed animal horn for drinks.—AFP ■



Two participants in the Serbian medieval festival come together. **PHOTO: AFP**

French farmers furious as wild boars run amok

SAINT-MALO (France)—With a gaping hole in the ground and tangled corn stalks strewn across Yves Rolland's field, it looks as if it has been hit by a tornado. He already knows who the culprits are.

"Every year it gets worse. They destroy everything," the French farmer fumes, striding through what's left of the crop.

"The boars come every night, in a pack. They nibble a little bit over here, a little bit over there, trampling on everything."

Like farmers across Europe, Rolland is suffering the consequences of an explosion in the wild boar population over the past three decades, venturing off woodland in search of food.

They have already ravaged eight hectares (20 acres) of his land this year—10 per cent of his farm on the edge of the Paimpont forest in the northern French region of Brittany.

As well as the valuable crops lost, the large bristly pigs have munched through feed he was growing for his livestock, which he will now have to buy.

"My father never saw boars when he was a farmer. Now we've been invaded," he says.

The number of boars shot by French hunters gives an idea of how their numbers have soared.

Some 150,000 were killed in 1990-91, according to hunting authority ONCFS, but by 2016-17, the figure had swelled to 700,000.

"The animals are very fertile, reproducing quickly and adapting to pressure from hunting," says ONCFS researcher Christine Saint-Andrieux.

Various factors have encouraged the pigs to multiply and to leave the woods, she says, notably urbanisation and climate change which is altering their traditional habitats.

Anger in the countryside

The farmers meeting near Saint-Malo have created a petition urging the state to act, including by setting up a volunteer hunting force that could spring into action when needed.

Regional hunting chief Andre Douard says he is already doing "everything possible to encourage" people to take aim at the pigs.

"Hunting is a hobby, it's voluntary. We don't have the power to force anyone," he says.—AFP ■

Scientists make 3D-printed structures to replace vessels, ducts in human body

WASHINGTON — American researchers have developed a way to “print” tubular structures that better mimic native vessels and ducts in human body.

The study published this week in *Advanced Materials* showed that the 3-D bio-printing technique allowed fine-tuning of the printed tissues’ properties, such as number of layers and ability to transport nutrients.

Those more complex tissues offered potentially viable replacements for damaged tissue, according to the study.

“The vessels in the body are not uniform,” said Zhang Yu, senior author on the study and a researcher in Brigham and Women’s Hospital’s Department of Medicine.

“This bio-printing meth-

od generates complex tubular structures that mimic those in the human system with higher fidelity than previous techniques.”

The researchers mixed the human cells with a hydrogel, a flexible structure composed of hydrophilic polymers and optimized the chemistry of the hydrogel to allow the human cells to proliferate, or “seed,” throughout the mixture.

Next, they filled the cartridge of a 3D bio-printer with the bio-ink.

They fitted the bio-printer with a custom nozzle that would allow them to continuously print tubular structures with up to three layers.

Disorders like arteritis, atherosclerosis and thrombosis damage blood vessels, and

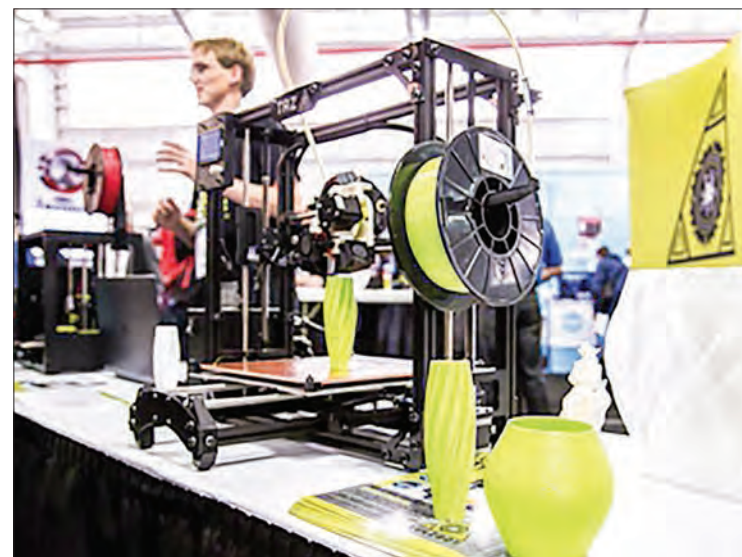
urothelial tissue can suffer inflammatory lesions and deleterious congenital anomalies, according to the study.

The researchers found that they could print tissues mimicking both vascular tissue and urothelial tissue.

They mixed human urothelial and bladder smooth muscle cells with the hydrogel to form the urothelial tissue. To print the vascular tissue, they used a mixture of human endothelial cells, smooth muscle cells and the hydrogel.

The printed tubes had varying sizes, thicknesses and properties.

According to Zhang, structural complexity of bio-printed tissue is critical to its viability as a replacement for native tissue, because natural tissues are



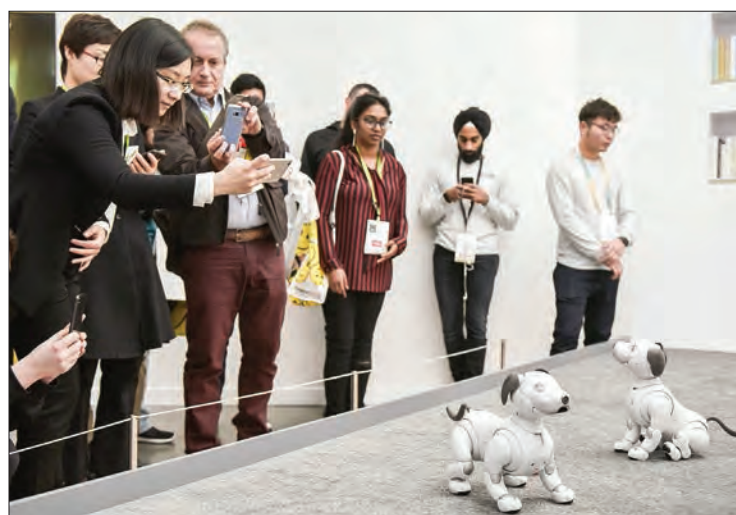
American researchers have developed 3D-printed structures to replace vessels, ducts in human body. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

complex.

For instance, blood vessels comprise multiple layers, which in turn are made up of various cell types.

“Our goal is to create tubular structures with enough mechanical stability to sustain themselves in the body,” said Zhang. —Xinhua ■

Sony to release AI-infused robotic pups in the US



In this file photo taken on 12 January 2018 exhibition goers look at Sony Aibo robotic dogs during at the Las Vegas Convention Center during CES 2018 in Las Vegas. **PHOTO: AFP**

SAN FRANCISCO — Sony on Thursday announced that its Aibo robotic dogs infused with artificial intelligence will be unleashed on the US market by the year-end holiday season, with a price tag of \$2,899.

The sixth-generation mechanical pup combines robotics with image sensors and artificial intelligence, enabling it to learn behaviors and recognize faces, according

to the Japanese consumer electronics giant.

Aibo robot personalities develop based on interactions with people, giving each a unique character depending on its human companions, Sony said.

“This is truly a one-of-a-kind product designed to connect with its owners on an emotional level,” Sony Electronics North America

president Mike Fasulo said in a release.

Similar to real-life dogs, Aibo can learn tricks and will seek out owners, reacting to words of praise or scratches on the head, according to Sony. Aibo will also play with toys, which Sony will sell you.

Unlike real-life dogs, Aibo has an application owners can use to adjust system settings or add new tricks, and can connect to the internet cloud to store memories.

Aibo owners will also be able to check on internet-linked canine companions while away from home, glimpsing life through their robotic eyes, according to Sony.

Sony will begin taking US orders for “First Litter Edition” Aibo next month, with deliveries promised by the holiday season.

Aibo became available in Japan early this year, more than a decade after it culled earlier models from its product line. —AFP ■

China launches new twin BeiDou navigation satellites

XICHANG — China on Saturday successfully sent twin BeiDou navigation satellites into space on a single carrier rocket.

The Long March-3B carrier rocket lifted off from Xichang Satellite Launch Center in southwest China’s Sichuan Province at 7:52 a.m.. It was the 283rd mission of the Long March rocket series, said a source of the launch center.

The twin satellites entered orbit more than three hours after

the launch. After a series of tests, they will work together with 10 other BeiDou-3 satellites already in orbit.

The twin satellites were developed by the Innovation Academy for Microsatellites of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Named after the Chinese term for the Big Dipper, the BeiDou system started serving China in 2000 and the Asia-Pacific region in 2012. —Xinhua ■



China sends twin BeiDou navigation satellites into space via a single carrier rocket from Xichang Satellite Launch Center in Xichang, southwest China’s Sichuan Province on 25 August 2018. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Diversified tree species brings more carbon storage in forests: research

BEIJING — Scientists have proved that tree species richness has increased ecosystem carbon storage in subtropical forests, according to the Institute of Botany of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Forest ecosystems are an

integral component of the global carbon cycle as they take up and release large amounts of carbon over short time periods or accumulate it over longer time periods.

However, there remains uncertainty about whether carbon

fluxes and stocks differ between forests of high and low species richness.

Scientists from China, Germany and Switzerland monitored 27 forest plots in Gutianshan Nature Reserve of east China’s Zhejiang Province over

six years.

They found that species-rich forest plots had higher carbon stocks and fluxes than the plots with lower species richness. In addition, old forest plots had higher carbon stocks than young ones.

The forest ecosystems with higher species richness had faster carbon cycle rates. Meanwhile, more carbon can be reserved above or below ground in stems, roots, dead and drying wood, litter and soil, according to the scientists. —Xinhua ■

Myanmar teams tried their best in 18th Asian Games 2018

On the eighth day of the 18th Asian Games 2018 held yesterday in the Indonesian cities of Jakarta and Palembang, Myanmar's athletes won in most of the games.

First, Myanmar team secured the final place of women's traditional boat race at Jakabaring Lake Rowing, by a record of 2 minute and 30.109 second in the semifinal match.

Later, in the final match, Myanmar secured fifth place by a record of 2 minute and 28.690 second.

Similarly in the men's traditional boat race at Jakabaring Lake Rowing, Myanmar team ranked sixth place by a record of 2 minute and 20.467 second.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Myanmar traditional boat race in action. PHOTO: MNA

AFF Futsal Championship 2018 in November

The AFF Futsal Championship 2018 will be held in November in Jogjakarta City, Indonesia, according to the 16th AFF Council Meeting.

This was decided during the 16th AFF Council Meeting held on Saturday at Shangri-La Hotel in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The AFF Futsal Championship 2018 will be held on 5 to 11 November, taking part eight teams in two groups. Malaysia, Myanmar, Indonesia and Cambodia will play in Group A and Thailand, Viet Nam, Brunei and Timor Leste in Group B.

In the meeting, the AFF Council donated a total of USD 100,000 to the victims of the Laos Dam Disaster and the earthquakes in Lombok. U Zaw Zaw, the President of the Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) gave USD 10,000 to Lombok. He had earlier given USD 10,000 to Laos while the FAT of Thailand contributed drinking water to the affected areas in Laos, according to the Official Website of Asean Football Federation.—K. Banana ■

Tiger, Spieth confident in Ryder Cup security plans

PARAMUS (United States) — American stars Tiger Woods and Jordan Spieth expressed their confidence in security arrangements for next month's Ryder Cup team golf showdown in France.

Ryder Cup organizers have been working with French police and government agencies on security measures at the course, Le Golf National, and team hotel in Versailles since May 2011, when France was awarded the Ryder Cup.

The Telegraph of London reported earlier this week a "Ring of Steel" would be in place.

And if French President Emmanuel Macron and his US counterpart, Donald Trump, were to attend, elite special forces would be placed on duty with mobile surface-to-air infrared missiles also deployed, according to the story.

As well, the Versailles area will be closed to air traffic, with the exception of registered helicopters and fighter jets.

An expected 50,000 fans are expected to flock to the course, with the September 28-30 event expected to be the strongest-guarded golfing event in the history of the ancient club-and-ball game.

Woods has played the Le National course just once, back in 1994 as an amateur, and while he was named a USA Team vice-cap-

tain earlier this year, the 42-year-old winner of 14 major titles is expected to be announced by US captain Jim Furyk next month as one of four captain's picks for the 12-man roster.

"I have traveled all over the world playing golf, so I've experienced different security scenarios where ever I've been," Woods said from this week's PGA Northern Trust tournament.

"I am sure the Ryder Cup will be fine and the organizers will have covered every security issue.

"We saw the security in place for the London Olympics some years back and you could argue London is in a similar state of alert as France but I have all confidence in the organizers." —AFP ■



Tiger Woods is expected to be announced by US Ryder Cup captain Jim Furyk next month as one of four captain's picks for the 12-man roster. PHOTO: AFP

		Medals Table			
		G	S	B	Total
		(Gold)	(Silver)	(Bronze)	
Rank	Country				
1	China	72	51	30	153
2	Japan	35	32	44	111
3	Republic of Korea	25	27	34	86
4	IR Iran	14	11	9	34
5	Indonesia	10	12	17	39
6	DPR Korea	10	5	7	22
7	Thailand	8	8	24	40
8	India	7	5	17	29
9	Chinese Taipei	6	11	13	30
10	Uzbekistan	5	10	8	23
11	Kazakhstan	4	7	27	38
12	United Arab Emirates	3	4	1	8
13	Mongolia	3	2	5	10
14	Hong Kong, China	2	6	13	21
15	Kyrgyzstan	2	4	6	12
16	Singapore	2	2	7	11
24	Philippines	1	0	9	10
25	Iraq	1	0	0	1
26	Lao PDR	0	1	2	3
26	Turkmenistan	0	1	2	3
28	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	0	1	1	2
28	Qatar	0	1	1	2
30	Myanmar	0	0	2	2
30	Pakistan	0	0	2	2