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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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President U Win Myint accepts credentials from the Ambassador of Italy

H.E. Mrs. Alessandra Schiavo, the newly-accredited Ambassador of the Italian Republic to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, presented her Letter of Credence to U Win Myint, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw at 10:00 am yesterday.

Present on the occasion were Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin, Deputy Minister for the Office of the President U Min Thu and Director-General of the Protocol Department U Thant Sin.—MNA

President U Win Myint receives the newly-accredited Ambassador of Italy at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Rakhine Advisory Board member meets with authorities, two communities separately in Maungtaw to hold reconciliation talks

A delegation led by Mr.Roelof Meyer, former Defence Minister of South Africa, member of the Advisory Board for the Committee for Implementation of the Recommendations on Rakhine State, met with local authorities, people from two different communities in Maungtaw, Rakhine State, yesterday, seeking ways to hold talks on reconciliation between the two communities.

First, he held a meeting with the officials at the meeting hall of the Maungtaw District General Administration Department in Maungtaw.

At the meeting, U Ye Htoo, Deputy District Administrator, briefed about the terrorist attacks that had occurred in Maungtaw, repatriation process for displaced people who had left their homes due to the terrorist attacks and the works for Maungtaw region development, resettlement and ongoing processes.

Afterwards, Mr.Roelof Meyer discussed with the authorities seeking ways to hold talks on reconciliation between the two communities.

Meeting with two different communities

In the afternoon, Mr. Roelof Meyer and party met separately with the towns elders of Maungtaw Township, people from Islamic community and people of Rakhine community, and discussed their opinions, views and suggestions over planning for reconciliation talks between the two communities. — Yamanya

Rakhine Advisory Board member Mr. Roelof Meyer holds meeting with representatives of the Muslim community at the Maungtaw District General Administration Department in Maungtaw, Rakhine State. **PHOTO: MYO THU HEIN**

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Pyithu Hluttaw

Second Pyithu Hluttaw's ninth regular session holds 15th-day meeting

THE 15th-day meeting of the ninth regular session of the Second Pyithu Hluttaw was held at the Pyithu Hluttaw meeting hall of the Hluttaw Building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the assembly, six questions concerning the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation were answered, a report submitted, a bill received reported, another bill put up for deliberation, and a motion discussed and asked for approval.

U Sein Han of Kanma constituency raised a question asking whether there are plans to conduct inspections on the state-run money lending business of the Kanma Township Cooperatives Society Ltd. on its renting of stores and houses that are not in line with enacted laws, and what actions will be taken against them.

Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw replied that proper instructions have been given to all township departments of cooperatives to properly manage the rented spaces to ensure no illegal items or alcohol consumption is carried out in the premises. He said the Kanma Township department also acquires a signed agreement from the tenant to follow the law. He said that there are currently no cases of department of cooperatives property being mishandled, but added that perpetrators will have action taken against them in accord with the Cooperative Societies Law.

U Sein Han. **PHOTO: MNA**

U Hla Kyaw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Tender processes follow President Office's guidelines

Daw Nan Kham Aye of Namtu constituency raised a question asking what guidelines the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation follows when advertising tender offers, whether there are different guidelines for states and regions, and who is the authority that scrutinizes items from a successful tender and ensure they reach the designated location.

Deputy Minister U Hla Kyaw replied that the tender process follows the guidelines and instructions set by the Office of the President, which applies to all states and regions. He said that under the administration of the state and region government, the Tender Committee, The Floor Price Calculation Committee, Tender Accepting and Scrutinizing Committee, and the Quality Review Committee are formed to verify set standards in relevant businesses, specifying rules for the tender process, advertising in newspapers and media, inviting tender applicant companies and media to explain the rules before the tender deadline approaches, and scrutinizing the technological and quotation concept notes on the deadline of a tender.

The deputy minister said all departments and universities under the ministry use the tender process. The Department of Irrigation and Water Utilization Management advertises tender offers for construction projects exceeding Ks 100 million.

Holding documents accessible only by owners

U Ba Shein of Kyaukpyu constituency raised a question on whether the plot of land at Holdings No. 118/C in Kyaukpyu Township is registered in the township land statistics department and why the relevant ministry has not supplied a copy of the Holdings' map to the MP, even though they have the responsibility to do so. Deputy Minister U Hla Kyaw replied that the particular plot of land at Holdings No. 118/C is registered with U Than Myint and its documents are archived at the Township Department of Agricultural Land Management and Statistics. He said only the true landowner or a legal representative can access or request copies of the land's documents.

Similarly, Deputy Minister U Hla Kyaw also replied to questions raised by U Sai San Thein of Mongnai constituency on whether there are plans to expand Namtun creek, Namsalai creek, Naungon creek, Naungkyawt pond and Lwaisel pond in Mongnai Tonship; U Naing Naing Win of Tamu constituency on whether permits for establishing farmlands will be granted to local residents in Yannyeinaung Village, Indine village-tract, Tamu Township; and U Tin Aye of Metmung constituency on whether there are plans to construct a District/Township Rural Development Department building and District/Township Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department building.

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Amyotha Hluttaw

Ninth regular session of Second Amyotha Hluttaw holds 15th-day meeting

DURING the 15th-day meeting of the ninth regular session of the Second Amyotha Hluttaw held at the Amyotha Hluttaw meeting hall of the Hluttaw Building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, asterisk marked questions were answered and MPs discussed the Boundary Measurement and Demarcation Bill.

Implementing CBT in endangered Salone ethnic settlements

Dr. Khin Maung Win of Taninthayi Region constituency 11 raised a question on whether community-based tourism (CBT) will be implemented in the ethnically endangered Salone (a) Moken islands of Makyonegalat, Nyaungwi, Jarlan, Jarohn and Langan in Kawthoung District and to protect the settlements, coasts and bays of the islands from the monopolization of hotels and tourism companies.

Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung replied that a pilot project for implementing CBT in the Taninthayi Region is being carried out in Samhlam Village in Launglon Twp, and will eventually be followed by Donenyaungmhine Village in Kyunsu Twp, Myeik District and Makyonegalat Village in Kawthoung Twp, Kawthoung District. He also said monopolization will not occur as hotels and tourism companies operating on the islands will require permission from the Myanmar Investment Commission, land lease agreements and BOT contracts, and permits from the regional government and the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

U Sai Ohn Kyaw. **PHOTO: MNA**

U Ohn Maung. **PHOTO: MNA**

Priority given to paving concrete roads in Siitway-Buthidaung pathway

U Khin Maung Latt of Rakhine State constituency 3 raised a question on whether the Mayu bridge on the Sittway-Mayu pathway will be constructed running through Muse island.

Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lin replied that the Sittway-Ponnagyun-Yathedaung-Buthidaung pathway connecting Sittway Town to Buthidaung Town in Mayu area has been constructed, allowing for direct travel by vehicles along the 79.1-mile road and the nine bridges, each a 180-feet and over, connecting them. Currently a project is underway to upgrade the pathway to a concrete road that will allow vehicles to access the road in all weather, taking only 3:30 hrs from Sittway to Buthidaung, he said. He added that concrete roads are also being paved from Angumaw to Maungtaw.

The deputy minister said the pathway to be constructed trough Muse island, as oart if the Sittway-Ponnagyun-Yathedaung-Buthidaung pathway will require building three bridges measuring 4,300 feet, 550 feet and 14,300 feet respectively. He said the costs for this part of the pathway is too high and priority is given to complete paving the concreted roads on the original pathway. He added that a prefeasibility study will be conducted to include the pathway through Muse island in the long-term road network development program.

Gottwin bridge to attract tourists, land confiscation act may be enforced

U Sai Ohn Kyaw of Shan State constituency 4 raised a question concerning the project for Nawnghkio Town bypass project in Kyaukme District, Shan State (North), also called the new Gottwin bridge access road project.

Deputy Minister U Kyaw Lin replied that the bypass and Gottwin bridge will be constructed 696 meters from the world famous Goteik viaduct, and once completed will allow a view of the famed viaduct thus attracting world travelers. The bridge will be built using the balance cantilever method combined with cable stayed, a technique never before seen in Myanmar.

SEE PAGE-3

President U Win Myint accepts credentials from the Ambassador of the Republic of Chile

H.E. Mr. Christian Rehren Bargetto, the newly-accredited Ambassador of the Republic of Chile to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, presented his Letter of Credence to U Win Myint, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw at 10:45 am yesterday.

Present on the occasion were Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin, U Min Thu, Deputy Minister for the Office of the President and Director-General of the Protocol Department U Thant Sin.—MNA ■

President U Win Myint receives the newly-accredited Ambassador of the Republic of Chile at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker receives Chilean Ambassador to Myanmar

PHOTO: MNA

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat received the Ambassador of the Republic of Chile to Myanmar Mr. Christian Rehren Bargetto at the Pyithu Hluttaw guest hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting, they discussed promoting the bilateral relations between Myanmar and Chile, cooperation processes between Hluttaws, cooperation processes in legislations between the two countries, trading, investment, agriculture and mining .—MNA■

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker receives Ambassador of the Republic of Chile

PHOTO: MNA

AMYOTHA Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than received the Ambassador of the Republic of Chile, Mr. Christian Rehren Bargetto at the Amyotha Hluttaw guest room in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting, they discussed cooperation between the two countries in agriculture, education and health sectors and procedures of the Hluttaw. Also present at the meeting were Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung and officials from the Amyotha Hluttaw.—MNA■

Union Minister for Commerce receives Chilean, Italian ambassadors separately

Union Minister for Commerce Dr Than Myint received Ambassador of Chile to Myanmar Mr. Christian Rehren Bargetto and Italian Ambassador to Myanmar Mrs. Alessandra Schiavo separately at his ministry yesterday.

During the meeting with the Chilean Ambassador, the Union Minister discussed exporting Myanmar's aquatic and agricultural products to Chile and invited technology and investors from Chile to mining sector of Myanmar as the South American country possesses high mining technology. They also discussed exporting Myanmar's agricultural products to Chile with "Zero Tariff".

At the meeting with the Italian Ambassador, they friendlily discussed matters on technical assistance from Italy for boosting Myanmar's export and development of basic infrastructure and human resources, and cooperation in development of Small and Medium Enterprises and agricultural sector with the technical and financial assistance from Italy. — MNA■

Ninth regular session of Second Amyotha Hluttaw....

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The deputy minister said the project cost will be partially covered by Oriental Highway Co. Ltd and will require two separate expenditure of Ks 40 billion and US$ 120.77 million. He said the bypass and bridge will take up 169.99 acres of agricultural land in Kyaukme Twp and 329.74 acres of agricultural land and forest area in Nawnghkio Twp. He said 36.35 acres of the combined areas are state-owned and thus require no compensation. The remaining 463.38 acres belong to 283 local residents and a total compensation capital of Ks 6.173 billion has been acquired in the fiscal year 2017-2018, handled by the Department of Bridges.

The deputy minister said 73 per cent of the compensation has been paid to local residents and he urged regional Hluttaw representatives to negotiate with the 62 local residents who have yet to accept the compensation. He added that Union Government has approved of the Shan State government's appeal to follow the 1894 Land Confiscation Act if negotiations fail.

MPs suggest amendments to national boundary bill

MPs then discussed the Boundary Measurement and Demarcation Bill.

The bill was discussed by Dr. Kun Win Thaung of Kachin State constituency 11, U Win Myint from Magway Region constituency 8, U Tin Aung Tun of Magway Region constituency 5 and U Soe Thein (a) U Maung Soe of Taninthayi Region constituency 10. Afterwards, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than announced that the Pyithu Hluttaw has sent back with amendments the 2017 Myanmar Gemstone Bill, sent with approval by the Amyotha Hluttaw. He called for MPs interested in discussing the bill to enroll their names.

The 16th-day meeting of the ninth regular session of the Second Amyotha Hluttaw will be held on 7 September.—Aung Ye Thwin■

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Staff from forestry department release eight softshell turtles in the Dokhtawaddy river. **PHOTO: THAN OO (LAYMYETHNAR)**

Eight softshell turtles released

THE FORESTRY department seized a total of 94 turtles from a passenger vehicle at Yaypu check point, Hsenwi Township, Shan State on 19 July. The illegal turtles have been sent to the Ban Bway tortoise conservation camp, in cooperation with Nawnghkio forestry department.

Authorities then conserved them at the Ban Bway tortoise conservation camp. Of the 94 turtles, 79 yellow-footed tortoises, six black turtles and one Arakan forest turtle have received treatment. Among the four species of turtles, eight Myanmar softshell turtles were released in Dokhtawaddy River as there is not enough space to conserve them in the long-term. Before that, authorities provided treatment and food at Ban Bway camp.

The eight Myanmar softshell turtles have been released in Dokhtawaddy River on 15 August.—Than Oo (Laymyethnar) ■

Villous amomum harvested in Thandaunggyi

LOCAL people in Thandaunggyi area, Kayin State, have harvested villous amomum also called amomum villosum on which they rely for their livelihoods. Villous amomum fruit harvest falls in September.

Last year, the price of villous amomum declined because of lower demand from China. Therefore, Myanmar Villous Amomum Association provided planting methods and training courses this year to promote the quality and price of villous amomum.

However, local residents from some villages plucked villous amomum fruit on 10 September because of unstable weather, according to local agricultural department. According to local residents, the villous amomum fruit produced high yield this year, due to heavy rain in their region. However, some villous amomum fruits have been destroyed by rodents this year.—Township IPRD ■

Illegal teak, ammunition confiscated in Mu river basin area

AUTHORITIES seized two elephants, varieties of hardwood lumbers weighing 130.41 tons and varieties of 597 hardwood logs, 16 saw mills, five vehicles, two chainsaws and percussion lock firearms and arrested four people in connection with illegal logging in Mu river basin between 2016 and 2018, said an official from Green Homeland Development Association.

A combined team comprising officers and staff from forestry department and forest police seized those illegal items in Mu river basin area, Sagaing Region with the assistance of public participated Natural Resource Conservation technique, published by Green Homeland Development Association.

"In April 2016, authorities seized one saw mill, square hardwood weighing three tons and 62 hardwood logs in east Chaung Gwe Village, while one saw mill, hardwood weighing over one ton were seized at three miles west of Nantat village in September 2016.

Authorities also seized two elephants, timber weighing 28.164 tons, ingyin weighing 4.174 tons and arrested four people near Hsin Tay Gine foothills in Gwecho Village, while 201 timber logs and 81 Tanmalan logs were seized in Pinlebu border in Bamauk," said an in charge of Green Homeland Development Association.

Additionally, three saw mills, hardwood weighing totally 21.5 tons were seized in Naung Pu Inn, Kanban and Kyauk U in December 2016, while nine Tanmalan blocks were seized in Kyar Inn Kone in January 2017.

Authorizes also seized five saw mills, one chainsaw, two percussion lock firearms, 12 Tanmalan blocks, arieties of hardwood weighing 43.126 tons and 97 hardwood logs from War Yu Thar Kanban and Naung Mu villages in March and November 2017.

In March 2018, authorities confiscated one vehicle, five saw mills, hardwood weighing over 13 tons and over 100 hardwood logs in Kanban Village, while four vehicles, 34 Tanmalan blocks, one Tanmalan log and hardwood lumbers, weighing 9 tons were seized in Gwecho village.—Myo Win Tun (Monywa) ■

Thanlwin river rises for second time, inundates Pasawng

HEAVY rains that occurred on 4 September caused Thanlwin river to swell, thereby resulting in floods in some wards and low lying areas of Pasawng, Kayah State, on 5 September morning.

Heaving heard the flood news, chairman of the Township Disaster Management Committee, administrator of the Township General Administration Department U Aung Myat Moe and committee members, Tatmadaw members from battalions and units, Myanmar Police Force, fire brigade members and local people went to the affected areas and provided all the necessary assistance, including the evacuation of flood victims to safety. Altogether 128 persons from 31 households were affected by the disaster and they are being provided with relief items by the Disaster Management Committee, under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.—MDN/ Pasawng Township IPRD ■

JICA plans to offer two-step loan of Ks151.6 billion for next fiscal year

JAPAN International Cooperation Agency (JICA) will plan to offer two-step loan of 11.5 billion yen (about Ks151.6 billion) for next fiscal year 2018-2019.

At the 9th day meeting of the seven regular the session of Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw held on 22 February, 14.9 billion yen was approved for JICA SME two-step loan phase-2. The loan agreement was signed on 29 March.

To implement this phase-2, Myanmar Citizens Bank, Kanbawza, Myanma Economic Bank, Myanmar Cooperative Bank, Ayeyawady Bank, Myanmar First Private Bank and United Amara Bank were selected as Participating Financial Institutions (PFIs), according to working committee for loan access held on 2 August at the Ministry of Planning and Finance.

This month, 3 billion yen (about Ks36 billion) will be lent to the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) from respective regions and states through seven PFIs.

All SMEs engaged in manufacturing, labor-based projects, retail and wholesale, service and other businesses are eligible to apply for JICA SME two-step loans. However, those farmers who can access to loans provided by Myanma Agricultural Development Bank, real estate agents, finance and insurance traders, precious metal dealers, liquor shops, entertainment and amusement businesses and manufacturers of arms and ammunition are not eligible.

A maximum mortgaged-backed loan of Ks500 million can be taken out at an annual interest rate of 8.5 per cent. Loan term is set from 1 to 5 years.

80 per cent of the loan is set to be used as fixed capital while the remaining 20 per cent as working capital.

In 2015-2016 fiscal year, 11 businesses took JICA's two-step loan of Ks4.8 million through Small and Medium Industrial Development Bank. JICA offered Ks36.7 billion loan for 175 entrepreneurs in 2016-2017 FY and Ks16 billion in 2017-2018 FY.

JICA's two-step loan is offered at an interest rate of 0.01 per cent to the government, which provides loans at an interest rate of 4 per cent to private banks. The banks will then give loans at an interest rate of 8.5 per cent to SMEs.

While taking out loans, fraudulent cases such as submission of counterfeit receipts and grants have prompted financial institutions to strictly follow bank loan screening process. Some traders are complaining over tight verification process of financial institutions.

There are over 67,000 registered SMEs, and there are many businesses which have failed to register, according to SME Development Department. SMEs constitute 90 per cent of Myanmar's businesses, but most of them are facing barriers and challenges regarding capital, technology and market access.— GNLM■

Increasing demand for mung beans from China

CHINA started purchasing mung beans from Myanmar beginning from August, according to Mandalay Pulses Market.

"The mung beans, which was mainly exported to India previously, has now less demand from India. Therefore, the local people were worried about losing their bean market. However, China started purchasing the mung beans, which can make the market to be sustained," said U Soe Win Myint, owner of Soe Win Myint Brokerage.

"China purchases two 12-wheel vehicles of mung beans daily at current price. Now, the price of mung beans is likely to rise in the local market," he added.

The price of mung beans reached to Ks 46,000 on 4 September, increasing from Ks38,000 per bag recently in Mandalay market. Currently, new mung beans are entering the market from Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions. A mung beans is sold at Ks40,000 per bag in the Mandalay market.

The price of black sesame and black cumin hit Ks 200,000 per bag, while the price of lablab bean is Ks150,000 per bag in Mandalay market.—Min Htet Aung (Mandalay sub-printing house) ■

Mung beans and pulses kept on display for sale at a market. **PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG (MANDALAY SUB-PRINTING HOUSE)**

YSX Expo 2018 to be held

YSX Expo 2018 will be held on 9 September at Novotel Hotel, Yangon from 9am to 4pm, with a view to increasing the number of individual investors, including shareholders of listed companies in Myanmar, supporting growth of Myanmar enterprises and helping development of ecosystem of the capital market, according to a notice from the Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX).

Additionally, the event will help those interested to explore in detail of five listed companies' future perspectives and growth. They can also consult with staff from securities companies.

The public companies— First Myanmar Investment Co., Ltd. (FMI), Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings Public Ltd. (MTSH), Myanmar Citizens Bank Ltd. (MCB), First Private Bank Ltd. (FPB) and TMH Telecom Public Co., Ltd. (TMH) are currently trading shares.

YSX also gave trading qualifications to the following securities companies— Myanmar Securities Exchange Center Co., Ltd. KBZ Stirling Coleman Securities Co., Ltd, CB Securities Ltd, AYA Trust Securities Co. Ltd., KTZ Ruby Hill Securities Co., Ltd. and UAB Securities Ltd.

For enthusiastic investors, security account opening facilities will be provided through one-stop services. They need to bring their NRC card and Bank Book in order to be processed.

At the event, U Aung Naing Oo, Director-General of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration will discuss the role of capital market in the growth of Myanmar economy. Additionally, there will be short presentation of five listed companies' financial reviews for FY 2017-2018 and future business outlook. The event also includes panel discussions for future business outlooks of listed companies and foreign participation and Myanmar companies' potential.

YSX Expo will display YSX's booths for stock quizzes and gifts, all listed companies and securities companies, professional firms and educational firms and banks and insurance companies. Lucky draw program will be included. Registration is needed to be made in advance through filling registration forms online: http://ysxexpo2018.ysx-mm.com/register/ or by dialing 01-371274,01-371276, 09-762690560. —GNLM ■

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Shan Nationalities Democratic Party presents its policy, stance and work program

U Sai Ai Pao, Chairman of Shan Nationalities Democratic Party.

CHAIRMAN of the Shan Nationalities Democratic Party U Sai Ai Pao has presented the party's policy, stance, work program and other issues from radio and television on 5 September.

Following is a translation of the presentation:

Mày sung khaa.
Mingalabar.

Citizens and voters,

I wish you all health and happiness.

Ethnic nationalities,

The aspiration of all ethnic peoples of the Union is to enjoy life that is free from all social worries in a peaceful, stable, modern and developed democratic federal union and to peacefully coexist in the global village.

Since Shan Nationalities Democratic Party was registered as a political party under registration No 15/2010 on 26 May 2010, the party has been striving under its own conviction to realize the political expectations of the ethnic peoples and citizens. The party will continue this endeavor.

Our belief

We firmly believe that we can build a federal Republic of the Union of Myanmar only if we can establish a democratic state where there is no oppression and repression, but instead love and unity among the ethnic peoples, equality in basic social rights, fairness and liberty.

We declare that the following are the main points of the goal and work program of the party:

(a) To establish a federal democratic state through peaceful means;
(b) To ensure perpetuation of the Union, and love and unity among its ethnic nationalities;
(c) To ensure all basic social rights for every ethnic race living in the Union;
(d) To prioritize especially on the practical work and not on the theories or dreams;
(e) To apply all available rights and authority in achieving more effectiveness, without giving priority to confrontation and opposition in politics and other sectors.

All ethnic races, including Bamars,

At present, the world has become a global village because of the intangible and tangible facilitation of communications and connection sectors.

We can compare our country with a household in this global village. Only if the leadership and management is good, then members of a household will be happy, and in unity the family can be protected and developed. Otherwise, there will be no development undertaking, as happiness comes to a halt and unity becomes broken down.

For all the brethren to strive in unity and love for the progress and prosperity of the Union, an environment, where there are equal basic human rights, justice and freedom and where there is no oppression and repression, must be created. We will achieve peace and prosperity if we concentrate on the practical areas, rather than on dreams, while staying away from placing personal interests and desire in the fore.

So we need to choose the people's representatives who keep their promises and who will lead with goodwill for a "real change" towards a positive end.

Ethnic nationalities,

Fifty-one points have been agreed upon at the Union Peace Conference — 21st Century Panglong, as its fruits. An agreement on the establishment of a public-aspired democratic federal state, which received unanimous support, is also included in the 51 points.

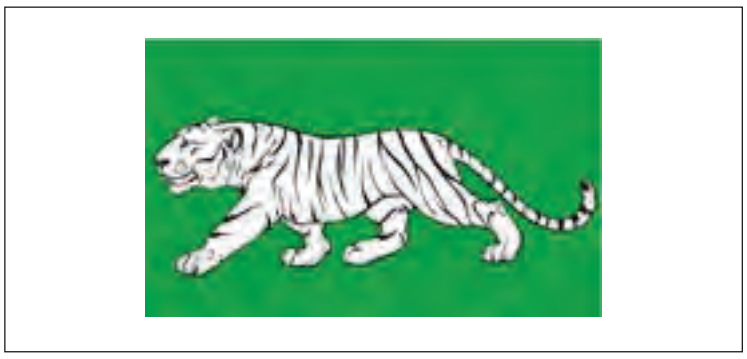
Ethnic nationalities,

The word federal doesn't mean secession. It actually stands for "integration".

- In the Union, necessary legislative and administrative powers should be shared equally among the states, so that they can have equal rights.
- On behalf of all, the Union government shall be responsible for the legislative and administrative powers that must be exercised collectively.
- A system that equally distributes the rightful powers to the states is a true federal system.

It is a kind of federal we desire.

We need a real change towards a positive end in establishing a democratic federal state, aspired by the entire people. So we all need to choose people's representatives that prove themselves with practical actions, not just in words.



Party logo.

Ethnic nationalities,

Just by wearing a flower doesn't mean that we love flowers. We can say we love flowers only if we water the plant, fertilize the soil and do weeding, until beautiful and sweet-smelling flowers bloom. We cannot say that a person loves a democratic federal system, if they just want to grab its fruits. They are in fact selfish persons and day-dreamers.

To enjoy the beauties of a democratic federal system, such as the practice of paying attention to the aspiration of both the majority and the minority and ensuring full basic rights, equality justice and freedom, we must water the plant, fertilize the soil and do weeding. If we cannot do this by ourselves, we should find a person or party that will do the job, on our behalf. The person who will represent us must be the person from an organization desirous of serving the majority interest with zeal and energetic efforts. In other words, they must be from a party with an excellent policy. We need to select a good person.

I would like to inform the people that the chance to make a real change towards a positive end is in your hands.

Ethnic nationalities,

Political development comes together with national economic growth. We can develop our national economy as long as we can ensure a peaceful and stable political landscape. Likewise, there will be peace, stability and social development in the nation only if there is economic progress. Only if people fully enjoy equality, there will be socioeconomic progress and peace and stability in the nation. Moreover, we can avoid social problems.

So, I would like to urge the people to join hands in implementing a federal economic system, based on equality, justice and freedom in generating a real change towards a peaceful and stable positivity, terminating social troubles.

Ethnic nationalities,

We can say that the election is an event in which persons who wish to take political responsibility and accountability on the path towards a desired federal democratic state will be tested. Gold proves its value when tested. Likewise, a people's representative must take the responsibility and accountability to prove his words with deeds.

We will reach the goal of a democratic federal system only if the public correctly elects the persons who prove their words with actions.

Let's make a real positive change. So, make sure, you cast a vote correctly for the candidate you choose.

Ethnic nationalities,

Last but not the least, I would say that we are all the ones who wish to build and develop our own lives and country, which is our home and shelter. So as a means to pay back the gratitude we owe to our country, we must make the right choice in the election.

As for making a real positive change, the Shan Nationalities Democratic Party solemnly vows to carry on giving new life to the Union, based on its own stance. With this I conclude.

Translated by TMT

*****

THE CENTRAL

WHERE THE FINEST MEET

AWARD - WINNING DEVELOPMENT | BY INYA LAKE

HOTLINE
+ 959 777 773 770

PROJECT LOCATION

Corner of Kabar Aye Pagoda Road and Kanbe Road, Yankin Township, Yangon, Myanmar

thecentralyangon

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ELEVATED LIVING IN MYANMAR'S BEST ADDRESS

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6 SEPTEMBER 2018
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Towards zero traffic fatalities together

TRAFFIC deaths have increased in Myanmar with the number of vehicles on the road increasing since 2011 when the new car import policy took effect.

The increasing number of fatal road accidents statistics paints a worrisome picture.

Experts said not wearing seat belts by both drivers and passengers, driving under the influence of alcohol, distracted driving, high speed limits and using mobile phones while driving are found as major causes for road accidents.

Traffic and road accidents could not be foreseen but are preventable.

Basic rules toward improving road safety such as the use of seat belts, abstaining from use of mobile phones while driving and driving at high speed should be enforced in regions and states.

> Changes like those being made in our traditional New Year festival period can save lives.

We agreed that seat belts save lives. There are also regulations regarding seat belts and child safety seats in our vehicles.

Besides, drivers should not focus on smartphones, in-car infotainment systems and other distractions when they should be focused on the road. All road users are urged to obey the road safety rules to put the country's drive for road safety in the right direction.

Road signs, installation of signal lights and road construction projects are required to follow existing rules and laws.

For achieving quick wins in the country's national road safety drive, wearing helmets (for motorcyclists), using seat-belts, abstention from using smartphones while driving, abstention from drunk driving and driving over the speed limit are required to be obeyed by all road users.

Meanwhile, relevant departments need to systematically enforce the road safety ruleswhile private driving schools need good and complete courses with capable and truly experienced driving instructors, teaching guide literature and practical driving lessons.

We witnessed in April that cooperation and conduct of relevant entities contributed to a decline in fatalities and injuries from traffic and road accidents during the 2018 New Year Thingyan period.

Safety advocates say the achievement came due to the authorities' push to eliminate traffic deaths by lowering speed limits and drunk driving and due to cooperation between the people and traffic rules enforcers.

If drivers and road users follow the vehicle, traffic and road rules, loss of properties, lives and limbs could be reduced significantly.

Changes like those being made in our traditional New Year festival period can save lives.

The world's vision on Road Safety "Towards Zero Together" could be achieved only through effective organization and

The role of Myanmar Investment Commission, the new Myanmar Investment Law 2016

By Ye Khaung Nyunt, Zaw Gyi

A roundtable business discussion was held recently, during which matters relating to duties and responsibilities of the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC), opportunities and challenges faced by investors and current economic and financial situation at home and abroad were discussed by U Than Aung Kyaw, Deputy Director General from the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA), Daw Mya Thuzar, MIC Joint Secretary, U Htay Chun, MIC member, and U Aye Lwin, MIC member and National League for Democracy Central Economic Committee member.

Q: Could you explain the functions and responsibilities of the Myanmar Investment Commission?

U Than Aung Kyaw: The Myanmar Investment Commission was formed in accordance with rules and regulations prescribed by the government. With regard to implementation, the MIC was established to facilitate the investment process in Myanmar.

Main business

The first and primary task of the MIC is to see to it that there is an increase in domestic and overseas investments, and the second task is to facilitate the investment process, in coordination with state and regional governments and ministries. We also provide investment policies to state and regional governments to support their responsibilities and accountability.

As in other countries, to encourage investors, the MIC works on creating incentives whereby they could enjoy their rights and privileges. On the other hand, the MIC monitors whether or not these businesses are legal and beneficial to the country, whether or not they are accountable and responsible. These are our main tasks that we carry out.

Q: Prior to the Myanmar Investment Law 2016, we have witnessed a series of steps taken in the enactment of a number of investment laws. What is the reason behind these steps?

Daw Mya Thuzar: Since Myanmar transformed itself into a market-oriented economy in 1988, the government enacted the Foreign Investment Law of Myanmar 1988, aiming a speedy flow of investments. Also, the government promulgated the Myanmar Citizens Investment Law 1994 with an objective of granting employment opportunities to our citizens.

Q: What are the advantages and benefits of the new Myanmar Investment Law 2016?

U Htay Chun: There are many salient features in the Myanmar Investment Law 2016, such as enhancing the volume of investments, making it public with some relaxations, compared to previous laws. We drafted the law, focusing on transparency. Formerly, every company or business was needed to obtain permission from the ministry concerned, but situations have changed now. Enterprises need no permission to make investments in Myanmar. According to Section 36 of the Myanmar Investment Law 2016, investors are needed to submit a proposal to the commission and start investing, once permit for the following businesses stipulated in the rules is received: (a) strategic investment businesses that are essential to the Union; (b) investment projects with huge capital investment; (c) investments which are likely to cause a large positive impact on the environment and the local community; (d) investment businesses that are located on state-owned land and buildings; (e) investment businesses which are designated by the government. Except for these five categories, no investments need any permission from the commission and can start work with an approval. With an aim for states and regions to develop on an equal stand, investment committees have been formed in the regions, and these committees can approve investments in their areas. The maximum amount of an investment that can be approved by state and regional governments had been set to US$5 million or Ks.6 billion. Regional and state investment committees will now be able to approve proposals without having to seek permission from the MIC.

PHOTO: PHO ZAW

> Formerly, it took up to 90 days to obtain permission from the MIC, but at present, permission can be obtained within 60 days. As for the approval order, it can easily be obtained within 30 days. Moreover, the MIC has declared investment promotion zones, where relaxation of three, five or seven years have been set, according to zonal classification.

Investment facilitation

Formerly, it took up to 90 days to obtain permission from the MIC, but at present, permission can be obtained within 60 days. As for the approval order, it can easily be obtained within 30 days. Moreover, the MIC has declared investment promotion zones, where relaxation of three, five or seven years have been set, according to zonal classification. These are the advantages of the new law.

Q: Regarding zonal classification, what kind of benefits and results will there be?

U Aye Lwin: Actually, the purpose of the law is good. As far as I know, there are some countries, including Laos, Cambodia and Viet Nam, that have practiced similar kind of law. Yangon and Mandalay are regarded as the main developed regions in Myanmar and are in Zone 3. Only a few places can be classified as Zone 3, where investors can enjoy three years of tax exemption. According to the commission, less-developed regions are designated as Zone 1, while moderately-developed regions as Zone 2. By investing in the less-developed zones, regions can enjoy more income tax exemptions. Under the new investment law, investors can enjoy income tax exemption for a consecutive 7 years, starting from the year of investment operation in Zone 1, while those who invest in Zone 2 will get a 5-year exemption. Most of the investments are in the developed regions, but investors are eager to invest in the government's promoted sectors to enjoy tax privileges.

All in all, the MIC has paved way for investors to carry out their projects within the legal framework. We are making all-out efforts in creating effective approaches that would invite foreign investors as to enhance the country's economy.

Q: Could you explain measures taken for a speedier granting of permits to business enterprises?

U Than Aung Kyaw: Well, it took about 90 days to make a business proposal in former times, and thanks to the new law, it takes now only 60 days. After obtaining permission from the relevant ministry, investors can apply for their license with ease and in a systematic way. We also informed the public what sectors would suit them the best in making investments, such as agriculture, farming or the hotel industry.

Quick and easy

The Myanmar Investment Commission is a government-appointed body, responsible for verifying and approving investment proposals and regularly issuing notifications about sector-specific developments. The Myanmar Investment Law 2016 has changed the role of the MIC. One Stop Services (OSS) have now been established by the MIC, aiming to serve the interests of the people and the business enterprises.

Translated by
Win Ko Ko Aung
Photo: Pho Zaw

■

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.

ပြန်ကြားရေးနှင့်ပြည်သူဆက်ဆံရေးဦးစီးဌာန
အခြေခံပညာဦးစီးဌာနနှင့် ကျောက်ဆည်မြို့ပြည်သူလူထုတို့
ပူးပေါင်းကျင်းပသော

ကလေးစာပေပြပွဲနှင့်စာအုပ်ဈေးရောင်းပွဲတော်

(ကျောက်ဆည်မြို့)

၂၀၁၈-ခုနှစ်၊ဧကင်္ဘာလ(၇/၉/၂)ရက် သောကြာစနေ၊တနင်္ဂနွေများတွင်
နံနက်(၉)နာရီမှ ညနေ(၅)နာရီထိတိုင်အောင်ပြည်သူ့ဆိုပါဝင်ဆင်နွှဲနိုင်ပါသည်။
အထက(၁)ကျောက်ဆည်မြို့။

Myanmar Daily Weather Report
(Issued at 2:00 pm Wednesday 5th September, 2018)

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS RECORDED AT 09:30 hrs M.S.T: During the past (24)hours, rain or thundershowers have been fairly widespread in Lower Sagaing and Magway Regions, Kachin State and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with regionally heavy falls in Naypyitaw, Mandalay and Ayeyarwady Regions, Kayin and Mon States and isolated heavy falls in Magway Region and Kachin State. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded were Hainggyigyun (5.79)inches, Thaton (5.75)inches, Yay (4.25)inches, Kawkareik (3.43)inches, Shan-Ywar-Thit (3.39)inches, Kyeikkhame (3.27)inches, Phyarpon and Paung (3.20)inches each, Putao (3.11)inches, Natogyi (3.00)inches, Gwa and Kawthaung (2.99)inches each, Shwegone (2.95)inches, Labutta (2.83)inches, Ngazun (2.81)inches, Dawei and Launglon (2.60)inches each and Kamamaung (2.36)inches.
BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (13:30)hrs M.S.T today, the low pressure area over the Northwest Bay of Bengal still persists. Monsoon is moderate over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and strong to vigorous elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.
FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 6th September, 2018: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions, Shan State and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with isolated heavy falls in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyarwady and Taninthayi Regions, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon States. Degree of certainty is (100%).
STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with rough seas are likely at times Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35-40)m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (8-10) feet in Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coasts and about (5.-7) feet in Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon – Taninthayi Coasts.
OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Moderate monsoon.
FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 6th September, 2018: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

Power China International Group contributes US$100,000 to rehabilitation works

POWER China International Group Co., Ltd. contributed US$100,000 to vocational trainings and rehabilitation works by the Work Committee on Reinstaing Vocational Training at the office of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The donation ceremony was attended by Union Minister for MOALI Dr. Aung Thu, Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Aung, permanent secretaries, directors-general, Mr Xie Guoxiang, the Economic and Commercial Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy in Myanmar members of the board of directors from Power China International Group Co. Ltd.

At the ceremony, Mr. Xie Guoxiang briefed about the donation and one of the directors from the Power China International Group explained the purpose of the donation. Chairman of the work committee Union Minister Dr. Aung Thu received US$100,000 presented by Mr. Yang Jian, General Manager of Power China International Group Co., Ltd. of China and expressed words of thanks.—MNA ■

General Manager Mr. Yang Jian hands over US$ 100,000 cash donation to Union Minister Dr Aung Thu. **PHOTO: MNA**

CBM's Governor meets Chairman of Korean Bank Association in Myanmar

GOVERNOR of the Central Bank of Myanmar U Kyaw Kyaw Maung received Chairman of Korean Bank Association in Myanmar Mr. Lee Chang Ha yesterday morning at Kant Kaw Hall of the Central Bank of Myanmar. During the meeting, they discussed cooperation in the financial sector between Myanmar and Republic of Korea, launching branches of foreign banks in Myanmar, Retail Payment Cards to be widely used in Myanmar and issues on cooperation processes between banks to develop Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sectors.—MNA ■

Central Bank Governor U Kyaw Kyaw Maung poses for a documentary photo with members from Korean Bank Association at the Central Bank of Myanmar. **PHOTO: MNA**

Thura U Shwe Mann holds talks with Chinese Ambassador Mr. Hong Liang in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Thura U Shwe Mann receives Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar

THURA U Shwe Mann, Chairman of the Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, received Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Hong Liang at the Hluttaw Building (I-1) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

During the meeting, they discussed and exchanged views on matters related to bilateral cooperation, peace and Myanmar's development.—MNA ■

Anti-Illicit Trade Forum held in Nay Pyi Taw

Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman U Aung Kyi addresses the Anti-Illicit Trade Forum in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Anti-Illicit Trade Forum was held at the M Gallery Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the forum, Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman U Aung Kyi called on participants of the forum for seeking ways for solving illicit trading in Myanmar.

The forum was also attended by officials from Euro Cham Myanmar, local business persons, officials from international organizations and anti-illicit trade field experts.

Executive Director from Euro Cham Myanmar, Mr. Filip Lauwerysen briefed about impacts of the illicit trade across the world and introduced facts to be taken into account by a government when it lays down policies on fighting the illicit trade.

Next, Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman U Aung Kyi said massive potential tax revenue loss is caused by illicit trade which negatively impacts the economy, natural environment and society and the illicit trade cannot be easily controlled under law as it is operated by illegal groups.

Illicit trade leads to breaking the taxation law and causes negative consequences, he added.

The Anti-Corruption Commission is drawing a strategy to fight the illicit trade 2018-2021 and is implementing the national level anti-corruption strategy, he said.

The chairman expressed his belief that the suggestions acquired from the forum will be supportive for the future plan of the commission, pledging that the commission will cooperate with the government organizations, public and private business persons, civil society organizations and the public in fighting the corruption in the country.

Afterwards, Chairman U Aung Kyi took a documentary photo together with the attendees. The forum then began and the participants of the forum discussed assessment of the illicit trade, government policy on trading and educating the public about impacts of corruption and illicit trade.—MNA ■

Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye attends ASEM Conference on "Global Ageing and Human Rights of Older Persons"

Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye and attendees pose for the photo at 3rd ASEM Conference. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye attended the first day of ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting) Conference on 'Global Ageing and Human Rights of Older Persons' in Seoul, Republic of Korea. Union Minister then attended the ministerial-level dialogue of Prime Minister of Republic of Korea Mr. Lee Nak-yeon and ministerial level officials from the ASEM Conference attended countries.

Speaking at the dinner which was held after the conference, the Union Minister appreciated the efforts of the Asia-Europe member countries for promoting the rights of older persons' health, poverty alleviation and protection from discrimination.

He expressed his belief that ASEM Global Ageing Center (AGAC) would play a leading role in the efforts.

His ministry has provided fundamental human rights to the people including older persons, after laying down policies in accord with the democratic standards, he said.

Social pensions have been provided to over 45,000 older persons aged over 90 since 2017.

Starting from this October, the social pensions will be provided to the older persons aged over 85, and the number of aged people who receive social pensions will reach over 150,000 across the nation.

Myanmar is carrying out the Sustainable Development Goals (2018-2030) set by the United Nations Development Programme, the Union Minister explained.

The Union Minister was accompanied by the Myanmar Ambassador to the Republic of Korea Thura U Thet Oo Maung at the meeting.

The ASEM Conference on "Global Ageing and Human Rights of Older Persons" will be held until 7 September. —MNA ■

Third Anniversary of China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation held

THE third anniversary of the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation (Myanmar) (CFPA-Myanmar) was held at the Diamond Jubilee Hall of Yangon University yesterday.

Deputy Director-General of the Higher Education Department Dr. Nay Win Oo delivered a speech at the ceremony. Counsellor of the Embassy of the People Republic of China in Myanmar Mr. Yang Shouzhang, and Deputy Secretary General of China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation Mr. Chen Hongtao also delivered speeches. Director for International Development Department of CFPA Mr. Wu Peng, reviewed and discussed the works of the CFPA Myanmar team.

Afterwards, scholarship recipient students entertained with music, and on behalf of them, a student gave word of thanks.

Next, Deputy Director-General Dr. Nay Win Oo, Deputy Secretary General of CFPA Mr. Chen Hongtao, Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy Mr. Yang Shouzhang and officials presented the scholarships to the student representatives of the University of East Yangon, University of West Yangon and Yangon University of Economics (Ywar Thar Gyi).

The China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation has been operating 10 projects in Myanmar for three years, and has granted scholarships worth Chinese Yuan ¥1.695 million to 1,300 university students.—MNA ■

Deputy Director-General Dr. Nay Win Oo delivers the speech at the third anniversary of China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation (CFPA) ceremony. **PHOTO: MNA**

Second Pyithu Hluttaw's ninth regular session ...

FROM PAGE-2

Next, Daw Thandar, member of the Pyithu Hluttaw Committee on Citizen's Fundamental Rights, read the committee's report to the assembly. MPs interested in discussing the report were asked to enroll their names.

It was then announced that the Second Bill Amending the Myanmar Pearl Law, sent back with amendments from the Amyotha Hluttaw, has been received and MPs interested in submitting amendments to the bill were asked to enroll their names.

The Pyithu Hluttaw then deliberated on the Literature and Art Copyright Bill, sent back with amendments from the Amyotha Hluttaw, after which the Pyithu Hluttaw approved the bill.

MPs discuss motion urging proper research for TVET

U Tin Maung Win of Seikkan constituency tabled a motion urging the Union Government to properly research the number of required skilled workers, technicians and engineers in the country so that appropriate policies and strategies can be put in place concerning opening new branches of technical high schools, government technical institutes and technical universities in implementing the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Myanmar.

Daw Khin Hnin Thit of Pandaung constituency discussed the motion saying that some countries teach technical and vocational education alongside basic education subjects, thus nurturing skilled professionals who will implement government policies. She said India produces 135,000 technicians a year, while Singapore produces 70,000, and Myanmar just 10,000. She said people need opportunities to utilize the technical or vocational skills they have acquired. Failure to create employment for them signals a weakness in national policies, she said. She said the motion urges research to properly see which variety of technicians and how many are required in the relevant sectors so that compatible and supportive national policies can be set, and thus she agrees with the motion.

U Ba Shein of Kyaukpyu constituency also discussed the motion saying the ministry of technology is organized under the Ministry of Education but a deputy minister has not been appointed for the technological sector. He said setting policies and strategies and performing research to develop the technological education aspects should be carried out. He said there should be a motivating force to ensure more emphasis on technological aspects. He said the Ministry of Education should broadly implement sectors relating to technology. He advised that appointing a deputy minister for technology will be suitable for undertaking technological development.

The motion was further discussed by U Saw Tun Mya Aung of Papun constituency, U Maung Myint of Mingin constituency, U Ohn Khin of Palaw constituency, U Sai Oo Kham of Hsenwi constituency, U Aung Thike of Seikpyu constituency, Dr. Daw Thet Thet Khine of Dagon constituency, Daw Yin Min Hlaing of Gangaw constituency, U Min Thein of Taungtwingyi constituency, Dr. Daw Khin Nyo of Dedaye constituency, U Myo Naing of Chanayethazan constituency, and U Tin Ko Ko Oo (a) U Atut of Bilin constituency. Deputy Minister for Education U Win Maw Tun replied to the motion saying that the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) 2016-2021 was launched after researching the requirements of skilled workers, technicians and engineers in Myanmar so that the necessary job opportunities, teaching staff, teaching aid and materials, and infrastructure can be included in the respective state and region's budget proposals. He said the Ministry of Education has carried out and accomplished all the criteria in the tabled motion and accepts the motion as it encourages further multi-technical and vocational education for the country. After some deliberation, the Pyithu Hluttaw approved the motion. The 16th-day meeting of the ninth regular session of the Second Pyithu Hluttaw will be held on 7 September. —Myo Myint, Han Lin Naing ■

Emergency meet in Bangkok to head off swine fever spread

BANGKOK (Thailand) — An emergency meeting to head off an outbreak of African swine fever across Asia opened in Bangkok on Wednesday, after a mass pig cull in China sparked fears of a potential pandemic.

The three-day meeting led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) brings together specialists in animal diseases as well as agricultural policy from nine countries neighbouring China. China, the world's largest pork producer and consumer, reported its first case in August in northeastern Liaoning province. The disease has since spread south prompting a cull of 38,000 pigs. African swine fever does not affect humans but causes haemorrhagic fever in pigs and wild boars that is nearly always fatal. There is no antidote or vaccine, and the only known preventive measure is a mass cull of infected livestock. "It's critical that this region be ready for the very real possibility that ASF could jump the border into other countries," the FAO's Wantanee Kalpravidh said in a statement. "That's why this emergency meeting has been convened — to assess where we are now and to determine how we can work together in a co-ordinated, regional response." Swine fever spreads by contact between infected pigs, ticks or other wild animals and can inflict massive economic damage on farms. Participants at the Bangkok meeting come from Cambodia, China, Japan, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand and Viet Nam.—AFP ■

A group of South Korean envoys, led by President Moon Jae In's top security adviser Chung Eui Yong (3rd from r), departs a military airport near Seoul to visit Pyongyang on 5 September, 2018. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

South Korean envoys in North Korea to discuss summit details, meet officials

SEOUL — A group of special envoys for South Korean President Moon Jae In held talks with North Korean officials on Wednesday after arriving in Pyongyang by plane to hammer out details of the next inter-Korean summit slated to take place this month in the North Korean capital.

The five-member delegation, led by Moon's top security adviser Chung Eui Yong, met with Kim Yong Chol — the vice chairman of the ruling Workers' Party Central Committee who is a close aide to leader Kim Jong Un — among other officials, according to the presidential office.

Presidential office spokesman Kim Eui Kyum had earlier told reporters that the envoys were expected to discuss topics such as a concrete schedule for the next summit, ways to improve inter-Korean relations, denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and the two Koreas' goal of reaching a peace settlement.

The delegation also includes Suh Hoon, chief of the National Intelligence Service, Vice Unification Minister Chun Hae Sung, Yun Kun Young, presidential secretary for state affairs, and Kim Sang Gyun, a senior intelligence agency official.

Chung was expected to be carrying with him a personal letter from Moon, but it remains unclear whether the envoys will hold a meeting with Kim Jong Un during their visit.

The envoys, who left a military airport near Seoul earlier on Wednesday morning, are scheduled to return to the South by the day's end.

On Tuesday, Moon and US President Donald Trump held talks over the telephone.

Trump said he hoped for a fruitful result from the dispatch of the presidential envoys while Moon promised to brief Washington on their talks with North Korean officials, according to the South Korean and US governments.

The two Koreas agreed in high-level talks on 13 August to hold another inter-Korean summit sometime in September in Pyongyang, but specifics have yet to be discussed. If held, the meeting will be the third summit between Moon and Kim following ones on 27 April and 26 May. —Kyodo News ■

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(17 / 2018)

1. Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars and Myanmar Kyats.

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-021(18-19)	Applied Research Center, Mud Logging Unit and Geology Workstation (10) Items	US$
(2)	IFB-022(18-19)	LITHO SI Software (1) No	US$
(3)	IFB-023(18-19)	Telecommunication Equipment (4) Items	US$
(4)	IFB-024(18-19)	Three Phase Separator for Production 1000 PSI (1) Set	US$
(5)	IFB-025(18-19)	Echometer Digital Well Analyzer (1) Set	US$
(6)	IFB-026(18-19)	Cat 3512B Engine Assy (2) Units	US$
(7)	IFB-027(18-19)	9 5/8" Seamless Steel Casing (3) Items	US$
(8)	IFB-028(18-19)	Assorted Sizes of Drill Pipes (3) Items	US$
(9)	DMP/L-099(18-19)	Mobile Type Welding Machine Engine Driven 400 AMP and Accessories (7) Sets	Ks
(10)	DMP/L-100(18-19)	Welding Set and Accessories (400 V) Maximum Current At 100% Duty Cycle 400 AMP (4) Sets	Ks
(11)	DMP/L-101(18-19)	Portable Welding Machine with 14 HP Engine and Accessories (5) Sets	Ks
(12)	DMP/L-102(18-19)	Portable Fire Fighting Pump and Accessories (1) Set	Ks
(13)	DMP/L-103(18-19)	Gas Detector (6) Nos	Ks
(14)	DMP/L-104(18-19)	Telephone Cable (2) Items	Ks
(15)	DMP/L-105(18-19)	Electronic Private Branch Exchange(2)Nos	Ks
(16)	DMP/L-106(18-19)	Data Acquision, Data Processing Center and Interpreation Work Station (8) Items	Ks
(17)	DMP/L-107(18-19)	Mud Testing Equipment, Geological Survey Instrument & Field Equipment, Applied Research Centre and Mud Logging Unit (22) Items	Ks
(18)	DMP/L-108(18-19)	Soft-Start (Model-3RW 4074-6BB44) (15)Nos	Ks
(19)	DMP/L-109(18-19)	1000 KVA Transformer for CNG Station (1) No	Ks
(20)	DMP/L-110(18-19)	33/0.4 KV, 500 KVA Transformer & 11/6.6-0.4 KV, 500 KVA Transformer(2)Nos	Ks
(21)	DMP/L-111(18-19)	132 KW Main Motor (China) for L-Type CNG Compressor (1) No	Ks
(22)	DMP/L-112(18-19)	Foam Pig (20) Nos	Ks
(23)	DMP/L-113(18-19)	Welding Electrode (3) Items	Ks
(24)	DMP/L-114(18-19)	Heat Shrinkable Sleeve and Closure Patches (2) Items	Ks
(25)	DMP/L-115(18-19)	Gas Detector Equipment with Complete Accessories (5) Sets	Ks
(26)	DMP/L-116(18-19)	Mobile Welding Machine with Complete Accessories 600 AMP (2) Sets	Ks
(27)	DMP/L-117(18-19)	D3 T2 SR-I Drilling Rig DC Motors Control System Upgrading (1) Lot	Ks
(28)	DMP/L-118(18-19)	Fire Fighting Truck (5000 Liter) (1) Unit	Ks

2. The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qtty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available free download at the Ministry of Electricty and Energy Website Portal (www.moee.gov.mm) as from **5 September 2018**. Tender forms will not be sold.

3. The interested Bidders should submit the **Technical Specifications with Original Bid Bond and Commercial Quotation in each separate sealed envelopes** on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in Tender Box of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than **14:00 pm** on **2 October 2018**.

4. Tender Closing Date & Time- 2-10-2018, 14:00 pm

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph . +95 67 - 411206

Japan evacuates major airport after typhoon wreaks havoc

TOKYO (Japan) — A major airport that was cut off when a huge typhoon smashed through its sole access road was being evacuated on Wednesday, as Japan grappled with devastation caused by its most powerful storm in a quarter of a century.

Boats were ferrying stranded passengers from Kansai International Airport — one of the country's busiest — after thousands of people were forced to spend the night in the partially flooded facility.

At least ten people were killed, and hundreds more injured by Typhoon Jebi as it raked through the major manufacturing area around Osaka — Japan's second city — wrecking infrastructure and destroying homes.

Winds up to 216 kilometres (135 miles) per hour ripped off roofs, overturned trucks on bridges and swept a 2,500-ton tanker into a bridge leading to the airport, the region's main international gateway and a national transport hub.

The damage to the bridge left the artificial island cut off, stranding 3,000 travellers and additional staff overnight.

Runways were flooded as high waves washed into the facility on Tuesday, knocking out electricity and inundating buildings.

By Wednesday lunchtime several hundred people had been ferried to Kobe on a specially chartered boat, but more than two thousand were still awaiting rescue.

An aerial view from a Jiji Press helicopter shows a ship that collided with a breakwater due to strong winds caused by typhoon Jebi in Nishinomiya city, Hyogo prefecture on 5 September, 2018. The toll in the most powerful typhoon to hit Japan in a quarter century rose on September 5 to nine, with thousands stranded at a major airport because of storm damage. **PHOTO: AFP**

There was no indication yet when the airport, which runs over 400 flights a day, might reopen.

"We had a blackout so there was no air conditioning. It was hot," a woman told public broadcaster NHK after being ferried to Kobe.

"I'd never expected this amount of damage from a typhoon."

Government spokesman Yoshihide Suga said the death toll in the storm stood at 10, with 300 people injured.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, tweeting on his official account, said the government was working to get the airport back online.

"We will do our best to get the airport functioning again," he said.

He said 2.4 million households had lost power in the storm, with service restored to only half by Wednesday morning.

"We continue to make utmost efforts to respond to disaster damage and restore infrastructure," he added.

Trail of destruction

More than 1.2 million people had been advised to leave their homes as Jebi approached the Kansai area — Japan's industrial heartland. Around 16,000 people spent the night in shelters, local media said.

Japan is regularly hit by powerful typhoons in the summer and autumn, many of which cause flooding and landslides in rural areas.

Jebi appears to have caused damage to the region's infrastructure on an unusual scale.

In the tourist magnet of Kyoto — home to ancient temples and shrines — it brought down part of the ceiling of the main railway station, while in nearby Osaka, the high winds peeled scaffolding from a multi-story building.

Footage on NHK showed a 100-metre (328-foot) tall ferris wheel in Osaka spinning furiously in the strong wind despite being switched off.

"I've never seen such a thing," a 19-year-old man at the scene told NHK.

Businesses, factories and schools in the affected area shut down while the storm barrelled across the country, forcing the cancellation of hundreds of flights, ferry services and some bullet trains.

Despite its strength, the storm was far from the deadliest Japan has seen in recent years.

In 2011, Typhoon Talas killed at least 82 people in the area, while in 2013, a storm that hit south of Tokyo left 40 people dead.

Earlier this year torrential rains lashed the west of the country, sparking flooding that killed more than 200 people as it laid waste to villages and caused hillsides to collapse.—AFP ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V KOTA HASIL VOY. NO. (KHSA 0090 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KOTA HASIL VOY. NO. (KHSA 0090 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6-9-2018 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 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: M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V BLPL TRUST VOY. NO. ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V BLPL TRUST VOY. NO. ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.I.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S BLPL SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V MCC KYOTO VOY. NO. (1819S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MCC KYOTO VOY. NO. (1819S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT (S'PORE) PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V ANAN BHUM VOY. NO. (225 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ANAN BHUM VOY. NO. (225 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V BOX EXPRESS VOY. NO. (1853-1854)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V BOX EXPRESS VOY. NO. (1853-1854) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/T.M.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S TRANSPORT (S'PORE) PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

Dolly Parton to be honored in Grammy gala

In this file photo taken in 2014, Dolly Parton performs on the Pyramid Stage in Somerset, England. **PHOTO: AFP**

LOS ANGELES—Country legend Dolly Parton will be honoured at a charity concert ahead of next year's Grammy Awards, the Recording Academy, which administers the prize, announced on Tuesday.

Parton will be the 2019 focus of Musicares, a charitable wing of the Recording Academy that raises money to help musicians in need through the annual star-studded gala.

Parton is among the most prominent women in country music and one of the Nashville-based industry's most prolific songwriters. She became such a cultural icon that she is the center of the Dollywood theme park in Tennessee.

Announcing the choice of Parton, the first country artist to be recognized at Musicares, the Recording Academy pointed to her longstanding charitable activities which include working on literacy and assisting Tennessee residents after disasters.

"Dolly Parton has always been and continues to be a courageous trailblazer and indomitable inspiration for creators and artists," Recording Academy president Neil Portnow said in a statement. Announcing the schedule for next year's Grammy Week in Los Angeles, Portnow said that Parton would be honored on 8 February with the Grammys two days later.

The awards, the most prestigious handed out by the music industry, shifted this year to New York to mark the Grammys' 60th edition. The last Musicares honored Fleetwood Mac, bringing together the notoriously fractious band for a concert with performances by Lorde, Miley Cyrus and Haim attended by former president Bill Clinton.

Musicares said it distributed more than $6.4 million dollars among some 8,500 members of the music industry in the last fiscal year. — AFP ■

Bon Iver to present dance work at Kennedy Centre festival

WASHINGTON—Rockers Bon Iver and Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Du Yun will showcase new works in the latest festival of forward-looking music at the Kennedy Center, the Washington cultural institution announced on Tuesday.

The Kennedy Centre, hoping to reach new audiences and to shake off some of its staid image, in March held its first Direct Current festival with an emphasis on contemporary and experimental fare.

The second edition, to take place from 25 March to 7 April, will feature a new project by Bon Iver, the Grammy-winning band from Wisconsin that first took the spotlight a decade ago with its emotionally resonant indie folk.

Bon Iver—whose last album, "22, A Million," took a sharply experimental turn with numerological riddles over synthesizer loops—will release a new work at the Kennedy Center called "Come Through" on 25 March. —AFP ■

Australia mints its most valuable coin ever

SYDNEY (Australia)—Australia has minted a gold coin encrusted with rare pink diamonds worth Aus$2.48 million (US$1.8 million) to meet growing demand for high-end collectables from the ultra-rich.

The two-kilogramme treasure, which depicts a sailing ship, a gold prospector and boab trees found in Western Australia, is considered legal tender and will be sold to the highest bidder.

It is the most valuable coin ever made in Australia and is expected to be sold to a buyer from Asia or the Middle East.

It was "released in response to the distinct increase in demand for exclusive luxury items", said Perth Mint chief executive Richard Hayes on Tuesday.

This undated handout picture released by The Perth Mint on 4 September, 2018 shows a minted two-kilo (4.4 lbs) gold coin called "Discovery" in Perth. Australia has minted a gold coin encrusted with rare pink diamonds worth 1.8 million USD to meet growing demand for high-end collectables from the ultra-rich. **PHOTO: AFP**

"The coin showcases rare pink stones handset in the most famed of precious metals, telling the inspirational rags to riches tales of mining for these prized resources." Called "Discovery", it was modelled after the "Holey Dollar", one of Australia's first coins, with a private collector paying Aus$495,000 for one of those in 2013. A key attraction is the four pink diamonds from the renowned Argyle mine in Australia's remote western Kimberley region, including a 1.02-carat emerald cut.

"In terms of pink diamonds themselves, you can fit the whole year's production literally into the palm of your hand," said Hayes.

Miner Rio Tinto holds a pink diamond sale each year which attracts global interest. Stones can fetch US$1-2 million a carat.—AFP ■

Casting room was my training ground, says 'Stree' actor Abhishek Banerjee

NEW DELHI — His character of Jana, a quirky friend to Rajkummar Rao's Vicky in "Stree" is a real scene stealer but before landing his debut film Abhishek Banerjee worked behind the scenes discovering new talents.

The film fulfilled a long cherished dream as Banerjee says he initially came to Mumbai to become an actor but he became a casting director after things did not work out, not knowing that destiny would make a turnaround. "When I came to Mumbai to act and it didn't work out for me for few years, I thought I will go back to training but casting room has been a great training space for me," Banerjee told PTI in an interview.

He has cast for films such as "Pari", "Once Upon a Time in Mumbaai" and "Gabbar is Back". The actor continues with his casting duties with upcoming films including - "Patakhaa", "Kalank" and "Student of the Year 2".

He says performing scenes with potential talents gave him a perspective about acting and how it is all about "action and reaction".

"When you are reacting to a good actor, your reactions become better. You get to know what to tone down and how to make yourself believe in those characters. So, that room has really taught me a lot. You also understand the trend of the time. You get to evolve with the actors, you get to know how it's moving," he added.

Banerjee's chemistry with Rao and Aparshakti Khurana gives the film some of its most hilarious moments.

The actor believes the film's message about treating women equally does not get lost in the laughs, in fact, they highlight it.

"Some films connect with you deeply. If a child sees the film, maybe he aspires to become like the hero. So, maybe if we make films like that, we will have more children growing up with this.—PTI ■

China's super hybrid rice output in test fields sets new world record

KUNMING — Super hybrid rice output in test fields in southwestern Yunnan Province has set a new world record, local authorities said on Monday.

The latest output of three plots at a super hybrid rice demonstration base located in Datun Township in the city of Gejiu reached an average of 1,152.3 kg per mu (about 0.07 hectares). The demonstration base started to plant hybrid rice in 2009.

A group of experts from agricultural and scientific universities and research institutions randomly selected three plots on the rice fields and supervised the harvest.

With an average temperature of 20 degrees Celsius, the base lies at an altitude of more than 1,200 meters above sea level. Proper annual precipitation and flat terrain also contribute to the harvest of hybrid rice, according to Xie Hua'an, leader of the research team.—Xinhua ■

Farmers prepare to thresh rice stalks at a super hybrid rice demonstration base in Datun Township in the Gejiu City, southwest China's Yunnan Province on 2 September, 2018. The latest output of three plots at a super hybrid rice demonstration base located in Datun Township has set a new world record by reaching an average of 1,152.3 kg per mu (about 0.07 hectares), local authorities said on Monday. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

OPPO Myanmar launched it's latest F9 series at the Melia Hotel in Yangon on 30 August. OPPO and Telenor Myanmar are in collaboration,with 80 per cent of Telenor users in Myanmar having smartphones. **—GNLM**

Going up! Japan to test mini 'space elevator'

TOKYO—A Japanese team working to develop a "space elevator" will conduct a first trial this month, blasting off a miniature version on satellites to test the technology.

The test equipment, produced by researchers at Shizuoka University, will hitch a ride on an H-2B rocket being launched by Japan's space agency from southern island of Tanegashima next week. The test involves a miniature elevator stand-in — a box just six centimetres (2.4 inches) long, three centimetres wide, and three centimetres high.

If all goes well, it will provide proof of concept by moving along a 10-metre cable suspended in space between two mini satellites that will keep it taut.

The mini-elevator will travel along the cable from a container in one of the satellites.

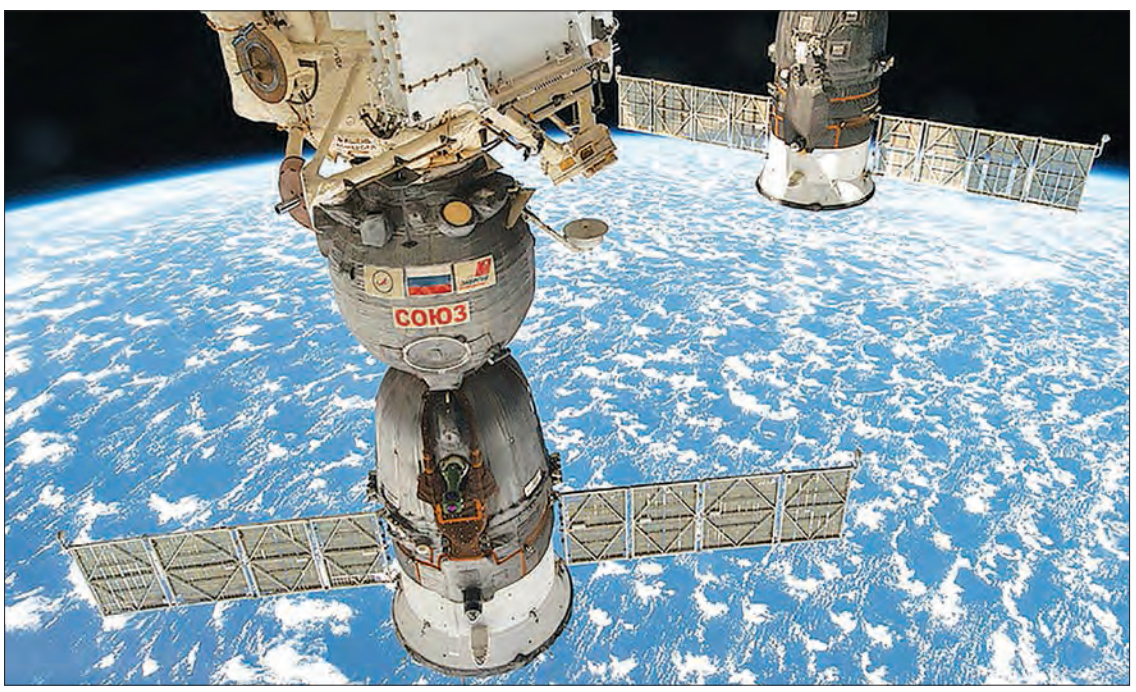
"It's going to be the world's first experiment to test elevator movement in space," a university spokesman told AFP on Tuesday.

The movement of the motorised "elevator" box will be monitored with cameras in the satellites.—AFP ■

Fracture on Soyuz spacecraft most likely caused by technological error — Roscosmos CEO

MOSCOW—A fracture in the Soyuz MS-09 spacecraft was caused by a technological error, various theories are being considered, CEO of Russia's state space corporation Roscosmos Dmitry Rogozin said on Monday.

"We are considering all the theories. The one about a meteorite impact has been rejected because the spaceship's hull was evidently impacted from inside. However it is too early to say definitely what happened. But, it seems to be done by a faltering hand… it is a technological error by a specialist. It was done by a human hand — there are traces of a drill sliding along the surface. We don't reject any theories," he said.



It was done by a human hand—there are traces of a drill sliding along the surface, Dmitry Rogozin said. **PHOTO: TASS**

"It is a matter of honour for Energia Rocket and Space Corporation to find the one responsible for that, to find out whether it was an accidental defect or a deliberate spoilage and where it was done — either on Earth or in space. Now it is essential to see the reason, to learn the name of the one responsible for that. And we will find out, without fail," he pledged. A pressure drop was registered on the International Space Station overnight no 30 August. It was subsequently found that the pressure was dropping due to a 2mm fracture in the hull of the Russian manned Soyuz MS-09 spacecraft docked to the orbital outpost.

Russia's Mission Control Centre instructed Russian cosmonauts Oleg Artemyev and Sergei Prokopyev to plug the hole in the space vehicle with the epoxy-based sealant.

The work was accomplished on Thursday evening. After that, the Russian cosmonauts made photos and video records of the hole and monitored its condition and pressure on the space station every hour. According to Roscosmos's data, pressure on the orbital outpost is holding stable after the repairs.—Tass ■

Mourinho to admit tax evasion in Spain: report

MADRID (Spain) —Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho is set to admit to a Spanish court investigating him that he evaded 3.3 million euros ($3.8 million) in tax while coaching Real Madrid, Spanish daily *El Mundo* reported on Tuesday.

The 55-year-old Portuguese is accused of committing tax fraud in 2011 and 2012, prosecutors said last year.

He has reportedly accepted to pay a fine corresponding to 60 percent of the amount he allegedly hid from the taxman and to a one-year prison sentence that should be commuted into another fine, the newspaper said.

That should come to a total of more than five million euros, it added. The deal reached with prosecutors and the Spanish taxman has not yet been submitted to the court investigating the case, according to El Mundo.

Mourinho is the latest in a long list of football players and other personalities in the industry to be accused of tax fraud in Spain on income related to image rights in the past few years.— AFP ■

World Cup finalists Croatia face Portugal but look to the future

ZAGREB (Croatia)—Still riding the wave of their historic World Cup run, Croatia are heading for a potential reality check as their new season starts with a friendly against Portugal in Faro on Thursday.

It will be the tiny Balkan nation's first match since the side led by star midfielder Luka Modric succumbed to France in the World Cup final in July -- a loss celebrated like a victory by underdogs who had never made it so far on the world stage.

That fairytale glow took the spotlight off controversies plaguing football in Croatia, from the unsavoury ultra-nationalism of its hardcore supporters to a litany of legal problems.

But fans will be reminded of the former when Croatia face England in its first Nations League home match on 12 October.

The game will be played in an empty stadium -- punishment by UEFA for the swastika drawn on a pitch in Split, on Croatia's Adriatic coast, ahead of a Euro 2016 qualifier with Italy.

The perpetrators were never found, but it was not the first time Croatian fans have tainted the team's image by using fascist slogans and symbols.

That darker side of Croatia's football fairytale also reared its head during the World Cup celebrations, when the players invited a singer known for pro-Nazi sympathies to join them on the bus and stage at their welcoming party in Zagreb.

Legal woes

Even during the euphoria of the World Cup one local paper warned that "after showering in the champagne of victory, not only cosmetic but deep changes should be made" in the sport.

It may be only a matter of time before fans resume calls for the departure of the federation's president, Davor Suker, accused of being a puppet in the hands of Zdravko Mamic, the self-exiled strongman of Croatian football.

Mamic, the former head of the Dinamo Zagreb club, fled to Bosnia after being sentenced in June to a six and a half years in prison for corruption and embezzling funds from players' transfers.

"His influence on Croatian football maybe did not disappear overnight, but now he cannot influence Dinamo or even less the federation as he used to," prominent sports journalist Davorin Olivari told AFP.— AFP ■

Croatia's midfielder Luka Modric (l) vies with England's midfielder Jordan Henderson (r) during the Russia 2018 World Cup semi-final football match between Croatia and England at the Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow on 11 July, 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**

US Serena Williams hits a return to Czech Republic's Karolina Pliskova during their Women's Singles Quarter-Finals match at the 2018 US Open at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York on 4 September, 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**

Six-time champion Serena into US Open semi-finals as champion Stephens exits

NEW YORK—Six-time champion Serena Williams shook off a sluggish start to power past eighth-seeded Karolina Pliskova 6-4, 6-3 on Tuesday and into the US Open semi-finals.

The US superstar, chasing a record-equalling 24th major title, surrendered an early break to Pliskova, but she roared back with a streak of eight straight games to put away the opening set and take a 4-0 lead in the second against the woman who beat her in the semi-finals at Flushing Meadows in 2016.

"I just wanted to play better," Williams said of her mindset as she trailed 3-1 in the first. "I was thinking, you know, I can play better, so that was the good news." Williams did indeed cut down on the errors, and came up with the big serves when she needed them.

She finished the match with 13 aces and will take on Anastasija Sevastova for a place in the final after the 19th-seeded Latvian toppled defending champion Sloane Stephens 6-2, 6-3.

Pliskova, who managed to convert just two of 12 break point chances in the contest, said Williams was simply too good in the important moments.

"She hit all first serves on the break points, which is always a little bit tougher to return," Pliskova said.

"The second set, she was just mixing the serve. She was going a lot of wide. Not much that I could do on the break points."

Williams did drop her serve once in the second, coughing up one of her five double faults on break point as Pliskova narrowed the gap to 4-1.

But when she fell behind 0-40 in the seventh game she rescued herself with 112 mph (180 Km/h) service winner followed by a another service winner and an ace.— AFP ■

MFF hosts AFC football coaching course

IN close collaboration with the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), the Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) is holding an AFC 'A' football coaching certificate course at MFF's headquarters in Yangon, beginning on 4 September.

The duration of the course is 27 days, with a minimum of 148 hours in total.

The AFC 'A' coaching certificate course is for coaches who already hold both the 'C' and 'B' coaching certificates. Selection of participants is based on the recommendation of the instructors.

The course is designed to educate coaches in tactical and advanced technical requirements of teams and team management, said an official.

Physiological and psychological needs of the players are being prescribed as part of the teaching module.

Students are tested on the practical and theoretical aspects of the game, and are required to submit and present a dissertation, the official added.

There are a total of 24 attendees, and the course will be held till 27 September.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)■