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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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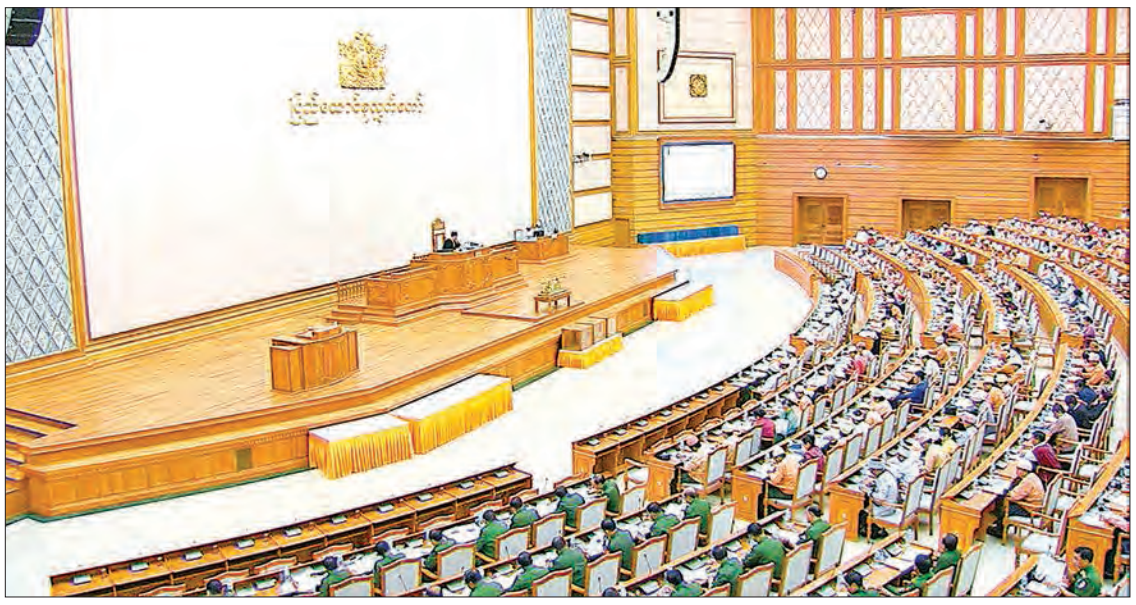
Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's ninth regular session holds 18th-day meeting

Union Minister for Information explains ways to remedy NPE's expected loss, response of state-owned media in countering the world media's biased reports on Rakhine issue

THE 18th-day meeting of the Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's ninth regular session was held at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw meeting hall yesterday morning.

At the meeting, a report was read, an explanation made on Myanmar signing an international treaty, Union level officials responded to discussions by Hluttaw representatives on the basic principles, project works and budgets of the National Planning Bill and the Union Budget Bill, and the decision of the Hluttaw made on obtaining two loans were conducted.



Hluttaw representatives at the 18th-day meeting of the ninth regular session of the Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw yesterday discuss matters related to national planning and the union budget and Union level officials respond accordingly. **PHOTO: MNA**

Report on 2018-2019 Union Tax Bill

First, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee member Daw Nwe Nwe Aung read the committee report on its findings and comments on 2018-2019 Union Tax Bill.

Announcement was made for Hluttaw representatives who wanted to discuss the bill to enroll their names.

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Next, the benefit of Myanmar signing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons sent by the President was explained by Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin.

Announcement was then made for Hluttaw representatives who wanted to discuss the matter to register their names.

Union level officials respond to discussion on National Planning Bill and Union Budget Bill

Afterwards Union level officials responded to the discussions by Hluttaw representatives on the basic principles, project works and budgets of the 2018-2019 National Planning Bill and the Union Budget Bill.

In his explanation, Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint said he'll explain in brief about the discussion of Daw Aye Mya Mya Moe of Kyauktan constituency related to Ministry of Information.

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Grounded vessel to be handled in accordance with the law: Officials

THE grounded Indonesian ship in the Myanmar waters would be removed and it is first priority of the Marine Administration Department, said U Thaung Kyaing, the Director-General of the department.

At the press conference in Yangon yesterday, he said the crew of the tugboat Independence, who were towing the vessel, are being questioned in Kawthoung to determine whether the incident was intentional or an accident.

The outcome of the questioning will be submitted to the Office of the Union Attorney-General to decide on what course of action should be further taken.

Officials of the department met the media to explain the department's handling of the grounded container vessel MV SAM RATUIANGI grounded near the mouth of the Sittoung River, 7 miles from Thamaseikta Village in Thongwa Township.

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Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's ninth regular session holds 18th-day meeting

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The first point is about News and Periodicals Enterprise (NPE), Ministry of Information, having an income of Ks20.374 billion, expense of Ks21.537 billion and a loss of Ks1.158 billion, despite using the State's resources and staffs and having the biggest market share and obtaining the majority of the advertisement revenue.

Of the four departments under Ministry of Information, NPE is the only one that is a State-Owned Enterprise (SOE). Estimate for NPE for fiscal year 2018-2019 is an income of about Ks20.374 billion and an expenditure of about Ks21.531 billion, not Ks 21.537 billion.

In FY 2013-2014 and FY 2015-2016, NPE's capital expenditure, management expenditure, salary, pension and distribution expenses only were incurred from the State budget, while ordinary expenditures such as paper, ink, printing materials, machineries, spares and POL (petroleum, oil and lubricants) for machineries, income tax and State contributions were incurred from ministry's own Other Account (OA).

In FY 2016-2017, all ordinary expenditures are incurred from NPE's OA account, while capital expenditures were from the State budget. Starting from FY 2017-2018, State budget was not requested and all expenditures including salaries of all personnel and pension for 847 persons as well as all capital expenditures were incurred from the department's OA.

When Ministry of Information sells state-owned newspapers to the people, it was done with an aim to provide complete news to the people cheaply rather than to gain profit. Thus, a 32-page newspaper was sold at a reduced price of Ks50 when production cost is about Ks115.

Despite doing this, NPE was not in the red (loss) from 2011-2012 to the first six months of 2018. However, when estimates were made for FY 2018-2019, the accounts show a higher expenditure over income. The reason for this is the rise in exchange rate affecting importing of raw materials for printing newspapers, such as paper, inks and other products and reduction in print media advertisement revenue due to more advertisements going to online media. As such, the estimate shows a possibility of having a loss of about Ks1,157.577 million.

Although the account estimate shows a possibility of loss, attempts will be made as an SOE to reduce the loss as much as possible through (state-owned) newspapers reaching the rural population, increasing circulation, reducing expenses and increasing advertisement revenue to a certain extent.

While striving towards increasing advertisement revenue on one hand, considerations need to be made toward advertisement market for private newspapers, journals and magazines. The most distinct example in this is the suspension of 8 advertisement pages in Kyemon and Myanma Alinn, starting from 1 January 2016.

On the other hand, reduction in tax, commercial tax and Customs duties as per 2018 Union Tax Law is expected to reduce the loss as initially estimated.

In short, NPE, an SOE that was operating without any loss in the past, is estimated to incur a loss in FY 2018-2019, but attempts will be made as mentioned above to reduce the loss, said the Union Minister. The Union Minister then continued his explanation on the second point of the response of state-owned media lacking in countering the world media's one-sided attack on Rakhine issue.

The first thing the Union Minister said about this matter is the fact of a political battle's reflection on the media front. He said the problem will be sidetracked if this is considered as a media battle. Another thing is the huge power of the world's media and the small power of the state-owned media (or) Myanmar media. It is small because the state-owned media was formed with an aim to be a bridge between the government and the people. It was not aimed at penetrating into the world, as to do this requires investments in media infrastructures and human resources that is costly and time consuming.

Yet, at the moment, state-owned media is doing all it can to inform the true situation of Rakhine State to the world. In order to release information on events in Maungtaw region, Rakhine State, Ministry of the State Counsellor's Office established a State Counsellor Office's Information Committee on 26 November 2016. In addition to this, the Rakhine State government formed a Rakhine State True News Issuing Committee on 27 August 2017 under notification 88/2017 and a state-owned media group led by a high ranking official from the Ministry of Information was attached to the Rakhine State government to support in its work.

In addition to announcements made by the committees, works conducted by Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development (UEHRD) in Rakhine and the Committee for Implementation of Recommendations on Rakhine State were published in state-owned media.

In addition to publishing these in the state-owned media, emails are being sent to a total of 200 addresses, including 22 government organisations, 41 embassies based in Myanmar, and 137 local and international newspapers and journals, for their free coverage.

After the terrorist acts in Rakhine State's Maungtaw region in October 2016, government's stabilization and development works were widely distributed by sending to the region local media and international media organisations 25 times to date.

Furthermore, since the event in Maungtaw occurred, about 17 press conferences were held to date. In short, despite requirements in the capacity of state-owned media, news including about Rakhine State's Maungtaw region were being announced in a timely manner in order to penetrate into international media, explained the Union Minister.

The Union Minister then continued and responded to a discussion by U Ye Htut of Sagaing Region constituency 5 on privatizing state-owned media because there shouldn't be any state-owned media in a democracy country.

Newspapers and media are public communication machineries. Departments, organisations and businesses dealing with the public need to communicate with the public through newspapers, journals, magazines, pamphlets, television, radio and online media, whichever is appropriate and within reach to conduct their works effectively. The government elected and appointed by the people also has the responsibility to inform and report to its electors about its works and (state-owned) newspapers are a necessary and useful media tool, explained the Union Minister.

Ministry of Information is responsible to provide news and information to the people and to increase the knowledge of the people, and (state-owned) newspapers are useful and valuable media tools for this, said the Union Minister.

> Ministry of Information is responsible to provide news and information to the people and to increase the knowledge of the people, and (state-owned) newspapers are useful and valuable media tools for this, said the Union Minister.

In his explanation on heavy losses incurred due to Phyu Chaung factory fire in 2017, Deputy Minister for Electricity and Energy Dr. Tun Naing said that construction works were not completed in time and had to done in parts over several financial years while machineries and equipment purchased for the works were stored for long period of times. When a flashover in the High Voltage Room causes a fire, much was lost and arrangements are being made to prevent similar occurrences from happening again.

Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win, on the other hand, explained about works being conducted to study and report jointly with the Office of the President, Union Government Office and the Ministry of Industry for SOEs to reduce losses and conduct works in full capacity. To reduce budget deficit, works were being done to increase income on one part, while on the expenditure part, mid-term financial frameworks were drawn to improve the resources distribution strategy. It will be done through the modernizing and developing public finance management project, conducted by Ministry of Planning and Finance, said the Deputy Minister.

Ministry of Planning and Finance appreciate the comments and remarks of the joint bill committee, the joint public account committee and the discussion and suggestion made by the Hluttaw representatives. Necessary instructions will be made to relevant departments and required submission will be made to the Office of the President and Union Government Office, explained the Deputy Minister.

Similarly, union level officials from Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Border Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Sports, Ministry of Construction, Nay Pyi Taw Council (for Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee and Central Bank of Myanmar responded to discussions by Hluttaw representatives on the basic principles, project works and budgets of the National Planning Bill and the Union Budget Bill.

Hluttaw decides on IFAD and EDCF loans

Later, Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw and Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win explained about US$8.984 million loan from International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to conduct Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation projects and Ministry of Planning and Finance project works.

This was followed by explanations by Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lin and Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win on US$61.816 million Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) loan from EXIM Bank of Korea to conduct project works of Ministry of Construction.

Finally, the Hluttaw decided to approve the two loans.

The 19th-day meeting of the ninth regular session of the Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is scheduled to be held on 10 September, it is learnt. – Myo Myint, Aung Ye Thwin (MNA) ■

Constitutional Tribunal delegation attends Int'l Conf. on Constitutional Justice, Democracy

A DELEGATION headed by U Myo Nyunt, Chairperson of the Constitutional Tribunal of Myanmar, attended an International Conference in commemoration of the 30th Anniversary of the Constitutional Court of Korea,which held a discussion under the theme of "Constitutional Justice and Democracy" in Seoul, Republic of Korea from 2 to 5 September.

Attending the conference alongside Myanmar and Korea were constitutional tribunals and courts from 36 other countries including Croatia, Spain, Portugal, Viet Nam, Bulgaria, Malaysia, Turkey, Thailand, Ukraine, Russia Federation, Romania, United States, Indonesia, Egypt, etc., councils, high courts, high-ranking officials from the Europe Venice Commission and the Constitutional Drafting Free Commission, chief justices, deputy officials, judges and magistrates, secretaries general, and professors from various Korean universities.

Myanmar Constitutional Tribunal delegation poses for a photo with attendees at the International Conference in Commemoration of the 30th Anniversary of the Constitutional Court of Korea in Seoul. **PHOTO: MNA**

During the conference, the Constitutional Tribunal of Myanmar read a paper titled 'Myanmar's Past and Contemporary Constitutional Judgements'. The paper discussed Myanmar's 1947, 1974 and 2008 Constitutions, the constitutional judgements associated with them, as well as their handovers, insights, judgements on proposals and other related facts.

The conference also saw officials from the attending countries engaging in discussionsthat were divided into four parts--namely, 'Past and Contemporary Constitutional Judgments', 'Constitutional Judgements on the Legislative Body and Elections', Constitutional Judgements on Protection of Human Rights', and 'Challenges of the 21st Century'.

The Constitutional Tribunal of Myanmar is working together with the Association of Asia Constitutional Courts and Equivalent Institutions (AACC) and other international constitutional courts and equivalent institutions concerning the administration of constitutional justice. —MNA ■

Union Minister U Thaung Tun meets Malaysian Prime Minister

UNION MINISTER For the Office of the Union Government U Thaung Tun visited Malaysia from 4 to 5 September 2018 as Special Envoy of the State Counsellor.

He called on the Prime Minister of Malaysia H.E. Tun Dr. Mahathir Bin Mohamad at the Prime Minister's office in Putra Jaya on 5 September and apprised the Prime Minister of Myanmar government's efforts for national reconciliation and peace as well as developments in Rakhine.

During the visit, the Union Minister also met with Foreign Minister Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah and discussed bilateral relations and cooperation, developments in Rakhine and implementation of agreements on repatriation of displaced persons with Bangladesh as well as MoU with the UN Agencies.

While in Kuala Lumpur, the Union Minister, in his capacity as Chairman of the Myanmar Investment Commission, held meetings with Malaysian business enterprises. He informed them of the change and transformation taking place in Myanmar's investment environment and invited them to invest in the country. The Malaysian entrepreneurs expressed keen interest to diversify their ongoing business in Myanmar. —MNA ■

Union Minister U Thaung Tun (Right) calls on Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Dr. Mahathir Bin Mohamad in Putra Jaya, Malaysia on 5 September. **PHOTO: MNA**

Ambassador U Kyaw Zeya presents Credentials to President of French Republic

U Kyaw Zeya, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the French Republic, presented his Credentials to His Excellency Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic on 31 August 2018, in Paris.—MNA ■

Myanmar Police Force rep. attends 38th ASEANAPOL Conference

THE 38th ASEAN National Police (ASEANAPOL) Conference was held at the Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darusalam from 3 to 5 September and was attended by Police Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo, the Chief of Myanmar Police Force, and his delegation.

The conference discussed such topics as drug trafficking, terrorism, arms trafficking, wildlife poaching, cybercrime, and economic crime.

The Chief of Myanmar Police Force met separately with his counterparts and deputy chief of police from New Zealand, Australia and Canada and discussed increased cooperation between the countries' police forces.

Attending the 38th ASEANAPOL Conference were the chief of police forces and deputy police chief from ten ASEAN countries, as well as officers, officials and representatives from China, the Russian Federation, Australian, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Turkey, Fiji, and Timor-Leste, ASEAN Secretariat office and the Office of the Secretary General of Interpol, the National Crime Agency of UK and European police agencies, representatives from Sri Lanka, France, Canada and the ICRC attending as observers, and other officials. —MNA ■

Chief of Myanmar Police Force Police Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo and other police chief from ASEAN countries attending the ASEANPOL Conference pose for a documentary photo at the Conference in Brunei Darussalam. **PHOTO: MNA**

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Yangon to designate public area smoke-free zones by 2022

By Nyein Nyein

NO SMOKING ZONES will be designated in 33 townships of Yangon Region by 2022, according to a workshop to establish smoke-free zones in Yangon Region.

Smoke-free zones where smoking will be banned by law will be carried out within five years, with an attempt to reduce consumption of tobacco and products, said Dr. Phone Myint, secretary of People's Health Foundation.

Smoke-free zones will be carried out as priority in townships in Yangon City.

Of the 12 townships in the city of Yangon, Kyauktada has been selected as the pilof smoke-free township and implementation of smoke-free zones in Kyauktada's smoking prohibited places, according to law, will be completed at the end of this year, said Dr. Thein Swe, vice chair of People's Health Foundation.

"Secondhand smoke has the same harmful chemicals that smokers inhale. It is miserable that non-smokers suffer diseases owing to harmful effects of secondhand smoke exhaled by smokers", he added.

Based on the implementation process of non-smoking zones in Kyauktada Township, plans will proceed to other townships, designated as smoke-free zones in Yangon by 2022.

"Smoke-free zone initiative will start in Kyauktada Township and more townships will join in the coming years. Yangon Region intends to be smoke-free zone by 2022", said U Maung Maung Soe, Mayor of Yangon City.

There are 114 places in Kyauktada Township where smoking is prohibited, according to law, including 35 religious precincts, 24 hotels, motels, guesthouses and inns, seven schools, a public hospital and a park, 40 government buildings, three shopping centers and three cinemas.

Universities and colleges in Yangon City and private schools, accommodating over 1,000 students, are also being planned as no smoking areas.

Implementation committee for no smoking area will be formed with officials from Yangon City Development Committee, relevant departments and Hluttaw representatives, Dr. Phone Myint said.

This plan will be introduced by holding awareness campaigns, distributing pamphlets, setting smoking ban places and granting recognition certificates to offices, schools, markets, restaurants and hotels.

During project implementation, the monitoring committee and working analysis committee, assigned by Yangon City Development Committee, will conduct a surprise check at the designated no smoking places, according to law, every three months.

To implement this project, the US-based vital strategies/Bloomberg Philanthropies has agreed to contribute US$100,000.

According to a 2009 survey on consumption of tobacco and related products, 33.61 per cent of men and 6.13 per cent of women were smokers. In 2014, the rate increased up to 41.4 per cent for men and 8.4 per cent for women. ■

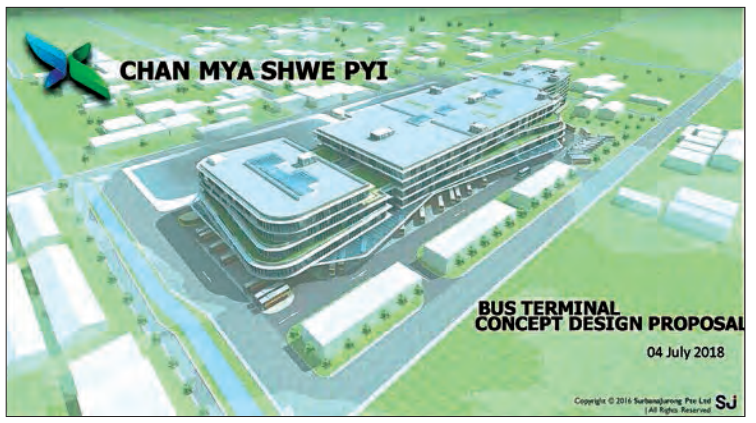
Bus gates to move out to rebuild Chan Mya Shwe Pyi bus terminal

BUS line gates from Chan Mya Shwe Pyi bus terminal would be moved to a temporary bus terminal near Tagondine roundabout not later than December, said Mandalay City Development Committee (MCDC) member U Kyaw Hsan Myint.

The reconstruction design of Chan Mya Shwe Pyi bus terminal has been approved after M-Development Corporation (Myanmar) Co. Ltd., bus gate owners, bus owners and bus terminal regulator teams met at MCDC's meeting hall on 3 September. Therefore, bus line gates are being planned to be moved out to a temporary bus terminal.

"When we submitted a draft of reconstruction design, bus line gate owners agreed with the design. So, the bus line gates have to move out not later than December 2018 to start the project. The project is expected to be completed in 2020. The temporary bus terminal is located near Tagondine roundabout," he added.

The company and a group comprising around 20 members of bus line gate owners and bus owners will hold monthly meeting in Yangon to negotiate requirements for the reconstruction project. The



new bus terminal will be a landmark of Mandalay and will be the first international standard highway bus terminal in Myanmar.

Upon completion of the project, the Chan Mya Shwe Pyi bus terminal will include international passenger lounges, ticket sale counters, shops and food courts, he added.—Min Htet Aung (Mandalay sub-printing house) ■

Yaba tablets worth Ks50 billion seized in Nawnghkio Township

A COMBINED team comprising police from anti-narcotics team No. 24 from Lashio, Shan State seized Yaba tablets worth Ks50 billion from a vehicle near the Oriental toll gate, entering Nawnghkio, on 6 September.

The combined team stopped and searched the vehicle driven by U Ngwe Oo Maung (alias) Myo Gyi with Thein Swe on board near the Oriental toll gate, on Muse-Mandalay Union highway and found 2,541,000 Yaba tablets, worth Ks50 billion from the vehicle.

Police have filed charges against both suspects under the Anti-Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—MNA ■

Suspects U Ngwe Oo Maung (alias) Myo Gyi and Thein Swe seen together with seized Yaba tablets and vehicle. **PHOTO: MNA**

Rice, broken rice export volume expected to hit over 2 million tons

By Nyein Nyein

THE volume of rice and broken rice export is expected to reach 2 million tons in the current six-month mini-budget period, prior to next fiscal year 2018-2019, said U Ye Min Aung, general secretary of Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

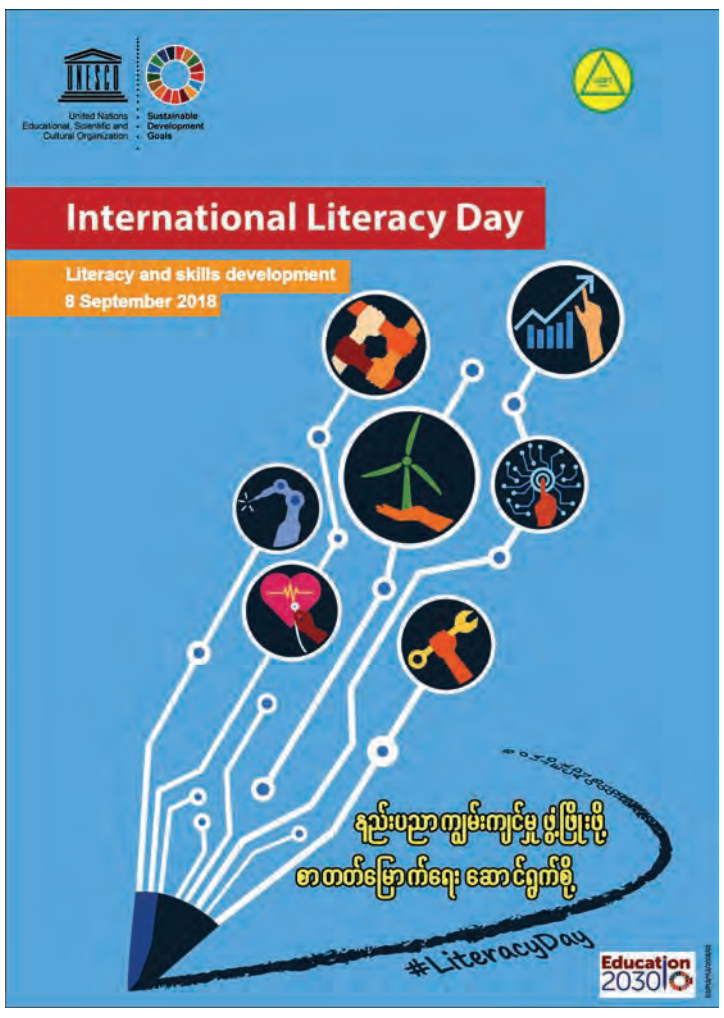
"Export volume during this period can be less than previous years but we have to wait and sea. Around 400,000 acres of paddy plantations were damaged by floods. This mini-budget period intends to see export volume of over 2 million tons", said U Ye Min Aung. Between 1 April and 17 August, the volume of rice and broken rice export was estimated at 909,376 metric tons, earning US$315 million, according to an announcement by MRF. In the similar period of last year, over 1 million tons of rice and broken rice were shipped to foreign countries, with export value of $300 million.

"The current export volume shows a slight decrease compared to that in the similar period of last fiscal year. However, export values are relatively similar", said U Ye Min Aung.

In the past nearly five months, Myanmar's rice worth US$256 million was shipped to 40 countries, with export volume of over 713,104 metric tons. Meanwhile, over 196,271 metric tons of broken rice were exported to 15 countries, earning $58 million.

Workers loading sacks of rice on a ship at a jetty in Yangon. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

Border trade surpassed sea trade in rice export, accounting for 56.7 per cent of the total export. Rice export through border checkpoints earned an estimated $183.9 million, whereas the sea trade saw an income of $131 million. In the last 2017-2018 fiscal year, 3.6 million tons of rice and broken rice worth $1.13 billion were exported to foreign countries. ■



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August YSX stock trading hits Ks1.5 billion

THE value of traded stocks on the Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) last month hit a high of Ks1.5 billion, according to monthly trading data released online by YSX. This figure is the highest value so far this year, with trading volume of 334,367 shares. However, the value is much lower than the stock value of Ks2.2 billion in August 2017.

At present, shares of five listed companies — First Myanmar Investment (FMI), Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings (MTSH), Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB), First Private Bank (FPB) and TMH Telecom Public Co. Ltd. — are being traded on the YSX.

Stock trading values of five listed companies were registered at Ks1.21 billion in January, Ks 746 million in February, Ks778 million in March, Ks875 million in April, Ks869 million in May, all-time low of Ks666 million in June and Ks1.23 billion in July.

This year, YSX increased the matching time from two to four per day. In addition to this, in order to increase the number of new investors and encourage existing investors to trade more actively by letting them know about financial review and future prospects of YSX's listed companies, YSX held a promotional event for investors. Additionally, 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.

Share prices are on the low side at the closing time of 31 August compared to opening time on 1 August.—GNLM ■

Myanmar-Thai border trade up by $31.145 million

MYANMAR'S border trade with Thailand from 1 April to 24 August, during the six month interim period prior to the next 2018-2019 financial year, increased by US$31.145 million, as compared with the same period of the last fiscal year, according to the official statistics by the Ministry of Commerce. Myanmar-Thai trade volume reached $517.07 million, consisting of $154.598 million in exports and $362.477 million in imports. The bilateral trade was $485.933 million at this time last year, according to figures released by the commerce ministry.

Myawady border trade, which has the second largest trade value out of 16 border trade gates, has seen a decrease of over $8.6 million compared to that of last fiscal year. Myanmar and Thailand are conducting border trade through the following border gates: Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee, Mawtaung and Maese.

Thailand-Myanmar border trade values as of 24 August this year are $34.4 million in Tachilek, $320.8 million in Myawady, $50 million in Kawthoung, $104.3 million in Myeik, $3.25 million in Hteekhee, $4 million in Mawtaung and nearly $1 million in Maese. The country is also trading with the following neighboring countries: China, India and Bangladesh. China-Myanmar border trade is carried out through Muse, Lwejel, Kanpiketee, Chinshwehaw and Kengtung gates, while India-Myanmar border trade is carried out through Tamu and Reed.

The country's border trade gates with Bangladesh are Sittway and Maungtaw. Myanmar exports agricultural products, forest products, animal products, minerals, fishery products, manufactured goods and other products, while capital goods, industrial raw materials and consumer goods are imported into the country.—Zwe ■

Students paint on pottery at Children Literature Festival in Insein, Yangon. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

Students perform science experiments at Children Literature Festival in Insein. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

A book shop is crowded with students at Children Literature Festival in Insein. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

Children Literature Festival held in Insein

LITERATURE Festival attracts over 10,000 students, teachers, and parents from eight townships in Yangon's northern district. A two-day Children's Literature Festival kicked off at No.1 Basic Education High School in Insein in northern district of Yangon, attracting more than 10,000 visitors. The festival was formally opened by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Yangon Region Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Lin Naing Myint, Yangon Region Social Affairs Minister U Naing Ngan Lin, Minister for Kayin Ethnic Affairs Naw Pann Thinzar Myo, Scout member Maung Hein Min Thant and two outstanding students Ma Zin Mi Mi Kyaw and Ma Yu Ya Khin.

Contests for students launched following the opening ceremony and prizes will be presented to the winners of all contests today.

About 100 students participated in the contests.

Teaching aid shops and book stalls has attracted teachers, parents and students while the contests such as painting, extempore talks, literature talks and quiz are crowded with students.

Additionally, the Basic Education Department and private schools in Yangon northern district opened booths on health, science and general knowledge and laboratories.

"The festival is aimed at cultivating the reading habits of children, promoting their innovative skills and creative thinking," said Daw Aye Thandar Chit, Deputy Director of the Yangon Region Northern District Education Department.

"We have gained a lot of knowledge from this festival. I've got motivation for reading. We are interested in laboratories as well as drawing in this festival. Entertainment programs also attracted us," said Ma Kyi May Khaing, a ninth grade student from the No.2 BEHS, Insein Township.

The festival was held with the aim of providing opportunities for the children to grow their love for literature, to have good habits of participating in group activities, to become intellectual and intelligentsia culture and to develop their reading skills gradually. — Zaw Gyi ■

61 dams, reservoirs overflow through spillways

THE water level in some dams and reservoirs in regions and states exceeded their maximum capacities due to torrential rains and overflowed through their spillways. A total of 61 dams and reservoirs including Pyu Chaung Dam from Pyu Township, Toungoo District and Mazinn Dam from Bago Township, Bago District, are currently overflowing.—MNA ■

Myanmar, Bangladesh conduct coordinated patrol

TROOPS led by Police Captain Tun Tun Soe of Aungzu Area Police Force, No. 1 Border Guard sub-division in Region-2, Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State and troops led by officer Naib Subedar Md. Wares Sarkar of Chakdhala Outpost, No. 11 Border Guard Bangladesh, conducted a coordinated patrol along border mile post 43 to 44 according to the Information Department of the Myanmar Police Force. —Myanmar Police Force ■

Myanmar Border Police troop conduct coordinated patrol along the Myanmar- Bangladesh border. **PHOTO: MYANMAR POLICE FORCE**

University of Pharmacy-Yangon awards scholarships, stipends to 16 students

THE University of Pharmacy-Yangon honoured its 16 outstanding students by presenting scholarship awards and stipends to them on 28 August.

At a ceremony to honour the students held at the university, Mr. Han Jong Hyeon, CEO & President of Dong-A Socio Holdings, presented US$500 each to eight students who won scholarship awards for their outstanding achievement from first to fourth year, and eight students who won stipends under the Bacchus Scholarship Programme of the Suseok Cultural Foundation. Scholarships have been granted to eight outstanding students in each academic year since 2014-2015. Stipends program was added during this academic year, thus granting awards to eight more students.

The University of Pharmacy-Yangon opened in 1992 and has produced 2,352 graduates so far.—Phyo Thura Kyaw ■

Signing ceremony for contract on Bago-Nyaunglebin railway line

A SIGNING ceremony for contract over civil & track works, and signaling & telecommunication works along Bago-Nyaunglebin railway line was held at Myanma Railways (MR) head office meeting hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

MR Managing Director U Thurein Win and Mr. Seiji Yamamoto from Tekken Company signed the contract in the presence of Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung.

Yangon-Mandalay railway line is 385.5 miles long and investment to upgrade the entire length would be high. Therefore, the project was separated into two phases, Yangon-Toungoo 166 miles and Toungoo-Mandalay 219.5 miles.

The first phase of Yangon-Toungoo was further separated into three sub-phases: Yangon-Bago, Bago-Nyaunglebin and Nyuanglebin-Toungoo. Invitation for tenders was made by MR in March 2017, it is learnt.—MNA ■

Older Persons research works in cooperation with ASEM Global Ageing Center

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr, Win Myat Aye participated in the second day of ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting) Conference on 'Global Ageing and Human Rights of Older Persons' held at Four Seasons Hotel, Seoul, Republic of Korea.

At the conference long term care for older persons in Asia-Europe member countries; improving technology and techniques country wise; reducing and eliminating ignorance and discrimination against older persons in social, economic, politics and job; older persons and care givers to understand laws and rules on rights of older persons and to implement research on sharing good practices and information on increasing rights of older persons among ASEM member countries and older persons to have full rights, self-determination and participation were discussed and decided upon.

Myanmar will cooperate with ASEM Global Ageing Center in conducting research works on ignoring, using and poverty of older persons to implement older persons to live in a dignified way and to have full rights it is learnt. —MNA ■

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye and participants seen at the 2nd day of ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting) Conference in Seoul, Republic of Korea yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Grounded vessel to be handled in accordance...

A press conference concerning container vessel MV SAM RATUIANGI stranded near Thongwa Township held in Yangon. **PHOTO: YE HTUT**

FROM PAGE-1

It was learnt from the press conference that the Ministry of Transport and Communications is required to form a committee for harboring and maintaining wrecked vessels as per Section 273 of the Myanmar Cargo Vessel Act.

U Thaung Kyaing confirmed that the aforementioned committee has been formed to represent the nation in handling the stranded vessel. He said sections 272 to 279 of the Myanmar Cargo Vessel Act explicitly states the procedures for dealing with stranded or wrecked vessels in the country's maritime boundary, ranging from contacting the stranded vessel's insurance company to protocols to follow when the company cannot be contacted.

The Department of Marine Administration is making sure the crew of the tugboat Independence are receiving drinking water and food rations while detained in Kawthoung, said U Thaung Kyaing.

He said the Indonesian Embassy has contacted his department to arrange a meeting with the Indonesian crew of the Independence. He added that the Indonesian Embassy will be allowed to meet the crew members after questioning has been completed, in addition to Indonesian Embassy's notification to and approval from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

U Thaung Kyaing said the insurance company of the MV SAM RATUIANGI, Singapore-based First Capital, has contacted his department and will send a team of experts to Myanmar by 7 September (today). He said the task of salvaging the stranded vessel will be handled by Spica Services Pte Ltd. (Myanmar Branch Office), on behalf of First Capital. — Min Thit (MNA)

Cyclone Warning

6 September, 2018

Deep Depression

According to the observations at (13:30)hrs MST today, the depression over Northwest Bay of Bengal has further intensified into a deep depression. It is centered at about (30)miles East- Northeast of Digha(India).

It is not moving towards Myanmar coasts, the present stage of the depression is coded yellow stage.

Position of deep depression, Center pressure and wind

Deep Depression is located at Latitude (21.8) degree North and Longitude (87.9) degree East, Centre pressure of depression is (990) hPa and maximum wind speed near the center is (32)miles per hour at (13:30) hrs MST today.

During next (12)hrs Forecast

It is forecast to move North-Northwestwards and cross West of Bengal coast near Digha (India) by tonight.

General caution

Squalls with rough seas are likely at times Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35-40)mph. 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.People should be awared trawlers, vessels and ships off and along Myanmar Coasts. —Department of Meterology and Hydrooogy

Electoral presentation from Chin Progressive Party to be published in newspapers

ELECTORAL presentation from the Chin Progressive Party will be broadcasted on radio and television after the 8 p.m. news programme on 7 September and will be published in the 8 September issues of *Myanma Alinn, Kyemon and Global New Light of Myanmar.* — MNA ■

Coal mine blast kills three in Saw Township, five missing

THREE miners were killed and five were missing after an explosion at a small coal mine in Saw Township, Gangaw District, Magway Region, yesterday morning. The incident happened at Tun Yarzar coal mine, run by a private company, on Thursday morning shortly after 13 miners entered into the mine.

Seven miners were rescued after the explosion, of them, two died on the way to hospital and one is receiving treatment there.

One body of 17-year old miner was retrieved from the mine around 3:45 pm. The explosion happened when the miners arrived at the depth of 300 feet. Cause of explosion was unclear, while rescue work are underway to rescue the remaining five miners who are still trapped in the mine, according to local Saw Township Information and Public Relations Department.

A previous coal mine collapse happened at a coal mine in Minbu Township, in November last year due to an explosion, killing eight miners.—GNLM ■

7 SEPTEMBER 2018
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Defeat the illicit trade through cooperation with key partners

ILLICIT trade is a strain on the global economy, and the problem is even more pronounced in Asia-Pacific. It is difficult to accurately gauge the volume of illicit trade in monetary terms, it is clear that significant sums of money are involved, and countries worldwide consider it a priority to respond.

Highlighting its impact on the Asia-Pacific region, Steven Galster, founder and executive director of the Freeland Foundation, stated that "due to rising affluence in Asia and other major consuming economies, illicit trade volumes have gone up."

The World Trade Organizations estimates that the value of counterfeit and pirated goods alone is equivalent to some 7 percent of the world's merchandise.

In 2018, a Global Illicit Trade Environment Index has been commissioned to the Economist Intelligence Unit by the Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade (TRACIT). Myanmar is one of 84 countries featured in the Index. The objective of this project is to improve the knowledge and understanding of the regulatory environment and economic circumstances that enable illicit trade and provide recommendations on priority areas.

> To fight corruption effectively, the Anti-Corruption Commission submitted amendments for the Anti-Corruption Bill seeking more authority in combating bribery.

The Anti-Illicit Trade Forum hosted by EuroCham in partnership with TRACIT and the Economist Intelligence Unit, in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday is the first of its kind in Myanmar and it recognizes how valuable information can be used as a tool to raise awareness and mobilize action.

The anti-illicit trade forum in Nay Pyi Taw is one of Myanmar's cooperative efforts with key partners to combat illicit trade, corruption, and money-laundering, and to protect communities from the violence, harm, and exploitation brought about by transnational networks.

Myanmar is implementing the anti-illicit strategy 2018-2021 and is making efforts for emergence of the national-level anti-corruption strategy.

To fight corruption effectively, the Anti-Corruption Commission submitted amendments for the Anti-Corruption Bill seeking more authority in combating bribery.

Sub-section (A) of Section-3 of the Anti-Corruption Law with four amendments has prevented corruption and the abuse of power by making use of a position in the government's administration. Actions can be taken against takers and givers of bribery in accordance with the law.

At the same time, the Anti-Corruption Commission will continue to enhance international cooperation with key partners to combat the lethal nexus of organized crime, illicit trade, corruption, and money-laundering, and to protect communities from the violence, harm, and exploitation brought about by transnational networks.

We hope that this forum held in Myanmar would result in effective and practical ways to defeat illicit trade. This dark world of illicit trade is an obstacle to shared prosperity. It breeds corruption by siphoning capital and human resources away from legitimate economic activity.

Protected by 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), U Aye Lwin, MIC member and National League for Democracy Central Economic Committee member, Daw Mya Thuzar, MIC Joint Secretary, and U Htay Chun, MIC member.

Q: Regarding safeguards granted to investors by the new Myanmar Investment Law 2016, what measures have been taken to protect them?

U Than Aung Kyaw: When it comes to the basic nature of foreign investments, there are already some general agreements between both parties, and also agreements worked out regionally. The host country is duty bound to render assistance to foreign investors, and the law has been prescribed to that effect.

PHOTO: PHO ZAW

Guarantees and safeguards

The government gives a guarantee that businesses that are permitted will not be nationalized, directly or indirectly forced to cease their operations during the period approved or extended in the contract, as long as the investments are running legally. Even if businesses are nationalized because of a compulsory requirement for the interest of the people or country, compensation has to be paid, based on current value in the market.

According to Section 26(d) of the Constitution, the government guarantees that investments will not be nationalized during the granted 20, 30, 50 years or so, if they are not going against the law. If there arises a state of emergency, the Union can close down business enterprises after giving adequate compensation for damages or losses. These are our guarantees and safeguards granted to investors.

U Aye Lwin: What I want to add is that in the same way efforts are made by the government or relevant ministries to facilitate and relax some rules, on their part, any local or foreign investment, and local or foreign investor need to run their operations in accordance with the law. They should act ethically. The word "protected" means "protection for the investment", and "not for the investors". Of course, the law would support and protect investors whose businesses play a vital role for the benefit of the country. If investors break the rules, we cannot be able to protect them and will have to take legal action against them.

> ... on their part, any local or foreign investment, and local or foreign investor need to run their operations in accordance with the law. They should act ethically. The word "protected" means "protection for the investment", and "not for the investors". Of course, the law would support and protect investors whose businesses play a vital role for the benefit of the country. If investors break the rules, we cannot be able to protect them and will have to take legal action against them.

Abiding by the law

Section 55 of the new investment law says it is necessary to safeguard investments. But there are also four exceptions to this rule, where the government can terminate an investment and not protect it: (a) when it is an absolute necessity in the interest of the Union or its citizen; (b) when a member of an investment company goes against the law; (c) when agreements between the investor and relevant ministries or entrepreneurs are being violated; (d) when one of the agreed parties goes against ethics, the environment and the public.

If violators are given protection, this would go against the law. Those who should receive compensation should be granted thus, but those who shouldn't would not be granted compensation. We will conduct the procedures according to rules, and I want to add that everyone is responsible to abide by the law and regulations.

Q: Could you discuss regarding the terms for land utilization by or land lease for the investors?

Daw Mya Thuzar: When it comes to the issue of land lease, investors can lease and utilize land according to the kinds of businesses they are running and the location of their businesses. Formerly, foreign investors could not lease land from private citizens, but only from the government. The Myanmar Investment Commission has issued announcement 39/2011 regarding land utilization.

According to the new Myanmar Investment Law, foreign investor may lease land or buildings either from the government, government organizations or from owners of private land or buildings up to an initial period of 50 years. After the expiry of the terms for the right to use land or buildings, a consecutive period of 10-year extension, and a further consecutive 10 years extension may be obtained with the approval of the MIC.

Q: According to rules and regulations, which investments could be categorized as being restricted?

U Than Aung Kyaw: The following types of businesses shall be stipulated as restricted investments: businesses that are permitted to be carried out only by the Union; investments that are not allowed to be carried out by foreign investors; investment businesses that have to be carried out only in the form of joint ventures with any citizen-owned entity or with any Myanmar citizen; and investments that could be carried out only with the approval of relevant ministries. There are also investments that will require government approval—those that are deemed "strategic" for the country, capital intensive or those that may have a large impact on the local community or the environment.

Q: Are there any increase of investments that are having an impact and what is being done about them?

U Htay Chun: The Myanmar Investment Commission is a government-appointed body, responsible for verifying and approving investment proposals and regularly issuing notifications about sector-specific developments. Income tax exemptions shall be granted only for the sectors specified by the Commission in the notification, and investments promoting these sectors will have their tax exempted. In addition to the provisions under Chapter XI of Treatment of Investors, the government may undertake subsidies, funding, capacity building and training to Myanmar citizen investors and citizen-owned small- and medium-sized enterprises. The government may also allow exemptions and relaxations for designated locations where Myanmar citizen-owned businesses or other economic activities are operated.

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 on Thursday 6 September 2018)

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS RECORDED AT 09:30 hrs MST: During the past (24)hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Lower Sagaing Region, rain or thundershowers have been scattered in Mandalay Region, Kachin, (Eastern and Southern) Shan and Kayah states, fairly widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Magway and Taninthayi regions and widespread in the remaining regions and states with isolated heavy falls in Kachin and Rakhine states. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded were Putao and Gwa (3.47) inches each, Thandwe (2.72)inches, Sittway (2.64)inches, Launglon (2.20)inches, Theinzayet (2.17)inches, Hpa-an (2.13) inches, Ngathaigchaung (2.05)inches, Zaung Tu (1.93)inches, Yangon(North Dagon) (1.89) inches, Okkan, Pathein and Dawei (1.77)inches each.

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (13:30) hrs MST today, the depression over Northwest Bay of Bengal has further intensified into a deep depression. It is centered at about (30) miles East- Northeast of Digha(India). It is forecast to move West-Northwestwards and cross West of Bengal coast near Digha (India) by tonight. Monsoon is weak over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and moderate to strong elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 7 September 2018: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Lower Sagaing Region, scattered in Mandalay and Magway regions, Kayah State and fairly widespread in Nay Pyi Taw and Shan State and widespread in the remaining regions and states with isolated heavy falls in Kachin and Rakhine 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)mph. 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: Weak to moderate monsoon.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 7 September 2018: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 7 September, 2018: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 7 September, 2018: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

Warring parties in Yemen to participate in new peace talks in Geneva

UN Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen Martin Griffiths (C) addresses the media in Geneva, Switzerland on 5 September 2018. Martin Griffiths on Wednesday announced here that warring parties in Yemen are scheduled to participate in a new round of peace talks in Geneva to end the four-year conflict engulfing the country. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

GENEVA—UN Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Martin Griffiths, on Wednesday announced here that warring parities in Yemen are scheduled to participate in a new round of peace talks in Geneva to end the four-year conflict engulfing the country.

Speaking at a press conference here, the UN envoy said the new talks will begin on Thursday and at this stage the parties will mainly discuss the framework for negotiations and relevant confidence-building measures so as to move the process forward.

Saying that he had met people from every segment of Yemeni society over seven months, the UN envoy said that "we have all agreed the time has come to begin a new process which will lead to a resolution of this conflict which has tragically marked the lives of so many Yemenis and continues to do so".

"We are talking about consultations. This is not formal negotiation," he said, noting that details still need to be hammered out for measures to resolve the conflict for which "there is no military solution".The UN envoy said he is hoping that both parties will meet in the same room, but they do not have to as he tries to "build confidence" in both parties in the three days initially set aside for the talks.

"We have an opportunity to make progress towards a solution in Yemen," the UN official said at the beginning of Wednesday's press conference."This is an opportunity for that page to be turned, we want to understand the issues of both parties," he added.

The last UN-backed peace negotiations for Yemen was held in 2016 in Kuwait, which continued for several months in the Gulf country but no constructive results had been reached due to serious differences between the rival parties.

As for the duration of the new talks, Griffiths said he did not want to define a "timetable" for the consultation. —Xinhua ■

Iran's currency falls to lowest rate amidst concerns over US sanctions

TEHRAN—With mounting sanction pressures by the US administration against the Islamic republic, Iran's currency rial experienced the lowest rate ever against the foreign currency on Wednesday. In Tehran's exchange market, one US dollar was traded for 148,000 rials on Wednesday, losing some 25 per cent of its value since Saturday.

The depreciation of the local currency, for its main part, follows the return of the first round of US sanctions signed into effect by US President Donald Trump last month and the impending round of US sanctions to be implemented on 4 November.

Trump pulled Washington out of the Iranian international nuclear deal in May and vowed to reimpose US sanctions which had been lifted under the 2015 nuclear deal, also known as the JCPOA.

On 7 August, the United States reimposed the first round of economic sanctions on Iran. The sanctions targeted Iran's trade in precious metals, transactions in US dollar, as well as Iran's auto sector.

The second round of US sanctions will take effect in November, which will include a ban on Iranian oil exports and business with Iran's central bank.

The volatile climate of Iran's currency, beside being affected by the US sanction pressures, can be traced to the quit of a number of major international energy and industrial companies from Iran's market amid the fear that they might fall to the prey of the US punitive measures.Also, there have been rising demand for foreign currency and gold coins among people for the fear of more plunge in their assets values and growing price.Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said that the economic problems are not wholly caused by the US sanctions, but a series of internal issues and mismanagement.

Iran's enemy has been focusing its attention on Iran's economy due to certain economic weaknesses in the country, he said, adding that in dealing with economic woes, officials need to concentrate on the policies of the "resistance economy" that is based on domestic production as a defensive tool.

The resistance economy will help Iran build a stronghold and boost capabilities against the enemy and will move forward, the Iranian leader said.

Last week, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani attended parliament to answer questions by the lawmakers about his government's failure to control goods smuggling, continuation of western banking sanctions, unemployment rate, economic recession and increase in forex rate.

The Iranian lawmakers have complained that the administration's mismanagement of the conditions has resulted in price hikes and diminishing purchasing power.—Xinhua ■

Hundreds of African migrants rescued from Niger desert

NIAMEY—More than 400 people from across West Africa have been rescued from the desert in northern Niger in two days, the International Organization for Migration said, in the latest recovery of migrants from the frontier region near Algeria.

Search and rescue teams found the migrants in two groups at the desert border town of Assamaka, IOM said, without specifying whether they had been pushed back across the border from Algeria—following previous claims by rights groups that migrants were dumped in the remote region.

Niger is a transit country for thousands of migrants heading to Libya and Algeria, key hubs for migrants trying to reach Europe.

The Saharan route is notorious for its dangers, which include breakdowns, lack of water and callous traffickers who abandon migrants in the desert.Some 347 people from 13 countries, including Mali, Guinea and Senegal, were found in Assamaka on Monday after arriving on foot overnight, IOM said.

The Saharan route is notorious for its dangers, which include breakdowns, lack of water and callous traffickers who abandon migrants in the desert. **PHOTO: AFP**

It added that most of them had been taken to a transit camp where they could receive food, water and medical assistance. A further 92 were rescued on Tuesday. The IOM has reported a sharp rise in the number of migrants left to walk across the border between Algeria and Niger through the desert this year.

In July, the UN body said it had rescued nearly 400 people "abandoned on the border with Niger and Algeria".

But Algeria lashed out at IOM, with Interior Minister Noureddine Bedoui denouncing "a campaign of non-constructive and unfounded criticism" against his government. —AFP ■

US, Canada making 'good progress' on revised NAFTA

WASHINGTON — The US and Canada are making "good progress" on the revision of the continental free trade deal but talks will continue to resolve remaining issues, Canada's Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland said Wednesday.

As the neighbors try to salvage the North American Free Trade Agreement as a three-country deal, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau warned he would stand firm on key issues as he questioned Donald Trump's respect for trade rules.

Amid the charged political atmosphere, dogged by Trump's repeated threats to leave Canada out of the revised NAFTA, Freeland said she believes "a deal that is good for Canada, good for the United States and good for Mexico is absolutely possible."

However, "The thing about trade negotiations is that nothing is done until everything is done," Freeland told reporters following a meeting with US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer.

She said officials will meet late into the night to review additional issues, and the ministers will resume talks Thursday, noting that "all sides are committed to doing what it takes to get a good deal."

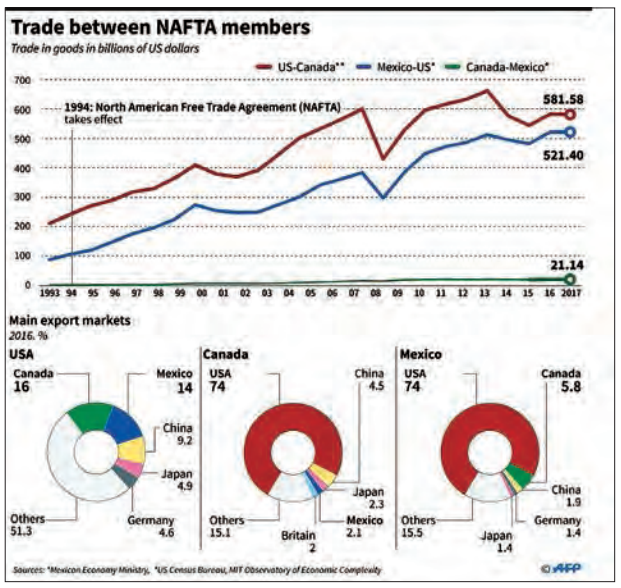
That was a notable change from Friday, when inflammatory comments from Trump angered officials in Ottawa and the discussions ended with no agreement on a rewrite of the 25-year-old trade deal.

Earlier on Wednesday, Trudeau once again stressed that he "will not sign an agreement that would be bad for Canada."

"We'll walk away and not sign a deal rather than sign a bad deal."

Following the rules

One of the key sticking points in the talks has been a dispute mechanism in Chapter 19 of NAFTA that provides binational panels to resolve disagreements. Canada has used the mechanism to fight off US anti-dumping duties.



Trade between NAFTA countries. **PHOTO: AFP**

Trudeau said this was a "red line" that Ottawa will insist on retaining to make sure NAFTA rules are enforced.

"We need to keep the Chapter 19 dispute resolution because that ensures that the rules are actually followed. I mean, we have a president who doesn't always follow the rules as they're laid out," Trudeau said in the interview.

Another issue is US complaints about Canada's strictly controlled dairy market, which Trump criticized again on Wednesday, blasting the tariffs that are as high as 300 per cent.

Trade analysts say his complaints are misleading because the US exports far more dairy goods to Canada than it imports, and American producers do not actually pay the high tariffs because they only apply when imports are above the set quota.

But Trump told reporters that Canada "has walls up against us" and has been "taking advantage of the United States for many years," along with other countries.

He again called NAFTA a "foolish" and "stupid" trade deal that he was moving to fix.

Trilateral or bilateral?

Trump has threatened repeatedly to leave Canada on the sidelines and proceed with Mexico, which reached a deal with Washington last week and could sign NAFTA 2.0 as soon as 30 November .

The White House notified Congress on Friday of its "intent to sign a trade agreement with Mexico — and Canada, if it is willing — 90 days from now."

The administration has until 30 September to present the full text of the new agreement to Congress, which gives Ottawa and Washington time to iron out remaining differences.

Trump continued his tough talk throughout the weekend, and was unlikely to be in a more cooperative mood after trade data released Wednesday showed the US deficit with Canada expanded, and deficits with China and the European Union hit new records.

"There is no political necessity to keep Canada in the new NAFTA deal. If we don't make a fair deal for the US after decades of abuse, Canada will be out," Trump tweeted on Saturday. "Congress should not interfere with these negotiations or I will simply terminate NAFTA entirely & we will be far better off."But legislators and trade law experts have warned that Trump does not have the authority to supplant the three-nation NAFTA with a bilateral pact. The US business sector strongly prefers that NAFTA remain a trilateral agreement.

"Anything other than a trilateral agreement won't win Congressional approval and would lose business support," warned Thomas Donohue, president of the US Chamber of Commerce.—AFP ■

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu (R) and his German counterpart Heiko Maas attend a press conference in Ankara, Turkey, on 5 September 2018. Turkey and Germany will work intensely to strengthen bilateral ties and prevent the escalation of conflicts in Syria's Idlib region, foreign ministers of the two countries stressed Wednesday in Ankara. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Turkey, Germany work jointly to prevent escalation in Syria's Idlib

ANKARA — Turkey and Germany will work intensely to strengthen bilateral ties and prevent the escalation of conflicts in Syria's Idlib region, foreign ministers of the two countries stressed Wednesday in Ankara.

Speaking at a joint press conference, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said he has discussed with his German counterpart Heiko Maas steps to improve and restore relations, as well as the latest developments in Syria's Idlib region.

Cavusoglu said the bombing of Idlib was wrong and had serious risk, adding that Ankara was going to prevent such attacks happen again on the Friday's Turkey-Russia-Iran summit in Tehran.

"We are making intense efforts with Germany to normalize and strengthen bilateral ties," the minister added.

For his part, Mass retaliated the important of German-Turkish relations, and expressed positive stance for Turkey's effort on Syrian issues.

"Turkey is right in its concerns over Idlib, we will work together with Turkey to prevent escalation in Syria's Idlib region," Mass said.

Maas kicked off his two-day trip to Turkey on Wednesday as the two countries seek to improve ties which have strained after a failed coup attempt in Turkey in July 2016.

Before the press conference, Mass was hosted by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the presidential Palace in Ankara. Erdogan has planned to pay a state visit to Berlin on 28 and 29 September. — Xinhua ■

Peru arrests 30 members of criminal ring

LIMA — Peruvian authorities have arrested 30 suspected members of a criminal ring involved in drug trafficking and murder, Interior Minister Mauro Medina said on Wednesday.

Known as the "San Martin Executioners," the gang operated in the northern department of San Martin, hiring out members as hitmen, and running extortion, robbery and bribery schemes, as well as trafficking drugs and money laundering, the official said.

Alleged gang leader Segundo Quispe, who was caught in the northern city of Moyobamba, has been linked to at least nine cases of homicide since 2016 and 26 aggravated robberies, Medina said via Twitter.

The minister said 10 months of investigative work led to the arrests, which dealt a "significant blow" to organized crime in the region. — Xinhua ■

GlaxoSmithKline (Thailand) Limited (Yangon Branch)

Notice of Closure of branch office

It is hereby notified that pursuant to the Head Office's Board of Directors' Resolution dated 10 July 2018, the closing down proceedings of the above Yangon Branch Office has been commenced with effect from 1 September 2018.

Advertisement to Creditors

All persons claiming to be creditors of the above Yangon Branch Office are, therefore, requested to submit details of their claims together with any documentary evidence in their possession and the names and addresses of their attorneys, if any, to the undersigned Liquidator at the address given below before 1 October 2018 or in the default thereof, they will be excluded from the settlement of such debts and claims.

Daw Tin Tin Yee
Liquidator, Facilitation Limited
Room (4), 1st Floor, 24 (C),
Yaw Min Gyi Street, Dagon Township,
Yangon.

Inter-Korean summits. **PHOTO: AFP**

Two Koreas to hold summit as Kim renews denuclearisation pledge

SEOUL (South Korea) — The leaders of the two Koreas will hold a summit in Pyongyang in September, Seoul said Thursday, as the North's leader Kim Jong Un renewed his commitment to the denuclearisation of the flashpoint peninsula.

The announcement of the September 18-20 summit — the third between Kim and South Korean President Moon Jae-in this year — comes as US efforts to dismantle the North's nuclear arsenal have stalled.

The two leaders will meet in the North Korean capital to discuss "practical measures to denuclearise" the Korean peninsula, South Korean National Security Advisor Chung Eui-yong told reporters.

Chung flew to the North on Wednesday where he handed over a personal letter from Moon to Kim, as Seoul seeks to kick-start the diplomacy that led to the landmark summit between US President Donald Trump and the North Korean leader in June, where they pledged to denuclearise the Korean peninsula.

But no details were agreed at the Singapore summit and Washington and Pyongyang have sparred since on what that means and how it will be achieved.

However, in his meeting with Chung, Kim renewed his commitment to that goal, North Korean state media said Thursday. The two Koreas "should further their efforts to realise the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula", Kim was quoted as saying by KCNA.

"It is our fixed stand and... will to completely remove the danger of armed conflict and horror of war from the Korean peninsula and turn it into the cradle of peace without nuclear weapons and free from nuclear threat."

'Sense of frustration'

The pledge comes after Trump, frustrated with a lack of progress on disarmament, last month cancelled Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's trip to Pyongyang after the North reportedly sent a belligerent letter to the US leader.

Kim made it clear that his "trust in Trump remains unchanged" despite the difficulties, Chung said, and expressed his "intention to work closely with the US" and "achieve the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula in the first official term of President Trump."—AFP ■

Nine die in rain-related incidents in northern India

NEW DELHI — At least nine people have been killed in rain-related incidents in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh in the past 24 hours, officials said Thursday.

The casualties were reported from six districts across the state.

"Some nine people have died due to heavy rains and flooding in the state in the past 24 hours, taking the toll to over 50 since Saturday," a disaster management official said.

"While three people died in Faizabad district, two lost their lives in Unnao district. One person has been killed each in Auraiyya, Hardoi, Meerut and Etah districts," he added.

Apart from the disaster relief force, the Indian Air Force has also been pressed into service for rescue work in the state.

The weather department has predicted scattered showers in the next 24 hours in parts of the state. "More rains are expected in some parts of the state," a weather official said.

Uttar Pradesh is not the only Indian state affected by monsoon this year. Over 450 people died in heavy rains in the southern state of Kerala this monsoon. —Xinhua ■

TRADEMARK CAUTION

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Yangon, 6 September 2018

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THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
DEPARTMENT OF POWER TRANSMISSION AND SYSTEM CONTROL
Invitation for Expressions of Interest (EOI) - Consulting Services

Date	:	7th September 2018
Project No.	:	50020-002
Project Title	:	Myanmar: Power Network Development Project
Title of Assignment	:	Project Implementation Consultant (PIC) - Transmission Component
Deadline for Submission of EOI	:	27th September 2018, 14:00 hr

1. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has applied for financing from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) toward the cost of Power Network Development Project, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this financing to payments for the Project Implementation Consultant (PIC) - Transmission Component ("the Assignment").
2. The Department of Power Transmission and System Control (DPTSC) of the Ministry of Electricity and Energy (MOEE) ("the Client") invites firms from eligible source countries of ADB to submit EOI through ADB's Consultant Management System (CMS) (https://cms.adb.org).
3. The PIC for the transmission component of the project is required to assist DPTSC and MOEE throughout the implementation of the Power Network Development Project. The main tasks are: (i) conduct procurement of project packages from contract packaging, bidding, evaluation and award of contract; (ii) update and implement resettlement and ethnic group development plan (REGDP); (iii) supervision of EPC/turnkey contracts; (iv) preparation of environmental management plan (EMP) and environmental supervision and monitoring; (v) overall project administration; (vi) reporting; (vii) financial management, and (viii) public communication and consultation. The Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be found on CMS. The place of assignment is Nay Pyi Taw and project sites, Myanmar, and the duration of the assignment is six years.
4. Quality-Cost-Based Selection (QCBS) process will be used in accordance with the *Guidelines on the Use of Consultants for Asian Development Bank and Its Borrowers*. Shortlisted firms will be required to submit a Full Technical Proposal (FTP). For further information, please visit https://cms.adb.org.
5. EOIs must be submitted through ADB's CMS (https://cms.adb.org) on or before 27th September 2018, 14:00 hr. Firms that are not yet registered with CMS are required to register.
6. DPTSC will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by firms in connection with the preparation or submission of EOIs.

Director General
Department of Power Transmission and System Control (DPTSC),
Building No. 27, Nay Pyi Taw , Myanmar
Telephone: 95 67 8104286
Email: sedesignptp.mepe@gmail.com,
Website: http://www.moee.gov.mm

World's biggest sovereign fund pleads to save oceans

OSLO — Companies should be doing more to protect the world's oceans, including combatting plastic waste pollution, Norway's sovereign wealth fund, the world's biggest, said on Wednesday.

"The ocean is a vital part of the biosphere and an important part of the global economy," said Yngve Slyngstad, the head of the fund valued at 8.66 trillion kroner (890 billion euros, $1.03 trillion).

"We expect companies to manage the challenges and opportunities related to sustainable use of the oceans," he added.

The Norwegian fund has the clout to push companies into action, including on rampant plastic pollution. **PHOTO: AFP**

A heavyweight on the global finance scene, the Government Pension Fund Global published a document outlining what it expects from the 9,000 companies in which it holds stakes.

Among other things, it urged them to integrate environmental ideas into their business strategies, suggesting for example that plastics producers plan a transition to a "circular economy" frugal in raw materials, and that fisheries companies incorporate forecasts on future stocks in their planning.

The recommendations apply to companies active at sea — shipping, fisheries, fish farms — as well as others on land whose activities may affect the oceans, such as distribution and plastics industries and agriculture, the fund said.

The fund has in the past laid out its expectations on other issues, including better efforts in water management, anti-corruption, human rights and tax transparency, judging that bad practices in these fields can ultimately hurt companies' profitability.

On Wednesday, the fund also published a document reviewing its support of the United Nations sustainable development goals.

"Our most important contribution is to strengthen governance, improve performance and promote sustainable business practices," Slyngstad said. —AFP ■

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
ELECTRICITY SUPPLY ENTERPRISE
Invitation for Expressions of Interest (EOI) – Consulting Services

Date	: 7th September 2018
Project No.	: 50020-002
Project Title	: Myanmar: Power Network Development Project
Title of Assignment	: Project Implementation Consultant (PIC) (Distribution Component)
Deadline for Submission of EOI	: *[27thSeptember 2018 , 14:00 hr]*

1. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has applied for financing from the Asian Development Bank(ADB) toward the cost of Power Network Development Project, and it intends to apply part of the proceedsof this financing to payments for the Project Implementation Consultant (PIC) – Distribution Component ("the Assignment").
2. Electricity Supply Enterprise (ESE) of the Ministry of Electricity and Energy (MOEE) of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar ("the Client") invites firms from eligible source countries of ADB to submit EOIs through ADB's Consultant Management System (CMS) (https://cms.adb.org).
3. ThePIC for distribution component of the project is required to assist ESE and MOEE throughout the implementation of the Power Network Development Project. The main tasks are: (i) conduct procurement of project packages from contract packaging, bidding, evaluation and award of contract; (ii) update and implement resettlement and ethnic group development plan (REGDP); (iii) construction supervision and supervision supply and construction contracts; (iv) preparation of environmental management plan (EMP) and environmental supervision and monitoring; (v) overall project administration; (vi) reporting; (vii) financial management, and (viii) public communication and consultation. The Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be found on CMS. The location of the Assignment is in Myanmar, and the duration is six years.
4. Quality-Cost-Based Selection (QCBS) process will be used in accordance with the *Guidelines on the Use of Consultants for Asian Development Bank and Its Borrowers.* A Full Technical Proposal (FTP) will be required from shortlisted firms.For further information, please visit https://cms.adb.org.
5. EOIs must be submitted through CMS (https://cms.adb.org) on or before [27thSeptember2018 ,14:00 hr]. Firms that are not yet registered with CMS are required to register.
6. ESE will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred byfirms in connection with the preparation or submission of EOIs.

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Electricity Supply Enterprise
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M.V LE MIN VOY. NO. (146)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V LE MIN VOY. NO. (146) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T-5 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 COSCO SHIPPING SPECIALIZED CARRIERS CO., LTD.
Phone No: 2301928

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V THANLWIN STAR VOY. NO. (039 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V THANLWIN STAR VOY. NO. (039 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7-9-2018 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 CONTINENTAL SHIPPING LINE PTE LTD
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR BALI VOY. NO. (067 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SINAR BALI VOY. NO. (067 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of 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 SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINE
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V UNI AMPLE VOY. NO. (0257-461W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V UNI AMPLE VOY. NO. (0257-461W/E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.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 EVERGREEN SHIPPING LINES
Phone No: 2301185

'Mission: Impossible' composer to get honorary Oscar

LOS ANGELES—Argentinian composer Lalo Schifrin, best known for his "Mission: Impossible" theme song, is to receive an honorary Oscar along with actress Cicely Tyson and publicist Marvin Levy, the Academy said Wednesday.

Also to be honored during the 10th annual Governors Awards on 18 November in Hollywood will be producers Kathleen Kennedy and Frank Marshall, who are married and who will receive the Irving G. Thalberg Award, named after the legendary studio executive, the Academy said.

"Choosing the honorees for its awards each year is the happiest of all the Board of Governors' work," John Bailey, president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which hands out the Oscars, said in a statement.

"And this year, its selection of five iconic artists was made with universal acclaim by the Academy's 54 spirited governors," he added. Levy, the first publicist ever to receive an honorary Oscar, has long worked with Steven Spielberg and spearheaded the advertising campaigns for such films as "Kramer vs. Kramer," "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" and "Schindler's List."

Musician Lalo Schifrin, pictured in 2016, is among five 'iconic' stars set to receive an honorary Oscar. **PHOTO: AFP**

Tyson, 93, who began her career as a model before turning to acting, was nominated for an Academy Award for her performance in the 1972 film "Sounder." Her other film credits include "Fried Green Tomatoes," and "The Help."

Schifrin, 86, who has written scores for more than 100 films, including "Bullit" and "Dirty Harry," is perhaps most famous for the theme he wrote for the television series "Mission: Impossible" which has also been a hallmark of the films that followed. —AFP ■

Cambodian reptile cafe slithers into people's hearts

Visitors can order a coffee and request a sit-down with a serpentine friend from one of the tanks. **PHOTO: AFP**

PHNOM PENH—For anyone terrified of an albino python, an orange corn snake or a scaly, bearded iguana, Chea Raty says getting up close and personal at Phnom Penh's first reptile-themed cafe is the only remedy.

Taking off from the cat cafes already popular in the Cambodian capital, Chea Raty launched his business to revamp the skin-crawling reputation of lizards and snakes and convince haters that they are simply misunderstood.

As customers sip on their lattes and hang out with the reptiles, "they will love them like I do," the 32-year-old told AFP while stroking the scaly neck wattle of an iguana.

The walls of his cafe are lined with lit-up glass tanks containing snakes of various lengths and colours, while a bright macaw screeches in the corner.

Some visitors look hesitantly at the cages, others are bolder in their embrace of the creatures.

There's no entry fee, so visitors can order a coffee and request a sit-down with a serpentine friend from one of the tanks.

An ice tea for a young customer instantly becomes a cool object for a yellow-and-cream-coloured ball python to twist its body around.

A woman giggles as an albino python creeps from her shoulder and wraps behind her head.

Nearby, a bearded dragon iguana perches on a table while a man gently pets it.

Customer Y Navim was wary at first of a corn snake, an orange-coloured serpent that kills its prey through constriction. But it was soon resting on her palm as she sipped her coffee.

"This cafe is quite unique," the 22-year-old said. "I've never seen some of these reptiles before. They are beautiful and scary."

To critics who say the animals should be left alone in the wild, Chea Raty says his human-bred creatures "cannot survive there."

All of his cafe creatures are imported from Thailand.

Business is still slow-going due to the common fears of snakes and lizards. —AFP ■

Tom Ford kicks off New York Fashion Week

NEW YORK—New York Fashion Week opened with a bang with a masterclass from Tom Ford, A-list models oozing subdued sophistication in neutral palettes with Tom Hanks and break-out rom-com star Henry Golding front row. The US city kicks off a month-long fashion merry-go-round in which editors, celebrities and influencers descend first on the Big Apple before jetting off to fashion weeks in London, Milan and Paris. Everyone from the biggest names in the industry to fresh-out-of-college hopefuls will pack a frenetic schedule from Thursday to 12 September as the Big Apple wilts under a late summer heatwave.

Ford took a chill pill—opening the spring/summer 2019 season by sending down the runway models Kaia Gerber, Gigi Hadid, Joan Smalls in matte make-up, headscarves and smokey eyes.

For men, the trademark Tom Ford suit was fashioned into candy colors and metallics, paired with block shades and a traditional mac.

For women, think feminine pencil skirts, little black dresses and feathered evening gowns worn with snakeskin-style jackets, with only minimal snatches of animal print after last season's feline riot. Hemlines fell below the knee with delicate lace detailing, and there was double-breasted black pant suit for evening that wouldn't look out of place on Meghan Markle, the newly minted Duchess of Sussex.

Guests of honor were Oscar-winner Hanks with wife Rita Wilson, rap star Cardi B, Vogue high priestess Anna Wintour and Golding, the hero of "Crazy Rich Asians" and ideal personification of the Tom Ford man.

It's no longer news to say that the traditional runway show is in flux, but September's edition of the bi-annual style fest serves up a smattering of treats after several seasons in the wilderness.Kate Spade will show on Friday, the first since the label's founder ended her life in June, with a tribute to Spade expected.

Barbadian superstar Rihanna steals an honor customarily enjoyed by Marc Jacobs, by closing out the week with a Savage x Fenty bash to baptize her brand-new lingerie line.

European transplants

Then there are the New York anniversaries: Ralph Lauren is marking half a century of collections in Central Park with a fashion show and gala dinner that is strictly A-list only. The location is the Bethesda Terrace fountain—a popular movie scene stealer—and the event an homage to the city where the 78-year-old designer was born, grew up and built his fashion empire. —AFP ■

Tom Ford took a chill pill—opening the spring/summer 2019 season by sending down runway models in matte make-up, headscarves and smokey eyes. **PHOTO: AFP**

Breakthrough study 'grows' skin from tissue to heal wounds

TOKYO—In a world first, researchers have transformed tissue cells into skin cells to help heal serious wounds, a technique that could revolutionise care for victims of burns and other severe injuries.

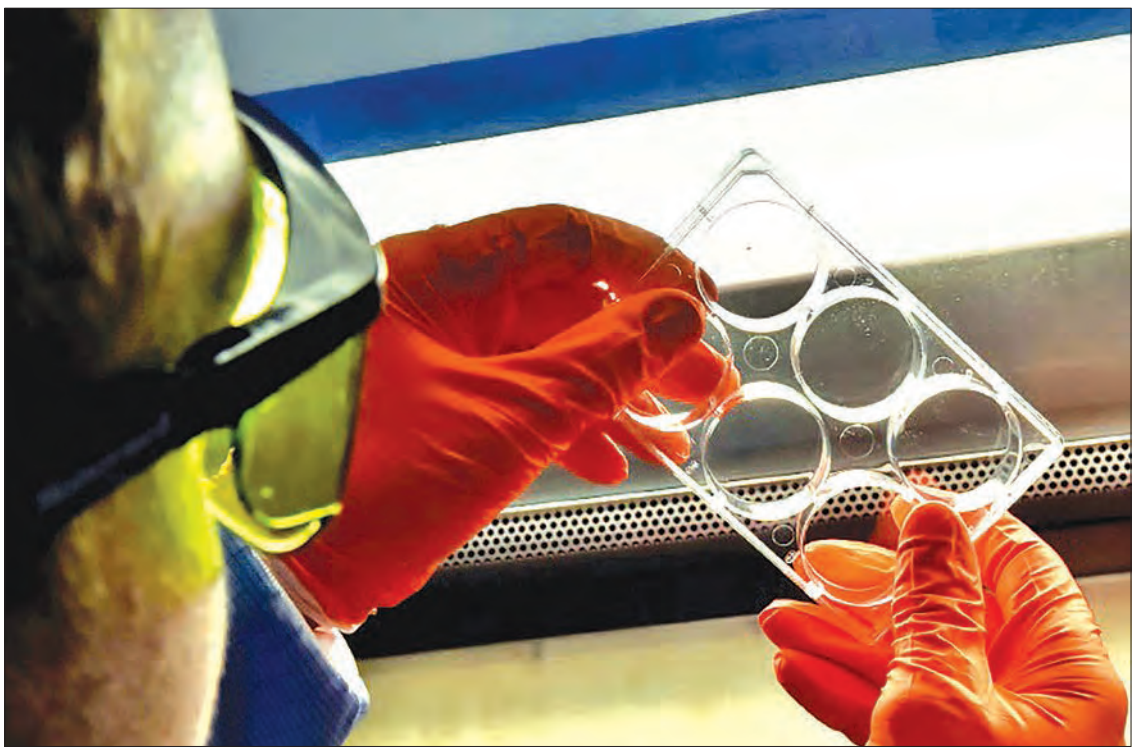
The research is the culmination of a decade of work and holds promise for a variety of patients, including those with serious burns or elderly patients with bedsores and other recurring lesions.

The study, published Thursday in the journal *Nature*, involves a technology called "cell reprogramming" in which genes are inserted into cells to change them from one form to another.

"This is the first description of reprogramming of tissue cells to skin cells," lead author Masakazu Kurita told AFP.

"I'm really excited about the results." Kurita, a plastic surgeon and professor at the University of Tokyo, began working on the technique 10 years ago.

It has been a laborious and painstaking process since then.



The research is a culmination of a decade of work and experimentation and holds promise for a variety of patients, including those with serious burns or elderly patients with bedsores and other recurring lesions. **PHOTO: AFP**

The first stage involved identifying genes present in skin cells but not in tissue cells, which could be isolated and then inserted into tissue cells to transform them.

"We picked around 80 candidate genes featured in skin cells, then we tried combinations," Kurita said. His breakthrough came in 2014, when he successfully reprogrammed tissue cells into skin cells in a culture dish using a combination of 28 genes.

In 2015, he moved to the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in California to collaborate with a team of specialists from around the world. In all, he and his colleagues conducted around 2,000 trials with different combinations of genes, looking for the most efficient way to transform cells.

Eventually, they hit upon a four-gene combination and began testing it in wounds on mice.

They sealed the wounds off from the surrounding skin to replicate the difficult conditions at the centre of a large burn or similar injury, with no adjacent skin to promote healing. Using the technology, along with existing drug treatments, they were able to heal a lesion one centimetre in diameter in around two weeks.

'A way to survive'

"Our data suggests the feasibility of a completely new therapy which could be used for the closure of wounds from various causes," Kurita said.

The most obvious application would be severe burns covering large parts of the body, which are usually treated with skin grafts, he added.—AFP ■

Scientists develop new way to harness solar power

LONDON —Photosynthesis, a process which plants and other organisms used to convert sunlight into energy and produce oxygen as an important byproduct for animals on earth, has been altered by scientists as a new way to harness solar energy, a new study said.

"Natural photosynthesis is not efficient because it has evolved merely to survive," said Katarzyna Sokol, first author of the study and a PhD student from St John's College of the University of Cambridge.

Natural photosynthesis makes the bare minimum amount of energy a plant needed -- around 1-2 percent of what it could potentially convert and store, Sokol said in a statement on the university's website.

In contrast, artificial photosynthesis, which has been around for decades, relies on the use of expensive and toxic catalysts, thus it has yet been used on an industrial scale.

Sokol's team is part of the emerging field of semi-artificial photosynthesis which substituted enzymes for catalysts to overcome the limitations of artificial photosynthesis and achieve desired results.

The researchers used an enzyme known as hydrogenase to improve the amount of solar energy produced and stored.

"Hydrogenase is an enzyme present in algae that is capable of reducing protons into hydrogen," Sokol said.

"During evolution this process has been deactivated because it wasn't necessary for survival but we successfully managed to bypass the inactivity to achieve the reaction we wanted—splitting water into hydrogen and oxygen," she said.

"This could be a great platform for developing solar technologies," Sokol said. "The approach could be used to couple other reactions together to see what can be done, learn from these reactions and then build synthetic, more robust pieces of solar energy technology."—Xinhua ■

Chinese private space company launches suborbital rocket

JIUQUAN—A Chinese private company sent a suborbital rocket into space at 1:00 p.m. Wednesday from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China. The SQX-1Z was developed by iSpace, a Beijing-based private rocket developer, founded in 2016 with a research center in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province.

The rocket carried three CubeSats, miniature satellites, for two Chinese commercial companies. After entering its preset orbit, the rocket will release two satellites for testing, and the other satellite will be parachuted to Earth, according to a statement by the company.

The SQX-1Z rocket will provide minisatellite and constellation launch services for clients, said Yao Bowen, spokesperson for the company.

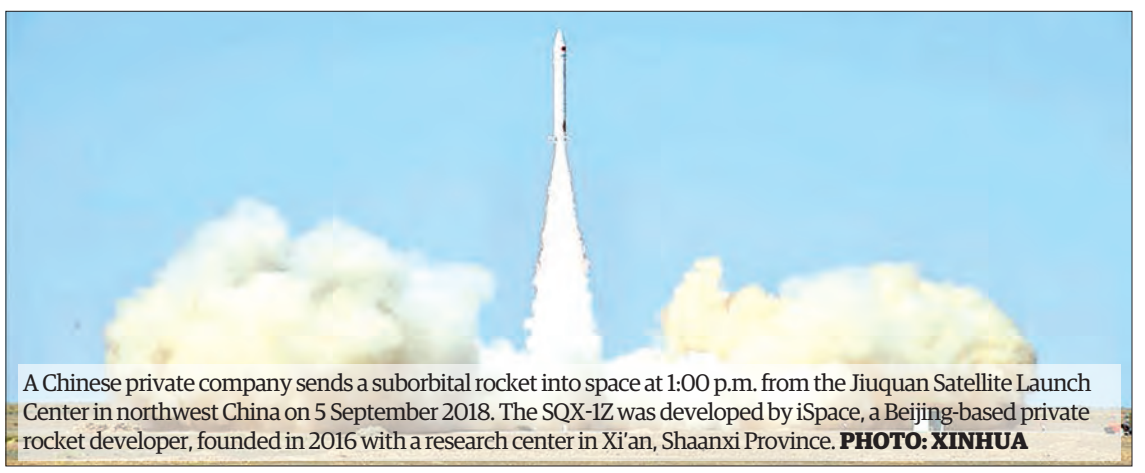
A suborbital rocket usually has a flight path of less than one complete orbit of the Earth. It can reach an altitude of more than 100 km above sea level and then falls back to Earth. Suborbital rockets or satellites are primarily used for scientific experiments.

The 9.5-meter-long rocket can reach a maximum altitude of 175 kilometers and has a top speed of 1,600 meters per second. It can travel for 450 seconds.

This was the company's second launch this year. In April, it launched a suborbital rocket, the Hyperbola-1S, from a launch center in the southern province of Hainan.

The company also plans to launch a carrier rocket in 2019.

China's aerospace exploration was dominated by state-owned companies and institutes until 2014 when private companies were allowed to develop and launch rockets.—Xinhua ■



A Chinese private company sends a suborbital rocket into space at 1:00 p.m. from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China on 5 September 2018. The SQX-1Z was developed by iSpace, a Beijing-based private rocket developer, founded in 2016 with a research center in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Myanmar forward player (red) vies for the ball with the Singaporean goalkeeper. **PHOTO: MFF**

Myanmar Women U-19 football team beats Singapore 7-0 in friendly match

MYANMAR Women U-19 football team beat Singapore Women U-19 team with a 7-0 score in a friendly match, played at the Thuwunna Stadium, Yangon yesterday, as a preparation for the 2019 Asian Football Confederation (AFC) U-19 Women's Championship Qualification.

The game began at 8am. The goals for Myanmar team were scored by Moe Moe Than at seventh minute, Ngwe Ni Win 16th minute, Thazin Aung 68th minute, Hlaing Haling Myint 79th and 82nd minutes, and San Thaw Thaw 86th and 87th minutes, respectively.

Myanmar and Singapore Women's U-19 teams are competing for the AFC qualification matches in September and October. Myanmar will be the host for Group F, which also includes Iran, Palestine and Laos, whereas Singapore will play in Group B together with host Thailand, India, Pakistan and Nepal.

The Singapore Women U-16 and U-19 teams have visited Myanmar to play friendly matches with local teams. In the U-16 friendly match, Myanmar Women's team beat Singapore Women team with a 9-2 score on 4 September. In yesterday's match, Myanmar beat Singapore again with a 4-0 score.

The first round of 2019 AFC U-16 Women's Championship Qualification will be held from 15 to 23 September. Myanmar is included in Group E along with host Nepal, the Philippines and Malaysia, while Singapore is in Group C together with host Tajikistan, Thailand, Iran and the Northern Mariana Islands. —K. Banana ■

Foley dropped as Folau declared fit for Wallabies

BRISBANE (Australia)—Bernard Foley was dropped in a major backline shake-up by the Wallabies Thursday, who got a big boost with Israel Folau and David Pocock both declared fit for their clash against South Africa.

Australia have lost six of their past seven games, and ceded the Bledisloe Cup to New Zealand for the 16th consecutive year after a 40-12 hammering in Auckland and a 38-13 thrashing in Sydney.

Coach Michael Cheika has been under mounting pressure to fix his misfiring team and responded by relegating the ever-present Foley to the bench for the must-win Rugby Championship match in Brisbane on Saturday.

Kurtley Beale was selected to start his first Test in the No.10 jersey since 2014 with the 76-Test veteran directing the show from fly-half, with the experienced Matt Toomua promoted to inside centre.

In a further change to the backs, Folau returns after an ankle injury ruled out him out of the second Bledisloe Cup Test in Auckland. The star fullback only returned to light training this week. Key backrower David Pocock also defied the odds to be selected after being in doubt with a neck injury.

Brumbies lock Rory Arnold will start in the second row for his first Test of 2018 while "Tongan Thor" prop Taniela Tupou has overcome a hamstring complaint to take his place on the bench.

Australia and South Africa couldn't be split in their two encounters last year with a 23-all draw in Perth before playing out a 27-all draw in Bloemfontein.

Australia (15-1): Israel Folau; Dane Haylett-Petty, Reece Hodge, Matt Toomua; Marika Koroibete, Kurtley Beale; Will Genia, David Pocock, Michael Hooper; Lukhan Tui, Adam Coleman; Rory Arnold, Allan Alaalatoa, Tatafu Polota-Nau, Scott Sio. — AFP ■

Djokovic to face Nishikori in 11th US Open semi-final

NEW YORK—Two-time champion Novak Djokovic ended John Millman's fairytale US Open run on Wednesday, beating the 55th-ranked Australian in straight sets to book a semi-final clash with Kei Nishikori. The Serbian star, who ended a 54-week title drought with his 13th Grand Slam title at Wimbledon, defeated the tenacious Aussie 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 to reach his 11th US Open semi-final in his last 11 appearances.

He lifted the trophy in 2011 and 2015. Nishikori, the 21st seed, advanced with a 2-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7/5), 4-6, 6-4 victory over Marin Cilic —the man who beat him in the 2014 final. Millman, who stunned five-time champion Roger Federer in the fourth round, kept Djokovic running —and was kept running himself -- for 2 hours 49 minutes on another hot, humid night on Arthur Ashe Stadium.

"You survive on the court then thrive with a win," said Djokovic, who converted just four of his 20 break points and made 53 unforced errors before he was finally able to accomplish what Federer couldn't in seeing off Millman. "Very tested," said Djokovic, who admitted that like many he was surprised to find himself facing Millman, not Federer, across the net. "But Millman is the kind of a player that makes you miss the balls, makes you win the point, earn the point.

"He doesn't miss a lot himself, so he just runs left, right, gets a lot of balls. Tactically, you've got to find the right balance between being patient but constructive in the point, but at the same time, be aggressive and take the chance when you have a shorter ball. It's easier said than done."

It was clear that it could be a long night when the players battled for more than 15 minutes in the sixth game of the opening set, Millman saving four break points.

The Aussie saved another four in the opening game of the second set and as the duel continued both players were clearly feeling the effects of long, entertaining rallies.Millman, his clothes soaked, made the unorthodox request to go change after the fourth game of the second set—Djokovic agreeing.

"He was apologizing he felt very sorry that he has to leave the court and change. I said, 'Man, go ahead.'"I needed that rest," said Djokovic, who finally gained the decisive break in the penultimate game of the final set then served it out at love.

"I gave it a crack," said the 29-year-old Millman, who has battled a litany of injuries in his career.

"I definitely left it all out there today and pulled up a bit short. Novak's a champion. He's played a lot of Grand Slams and he knows how to win them."

Japan's Nishikori, who missed last year's US Open after a season-ending wrist injury, joined compatriot Naomi Osaka in reaching the semis -- the first time that a Japanese man and woman have reached the last four in the same Grand Slam. — AFP ■

Survive and thrive: Novak Djokovic celebrates victory over John Millman in the US Open quarter-finals. **PHOTO: AFP**