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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. V, No. 126, 9th Waxing of Wagaung 1380 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Monday, 20 August 2018

State Counsellor visits Singapore



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi being seen off at the Nay Pyi Taw International Airport. **PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY**

STATE COUNSELLOR Daw Aung San Suu Kyi left Nay Pyi Taw this morning by special flight to Singapore for a working goodwill visit, at the invitation of Singaporean Prime Minister Mr. Lee Hsien Loong.

The State Counsellor was seen off at the Nay Pyi Taw International Airport by Union Minister from the Office of the

State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe, Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung, Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council Dr Myo Aung and wife, Chief of Myanmar Police Force Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo, the chargé d'affaires of the Embassy of Singapore in Myanmar and responsible officials.

Together with the State Counsellor, Union Minister from the Office of the Union Government U Thaung Tun, Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin, Deputy Minister U Min Thu from the Office of the President, senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and responsible officials left the airport on the

same flight.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and delegation arrived in Singapore at 1.30 pm local standard time and were welcomed by Senior Minister of State at the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman, Myanmar Ambassador to Singapore U Htay Aung and

wife, Ambassador of Singapore to Myanmar Ms Vanessa Chan, Military Attaché Col Win Myat and wife, families of the Myanmar embassy and officials at the Changi International Airport of Singapore. The State Counsellor and delegation then arrived at the Shangri-La Hotel where they will temporarily stay. — Myanmar News Agency ■

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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and delegation arrived in Singapore at 1.30 pm local standard time yesterday, and were welcomed by Senior Minister of State at the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman. **PHOTO: MNA**

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Operation of pasteurised plants in Aunglan, Pakokku in the pipeline

PASTEURISED plants in Aunglan and Pakokku townships, Magway Region, are in the pipeline and they are expected to be operated after receiving electricity supply, according to the region Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department.

Under the School Milk Programme, pasteurised plants have been established in four townships in the region, including Minbu, Magway, Aunglan and Pakokku townships.

With the support of Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department, authorities have already distributed pasteurisation machines to the project areas.

The key objective of the School Milk Programme is to benefit primary school children by helping them improve the consumption of nutrient-rich drink at critical growth ages.

As a complete food product, milk contains vital nutrients required for children's growth and the development of their brain cells.

For the time being, pasteurised plants in Magway and Minbu townships are in operation. However, it is required to install pasteurisation machines

in the plants in the remaining townships.

The plant in Aunglan is currently in need of power meter installation, while the plant in Pakokku requires power supply.

Dr Maung Maung Soe, head of Magway Region Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department, said that the department spent its Ks50 million budgets on establishing necessary buildings for the project in Aunglan and Pakokku.

In addition, the department bought 30 cows amounting to Ks30 million and a group of farmers are keeping them in Paikthin Village in Minbu Town with a low interest rate. Income of the farm also goes to the project, he added.

He went on to say that the programme is being implemented in the region through private-public partnership approach.

For example, a private businessman in Minbu has hired pasteurisation machines from the department. In turn, he has to give 200 packets of milk drink per week to the department.

Therefore, the department can feed 800 school children a month.—Zeyatu (Magway) ■



Teachers treat students with milk and dairy products at a school. **PHOTO: ZEYATU (MAGWAY)**

Union Minister provides support to people with disabilities in Bago Region

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye attended two ceremonies for providing support to people with disabilities, held in Ottwin Township and Kyaukkkyi Township in Bago Region yesterday.

During the ceremonies, the Union Minister said they are undertaking social security operations that will directly benefit the people, ensuring people with disabilities are guaranteed their full rights, have access to developmental opportunities, given inclusion and job opportunities. He also said they are working on ensuring people with disabilities are registered as such and receive regular support. He added that the government, the public, humanitarian organizations and everyone concerned should be involved in ensuring people with disabilities receive the skills needed to rise above their disabilities. The Union Minister donated Ks20.88 million for people with disabilities in Ottwin Township and Ks5 million for people who became disabled from landmine explosions in Kyaukkkyi Township. The

donations were received by relevant officials who responded to the Union Minister with words of thanks.

The Union Minister and his entourage then travelled to Madauk Township and inspected the old railway tracks in front of Taguntaing monastery that were eroded by the Sittaung River. He donated Ks15 million for immediate emergency repairs to the bridge and then met with township-level departmental officials to discuss the swift reconstruction and rehabilitation of farmlands, crops, roads, bridges and other basic infrastructure damaged or lost in the floods.

The Union Minister next travelled to Shwekyin Township and met with and gave words of encouragement to people who became disabled from landmine explosions, and donated Ks 7.4 million to support them. He also donated Ks 543,900 for purchasing rice for flood-affected people. The Union Minister then met with departmental officials in Shwekyin Township and discussed rehabilitation processes in the aftermath of the damages caused by the floods.—MNA ■



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye donate cash to flood-affected people in Shwekyin. **PHOTO: MNA**

Government support for flood victims ongoing

TEMPORARY flood relief centres were opened in areas hit by floods between the months of July and August.

After floods hit most of Myanmar in July and August, flood victims were successfully shifted to 376 flood relief centres, and currently 338 of the 376 centres have been closed.

At present, a total of 15,018 people from 3,253 households

are temporarily living at the 38 camps that are still open. The National Disaster Management Committee has donated Ks 300 million from its funds and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has donated Ks 493.8059 million for the flood affected victims, with additional support processes still ongoing.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Myanmar opens first agrochemical factory

THE first agrochemical factory in Myanmar was put into commission in the northern part of Yangon Region yesterday morning in the presence of Vice President U Henry Van Thio, Chairman of the Steering Committee for Farmers Rights, Protection and Promoting of Interests.

The US\$ 35 million factory will produce over 200 types of high quality agrochemicals, including pesticides, fungicides, herbicides and phytohormones, with the use of advanced technology, up to 50 percent of the demand.

Jointly set up by Myanmar Awba Group Company Ltd., with a capital of \$ 25 million, and the International Financial Corporation (IFC), a member of World Bank, with a capital of \$ 10 million, the factory is located on a 216-acre plot near Wanetchaung village, Hmawbi Township, Yangon Region.

Vice President U Henry Van Thio, Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr



Vice President U Henry Van Thio inspects the agrochemical factory in Hmawbi Township in the northern Yangon Region. **PHOTO: MNA**



Aung Thu and officials formally commissioned the factory into service, followed by a commemorative photo session.

Union Minister Dr Aung Thu explained about the good prospects for investment opportunities in the agricultural sector. Afterwards, Chairman of the Myanmar Awba Group Company

Ltd. U Thadoe Hein reported on the different stages of the factory project and project director U Nyan Lin Phyo on the salient points of the factory.

The Vice President and party then looked around the production line and the wastewater treatment system of the factory that will run under BOT

arrangement between the Union Ministry for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation and Myanmar Awba Group Co. Ltd.

The aims of the factory include manufacturing of farm-related goods at affordable prices for farmers, import substitution and situation-based manufacturing process.

Also present at the launching ceremony held in the factory compound were officials of the Myanmar Awba Group Co. Ltd., Commercial Attaches of foreign embassies, officials of IFC and other foreign organizations, departmental personnel and guests. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Basic training courses for scouts launched in Ayeyawady Region



Myanmar Scout Chief Organizer U Aye Kyaing confers an honorary medal to Patheingyi University rector. **PHOTO: MYANMAR SCOUT ASSOCIATION**

WITH an aim to promote the abilities of Myanmar Scouts to better serve their country, basic training courses for scouts were conducted in the universities and colleges in Ayeyawady Region, starting from the second week of August.

The basic training courses for scouts in the region were organized by Myanmar Scout Chief Organizer U Aye Kyaing and senior scouts who attended

the International scouts' courses and workshops.

With the collaboration of rectors, professors and lecturers from respective universities in Ayeyawady Region, the senior scouts conducted the courses to 120 university students in Maubing University from 9 to 12 August, and to 200 university students from Patheingyi University, Technological University (Patheingyi), University of Computer Studies

(Patheingyi) from 18 to 21 August.

The courses taught youths in the respective universities about scout ethics, first aid methods, scout songs, camping and hiking, both theoretically and practically. More scout courses will be launched in Dagon University from 27 to 30 August and at Hinthada University from 5 to 8 September, according to the Myanmar Scout Association. — Myanmar Scout Association

Myanmar Board of Examinations announcement for students taking the 2019 matriculation examination

1. The following statements are relevant to all students taking the 2019 matriculation examinations.
2. Application forms for taking the matriculation examinations can be purchased at the Board of Examinations at the set price of Ks 200, starting from 31 August 2018.
3. When submitting the examination application form, students taking the exams for subjects No. 1, 5, 6, 7, and 8 have to submit the green application form and card, while students taking subjects No. 2, 3, and 4 have to submit the pink application form and card.
4. For external applicants, an application stamp, at the set price of Ks 700, can be purchased from their respective township education office and stamped on the left-hand corner of the application form. The application should then be submitted to the education office of the same township the student is residing, anytime between 31 August and 28 September 2018.
5. For students applying from basic education high schools, school branches, associate schools and private high schools, the principal will stamp the Ks 700 application stamp on each of the students' application form and collectively send it to the Board of Examinations between 31 August and 28 September 2018.
6. Applicants who fail to submit their application forms within the set time period will not be permitted to take the matriculation examination. Likewise, applicants will have to take the examination for the subjects outlined in their application choice and cannot switch to another set of subjects later on. It is therefore advised that applicants carefully review their application form before submitting them.
7. The matriculation examination application forms and application stamps can be purchased at the Myanmar Board of Examination Headquarters in Nay Pyi Taw Office No. 52, Myanmar Board of Examination (Zwekabin Hall) in Hlaing Campus, Hlaing Township in Yangon City, and the Myanmar Examination Board, No. 166, Latha Street, Yangon City.

Director-General
Myanmar Board of Examinations

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.comPrinted and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.gnlmdaily@gmail.com
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
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‘Bagan in Our Heart’ photo exhibition held in Mandalay

AS part of efforts to enrol Bagan in the UNESCO’s world heritage list, a photo exhibition titled ‘Bagan in Our Heart’ will be held in Mandalay and Monywa cities this month and next month.

The events are jointly organised by photographers, the Department of Archaeology and National Museum (Bagan branch), Metta Moe philanthropic organisation and Xenon Inject Printing Co.

The photo exhibition in Mandalay is due to take place from 20 through 22 August at Mandalay City Hall, with the organisers planning to hold a similar event in Monywa from 7 through 9 September at Monywa City Hall. Bags, picture books and T-shirts will also be sold during both the events.

All proceeds from both exhibitions will go to BAGAN-COM, an organisation attempting to enrol Bagan on the world heritage list. The organization plans to attend the 43rd Session of UNESCO’s World Herit-



A historic site in Bagan — dating back to the 10th Century — was damaged by a 6.8-magnitude earthquake that struck central Myanmar in 2016. **PHOTO: MYO WIN TIN (MONYWA)**

age Committee in Azerbaijan next year.

The exhibits will showcase photographs that highlight the

grand ancient edifices, magnificent artefacts, ancient religious structures, natural landscapes, lifestyles of res-

idents in the Bagan ancient cultural zone and traditional festivals.—Myo Win Tun (Monywa) ■

Over 1,200 dengue cases with four deaths recorded in Mon State

MON State has recorded more than 1,200 confirmed dengue (DHF) cases in 10 townships since January this year, according to Dr Sithu Ye Naung, assistant director of the state’s Public Health Department.

According to the hospital-based data, the DHF cases were reportedly high in Maw-

lamyine and Mudon townships with over 200 cases respectively, followed by Paung Township with 199 cases, Thanbyuzayat Township with 187 cases, Ye Township with 178 cases, Kyaikmaraw Township with 101 cases, Chaungzon Township with 73 cases, Thaton Township with 64 cases, Bilin Township with

16 cases and Kyaikto Township with five cases.

The disease killed four people, including an eight-month-old infant in Paung Township, a 15-year-old child in Thaton Township, a nine-year-old child in Thanbyuzayat Township and a four-year-old child in Ye Township.

Dengue hemorrhagic fever, a mosquito-borne disease, is more prevalent in the rainy season. Lack of sanitation, unhygienic water storage and overcrowding are mainly blamed for causing the deadly infectious disease, according to medical professionals.—Ko Htut (Mawlamyine)

Villagers in Meiktila to build self-reliant creek bridge

VILLAGERS in Thanbo village-tract in Meiktila Township, Mandalay Region, are facing transportation hardships due to lack of a creek bridge and they have now decided to build a bridge on a self-reliant basis, said U Tin Win, a resident from Tehla Village.

Residents of Kabate and Tehla villages are experiencing transportation difficulties as there is no bridge to cross the creek situated between them. Villagers usually use bamboo rafts to cross the creek for their daily survival. There is an inter-district road to go to the town; however, villagers hardly

use it because of long travelling time. Plans are underway to construct a wooden bridge, which will be 100 feet long and 12 feet wide, across the creek. The estimated cost for the project exceeds Ks50 million.

At present, villagers have collected Ks20 million, contributed by well-wishers. They have already requested respective authorities to help them carry out the project as much as possible.

The project is expected to start after the harvesting of sesame crops cultivated near the area, U Tin Win added.—Chan Tha (Meiktila)■



Local people in Meiktila are facing transportation hardships due to lack of a creek bridge. **PHOTO: CHAN THA (MEIKTILA)**

Meeting outcome for pulses industry development to be reported to authorities

BY Nyein Nyein

SUGGESTIONS regarding Myanmar's pulses, beans and sesame seeds production and export development will be submitted to the Union Government, said U Toe Aung Myint, permanent secretary of the Ministry of Commerce.

He mentioned that at the workshop for development of the pulses industry, organized by Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association and Yangon Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Bayintnaung commodity depot), at the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry office on 18 August.

"We will report the outcome of the meeting to the Union Government, submitting the requirements faced by the pulses industry", said U Toe Aung Myint.

The workshop aims to realize the current condition of Myanmar's pulses market, especially mung beans and pigeon peas



Myanmar pulses are kept on display for sale in a shop at a market. PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT

to all stakeholders in the supply chain, including pulse growers, merchants and related organizations. Future plan for pulse production and selecting more profitable crops for farmers as

substitution for mung beans and pigeon peas were also discussed, according to Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association.

"We have a plan to turn to

other crops. But there is still no firm market share for those crops.

Growers realize this. We only expect benefits", said U Ko Gyi, a mung bean grower

from Bago Region. The government is releasing information regarding pulse import policy changes by foreign countries, global market climate and export market conditions in cooperation with related organizations and depots. Vice President U Henry Van Thio has urged related ministries and region and state governments to cooperate in future activities of various pulse production and other substitution crops selection.

About 1 to 1.2 million tons of mung beans, pigeon peas and green grams are yearly exported to foreign countries, with an income of US\$1 billion. Mung bean and pigeon pea markets were drastically battered by India's pulse import policy changes in August 2017.

Fiscal Year 2017-2018 saw export volume of over 1 million tons of them, but export value was worth only \$713 million as prices are much lower than previous years, said Dr. Than Myint, Union Minister for Commerce. ■

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Greece emerges from bailouts relieved, but not euphoric

ATHENS (Greece) — The youngest Greeks may not be able to remember what life was like beforehand: the third and last of the country's international bailouts comes to an end on Monday, and while Greece is faring better, it still bears the scars of eight years of austerity. After Portugal, Ireland, Spain and Cyprus, Greece was the last eurozone member to benefit from an international bailout programme in the fallout from the eurozone crisis.

In three successive programmes — 2010, 2012 and 2015 — the European Union, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund loaned debt-racked Greece a total 289 billion euros (\$330 billion).

But the economic reforms its creditors demanded in return almost brought the country to its knees, with a quarter of its gross domestic product (GDP) evaporating over eight years and unemployment soaring to more than 27 per cent. The economy is now expanding and the jobless rate in May was back below 20 percent for the first time since 2011. But "it would be arrogant to say that we did everything right in Greece", said Klaus Regling, head of the European Stability Mechanism, which is in charge of the current programme, in a German magazine interview last week. Regling told the online edition of the weekly *Der Spiegel* that he felt "tremendous respect" for the Greeks, whose salaries and pensions had been cut by as much as a third during the crisis.

Nevertheless, many econ-



Greece's Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras. PHOTO: AFP

omists, such as Theodoros Stamatou of Eurobank, argued that while bailout programmes were "unavoidable" in a country lagging far behind in reforms, they were also too harsh.

No new collapse

Leftist Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and his then Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis tried to soften the terms of the second programme when they came into power in January 2015.

But despite the resounding "No" of the Greek population to the international creditors in a public referendum, Tsipras — faced with a possible ejection of Greece from the single currency area — was compelled to sign a third bailout programme the following July. Nonetheless, all of Greece's major political parties, including Tsipras's Syriza, are

convinced of the need for serious reforms. Economics professor Nikos Vettas regards this as a favourable development and says that "nobody really thinks any more that Greece will collapse", a view that appears to be widely shared. But Toulouse University economics professor, Gabriel Colletis, is highly critical of the bailout programmes and believes Greece could be facing "inevitable social conflagration".

While the country achieved budget surpluses — excluding debt repayments — of around four percent in 2016 and 2017, its hands remain tied. Greece has already legislated new reforms for 2019 and 2020 and will remain under supervision for several years.

Still, this is a win-win situation and Greece will receive debt relief which the international

ratings agency Fitch described as "substantial" as it upgraded the country's sovereign debt to "BB" from "B". Even at that level, Greek debt still remains in the non-investment grade or "junk" category. But another ratings agency, S&P, last month raised its outlook for Greece to "positive," suggesting another upgrade could be coming soon.

Is Greece's debt sustainable?

The key question remains, however: whether, at 180 percent of GDP — and the highest in the EU — Greece's debt remains sustainable. The IMF, for one, is not convinced and, as a result, was only willing to take on observer status in the third bailout programme. Athens argues that — as a result of the extended maturities for the loans decided

by eurozone finance ministers in June — its annual financing needs will remain below the critical threshold of the 20 per cent of GDP.

"Not only is Greece's debt not unsustainable, it is in fact highly sustainable", one official insisted. The government estimates that its financing needs are now covered until the end of 2022, opening up room for it to plan its return to the capital markets.

"The euro-area crisis is now long over... August 20 is the epilogue", ESM chief Regling told *Der Spiegel*. Nevertheless, the improving economic indicators are not yet translating into tangible improvements in the day-to-day lives of Greeks. Economics professor Vettas believes it is "imperative" to generate "very strong growth" in the coming years. Otherwise, "households that are in a very weak position due to 10 years of cumulative recession will continue to suffer".

Against this backdrop, any triumphalism on the government's part about the ending of the bailout programmes would probably not go down well with the wider population. Especially in view of the deadly wildfires that killed 96 people near Athens just a month ago. According to government-friendly newspapers, premier Tsipras will simply give a televised speech on Tuesday.

On Saturday, *Ta Nea*, an opposition-friendly daily, summed up sentiment with its headline: "August 21st, zero hour. The bailout is over; the nightmare continues."—AFP ■

Gov't to encourage installment of flight recorders in small aircraft

TOKYO — The transport ministry plans to promote the installment of low-priced flight data recorders in small aircraft after a spate of accidents involving helicopters and propeller planes without the device, ministry officials said on Sunday.

Flight data recorders play a vital role in post-accident investigations as they provide data on altitude and speed changes of aircraft as well as the status of engines, but small aircraft are not required by law to install such devices in Japan and few of them are equipped with them.

When a small plane is involved in an accident, investi-

gators tend to face difficulty in identifying its cause without flight data recorders.

A rescue helicopter crashed on an eastern Japan mountain earlier this month, with all nine crew members confirmed dead. The Bell 412EP chopper belonging to Gunma Prefecture had no flight data recorder.

The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism is now considering streamlining the procedures needed to prove the safety of simplified and lower-priced flight data recorders, according to the officials.

Under the law, airplanes with a maximum take-off weight

of over 5.7 tons or heavier and helicopters with that of over 7 tons are required to have flight data recorders.

Small airplanes can still be equipped with flight data recorders but the cost of installing the device — several tens of thousands of yen — is seen as one of the bottlenecks.

Flight data recorders can gather around 80 types of data. Simplified devices, made overseas and cheaper than the conventional ones, can keep around 10 types of basic data, along with visual images and audio recordings of the cockpit.—Kyodo News ■

Trump says asking SEC to consider ending quarterly earnings reports

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said on Friday he had asked stock market regulators to look into ending the requirement for businesses to issue quarterly earnings reports.

Asking the Securities and Exchange Commission — an independent agency — to move to twice-yearly reporting could help create jobs, Trump said on Twitter.

"In speaking with some of the world's top business leaders I asked what it is that would make business (jobs) even better in the US. 'Stop quarterly reporting & go to a six month

system,' said one. That would allow greater flexibility & save money," he tweeted.

"I have asked the SEC to study!" He later attributed the suggestion to PepsiCo chief Indra Nooyi, who last week announced she was stepping down in early October.

He told reporters "the head of Pepsi-Cola, a great woman who is now retiring... I asked, what could we do to make it better? She said, two times a year reporting, not quarterly."

"It made sense to me," he added. "We are looking at that very, very seriously."—AFP ■

Hammering of copper price a worrying signal for global growth

LONDON — The plunge in the price of copper by more than 20 per cent since the beginning of June has worried analysts who see it as a bad signal for the global economy.

The red metal has acquired the sobriquet Doctor Copper for its ability to take the temperature of the world economy.

Why trust Dr Copper?

Doctor Copper is able to tell when the world economy is going to get sick or get better because of the ubiquity of copper in the modern world.

It is used in plumbing, heating, electrical and telecommunications wiring.

“Trains, planes and automobiles are full of copper, so too are homes and appliances,” said Russ Mould, investment director at AJ Bell.

So, it is hard to imagine economic growth without copper, and the market price of the metal reflects fluctuations in demand.

Economists at the Bank of England who monitor the global growth to set monetary policy said on their blog that for them it “is crucial to assess what is happening in the world economy in



As copper is used extensively in the modern economy the price of the metal is seen an indicator for the health of the global economy, earning it the nickname of Doctor Copper. PHOTO: AFP

real time or ‘nowcast’ economic activity.”

Copper prices provide such a real time signal.

How good are his diagnoses?

Last year’s acceleration of global growth surprised the International Monetary Fund and several central banks.

The Bank of England economists noted that: “Metals prices rose 30 percent over 2017, reflecting the continued and surprising strength of the global economy”.

It also works the other way. “The price of copper fell steeply during the global financial crisis,” said Andrew Ken-

ningham, Chief Global Economist at Capital Economics.

“And if it continues for much longer, the latest leg down will begin to look ominous.”

But copper prices aren’t a foolproof signal as they are also due to supply factors.

“Copper prices are driven not only by physical demand but

also by supply shocks, speculation and exchange rate movements,” said Kenningham.

As copper is traded in dollars, when the value of the Chinese yuan or other emerging market currencies fall it becomes more expensive, dampening demand and pulling the price of the metal lower.

What is behind current weakness?

On Wednesday, shares and raw materials prices tumbled as global trade tensions ratcheted higher and emerging market currencies fell against the dollar.

Three-month copper futures prices, which were over \$7,200 per tonne in early June, struck a 13-month low of \$5,773 per tonne. “Copper prices have collapsed as concerns over trade tariffs” increased wrote analysts at ANZ banking group.

Some analysts believe the current lack of appetite for risk assets was presaged by the drop in copper prices.

“Copper is widely considered to be a bellwether for the global economy and so a weak price is cause for concern” said Mould at AJ Bell.—AFP ■

CBOT futures rally over declining crop ratings, trade talks

CHICAGO — Chicago Board of Trade (CBOT) agricultural futures closed higher in the past trading week which ended on 17 August amid declining crop conditions and news about trade talks with China.

The most active contract for December corn rose 7 cents weekly, or 1.88 per cent, to 3.7875 dollars per bushel. December wheat delivery went up 10.25 cents, or 1.8 per cent weekly, to 5.7975 dollars per bushel. November soybeans saw a 31-cent surge, or 3.6 per cent, to 8.9275 dollars per bushel.

On Monday, the US Department of Agriculture released its latest crop condition report, saying corn, wheat and soybeans rated good or excellent were about one percentage point down from the prior week. The falling ratings pushed up all the prices.

CBOT soybeans extended gains in late week trade over news that China and the United States were preparing for trade talks. A Chinese delegation led by Vice Minister of Commerce Wang

Shouwen will, at the invitation of US side, visit the United States in late August to talk with the US counterpart on bilateral economic and trade issues of their own concern, China’s Ministry of Commerce (MOC) announced on Thursday.

China is the top buyer in global soybean market. Hopes among traders and farmers that the two sides work out a formula to avoid further escalation of trade tensions led to the surge of soybean prices.

Meanwhile, China reaffirmed its stance of opposing unilateralism and trade protectionism, and not accepting any forms of unilateral restrictive trade measures. Additional support came from a crush report which showed US soy processors consumed a record large amount of soybeans in July.

Analysts said that technical charts of soybeans are pointing higher, with November contract now aiming for as high as 9.15-9.20 US dollars per bushel.

CBOT wheat futures gained

nearly two per cent weekly amid declining world supply due to adverse weather conditions. Drought has already hit France, Germany, Black Sea area and Australia, and Aussie forecasts are indicating a dryer-than-average September ahead.

As concern over major wheat exporters’ yields continued, futures were further driven up by talks that Russian government is attempting to cap exports in a bid to keep bread prices reasonable. Similar rumors came out of Ukraine during the previous week, saying the government there will limit its wheat export sales. But an official denial gave some relief to the soaring prices.

Such rumors and panic in market showed that major wheat exporters’ stocks now stand at the lowest level. As a result, wheat prices will probably keep high for some time, and upside targets remain above 6.25 dollars per bushel, said analysts with AgResource, a Chicago-based agricultural research firm.—AFP ■

Tesla sues Ontario government for “unfair treatment”

TORONTO — Tesla Motors Canada is taking Ontario’s new government to court, claiming it was “singled out for unfair and arbitrary treatment” after the government cancelled an electric vehicle rebate, local media reported.

The new Ontario Premier Doug Ford has cancelled several policies including the Electric and Hydrogen Vehicle Incentive Program, which was brought in by his predecessor.

Aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the province, the program offered rebates of up to 14,000 Canadian dollars (about 10,700 U.S. dollars) for people who bought electric vehicles. During the transition period, the government promised anyone who bought electric vehicles through a dealership before Sept. 10 can still get rebates.

Tesla Canada claimed the company was singled out un-

fairly because it sold vehicles directly to customers instead of through dealerships. However, people buying electric vehicles from other brands were unaffected during the transition period, the lawsuit of Tesla alleged.

“The Minister of Transportation’s decision suddenly left hundreds of Tesla Canada’s Ontario customers in the unfair position of no longer being eligible for the rebate they had expected to receive when they ordered their vehicles,” said Tesla Canada in its lawsuit.

The lawsuit asked the province’s superior court to quash the “arbitrary and entirely unreasonable” decision.

A spokesperson for Ontario’s Ministry of Transportation said it would be inappropriate to comment the lawsuit because “this matter is before the courts.”—Xinhua ■

Calmly overcoming obstacles

LATELY, the steady rise in the US dollar is on everyone's mind. This has repercussions in Myanmar's economy, as the rising dollar value also brings up the price of imports into the country and other commodities.

But this economic and financial repercussion is felt all around the world. The strengthening dollar is causing other currencies to decline in value. One could also say it's affected by the shifting trade policy of a superpower nation. Myanmar, and many other countries are in the crossfire of two superpowers engaging in a trade war; a sapling caught between two mighty bulls in a heated battle.

The financial repercussion also hits countries which have currencies that are internationally exchanged but since the foreign exchange market is dominated by the US dollar, there is not much they can do. For a country like Myanmar, if neighboring trade countries, such as Thailand, are affected then it will be felt here as well. Myanmar is an import-oriented country that purchases US dollars for its transactions. If demand in the trade market or financial market increases, then value will follow suit.

The fall of the Kyat is the direct result of the rising dollar, as well as the increasing international currency and trade deficit. The international currency repercussion will be present for some time. A similar event transpired in 1997. It is hoped that there will not be extremely worrying scenarios for the public. We have to strive to lower the trade deficit; if not now then surely in the long run. For example, promoting local small and medium enterprises and substituting imports with local products can achieve this.

Of course, this means those in authority need to create opportunities for the private sector to carry out this goal. There needs to be the right set of circumstances to reduce the burden of corporations and businesses and to reduce the people's worries and anxieties.

The increase in foreign currency demand can heighten the financial repercussion we are facing now, so adequate measures must be taken to reduce qualms and desires. Myanmar is poised for taking on many undertakings and she has natural resources at its disposal.

Therefore, the people should not be overly worried and stockpiling US dollars in a panic. Instead, we all need to calmly respond to the current international currency repercussion by actively participating in the promotion and development of economic success, local production and exports.

... we all need to calmly respond to the current international currency repercussion by actively participating in the promotion and development of economic success, local production and exports.

Tourism in Hong Kong

By Sayar Mya (MOFA)

A sea of people at arrival

On a cool Sunday afternoon at 2:30 pm local time, the Myanma National Airlines (MNA - 8027) aircraft landed on the Hong Kong soil. Our loving daughter was waiting at the exit tube of the aircraft, from where we had to walk a long, long way to arrive at the immigration counter, as the terminal is very large.

Wow!!! Thousands of visiting passengers were queuing in a zigzag row to get to the immigration counters. In 2014, a record 60.8 million visitors came to the city. Last year in 2017, the total number of visitors was 58.4 million.

One handsome junior immigration officer saw me in limbo, and asked me, "Grandpa!!! You looked tired. Come with me to another counter". He was a man with a soft heart towards senior citizens. I am thankful to him, good guys.

Hospitality and courtesy starts from the airport from the very beginning for the visitors.

I have noted down the sea of people arriving at the airport to write an article about tourism in Hong Kong at an appropriate time.

Myanmar CCDNTI meeting held to promote country's tourism industry

The Central Committee for the Development of the National Tourism Industry (CCDNTI) was held on 3 August 2018, with an opening address by State

Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

The meeting was the first for 2018, becoming the fourth since the formation of the committee in 2016, and it was held to promote the country's tourism industry.

The State Counsellor said that international visitors are humans like us and that they want to see, experience things conveniently and comfortably.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi pointed out that at the moment, international travel business is important not only for a country but also for the entire world. Since the earliest time, there were instances of travelling. At that time, merchants were the ones who mostly travelled and they travelled for trading purposes. The first time travel was done for knowledge and not for trade was by extraordinary people who wished to seek knowledge. There were also people who travelled for adventure.

As the world became developed, most of the travelling is done for recreation, to see things that do not exist in one's country of origin and to gain knowledge. To attract international travelers to our country, we need to think of ourselves as hosts. If the thinking is to make money only, it would not be as successful as we wish. A host first thinks about the requirement of the guests.

At this opportune time, the author takes the liberty in sharing about tourism in Hong



Kong.

Hong Kong, a former British colony, is a special administrative region in southeastern China. Its vibrant, densely populated urban centre is a major port and global financial hub with a skyscraper-studded skyline.

The tourism industry has been an important part of the economy of Hong Kong since it shifted to a service sector model in the late 1980s and early '90s. There has been a sharp increase of domestic tourists following the introduction of the Individual Visit Scheme (IVS) in 2003.

The Hong Kong Tourism Board works closely with au-



ong: Random Jotting



old for our capacity, according to Executive Director Anthony Lau of HK Tourism Board.

Tourism

The guideline in the Chief Executive Carrie Lam's 2017 Policy address is as follows:

107. Over the years, tourism has remained one of the pillar industries of Hong Kong. Visitor arrivals increased by 1.9% year-on-year in the first eight months of this year. The current-term Government has set a clear vision and mission to press ahead with the development of Hong Kong into a world-class premier tourism destination. Apart from maintaining a steady growth in visitor numbers, we are more concerned about attracting more high-yield overnight visitors to ensure the balanced, healthy and sustainable development of the tourism industry.

New appointments

Anthony Lau has been appointed Tourism Board Executive Director with Daisy Lam as deputy. Their appointments took effect 1 August and 1 September 2017.

Secretary for Economic Development & Labor Stephen Ip said they have extensive experience in marketing and management.

Tourism Board Chairman James Tien said their deep knowledge of the local and international markets and their superb management skills will help the board market and promote Hong Kong worldwide, and meet new challenges and opportunities amid intensified competition in the global tourism market.

"They will lead the organization to even closer collaboration with travel-trade partners, and help strengthen Hong Kong's position as one of the world's premier destinations," he said.

Conclusion

General Manager Richard Hatter, an experienced trouble-shooter from the Shangri-La group said, "I had a clear idea of our clientele. They were looking for something sophisticated, authentic and local – it was a trend."

The author would like to conclude, it is the hospitality; warm reception, sociability and cordiality are the core elements in the tourism industry.

Government on tourism development from a strategic perspective.

Promotion

The HKTb continues to promote the destination to business and leisure travelers through its worldwide "Hong Kong – Live it, Love it!" campaign. Leveraging on the opening of several new attractions from 2005 onwards, the HKTb designated 2006 as "Discover Hong Kong Year". The global marketing campaign makes use of a series of strategic promotions to showcase the new image of Hong Kong and promote it as a "must-visit" destination in 2006. The HKTb began its travel trade promotion in May 2005 and rolled out the consumer promotions worldwide in late 2005. An agreement called "Alo-agreement" was signed and implemented with a series of joint overseas marketing initiatives being conducted with provincial tourism bureaus concerned.

The board revealed at least five districts would be earmarked for a global campaign promoting their unique culture and heritage, building on the success of the Old Town Central initiative last year. It is a place where East and West, past and present coexist and collide.

Tourism is regarded as one of the four pillars of Hong Kong's economy, contributing 4.7 per cent to the city's gross domestic product in 2016.

The number 60 million should not be seen as a thresh-

thorities to make Hong Kong an essential component in all combination and multi-destination itineraries.

Tourism, along with international trade and financial services are the three main sources of income for Hong Kong.

Tourism Commission

The Tourism Commission was established in May 1999 to promote Hong Kong as Asia's premier international city for all visitors. A Tourism Strategy Group, comprising representatives from the Government, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTb) and various sectors of the tourism industry has been established to advise the



EARTHQUAKE NEWS

A very strong earthquake of magnitude (8.0) Richter Scale with its epicenter outside Myanmar (Fiji Islands Region), latitude 18.100°S, longitude 178.000°W, depth (570)kilometers about (6320) miles southeast of Kaba-Aye seismological observatory was recorded at (06)hr (49)min (40)sec M.S.T on 19th August, 2018.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 am Sunday 19th August, 2018)

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is strong to vigorous over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 19th AUGUST, 2018: Rain will be fairly widespread in Northern Shan State and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with regionally heavy falls in Taninthayi Region, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon States and isolated heavy falls in Naypyitaw, Upper Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyarwady Regions, Kachin and Chin States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with rough seas are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35 - 40) m.p.h. Wave height will be about (8-10) feet in off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Strong monsoon.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 19th AUGUST, 2018: Some rain. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 19th AUGUST, 2018: Some rain. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 19th AUGUST, 2018: Some rain. Degree of certainty is (100%).

Third 10 Days Weather Forecast in August, 2018 Issued on 18-8-2018

Bay of Bengal Condition

A Low Pressure Area may form over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal. Monsoon will be moderate to strong over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

Rain Conditions and Rainy Days

Rain or thundershowers are likely to be expected above normal in Taninthayi Region, Shan, Rakhine, Kayah, Kayin and Mon States and about normal in Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyarwady Regions, Kachin and Chin States.

Rainy days are likely to be expected about (8) to (10) days in Upper Sagaing, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyarwady and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin, Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon States and about (5) to (7) days in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions and Kayah State.

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Ghana backpedalling out of banking crisis



Ghana's President Nana Akufo-Addo was voted into power in 2016 on a pledge to revamp Ghana's economy.
Photo: AFP

ACCRA — Ghana is backpedalling out of a banking crisis as the government takes on debt to save a troubled sector and vows to punish the executives responsible.

Early in August, Ghana's central bank revoked the licenses of five local banks and combined them into one – the newly created state-run Consolidated Bank – issuing 5.8 billion cedis (\$1.2 billion) in bonds to clear their debt.

The Bank of Ghana (BoG) accused the collapsed banks of a range of issues, including poor corporate governance, question-

able transactions and dishonest reporting.

The merger was just one step out of many that President Nana Akufo-Addo's government has been forced to take in order to reform Ghana's rotten banking sector, brought close to collapse as a result of bad governance and weak lending.

This past week, Ghana's deputy central bank governor Elsie Addo Awadzi said in an interview that law enforcement agencies will "further investigate criminal behaviour" connected to the

failed banks.

Ghana faces a "now or never" decision to clean up the banking sector, economist Eric Osei-Assibey told AFP.

"This central bank is carving a niche for itself. It is beginning to bite and that alone could engender some confidence in the medium and long term," Osei-Assibey said.

'Good progress'

The banking intervention will add to Ghana's already high debt burden, said Razia Khan, Africa

economist at Standard Chartered, in a note to investors earlier this month.

Ghana is currently in its final year of an IMF bailout totalling almost \$1 billion, with its debt as a percentage of gross domestic product hovering over 60 percent.

Along with the Consolidated Bank loan, the central bank will give support to other banks in order to help them meet a minimum capital requirement of 400 million cedis by the end of 2018.

Despite the turmoil, "Ghana has made good progress on fiscal consolidation in recent months", said Khan.

"The action taken to strengthen the banking system is likely to be viewed as a necessary measure by the fund and we do not expect this to disrupt disbursements under the current IMF programme," she said.

If Consolidated Bank is run properly, it may even play a positive role in the economy, said Souhir Mzali, Africa editor at Oxford Business Group, a London-based research firm.

"It might transform from a debt burden to an asset by the time the government is expected to offload shares in 2020," Mzali said.

'Lost confidence'

Of course, there will be consequences.

"It's going to affect banking

habits," said Kwesi Jonah, senior research fellow at the Institute of Democratic Governance in Ghana's capital of Accra.

"Some people will lose confidence in the banking system altogether, other people will be more inclined to move towards the foreign banks," Jonah said, blaming the previous administration for letting the sector rot.

"There was lack of political will to deal with the problem," he added.

President Akufo-Addo was voted into power in 2016 on a pledge to revamp Ghana's economy after it had to turn to the IMF for a bailout the year before.

Ghana became Africa's fastest-growing economy in 2017 thanks to a surge in oil and gas production, recording a blistering 6.8 percent growth in the first quarter of this year.

But there is no getting away from the fact that West African gold and cocoa producer still has work to do in order to restore integrity to the tarnished financial sector.

As Ghana's Finance Minister Ken Ofori-Atta put it this past week, the days of being "soft" on laws are over.

"Hopefully (with) what we are going to do in the banking sector, everybody will begin to realise that those periods are gone." —AFP ■

Iran to advance renewables export by private sectors

TEHRAN — Iran is preparing the ground for private investment in and export of renewables, the news website EghtesadOnline reported Saturday.

State-owned Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization, also known as Satba, was tasked with devising relevant regulations and establishing the infrastructure for investors to generate and sell electricity to foreign buyers.

All domestic and foreign investors are welcome to start new ventures through Satba, said Peyman Taqipour, a director at the organization.

"Accordingly, legal or natural entities keen on producing renewable energy in the country will be granted

land and network access," he added.

"The government will not benefit from the ventures and the investors will only be charged with land and transit tariffs," the director noted.

However, applicants must submit documents that prove their memorandum of understanding with a foreign purchaser, Taqipour explained.

Iran enjoys potentials for the production of renewable energies, including geothermal, solar and wind power.

Iran's installed electricity capacity amounts to 80 GW. The lion's share of power is produced with the help of fossil fuel-based power plants. The amount of electricity produced by renewables in Iran is as low as 612 MW. —Xinhua ■

Tanzania rejects US criticism of local polls

DAR ES SALAAM — Tanzania is an "independent" country and will not be "intimidated", the ruling party said on Saturday after the US expressed concern about the conduct of 70 recent by-elections.

The US on Wednesday cited "election violence and irregularities" aimed at the opposition after local elections were held on Sunday to replace officials who had either resigned or died.

"Credible accounts of election violence and irregularities include refusal by National Election Commission authorities to register opposition candidates, intimidation by police of opposition party members, unwarranted arrests, and suppression of freedoms of assembly and speech in the lead up to the by-elections," the US said in a statement.

But Bashiru Ally, secretary-general of the ruling party, the CCM, told a public meeting on Saturday: "We will not be intimi-

dated, we cannot be intimidated.

"Even if our country is poor, we are not ready to accept interference in our governance. We will continue to govern ourselves," he added. Local media earlier reported the beating and hospitalisation of some members of the main opposition by supporters of the ruling party.

Churches and civil society

organisations had also highlighted political violence around local elections, particularly the perceived bias of security forces in favour of ruling party candidates.

The US statement came amid sustained criticism of the rule of President John Magufuli who has cracked down on dissent since taking office three years ago. —AFP ■



The US statement came amid sustained criticism of the rule of President John Magufuli, pictured in October 2016, who has cracked down on dissent since taking office in 2015. **PHOTO: AFP**

Italy bids farewell to bridge collapse dead as outrage simmers

GENOA — Thousands of mourners attended a state funeral in the Italian city of Genoa to bid a solemn farewell to victims of a bridge collapse that has sparked nationwide anger, while rescuers pulled more bodies from the rubble.

Large crowds packed inside an exhibition hall turned into a makeshift chapel where coffins adorned with flowers and photographs were lined up, although the families of some victims shunned the state event.

"I lost a friend but I came for all the victims," local resident Nunzio Angone told AFP.

Italian President Sergio Mattarella and Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte presided over the hour-long Catholic service, which coincided with a national day of mourning for Tuesday's disaster. A visibly shaken Mattarella spoke of an "unacceptable tragedy".

The death toll now stands at 40 including several children after the discovery Saturday of the body of a labourer in his 30s in the rubble and the death of another man in hospital, officials said.

Local media reported that the bodies of three family members, including a nine-year-old girl, had also been found inside a car under debris. At the ceremony, there was applause as a priest read out the names of the dead.

"The Morandi bridge collapse has pierced the heart of Genoa. The pain is deep," Archbishop Angelo Bagnasco said.

Solemn chants of "Allahu akbar" (God is greatest) then rang out as an imam led prayers for two Muslim victims.

His presence was particularly poignant in a staunchly Catholic country, where the far-right is now in power and which has seen



Archbishop Angelo Bagnasco blessed the coffins during the state funeral for victims of the Morandi bridge collapse. PHOTO: AFP

a rise in attacks on foreigners.

'Rigorous investigation'

The populist government has blamed Autostrade per l'Italia, the operator of the viaduct, for the collapse and wants to strip the company of its lucrative contracts. Autostrade chief executive Giovanni Castellucci said at a press conference that 500 million euros (\$570 million) will be available from Monday to help Genoa and to rebuild the bridge while funds would be set up to help victims.

The government has accused the infrastructure giant of failing to invest in sufficient maintenance.

Interior Minister Matteo Salvini had demanded that the company offer up to 500 million euros to help families and local government deal with the aftermath of the disaster.

The government was set to hold an emergency meeting in Genoa on the disaster later Saturday.

"Everyone who has come here in recent years has gone over that bridge. I have travelled along that bridge many times too, also recently," Mattarella said,

vowing to carry out a "rigorous investigation" into the accident.

'Farce of a funeral'

Relatives of victims comforted each other as they huddled around each of the 19 caskets.

Among the coffins was a small white one for the youngest victim, an eight-year-old boy who was killed alongside his parents as they prepared to catch a ferry to the holiday island of Sardinia.

The dead also include three Chileans and four French nationals, while 10 people remain in hospital.

"I don't know those who have died in the bridge collapse but I wanted pay my respects regardless. This shouldn't have happened," Genoa resident Claudio Castellaro, 73, told AFP.

Applause erupted as firefighters entered the hall ahead of the ceremony. There was also loud clapping for co-deputy premiers Matteo Salvini and Luigi di Maio who have led angry tirades against Autostrade. But more than half of the families of the victims refused to take part, some preferring a more intimate funeral, while others announced a boycott. —AFP ■

Greece emerges from bailouts, relieved, but not euphoric

ATHENS — The youngest Greeks may not be able to remember what life was like beforehand: the third and last of the country's international bailouts comes to an end on Monday, and while Greece is faring better, it still bears the scars of eight years of austerity.

After Portugal, Ireland, Spain and Cyprus, Greece was the last eurozone member to benefit from an international bailout programme in the fallout from the eurozone crisis.

In three successive programmes — 2010, 2012 and 2015 — the European Union, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund loaned debt-racked Greece a total 289 billion euros (\$330 billion).

But the economic reforms its creditors demanded in return almost brought the country to its knees, with a quarter of its gross domestic product (GDP) evaporating over eight years and

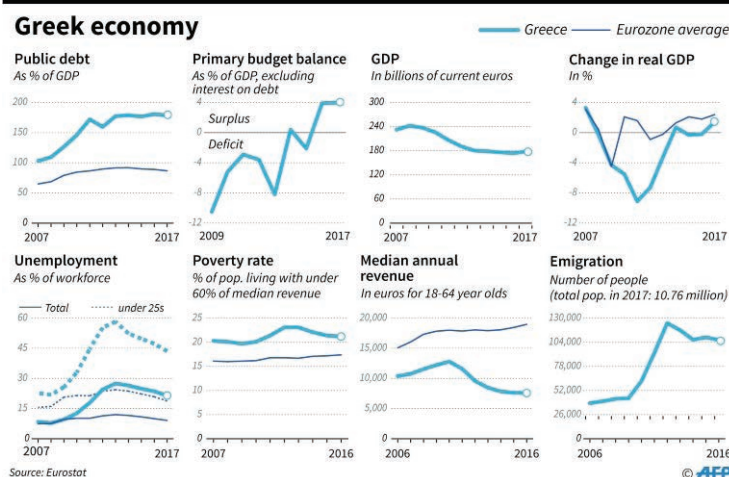
is Tsipras and his then Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis tried to soften the terms of the second programme when they came into power in January 2015.

But despite the resounding "No" of the Greek population to the international creditors in a public referendum, Tsipras — faced with a possible ejection of Greece from the single currency area — was compelled to sign a third bailout programme the following July.

Nonetheless, all of Greece's major political parties, including Tsipras's Syriza, are convinced of the need for serious reforms.

Economics professor Nikos Vettas regards this as a favourable development and says that "nobody really thinks any more that Greece will collapse", a view that appears to be widely shared.

But Toulouse University economics professor, Gabriel



Greek economy over 10 years. PHOTO: AFP

unemployment soaring to more than 27 percent.

The economy is now expanding and the jobless rate in May was back below 20 percent for the first time since 2011.

But "it would be arrogant to say that we did everything right in Greece", said Klaus Regling, head of the European Stability Mechanism, which is in charge of the current programme, in a German magazine interview last week. Regling told the online edition of the weekly *Der Spiegel* that he felt "tremendous respect" for the Greeks, whose salaries and pensions had been cut by as much as a third during the crisis.

Nevertheless, many economists, such as Theodoros Stamatou of Eurobank, argued that while bailout programmes were "unavoidable" in a country lagging far behind in reforms, they were also too harsh.

No new collapse

Leftist Prime Minister Alex-

Colletis, is highly critical of the bailout programmes and believes Greece could be facing "inevitable social conflagration".

While the country achieved budget surpluses — excluding debt repayments — of around four percent in 2016 and 2017, its hands remain tied.

Greece has already legislated new reforms for 2019 and 2020 and will remain under supervision for several years.

Still, this is a win-win situation and Greece will receive debt relief which the international ratings agency Fitch described as "substantial" as it upgraded the country's sovereign debt to "BB-" from "B".

Even at that level, Greek debt still remains in the non-investment grade or "junk" category.

But another ratings agency, S&P, last month raised its outlook for Greece to "positive," suggesting another upgrade could be coming soon. —AFP ■

London car attack suspect charged with attempted murder

LONDON — Scotland Yard on Saturday said that the suspect who slammed his car into security barriers outside the British Parliament on Tuesday was charged with the attempted murder of members of the public and the attempted murder of police officers.

Salih Khater, the 29-year-old British citizen of Sudanese origin, was arrested on suspicion of attempted murder after the

car crash.

He allegedly drove his Ford Fiesta into commuters and towards police officers before hitting a security barrier outside Parliament on Tuesday morning.

A man and a woman were taken to hospital with non life-threatening injuries. They have now been discharged. Another man was treated on the scene.

Police have been granted a

warrant to hold Khater in custody until Monday after his arrest on suspicion of preparing an act of terror.

The suspect was unknown to MI5, according to the Metropolitan Police.

The British Parliament is not far from the Westminster Bridge, where a terrorist attack took place in March 2017 when a man ploughed a car into crowds, killing five people. —Xinhua ■

Energy is one of the priorities of Russian-German cooperation — Putin

BERLIN — Russia attaches great importance to the development of mutually beneficial cooperation with Germany and energy is one its priorities, President Vladimir Putin told reporters before the talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

“Russia attaches great importance to the development of mutually beneficial cooperation with Germany in the political, economic and other areas. One of the priority areas is energy,” Putin said.

The President recalled that “Germany is the largest buyer of Russian energy resources.”

“In 2017, we delivered 53.8 bln cubic meters of gas, which covers more than 30% of the German market, while the consumption of Russian gas is constantly growing and this year it increased by 13%,”



Russian President Vladimir Putin and German Chancellor Angela Merkel. **PHOTO: TASS**

he said.

Putin noted that Germany is not only a market for the supply of hydrocarbons from Russia, but also an important link in their transit to other European countries.

He recalled that this June marked 50 years since the beginning of gas supplies from

the Soviet Union to Western Europe.

“Throughout this period, our country reliably provided uninterrupted power supply, made and still makes a significant contribution to the energy security of the entire European continent,” the Russian leader said. —Tass ■

Afghan airstrikes kill 11 militants in southern province

KANDAHAR — Up to 11 militants loyal to the armed Taliban group were killed following a series of Afghan forces airstrikes in the country’s southern province of Kandahar on Saturday, police spokesman in the restive province Abdul

Bashir Khaksar said.

The air raids took place at around 4:00 am local time when a militants’ hideout was targeted in Malang Kariz area of Maiwand district in the province, resulting in the death of at least 11 militants,

the official said. According to the source, three explosive-packed vans belonging to the hardliner Taliban militants have also been targeted and destroyed in the bombings.

The Taliban militants have not commented. —Xinhua ■

Magnitude 6.3 earthquake rocks Indonesia’s Lombok island: USGS

LOMBOK (Indonesia) — A strong 6.3-magnitude earthquake rocked the Indonesian island of Lombok Sunday, sending people fleeing into the streets just two weeks after a quake which killed more than 460 people.

The quake was centred west-southwest of Belanting town in East Lombok, the US Geological Survey said, at a relatively shallow depth of seven kilometres (four miles).

“I was driving to deliver aid to evacuees when suddenly the electricity pole was swaying. I realised it was an earthquake.

“People started to scream and cry. They all ran to the street,” East Lombok resident Agus Salim told AFP. The tremor was also felt in the island’s

capital Mataram and on the neighbouring resort island of Bali.

It comes two weeks after a shallow 6.9-magnitude quake on August 5 levelled tens of thousands of homes, mosques and businesses across Lombok.

Indonesia, an archipelago of thousands of islands, sits on the so-called Pacific “Ring of Fire”, where tectonic plates collide and many of the world’s volcanic eruptions and earthquakes occur.

In 2004, a tsunami triggered by a magnitude 9.3 undersea earthquake off the coast of Sumatra, in western Indonesia, killed 220,000 people in countries around the Indian Ocean, including 168,000 in Indonesia. —AFP ■



Two residents look on as damaged houses are being destroyed by workers using an excavator after an earthquake hit the area of Gangga on 12 August 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**

Nepali PM congratulates Pakistan’s new PM on election

KATHMANDU — Nepali Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli on Saturday congratulated Imran Khan on his election as the new prime minister of Pakistan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said.

In his congratulatory message to Khan on Saturday, Sharma Oli recalled friendly relations between Nepal and Pakistan while extending his wishes for successful tenure of Khan.

“In the message, the prime minister has also expressed hope that bilateral relations between Nepal and Pakistan will be further strengthened during the tenure of Prime Minister Khan,” the ministry said in the press statement. Cricket-turned-politician Khan was

sworn in as Pakistan’s 22nd prime minister on Saturday. Pakistan President Mamnoon Hussain administered the oath in a ceremony which was attended by diplomats, ministers, lawmakers, other political leaders, military and civil officials and dignitaries. The national assembly, or the lower house of the parliament, elected Khan as prime minister on Friday.

Khan garnered 176 votes as against 96 votes secured by his only rival Shehbaz Sharif of the opposition Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

Khan’s Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, or Movement for Justice, emerged as the single largest party in the 25 July parliamentary elections. —Xinhua ■



People evacuate from flood-stricken area in Kochi of Kerala State in India

People evacuate from a flood-stricken area in Kochi of Kerala State in India, on 18 August 2018. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Choking hazard: air pollution hangs over Asian Games

JAKARTA — Indonesia is about to open the Asian Games but its traffic-clogged capital Jakarta remains shrouded in a haze of air pollution that threatens to mar the world's second-biggest multi-sport event. Jakarta's toxic skies have been stuck at unhealthy levels for weeks despite drastic efforts to cut down on congestion, including an odd-even licence plate system and the closure of some schools and toll roads.

The city's air-quality index reading hovered around 107 on Friday, posing a danger for people sensitive to air pollution including those with respiratory problems.

But the index has regularly topped 150 this month, which is considered a health threat to the general population. A reading over 300 is seen as hazardous. About 16,000 athletes and officials from 45 Asian countries — along with hordes of sports-crazy tourists — are flocking to Jakarta and co-host city Palembang for the showpiece event, which kicks off Saturday.

Athletes competing indoors will be relatively unaffected, but it's a different story for outside sports like athletics, archery, baseball, softball and rugby, said Budi Haryanto, an air pollution and health expert at the University of Indonesia.

Competing in an environment with dirty air limits athletes' ability to perform at their best, he added, with Jakarta's average 31 degree Celsius temperatures already threatening to leave competitors drenched in sweat.

It's a worry for race-walker Hendro Yap, 17, who hails from Indonesia's cultural capital Yogyakarta where the climate is cooler and less polluted. Yap, who broke the Southeast Asian Games record last year in Kuala Lumpur for 20-kilometre race walking, said he finds competing in Jakarta a challenge. "For (people) who are used to running in Jakarta... it might be slightly easier," he told AFP.

"But it's still very hard. You sweat more. And in Jakarta it's so polluted... that it's hard to perform."

Tackling Jakarta's foul air is no easy task. There are some 18 million cars plying the roads of the sprawling city of 10 million — and the number of vehicles is going up every year.

The majority of Jakarta's air pollution is due to vehicle emissions.

Environmental experts say there is little hope for clean skies during the two-week tournament.

"It's hard to find a solution because the key lies in regulating emissions," said Hindun Mulaika, climate and energy manager at Greenpeace Indonesia.

"The government still thinks this is purely a transport problem."

Meanwhile, annual forest fires in Sumatra are threatening to envelop the sleepy city of Palembang in a different kind of toxic cloud. Other countries have faced similar air pollution challenges including Beijing when it was set to host the Olympics in 2008. The Chinese capital took successful, drastic measures including temporarily closing factories to clean up its skyline. —AFP ■



Jakarta's toxic skies have been stuck at unhealthy levels for weeks despite drastic efforts to cut down on congestion. **PHOTO: AFP**

More than 320 dead in India flood crisis

KERALA — Pressure intensified Saturday to save thousands still trapped by devastating floods that have killed more than 300 in the Indian state of Kerala, triggering landslides and sending torrents sweeping through villages in the region's worst inundation crisis in a century.

Authorities warned of more torrential rain and strong winds over the weekend, as hundreds of troops and local fishermen staged desperate rescue attempts in helicopters and boats across the southern state.

Kerala, popular among international tourists for its tropical hills and beaches, has been battered by record monsoon rainfall this year.

The state is "facing the worst floods in 100 years", chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan said on Twitter, adding that at least 324 lives have been lost so far.

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in the stricken state on Friday night, Vijayan's office tweeted, with media reports saying the premier would undertake an aerial survey of the worst-affected areas on Saturday.

People all over the state of 33 million have made panicked appeals on social media for help, saying they cannot make contact with rescue services as power and communication lines are down.

"My family and neighbouring families are in trouble," wrote Ajo Varghese, a resident of the coastal city of Alappuzha, in a Facebook post that quickly went viral.

"No water and food. Not able to communicate from afternoon. Mobile phones are not reachable... Please help," he added.

Other distressed messages were shared online from people trapped inside temples and hospitals as well as their homes.

More than 30 military helicopters and 320 boats are attempting rescues across Kerala after some areas were engulfed by overflowing rivers, with residents seen swimming and wading through chest-high waters past partially submerged houses.

Authorities said thousands of people have been taken to safety so far but 6,000 more are still waiting for rescue.



Kerala has been battered by record monsoon rainfall this year. **PHOTO: AFP**

"We are deploying more boats and the army to ramp up rescue operations," senior state government official PH. Kurian told AFP.

Helicopters have also been dropping emergency food and water supplies, while special trains carrying drinking water have been sent to Kerala.

'Extremely grave'

According to India's weather bureau, since the beginning of June more than 321 centimetres (126 inches) of rain has fallen on the hilly central district of Idukki, which is now virtually cut off from the rest of the state.

The Kerala government has said it faces an "extremely grave" crisis and Vijayan warned of

further torrential rainfall hitting the region over the weekend.

The gates of dozens of dams and reservoirs across the state have been opened as water levels reach danger levels, inundating many other villages.

At least 310,000 people have been displaced and are taking shelter in more than 2,000 relief camps. North and central Kerala have been worst-hit by the floods with the international airport in the main city of Kochi shut until at least August 26.

The home ministry announced separately that 868 people have been reported dead in seven Indian states including Kerala since the start of the monsoon in June. —AFP ■

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY HOLIDAY NOTICE

As the wharves, warehouses and chellan Offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the 22nd AUGUST 2018 (Qurbani Eid), Loading, Unloading and delivery for Goods will be received on Payment as Holiday Fees.

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V TOVE MAERSK VOY. NO. (1819)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V TOVE MAERSK VOY. NO. (1819) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20-8-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

TRADEMARK CAUTION

LION CORPORATION, a company incorporated in Japan and having its registered office at 3-7, Honjo 1-chome, Sumida-ku, Tokyo 130-8644, Japan is the owner and proprietor of the following Trademark:



Reg. No.4/7179/2018 (11.7.2018)

In respect of "Soaps; body soap; hand soap; shampoos; hair rinses; hair conditioners; hair lotion; hair tonics [cosmetics]; skin cream; skin lotion; toilet water; antiperspirants [toiletries]; deodorants; facial washes; dentifrices" included in **International Class 03**.

Notice is hereby given that the Registrant claims the colors in respect of and as represented in the abovementioned trademark at Registration No. 4/7179/2018 (Dated 11.7.2018).

Fraudulent or unauthorised use or actual or colourable imitation of the Mark shall be dealt with according to law.

Daw Htoo Htoo, H.G.P
For LION CORPORATION,
C/o Kelvin Chia Yangon Ltd.,
Level 8A, Union Financial Centre (UFC),
Corner of Mahabandoola Road and Thein Phyu Road,
Botataung Township, Yangon.

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Dated 20 August 2018 hh@kcyangon.com

Former UN chief and Nobel laureate Kofi Annan dies

ACCRA/GENEVA—Former UN chief and Nobel peace laureate Kofi Annan died Saturday at the age of 80, triggering a flood of tributes from around the world for the “diplomatic rock star”.

The Ghanaian national was a career diplomat who projected quiet charisma and was widely credited for raising the world body’s profile in global politics during his two terms as head of the UN from 1997 to 2006.

The first secretary general from sub-Saharan Africa, Annan led the United Nations through the divisive years of the Iraq war and was later accused of corruption in the oil-for-food scandal, one of the most trying times of his tenure.

“It is with immense sadness that the Annan family and the Kofi Annan Foundation announce that Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the United Nations and Nobel Peace Laureate, passed away peacefully on Saturday 18th August after a short illness,” the foundation said in a statement.

“His wife Nane and their

children Ama, Kojo and Nina were by his side during his last days.”

Annan, who lived not far from the UN European headquarters in Geneva, died in hospital in the German-speaking part of the country, Swiss news agency ATS reported.

‘Guiding force for good’

Current UN chief Antonio Guterres described his predecessor as “a guiding force for good”.

“In many ways, Kofi Annan was the United Nations,” he said.

“He rose through the ranks to lead the organisation into the new millennium with matchless dignity and determination.”

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein said Annan was “a friend to thousands and a leader of millions”.

“Kofi was humanity’s best example, the epitome, of human decency and grace.”

The UN said it would fly flags at half mast at all of its locations around the world through



Kofi Annan, who died on Saturday aged 80, is widely credited for raising the United Nation’s profile in global politics. **PHOTO: AFP**

Tuesday.

And Ghana’s President Nana Akufo-Addo announced a week of mourning for “one of our greatest compatriots”.

In 2001, as the world was reeling from the September 11

attacks in the United States, Annan was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize jointly with the world body “for their work for a better organised and more peaceful world”.

Another Nobel laureate, re-

tired South African archbishop Desmond Tutu, described Annan as “an outstanding human being who represented our continent and the world with enormous graciousness, integrity and distinction.” —AFP ■

Brazil’s ‘queer museum’ reopens in Rio after forced closure

RIO DE JANEIRO — Brazil’s “queer museum,” forced to close last year after conservatives attacked it for allegedly promoting pedophilia, blasphemy and bestiality, is reopening in the shadow of Rio de Janeiro’s iconic Christ the Redeemer statue.

The Queermuseu, which features 200 works by 82 Brazilian artists, originally opened last year in the southern city of Porto Alegre but was forced to close by critics who accused it of attacking Christianity.

The enforced closure sent shockwaves through the artistic community and triggered debate about freedom of expression and a return of censorship, three decades after the end of the military dictatorship that ran the Latin American country from 1964-85.

A crowdfunding campaign raised more than a million reais (\$275,000) allowing it to reopen for a month, with free admission, at the School for Visual Arts in Rio de Janeiro’s Parque Lage — a wooded parkland at the foot of the mountain



A crowdfunding campaign raised more than a million reais (\$275,000) allowing the exhibition to reopen for a month. **PHOTO: AFP**

topped by the renowned statue of Christ.

The series of fundraising events included a concert by the legendary musician Caetano Veloso.

The curators picked the venue in the park after the city’s Evangelical mayor, Marcelo Crivella, banned the use of Rio’s Arts Museum for the show.

“It is a very important moment for Brazilian democracy, a convincing demonstration that the most progressive sectors of society will not accept censor-

ship,” said curator Gaudencio Fidelis.

“We haven’t seen an act of censorship of this size and severity since the dictatorship,” he said.

In addition artwork, the exhibition features talks on sexual diversity and LGBT rights as well as musical shows by “queer” performers.

The exhibition is almost identical to the one forced to close in Porto Alegre, featuring the same provocative works that scandalized Brazilian conservatives. —AFP ■

Aretha: muse and soundtrack of US civil rights movement

DETROIT — From singing for free to raise money for the cause, to uplifting activists with her phenomenal voice and upbeat anthems, Aretha Franklin was indelibly linked to the US civil rights movement.

Her signature song, “Respect” — recorded as a feminist anthem — became a rallying cry as African Americans rose up nationwide in the 1960s to fight peacefully for racial equality.

Jesse Jackson, the veteran civil rights activist who was

part of Martin Luther King Jr’s inner circle, hailed Franklin as “a source of joy” who “used the platform for issues other than just singing,” in an interview with AFP.

Jackson, who said he first met the singer when they were teenagers, told AFP by telephone from Chicago that “it was very difficult to say goodbye” when he visited and prayed with the music legend shortly before her death on Thursday at age 76. —AFP ■



Aretha Franklin (l) — shown here with her father C.L. Franklin and sister Caroline in a handout photo provided by the New Bethel Baptist Church — helped raise money for the civil rights movement in the 1960s by singing. **PHOTO: AFP**



Scientists have found a gene which plays an important role in helping rice. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Chinese scientists discover gene helping rice adapt to cold climate

BEIJING — Chinese scientists have found a gene which plays an important role in helping rice, originating in warm southern China, expand to the relatively cold northern regions.

Rices grown in Asia include two subspecies: indica rice and japonica rice. The heat-resistant indica rice is mainly planted in southern China, as well as the tropical and subtropical areas in South Asia and Southeast Asia, while the japonica rice, after nearly 10,000 years of domestication and selection, can tolerate cold weather and has been expanded to northern China and the temperate zones in Northeast Asia.

After analyzing 202 rice samples from various growing regions around the world collected by the Department of Agriculture of the United States,

Chinese researchers at the Institute of Genetics and Development Biology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences identified a gene, bZIP73, associated with cold tolerance.

The researchers believe the gene has facilitated the adaptation of rice to low temperatures.

Rice is one of the most important cereal crops feeding more than half of the world's population. Cold stress is a major factor limiting production and geographic distribution of rice, said Chu Chengcai, a lead scientist in the research.

The discovery may help breed new rice varieties which can grow in high latitude and high altitude regions, Chu said.

The research was published in the latest issue of the journal *Nature Communications*. —Xinhua ■

Luxury brands, status symbols may block new friendships

CHICAGO — Designer clothes, expensive watches and luxury cars that convey high status might actually deter new friends as people usually want to be friends with ones of more modest means, a new study of the University of Michigan (UM) shows.

In the study, 125 participants from a wealthy suburb were presented with one of two scenarios. Those in the presenter's scenario picked between a luxury car or a basic car to drive to an outdoor wedding party where they could meet new friends, and those in the evaluator's scenario indicated their reaction to someone arriving in either car.

Nearly two-thirds of the individuals in the presenter's condition believed the luxury car

would be more effective in making friends. However, this choice backfired from the perspective of the would-be friends, who expressed significantly less social interest in that individual; they expressed more social interest in the person with the basic car.

Another study asked people to choose from two plain T-shirts to wear to a picnic in their efforts to make new friends. One T-shirt had "Walmart" written on it in plain script, and the other T-shirt had "Saks Fifth Avenue" written on it in plain script. Seventy-six percent of the participants who were presenting themselves chose to wear the T-shirt with "Saks Fifth Avenue," whereas 64 percent of the would-be friends chose the person wearing the "Walmart" T-shirt as a potential new friend. —Xinhua ■

Projects like OneWeb unlikely to have commercial success — expert

MOSCOW — Projects to create satellite constellations, similar to OneWeb, are realistic from the technical point of view but unlikely to be commercially successful, said Yevgeny Buidinov, the Deputy Director General at the Russian Satellite Communications Company.

"Multi-satellite constellations, providing personal communication services, have already been in operation for quite a while, and almost all major satellite system projects have gone through the stage of bankruptcies and acquisitions. It will be very hard to create a commercially successful system with such a great number of satellites. A minimal number of users for such a system should be counted in hundreds of millions. Besides, user devices available at costs not exceeding \$100-\$500 should also be designed, which is impossible at the moment. Besides, prices for their services should be comparable to those provided by cellular service providers," he said. Buidinov added that a communications system of thousands of satellites should have a global coverage.

"At the same time, 50% of the planet's population lives within the 200-kilometer coastal zone, while 70% of the global population inhabit 7% of the global territory. It turns out that the efficiency of a truly global coverage will be fairly low due to a low number of users. At the same time, densely populated areas with great demand and capacity to pay, already have ground-based mobile service operators, which by that time will



One Russian expert believes that space internet technologies are necessary and feasible. **PHOTO: TASS**

switch to the new 5G standard," he said.

"From the commercial point of view, funds invested into such a system are unlikely to ever pay back, considering the demand for such technologies. However, a system of this kind is technically possible even at the present level of scientific development," the expert added.

Another point of view

At the same time, Andrey Ionin, a member of the Tsiolkovsky Russian Academy of Cosmonautics, believes that space internet technologies are necessary and feasible.

"Space internet - and, first of all the OneWeb system - are not a rival to ground-based services. It is an element of the digital economy, which is being widely discussed in Russia and abroad. Moreover, digital economy would simply be impossible without such systems," he said.

"First of all, only space sys-

tems can make the digital economy truly global - for example, to ensure that its elements, such as transport, are operable at any location. Secondly, space internet will be crucial in situations of natural and man-made disasters, when ground infrastructure of the digital economy, its communication links and energy systems can be knocked down completely or in part," Ionin added. "In those cases, access to communication technologies and internet is of utmost importance, first of all for organizing rescue efforts. Space technologies will be the only system that remains operable no matter what disasters take place on the ground," he continued.

Increased cybersecurity is another advantage of space-based internet, the expert said.

"I'm sure that systems similar to OneWeb will definitely be feasible as an element of the digital economy that complements and backs up ground-based services," he went on. —Tass ■



in
Picture

2018 World Robot Conference

Visitors watch a robot performing at the 2018 World Robot Conference in Beijing on 17 August 2018. The conference attracts a total of 166 domestic and international enterprises exhibiting their cutting edge technologies and more than 500 items are displayed at the scene. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Myanmar athletes go all out in 18th ASIAN Games 2018

MYANMAR athletes are participating in a variety of events: wushu, taekwondo, shooting, boat race and sepak takraw, in the 18th Asian Games 2018, which is being held from 18 August to 2 September in the Indonesian cities of Jakarta and Palembang.

Myanmar's athletes tried their best in yesterday's matches.

In the taekwondo demonstration contest, Myanmar's athlete San Shine Htet lost to the Indonesian fighter with a 1.73 point difference.

Also in men's wushu contest, Myanmar's Htet Han Kyaw stood at 13th place with

a total of 8.94 points, while in the women's contest under the same categories, Myat Noe Eain stood at 11th place, while Aye Thitsar Myint garnered the 10th place.

In the 10M Air Pistol Mixed team contest, Myanmar's Ye Tun Naung and May Moe Wha stood at 13th place after collecting 752 points.

In the women's double boat race, Myanmar secured the next stage of the qualification.

In the morning women's sepak takraw contest, Myanmar beat Indonesia 2-1 while in the afternoon of the same event, Myanmar lost to Viet Nam 1-2. —Myanmar News Agency



A wushu athlete performing in the demonstration contest in yesterday's 18th Asian Games 2018 in Indonesia. PHOTO: MNA

Ronaldo, Ancelotti make winning start in bruising Serie A

VERONA (Italy) — Cristiano Ronaldo failed to score on his Serie A debut but champions Juventus won 3-2 at Chievo as Carlo Ancelotti began life as Napoli coach with a come-from-behind 2-1 victory at Lazio in two bruising opening matches of the 2018-2019 league season on Saturday.

Ronaldo, 33, who joined the Turin giants from Real Madrid last month in a deal worth 100 million euros (\$114.5 million), clenched his fists with delight as his team earned all three points despite his four missed chances.

"Happy for the first victory in the Juve jersey!" Ronaldo tweeted after the match.

Italian Federico Bernardeschi scored the winner in injury time minutes after Chievo goalkeeper Stefano Sorrentino was knocked out and later hospitalised after colliding with the Portuguese superstar.

"Everyone was waiting for the goal. It's a shame he couldn't score but Sorrentino denied him a couple of times.

He was happy we got the win anyway," said Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri. "I'm happy with what he did and he's happy with his performance.

"We're still getting to know Ronaldo. He linked up well with (Paulo) Dybala today and I was impressed by how easily he slot- ted into the team."

Brazilian left-back Alex Sandro added: "I feel at ease with him (Ronaldo), and he's an excellent player.

"We understand each other, and we make a perfect team together. We have to go on like this." The champions were made to work after Germany international Sami Khedira opened the scoring after just three minutes at the Bentegodi Stadium for the seven-time defending champions.

Polish striker Mariusz Stepinski headed in a 37th-minute equaliser for Chievo with Emanuele Giaccherini slotting in a penalty after 56 minutes following a foul by new Juventus signing Joao Cancelo. —AFP ■

Myanmar to compete against Iran today in 2018 Asian Games

THE Myanmar men's national football team will play against the Iran men's football team at the Patriot Chandrabhaga Stadium, Bekasi, Indonesia, today in the 2018 Asian Games.

The North Korea team will also play against the Saudi Arabia team at Wibawa Mukti Stadium, Cikarang, Indonesia.

The two matches are from

Group F and both will play at 4pm local time (3:30pm Myanmar time).

Group F has a total of four teams and each team has already played two matches.

So far, the Saudi Arabia team and the Iran team are at the top of the table, garnering four points each, and followed by Myanmar and North Korea,

collecting one point each.

Two teams at least from six groups of the tournament will advance to Round of 16 stage. Four other teams from the groups will also advance to the Round, depending on their points.

The Round of 16 matches will be played on 23 and 24 August. —K. Banana ■

All Blacks Crotty, Ioane to miss second Bledisloe Test

SYDNEY—The All Blacks will be without both first-choice centres for next week's second Bledisloe Cup Test against Australia in Auckland, coach Steve Hansen said Sunday. He confirmed Ryan Crotty would miss the match after being knocked out in Saturday's 38-13 first Test win in Sydney, while Sonny Bill Williams was already out injured.

Hansen said he would be forced to check on the fitness of Wellington Hurricanes' Vince Aso, who has been out since May after damaging wrist ligaments during the Super Rugby season.

"The guy we're pretty keen on is Aso, we're trying to get an update on his about how his wrist is," he told reporters. Hansen said wing Rieko Ioane was sidelined after picking up a hamstring tear in Sydney.

The injuries may give Australia a glimmer of hope for next week's must-win second Test at Eden Park, a venue where they have not tasted victory since 1986. —AFP ■



Australia's Israel Folau (R) and Kurtley Beale (L) tackle New Zealand's Rieko Ioane during their Rugby Championship Bledisloe Cup match in Sydney. PHOTO: AFP