

NATIONAL

Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe meets US Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell



PAGE-2

NATIONAL

Ceremony held to observe 2018 International Day of Older Persons

PAGE-3

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Anti-corruption

- * The Union Government has established a four-year (2018-2021) strategic plan for anti-corruption reforms and initiatives to reduce the erosion of state funds and bring bribery and corruption under control.
- * The government's plans are now in place to implement the strategic plan for anti-corruption and bribery. At the same time, in order to protect individual rights and the basic rights of citizens, the protection of human rights is being implemented as a matter of great importance.

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

Sixth coordination meeting of National Level Environmental Conservation Committee held

PATRON of the National Level Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Central Committee Vice President U Myint Swe delivered an address at the sixth coordination meeting of the National Level Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Central Committee held in the meeting hall of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The meeting was attended by Central Committee Chairman Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win, Central Committee members including Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw and Deputy Attorney-General U Win Myint, environmental conservation and climate change supervisory chairmen Nay Pyi Taw Council member, states/regions government ministers, officials from six work committees, Permanent Secretaries, Directors General, represent-



Vice President U Myint Swe addresses the sixth coordination meeting of the National Level Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Central Committee in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

atives from non-government organizations and civil society organizations, and officials.

In his address, the Vice President said emphasis must be placed towards achieving the common aim of "coordinating environmental conservation sectors for sustainable develop-

ment" by balancing the social, economic and environmental conservation for socio-economic development of the State.

It is important that the eco-system and natural environment is not harmed or spoiled by increase in natural resource-based local and foreign invest-

ments. It is important that the land, water and air qualities are not affected by industries and expansion of urban areas.

The bad effect of climate change faced every year by Myanmar is a huge challenge for the country's socio-economic development. Preventive works

and preparations against climate change is our main work process. As such "a strong natural environmental management system to coordinate sustainable development works" needs to be established for the benefit of the country and the people.

SEE PAGE-3

INSIDE TODAY

NATIONAL

Union Minister for Int'l Cooperation meets with IFRCRCs Chair, Norwegian counterpart in New York

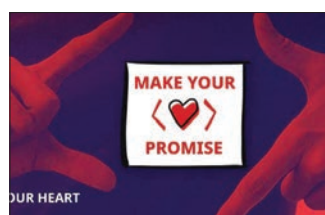
PAGE-2



OPINION

May each and every heart be healthy

PAGE-8-9



SCIENCE & TECH

Chinese scientists find vaccine effective in combating bird flu, but new risks among ducks

PAGE-15



Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe meets US Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell

UNION MINISTER for Office of the State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe, who is currently in New York attending the 73rd General Assembly of the United Nations, met with US Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell at the US Capitol in Washington, D.C. on 26 Sep-

tember.

At the meeting, democratic transition, peace and national reconciliation processes and Rakhine issue, including repatriation and formation of the Independent Commission of Enquiry were discussed.—MNA ■



Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe meeting with US Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell in Washington, D.C. PHOTO: MNA

Union Minister Dr. Aung Thu addresses 12th World Rabies Day Ceremony



Union Minister Dr Aung Thu observing anti-rabies injection administered by Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department and OIE. PHOTO: MNA

RABIES is a deadly virus spread to people from infected animals in Myanmar and to fulfil the global goal of reducing rabies infection to zero by 2030, close cooperation between Government, ministries concerned, parliaments, private sector, animal breeders and international supporters is needed, said Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Aung Thu at the 12th World Rabies Day ceremony held in Nay Pyi Taw Office No. 36, yesterday.

The theme of the 12th World Rabies Day was "Rabies: Share the message. Save a life."

The ceremony was attended by Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Aung Thu, Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Aye Maung Sein, officials from Hluttaw affairs committees, permanent secretaries, directors general, representatives from WHO, FAO, OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health), FOUR PAWS International and international partner organisations, veterinarians and departmental officials.

After Union Minister Dr. Aung Thu delivered the opening speech, the Union Minister and

ceremony attendees visited the displayed exhibits. Following this, they observed the anti-rabies injection administered by Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department and OIE.

According to WHO figures, a person in the world is affected with rabies every 15 minutes causing 55,000 to 70,000 fatalities, annually.

Myanmar is also a country that is infected by rabies and relevant ministries are cooperating with international organisations such as OIE, WHO, FAO to reduce and eradicate rabies.—MNA ■

Union Minister U Kyaw Tin attends Informal ASEAN-US Ministerial Meeting

UNION Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin, who has already arrived in New York, the United States to attend the 73rd General Assembly of the United Nations, attended the Informal ASEAN-US Ministerial Meeting at Lotte Hotel in New York yesterday afternoon. During the

meeting, Lao Prime Minister Saleumxay Kommasith and United States Deputy Secretary of State John J. Sullivan acted as chairpersons. They discussed promoting bilateral relations between ASEAN-US along with exchanging views on local and international issues.—MNA ■



Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin attending the Informal ASEAN-US Ministerial at Lotte Hotel in New York yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Union Minister for Int'l Cooperation meets with IFRCRCS Chair, Norwegian counterpart in NY

UNION Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin, who is attending the 73rd General Assembly of the United Nations in New York, met with Chair of International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRCRCS) Dr. Jemilah Mahmood at 10.30 am local time at the UN Headquarters in New York yesterday.

At the meeting, they discussed issues related with repatriation, resettlement and rehabilitation of the displaced people in Rakhine State.

Similarly, the Union Minister also met with Mr. Nikolai Astrup, Norway Minister for International Development at the UN Headquarters at 11.30 am local time yesterday.

At the meeting, they dis-



Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin meeting with Chair of International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Dr. Jemilah Mahmood at the UN Headquarters in New York yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

cussed democracy, peace and national reconciliation processes in Myanmar, repatriation, resettlement and rehabilitation of displaced

people in Rakhine State and formation of Independent Commission on Enquiry (ICOE) for solving Rakhine issue.—MNA ■

Sixth coordination meeting of National Level Environmental ...

FROM PAGE-1

It must be firmly stated that conserving the nature and environment is the main priority work of the State because the five strategic aims of the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (2018-2030) drawn up by the Union Government includes prioritizing the conservation of the nature and environment.

Based on this aim, the incumbent government is pushing towards strengthening environmental policy, law and procedures to coordinate sector wise work processes on maintaining the natural environment and combating climate change.

Emphasis needs to be placed on the fact that the committees play an important role in effectively coordinating and implementing environmental conservation plans in all sectors.

After forming the Central Committee, six work committees and management committees, coordination meetings were held starting from August 2016 and this is the sixth coordination meeting. The result of the collective efforts of the committee members are put on record, as in the five central committee meetings 77 future work processes were established, out of which 36 were completed and 41 were underway.

At the moment, long-term aims in the natural environmental sector has been submitted to the Office of the President. On the matter of natural environment, the aim is to maintain a clean natural environment and a good eco-system for the socio-economic development, health and happiness of all people living in

Myanmar. On the matter of climate change, the 2030 strategic long term aim of supporting sustainable development, withstanding the effect of climate change and achieving development while reducing carbon emission was established.

To effectively implement these long-term policy aims, relevant ministerial departments, Nay Pyi Taw Council area, states/regions are required to conduct the necessary coordination works that include practical priority plans.

Of the matters decided in the past meetings, the long-term works of education, information and capacity raising works are to be conducted with emphasis placed on it. On the other hand, there is a need to assess and manage whether maintaining of natural environment, according to laws, is included and coordinated in development works, including industries. These need to be done with increasing momentum all over the country.

In addition to this, to draw up and implement the priority work of raising the technology level in urban environment management, to maintain, manage and use effectively and in a sustained way the natural resources, environment, eco system and bio-diversity, central committee and Nay Pyi Taw Council, states and regions are to interact down to district and township level and work together for the long run with related organizations, NGOs, CSOs and private sector.

The air pollution which affected the people in nearby wards caused by the garbage dump fire in Yangon during April 2018 is a



Vice President U Myint Swe. PHOTO:MNA

warning to prioritize the systematic management of waste products all over the country. That is why it is urged to draw up and implement a guideline on systematic collection and disposal of wastes, including plastics, based on waste management strategy and aims included in the work program not only in major cities of Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay but in the whole country.

Nay Pyi Taw Council, state, region management committees and relevant ministerial departments are urged to discuss works conducted on decisions made in the last five meetings, drawing up and implementing long and short term natural environment maintaining work programs and

priority works appropriate for their own regions in this meeting.

Although there are limitations in human resources, technical requirements and fund in implementing the maintaining of natural environment and climate change matters to support the country's economic policy, socio-economic development of the country and the people, it is believed that difficulties and challenges can be overcome step by step with the combined efforts of all who are involved in this.

To overcome the technical, capacity, expertise requirements and obstacles, relevant ministerial departments, Nay Pyi Taw Council, state/region governments are urged to increase

cooperation with the United Nations as well as international organizations and partner countries. To implement the future works established by the central committee, work committees, Nay Pyi Taw Council area, state, region management committees, are urged to discuss and suggest based on the strength and weaknesses experienced in the past two years, said the Vice President. Next, Central Committee Chairman Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win said that the natural environment is the foundation in working for social, culture and economic development of a country. Therefore, social economic development and maintaining a sustainable natural environment need to be balanced.

Due to excessive production of mineral, forestry and fishery resources, especially through illegal production, natural resources were degraded and damaged. All are required to put in extra efforts to prevent and eradicate such illegal production as a national duty. The Central Committee Chairman urged all attendees to cordially and openly discuss.

Afterwards, the Central Committee Secretary explained about works conducted on decisions made at the fifth coordination meeting, and works conducted and future works of the six work committees.

This was followed with sector-wise discussions and explanation by central committee members, and seven decisions were made. The meeting then concluded with a closing speech by the Vice President. — MNA ■

Ceremony held to observe 2018 International Day of Older Persons



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye addresses at the ceremony held to observe 2018 International Day of Older Persons. PHOTO: MNA

A CEREMONY to observe the International Day of Older Persons that will fall on 1 October was held at Myanmar International Convention Centre II, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday morning.

The ceremony was attended by Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than, Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung, Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Dr. Win Myat Aye, Nai Thet Lwin, Hluttaw Affairs Committee chairmen, heads of departments, resident representatives of United Nations organisations, foreign ambassadors in Myanmar, outstanding and honored older persons, invited guests and

officials.

At the ceremony, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye said Myanmar, as well as the world, is facing changes in population demography. The ratio of older persons has increased in comparison to the past. In Myanmar, the percentage of older persons who are 60 years and above was 6 per cent in 1973 and 6.4 per cent in 1983. It increased up to 8.9 per cent in 2014. Along with the increase came challenges. It is understood that it is important to change the challenges to an opportunity.

SEE PAGE-7

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Myanmar Investment Commission’s work in July and August of (April to September) fiscal year 2018

- 1. Myanmar Investment Commission is permitting local and foreign investments, according to Myanmar Investment Law.
- 2. Myanmar Investment Commission had permitted in July 2018 total foreign investment, including increased investment, valued at US\$434.889 million, and in August 2018 total foreign investment, including increased investment, valued at US\$436.921 million.
- 3. Foreign investments permitted during July and August of 2018 are as follows:

Sr.	Sector	July		August	
		No. of Investments	Capital US\$ million	No. of investments	Capital US\$ million
a	Transportation and communications sector	-	140.048*	-	130.000*
b	Industrial sector	20	107.404*	8	113.576*
c	Housing and building construction sector	1	22.500	1	170.200
d	Hotels and tourism sector	-	-	1	0.271
e	Animal husbandry and fishery sector	1	10.514	1	7.874*
f	Other services sector	3	121.423 *	1	15.000
g	Industrial zone construction sector	1	28.000	-	-
h	Agriculture sector	1	5.000	-	-
Total		27	434.889	12	436.921

* Increased investment was included in the investment amount.

- 4. Myanmar Investment Commission had permitted in July 2018 total Myanmar national investment valued at Ks108,717.130 million, and in August 2018 total Myanmar national investment valued at Ks83,288.730 million.
- 5. Myanmar national investments permitted during July and August 2018 are as follows:

Sr.	Sector	July		August	
		No. of investments	Capital Kyat million	No. of investments	Capital Kyat million
a	Housing and building construction sector	-	-	1	2,490.422
b	Industrial sector	6	58,335.020	3	7,641.598
c	Hotels and tourism sector	5	2,833.420	4	59,632.260
d	Mining sector	-	19,950.000*	-	-
e	Animal husbandry and fishery sector	3	2,860.000	-	-
f	Agriculture sector	1	700.000	-	-
g	Other services sector	4	24,038.690	1	13,524.450
Total		19	108,717.130	9	83,288.730

* Increased investment was included in the investment amount.

- 6. Increased number of jobs for locals created sector-wise by foreign investments during July and August 2018 are as follows:

Sr.	Sector	No. of jobs created for local workers	
		July	August
a	Agriculture sector	170	-
b	Animal husbandry and fishery sector	122	176
c	Industrial sector	14,442	1,411
d	Hotels and tourism sector	-	25
e	Housing and building construction sector	66	2,022
f	Industrial zone construction sector	50	-
g	Other services sector	2,069	48
Total		16,919	3,682

- 7. Increased number of jobs for locals created sector-wise by Myanmar national investments during July and August 2018 fiscal year are as follows:

Sr.	Sector	No. of jobs created for local workers	
		July	August
a	Industrial sector	964	238
b	Hotels and tourism sector	159	371
c	Housing and building construction sector	-	18
d	Animal husbandry and fishery sector	90	-
e	Agriculture sector	19	-
f	Other services sector	309	167
Total		1,541	794

Experts, technicians to inspect Yangon Region flyovers

By Nyein Nyein

IN response to a question raised by Yangon Region Hluttaw representative Daw Yin Yin Myint of Ahlon Township constituency 1 at the 11th-day meeting of the seventh regular session of the Second Yangon Region Hluttaw, held on 27 September, Yangon Mayor U Maung Maung Soe said a committee led by Yangon Region government is being formed with experts and technicians to inspect flyovers in Yangon Region.

Daw Yin Yin Myint was asking if there is a plan to conduct regular inspection of the overpasses in Yangon Region.

“For flyovers to be used their full lifespan they need to be inspected regularly by experts and technicians, at least once a year. Yangon Region government is

forming a committee for this. This committee will include experts and technicians from Myanmar Engineering Council, Myanmar Engineering Society, Ministry of Construction’s Department of Bridge, Ministry of Transport and Communications’ Myanma Railways, Yangon City Development Committee and Yangon Technological University,” said U Maung Maung Soe.

He added further that most of the bridges in Myanmar were constructed under the specifications of American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). In addition to this, the loading and design of bridges differ from one another, so the lifespan is also not the same. However, in general, calculated load is from 60 to 75 tons and the maximum lifespan is



Tourists taking pictures on a flyover in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

mostly 50 years, said the Yangon mayor. In Yangon Region, there are a total of 70 bridges (flyovers),

of which 36 have length 180 ft. and above, a railway crossing bridge maintained by Ministry

of Construction, 26 by Myanma Railways and seven by Yangon City Development Committee. ■

Local rubber price riding rough due to instable dollar exchange rate

By May Thet Hnin

THE current instability of dollar exchange rate has led to a rough ride for local rubber price, said U Khaing Myint, secretary of Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association.

“The prevailing local rubber price is not that different, compared to global rubber price. However, dollar exchange rate fluctuation in local currency market causes a rough price pattern for local rubber”, he said.

At present, a ton of RSS3 (ribbed smoked sheets) rubber is worth US\$1,300 in global market, whereas local rubber fetches Ks850 per pound. When the US dollar exchange rate hit above Ks1,640 last week, the price of rubber reached a high of Ks890 per pound.

Rubber production was

halted during the rainy season. It was resumed this month and the price turned to the high side. Nevertheless, production is still less, since the rainy season has not ended, said U Khaing Myint.

“Last rainy season witnessed the fall of rubber price to Ks700 per pound. The opening price in the early rubber tapping season is on the high side”, he maintained.

Rubber price is usually on high side when the rubber tapping season starts. Last year, rubber fetched above Ks900 in the opening season. This being so, this year’s price is lower than last year’s. Rubber trading is still slow. Last year, it fell to a low of Ks500 per pound, forcing some rubber farm owners to shut down their businesses without tapping latex, as they cannot cover labour wages. The prevailing price is

pretty high, Daw Lin Lin Tun, rubber producer from Hlaingbwe Township said.

Rubber price hit the highest record in 2011 with Ks1,800 per pound and \$6,000 per ton.

Rubber price can vary depending on dollar price, global crude oil price and global political climate. Currently, global rubber demand is moving slow, resulting from escalating trade war between the US and China. Therefore, largest rubber producers such as Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia are reducing their production, with a falling demand on global market. Myanmar, being a low producer of rubber, will not be affected from this.

Seventy per cent of Myanmar’s rubber production goes to China market. It is also shipped to Singapore, Indonesia, Malay-

sia, Viet Nam, South Korea, India, Japan, etc. Myanmar’s rubber is primarily produced in Mon and Kayin states and Taninthayi, Bago and Yangon regions. There are 1.63 million acres of rubber plantations in Myanmar, of which over 700,000 acres can produce rubber latex. About 150,000 tons of rubber were exported in the 2017-2018 fiscal year.

As Myanmar’s rubber is substandard, there is a price gap of \$400 per ton between global and local rubber prices. All stakeholders in the rubber supply chain are exerting concerted efforts to produce profitable quality rubber.

At present, Rubber Law is still being drafted. The government and rubber associations are endeavouring to set up a rubber central market after the Rubber Law comes into effect. ■

Trade deficit decreases by over \$900 million

EXTERNAL trade between Myanmar and partner countries between 1 April and 21 September this year exceeded US\$17 billion, registering a trade deficit of \$1.4 billion, according to a trade report issued by the Ministry of Commerce on 28 September.

The current trade deficit decreased by \$911 million, as against the same period last year, when the trade deficit was \$2.3 billion. Over the 174 days of the present six-month fiscal period, Myanmar exported domestic products with a value of \$7.9 billion and imported foreign commodities amounting to \$9.359 billion. This year saw an increase in value of both export and import, compared with last year. Compared with the similar period last year, the country’s exports went up by \$1.6 billion, while its imports rose by \$720 million.

The data shows that the country’s international trade covered over \$13 billion from maritime routes and over \$4 billion from borders. In the last 2017-2018 fiscal year, the country suffered a trade deficit of more than \$3.97 billion, decreasing by over \$1 billion, matched against that of the trade deficit of \$5.2 billion in the previous 2016-2017 FY, according to the annual trade report. Authorities are reducing the trade gap by boosting the country’s productivity in an anticipation of a healthy export.—Swe Nyein

Export of forest products continues to decline

MYANMAR’S export of forest products over the first 174 days in the current six-month interim fiscal year totalled US\$90.261 million, decreasing by \$17 million against the same period last year, the Ministry of Commerce reported.

The total figures included \$6.78 million from the public sector and \$83.48 million from the private sector. This year saw a decrease in value of forest

products by nearly \$20 million, compared with this time last year, when the sector exported \$103 million worth of the same product. Despite a decrease in the private sector export of forest products, public sector exports of the same increased by \$2.5 million against last year, the data showed.

From 1 April through 21 September this year, the country earned \$7.9 billion

from overall exports of local products, consisting of agro products worth \$1.236 million, animal products worth \$171 million, marine products worth \$281 million, minerals worth \$587 million, manufactured goods worth \$4.14 billion and miscellaneous goods worth \$1.051 billion.

The export of forest products in the last 2017-2018 financial year was \$212 million,

decreasing by \$34.9 million matched against that of the previous year’s total of \$247 million.

According to the yearly report of the ministry, exports of forest products by the two sectors were \$641.9 million in the 2011-2012 FY, \$595.6 million in the 2012-2013 FY, \$948 million in the 2013-2014 FY, \$94.4 million in the 2014-2015 FY and \$212.9 million in the 2015-2016 FY.—Shwe Khine ■

Myanmar Investment Commission Meeting (16 / 2018) convened

THE Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) meeting (16 / 2018) was convened at the meeting of MIC in Yangon on 28 September, and reviewed investment proposals consistent with the Myanmar Investment Law.

U Thaung Tun, Chairman of MIC and 11 members of MIC attended the meeting.

The submission of proposals and endorsement applications from investors and post-permit activities of MIC-permitted companies were discussed in the meeting.

The MIC meeting (16 / 2018) decided to issue 7 investment permits and 12 endorsements in relation to the investment proposals.—MNA ■



Chairman of MIC U Thaung Tun addressing the Myanmar Investment Commission meeting.
PHOTO: MNA

Local, foreign journalists meet with displaced people at boundary line

LOCAL and foreign journalists met with displaced people staying near the boundary line between Myanmar and Bangladesh yesterday.

They interviewed the displaced people about their condition and plans for returning to Myanmar.

Before meeting with the displaced people, the journalists visited the Taungpyo Letwe Reception Centre and met with authorities.

At the camp, authorities briefed them about repatriation readiness, plans for providing humanitarian assistance to returnees. The officials of the camp also replied to questions raised by journalists over scrutinizing process.

Following the meeting, the journalists visited the camp's

offices for repatriation and the border bridge.

The media delegation comprised journalists from Nikkei Shimbun, NHK, Nippon TV, CRI, CNN, The Guardian Newspaper, The Washington Post, CBC, Arte Television, MRTV, MITV and MNA and arrived back in Yangon yesterday evening.

The local and foreign journalist groups visited Rakhine State for 26 times after the terrorist attacks in October 2016.

They visited the conflict areas one time in 2016, eight times in 2017 and 17 times in 2018, totalling 26. The visits came under the arrangement of the Committee for Implementation of Recommendations on Rakhine State.—Thura Zaw ■



Journalists collecting news at Taungpyo Letwe Reception Centre in Rakhine State. **PHOTO: THURA ZAW**

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye receives UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye received United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Mr. Knut Ostby at his office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning. During the meeting, current issues of the Rakhine State, issues about IDP camps, creating job opportunities for people along with their social economic development, promoting skills of women with launching of vocational training courses for women, UN's cooperation in implementations of the advices of Rakhine State and IDPs to be closed systematically were cordially discussed.—MNA ■



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye shaking hands with UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Mr. Knut Ostby in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Ordinary passport holders from Japan, South Korea, China, Macao and Hong Kong will be visa relaxed

WITH the aim of increasing tourism business in Myanmar, ordinary passport holders from Japan, South Korea, China, Hong Kong and Macao will have visa entry relaxed as 1 year of probation period from 1 October 2018 to 30 September, 2019.

Travellers from Japan, South Korea and China's Administrative Regions: Hong Kong, Macao will be allowed with visa exemption to enter and leave Yangon, Mandalay

and Nay Pyi Taw international airports, Yangon international harbor, Tachilek, Hteekhee and Kawthoung international airport (Myanmar-Thailand), Tamu and Rechawdar international airport (Myanmar-India).

Tourists can visit with only tourist visa and live a total of 30-day stay with visa exemption.

Ordinary passport holders from China can enter Yangon, Mandalay, Nay Pyi Taw international airports with visa on

arrival system and 30-day stay by paying US\$50 visa on arrival fee.

Travellers who enter from Japan, South Korea, Macao and Hong Kong with visa exemption on arrival can freely go other places in compliance with current laws and procedures during 1year probation period.

Tourists will be screened by security department, organizations and immigration department.—MNA ■

Myanmar-Bangladesh conduct coordinated patrol

A COORDINATED patrol between Myanmar and Bangladesh was conducted at border mile posts 41/2 to 42 from 10:35 am to 11:35 am on 27 September.

The Myanmar patrol was led by Police Captain Aung Kyaw Kyaw from No.1 Border Police sub-division (Aung Thabyae), Area 2, Maungtaw Township, and the Bangladesh patrol

was led by Subedar Md. Shajaham of No. 11 Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB).

Similarly, on the same day, another coordinated patrol between Myanmar and Bang-

ladesh was conducted at the border mile posts 53 to 54 from 11:00 am to 1:45 pm.

The Myanmar patrol was led by Police Major Zaw Lin Aung from No.1 Border Police

sub-division, Area 5, Maungtaw Township, and the Bangladesh patrol was led by Naib Subedar Md. Shajaham of No. 34 BGB.—Police Information ■

Ceremony held to observe 2018 International Day of Older Persons

FROM PAGE-3

Our Myanmar society has a long history of honoring and respecting older persons. Traditionally, three generations, father-son-grandson (mother-daughter-granddaughter), live and care for each other. But due to changing social and economic situation, the tradition of grandparents, parents and children living and caring for each other is decreasing and disappearing. The traditional way of caring for older persons is no longer covering all older persons. In addition to the family caring for older persons, other community-based elderly person care and day care of older persons need to be widely practised.

Older persons in our country face insufficient income and health care problems as well as living an isolated and lonely life. With an aim to support income security of older persons, the government started a social pension program, a financial support system, starting from fiscal year 2017-2018. When it was started, the beneficiaries were set to be older persons 90 years and above, but starting from fiscal year 2018-2019, it was reduced to 85 years and above. In the initial plan, there were 43,439 beneficiaries to so-

cial pension and this will be increased up to 140,000 with the new plan. Relevant ministries are to strive toward implementing the older person health care as per older person rights, enacted in the Older Persons Law. Health care for older person is not only normal and traditional health care but also long-term care and for those who do not need this, a prevention-from-long-term care said, the Union Minister.

The theme of this year's International Day of Older Persons is "Celebrating Older Human Rights Champions."

Next, message of United Nations Secretary General was read by UNDP resident representative and humanitarian coordinator Mr. Knut Ostby. Afterwards, sector-wise outstanding older persons and honored older persons were presented with honorary documents by Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than, Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung and Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye. Union Minister Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin, Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Aung Myin Tun, Pyithu Hluttaw health and sports development committee chairman Dr. San Shwe Win, Amyotha Hluttaw women and



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than, Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye and officials observing the pictures showcasing the activities of older persons. PHOTO: MNA

children affairs committee chairman Dr. Tin Tin Win, Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Chairman U Win Mra and Help Age International (Myanmar) Country Director Mr. God Fred Paul presented medicine and cash donations.

Representatives from Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Ministry of Electricity and Energy, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Health and Sports, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation (MWAFF), Myanmar Maternal and Child

Welfare Association (MMCWA), Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) and Help Age International then donated cash, which was accepted by Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye, who in return presented documents of honor.

Following the singing of a song in honor of the older persons, showing of a video depicting care of older persons in Myanmar, care of older persons by older person group chairperson herself, being an older person saying words of thanks,

the ceremony came to a close.

After the ceremony, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Union Ministers and guests observed the photo display, showing older person care conducted by ministries, MWAFF, MMCWA, MRCS, Help Age International, states and regions.

At the ceremony, outstanding older persons and honored older persons were each presented with Ks 100,000 and Ks 50,000 respectively, as well as gifts, it is learnt. — MNA ■

Myanmar, Russia to promote bilateral relations

THE signing ceremony of the Plan of Consultations (2018-2020) between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation was held at 1pm on 28 September at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw, and U Myint Thu, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar and H.E. Dr. Nikolay Listopadov, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Myanmar, signed on behalf of the respective Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In accordance with the Plan of Consultations, the two Ministries of Foreign Affairs will conduct series of consultations on bilateral, regional and international matters of common interest.

Also present at the signing



Permanent Secretary U Myint Thu and Ambassador Dr. Nikolay Listopadov at the signing ceremony. PHOTO: MNA

ceremony were Directors-General, Deputy Directors-General and responsible officials

from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Russian Embassy in Yangon.—MNA ■

ASEAN Ninth Meeting of ACDM Working Group on Recovery held in Mandalay

OFFICIALS from ASEAN disaster management bodies gathered at the Ninth Meeting of ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) Working Group on Recovery in Mandalay yesterday.

Speaking at the meeting, Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Aung said more than 50 per cent of global disaster mortalities occurred in the ASEAN region.

"Every year, on average, the ASEAN region experiences losses related to natural disasters estimated at US\$4.4 billion," said the deputy minister. Myanmar and Indonesia, with the cooperation of other ASEAN countries, is promoting the capacity for rehabilitation sector in ASEAN region and finding tools for the recovery after disasters in the region, said U Soe Aung.

"Recent floods in two regions and two states of Myanmar rang the alarm for impacts of climate change in Myanmar," he said. "Of them, Mon State and Tanintharyi Region were hardly hit by disasters in the past."

Myanmar is stepping up its efforts for rehabilitation of flood victims in the areas with the guidance of the National Disaster Management Committee.

He also expressed Myanmar's readiness for fulfilling pledges for rehabilitation in the region. Following his speech, the meeting continued and the participants at the meeting discussed and approved the priorities for 2019. The meeting was participated by representatives from Myanmar, Indonesia, Brunei, Laos, the Philippines and Thailand and also representatives from AHA Centre, UNDP and ADB.—MNA ■

ICC's resolution is in no one's interest

US President Donald Trump accused the UN-backed International Criminal Court-ICC of lacking any legitimacy, saying it violated "all principles of justice."

"The ICC claims near-universal jurisdiction over the citizens of every country, violating all principles of justice, fairness, and due process. We will never surrender America's sovereignty to an unelected, unaccountable global bureaucracy," said Trump at the General Assembly of the United Nations on Tuesday.

He also called on the countries around the world to defend against threats to sovereignty not just from global governance, but also from new forms of coercion and domination.

About one week ago before Trump's tough stance against the UN backed International Criminal Court, ICC released a one-sided report of its Fact-Finding Mission interfering in our internal affairs in relation to Rakhine State.

Not only is this report detrimental to social cohesion in Rakhine State, it also undermines the Government's efforts to bring peace, national reconciliation and development in the entire nation.

“No country can condone terrorism under any form and any circumstance. The provocative terrorist attacks of October 2016 and August 2017 have affected . . .

The report is based on a one-sided perception of Myanmar history without consulting any of the many studies about the history of the conflict.

This is now a matter of our country's sovereignty, which is every country's right to be free from interference from foreign entities. It's in the UN Charter, too. But due to various reasons such as terrorist groups killing civilians and destroying villages, the military had to intervene. Without security forces, everyone would be in trouble. Every country has the Right of Defence, and it will defend its people from terrorism.

No country can condone terrorism under any form and any circumstance. The provocative terrorist attacks of October 2016 and August 2017 have affected the course of our earnest endeavor to build a peaceful, fair and prosperous future for all people in Rakhine State.

The resolution is very likely to exacerbate the tensions. This is in no one's interest.

This is a critical juncture for Myanmar in its journey towards a peaceful, prosperous democratic federal union.

We strongly object any attempt to create disunity in our country. We are determined to achieve our goal of creating a strong democratic federal union.



By Professor Nwe Nwe
Professor and Head of Cardiology Department
Yangon General Hospital University of Medicine (1)

WORLD Heart Day takes place on 29 September every year. The slogan of World Heart Day 2018 is "My Heart, Your Heart". Myanmar also participates in global activities on heart health. Seventeen million and five hundred thousand people die untimely, due to cardiovascular diseases each year. It is estimated that the mortality toll could go up to 23 million by 2030. Between the ages of 30 and 70, 1 out of 10 dies of cardiovascular diseases, and 31% of all deaths is due to cardiovascular diseases as well.

2018 commemorates the 40th anniversary of the formation of World Heart Federation. In collaboration with its more than 200 member countries, World Health Federation is taking initiatives in combating cardiovascular diseases. It focuses on eliminating the use of tobacco and smoking, reducing lack of treatment and eradication of rheumatic heart disease which demands the hundreds of thousands of children's lives.

The main aim of celebrating World Heart Day is to reduce global mortality rate caused by heart diseases. The most threatening causes of cardio-

vascular diseases and stroke include: failing to control high blood pressure, high sugar level in blood, smoking, lack of taking nutritious food, insufficient eating of fruits and vegetables, gaining weight and obesity.

World Heart Day effectively draws people's attention to heart illness as a major cause of death globally.

Myanmar also participates in such efforts, fulfilling World Health Organization's aim of reducing 25% of untimely death due to cardiovascular diseases by 2025.

We will be able to have a happier and healthy life just by changing and adopting certain practices of life style for our heart's health.

Therefore, to obtain a healthy heart, let's make our resolution to change certain practices and adopt those simple healthy life styles starting from this year's World Heart Day!

Take only healthy food

- Take water and juice with very little sugar, instead of sugary juice and fruit juice.
- Take fresh vegetables instead of snacks.
- Eat a fistful of fruits and vegetables 5 times per day. You may eat fresh ones or from cold



Heart-Healthy Diet: 8 steps to prevent heart disease

1. Control your **portion size**
2. Eat more **vegetables and fruits**
3. Select **whole grains**
4. Limit unhealthy **fats and cholesterol**
5. Choose low-fat **protein sources**
6. Reduce the **sodium** in your food
7. **Plan ahead:** create daily menus
8. Allow yourself an **occasional treat**

storage or tinned ones or dried fruits.

- Avoid taking alcoholic drinks. Otherwise, drink moderately.
- Reduce taking foods which are prepared with plenty of sugar, salt and fats.
- Prepare healthy lunch to be taken at work or school.

Do exercises

- Do moderate-intensity exercise 30 minutes per day, 5 days per week. If you could do vigorous-intensity exercise, do 75 minutes per week at different time.
- You can also do jogging, walking, house chores and dancing.

- It is essential to adopt an active life style on a daily basis. Instead of taking the lift, use the stairs at work. Either take a bicycle or walk, instead of driving the car.

- Watching exercise programmes from the Internet, and using the pedometer could let you know the progress of your exercises.

- Doing exercise with family members or friends gives you more fun and makes you more active.

- Encourage children to live an active life.

Do not smoke

- Avoiding smoking is truly supportive towards good health.

- After stopping to smoke for two years, there is a significant decrease in cardiovascular disease risk.

- 15 years after quitting, the risk of heart disease is the same as someone who has never smoked.

- Passive smoking could also cause heart disease.

- Quitting smoking or non-smoking is beneficial for your health as well as the health of those who share your environment.

- Consult a doctor and take advice from them, if you are in need of professional assistance.

- Encourage those you love to quit smoking.

- Work towards a smoke-free environment.

In addition, rising blood sugar is an indicator of diabetes. A majority of diabetics die of cardiovascular diseases. A person who does not know they have diabetes or a diabetic who ignores medical treatment are at risk of acquiring cardiovascular diseases and stroke.

Hypertension is also the main culprit, causing cardio-

vascular. As hypertension does not show disease symptoms you may not know that you have hypertension. If one cannot control hypertensive condition or fail to take treatment, it could lead to a series of diseases, such as narrowing of blood vessels, heart failure, stroke, kidney failure, and degenerative vision. Therefore, if you have hypertension, it is pivotal to consult the doctor on a regular basis and take the prescribed medicine regularly.

Approximately, four million people die of high cholesterol. It is essential to check your cholesterol, body weight and body mass index. Only then you will know whether you are at risk of getting heart diseases. In case of need, you should take advice and treatment from professional doctors.

Therefore, to welcome the World Heart Day, do follow the appropriate practices for heart health and share this knowledge further to others. May all human beings possess a healthy heart.

■ ■ ■

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Order 34/2018
4th Waning of Tawthalin ME 1380
(28 September 2018)

Appointment of Yangon Region Advocate General

In accordance with the provisions stated in Article 268 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Section 82 (e) of Union Government Law, Section 32 of Union Attorney General Law and Section 56 (b) of Region or State Government Law, Daw Khin Myo Kyi has been appointed as Yangon Region Advocate General.

Sd/WinMyint
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued on Friday 28th September, 2018)

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS RECORDED AT 09:30 hrs MST: During the past (24) hours, southwest monsoon has withdrawn from the East Central Bay of Bengal and Deltaic areas of Myanmar. Weather has been partly cloudy in Lower Sagaing Region and Eastern Shan State, rain or thundershowers have been widespread in Kachin State, fairly widespread in Southern Shan State, scattered in Upper Sagaing Region and Chin State and isolated in the remaining regions and states. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded were Bhamo (1.93)inches, Machanbaw (0.79)inch, Matupi (0.71) inch, Dawei (0.47)inch, Katha and Taungdwingyi (0.43)inch each and Putao (0.39)inch.

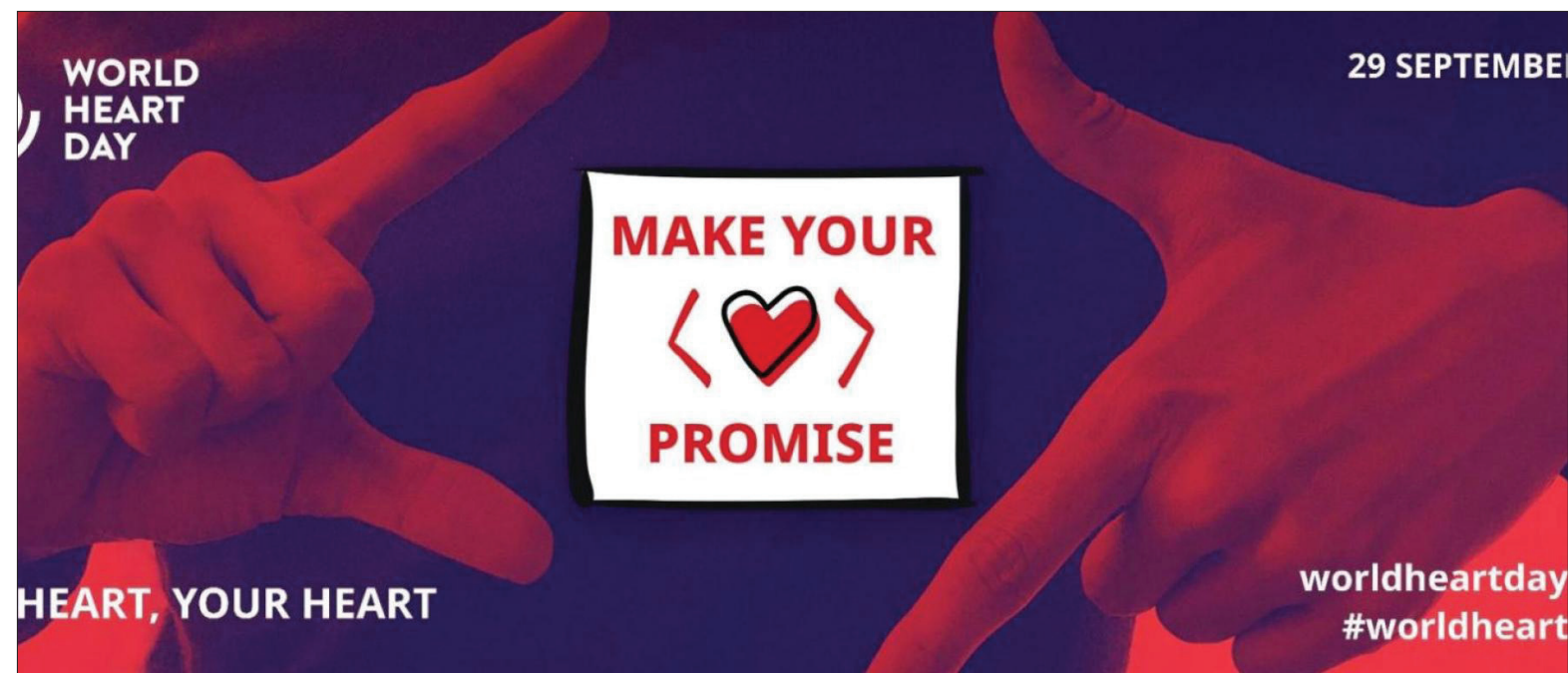
BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is weak over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and weather is partly cloudy elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF 29 September 2018: Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Kachin and Southern Shan states, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Sagaing, Mandalay and Bago regions, Chin and Kayah states and isolated in the remaining regions and states. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (1 - 4)feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Weak monsoon over the Andaman Sea and South Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 29 September 2018: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).



South Africa changes mining code to boost black ownership

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa on Thursday unveiled a raft of changes to a controversial mining bill which is to raise black ownership of mining companies from 26 percent to 30 percent.

Mineral Resources Minister GwedeMantshu revealed details of the mining charter, intended to transform the key industry and address long-standing racial inequality in the sector.

The 30 per cent black-held equity will be distributed between employees, mine communities and entrepreneurs, Mantshu said at a news conference in Pretoria.

An impasse between government and business over key provisions of the legislation had in recent years created uncer-

tainty within the industry, a cornerstone of South Africa's economy. Mantshu told reporters that the document will "entrench regulatory certainty for investors, and provide security of tenure for investments".

The government had been criticised over the slow pace of change in the sector which contributes eight percent of GDP.

The charter includes a raft of other reforms including mandatory workers' housing and quotas for black representation on boards. More than 460,000 people are employed in South Africa's mining industry.

Mantshu said the charter will also help stimulate the sluggish economy, cut poverty, reduce inequality and create jobs.

"It aims to create regulatory certainty, sustainable growth and a competitive and transformed mining industry," he said.

But the main opposition Democratic Alliance party, while applauding the new version of the charter as an improvement, said it "still amounts to a tightening of the rules governing investment". The Minerals Council, an association representing big mining companies, acknowledged that government "had a difficult task balancing the inputs from the various stakeholders".

South Africa, the continent's most advanced economy, slipped into a recession in the second quarter of this year and last year suffered two ratings downgrades.—AFP ■



Malian children have fun in a flooded underpass in Bamako on 14 September, 2018. Due to heavy rains the Niger overflowed, flooding several villages located on the edge of the river. **PHOTO: AFP**

Niger flood death toll up to 42: UN

NIAMEY(Niger) — Forty-two people have died in flooding in Niger since the start of the rainy season in June, most of them in northern desert areas, according to a UN report released Thursday.

Nearly 205,000 people have been affected by the floods, which have destroyed 16,992 houses, said the report by the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

Some 31,130 head of cattle and 7,579 hectares of crops have been lost in the floods as of 16 September, the report said.

The UN's last assessment on 28 August reported 36 dead.

The rainy season, which lasts up to three months, is almost over.

The West African's country's capital Niamey was almost completely spared from the floods this year, which some residents put down to the construction of dams that spared thousands of residents from the worst of the River Niger bursting its banks.

Last year, around 20 people died in the capital during the rainy season.—AFP ■



More than 460,000 people are employed in South Africa's mining industry. **PHOTO: AFP**

Seven soldiers, one civilian killed in Mali bomb blast

BAMAKO — Seven soldiers and a civilian driver were killed in central Mali when their vehicle hit explosives in the latest attack in an area riven by jihadist violence, the defence ministry said Thursday.

Wednesday's "cowardly terrorist attack" took place between the northern city of Timbuktu and Mopti in the centre, a statement said, adding that the soldiers were on an escort mission.

"Two escort vehicles of the Malian army hit improvised explosive devices between Bambara-Maoude and Douentza," it said.

A total of 120 French soldiers meanwhile landed Thursday by parachute in the north-eastern region of Menaka, a particularly volatile region near the border

with Niger, to boost counter-insurgency operations, French

military spokesman Colonel PatrikSteiger said.

"We are combining our capacities to create a surprise

effect for the armed terrorist groups and to show to locals that we are capable of arriving quickly," he said.

Mali's unrest stems from a 2012 Tuareg separatist uprising which was exploited by jihadists in order to take over key cities in the north.

The extremists were largely driven out in a French-led military operation launched in January 2013.

But large stretches of the country remain out of the control of Malian, French and UN forces, which are frequent targets of attacks.

Jihadist violence, meanwhile, has spread from northern Mali to the centre and south and spilled into neighbouring Burkina Faso and Niger, often exacerbating communal conflicts.—AFP ■



Wednesday's "cowardly terrorist attack" took place between the northern city of Timbuktu and Mopti in the centre, Mali's defence ministry said. **PHOTO: AFP**

‘Major terrorist attack’ foiled in Netherlands, 7 arrested

THE HAGUE — Dutch police arrested seven men Thursday suspected of plotting to carry out a “major terrorist attack” at a public event using explosive belts and an AK-47 assault rifle, the public prosecutor’s office said.

“Police arrested seven men on Thursday... suspected of being at a very advanced stage of preparation for a major terrorist attack in the Netherlands,” it said in a statement, adding one of the suspects had wanted to kill “many victims”.

Prosecutors and investigators were “convinced that a terrorist attack was prevented” as a result of the arrests in the cities of Arnhem and Weert which followed a months-long police operation.

Officers had placed a group of people under surveillance, a central figure being a 34-year-old man of Iraqi origin convicted in 2017 of attempting to reach territory controlled by the jihadist Islamic State group, the statement added.

Those arrested by elite special anti-terrorist police teams with helicopter support ranged in age from 21 to 34.

The suspects came from Arnhem, the port city of Rotterdam and villages close to those two cities. Two others in the group also had convictions related to attempts to travel to Iraq or Syria.



Police officers conduct an investigation at the residence of an alleged jihadist in Rotterdam on September 27, 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**

terdam and villages close to those two cities. Two others in the group also had convictions related to attempts to travel to Iraq or Syria.

“One of the men from Arnhem wanted to commit an attack with a group at a major event in the Netherlands and kill many victims, according to the Dutch Intelligence Service (AIVD),” the prosecutor’s office said.

Police had yet to identify the target of the planned attack which the prosecutor’s office said was to have included a separate car bombing.

The suspects, who investigators said were in possession of small arms when they were detained, are expected to appear in court in Rotterdam on Friday.

“They were seeking AK-47 assault rifles, grenades, explosive belts and raw materials with which to make other bombs,” investigators said.

sive belts and raw materials with which to make other bombs,” investigators said.

Dutch on alert

The arrests came three months after two men were arrested in Rotterdam on suspicion of preparing attacks in France and in the Netherlands. Prosecutors said earlier this month they were “close” to launching their

attack. There has been no mention of what the target in France might have been.

In the Netherlands the pair are said to have staked out and “identified several possible targets” in Rotterdam, including “a police station and the Erasmus Bridge”, the country’s second largest.

On 31 August, an Afghan aged 19 and with a German residence permit stabbed and injured two American tourists at Amsterdam’s busy Central Station before being shot.

The prosecutor’s office said he had chosen the Netherlands for the attack believing Islam to be “frequently insulted” there.

The Amsterdam incident came following a Taliban call for attacks on Dutch troops after far-right Dutch politician Geert Wilders organised a Prophet Muhammed cartoon competition.

Many Muslims consider images of the prophet to be blasphemous.

The likelihood of a terror attack in the Netherlands “remained substantial”, the Dutch anti-terror agency NCTV said last week, with terror threat levels remaining at level four out of five.— AFP ■

Italy government agrees on 2.4-per cent deficit of GDP in 2019

ROME — Italy’s populist government agreed Thursday on a deficit of 2.4-per cent of gross domestic product in 2019, the leaders of the coalition parties announced.

“We’re satisfied, this is the budget of change,” joint deputy prime ministers Matteo Salvini and Luigi Di Maio said in the statement quoted by Italian media.

The figure, vastly higher than the 0.8 per cent forecast by the previous, centre-left government, could spark panic on the markets over the country’s already mammoth debt burden — currently 131 per cent of GDP, the biggest in the eurozone after Greece. All eyes had been on whether Western Europe’s first anti-establishment leadership would defy Brussels or toe the line with its first budget.

“Today is a historic day! Today Italy changes! For the first time the state is on the people’s side. For the first time it is not



Italian Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini and his joint counterpart Luigi Di Maio say they are “satisfied, this is the budget of change”. **PHOTO: AFP**

taking away, but giving,” Di Maio said in a message on Facebook.

He had previously said his anti-establishment Five Star Movement would not support the budget if the finance ministry did not find the money for projects, including a basic income grant

promised in March elections.

The deputy prime minister said there were 10 billion euros (\$11.5 billion) earmarked for the income in the budget, which “for the first time in the history of this country will eradicate poverty”. — AFP ■

German federal police chief faces kidnapping probe

BERLIN — German prosecutors said Thursday they are investigating the head of the federal police for kidnapping, after he travelled in person to Iraq to secure a rape-murder suspect who had fled there.

Several people filed complaints against top officer Dieter Romann, whose expedition to Iraq in spring — accompanied by reporters from top-selling newspaper Bild — caused an uproar.

He travelled to the Kurdish-controlled region of northern Iraq to arrest a young Iraqi asylum seeker, Ali Bashar, suspected of raping and strangling to death 14-year-old Susanna Feldman while he lived in Germany.

The suspect, who lived in refugee housing in western German city Wiesbaden at the time of the crime, fled to his home country

soon after.

Authorities in the Kurdish autonomous region arrested the young man in early June and handed him over to Romann and his officers at the airport in their capital Erbil. But no formal extradition had been agreed with the Iraqi government in Baghdad.

Bashar is in custody in Frankfurt after admitting to the murder, and is also a suspect in the rape of an 11-year-old girl.

The case was one of a number of high-profile violent crimes committed by migrants that have been seized on by the far-right to pummel Chancellor Angela Merkel’s refugee policy.

Before the murder, Bashar was a suspect in some minor crimes, but had never previously been charged with anything. — AFP ■

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Pictures and video posted on social media showed locals scrambling in small boats to rescue the passengers and crew. **PHOTO: AFP**

Plane ditches into Pacific Chuuk lagoon

WELLINGTON (New Zealand) — Passengers were forced to swim for their lives Friday when an airliner ditched into a lagoon after missing the runway on a remote Pacific island and immediately began sinking.

The Air Niugini Boeing 737 was attempting to land at Weno airport in Micronesia but ended up half submerged in Chuuk lagoon after the accident on Friday morning.

Pictures and video posted on social media showed locals scrambling in small boats to rescue the passengers and crew as waters covered most of the aircraft's fuselage.

The airline said the plane, which was making a scheduled stop on its way from the Micronesian capital Pohnpei to Port Moresby, had "landed short of the runway".

Remarkably, it said there were no serious injuries.

"Air Niugini can confirm that all on board were able to safely evacuate the aircraft," the firm said in a brief statement.

"The airline is making all efforts to ensure the safety and immediate needs of our passengers and crew."

It did not detail what caused the accident.

Papua New Guinea's Accident Investigation Commission said it was preparing to send investigators to the accident site.

"We're trying to arrange a team to go there but I cannot give you any more information because I simply don't have it," a spokesman told AFP.

Pacific Daily News reported, citing airport official Jimmy Emilio, that all 36 passengers and 11 crew had been taken to hospital for check-ups. Air Niugini is Papua New Guinea's national airline. —AFP ■

5.0 magnitude earthquake rocks Indonesia's Aceh

JAKARTA (Indonesia) — A 5.0 magnitude earthquake rocked Indonesia's western Aceh province early Thursday, the US Geological Survey said, but there were no immediate reports of damage or casualties.

The shallow quake struck shortly before 1 am local time with its epicentre 20 kilometres northwest of the city of Langsa.

No tsunami warning has been issued.

Indonesia, one of the most disaster-prone nations on earth, straddles 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.

A series of quakes and aftershocks on the Indonesian holiday island of Lombok through July and August killed about 500 people and forced hundreds of thousands into evacuation shelters or tents. —AFP ■

China, EU vow to enhance cooperation, Eurasian connectivity

UNITED NATIONS — Top Chinese and European Union (EU) diplomats said on Thursday that the two sides are willing to strengthen cooperation and enhance Eurasian connectivity.

China welcomes the EU to participate in the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and is willing to promote the alignment of the BRI with the EU-proposed connectivity plan, said Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minis-

ter Wang Yi.

Wang made the remarks during his meeting with High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini. Both diplomats are attending the United Nations General Assembly.

Both China and the EU advocate multilateralism and resolving international disputes through peaceful settlement, Wang added, noting that maintaining and enhanc-

ing China-EU relations is the shared responsibility of both sides.

Mogherini said the newly-released European Commission plan that calls for a comprehensive, sustainable and rule-based connectivity goes along with the BRI and will contribute to bilateral cooperation.

She said it is important for the two sides to exchange opinions on strategic issues of common concern. —Xinhua ■

Six dead in Kashmir violence ahead of polls: Indian officials

SRINAGAR (INDIA) — Six people were killed in mounting violence ahead of local elections in Kashmir as Indian authorities imposed a curfew and suspended mobile internet services in the disputed territory on Thursday.

There were at least four separate shootings in the restive Himalayan region, where an armed insurgency against Indian rule has raged for three decades, costing tens of thousands of lives.

An army spokesman, Colonel Rajesh Kalia, said three militants and one soldier died in separate shootouts in Budgam district and Anantnag district.

Elsewhere, a road-construction labourer was shot and killed by soldiers, said a police officer who spoke on condition of anonymity and could not provide further details.

In the main city of Srina-

gar, government forces shot dead a man during an early morning patrol, sparking public unrest.

Thousands defied the government curfew to attend his funeral, chanting slogans against Indian rule in the mountainous area where half a million soldiers are deployed.

Kashmir has been divided between India and Pakistan since 1947 but both nuclear-armed rivals claim the territory in full, and have fought three wars over its control.

Tensions have been rising ahead of local elections in October and November. New Delhi has deployed an additional 40,000 troops to the region to maintain order.

Both pro-Indian parties and separatist groups fighting for self-determination have called for a boycott of the upcoming polls.

The region has been un-

der direct control of New Delhi since the local government there collapsed in June.

Curfews, internet shutdowns and clashes with civilians are not uncommon when violence flares in Kashmir, where Indian forces have been accused by the UN of rights abuses.

The Software Freedom Law Centre, a New Delhi-based advocacy group, says authorities have suspended the internet 105 times this year in Kashmir alone.

New Delhi has long accused Islamabad of supporting militant groups waging an insurgency in Kashmir, which is divided by a heavily militarised de facto border.

This month, India blamed postage stamps released by Pakistan honouring a Kashmiri militant as part of its reason for cancelling rare talks between the neighbours in New York. —AFP ■



Tensions have been rising in Kashmir ahead of local elections in October and November. **PHOTO: AFP**

Wetlands disappearing three times faster than forests

GENEVA — Wetlands, among the world's most valuable and biodiverse ecosystems, are disappearing at alarming speed amid urbanisation and agriculture shifts, conservationists said Thursday, calling for urgent action to halt the erosion.

"We are in a crisis," Martha Rojas Urrego, head of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, told reporters in Geneva, warning of the potential devastating impact of wetland loss, including on climate change.

The convention, adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar nearly a half-century ago, on Thursday issued its first-ever global report on the state of the world's wetlands.

The 88-page report found that around 35 per cent of wetlands — which include lakes, rivers, marshes and peatlands, as well as coastal and ma-



Wetlands are being lost three times faster than forests, and the impact on accelerating climate change could be devastating, the Ramsar Convention has warned.

PHOTO: AFP

rine areas like lagoons, mangroves and coral reefs — were lost between 1970 and 2015. Today, wetlands cover more than 12 million square kilometres (4.6 million square miles), the report said, warning that the annual rates of loss had accelerated since 2000.

"We are losing wetlands three times faster than forests," Rojas Urrego said, describing the Global Wetland Outlook report as a "red flag".

While the world has been increasingly focused on global warming and its impact on oceans and for-

ests, the Ramsar Convention said wetlands remain "dangerously undervalued". Thursday's report, released in advance of a meeting of the parties to the convention in Dubai next month, stressed the importance of wetlands to all life on Earth.—AFP ■

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY NATIONAL ELECTRIFICATION PROJECT

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Date : 28th September, 2018

Invitation for Bids

IDA, Credit No : 5727-MM

Contract Title : Installation of Distribution Lines and Transformers for Sagaing, Magway, Chin, Magway, Rakhine, Bago (West), Bago (East), Kayin & Mon For National Electrification Project

Reference No : MOEE-NEP/C1-W2/18, MOEE-NEP/C1-W3/18 & MOEE-NEP/C1-W6/18

1. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received financing from the World Bank towards the cost of the National Electrification Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds towards payments under the contract for Installation of Distribution Lines and Transformers MOEE-NEP/ C1-W2 /18 process for Sagaing, Magway and Chin, MOEE-NEP/C1-W3/18 for Magway, Rakhine, Bago (West) and MOEE-NEP/C1-W6/18 for Bago (East), Kayin and Mon.

2. The Ministry of Electricity and Energy now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for Installation of Distribution Lines and Transformers MOEE-NEP/ C1-W2 /18 process for Sagaing, Magway and Chin, MOEE-NEP/C1-W3/18 for Magway, Rakhine, Bago(West) and MOEE-NEP/C1-W6/18 for Bago(East), Kayin and Mon in the following locations.

The number and identification of lots comprising this installation bidding MOEE-NEP/ C1-W2 /18 processes for Sagaing, Magway and Chin is:

Lot 1: Monywa District	- 53 villages
Lot 2: Monywa District	- 40 villages
Lot 3: Yinmarbin District	- 45 villages
Lot 4: Yinmarbin/Kale District	- 72 villages
Lot 5: Magway District	- 38 villages
Lot 6: Pakokku District	- 71 villages
Lot 7: Pakokku District	- 49 villages
Lot 8: Pakokku District	- 36 villages
Lot 9: Pakokku District	- 48 villages
Lot 10: Gangaw/Mindat & Falam District	- 28 villages

The number and identification of lots comprising this installation bidding MOEE-NEP/ C1-W3 /18 processes for Magway, Rakhine, Bago (West) is:

Lot 1: Magway District	- 40 villages
Lot 2: Magway District	- 79 villages
Lot 3: Minbu/Sittwe/Kyaukpuy /Thandwe District	- 59 villages
Lot 4: Minbu District	- 87 villages
Lot 5: Thayet District	- 84 villages
Lot 6: Pyay District	- 68 villages
Lot 7: Pyay District	- 82 villages

The number and identification of lots comprising this installation bidding MOEE-NEP/ C1-W6 /18 processes for Bago (East), Kayin, Mon is:

Lot 1: Bago District	- 56 villages
Lot 2: Bago District	- 50 villages
Lot 3: Bago District	- 36 villages
Lot 4: Bago District & Taungoo District	- 69 villages
Lot 5: Hpa-Ann District	- 19 villages
Lot 6: Mawlamyine District & Thaton District	- 50 villages

3. Bidding will be conducted through the National Competitive Bidding procedures as specified in the World Bank's [Guidelines: Procurement of Goods, Works and Non-Consulting Services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers](#) ("Procurement Guidelines"), and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the Procurement Guidelines. In addition, please refer to paragraphs 1.6 and 1.7 setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from Project Management Office (National Electrification Project), Project Manager and nep.pmomoep@gmail.com and inspect the bidding documents during office hours [09:30 to 16:00 hours] at the address given below.

5. A complete set of bidding documents in English may be obtained free of charge by interested eligible bidders upon the submission of a written application to the address below. The Bidding Documents will be issued through email only.

6. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 1st November, 2018, (10:00 A.M) - Myanmar Time. Electronic bidding will not be permitted. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the bidders' designated representatives and anyone who choose to attend at the address below.

7. All bids must be accompanied by "Bid-Security"

8. The address (es) referred to above is (are):

Attention: **Project Manager**
Project Management Office (National Electrification Project)
Office Building No.27, Ministry of Electricity and Energy
City: **Nay Pyi Taw** ZIP Code: **095**
Country: **The Republic of the Union of Myanmar**
Telephone: **+95 67 3431175**
Facsimile number: **+95 67 3431176**
Electronic mail address: nep.pmomoep@gmail.com

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V KUO TAI VOY. NO. (110N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KUO TAI VOY. NO. (110N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 29-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S SILKAGO LOGISTICS PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V OCEAN FAITH VOY. NO. (1)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V OCEAN FAITH VOY. NO. (1) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on ETA. 29-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S TOKO KAIUN KAISHA

Phone No: 2301191, 2301178

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V KUO HSIUNG VOY. NO. (1091 S/N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KUO HSIUNG VOY. NO. (1091 S/N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 29-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T/H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V HUNSA BHUM VOY. NO. (425W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V HUNSA BHUM VOY. NO. (425W/E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 29-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/A.I.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

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Neymar and Mbappe satins are Paris fashion must-haves

PARIS — Football's biggest stars burst onto the Paris fashion runway Thursday with Neymar, Kylian Mbappe and Edinson Cavani popping up on T-shirts and satin bomber jackets by Indian designer Manish Arora. The flamboyant creator has linked up with their club, Paris Saint-Germain, to produce a line of women's clothes inspired by its stellar trio of strikers, including vertiginous stiletto football boots in a mix of hot pink, lime green and gold aertex.

In the most colourful and joyous catwalk show of the week so far, Arora remade the team's crest with the footballers' faces surrounded by adoring hearts in Indian Zardozi metal embroidery.

A kaleidoscopic portrait of PSG's dishy Brazilian defender Thiago Silva adorned another top, while Neymar's featured on the shiny scarlet tongue of Day-glo rainbow trainers.

"Life can always be more colourful," he quipped as he also sent out football-shaped gold chain bags decorated with the players' faces and names, and jackets with staggering leopard-head shoulder pads.

The traffic-stopping outfits came with leopard hand bags "complete with laser eyes", the

ultimate WAG (Wives and girlfriends) swag.

"Girls just wanna have fun" — the show's title — also made it onto those football boot stilettos.

Then there was the model in a heart-covered wedding cake gown, her face done up like a wacky Snapchat filter, not to mention the three-tiered cake bags.

"The kitsch quota comes good enough to eat," Arora joked, and it doesn't take a huge leap of the imagination to see them making it onto WAG credit card bills.

The show went down a storm with critics, with the style bible *Women's Wear Daily* hailing Arora for "reaching out to a global audience" and nudging his clothes "upmarket a notch, trimming away some of the excess without losing any of its punch". It is not the first time that PSG has inspired Paris designers. Last year the smart young French brand Koche sent out a line of re-imagined silky PSG tops. The official link-up with Arora, however, is part of PSG's strategy to become a global entertainment industry brand, with a capsule collection drawn from the show due to go into the shops in China and India in February. —AFP ■



Paris Saint-Germain's star players featured in Manish Arora's latest collection at the Spring-Summer 2019 Ready-to-Wear collection fashion show in Paris. **PHOTO: AFP**



Nobel winners' names are engraved on the medal, except for the peace and economics prizes. **PHOTO: AFP**

1,001 ways to lose a Nobel Prize

OSLO — It's easier to lose a Nobel Prize than to win one.

Smuggled out to impress girls in a bar, or dissolved to prevent the Nazis from getting their hands on one, the precious gold medals have gone missing in crazy, tragic or spectacular ways over the more than hundred-year history of the Nobel Prize.

Here are some of them:

Dissolved in acid

When the Nazis invaded Denmark in April 1940, scientists at Niels Bohr's Institute for Theoretical Physics began to worry about the 1914 and 1925 Nobel Physics Prize gold medals that two German laureates — Max von Laue and James Frank — had placed there for safekeeping.

"In Hitler's empire it was almost a capital offence to send gold out of the country, and, Laue's name being engraved into the medal, the discovery of this by the invading forces would have had very serious consequences for him," Hungarian chemist George de Hevesy, who was working at the Institute, wrote in 1962.

After being persuaded not to bury the medals as they could be unearthed, de Hevesy decided to dissolve the two 23-carat-gold discs with aqua regia acid mix-

ture, the only solution able to do so. Stored high up on a shelf in his laboratory, the orange-coloured liquid went unnoticed by the Nazis. After the war was over, de Hevesy — who won the Nobel Prize himself in 1943 — turned the gold back into a precipitate in 1950. He gave it to the Nobel Foundation so it could be recast into two medals which were presented to the men in 1952.

In a less triumphant moment, Norwegian writer Knut Hamsun gave his Nobel Literature Prize medal to Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels in 1943. A strong supporter of the Nazis, Hamsun was convicted of treason in 1947 and spent the rest of his life in mental institutions.

It is not known what became of his medal.

Under the Hammer

Sometimes, because of acts of charity, inheritance disputes or just because life can take odd turns, the Nobel medals end up for sale at auctions.

With varying results.

The Nobel Peace Prize won by Frenchman Aristide Briand in 1926 for his role in France and Germany's short-lived post-war reconciliation was sold for the modest sum of just 12,200 euros

(\$14,000) in 2008.

Six years later, US scientist James Watson, who won the 1962 award for his co-discovery of the structure of DNA and who has made controversial remarks about Africans, sold his medal for a record \$4.1 million excluding taxes. A bonanza for the US biologist — especially after the buyer, Russian billionaire Alisher Usmanov, returned the medal to him.

Stop, thief

There have also been times when medals have just disappeared. France's Heritage Museum Ecomusee of Saint-Nazaire only had Aristide Briand's medal in its possession for a few years after buying it so cheaply: it was stolen in 2015 and has yet to be recovered.

And in India in 2017, robbers made off with the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize medal won by Kailash Satyarthi. Or so they thought. The medal was a replica — the real one is on display in a museum — and it was quickly recovered. No such luck for the 1913 Nobel literature medal awarded to Rabindranath Tagore, whose medal was snatched in 2004 and has not been found. —AFP ■

Great indoors: eSports gains foothold in Australia

SYDNEY — Outdoor sport is almost like a religion in Australia, with kids packing into cars each weekend bound for organised chaos at parks and ovals, while millions diligently follow rugby, football and cricket on TV or at stadiums. The rituals help explain why eSports has been slow to catch on Down Under.

But the Aussie passion for competition has gaming pio-

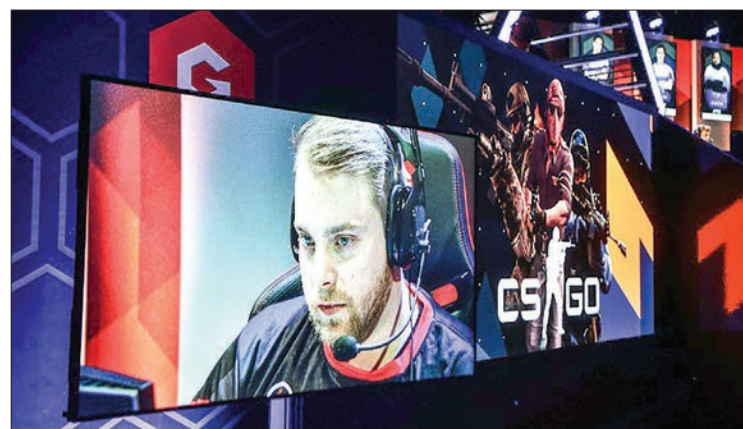
neers convinced that eSports has a future in the country — even if the profile so far remains low.

"There is still a general unawareness with what actually eSports is, so there is an education process that a lot of tournament organisers, or teams and clubs, are working through," GFinity Australia chief executive Dominic Remond told AFP.

The firm ran their maiden

eSports Elite Series in June and July, with teams from major cities in Australia playing Counter Strike Global Offensive, Street Fighter V and Rocket League.

The event was held at Sydney's first eSports stadium — which doubles as a TV show set — with teams stationed above giant gaming screens and commentators positioned in front of cameras below. —AFP ■



An eSports competitor takes part in the maiden event of Sydney's first dedicated eSports stadium. **PHOTO: AFP**

Study shows how motherhood sends octopuses into death spiral

CHICAGO — A study by neurobiologists at the University of Chicago (UChicago) uses modern genetic sequencing tools to describe several distinct molecular signals produced by the optic gland after a female octopus reproduces. The study has been newly published in the *Journal of Experimental Biology*.

In the study, the researchers used the California two-spot octopuses to study their odd maternal behaviors. In the first stage of brooding, mated females sit with their eggs like a deep-sea hen, stroking them and blowing water over the clutch. For the first three or four days they continue feeding but rarely leave their eggs, snatching the odd unlucky crab only if it happens to get too close.

After four days or so, they stop eating completely. This stage of brooding can last eight to ten more days until they hit the final phase of rapid decline, when things get really ugly. The females become listless, spending more time away from their eggs or slamming themselves against the corners of the tank. They start grooming themselves excessively, running their arms over their mantles until they became a tangled mess. Their skin pales and they lose muscle tone.

The researchers collected the optic glands from octopuses at each phase and sequenced the RNA transcriptome of each.

During the non-mated phase when females were actively hunting and eating, they produced high levels of neuropeptides, or small protein molecules used by neurons to communicate with

each other that have been linked to feeding behavior in many animals. After mating, these neuropeptides dropped off precipitously. As the animals began to fast and decline, there was more activity in genes that produce neurotransmitters called catecholamines, steroids that metabolize cholesterol, and insulin-like factors. It's the first time the optic gland has been linked to metabolism, besides reproduction.

Females in the early stage of brooding continued to eat but didn't actively seek out food. This could mean that the neuropeptides affect the amount of energy the octopus expends to find prey. Certain muscles may begin to deteriorate so the octopus physically can't hunt or digest food. The increased steroid and insulin production could be targeting reproductive tissues that promote maternal behavior, or they could be directing energy away from digestion and feeding.

Though scientific jury is still out as to why these clever, resourceful creatures meet such an ignominious end, there are several theories. Octopuses are serious cannibals, so a biologically programmed death spiral may be a way to keep mothers from eating their young.

Octopuses are semelparous animals. They reproduce once and then die. After a female octopus lays a clutch of eggs, she quits eating and wastes away; by the time the eggs hatch, she dies. The males don't get off any easier. Females often kill and eat their mates; if not, they die a few months later. —Xinhua ■

China's Tiangong-2 to de-orbit after July 2019

BEIJING — China's Tiangong-2 space lab is functioning normally and will de-orbit safely after July 2019, according to a briefing on China's space projects Wednesday.

"Tiangong-2 is currently operating in a near-circular orbit with an average height of about 400 kilometers. The temperature and pressure of the experimental cabin all meet the working requirements," said Lin Xiqiang, deputy director of the China Manned Space Engineering Office, at the briefing.

"It will conduct compressor life tests and space science application tests in the future," Lin added. Zhu Congpeng, chief designer of the space lab, said that Tiangong-2 was designed with several safety control modes to deal with emergencies and ensure it can safely leave orbit.

"We have also made more than 300 fault countermeasures to ensure its safe operation," Zhu said. Launched on 15 September, 2016, Tiangong-2 has been in orbit for more than two years. —Xinhua ■

Chinese scientists find vaccine effective in combating bird flu, but new risks among ducks

WASHINGTON — Chinese scientists found that vaccine for chickens in 2017 effectively worked to curb bird flu pandemic starting in 2013 in China, but new risks now went on in ducks that demanded more vaccination.

The study published on Thursday in the journal *Cell Host & Microbe* revealed that vaccination of chickens successfully prevented the spread of the H7N9 virus in China as human infection has not been detected since February 2018, indicating that consumers of poultry have been well-protected from H7N9 infection.

Researchers collected over 37,928 chickens and 15,956 duck genetic samples 8 months before and 5 months after the vaccine's introduction. They isolated 304 H7N9 viruses before the vaccine's release, and only 17 H7N9 viruses and one H7N2 virus afterwards.

But the findings also suggested that two new genetic variations of the H7N9 and H7N2 subtypes had been detected in unvaccinated ducks.

"It surprised me that the novel, highly pathogenic subtypes had been generated in and adapted so well to ducks, because



Chinese scientists found that vaccine for chickens in 2017 effectively worked to curb bird flu pandemic. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

the original highly pathogenic form of H7N9 has very limited capacity to replicate in ducks," said Chen Hualan, a senior author on the paper and an animal virologist at the Harbin Veterinary Research Institute. The bird flu virus replicates in host cells and often mutates and reassorts over time. When Chen's team looked closely at the genetic types of the disease-causing strains in ducks, they found that an H7N2 and an H7N9 virus had picked up certain gene segments from other duck influenza viruses, improving their ability to infect ducks.

"Influenza viruses mutate

as long as they replicate, but it's very difficult to predict when the H7N9 virus will obtain a particular harmful mutation," said Chen. "It is possible that the virus may adapt in other species in the future if it cannot be eliminated soon." Chinese eat roughly three billion ducks per year and 14 billion chickens. To prevent further human infection, Chen suggested that the virus should be eliminated in ducks as soon as possible. "Our study indicates that the current vaccine will work well in ducks, so we do not need to develop a new one," said Chen. —Xinhua ■

Global research team date millennia-old magnetic storms using tree rings



A global team of scientists managed to recover data on magnetic storms from thousands of years ago. **PHOTO: TASS**

MOSCOW — A global team of scientists, along with the employees of the Krasnoyarsk Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Siberian Branch and the Siberian Federal University managed to recover data on magnetic storms from thousands of years ago, the Russian Ministry of Science and Higher Education's press service reported. The study was published in the *Nature Communications* journal.

"An international group of

researchers, with the participation of the Krasnoyarsk Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Siberian Branch and the Siberian Federal University have managed to pinpoint an increased concentration of stable carbon isotopes in tree rings from several samples of trees located on five continents, from 774 and

993 AD. These dates coincide with historical evidence indicating unusually bright northern lights (aurora borealis). This discovery not only proves the accuracy of the tree rings' date patterns, but also, in the long run, it will help detect the frequency of abnormal magnetic storms of the past," the message reads.

Earlier, Japanese scientists discovered that solar flares causing magnetic storms leave traces on tree rings. Heavy charged particles called protons enter the atmosphere and "enrich" the chemical elements forming part of it. Radiocarbon (a "heavy" carbon isotope ^{14}C) is one of the products of this "enrichment", which then becomes part of the carbon cycle on our planet: namely, it accumulates in trees. The researchers suggested that tree rings from the years with higher solar activity would include higher amounts of heavy carbon. —Tass ■

Mourinho's Pogba feud takes spotlight, Hazard set for Liverpool rematch

LONDON — Jose Mourinho's astonishing feud with Paul Pogba will take another twist when Manchester United's warring duo head to West Ham, while Chelsea's Eden Hazard bids to inflict more misery on Liverpool.

On any other weekend, the showdown between Premier League leaders Liverpool and title rivals Chelsea at Stamford Bridge would be the centre of attention. But United manager Mourinho is embroiled in a clash of egos with France midfielder Pogba that threatens to derail his side's season.

Mourinho and Pogba were filmed in a heated discussion at United's training ground on Wednesday, just 24 hours after the World Cup winner was told he would no longer be the team's vice-captain. The volatile Pogba reportedly infuriated Mourinho by making it clear he wants to join Barcelona and poured fuel on the fire when he criticised the manager's cautious tactics in last weekend's draw with Wolves.

With United players said to be taking sides on the row, Mourinho is facing a toxic situation that could divide the club.



Jose Mourinho and Paul Pogba are at the centre of a clash of the egos. PHOTO: AFP

There was further woe for Mourinho on Tuesday as United, with the rested Pogba watching from the stands, were dumped out of the League Cup third round in an embarrassing defeat against second tier Derby.

United are already eight points behind Liverpool and can ill-afford another setback in an already traumatic campaign.

Against that tense backdrop, the announcement of United's team-sheet at West Ham on Saturday will be eagerly awaited to see whether Pogba will be recalled or be consigned to exile.

Regardless of Pogba's presence, United must raise their effort levels, according to their veteran defender Ashley Young.

"I think they had more inten-

sity than we did," Young said of the Derby defeat.

"You have to show that intensity and go further than the opposition. We didn't do that and I think we got punished."

Once the latest chapter of Mourinho's row with Pogba is out of the way in east London, all eyes will turn to the west side of the capital where Chelsea star

Hazard plans to aims repeat his midweek heroics against Liverpool. Belgium playmaker Hazard came off the bench to knock Liverpool out of the League Cup with a superb solo strike at Anfield on Wednesday.

Hazard's stunning late goal capped Chelsea's come from behind 2-1 victory, making them the first team to stop Liverpool winning this season.

That drama finale set the stage for Saturday's rematch at the Bridge, where Liverpool will put their six-match winning run in the league on the line against unbeaten Chelsea, who are two points behind in third place.

If Chelsea are to deal another blow to the Reds, they will surely need another memorable contribution from Hazard.

With five goals in his first six league games, Hazard has started the season in fine form, prompting Chelsea team-mate Ross Barkley to hail him as the world's best. Asked if Hazard compared to Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo, Barkley said: "They are probably a lot more selfish than Eden is. He is not a selfish player. — AFP ■

Cavani, Neymar on same wavelength as PSG target eighth straight win

PARIS — Paris Saint-Germain coach Thomas Tuchel says he has done nothing special to improve the relationship between star forwards Neymar and Edinson Cavani, despite the pair playing a key role in helping the French champions enjoy their best ever start to a season.

Cavani scored twice and

won a penalty that was converted by Neymar as PSG came from behind to beat Reims 4-1 on Wednesday, making it seven wins from seven games this season.

Neymar's first season in Paris following his world record transfer from Barcelona was brought to a premature end by a foot injury. But before that there were concerns the Brazilian had a frosty relationship with Cavani, with the duo notably bickering over penalty-taking duties.

There were no such problems on Wednesday, as the pair led PSG to another victory in the absence of the suspended Kylian Mbappe.

"I haven't done anything special. It is important that they exchange with one another," said Tuchel, whose team are already eight points clear at the top of Ligue 1.

"They play in the same team don't they? I haven't done anything. They are grown ups and, above all, they are pros.

"I also get the feeling that along with Kylian Mbappe and Angel (Di Maria) they are a quartet who want to win trophies and improve together."

PSG go to Nice on Saturday looking for an eighth win out of eight in the league -- if they do that they will match the best ever start to a season by any French club, set by Olympique Lillois in 1936.

Mbappe back

The good news for Tuchel is that Mbappe can return having completed his three-match ban, and the France star will surely feature ahead of next Wednesday's Champions League meeting with Red Star Belgrade. — AFP ■

Barcelona eye record revenues, aims for 1 billion-euro turnover by 2021

BARCELONA — Spanish champions Barcelona claimed Thursday that they were on course to set a new record turnover of 960 million euros for the 2018/19 season with a net profit of 11 million euros.

According to the budget estimate approved by the club's board of directors, in the

2017/18 season, Barcelona had a turnover of 914 million euros, exceeding its forecast of 897 million euros, for a profit of 32 million.

For the current season, expenses are expected to increase to 929 million euros, but will be offset by the increase in revenues, said a statement by the club, which added the target of a one billion euro turnover by 2021 is still within reach.



New look: This handout image released by FC Barcelona press office shows how the team's badge would look like after a redesign. PHOTO: AFP

"The club is very serious (in its management). We have more planned spending, but also more expected income. What we do will never endanger the viability of the club," said club spokesman Josep Vives.

Meanwhile, Barcelona also announced plans to redesign its club crest which will see the acronym "FCB" dropped to further highlight the ball and the Catalan regional flag, and "adapt to a new era."

The initiative responds to "one of the main objectives of the FC Barcelona Strategic Plan, which is the enhancement of its brand internationally," the club said in a statement. — AFP ■



Nicolas Pepe could not prevent Lille from losing at Bordeaux in midweek. PHOTO: AFP