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Three objectives of the State Government (Government Mission)

- (1) Ensuring the rule of law and promoting socio-economic development;
- (2) National reconciliation and internal peace; and,
- (3) Amending the Constitution, which is the basic foundation for building a Democratic Federal Union.

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

State Counsellor receives British Foreign Secretary

Views exchanged on Myanmar's democratization process, UN deliberations on Rakhine issue

DAWAUNG SAN SUU KYI, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received the Rt. Hon. Jeremy Hunt MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland at 15:30 hrs on 20 September 2018, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they exchanged views in a frank and cordial manner on the progress of democratization process in Myanmar; recent developments of the Rakhine State including the arrangements on repatriation process as well as the recent deliberations on the issue at the

fora of the United Nations.

Also present at the meeting were Union Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye, Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin and officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the morning, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and delegation, accompanied by Deputy Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor U Khin Maung Tin, left for Sittway by a special plane and were met by Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu and officials at the airport.

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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi welcomes British Foreign Secretary Rt. Hon. Jeremy Hunt MP in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Permanent Representative of Myanmar to Geneva responds during Interactive Dialogue with Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar

THE 39th Session of the Human Rights Council held interactive dialogue with Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar on 18 September 2018 from 0900 hours to 1200 hours at the United Nations Office

at Geneva.

During the interactive dialogue, Permanent Representative of Myanmar Ambassador U Kyaw Moe Tun delivered a statement responding to the

report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission of Human Rights Council on Myanmar. Some salient points of his statement are as follows:

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Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker receives Danish Ambassador



Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U T Khun Myat meets with Danish Ambassador Mr. John Nielsen in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat received Ambassador of Denmark to Myanmar H.E. Mr. John Nielsen at Pyithu Hluttaw Building, in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon. At the meeting increasing bilateral relations and cooperation, Hluttaw legislative process, supporting in capacity building of Hluttaw representatives and staffs, supporting education, water works and small and medium enterprise works and Hluttaw's participation in the internal peace process were discussed and views exchanged.—MNA ■

Vice-Senior General visits Indian National Defence Academy

A MYANMAR Tatmadaw delegation led by Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win was in India and visited the National Defence Academy (NDA) on 17

September.

Vice-Senior General and delegation were first explained about the teachings and trainings conducted in NDA by NDA officials. The Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation then went on a tour of

the NDA compound, met with the principal of the NDA in the office and signed the visitors' book.

Next, the Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation went on to Indian Army Armoured Corps headquarters and training school by helicopter and inspected the teaching and trainings conducted at the school.

Afterwards, the Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation visited the armoured history museum at the Tank Museum and Cavalry Officer Mess in the training school compound and attended a luncheon hosted by training school principal and wife.

Later Vice-Senior General and Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation left for ITC Maurya Hotel, New Delhi, where they are staying, according to the news released by the Commander-in-Chief Office.—MNA ■



Vice-Senior General Soe Win accepts a souvenir from principal of National Defence Academy in India. **PHOTO: COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OFFICE**

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker attends State/Region U-17 Football Tournament



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than presents a trophy to winners at Wunna Theikdi Stadium, Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

AMYOTHA Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than attended the final matches of the 2018 State/Region Under-17 Football Tournament, jointly conducted by Ministry of Sports, Sports and Physical Education Department and Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) at Wunna Theikdi Stadium, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday afternoon.

In the final match, Kayin State beat Taninthayi Region 5-0, while in the third place play-off, Kayah State beat Kachin State 4-2.

After the matches, prize awarding ceremony was held where best goalkeeper award went to Sain San Pha (Kayah), best defender award to Soe Win (Kayin), best midfielder award to Nyi Nyi (Kachin), best forward award to Kyaw Zeya Lin (Taninthayi), and best all-round player award throughout the entire tournament went to Than Ko Than

(Kayin).

The individual awards were handed out by Myanmar Olympic Committee Vice-President and Deputy Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Mya Lay Sein.

Next, cash and medals were awarded by Chief Minister for Kayin State Nang Khin Htwe Myint, Chairman of Myanmar Olympics and Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe and Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than to third-placed Kayah team, runner-up Taninthayi team and the champion Kayin team.

Chairman and members of Amyotha Hluttaw Health, Sports and Culture Committee, Kayin State ministers, Sports and Physical Education Department Director General U Myo Hlaing, officials, invited guests and football enthusiasts also watched the final matches. —MNA ■

BPI pharmaceuticals price stable despite rising dollar rate

MYANMA Pharmaceutical Industries has announced that their BPI pharmaceuticals, produced under the Ministry of Industry, will not see increases in price, despite the hike in costs for importing foreign pharmaceuticals, as a result of the rising US dollar.

Managing Director of Myanmar Pharmaceuticals Industries U Ko Ko Aung said they still have enough foreign pharmaceutical ingredients to continue production without raising the price of their finished products. However,

there may be considerations in the coming years, when they inevitably have to purchase more foreign ingredients, said U Ko Ko Aung. There are four companies that have won the tender for distributing BPI branded pharmaceuticals and Myanmar Pharmaceutical Industries has given the companies directions not to increase the price of the products as well. U Ko Ko Aung said not only have they instructed the sales representatives not to increase the price, they have also told them to fix the price

within the 10 per cent range, depending on transportation costs. Failure to comply will result in termination of the right to distribute their products, he added.

When asked about the effects of the rising dollar on imports of foreign pharmaceuticals, Dr. Saw Nay Nwe, member of the Myanmar Pharmaceuticals and Medical Equipment Entrepreneurs Association, replied that there will be some repercussions as 90 per cent of the country's medicine relies on imports. He said they have to bear the brunt

of the dollar hike as much as they can, as medicines are used for treating people's diseases. However, the increase in the recent two to three months have been very steep, rendering it impossible to stall, despite best efforts, he said. Pharmaceuticals have risen by 5 to 10 per cent. He said companies are monitoring the situation since the dollar exchange rate rose above Ks1,600, to see if it will fall back. If it doesn't, then they may have to increase the prices of medicine, said Dr. Saw Nay Nwe.

In former years, the pharmaceutical factories under the Myanmar Pharmaceutical Industries were able to produce BPI branded pharmaceuticals to supply 10 per cent of the entire country's medicinal needs, but has since increased to 15 per cent in the incumbent government's administration.

The pharmaceutical factories reportedly produce 198 varieties and generated Ks 12.16 billion profit for the nation in fiscal year 2017-2018. —Min Thit/MNA ■

State Counsellor receives British Foreign Secretary

FROM PAGE-1

They visited Taung Pyo Letwe reception centre set up to accept the returnees by military helicopter. Later, they proceeded to Shwe Zar village, Pan Taw Pyin village and met with the local people.

In the afternoon, Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin hosted a working luncheon to the delegation

led by Rt. Hon. Jeremy Hunt MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland at the Kempinski Hotel. The luncheon was also attended by Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government and National Security Advisor U Thaung Tun and officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—MNA

President U Win Myint, Brunei Darussalam Monarch exchange congratulatory messages over 25th anniversary of diplomatic relations

U WIN MYINT, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Muizzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, exchanged congratulatory messages on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Brunei Darussalam, which falls on 21 September 2018.—MNA

Permanent Representative of Myanmar to Geneva responds during Interactive Dialogue with Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar

FROM PAGE-1

- It has always been the cornerstone of Myanmar's foreign policy to cooperate with the United Nations. However, Myanmar delegation has rejected the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) on Myanmar since its establishment by the Human Rights Council in March 2017, as it will not contribute to our efforts to bring national reconciliation, peace, and inclusive and sustainable development in Rakhine State.
- The Government has therefore made it clear that it would not be able to accept its mandate and the results of its findings.
- Its establishment, composition and mandate, raised serious and genuine concerns that it would lack impartiality and hinder the Government's own efforts to find long-term solutions to the situation in Rakhine State.
- The one-sided Report of the FFM has only served to strengthen the Government's concerns. 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 to the entire nation.

- There are many obvious reasons to question the impartiality and objectivity of the FFM's report.
- The way the report portrayed about the national races of Myanmar is misleading. Instead of encouraging integration, the report seems encouraging disunity of the nation dividing between national races.
- The methodology of their investigation is also flawed as their Report was prepared based on results of interviewing selected groups of displaced persons in Cox's Bazaar and information gathered from some NGOs, INGOs and human rights group.
- They did not bother to interview even non-Muslims displaced persons staying in Cox's Bazaar.
- Their accusations are based on the stories told by those

alleged victims living under continuous threat and influence of ARSA terror group and not supported by concrete evidence.

- Regardless of the lack of balance, impartiality and fairness, the Government of Myanmar takes the allegations of human rights violations seriously. The Government will not condone human rights violation.
- The Government established the independent Commission of Enquiry. The Commission is tasked to investigate allegations of human rights violations and related issues following the terrorist attacks with a view to seeking accountability and reconciliation, and to formulate recommendations on steps to be taken to ensure peace and stability in Rakhine State.
- We share deep sympathy and concern for all displaced persons, especially women and girls.
- The government pays high priority to the repatriation. With regard to repatriation, no one needs to give pressure on Myanmar. We are

ready to receive the verified displaced persons.

- But we need the cooperation of Bangladesh to send back those wishing to return.
- We also recognize the crucial role of the United Nations in addressing an issue of this nature. The government of Myanmar also signed with UNDP and UNHCR an MOU that aims at assisting speedy and efficient resettlement and rehabilitation.
- The implementation of the MOU has been commenced and the UN teams are now on ground making first phase of their assessment.
- The report pointed out that the trained leaders and untrained villagers involved in the terrorist attacks of ARSA.
- 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 report is based on one-sided perception of

Myanmar history without consulting any of the many studies about the history of the conflict.

- The FFM under tremendous pressure reported the information they wanted to believe and jumped to a dangerous conclusion that could derail the democratization processes.
- This is critical juncture for Myanmar in its journey towards a peaceful, prosperous democratic federal union.
- We strongly object any attempt to make disunity of the country. We are resolute to achieve our goal of creating a strong democratic federal union.
- Non-constructive measures and retributive actions will only lead to further polarization of the communities, even worsen the situation we wish to resolve and will do nothing but impose greater impediment to our serious efforts to speedy repatriation of the displaced persons. What we should do now is to focus on solving the humanitarian situation.



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Labour Union Minister receives ILO's Deputy Director-General

UNION MINISTER for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe received a delegation led by Mr. Greg Vines, Deputy Director-General for Management and Reform of the International Labour Organization (ILO), at the meeting hall of the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw at 11 am yesterday.

At the meeting, they signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Myanmar Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP 2018-2021) implementation activities, building self-framework to implement elimination of all forms of forced or compul-



Union Minister U Thein Swe holds talks with ILO Deputy Director-General Mr. Greg Vines in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

sory labour and standardizing of labour laws to meet international norms. They continued to discuss matters regarding ILO's Direct Contacts Mission

to Myanmar next month, holding National Tripartite Dialogue Forum (NTDF) for ILO's century milestone in 2019. They also mentioned that the delegations

from the UK, Brazil, Qatar and Uzbekistan will come to Myanmar to share their implementation activities and experiences for elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour in the end of 2018. Additionally, forming a committee to draw up national-level project for elimination of child labour and constructive cooperation between the government and the ILO, concerning labour affairs in the future, were also closely discussed.

Present at the meeting with the Union Minister were permanent secretary U Myo Aung, director-general and officials concerned.—MNA ■

Railway level crossings to be modified, upgraded

By Nyein Nyein

THE Ministry of Transport and Communications is upgrading and modifying railway level crossings, said Daw Nilar Kyaw, Yangon Region Minister for Electricity, Industry, Road and Communications.

She was responding to a question raised by regional Hluttaw representative U Nyi Nyi of Dagon Myothit (South) Township constituency 1 on the sixth day of the seventh regular meeting of Second Yangon Region Hluttaw yesterday, asking if there are plans to widen the roads at railway level crossings where many traffic accidents are



Myanma Railways upgraded railway crossing. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

occurring, repairing barriers, appointing skilled workers and installing modern signal lights/sounds and equipment at the railway level crossings.

Minister Daw Nilar Kyaw said railway level crossings are being widened to be in accordance with roads repaired (widened) by the municipal, while

Myanma Railways (MR) was also upgrading and modernizing the barriers at old railway level crossings.

U Nyi Nyi said that due to narrow railway level crossings, many road accidents and traffic congestions were recorded.

At present, MR is implementing the Yangon circular railway upgrading project.

Along with this project, MR will also upgrade railway level crossings and appoint level crossing gate staffs for traffic safety.

They will be provided with signal flags, torch lights and safety jackets with reflectors and MR will also install light and sound signals, said Minister Daw Nilar Kyaw. ■

Dengue fever kills three in Mandalay Region

IN 2018, out of 1,151 people in Mandalay Region who were infected with dengue fever, only three, died from the disease, including two from Meiktila and one from Wundwin Township, according to 18 September statistics of Regional Department of Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases through Insect Carriers.

"In the past patients referral system, most of the patients were referred to the hospital when their dengue fever level reached level-3. Now, we have changed this. We asked doctors to refer patients to the hospital

when a patient is suspected of having dengue, and the treatment department will decide whether the patient should be hospitalized or not," said Dr. Tint Wai from the Regional Department of Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases through Insect Carriers.

The department conducted effective preventive and control measures against dengue haemorrhagic fever (DHF), under the programme of covering, emptying and cleaning of water storage containers and spraying of mosquito repellent.

The department is also us-

ing abate larvicide that kills disease-carrying insects, including mosquitoes at larvae stage, fogging machines, as well as conducted case-based management, health awareness talks, immunization activities, maternal and child care services and school health services, since January.

Moreover, authorities have provided abate, beginning from December 2016, to 28 townships depending on 2015-2016 case records. Dengue fever is caused by Aedes mosquitoes. Dengue fever breaks out mostly in Madaya, Myingyan,

Taungtha, Natogyi and Meiktila townships. The symptoms of dengue are high fever, headaches, joint and muscle pain, vomiting and rashes, he explained.

According to Mandalay Region Public Health Department statistics, the total number of dengue cases was 2,288, with eight fatalities in 2013, 2,025 patients with 20 fatalities in 2014, 6,442 patients with 17 fatalities in 2015, 1,401 patients with one fatality in 2016, and 2,727 patients with two fatalities in 2017.—Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing house) ■

Over 300 MIC-approved foreign enterprises closed down during past 30 years

By Nyein Nyein

SINCE 1988 fiscal year, there have been over 300 companies which shut down their operations after seeking Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) approval, according to data from the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

“Of 1,535 MIC-approved enterprises, 1,225 are currently running their businesses.

And so, over 300 enterprises were dissolved”, said U Kyaw Win Tun, Director of the DICA.

Most of the dissolved companies were from energy sector. They delisted their companies during the very first trial run, he continued.

“Those dissolved companies are mostly from in energy sector. There are four stages for companies to run in energy sector. After trial run, they undergo testing and then,

move to production and commercialization stages. If the energy companies cannot explore the resources during the trial run period, projects are halted and closed. Those companies are mostly from that sector”, U Kyaw Win Tun maintained.

In the past 30 years, of 153 permitted enterprises in oil and gas sector, only 86 currently exists, according to data

from DICA.

Main investors in oil and gas sectors are from China, Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong, the UK, South Korea, Malaysia, the Netherlands, India and Viet Nam.

Garment sector also saw companies which shut down after MIC’s approval, said U Than Aung Kyaw, deputy director general of DICA.

“There are cases like joint operation of two factories.

The closure of companies is not related to any political condition. As they did not receive purchase order, the businesses were closed and delisted”, said U Than Aung Kyaw.

About US\$14 billion of capital, proposed by those dissolved companies, was lost, including \$4 billion in oil and gas, \$6 billion in power, \$2 billion in manufacturing, and the remaining in other sectors. ■

Local demand driving up Ye Township areca nut price

THE price of areca nut produced from Ye Township has raised its head again, on account of high demand in local market.

The price of areca nut has risen from Ks3,000 to above Ks4,000 per viss (3.6 lb). Growers are expecting to fetch higher price this year than last year’s.

Last year, the price reached the highest of Ks6,000 per viss. However, low demand from Indian merchants brought down the price to Ks3,200.

As the prices of areca nut are on the upward trend, growers predict that this year, areca nuts will fetch above Ks6,000 per viss which was last year’s market price in the end of areca nut closing season.



Photo: Htut Htut

There are around 60,000 acres of areca nut farms in Ye Township. Locally-produced areca nuts are exported to India and Bangladesh, beyond self-sufficiency. —Htut Htut ■

Myanmar-ROK trade reaches \$258 million from April to July

BILATERAL trade between Myanmar and the Republic of Korea (ROK), from April to July in the mini-budget period, amounted to US\$258 million, including export worth \$126.39 million and import worth \$132 million, according to figures released by the Ministry of Commerce.

Rice and broken rice, coffee, mangoes, pulses, apparel produced by Myanmar’s garment sector on cut-make-pack basis, shrimp and sesame oil, among other things, are exported to South Korea, while Myanmar imports capital goods, such as machinery and equipment, raw

industrial goods, such as fertilizers and garment materials, and consumer goods, such as cosmetic products.

The value of bilateral trade between the two countries was \$798 million in the 2017-2018 FY, \$866 million in the 2016-2017 FY, \$657 million in the 2015-2016 FY, \$862 million in the 2014-2015 FY, \$1.57 billion in the 2013-2014 FY, \$623 million in the 2012-2013 FY, and \$667 million in the 2011-2012 FY.

South Korea brought foreign direct investments of \$44 million into Myanmar in the past four months. South Korea is the fifth

largest foreign investor in Myanmar, according to Myanmar Investment Commission’s foreign investment figures of existing enterprises.

Multinational corporations such as Posco, Daewoo, Samsung and Hyundai from South Korea have already grabbed market shares in Myanmar.

Additionally, the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) has provided a grant aid for sustainable rural development and capacity building in public service, technology, education and fundamental infrastructure building. — GNLM ■

August 5.5 per cent inflation highest this year

THE average rate of inflation in Myanmar, based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), rose to 5.5 per cent in August, which is the highest level this year, according to an announcement released by the Central Statistical Organization, under the Ministry of Planning and Finance.

Last month’s inflation rate was up from 5.02 per cent of July’s. In 2018, inflation rate in March indicated the lowest of 4.02 per cent.

Core CPI inflation, which strips out volatile food and energy prices, was 4.59 per cent in August.

In the past twelve months, the year-on-year inflation rate in August 2018 hit the highest rate of 8.18 per cent, while September’s inflation rate indicated the lowest of 3.4 per cent.

In August, Mandalay City recorded the highest inflation rate at 10.41 per cent, followed by Rakhine State at 9.64 per cent and Ayeyawady Region at 6.75 per cent.

The year-on-year inflation rate fluctuated with a maximum rate of 12.61 per cent in Rakhine and a minimum rate of 4.86 per cent in Kayah State.

In July, food group, tobacco

and beverages group, household goods and maintenance group, transportation group, other commodities group, clothing, health, education services, recreation and culture and housing groups showed a remarkable increase in CPI. Telecommunications group indicated slight decrease. As Myanmar currency is depreciating against the US dollar last month, prices of imported goods were on the high side. Transportation costs has also risen due to high fuel oil price, hiking up commodity prices. States and regions, including Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw cities, showed a significant increase in CPI rate.

Previously, the inflation rate was evaluated, based on a 2006 survey, and then, the base year turned to 2012. The Central Statistical Organization conducted a Household Income and Expenditure Survey in 82 townships in November 2012. In an attempt to reduce the inflation rate, authorities concerned made efforts, based on the policies of finance, currency, trade and foreign currency control, according to the second five-year National Development Plan. — Htet Myat ■

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National Development Party presents its policy, stance and work program



Chairman Dr. Ne Zin Latt.

Chairman Dr. Ne Zin Latt of National Development Party (NDP) presented the party's policy, stance, work programs and other issues on radio and TV on 20 September.

Following is a translation of the presentation:

I wish all the people happiness and health.

The second by-election will be held soon. Although there are only a few seats candidates, I would like to present my thanks for gaining a chance to present policy, stance and the situation we are encountering.

Esteemed people,

The party's name reflects the stance of our party. Based on the interest of all the 135 national races of the nation, we strongly believe nation building tasks will meet success only through experience and wisdom.

Let me present our party's opinion on some important sectors of a country.

Economy

Economy is the most important driving force in every country. A survey, conducted by the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chamber of Commerce

and Industry and supported by over 2000 businessmen, showed that Myanmar is facing an economic downturn continuously, and the year 2018 is the worst. Myanmar's kyat currency has also slumped, compared to the currencies of neighbouring countries, which has a negative impact on economy.

NDP knows well how much important is an economy of a country. It also has ways and means to recover the country's economy and how to improve it. The economic downturn is due to lack of a proper policy of using own forces correctly.

We have enough experts who are worthy of practical experience and well versed in economic affairs and who know what sound strategy to implement, which is the main requirement for a country. The party has not only experience within the country but also possesses skills to manage economy globally. The party also disseminates knowledge on public administration both in theory and in practice.

Peace

Our party accepts the fact that the country's development has been hindered due to various armed groups since the time of independence. Currently, we

cannot see good results because of the way to approach strategy of the whole process, although the policy of dialogue is correct.

We believe that peace process is one of the fronts for future of Myanmar and the current program should be replaced by some approaches which are more practical.

Social sector

The social sector is too broad that only governments that can drive the democratic mechanism will run it smoothly. Public administration is an art of managing every front and every sector of a country. Social problems, crimes, and drug cases which we can find in today's news are greatly associated with public administration. Our party has experts in such issues and it disseminates knowledge on this.

Education and health

The two sectors which play a very important role for the present and future of the country are education and health. Reforms in the education sector should be made more than the present efforts, and the situation is the same also in the health sector. Reforms are to be made both in policy making and systems.

The question then arises, "Can the education sector follow the rules of international curriculum?" It is needed to fulfill the needs in the whole process, including teachers and teaching aids. Vocational training should be conducted for people who have dropped out from schools without completing their education. NDP acknowledges education and health play an important role for the future of Myanmar. If one of our candidates is elected, we will make a proposal to enact law in that regard.

Esteemed people,

The National Development



Party logo.

Party is a party with firm stance and specific policy. The party possesses well-versed scholars who are experts in public administration and economic management which are very important for a country. The party is formed with many successful businessmen who can reach out to global economy, let alone nation's business.

Focus of most importance should be on farmers and workers. Over 70 percent of the country's population are farmers and their future depends on the nation's economy, and unfortunately, theirs is not bright.

NDP has a plan for what policy should be adopted and what fulfillment should be made for farmers and workers who are forced into a quagmire of debt year after year. We have been making plans for short-term economy growth, high yield of crops and mechanized farming in middle term and prosperity of farmers in the long run. Farmers and workers are to be ushered into industrialization from farming.

Some sectors I would like to present are Myanmar and international relations, and regional politics and economy. As you all are aware, the terrorist acts in Maungdaw, Rakhine State, was transformed into international pressure and it has become a challenge for Myanmar government and the Tatmadaw. We anticipate these pressures will not be lesser but accelerate gradually.

These pressures on Myan-

mar have some impacts on the country's economy to some extent, and the deliberations made at the United Nations also have impacts on the country more or less.

As we anticipate more impacts will be on the country at some point, we have developed policies and strategies how to deal effectively with international community, regional countries, UN and other powerful organizations.

Esteemed people,

There are many fronts and sectors to be tackled by a country. As there is time limit, I have presented just a few important sectors. NDP has been making clear and specific strategies regarding more broad issues, policies and processes to be implemented.

It is common that most of the issues need the approval of parliament to make a law. Here, I pledge that if you vote in favour of our candidate, you will find earnest proposals for making laws at the parliament which are of most importance and betterment of the future.

Economic and social difficulties we are facing today can be presented legally in parliament and thus I would like to inform you that vote in favour of candidate from NDP without any confusion to be able to address the challenges Myanmar is facing.

I wish you great health and prosperity.

Translated by TMT

Train service between Yangon, Mandalay back to normal

TRAIN service between Yangon and Mandalay resumed yesterday, after repairs were completed on the damaged track and bridges in flood-hit areas, Yedashe Township, Bago Region.

A test run on BR-305 and Yedashe-Kongyi-Swa railroad

was conducted on the repaired railroad sections. The Myanmar Railways announced yesterday that the tracks are ready for train services as from 2.25 pm yesterday.

The overflowing water from Swa Dam damaged the bridge and railroad after the

dam's spillway collapsed on 29 August.

"No. 11 Up Train and No.12 Down Train started operation yesterday and crossed the repaired railroad sections," said Superintending Engineer (Civil) U Soe Myint Aung of Myanmar Railways.— GNLM ■



PHOTO: MIN SWE

Protection of ethnic rights bill discussed



Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin delivers an opening speech at the coordinating meeting for discussing the Protection of Ethnic Rights Bill in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

A COORDINATION meeting for discussing the Protection of Ethnic Rights Bill was held at the Mingalarthiri Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Nai Thet Lwin delivered the opening speech at the meeting, saying that the meeting is of great importance as it will discuss the remarks sent back from the Office of the Union Attorney-General on the second draft of the bylaw for protecting ethnic rights, which was drafted at the end of two workshops.

The Union Minister said his ministry will work in line with the Law Protecting Ethnic Rights to implement equal rights for all ethnicities with no discrimination between hilly regions and the plains, putting an end to violations of ethnic rights, and promoting all-round socio-economic development, all of which will directly support the prolifera-

tion of peace.

Ethnic people will only be able to fully benefit from the constitutional rights, once this bylaw is enacted, as such, one can assess the critical significance of the bylaw for ethnic people and the ministry, said the Union Minister.

He concluded by urging the participants to the meeting to give their utmost cooperation in discussing the second draft of the bill, as its enactment will allow two of the departments under his ministry to conduct practical implementations.

The meeting then commenced, with officials from the advisory board of the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs explaining about the draft for the ethnic affairs bylaw.

This was followed by participants reviewing and discussing each chapter of the bylaw and consulting the discussions made and advice given to draw a confirmed ver-

sion of the bill.

Concerning the drawing of the new bill, Deputy Director General of the Department of Protecting Ethnic Rights, Dr. L Tu Meang Gaung, said consideration was given for the bylaw to come up with a version that provides a satisfactory link between the permissions granted by the Law Protecting Ethnic Rights and the high expectations from ethnic people, in addition to carrying out the ministry's tasks.

"This meeting will produce a third draft of the bylaw," said Dr. L Tu Meang Gaung, "It will be resent to the Office of the Union Attorney-General where it will undergo legal remarks and detailed reviews and amendments. After all that's done, we hope it won't be long till a bylaw that benefits ethnic people and supports working operations, will emerge."

—MNA ■



Shwedagon Pagoda Board of Trustees at the press conference on the pagoda's gold plate renovation in Yangon. **PHOTO: YE HTUT**

Trustee board refutes Shwedagon Pagoda gold plate rumors

SHWEDAGON Pagoda Board of Trustees member U Thaung Htike said 99.9 (purity) gold for Shwedagon Pagoda was bought, after submitting the matter to the Government, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture and Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Conservation, and stored in a secure gold storage room in Shwedagon Pagoda. When it is issued (for work), officials in a group take it out after inspection. The storage room is kept under CCTV surveillance, while Pagoda Board of Trustees security also kept it under its watch. The process of making gold plates for the pagoda was also overseen by the Pagoda Board of Trustees and all gold plates are 99.9 per cent pure, without any impurities, and were being installed onto the pagoda, said U Thaung Htike.

He said this during a press conference held on Shwedagon Pagoda yesterday afternoon regarding the 2018-2019 Shwedagon Pagoda gold plate renovation work.

U Thaung Htike said the press conference was held because false news was circulating in some newspapers, journals, and social media that could cause disrespect toward the religion.

He continued to say that one tical and six tical gold plates were produced by Ministry of Education research and innovation department, material science research department and metallurgy research department, and all were scientifically inspected. Gold contents were described and all gold plates are above 95 per cent purity. The authenticity is guaranteed and is ready for inspection anytime. Department of Mines will also inspect the gold content with

special machines. As for the gold flakes (shavings), traditional method of producing them has been used and the gold flakes submitted through tender system are inspected by metallurgy research department, and only gold flakes with 97.5 per cent gold content is accepted, said U Thaung Htike.

Shwedagon Pagoda Board of Trustees member U Nyo Win said "12 board of trustee members attended this press conference. Of the 12, nine are responsible for nine departments of Shwedagon Pagoda, and the remaining three are holding responsible positions regarding religion and international matters. For 2018-2019 Shwedagon Pagoda gold plate renovation works, a central committee, work committee and ten sub-committees were formed and assigned different duties and responsibilities. As they are responsible for the gold plates and flakes to be adorned onto the pagoda, they are participating in the press conference."

Shwedagon Pagoda Board of Trustees member U Tin Oo then encouraged the media to raise any question on Shwedagon Pagoda gold plate renovation work. As a fourth pillar (of the country), reports on Shwedagon Pagoda are urged to be written with a view of protecting and caring for the religion, said U Tin Oo. News media personnel in attendance then raised questions that were answered by the pagoda board of trustee members. The press conference was attended by Shwedagon Pagoda Board of Trustees, officials from Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture and Ministry of Industry and news media personnel. —Yi Yi Myint, Ohnmar thant ■

Mro national killed in Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State

A MAN from Gwa Sone Ywar Thit Village, Thit Tone Nar Gwa Sone village-tract in Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State, was found dead with multiple sword wounds yesterday morning.

Ethnic Mro U Du Lu, aged 40, from Gwa Sone Ywar Thit Village, in Maungtaw Township went herding eight cattle,

owned by U Carlin Wine from the same village, on the morning of 19 September, but failed to return.

In the evening, villagers went to search for U Du Lu and the cattle and found six cattle while U Du Lu and two other cattle were not found. Village administrator U Htun Shwe reported to the officials about

U Du Lu and the two cattle missing. Yesterday morning, the villagers continued their search and found the body of U Du Lu with multiple sword wounds in a valley about a mile away from Asankyaw Bridge. Authorities are learnt to be investigating the death.

—Hein Htet Zaw / Aye Min Thu ■

Amending constitution sine qua non for complete democratic transition

THE ongoing efforts in our current transition to democracy are the most complex and challenging of all. The transition is towards a democratic goal, following a path laid down in accordance with the wishes of the people and maintained with their consent and cooperation.

Our people wished for peace and security, for an end to unrest, for material and emotional security, and for a chance to contemplate on the future of their children in tranquility.

In order to fulfil these wishes of the people, the ruling party has determined its goals of rule of law, peace, development, and amendments to the Constitution.

Because, without peace, the transition to democracy cannot blossom and bear fruit.

Amending the constitution was one of the main goals of the incumbent government even before they came into office.

“As the government anticipated, amending the 2008 Constitution step-by-step through negotiations will virtually guarantee completion of our democratic transition.

In mind that national reconciliation is one of the government's greatest needs.

To amend the constitution will result in a foundation on which a democratic federal union can be built

The government is undertaking to establish a federal democratic Union for the benefit of all its citizens, however there are still many challenges to overcome to ensure our successful transition to democracy.

With this in mind, the current government has made the peace process a top priority. With the peace process at the center, national reconciliation can be also achieved, and this, shall lead to democratic transition and the establishment of the Union.

The main goal of the current peace process is to reach political agreements, to sign the Union Accord, and to implement steps for establishing a Union based on democracy and federalism.

In doing so, common approaches will be agreed through the process of holding political dialogue.

The role of military in the peace process is also very crucial. We need to overcome many challenges harmoniously during the peace process.

As the government anticipated, amending the 2008 Constitution step-by-step through negotiations will virtually guarantee completion of our democratic transition.

The completion of our democratic transition must necessarily involve the completion of a truly democratic constitution. At the same time, only if we can build freedom, equality and mutual respect amongst the ethnic peoples can a democratic federal Union be established.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has made the government's commitment clear that the NLD government will bring about the changes to the constitution through negotiations, always keeping

AT the outset, I would like to extend my best wishes to the Hluttaw Representatives and all invited guests to be auspicious and healthy.

I am Pyithu Hluttaw representative U La Mar Naw Aung from Ingyanyan constituency, and the title of the paper I am going to read on the occasion of 2018 International Day of Democracy is “Let's all lend a hand in making democracy thrive.”

Esteemed guests,

Many nations in the world have experienced different systems throughout the ages, and it is learnt that, at present, a majority of the countries practise the democratic system, which includes rights to create and choose their own destiny. Another reason is that democracy is a kind of philosophy that is most practical to the aspirations of a human being. In our country, leaders of ethnic races achieved independ-



U La Mar Naw Aung

ence, thanks to the Panglong Agreement, and founded the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, after which a democratic system was practised. But democracy did not last long and the country fell under the rule of a one party dictatorship.

After almost 50 years away from democracy, the country has just started adopting the democratic system again, gained through the sacrifices of the people. We must strive together to make democracy thrive, while taking lessons from the past. That's why, state leaders, Hluttaw, courts, armed organizations, political parties, media, CSOs and all citizen voters are duty bound to maintain good results.

Esteemed guests,

There must be free and fair elections system in the process of democratisation, and all citizens have the freedom of right to vote for their representatives who, on

behalf of them, can guarantee the sovereignty of the state. We will find that our country hasn't practised full democracy yet, and we need to adjust ourselves by bearing patience, and practising rational thinking with care.

Esteemed guests,

The pillars of democratic government include the legislative Hluttaw, administrative Government and judiciary Court, that can make check and balance each other without interfering in the affairs of one another. This is the essence of democracy and a vital point in making democracy survive. Without checks and balances, the system could head towards authoritarianism.

Every government wishes to implement tasks that brings prosperity to the people. But if there is no check and balance, it will become authoritarian, the original objectives lost, resulting in power seeking and power

maintain for self-interests. Democracy is a system of majority rule, and minority's rights must be protected by law.

In order to see to it that the democratic system is thriving and balanced, human beings cannot tackle the tasks alone, as measures should be taken to protect it with laws and regulations.

“As an example, in our daily life, to reap the fruits of our choice plant, we need to take care of the plant right from when we planted it, and nurturing its different stages until it bears fruit. In the same way, it is the duty of the people from the whole country to take care of the nascent democratic system, to make it thrive eternally.

I wish like to conclude by urging all citizens to cooperate and lend a hand for the flourishing of the democratic system.

Thank you.

(Unofficial Translation)

Kokang Democracy and Unity Party paper read at 2018 International Day of Democracy ceremony

GREETINGS and well wishes for health and prosperity to Union-level officials, officials concerned from international organizations, party leaders and guests.

I am Yan Kyin Kan, Pyithu Hluttaw Representative from Kunlong constituency.

I am thankful to all responsible persons who have allowed me to read the paper, on behalf of the Kokang Democracy and Unity Party, on the occasion of 2018 International Day of Democracy. **Esteemed personalities who cherish democracy,**

The changes in the political history of our country, similar to continuous changing of human political histories in various countries of the world, is due to those who wanted changes, and it has now reached a stage of multi-party democracy system for the benefit of ethnic races

and people across the country.

Therefore, we are marching towards a political journey structured with the three powers — legislature, administrative and judiciary — checking and balancing each other.

But if one of the powers cannot make counter check and balance of the others, we would not be able to walk towards our goal of democracy, aspired by all people.

Even an individual who does not reflect on oneself with reasoning power, human values and conducts may be consequently ruined. Similarly, powers given to implement tasks for the benefit of the majority, if not checked and balanced, could lead to extremisms and result in missing out the main objective.

Therefore, in a country like Myanmar, which is still at the tender stage of democracy, check

and balance is important, and we should emphasize and give it a top priority.

Generally, it is inevitable that we will encounter conflicts between two social groups — those desiring to walk on the path of a new system and those who still resist in making changes by holding on to the old system.

In order to eliminate old ideas and conducts, once and for all, all are responsible to change the undesirable ways that are not suitable with the present times.

This could only be done, beginning from individuals and ending with the whole society changing for the better.

In this period of transformation, we should not hold on to unnecessary old beliefs and ideology and cautiously get rid of them to be in line with the journey that we all have embarked



U Yan Kyin Kan

on, thereby ending up with positive results.

There are many challenges ahead of us and we should work together to overcome these barriers so that we can march together towards our goal of democracy. If we keep holding selfishly to the past, it would end up with unwanted results for the majority.

All people should realize the present situation that is leading towards equal rights for everyone, by taking lessons from the past systems with bitter experiences, and walking in determination towards the goal.

I would like to conclude my paper by urging all of you to work together, with positive motives and actions towards a common goal, in order to attain a prosperous and democratic nation.

Thank you.

(Unofficial Translation)

Myanmar Gazette

Contract Registration Law promulgated

The Contract Registration Law will take effect on the 1st of October 2018 (7th Waning of Tawthalin 1380 ME), as stated in Section 2 of the aforementioned law. ■

Announcement

1. As Visa and Work Permit for fishermen will be issued by Thailand, fishermen in Thailand are informed to contact and follow up as following:

- Fishermen whose permits are expiring on September 2018 will be given a two-year extension of their stay permit. Registration process had been conducted in One Stop Service Centers in 22 provinces since 20-8-2018 and will be continued until 30-9-2018.
- In granting two-year extension those with passports (or) CI (Certificate of Identity) and Sea-Book will be given a visa once a year while those with Work Permit will be extended for a year.

2. The fishermen can inquire about details to the following work officers.

(a)	U San Maung Oo	0948845484
(b)	U Oo Khin Maung	0990592352
(c)	U Thein Naing	0652206951
(d)	U Zaw Min Aung	0652206952
(e)	U Aung Min	0652206953

Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population

Weather bureau issues code yellow weather warning for deep depression in Bay of Bengal

THE depression over west-central Bay of Bengal has intensified into a deep depression over the same region and the system is now centered at about 142 miles Southeast of Gopalpur, India.

The weather system is not moving towards Myanmar coasts, and the present stage of the depression is coded yellow stage.

Position of deep depression, Center pressure and wind

Deep depression is located at Latitude (18.0 degree North and Longitude (86.5) degree East, Centre pressure of depression is (996) hPa and maximum wind speed near the center is (35) miles per hour. During next (12)hrs

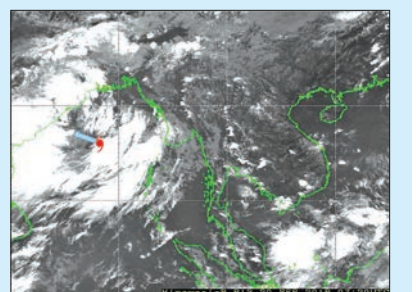
Forecast

It is forecast to move West- Northwestwards and may further intensify into a Cyclonic storm during next (12) hours. It will cross near Gopalpur (India) around mid night of today.

General caution

Occasional squalls with rough seas will be experienced Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40) m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (9 - 12) feet Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coasts and about (4-7) feet in Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthy Coasts.

Local people, fishermen, trawlers, vessels and ships are advised not to venture out off and along Myanmar Coasts.—GNLM ■



Zimbabwean president approves US \$64 mln budget to fight cholera

HARARE—Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa has approved a 64 million US dollars budget for immediate needs in the fight against a cholera outbreak that has so far killed at least 30 people in the capital Harare, a Cabinet minister has said.

Funds will also be used to fight typhoid which has also hit the city and other parts of the country, chairperson of the Cabinet committee on emergency preparedness and disaster management July Moyo told state run newspaper *Herald*.

It is anticipated that well-wishers will donate to the fund, with donations such as fuel, protective clothing, clean up tools, refuse receptacles, food and water purification chemicals being channeled through the Harare Town Clerk's office.

He said cash donations should be made to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, whose minister Mthuli Ncube last week announced the establishment of a crowd funding initiative to help fight the



Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa (C) arrives at Glen View Polyclinic as he visits the cholera affected patients in Harare, Zimbabwe on 19 September 2018. Emmerson Mnangagwa has approved a 64 million U.S. dollar budget for immediate needs in the fight against a cholera outbreak that has so far killed at least 30 people in the capital Harare, a Cabinet minister has said. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

outbreak. Moyo said government interventions followed Mnangagwa's declaration of the outbreak as a state of disaster on Sept. 12.

"Pursuant to this development, our preparedness in terms of geographical coverage is na-

tional while in terms of response more focus will be on the cholera hotspots," he said.

He said in the worst case scenario an estimated 100,000 people, including those in transit, could be affected, but the most likely

scenario was about 50,000.

The worst cholera outbreak to hit the country took place from Aug. 2008 to June 2009 when 98,596 cases of cholera were reported, resulting in 4,369 deaths. —Xinhua ■

Five million children risk famine in war-torn Yemen

SANA'A (Yemen)—More than five million children are threatened by famine in war-torn Yemen as prices soar, a charity said Wednesday, warning an entire generation may face death and "starvation on an unprecedented scale".

The three-year conflict between Yemen's Saudi-backed government and Huthi rebels linked to Iran has pushed the

already impoverished country to the brink of famine, leaving many unable to afford food and water.

"Millions of children don't know when or if their next meal will come," said Helle Thorning-Schmidt, head of Save the Children International.

"This war risks killing an entire generation of Yemen's children who face multiple threats, from bombs to hunger to pre-

ventable diseases like cholera."

The already dire humanitarian situation is being exacerbated by the battle for the lifeline port of Hodeida, which is threatening what little aid is trickling into the country.

"Any disruption to food and fuel supplies coming through Hodeida port could cause starvation on an unprecedented scale," said Save the Children.

Located on Yemen's Red Sea coast, the port city of Hodeida is controlled by the rebels and blockaded by Saudi Arabia and its allies.

At a hospital in Abs, north of Hodeida, skeletal children cried as they were tended to and weighed by doctors and nurses, an AFP photographer reported.

Aid agencies have sounded the alarm over escalating violence between the Huthis and Saudi-led government alliance, which is now edging towards Hodeida after a UN attempt to bring warring parties to the negotiating table this month failed.

"The humanitarian situation is very fragile," David Miliband, head of the New York-based International Rescue Committee, told AFP as he wrapped up a visit to Yemen on Wednesday.

"My takeaway in three days in Yemen is that the humanitarian imperative doesn't just demand better flow of goods and better access for humanitarian workers," said the former British foreign secretary.

"It also demands a cease-fire to allow the peace process to proceed."

'Too weak to cry'

The World Food Programme last year said food had become a "weapon of war" in Yemen, where fighting, cholera and looming famine have created what the UN calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

Having already identified four million children at risk of starvation, Save the Children said an extra one million could now face famine as the Hodeida battle escalates.—AFP ■



Save the Children says disruption to supplies coming through Yemen's embattled Hodeida port has put an extra one million children at risk of starvation, bringing the total to 5.2 million. **PHOTO: AFP**

Palestinian killed in night clashes with Israeli soldiers in southern Gaza

GAZA—A Palestinian boy was shot dead by Israeli soldiers on Wednesday night during clashes between dozens of Palestinian demonstrators and Israeli soldiers in southern Gaza Strip, according to Gaza Health Ministry.

Ashraf al-Qedra, spokesman of the Health Ministry in Gaza, told reporters that Mo'emmen Abu Eyada, 15 years old, was shot in the head by Israeli soldiers' gunfire east of Rafah town near the border with Israel on Wednesday night.

Earlier on Wednesday, al-Qedra said that 13 Palestinians were injured, including five with live gunshots, during evening clashes between Palestinian demonstrators and Israeli soldiers east of the central Gaza Strip town of Deir el-Ballah.

Clashes on the border have been going on recently almost on a daily basis, amid calls of the Gaza-based High Commission of Marches and Breaking the Israeli Siege Imposed on the Coastal Enclave.

Over the past few days, dozens of Palestinian activists formed a unit called the unit of night confusion, which demonstrates every night near the border with Israel. They burn tires and try to cut the barbed wires of the border fence.

Over the past two days, four Palestinian demonstrators were killed and dozens of others injured in the night protests.

The Commission, founded on March 30, has been organizing weekly protests and rallies on the border with Israel every Friday.

The demonstrators demand Israel to end the nearly 12 years of blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip since Hamas movement violently seized control of the enclave in 2007.

Mediation efforts have so far failed to broker a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas-led Gaza factions due to deep differences between the Islamic movement and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah Party.—Xinhua ■

Britain, EU clash over who should give ground on Brexit

SALZBURG (Austria) — British Prime Minister Theresa May clashed with EU leaders on Wednesday over who should make the next move to break the Brexit logjam, as time runs out to get a deal.

EU Council President Donald Tusk opened a crucial summit in the Austrian city of Salzburg with a stark warning that Britain's position on key issues must be "reworked".

He said negotiations on Britain's withdrawal from the European Union, due to take place in March, were reaching a "decisive phase" but said the outcome still remained open.

While welcoming the "positive evolution" of Britain's position on security ties, Tusk said that on the Irish border and post-Brexit trading relations, "the UK's proposals will need to be reworked and further negotiated".

Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz, who hosted the Salzburg summit, added that the EU was "ready to compromise but we also expect that from the UK", calling for May to offer a "step forward". But May said that after she presented her so-called Chequers plan on post-Brexit trade ties this summer, Brussels must also give ground.

"If we are going to achieve a successful conclusion then, just as the UK has evolved its position, the EU will need to evolve its position too," she said.

She told fellow leaders over a summit dinner Wednesday that "we will of course not agree on every detail", but "the onus is now on all of us to get this deal done". She warned however against waiting for a change in heart in London, again rejecting calls in Britain for a re-run of the



"On other issues such as the Irish question, or the framework for economic cooperation, the UK's proposals will need to be reworked and further negotiated," EU Council President Donald Tusk said.
PHOTO: AFP

2016 vote on EU membership.

"The UK will leave on March 29 next year," she said, according to officials.

'Hard border'

EU leaders will meet without May for lunch on Thursday in Salzburg to discuss Brexit.

Officials on both sides of the Channel hope this summit will give new impetus to divorce negotiations ahead of a crunch summit in Brussels on 18 October.

That was originally viewed as the deadline for a deal, but Tusk is planning a last-gasp gathering in mid-November.

A key sticking point in the talks is how to avoid a "hard border" between British-ruled Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic when London leaves the EU single market and customs union. There are fears that

frontier checks would disrupt trade and could undermine the 1998 peace deal on the island.

But Europe is insisting on a fall-back plan, a "backstop", that would keep Northern Ireland in the customs union under EU rules while a future trade relationship is negotiated.

London has rejected this, saying it would create a border in the Irish Sea that threatens its territorial integrity.

Europe's chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier this week indicated a shift in his position, saying any checks between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK could be away from the border. May welcomed his recognition of "the need to find a new solution", and conceded that some checks were already carried out in the Irish Sea, for example on agricultural products.—AFP ■

Mexico marks anniversaries of two deadly quakes

MEXICO CITY — Mexico held memorials and protests Wednesday in memory of the two earthquakes that devastated the country on 19 September one that killed 369 people last year, and another in 1985 that killed more than 10,000.

Raising their fists in the air — the symbol used by rescue workers to call for quiet as they search for signs of life in the rubble — Mexico City residents held a minute of silence for the victims of both quakes.

Then, as it does every year, the sprawling capital of 20 million people held an earthquake drill, preparing for the inevitable next quake in one of the most seismically active regions on Earth.

As the city's deafening earthquake alarms droned out their chilling message — "seismic alert, seismic alert" — some residents broke down in tears.

"The trauma is still there, even though time has passed, even though we know this isn't real," said Ofelia Gomez, 39, a bank teller.

'That enormous building danced'

The 1985 earthquake, which

measured 8.1 in magnitude, left huge swathes of Mexico City in ruins.

In an early morning ceremony, locals paid tribute to victims of one of the worst collapses, the 15-story Nuevo Leon apartment building, where 472 people died.

Former resident Fernando Lopez Padilla, 67, recounted the moment of the quake.

"At 7:19 am, that enormous building started to dance, to break into pieces," he told AFP.

"In a matter of seconds, the whole thing collapsed."

The government was so overwhelmed by the disaster 33 years ago that residents had little choice but to take matters into their own hands.

Thousands of civilian volunteers flooded the streets and tunneled through the rubble of collapsed buildings, frantically searching for survivors.

Many Mexicans say the quake changed the country forever. Political analysts often say the ensuing outrage drove Mexico's transition from a one-party state to a nascent democracy over the next 15 years.—AFP ■



Members of the "Los Topos" (the Moles) rescue team pay homage to the victims of the devastating 1985 earthquake, in Tlatelolco neighbourhood in Mexico City, on 19 September 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**

Brazilian presidential candidates foresee second electoral round

BRASILIA — Brazil's main presidential candidates on Wednesday said the possibility of a second electoral round remains open, following the disclosure of a new poll.

With less than three weeks remaining before the October 7 elections, the Ibope Institute released a new poll of likely voters.

It showed Jair Bolsonaro of the right-wing Social Liber-

al Party (PSL) with 28 percent; followed by Fernando Haddad of the Workers' Party (PT) with 19 percent.

Ciro Gomes, of the Democratic Labor Party (PDT) was third with 11 percent; Geraldo Alckmin of the Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB) with 7 percent and Marina Silva of the Sustainability Network Party had 6 per cent.

Bolsonaro also leads in voter dissatisfaction with 42 percent followed by Haddad at 29 percent, Silva 26 percent, Alckmin 20 percent and Gomes 19 percent.

Gomes said the poll only reflects the sentiment of the moment, and he is continuing to campaign hard.

"The country can no longer take the PT's polarization bomb," he said.

For his part, Alckmin reacted to the poll suggesting that the PT is already assured a spot in a second round.

"I see the candidate's curve (Haddad) is a curve that is moving upward, (Bolsonaro's curve) is not at the top and he will have a tendency to fall," Alckmin said.

Silva said the first round is "to vote for your dream candidate" while looking for the useful

vote. Others consider that it is premature to say the electorate is lining up with the possibility of a contest between Bolsonaro and Haddad. Candidate Alvaro Dias of the Podemos Party, said he would not withdraw from the race in order to support a rival candidate and "will continue until the last minute with his party with the hope of reaching the second round." — Xinhua ■

Two Koreas' leaders in mountain show of unity

SEOUL — Kim Jong Un and Moon Jae-in visited the spiritual birthplace of the Korean nation Thursday for a show of unity after their North-South summit gave new momentum to Pyongyang's negotiations with Washington.

The North Korean leader on Wednesday agreed to shutter the Tongchang-ri missile-testing site in the presence of international observers, a move the US welcomed by saying it was ready for immediate talks aimed at denuclearising the North.

Pyongyang also said it could dismantle its best-known nuclear facility at Yongbyon, if the US takes "corresponding measures", as Kim and the South Korean president held their third summit this year. It is an important caveat, but the declaration appeared to break the logjam in nuclear discussions with Washington.

President Donald Trump welcomed the move, tweeting that Kim had "agreed to allow Nuclear inspections, subject to final negotiations", adding: "Very



Kim Jong Un and Moon Jae-in's latest summit has breathed new momentum into denuclearisation talks.

PHOTO: AFP

exciting!" Secretary of State Mike Pompeo also praised the "important commitments", saying he spoke with his North Korean counterpart and invited him to meet next week on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

Washington was ready to

"engage immediately in negotiations" to achieve the North's denuclearisation of North Korea by January 2021, he added — the end of Trump's first term.

The process had stalled after the historic Singapore summit between Trump and Kim in June, when Kim declared his backing

for denuclearisation of the peninsula but no details were agreed.

Washington and Pyongyang have subsequently sparred over what that means and how it will be achieved, with the Trump administration consistently referring to the denuclearisation of North Korea specifically.

For its part, Pyongyang has condemned demands for its unilateral disarmament as "gangster-like". Experts remain sceptical about the Tongchang-ri pledge, pointing out that Pyongyang has used several other locations for missile launches, repeatedly said it has no need for further testing, and closing the site would have no impact on its ability to manufacture rockets.

Many also believe that apart from Yongbyon, the North also has covert nuclear facilities.

"The North Koreans are offering gestures that mimic disarmament," arms control expert Jeffrey Lewis tweeted. "They don't meaningfully constrain North Korea's nuclear programme."

Their main purpose, he added, was "to appease Trump, so that Moon and Kim can keep their engagement alive".

"This is what an Israel-style deal looks like with North Korea: They pretend to disarm and we pretend to believe it." —AFP ■

Rescuers dig for survivors in new Philippine landslide

MANILA (Philippines) — Rescuers were digging through a landslide that buried at least 10 homes and killed three people in the central Philippines Thursday, as monsoon rains unleashed more misery on the already-battered country.

The new tragedy comes just days after 2018's most powerful storm, Typhoon Mangkhut, raked the nation's north, sparking a separate landslide that left dozens dead. Emergency workers in yellow helmets rushed to the scene of the new disaster in the town of Tina-an on the

popular tourist island of Cebu.

Days of heavy monsoon rains caused a steep slope to collapse and now searchers are frantically looking for survivors.

Rescuers dug through debris and thick mud at the site of the slide. Injured survivors were wheeled into the back of ambulances and the dead were laid on pews at a local church.

"We have recovered three bodies. The others sustained minor injuries and we have taken them to hospital," civil defence spokesman Julius Regner told reporters. "The rescue effort

continues. There (were) about 10-15 houses or households in the area."

Civil defence officials in the region said landslides are fairly rare on Cebu, an elongated island with low hills.

As Thursday's rescue unfolded, efforts continued in the hunt for bodies in the mining area of Itogon in the mountainous north of the Philippines, which was the area worst hit by the typhoon. Most of 81 killed in the storm died in landslides in the Cordillera range, which includes Itogon and other mining towns in a region known for gold mining. Mangkhut swamped fields in the nation's agricultural north and smashed houses when it tore through at the weekend.

Itogon is one of the country's oldest mining hubs, with known gold panning activity stretching back to before the 17th-century Spanish colonial conquest. Thousands of people from all over the country still flock to the upland town seeking their fortune in largely unregulated mining, which is accompanied by periodic deadly accidents. —AFP ■



Rescuers search for survivors at the site of a landslide in Naga City, on the popular tourist island of Cebu. PHOTO: AFP

Japan's tech-hungry firms seeking help from Indian IT startups

BENGALURU (India) — Technology-hungry Japanese firms are being matched with startups in India as Japan looks to innovation to revitalize its fast-aging population and mature industrialized economy.

Next month, Indian startups will participate in the "1st Well Aging Society Summit Asia-Japan" in Tokyo, an international conference where large companies, startups, investors and government officials will discuss global healthcare issues.

In February next year, a Japanese Internet of Things mission will visit the southern Indian city of Bengaluru, known as India's technology capital, to explore possible collaboration.

"Two Indian startups are invited to attend the 1st Well Aging Society Summit Asia-Japan to be held on 9 October," said Yutaka Endo, director of the Bengaluru office of the Japan External Trade Organization, during a networking seminar on the Japan-India Startup Hub this week. "Also in early February next year, an IoT mission from Japan will visit Ben-

galuru." The Japan-India Startup Hub was established in Bengaluru in May to serve as a platform for promoting information exchange, business collaboration and investment between the two countries, a result of last year's joint declaration by the Japanese and Indian prime ministers.

Japan is trying to boost its manufacturing sector by adopting innovative and emerging technologies, but a dearth of well-trained IT professionals is making the task difficult, JETRO said.

"Many Japanese companies feel the limitations to conventional in-house innovation, which is a thing of the past, and hence moving towards most-advanced IT capabilities for which India is the ideal partner to look out for," JETRO said in a statement.

"The startup hub will act like a platform to serve and facilitate this objective of co-creation and co-innovation."

Tokyo also plans to introduce a one-year startup visa program as part of its economic stimulus package to promote foreign direct investment. —Kyodo News ■

Melting permafrost threatens climate rescue plan

PARIS — Global targets aimed at warding off runaway planetary warming could be breached sooner than expected, experts warned on Monday, as gases released by melting permafrost threaten to undermine human efforts to avert climate disaster.

Under the current rescue plan, outlined in the 2015 Paris climate treaty, countries have agreed to limit global temperature rises to “well below” two degrees Celsius, and 1.5°C if deemed possible.

That course of action assumes that dealing with manmade greenhouse gases — whether by slowing their emissions or removing them from the atmosphere — will be enough to bring global warming under control.

What climate models



Methane and CO₂ trapped in the frozen wastes of Russia, Canada and northern Europe are roughly equivalent to 15 years of manmade emissions. **PHOTO: AFP**

do not allow for are scenarios in which Earth begins to contribute to the problem, new research shows.

A team of experts from the International Institute for Applied Systems

Analysis in Austria said on Monday they had for the first time included projected emissions from melting permafrost in global climate change models, and the results prompted concern.

“Permafrost carbon release is caused by global warming, and will certainly diminish the budget of CO₂ we can emit while staying below a certain level of global warming,” said IIA-SA research scholar and

lead study author Thomas Gasser.

As reliance on fossil fuels persists, scientists have calculated that we are likely to “overshoot” the Paris temperature targets in the short to medium term. With only 1°C of warming above pre-industrial levels so far, the world’s permafrost is already thawing, albeit slowly.

But the rate of that melting is sure to accelerate as Earth continues to heat up.

Gasser warned that the overshoot scenario would leave the planet

even more vulnerable to permafrost emissions and, in a vicious feedback loop, even more warming.

In fact, under some models run in the study, published in the journal *Nature Geoscience*, we have already missed the 1.5°C target as a result of permafrost emissions.

“Overshooting is a risky strategy, and getting back to lower levels after overshooting will be extremely difficult,” Gasser told AFP. “We have to prepare ourselves for the possibility that we may never get back to safer levels of warming.” —AFP ■

Germany rolls out world’s first hydrogen train

BERLIN — Germany on Monday rolled out the world’s first hydrogen-powered train, signalling the start of a push to challenge the might of polluting diesel trains with costlier but more eco-friendly technology.

Two bright blue Coradia iLint trains, built by French TGV-maker Alstom, began running a 100-kilometre (62-mile) route between the towns and cities of Cuxhaven, Bremerhaven, Bremervorde and Buxtehude in

northern Germany — a stretch normally plied by diesel trains.

“The world’s first hydrogen train is entering into commercial service and is ready for serial production,” Alstom CEO Henri Poupart-Lafarge said at an unveiling ceremony in Bremervorde, the station where the trains will be refuelled with hydrogen. Alstom has said it plans to deliver another 14 of the zero-emissions trains to Lower Saxony state by 2021, with other German

states also expressing an interest. Hydrogen trains are equipped with fuel cells that produce electricity through a combination of hydrogen and oxygen, a process that leaves steam and water as the only emissions. Excess energy is stored in ion lithium batteries on board the train. The Coradia iLint trains can run for around 1,000 kilometres on a single tank of hydrogen, similar to the range of diesel trains.

Alstom is betting on the technology as a green-

er, quieter alternative to diesel on non-electrified railway lines — an attractive prospect to many German cities scrambling to combat air pollution. “Sure, buying a hydrogen train is somewhat more expensive than a diesel train, but it is cheaper to run,” Stefan Schrank, the project’s manager at Alstom, told AFP. Other countries are also looking into hydrogen trains, Alstom said, including Britain, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Italy and Canada.—AFP ■

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Dated **21 September 2018**

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M.V MCC DHAKA VOY. NO. (1813/1814)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MCC DHAKA VOY. NO. (1813/1814) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21-9-2018 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 MCC TRANSPORT
(S’PORE) PTE LTD**

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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.

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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING
LINE**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V UNI ANGEL VOY. NO. (0259-480W/E)

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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.

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Arthur Mitchell, trail-blazing black American ballet dancer, dead at 84

NEW YORK—Arthur Mitchell, a pioneering black American ballet dancer, died Wednesday at the age of 84, the Dance Theatre of Harlem troupe which he co-founded announced.

Born and raised in New York's Harlem, Mitchell joined the New York City Ballet in 1955, after being spotted in the Truman Capote musical "House of Flowers." In an interview with the New York Times in January, he recalled the often hostile reactions from audiences when he was given his first starring role in the 1955-56 season. "There happened to be a bald-headed guy sit-

ting right behind the conductor," he told local news channel Fox5 in a February interview. "He said: 'My god! They've got a nigger in the company!'"

"By the end, I got a standing ovation," he said, smiling. "I danced myself into their hearts."

In 1957, he was offered the principal role in "Agon" by the Russian-origin dancer and choreographer George Balanchine, where he would perform opposite white dancer Diana Adams—unheard of at the time.

"Everybody was against him," Mitchell said in his New York Times interview about Bal-



A supporter of the civil rights movement, Mitchell co-founded the Dance Theater of Harlem in 1969 along with Karel Shook. **PHOTO: AFP**

anchine. "He knew what he was going against, and he said, 'You know my dear, this has got to be perfect.'"

Blessed with a natural elegance and plenty of charisma to boot, Mitchell eschewed media attention for many years and refused

to be typecast as the first black dancer to find a place in the upper echelons of the traditionally white, upper-class art form.—AFP ■

Millennium fortune: Han Solo jacket up for auction in London

LONDON — The jacket worn by loveable Star Wars scoundrel Han Solo in "The Empire Strikes Back" as well as Indiana Jones's signature fedora are among rare movie memorabilia going under the hammer in London on Thursday. More than 600 costumes and props from much-adored films and television series, including Marty McFly's hoverboard in "Back To The Future Part II", are being auctioned by Prop Store at the BFI IMAX complex.

The film memorabilia seller has held the annual auction since 2014, and expects this year's collection to fetch a record £3.5 million (\$4.6 million, 3.9 million euros).

The big-ticket item is the jacket worn by actor Harrison Ford as smuggler Solo to dodge asteroids and shoot at Darth Vader in "Star Wars Episode V: The

Empire Strikes Back".

It is expected to be the highest-selling lot and fetch up to £1 million in the sale, which gets underway at 1100 GMT.

"It is a relatively simple jacket," said Brandon Alinger, Prop Store's chief operating officer, explaining how "Star Wars" creator George Lucas wanted workaday-looking clothes rather than flashy costumes that might distract attention.

"There's some very cool stylised elements, like this triple-stitch banding on the sleeves."

Alinger noted the jacket's grey colour, explaining how getting clothes to appear the correct shade of blue on film can be difficult.

"This colour hasn't changed. This is exactly what the colour is for 'The Empire Strikes Back'."

Meanwhile Ford's fedora

hat in the Indiana Jones franchise debut "Raiders of the Lost Ark", and his bullwhip from 1984's "The Temple of Doom" are also featured. Signed by Ford on the inner sweatband, the rabbit-felt hat is set to sell for up to £300,000.

The fedora was "sat upon, wrung repeatedly and treated with bleach and dust" ahead of filming to achieve a worn look, according to the auction catalogue.

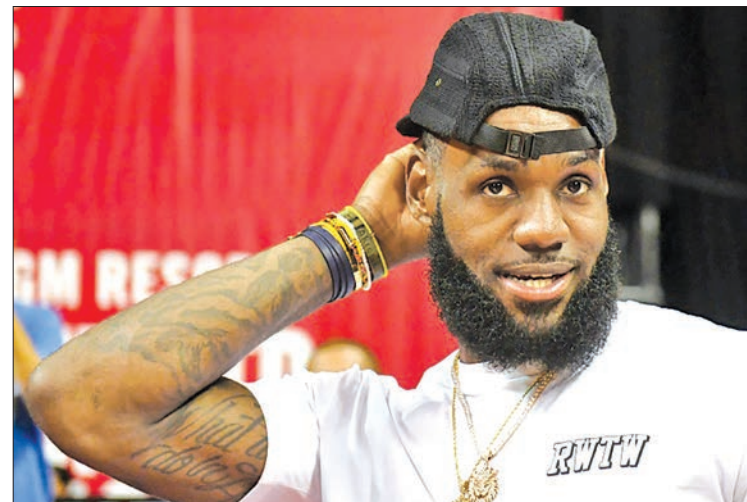
Another hot item is the hoverboard ridden by actor Michael J. Fox's character Marty McFly in the "Back to the Future" trilogy.

The board, expected to fetch £30,000 to £50,000, "is outfitted with neon-green and pink-coloured Velcro on top, and includes a furry pink foot strap," the catalogue says. For potential buyers on a lower budget, a piece of the Death Star from the "Star Wars" saga is listed at £1,000.

Items from the "James Bond", "The Godfather", "Harry Potter", "Batman", "Aliens", "Star Trek", "Blade", "Tomb Raider" and "Men in Black" series are also up for grabs.

Other classic movie items available include the robe worn by Brad Pitt's Tyler Durden character in "Fight Club", a Wonka bar from "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" and Johnny Depp's unique costume in "Edward Scissorhands".

Prop Store acquires its wares from movie studios, crew members and other collectors around the world.—AFP ■



Basketball superstar LeBron James—shown here at an NBA Summer League game between his Los Angeles Lakers and the Detroit Pistons in Las Vegas in July—is finally working to make "Space Jam 2" a reality. **PHOTO: AFP**

LeBron teams with 'Black Panther' director for 'Space Jam 2'

LOS ANGELES—Two months ago, basketball superstar LeBron James joined the Los Angeles Lakers. Now, he's taking on Hollywood in a big way.

The long-awaited sequel to "Space Jam"—the 1996 live action-animated film starring NBA legends Michael Jordan, Larry Bird, Charles Barkley and Patrick Ewing—is finally moving forward. King James's production company, SpringHill Entertainment, on Wednesday tweeted an image of a locker room featuring the names of James, "Black Panther" director Ryan Coogler as the producer and... Bugs Bunny himself as point guard. "I loved his vision" for "Black Panther," James said of Coogler to *The Hollywood Reporter*.

Independent filmmaker Terence Nance—the creator of

HBO's quirky comedy "Random Acts of Flyness"—is tapped to direct the film for Warner Brothers.

The original film featured the Looney Tunes characters—Bugs, Daffy Duck and friends—who recruit Jordan to help them win a basketball game against the Monstars, a team of animated alien villains who steal the talents of other NBA icons. "Space Jam 2" has long been rumored, but Wednesday's tweet made it clear the project is a go. This is not the first time that James, who signed with the Lakers in July, has dipped his toe into the acting world, but this would be his first starring role.

He made a well-received supporting turn in Amy Schumer's "Trainwreck" (2015) and has a voice role in Warner Brothers' animated feature "Smallfoot," which hits US theaters this week.—AFP ■



Han Solo's jacket from "The Empire Strikes Back" is expected to fetch up to £1 million at Thursday's auction. **PHOTO: AFP**

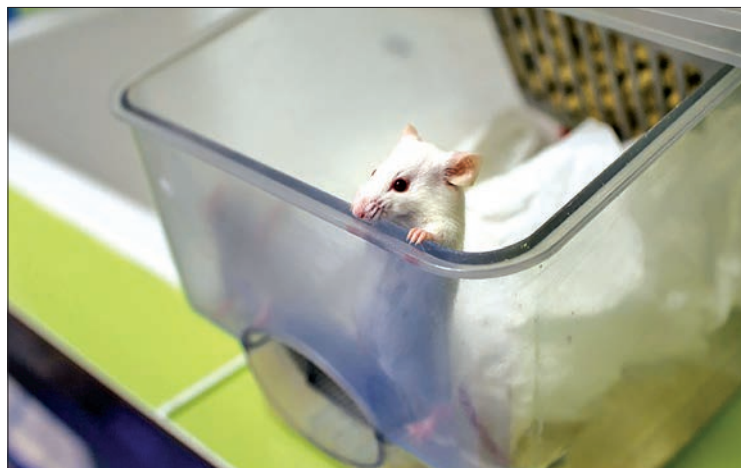
Removing 'zombie' cells deters Alzheimer's in mice

PARIS—Eliminating dead-but-toxic cells occurring naturally in the brains of mice designed to mimic Alzheimer's slowed neuron damage and memory loss associated with the disease, according to a study published Wednesday that could open a new front in the fight against dementia. The accumulation in the body of "zombie cells" that can no longer divide but still cause harm to other healthy cells, a process called senescence, is common to all mammals. Scientists have long known that these dead-beat cells gather in regions of the brain linked to old age diseases ranging from osteoarthritis and atherosclerosis to Parkinson's and dementia. Prior research had also shown that the elimination of senescent cells in ageing mice extended their healthy lifespan.

But the new results, published in *Nature*, are the first to demonstrate a cause-and-effect link with a specific disease, Alzheimer's, the scientists said.

But any treatments that might emerge from the research are many years down the road, they cautioned.

In experiments, a team led



A new study is the first to demonstrate a cause-and effect link between removing "zombie cells" in a mouse's brain and a specific disease, Alzheimer's. **PHOTO: AFP**

by Tyler Bussian of the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota used mice genetically modified to produce the destructive, cobweb-like tangles of tau protein that form in the neurons of Alzheimer's patients. The mice were also programmed to allow for the elimination of "zombie" cells in the same region.

"When senescent cells were removed, we found that the diseased animals retained the ability to form memories, and eliminated signs of inflammation," said senior author Darren Baker, also from the Mayo Clinic. The mice likewise

failed to develop Alzheimer's signature protein "tangles", and retained normal brain mass.

Keeping zombies at bay

A closer look revealed that the "zombies" belonged to a class of cells in the brain and spinal cord, called glia, that provide crucial support and insulation to neurons. "Preventing the build-up of senescent glia can block the cognitive decline and neuro-degeneration normally experienced by these mice," Jay Penney and Li-Huei Tsai, both from MIT, wrote in a comment, also in *Nature*.—AFP ■

China launches twin BeiDou-3 satellites

XICHANG—China on Wednesday evening successfully sent twin BeiDou-3 navigation satellites into space on a single carrier rocket.

The Long March-3B carrier rocket lifted off from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center at 10:07 p.m. It was the 285th mission of the Long March rocket series.

The twin satellites are the 37th and 38th editions of the BeiDou

navigation system. After a series of tests and evaluations, they will work together with 12 BeiDou-3 satellites already in orbit.

The twin satellites will provide danger alerts and navigation services for global users. A basic system with 18 orbiting BeiDou-3 satellites will be in place by the end of the year, which will serve countries participating in the Belt and Road

Initiative.

The satellites and the rocket for Wednesday's launch were developed by the China Academy of Space Technology and the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology, respectively.

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



China sends twin BeiDou-3 navigation satellites into space on a single carrier rocket from Xichang Satellite Launch Center in Xichang, southwest China's Sichuan Province on 19 September 2018. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Self-flying glider 'learns' to soar like a bird

PARIS—Scientists have created a self-flying glider that uses machine learning to navigate rising air currents, in an experiment that could help our understanding of how birds migrate.

Soaring birds ride warm air passages known as thermals to fly and gain height without needing to flap their wings, although no one knows exactly how they do it.

To gain insight into what cues birds instinctively use to catch an updraft, researchers from the University of California San Diego equipped a pilotless glider with an on-board computer allowing it to change direction on the basis of real-time meas-

to catch the warm updrafts.

"We find it very impressive as the glider had no prior knowledge about atmospheric physics or aerodynamics," Massimo Vergassola, lead study author, told AFP.

Whereas several other studies have shown how fast machines can learn strategies or form algorithms to solve complex problems, thermal updrafts change nearly constantly, making the gliders' task extra taxing.

By studying how the glider learned to respond to physical stimulus in flight, Vergassola and his colleagues believe that birds might also take certain physical and visual clues to help them

The East-Asian Australasian Flyway

The migratory zone connects northern Siberia and Alaska with tropical Asia, Australia and southern New Zealand

EAAF

Range for an estimated 50 million waterbirds

Total waterbird species: 349

Waterbird species dependent on intertidal flats: 155

Globally threatened species: 24

35 shorebird species fly to Australia from breeding sites in the Russian and Alaskan arctic on their annual journey

AFP Photo/Chris Purnell/Birdlife Australia



Bar-tailed Godwit

Est. population: Between 1.06-1.11 million

Around 325,000 occupy the EAAF

Status: Near threatened

Source: EAAFlyway.net/IUCN/Birdlife International/Australian government*

© AFP

A bird migration zone links Siberia with tropical Asia and Australia for waterbirds including the Godwit whose flying skills have been compared to a new self-flying glider which uses machine learning. **PHOTO: AFP**

urements.

To help navigate the ever-changing environment, they used machine learning—the glider, which has a wingspan of two metres (six feet), in effect teaches itself how to fly by evaluating each variation in air currents and receiving a reward for every "correct" decision that resulted in increased altitude.

In a study published Wednesday in the journal *Nature*, the team reported that after just 15 hours of test flights, the glider had "learned" how to optimise its position and developed a strategy

climb thermals, saving vital energy needed for long migrations.

Species such as the bar-tailed godwit and shorebird, that can fly upward of 11,500 kilometres (7,145 miles) without stopping, would not be able to do so without these skills.

"The (glider's) strategy shows quite good performance in ever-changing aerial environments," Vergassola said.

"We believe that soaring birds could in fact perform more complex planning computations or use additional navigational cues, such as clouds."—AFP ■



Aung La N Sang to defend his middleweight title against Mohammad Karaki

BURMESE Python Aung La N Sang will defend his middleweight title next month against Lebanese fighter Mohammad “O Lutador” Karaki at ONE: Pursuit of Greatness at the Thuwunna Indoor Stadium, Yangon.

Event organizers confirmed the bout between N Sang and Karaki for October 26.

Aung La N Sang, 33, currently holds two-division titles of ONE World Championship, middleweight and light heavyweight, and Mohammad Karaki, 27, of Lebanon is the latest undefeated mixed martial artist to join the roster of ONE Championship.

On his mixed martial arts (MMA) profession, Karaki recorded 9 wins with no loss. Phoenix Middleweight Champion Karaki is considered one of the greatest MMA fighters in the Middle East, according to *Conan Daily*.

Karaki posted on his Facebook: “Yes its ON! Heading to my biggest dreams coming true, fighting for the middleweight world title @onechampionship. The biggest fight of my career will be against the world Bur-

mese undefeated champion on the 26th of October in Myanmar. I proudly will be representing my home country Lebanon.”

Aung La N Sang currently has 23 wins and 10 losses and is famous for his impressive submission skills.

Aung La N Sang posted on his Facebook: “ONE Championship is back in Yangon on Oct 26th, 2018 at the Thuwanna Stadium! My 10th fight for One Championship is official, and I am excited to compete against an undefeated champion from Lebanon. I’m training hard and taking this match very seriously. Thank you for your love and support.”

In ONE Championship, there are ten divisions for men, of which Aung La N Sang is one of two two-division titleholders. He holds the titles of middleweight and light heavyweight divisions, while Martin Nguyen from Australia holds the titles of lightweight and featherweight divisions. The remaining six titles for men at ONE Championship are held by six different players.—K. Banana ■

50 athletes from Botswana preparing for Special Olympics

GABORONE—Fifty athletes with intellectual disability in Botswana are busy preparing for the Special Olympics World Summer Games in Abu Dhabi in March 2019.

Botswana performed well in the previous games held in Los Angeles with 6 gold, 4 silver and 10 bronze medals.

From Sept. 17, the athletes are taking a week-long intense preparation in Maun, in the northwestern part of the country.

They will compete in volleyball, football and swimming.—Xinhua ■

Ronaldo controversially sent off, Lyon stun Man City

PARIS—Juventus kicked off their Champions League campaign with a 2-0 victory at Valencia in a match overshadowed by a controversial red card for Cristiano Ronaldo, while tournament favourites Manchester City were stunned at home by Lyon on Wednesday. Ronaldo’s Champions League debut for Juventus lasted less than half an hour as the Portuguese star was red-carded after a collision with Valencia defender Jeison Murillo.

After tangling with Ronaldo, Colombian Murillo tumbled to the ground holding his face, and referee Felix Brych consulted with the assistant official beside the goal before giving the competition’s all-time record goalscorer his marching orders.

“The only thing I can say is that VAR could have helped the referee make the right decision,” said Juve coach Massimiliano Allegri, lamenting the lack of video technology in UEFA tournaments.

“It is very disappointing, we almost lost because of that and we will be without Ronaldo for the next (game).”

But Juventus, who had totally dominated until Ronaldo’s dismissal, were awarded two penalties within six minutes either side of half-time, and Miralem Pjanic confidently dispatched them both.

The Italian champions defended well thereafter to keep the hosts at arm’s length, although Juve goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny did save a Daniel Parejo

spot-kick in the final minute of injury-time.

Manchester United top the early Group H table, though, after continuing their recent upturn in form by brushing aside Young Boys 3-0 in Bern to notch a third straight win in all competitions.

Jose Mourinho’s men were inspired by Paul Pogba on the artificial pitch, as the French World Cup winner drilled home a brilliant opener before converting a penalty on the stroke of half-time, and setting up Anthony Martial for the third.

City downed by vibrant Lyon

But English champions Manchester City struggled, with Pep Guardiola watching from the stands after a touchline ban, and were beaten 2-1 by French side Lyon at the Etihad Stadium after an error-strewn display.

City, the bookmakers’ favourites for the title this term, suffered a nightmare first half against an enterprising Lyon, with Maxwel Cornet sweeping in after a mistake by Fabian Delph, and Nabil Fekir drilling home before half-time.

The introduction of Sergio Aguero as a substitute revitalised City after the break, and Bernardo Silva turned in Leroy Sane’s cutback with 23 minutes still to play. But Lyon, who have only won two of their first five Ligue 1 matches this

term, held on to clinch a famous victory and ease the pressure on coach Bruno Genesio. — AFP ■



Ronaldo was consoled by his teammates after being sent off in the first half of his Champions League debut for Juve.

PHOTO: AFP