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# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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## Depreciation of Myanmar Kyat

Analyzing the depreciation of Myanmar Kyat, although it started with the external impacts, the domestic factors that include, but are not limited to, weak economic fundamentals and structural issues have significant impacts on the exchange rate. Looking at trade, the trade deficit was US\$3.8 billion in 2017-18 and it is actually lower than previous years.

In 2016-2017, trade deficit was US\$5.2 billion and it was US\$5.4 billion in 2015-2016. It is evident that these deficits have had a lot of pressure on the domestic currency.

Second, changes in seasonal foreign currency demands have also had impacts on the exchange rate. Especially during the period from July to December, demands for foreign currency had been usually high.

In order to reduce the trade deficit, to strengthen the domestic economy and to be resilient, and to withstand various impacts, the Union government has been going through various reform processes in cooperation with the private sector stakeholders.

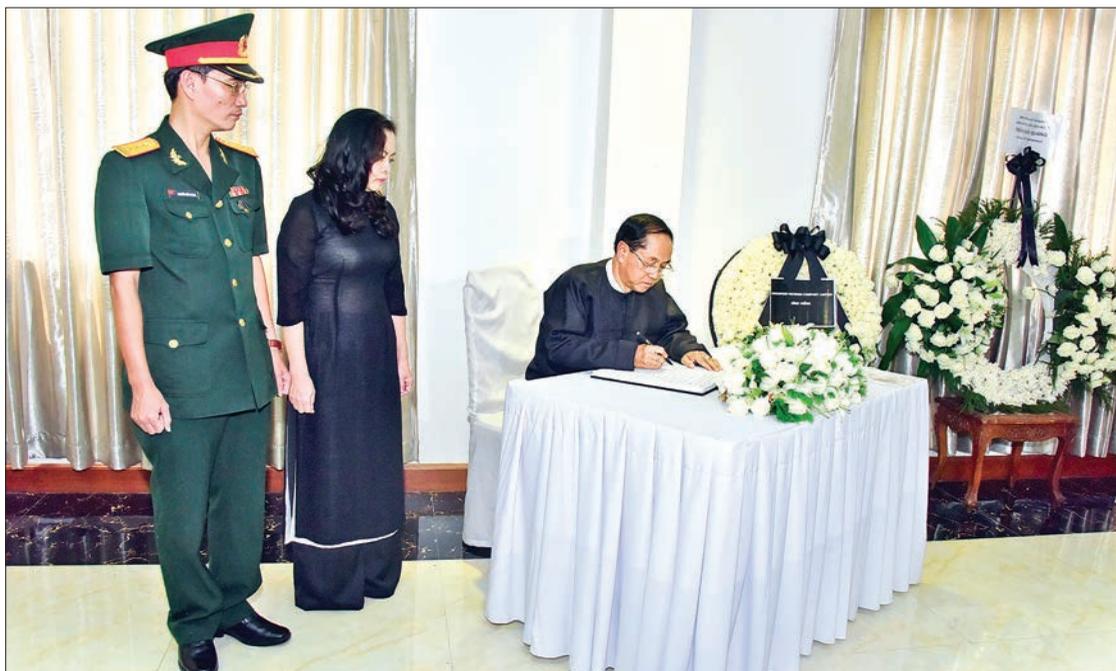
(Excerpt from the report on the current work of the Union government, delivered at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 19 September 2018)

## Vice President U Myint Swe signs book of condolences for President of Viet Nam

VICE President U Myint Swe signed the book of condolences for Socialist Republic of Viet Nam President, Politburo permanent member Mr. Tran Dai Quang at the embassy of Viet Nam in Yangon yesterday.

President Mr. Tran Dai Quang passed away at Hanoi hospital on 21 September due to a serious illness. He was elected President in 2016 and was 61 when he passed away.

In honor of President Mr. Tran Dai Quang, Viet Nam embassy in Myanmar had designated September 26 and 27 as mourning period, and a book of condolences will be opened for those who wish to sign in it, it is learnt. —MNA ■



Vice President U Myint Swe signs the book of condolences for Vietnamese President Mr. Tran Dai Quang in Yangon yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

## Myanmar signs Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

H.E. U Kyaw Tin, Union Minister for International Cooperation of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, attending the 73<sup>rd</sup> United Nations General Assembly, signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, at the High-Level ceremony on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, on 26 September 2018, during the United Nations Treaty Event 2018.

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Union Minister U Kyaw Tin signs the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons during the 73<sup>rd</sup> United Nations General Assembly. **PHOTO: MNA**

## Myanmar signs Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

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The High-Level ceremony was held in conjunction with International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. Together with the Union Minister, high ranking officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the United Nations were also present at the event.

The ceremony was also at-

tended by the President of the 73<sup>rd</sup> United Nations General Assembly H.E. Ms. Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garces, Chairman of the International Committee of the Red Cross Mr. Peter Maurer, Under Secretary and High Representative for Disarmament Ms. Izumli Nakamitsu, Executive Director of International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapon (ICAN) Ms. Beatrice Fihn, Under Secretary General of United

Nations Office of Legal Affairs Miguel de Serpa Soares and Chief of Treaty Section Mr. Santiago Villapando.

Myanmar has now become the 61<sup>st</sup> signatory to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Together with Myanmar, Antigua and Barbuda, Benin, Brunei Darussalam, Guinea-Bissau, Seychelles and Timor-Leste also signed the Treaty at the event.—MNA ■

## 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of National League for Democracy marked in Yangon



NLD central executive committee secretariat member U Nyan Win delivers the opening speech at the ceremony to mark the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National League for Democracy. **PHOTO: ZAW GYI**

THE 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the National League for Democracy was held at the headquarters of the National League for Democracy, Bahan Township, in Yangon at 10am yesterday.

During the ceremony, the Flag of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar was saluted, followed by an observance of eight seconds of silence as a memory to the fallen General Aung San and Arzarni (martyr) leaders, and monks, students and others who fell in the various Democracy Uprisings.

U Nyan Win, central executive committee secretariat member of the National League for Democracy, remarked, “We need to evaluate the current situation of the country with dignity and poise and come together with collective strength in finding ways to practically implement fundamental changes and transitions. We have leadership capability as seen in the processes and experiences that we’ve gone through bravely. All of the challenges should be met with responsibility than fear. The value of greatness is responsibility.”

Then, U Thein Oo, central executive committee member of the National League for Democracy, read a statement regarding the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the National League for Democracy, and put on record messages sent to the ceremony.

U Tin Oo, patron of the National League for Democracy, member of chairmen group U Ohn Kyaing, members of central executive committee, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun and Yangon Region Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Lin Naing Myint, regional ministers, Hluttaw representatives, veteran politicians, diplomats, responsible officials from other political parties, members of National League for Democracy and invited guests were presented at the ceremony.

It was reported that the National League for Democracy issued a six-point statement at yesterday’s ceremony.—Zaw Gyi ■

## Union Minister signs book of condolences for President of Viet Nam



Union Minister U Thaung Tun signs the book of condolences for the President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam Mr. Tran Dai Quang in Ha Noi. **PHOTO: MNA**

AS a Representative of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, U Thaung Tun, Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government, attended the Respect-Paying Ceremony to H.E. Mr. Tran Dai

Quang, the late President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, held at the National Funeral Hall in Ha Noi on 26 September 2018 at local time 14:10 hrs and signed in the Condolences Book.—MNA ■

## Union Minister U Kyaw Tin calls for adjusting TB elimination efforts, investment

UNION Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin has called for adjusting efforts for elimination of TB and investment in the drive globally.

His remarks came at the UN High-Level Meeting on the Fight Against TB, held under the theme “United to End Tuberculosis: An Urgent Global Response to a Global Epidemic”, on 26 September at the UN Headquarters in New York.

The Union Minister is in New York and is attending the 73<sup>rd</sup> UN General Assembly.

It is encouraging to see that the number of TB cases is downward globally, but it is painful to see millions of people in the world are suffering TB which is preventable and curable, said the Union Minister.

It is found that the number of TB cases is high in developing countries, causing a challenge for the sustainable development. Union Minister U Kyaw Tin also called for

promoting research and development and funding the TB elimination drive worldwide, in attempts to provide effective and affordable access to TB test and treatment to the people

U Kyaw Tin said Myanmar has pledged to bring down the number of TB patients who remain to be given treatment, as the country has reached to modern test for TB and drug-resistant TB.

Myanmar is implementing its National Strategic Plan (2016-2020) to end the tuberculosis epidemic as part of its commitment. The Union Minister called for practicing ASEAN and global-level means and ways to control and to fight the infectious disease.

“Myanmar is seeking ways to boost the local and foreign investment and to establish a multi-sectoral accountability framework-for TB,” said Union Minister U Kyaw Tin.—MNA ■

# Vice President U Henry Van Thio addresses World Tourism Day 2018 ceremony

VICE President U Henry Van Thio, Chairman of the Central Committee for the Development of National Tourism Industry, delivered an address at the World Tourism Day – 2018 ceremony held at Thingaha Hotel, Nay Pyi Taw hotel zone, yesterday morning.

The ceremony was attended by Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Thura U Aung Ko, U Thant Sin Maung, U Ohn Win, U Thein Swe, Dr. Myint Htwe, U Ohn Maung, Deputy Minister U Min Thu, senior departmental officials, representatives of UN organizations, diplomats, representatives of development partners, executives from travel businesses, specially invited guests and officials.

In his opening address, Vice President U Henry Van Thio said since the time Myanmar re-entered as a member of World Tourism Organization in 2012, the World Tourism Day has been commemorated and this is the seventh time it was being held.

Every year on 27 September, World Tourism Day is commemorated in member countries of the World Tourism Organization with the aim of increasing understanding on how tourism supports the long term development of a country. Therefore, conducting this ceremony can be taken as a practical way which has full potential to promote knowledge and insights on sustainable development of the country's tourism.

Tourism is a business that everyone is involved in and is a business that is developing rapidly in the world. In the world today, tourism business is creating job opportunities not only in developing countries but in developed countries as well, and is a source that provides huge revenue to a country. Development of the tourism business is also effective for socio-economic development and poverty reduction work processes. It can be seen that with the advancement of technology in the world today, for attracting travellers and implementing travel tours it can be observed that digital technology is being used over traditional methods. That is why the World Tourism Organization is urging the usage of digital technology and innovation in tourism business to overcome the challenges



Vice President U Henry Van Thio delivers the speech at the ceremony to mark World Tourism Day 2018 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

and achieve sustainable development.

The World Tourism Day – 2018 is held with a theme “Tourism and the Digital Transformation.” The World Tourism Organization is learnt to consider digital technology in the tourism sector as the main factor in supporting preparing of future works and innovation.

As per figures released by World Tourism Organization in 2017, there were about 1,323 million travellers in the world which is an increase of more than 84 million compared to the previous year. 2017 saw the highest number of travellers going to Europe and Africa. Due to the increase in numbers of arrivals, income from the tourism sector increased to US\$ 1.6 trillion and it contributed 7 percent of the world's export sector.

For 2018, it is estimated that worldwide, there will be an increase of 6 percent over last year. In Southeast Asia the increase is estimated to be 10 percent. By 2020, there will be about 1.6 billion travellers in the world and of those about 123 million is expected to come to Asian countries so the prospect for the travel business sector is heading towards a better future.

Looking at the Myanmar tourism sector, international tourist arrivals was 3.4 million in 2017 and as of July 2018 tourist arrivals stand at 1.93 million. The tourism sector plays a main role in the country's development and it needs to be in line with development of transport, basic infrastructure and financial management sectors so efforts should be exerted towards department and sector wise development.

Even though there are many challenges for development of the Myanmar tourism sector, by

conducting Sustainable Tourism, Responsible Tourism and Pro Poor Tourism, jobs are created and related works are developed, supporting the increase in the country's revenue. All need to plan ahead to maintain the development momentum of the Myanmar tourism sector and to share the benefits obtained from it with all the nationals.

Relevant state/region governments should work in close coordination and cooperation for more travellers to visit Myanmar, convenient arrangements made for ease of travel to the travel destinations, relaxing entry/exit restrictions and requirements, increase travel product state/region wise and arrange for year-round visit, developing community based travel, creating new travel destinations and to develop local travel businesses.

Due to one-sided and exaggerated reports on Rakhine issue by media, Myanmar witnessed decrease in tourist arrivals. Tourist arrivals from Europe and Australia dropped 2 per cent.

It was observed that efforts were made towards increasing visitors to Asia and Southeast Asia countries that has high market potential. On the other hand, it is required to spread actual true news to western countries. As travel business has a fragile nature, systematic preparation and arrangement need to be made to respond immediately to anything that could affect it. In doing this it is especially required for the government and the private sector to establish and implement joint strategies.

World travellers are to be informed through news media, inviting travel writers, distributing pamphlets, conducting study tours, participating in travel shows and international travel

shows that they can visit without any dangers to peace and stability of the tourism destinations. Digital promotion systems that are cost effective and could be organized in a short time frame need to be conducted increasingly.

The State is planning to relax entry visas to ASEAN+3 countries to redevelop the travel business and is taking steps to coordinate with relevant ministries. In the same way relaxing visa requirements to western countries that have potential will also be considered.

During September, a new brand for Myanmar travel business “Myanmar: Be Enchanted” was launched in Japan at the travel show held in Tokyo, Japan. The Myanmar travel business will take an upward trend as it is also learnt that groups were formed to conduct market wise promotion to increase visitors from Japan, South Korea, China, ASEAN countries and European countries.

The travel business is a business that can develop the socio-economic development of all the nationals in the country in a short time with very little investment, and it also raises the image of the country. Therefore, for the systematic and sustainable development of the travel business that supports the economic development of Myanmar, not only the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism but all stakeholders need to work together.

The Vice President then urged all entrepreneurs in the travel sector to use innovation to create new travel products, transform and raise the travel business using digital technologies, and work together.

Next video messages of UNWTO (United Nations World

Tourism Organisation) Secretary General Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili and UN Secretary General were shown and an official explained about the new brand of Myanmar travel business “Myanmar: Be Enchanted.”

Afterwards, winners of university and college level essay competition, winners of debate, winner of best performing hotel awards, best service award, winning travel companies and best public toilet award winners were presented with awards by Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Thura U Aung Ko, U Thant Sin Maung, U Thein Swe and U Ohn Win, respectively.

Officials from a travel booth representing Myanmar in the 33<sup>rd</sup> Korea World Travel Fair-2018 that won the Best Booth Operation Award and a travel booth representing Myanmar in the 21<sup>st</sup> Busan International Tourism Expo that won the Best Tourism Publicity Award then handed over the awards they received to Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung accepted the awards and presented certificates of honor to first prize winners who won it under the title, “Action Plan for Capacity Building of Shan Plateau, Myanmar (2020-2023)” at the 2018 Knowledge Sharing Seminar on Sustainable Tourism Development.

Following this, Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe presented certificates of honor to winners of Medallion for Excellence – Restaurant Service at 12<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Skills Competition. Later, the Vice President, Union Ministers and guests posed for a commemorative group photo, inspected the show rooms, award winning essays and photographs exhibited. — MNA ■

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

**DEPUTY CHIEF EDITOR**

Aye Min Soe

dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

**SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT**

Kyaw Myaing

**SENIOR TRANSLATORS**

Zaw Min,

zawmin.gnlm@gmail.com

Win Ko Ko Aung,

kowink2aung@gmail.com

**INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITOR**

Ye Htut Tin,

editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

**LOCAL NEWS EDITORS**

Tun Tun Naing (Editor),

intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor),

nwenwe9131@gmail.com

**TRANSLATORS**

Khaing Thanda Lwin,

Hay Mar Tin Win,

Ei Myat Mon

Zaw Htet Oo

Kyaw Zin Lin

Kyaw Zin Tun

**REPORTER**

May Thet Hnin,

reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

mayreporter.mm@gmail.com

**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar

**COMPUTER TEAM**

Tun Zaw, Thein Ngwe,

Zaw Zaw Aung, Ye Naing Soe,

Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,

Sanda Hnin, Thein Htwe

**EDITORIAL SECTION**

(+95) (01) 8604529,

Fax - (+95) (01) 8604305

**CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION**

San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,

Hotline - 09 974424114

**ADVERTISING & MARKETING**

(+95) (01) 8604530,

Hotline - 09 974424848

marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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## Daw Khin Myo Kyi unanimously approved as Yangon Region advocate general

By Nyein Nyein

THE Yangon Region Hluttaw unanimously voted Daw Khin Myo Kyi to replace former Yangon Region Advocate General U Han Htoo, who was relieved of his post for allegedly accepting bribes to drop the murder case of comedian Aung Ye Htwe.

During the tenth-day meeting of the seventh regular session of the Second Yangon Region Hluttaw, held on 26 September, the Speaker read the Yangon Region Chief Minister's nomination for Daw Khin Myo Kyi to be the new advocate general of Yangon Region. The Speaker then announced that MPs opposed to the nomination can voice their reasons with sufficient evidence.

During the eleventh-day meeting of the seventh regular session of the Second Yangon Region Hluttaw, held yesterday, the Hluttaw unanimously approved Daw Khin Myo Kyi as the new advocate general of Yangon Region.

Beginning in 1984, Daw Khin Myo Kyi has spent 34 years as a law officer and had just retired last June. She is currently 61. Daw Khin Myo Kyi has assumed several posts, including grade-4 law officer, township legal officer, Assistant Director (Mandalay), Deputy Director (Monywa), Regional Law Officer (Kayin State), and Director at the Union Attorney-General's Office, according to her short biography distributed at the Yangon Region Hluttaw. ■



PHOTO: FACEBOOK (DAW KHIN MYO KYI)

## Thant Myanmar urges fight against plastic pollution to enhance tourism

THANT Myanmar is urging the tourism and hospitality sector to take responsibility for their role in plastic pollution to create a better tourist destination, according to an event organized by Thant Myanmar, held on 26 September, in Botahtaung Township, Yangon.

Since the 1980s, World Tourism Day has been celebrated around the world on 27 September with an aim to raise awareness on the role of tourism within the international community, and to demonstrate how it affects social, cultural,

political and economic values worldwide. Tourism and the Digital Transformation is the theme of this year's World Tourism Day (WTD).

World Tourism Day 2018 is a unique opportunity to raise awareness on the potential contribution of digital technologies to sustainable tourism development, while providing a platform for investment, partnerships and collaboration towards a more responsible and inclusive tourism sector, according to United Nations World Tourism Organization.

Tourism destinations in Southeast Asia, including Myanmar, are struggling with mountains of trash. With the lack of efficient waste management systems, plastic waste winds up in rivers and oceans, not only polluting our waterways, but also killing birds and marine life, state a press release of Thant Myanmar.

On the occasion of World Tourism Day on September 27, Thant Myanmar is encouraging key players in Myanmar's tourism and hospitality sector to help

promote the recently released, "Be Enchanted", official Myanmar tourism slogan by "cleaning up their acts", and stepping up measures to refuse, reuse, reduce and recycle single-use plastics.

At a recent event, 45 hotels pledged to reduce their use of disposable plastics by the end of 2018, according to Thant Myanmar press release. Thant Myanmar is raising public awareness through social media, and will continue to provide free digital information to all tourism stakeholders. —GNLM ■

## 2018 AMPA, Power Expo kick off in Yangon

FOUR day-expos by AMPA Myanmar (Myanmar International Auto Parts, Accessories and Motor Show) and Power Expo (Myanmar International Electrical, Electronics & Electric Power Equipment Fair), organized by Taipei World Trade Center, kicked off yesterday at the Yangon Convention Center.

The two shows are being held from 27 to 30 September to showcase the comprehensive selection of auto parts and power equipment. Exhibitors

from China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, Viet Nam, Japan, Australia, Jordan, Poland and Myanmar have also joined these events organized by TWTC, showcasing premium products, including eco-friendly brake pads.

The events are likely to draw 5,000 visitors.

Power Expo also aims to support the state's electrification plan to serve the entire nation by 2030. Exhibitors include well-known enterpris-



Launching of AMPA Myanmar and Power Expo in Yangon yesterday.

PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

es, such as Tatung Company, Hiwin Technologies Corporation, Tongtai Machine & Tool Co., Ltd., Taya (Vietnam)

Electric Wire & Cable, Good Will Instrument Co., Ltd., and Elig Brake Technology Corp. —GNLM ■

## Myanmar-Australia trade decreases by \$20 million in four months

BILATERAL trade between Myanmar and Australia, a country in Oceania, within the four months in the present six-month fiscal period, totalled US\$43.9 million, down by \$20.039 million from this time last year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

In bilateral trade, Myanmar's imports always outdo its exports. From 1 April to 31 July this year, Myanmar imported a wide range of products amounting to \$36 million from Australia, whereas its exports to the island nation were valued at \$7.9 million.

At the same period last year, Myanmar imported \$56.2 million worth of foreign goods to Australia and exported \$7.742 million

worth of domestic products, totalling \$63.9 million.

When compared with last year, this year saw a significant decrease in value of bilateral imports by \$20.183 million, however, the export value slightly increased by \$0.144 million.

Australia imports crustaceans, fish, seafood and vegetables from Myanmar, and exports wheat, medicaments for veterinary purposes, pigments and paints, as well as varnish and coal.

Myanmar conducts bilateral trade with Australia mainly through by sea. According to the ministry's data, the bilateral trade was at its peak in the last financial year 2017-2018, reaching \$170 million. Trade between the two countries was

\$77 million in the 2011-2012 FY, \$86 million in the 2012-2013 FY, \$102 million in the 2013-2014 FY, \$74 million in the 2014-2015 FY, \$84 million in the 2015-2016 FY and \$144 million in the 2016-2017 FY.

According to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA), Australia's new investment in Myanmar in the past five months reached \$1.865 million. There was no FDI from the island nation in the last 2017-2018 FY. Australia's investment in Myanmar totalled \$16.29 million in the 2016-2017 FY. As a partner country, Australia continues its support to help Myanmar carry out political, economic and social change.—Shwe Khine ■

## Individual imports from nine border crossings exceed Ks14 billion

THE value of imports at borders using individual trading cards (ITCs) topped Ks14.3 billion over the past 160 days, in the current six-month fiscal period, while individual exports value was Ks4.6 billion, according to trade authorities.

This year saw individual imports through nine border crossings: Tamu, Muse, Myawady, Tachilek, Kanpaktee, Kawthoung, Reed, Mawtaung and Kengtung.

Between 1 April and 7 September this year, individual import

was the highest, both in terms of volume and trade, at the Myawady border gate, reaching more than Ks10 billion in value, followed by Mawtaung at Ks2.2 billion, Kawthoung at over Ks500 million, Kanpaktee at Ks382 million, Tamu at Ks136 million, Reed at Ks121 million, Tachilek at Ks33 million and Kengtung at Ks7 million.

During the period, individual exports from borders were Ks4.56 billion in total.

According to the

ministry, the total individual trade at all border points of entry, as of 7 September, amounted to Ks18.8 billion. The Ministry of Commerce has been issuing individual trading cards to merchants at borders since 2012-2013 FY. Since the programme was launched, some 1,036 ITC holders are operating at the border crossings. According to the ministry, it has issued 74 cards to individual traders over the past five months.—Swe Nyein ■

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# Seminar on business and human rights held

A SEMINAR on business and human rights was jointly held by the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at Park Royal Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

First, MNHRC Chair U Win Mra delivered an address, saying local and foreign investment is needed to develop the nation, and that it is necessary for business ventures to adhere to enacted laws and human rights standards. He said the forum will cover the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, as well as the good practices and challenges faced concerning it. He added that it will also support understanding the issues concerning business and human rights.

Next, UNDP Departmental Director Mr. Peter Batchelor delivered the opening speech, saying that in considering the history of setting business ethics for international corpo-



MNHRC Chair U Win Mra and participants pose for a documentary photo at the Seminar on Business and Human Rights in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

rations, the difficulties faced, the priority for each sector, and of human rights can create opportunities in Myanmar's sustainable development programmes.

The forum then commenced with various individuals leading discussions on various topics, including: Deputy Min-

ister for Planning and Finance U Sett Aung on 'The role of Special Economic Zones in promoting responsible investments and Myanmar's sustainable and balanced development goals'; UNDP's Chief Technical Advisor Mr. Scott Ciment on 'Rule of Law and the UN's guiding principles; UN Technical Expert

Mr. Livio Sarandrea on 'UN's guiding principles, understanding the contents of the guiding principles, challenges and effectiveness' and 'National level corporate strategies on business and human rights'; a representative from The Heineken Company on 'How businesses require government support in

respecting human rights'; and Ms. Claire Kirkham, the Head of Economic and Prosperity from the British Embassy in Yangon, on 'Considerations and views from the diplomatic community on promoting investments in Myanmar that are in accord with responsible ethics'.

Next on the agenda, the expert panel discussion on businesses and human rights commenced with Mr. Sean Lees, UNDP's Business and Human Rights Specialist, acting as moderator.

The topic of the panel was 'Opportunities and Challenges in Myanmar' and was discussed by MNHRC member U Nyunt Swe, International Labour Organization, Myanmar's Liaison Officer Mr. Rory Mungoven, UMFCCI General Secretary Daw Khine Khine Nwe, and Director Vicky Bowman of Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business. The panelists also replied to questions from the attendants. —MNA ■



Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun meets with Nathan Associates Vice President Ms. Jaleen Moroney yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

## Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun receives Nathan Associates Vice President and Chief of Party

DEPUTY Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun received US-based Nathan Associates Vice President Ms. Jaleen Moroney and Chief of Party Mr. Steve Parker at the Ministry of Information yesterday morning.

During the meeting, mat-

ters pertaining to cooperating in providing economic news that will help the State draw up and implement effective economic policies and drawing up basic strategies to cover accurate economic news, were openly discussed. —MNA ■

## Local, foreign media continue reporting in Maungtaw

A GROUP comprised of local and foreign media toured villages in Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State, yesterday.

First, they visited Inn-din Village and collected information on terrorist attacks that happened in the village.

After the visit, they met with local authorities at the General Administration Office in Maungtaw and Maungtaw District Deputy Administrator U Ye Htoo briefed about the efforts for repatriation and resettlement for returnees, peace and stability and development in the region.

At the meeting, the journalists interviewed the authorities.

In the afternoon, the media group visited the village of Shwezar where the two different communities are living in peaceful coexistence.

At the meeting with the villagers of Shwezar, the journalists interviewed about their situation, including current livelihood and getting National Verification Cards.



Journalists interview local people in Shwezar village. PHOTO: MNA

In the evening, the media group interviewed a family which returned from Bangladesh on 4 September.

The media delegation comprised of journalists from Nikkei Shimbun, NHK, Nippon TV, CRI, CNN, The Guardian Newspaper, The Washington Post, CBC, MRTV, MITV, MNA and Arte

Television.

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

They visited the conflict areas one time in 2016, eight times in 2017 and 17 times in 2018.—Thura Zaw, Thet Lwin Soe (IPRD) ■

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# Migrate work legally, receive full protection

**A**N MoU has been signed allowing Myanmar workers to be sent to legally work in Thailand's marine sector. The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population has led efforts to acquire the guarantee of the Thai Government for the full protection of Myanmar marine workers.

Statistics from Thailand's side show the number of Myanmar workers from Taninthayi Region, Ayeyawady Region, Mon State and Rakhine State going to work in Thailand. There are 40,000 Myanmar fishermen, 45,000 Myanmar workers in sectors relating to fishery, and 51,000 Myanmar workers working in fishery product factories.

The Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population has said that among the fishermen and people working in the fishing sector in Thailand are a vulnerable group and thus need special care and attention.

In 2016 when the National League for Democracy government took office, Myanmar and Thailand signed the first ever Memorandum of Understanding-MoU on helping Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand's fishery sector.

“ They must have the right to hold a proper document, have insurance coverage, obtain medical treatment, leave benefits and freedom to travel. The Union Minister said more friendly cooperation is needed between the two countries and welcomed the opening of the One Stop Service Center.

Official workers who will be sent to Thailand under the MoU System will obtain full legal rights to work on fishing boats.

At this office, workers will be provided with pre-work training courses, workers identity and they need to sign the employment agreements.

For this MoU system to be successful, effective action must be taken against brokers, agencies from the two countries that are conducting their work inappropriately and employers who violate the rights of the workers.

Help and assistance centers, where 24-hour service can be provided for workers in need must be opened in ports of the 22 provinces in Thailand. Staff who can speak in Myanmar language need to be employed there and Myanmar workers must have equal rights in the same way as other workers.

They must have the right to hold a proper document, have insurance coverage, obtain medical treatment, leave benefits and freedom to travel. The Union Minister said more friendly cooperation is needed between the two countries and welcomed the opening of the One Stop Service Center.

Fishermen already working in Thailand will soon be covered by all of the provisions and protections guaranteed under the said MoU.

# Analysing the Report of the Investigation Commission for Maungdaw

By Nyein Maung

## Formation of Investigation Commission

In order to assess the background that led to violent attacks in October 2016 in Maungdaw, northern Rakhine State, and study the prevailing situation as well as to avoid the recurrence of similar incidents in future, the Government formed the Investigation Commission led by Vice-President U Myint Swe on 1 December 2016.

The aims of the Investigation Commission are to recommend the appropriate measures to avoid similar incidents in future based on the findings of background situation of terrorist attacks in Maungdaw, root causes, deaths and casualties, incidents of terrorist attacks, destruction of property and other attacks and measures to be taken to restore stability and the rule of law, ensuring security and basic rights of the people, conflict prevention and provision of humanitarian assistance to the affected people.

## Report of the Investigation Commission

The Investigation Commission's final report was released on 4 August 2017 after examining the on-ground situation of violent incidents that occurred in Rakhine State. The report widely covered the findings with 17 chapters including introduction, objectives, annexes and photographs.

The report outlines sub-sections on investigation techniques and measures taken by the Commission; situation of Rakhine State and Maungdaw area; background situation of the conflict in Rakhine State; violent incidents of terrorist attack in Maungdaw; uniqueness of the incidents; peace and stability and rule of law; conditions on security and basic rights of the people; conflict prevention and provision of humanitarian assistance; findings on external allegation; salient points of the report of Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); investigations conducted by the Commission in Bangladesh and the recommendations of the Commission.

## Background

Myanmar and Bangladesh are neighbouring countries sharing border of 168.57 miles. Following the Anglo-Burman War of 1824, the Rakhine coastal region was annexed by Britain. Since then, a large number of Muslims from Chittagong region were brought in as labourers for farming. At first, they stayed temporarily on seasonal farming basis but later many settled down permanently in the area thereby increasing the Muslim population.

Ethnic nationals and Muslims have been residing in the Maungdaw District. According to the 2016 statistics, out of the total population of 834,637 in the district, Muslim population was 755,371 totalling 90.50 percent. In Maungdaw Township alone, the percentage of Muslim population stood at 93.8 percent. Within the Maungdaw District, there are 447 Muslim villages, 240 ethnic villages, 12 mixed villages of the people with different religious faiths and 4 other villages while there are 222 monasteries with 486 monks and novices, 1278 mosques, 1143 madrasa with 1659 Mawlawis, 17 Hindu temples and 7 churches.

According to the report, farming, fishery and aquaculture are the basic livelihood of the Maungdaw area, and are mostly owned by the Muslims.

The report also assessed that whereas the average poverty rate for the whole Country stands at 26 percent, the poverty rate for the Rakhine State reaches 44 percent,

making the state to be the second most impoverished state in the country. The low socio-economic status of the Maungdaw area is one of the root causes of the frequent eruption of conflicts.

The report also outlined its studies on background situation of Rakhine State, including the conflict in May 1942 between Rakhine people and Muslims in the region, which took the lives of over 20,000 Rakhine people and burnt several Rakhine villages as well as the 5 month-long conflicts of 2012 in the State which had a heavy toll of lives and properties of the local populace, and further deteriorated the understanding and trust between the two communities.

## Terrorist attacks in Maungdaw District

As regards the terrorist attacks in Maungdaw District in 2016, the report mentioned that on 9 October, the terrorists armed with guns, knives, spears and slingshots attacked the No. 1 Border Guard Police (BGP) Headquarters (Kye Kan Pyin) and Nga Khu Ya Police Station in Maungdaw Township and Koe Dan Kauk BGP outpost in Yathedaung Township. The incident resulted in the loss of 6 lives and wounded 2 police personnel and looting away of 62 various weapons and firearms and 10130 rounds of ammunition.

Similarly, on 12 November at 14:15 hrs., a military column and an infantry company led by the Officiating Commander of No. 345 Light Infantry Regiment in pursuit of the terrorists retreating from Pwint Phyu Chaung Village toward Gwa Sone Village were attacked by about 800 terrorists armed with guns, swords, spears and harpoons. The military personnel had to call in two MI-2

The Commission's recommendations reflect the on-ground situation in Rakhine State, and some of these recommendations are generally similar to those of the Advisory Commission on the Rakhine State led by the late Dr. Kofi Annan.

helicopters from the Air Force and used machine guns instead of heavy weapons with warning shots to disperse the attackers. After the warning shots were fired, the attackers fled into Gwa Sone Village. In the incident, 9 males and 1 female lost their lives according to the report. The Officiating Commander of the Regiment was killed and 2 military personnel were injured.

On the same day, the terrorists made another terrorist attack on security forces near Ma Yin Daung village and Maung Hna Ma Gyi village which killed one and injured 5 military personnel. It was learnt that terrorists burned down houses in some villages during the incident. On 13 November, security forces who undertook local area security measures were attacked by the terrorists again in three areas. Terrorists also burned down the houses.

## Analyzing incidents in Maungdaw District

The report divides the incidents of terrorist attacks in the Maungdaw District into three stages. In the first stage between October and November 2016, the terrorists

initiated attacks on the Headquarters of the Border Police Force Command and police outposts. In this period, 6 members of the security forces lost their lives and 2 sustained injuries. Losses included 63 pieces of assorted firearms, 10,130 rounds of ammunition and weapon accessories.

In the second stage, the security forces who jointly performed security measures for peace and stability and rule of law encountered skirmishes with the terrorist group. As a result of clashes, there were casualties, injuries, cases of arsons, displacement of people, loss of properties. Various allegations were made against the actions taken by the security forces, and thus creating misconceptions at the international level.

In the third stage, peace and stability of the local area were restored to a certain extent. However, members of the terrorist group found this development unfavourable to them and began committing acts of violence and human rights violations such as intimidation, killing and abduction.

However, the OHCHR report, which was released on 3 February 2017, only focused on alleged human rights violations and brutal treatment on Muslim villagers.

The OHCHR report did not contain positive and constructive recommendations for the future based on the past and present situations. Instead, it expressed "serious concern" that the security forces and the Government are intentionally committing "ethnic cleansing" against one community.

## Leaders involved in Maungdaw Incident

According to the report, the violent attacks in Maungdaw had been carried out by Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) led by Ata Ullah. The group was previously known as Aqa Mul Mujahidin (AMM).

The report found out that after the attacks, the leader Ata Ullah had been continuously releasing propaganda video files through social media networks, alluring the Muslims in the region to cooperate with him to continue waging wars in Maungdaw.

The investigation of the apprehended terrorists revealed that the incident in Maungdaw had been carried out to incite the Muslims majority who lived in the area to spread terrorism amongst them and to make efforts to occupy Buthidaung and Maungdaw and build Maungdaw as their stronghold. It was found out that they received the substantial amount of financial aid from the extremists from some Middle East countries. They followed similar methods of other terrorist organizations such as Taliban, Al-Qaeda, and ISIS, through propaganda video files that had been broadcasted online and social media so that the religious extremists within and outside the country would join them.

The report summarised based on the collected evidences that the terrorists were systematically preparing to carry out further attacks in Maungdaw.

Unlike the previous conflicts that had occurred between the local communities in Rakhine State, the incidents in Maungdaw involved violent attacks on Kye Kan Pyin Border Guard Police No. 1 Headquarters, Nga Khu Ya Police Station and Koe Dan Kauk Police outpost, and brutal killings of some members of the Myanmar Police Force. It was like the armed insurgency against a State institution by the terrorists groups receiving support and assistance from the extremist organizations in foreign countries, organizing and undergoing systematic trainings. The evidences also revealed that terrorists with

foreign connections caused the situation more delicate and complex. The significant findings of the incident in Maungdaw was that the seizures of large numbers of methamphetamine tablets in Maungdaw, before the violent incidents, led to the suspicions that those who had suffered losses due to drug seizures might have played a role as well.

The report concluded the main reason of the people who took shelters in neighbouring country was having well aware of the recruitment, preparation, and trainings of sabotage activities including arson by the terrorists and their involvement in those terrorist activities led villagers leave their homes out of fears, concerns and intimidations.

## Peace, Stability and Rule of Law

It is important to create a safe environment for the ethnic people who lived among the Muslim majority. At the same time, the Muslim Community should also be treated well.

In connection with the terrorist attacks and conflicts, it was found out that the Commission investigated not just only a single community but also other communities and ethnics groups in Maungdaw and its surrounding areas.

It is also necessary to protect the majority of the peace-loving Muslim people who have been threatened by the terrorist group. Besides, the report advised to correct certain civil servants who committed corruption and have weaknesses in performing their respective duties. The report also revealed that since 2016 there has been increasing amount of confiscated drugs, leading to an illicit drug trafficking route in Maungdaw region.

The report also pointed out that in order to eliminate the expansion of the illicit drug trafficking routes by using Maungdaw as an exit, the special attention should be given to the nature of transnational crimes associated with the terrorist groups along the border area.

During the field trips of the Commission to Buthitaung Township, three special courts were established to swift and just handling of the cases, and also coordinated with the local authority in arranging free transportation for Muslims families from the respective villages to Buthitaung Prison to visit the detainees.

## Safety and Assurance of Basic Rights of the People

Following the discussions with the local communities comprising the Buddhists, the Hindus and the Muslims at Nga Khu Ya village in Maungdaw Township during the first visit of the Commission, the Chairman of the Commission managed to negotiate for reopening of the local market and schools, and dispatching of teachers. Even though there is no ban for local Muslim praying at the mosque, they fear to visit the mosque because of the curfew and Section-144. The chairman of the Commission coordinated with the local authorities to allow prayers at the mosques.

SEE PAGE-10



“ အပြည်ပြည်ဆိုင်ရာ သက်ကြီးရွယ်အိုများနေ့ ”  
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF OLDER PERSONS

ရက်ပြည့်အခမ်းအနား

“ သက်ကြီးအခွင့်အရေးဖော်ဆောင်ဖို့ ကြိုးပမ်းသူကိုဂုဏ်ပြုဖို့ ”  
“ Celebrating Older Human Rights Champions ”

နေပြည်တော်

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12th World Rabies Day 28 September Rabies: Share the message. SAVE A LIFE. www.rabiesalliance.org/world-rabies-day “ခွေးရူးရောဂါကာကွယ်ဖို့ သတင်းစကားမျှဝေကာ အသက်ကယ်ဖို့” ၂၀၁၈ ခုနှစ်၊ စက်တင်ဘာလ (၂၈) ရက် ခွေးမြူရေးနှင့်ကုသရေးဦးစီးဌာန

## MYANMAR DAILY WEATHER REPORT (Issued on Thursday 27 September 2018)

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS RECORDED AT 09:30 hrs M.S.T: During the past (24) hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Lower Sagaing and Magway regions, Eastern Shan and Kayah states, rain or thundershowers have been widespread in Kachin State, fairly widespread in Northern Shan State, scattered in Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions, Southern Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon states and isolated in the remaining regions and states. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded were Kyauktaw (1.42)inches, Kyeikmayaw (1.34)inches, Bilin (1.22)inches, Kamamaung (1.14)inches, Paletwa (0.98)inch, Putao (0.94)inch and Patheingyi (0.82)inch.

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy over the North Bay and monsoon is weak over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF 28 September 2018: Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Kachin State, scattered in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi regions, Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon states and isolated in the remaining regions and states. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (1 - 4) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts. OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Weak monsoon over the Andaman Sea and South Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 28 September 2018: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 28 September 2018: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 28 September 2018: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

## EARTHQUAKE NEWS (Issued at (20:25 ) hours MST)

A slight earthquake of magnitude (4.3) Richter Scale with its epicenter inside Myanmar (about (30) miles northwest of Tamanthi) latitude 25.63°N, longitude 94.95°E, depth (25) kilometers about (105) miles north-northeast of Tamu seismological observatory was recorded at (20)hr (05)min (48)sec MST on 27 September 2018.

# Analysing the Report of the Investigation Commission for Maungdaw

FROM PAGE-9

## Conflict Prevention and the situation of humanitarian assistance

It is reported that the donor countries and organizations need to follow the Government's policies in providing humanitarian assistance to ensure equitable and effective distribution of aids where it is needed.

The report highlighted that the provision of humanitarian assistance requires transparency and equity as well as thorough coordination between the Government and donors in adopting aid allocation criteria and programmes and on ground distribution of assistance.

## External allegations

While conducting the investigation, the Commission gave the special emphasis on the external allegations such as rape, torture, arson, human rights violations, discrimination and genocide in Muslim villages.

With regard to the cases of sexual violence against Muslim women in the foreign media, the Commission investigated the allegations in a thorough manner. The Commission investigated Noor Ayesha from Kyet Yo Pyin village whose husband was killed and her two daughters were raped, and the cases of Ma Jamal Li Har from Pyaung Pike village and Daw Than Than aka Ma Oorlan from Kyet Yo Pyin village, who presented their cases directly to the Commission. The members of the Commission personally interviewed men and women of different ages and social classes individually and in groups, but as the allegations could not be confirmed it was concluded that the cases require further investigations.

A field investigation to the villages where buildings had been burned down indicated that the fires might have been caused either during the crossfires or by the arsons. Practically, it was difficult to confirm the culprit who had set fire to village. In any case, the Commission managed to file the arsons cases in accordance with the law so that actions may be taken against the perpetrators.

The investigation processes have been continued to confirm the human rights violations and torture. Appropriate legal actions have been taken in some cases.

It is also stated that allegations of excessive use of force by security personnel may be taken as weaknesses on the part of the security forces. It is necessary to learn lessons to avoid recurrence of such actions in future. If the disproportionate use of force happens, the responsible personnel will be accountable. Appropriate actions have also been taken on some cases.

It is stressed that in order to have a better understanding on the international norms and rule of engagement, awareness-raising campaigns for the ranks and files of security forces should be further implemented.

During the conflicts, there could have been actions that were not in compliance with the law, and excessive action on the part of individual members of security forces. There could also be exaggerations and fabricated allegations. The report stated that as it was necessary to conduct thorough investigations to uncover what had actually happened, the responsible persons at various levels of administration need to look into the issues carefully and take actions if found guilty.

## Points contained in the report of United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR)

The report also mentioned that the Commission took sufficient time in conducting field investigations to the affected villages including 20 villages mentioned in the OHCHR Report to verify whether the serious allegations raised in the report were true or not, whether there had been unlawful indiscriminate shootings, disappearances, rapes or gang-rapes to women, severe beatings, torture, racial and religious discrimination, looting, theft, burning and destruction of properties in Muslim villages, whether there have been incidents in which the right to life of Muslims in Northern Rakhine State has been disregarded, and whether there were any grounds of concerns

that crimes against humanity had potentially been committed, possibly leading to ethnic cleansing. However, there were no testimonies and difficulties to interview in some cases so that immediate legal actions cannot be taken. The commission, however, coordinated to file cases and has been continuing the investigation.

## The Commission's Investigations in Bangladesh

A six-member team from the Commission led by its Secretary went to Bangladesh from 18 - 22 March 2017 to conduct an investigation with the displaced persons in three camps. The commission found out that the displaced persons were living in makeshift tents in dire situation at the camps. Because of the political instigation, some of the displaced persons mentioned that the recognition of Myanmar government to them as Rohingya would be a precondition for their return to Myanmar.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) made arrangements for the Commission members to conduct face-to-face interviews with male and female Muslim refugees at Kutupalang Refugee Camp. At Balu Khali, refugees spoke only from behind a piece of yellow cloth that covered their face and upper body. At Leda, the displaced person refugees took interviews from the back of a piece of white cloth that hid them from head to toe.

The Commission was not allowed to take photographs, video or audio recordings. The IOM also prohibited the use of Myanmar language with those refugees who can speak Myanmar. Although there were many restrictions imposed by the IOM, the Commission did not make complaint, and focused

It is found out that most of the reports on the rape cases in Rakhine State were just compilations based on the narrative of the so-called victims and hearsays.

on carrying out its duties.

There are 48 recommendations in the Commission's report; 13 recommendations for governance and administration, 3 for news media, 2 for UN agencies and INGOs, 5 for citizenship verification, 3 for religious affairs, 6 for socio-economic matters, 12 for national security and border security, 1 for cooperation with international security organizations and 3 for general purposes.

## Observation on the formation of the Investigation Commission for Maungdaw

The Investigation Commission for Maungdaw in Rakhine State is comprised of 13 members. One of the members, U Htun Myat, served as United Nations Assistant Secretary General and another member, Dr. Aung Htun Thet, Senior Advisor at the United Nations, who have vast international experiences. Furthermore, in order to ensure fair, balanced and inclusiveness, representatives from all strata of life such as legal experts, parliamentarians and ethnic people as well as those from the interfaith groups are included in the Commission.

## Measures taken by the Commission

The Commission held 11 meetings and conducted four field trips to the villages and camps in Maungdaw District, where the terrorist attacks took place. Moreover, the Commission members also visited the refugee camps in Bangladesh once and carried out systematic investigations.

The Commission members visited 64 places of camps and villages in Maungdaw District and interviewed 2,240 local residents, 10 prisoners from Sittwe and Buthitaung prisons,

people from interfaith groups, responsible personnel from INGOs, officials from the respective departments and the security forces.

## Study on the Investigation Techniques used by the Commission

The reliability and credibility of the investigations can be assessed by studying the investigation techniques applied by the investigation committee, commission and special task forces. With a view to unfolding the actual incidents and situations while preventing the recurrence of similar incidents of violence in the future, the Commission visited affected villages and camps and interviewed the victims utilizing internationally accepted methods.

The rapid assessment method was mainly utilized in parallel with cross-sectional, qualitative methods such as roundtable discussions, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with women in almost all villages. Women were interviewed in their own groups in separate spaces where privacy was ensured. The efforts of the Commission members to reveal the truth on allegations are quite obvious as they patiently conducted interviews with females who spoke from behind a piece of yellow cloth that covered their faces and upper bodies at Balu Khali camp as well as female displaced persons who stayed behind a piece of white cloth that hid them from head to toe at Leda camp.

In some cases, interviewees were selected by local organizations and in other cases, by the Commission on a random basis. The names and addresses of the interviewees were kept confidential according to their wishes. If information on possible crimes came to light, the respective crime scenes were visited and investigated to a possible extent.

Moreover, the Commission report's annexure contained statements, full account of the terrorist attacks in the Maungdaw District, documentary photographs of field trips and supporting photographs of the incidents.

## Overall Assessment

The Commission's recommendations reflect the on-ground situation in Rakhine State, and some of these recommendations are generally similar to those of the Advisory Commission on the Rakhine State led by the late Dr. Kofi Annan. The ARSA terrorist group launched attacks on 25 August 2018 as predicted in the assessment submitted by the Investigation Commission on 4 August 2017 that there would be possible terrorist attacks.

It is found out that most of the reports on the rape cases in Rakhine State were just compilations based on the narrative of the so-called victims and hearsays. In contrast, the recommendations of the Investigation Commission led by Vice President U Myint Swe were based not only on the narratives but also on the findings of the Commission from its investigations carried out during its field trips to the villages where the reported incidents were occurred.

In connection with the terrorist attacks and conflicts, it was found out that the Commission investigated not just only a single community but also other communities and ethnic groups in Maungdaw and its surrounding areas. It is obvious that the Commission exerted its efforts by reflecting fair and square statements of the affected communities.

All in all, the report of the Investigation Commission led by Vice President U Myint Swe is reliable, objective and a good source of reference for stability, development and social harmony of the Rakhine State. It contained the method of investigation, the efforts to explore the root-causes of the terrorist attacks and complexity of the issues and the background, through making frequent visits to the scenes where the incidents occurred, investigating the allegations of Human Rights violations, the observation and analysis on lasting stability and harmony, and the recommendations for reducing tension among the diverse communities thus leading to the harmonious life, etc.

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# Tatmadaw (Army, Navy, Air) families, donors donate hospital equipment to Yangon General Hospital

TATMADAW (Army, Navy, Air) families and donors jointly donated hospital equipment to Yangon General Hospital at the nurse hall of the hospital yesterday morning. Present at the event were Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, high ranking officers from Commander-in-Chief Office, Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Thet Pon, Yangon General Hospital superintendent Prof. Dr. Yi Yi Myint, departmental officials, donors, doctors and nurses from the hospital.

First, Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief explained about the reason for donating, and then, the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief and wife, family members donated hospital equipment to the hospital superintendent.

Next, on behalf of the Tatmadaw (Army, Navy, Air) families, Adjutant-General Lt-Gen San Oo, Chief of Staff (Navy) Rear Admiral Moe Aung and Chief of Staff (Air) Maj-Gen Tun Aung donated hospital equipment, donors U Aung Myo Hein, Authentic Co., Ltd, U Hla Moe, Aung Myin Thu Company, U



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presents a souvenir to Yangon General Hospital superintendent Prof. Dr Yi Yi Myint. **PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF**

Kyaw Hein, Chan Hein Company, and Dr. Htet Aung of Star Nilar Company donated hospital equipment and the hospital superintendent gave words of thanks.

An average of more than 1,600 patients were undergoing treatment every day, and yesterday Tatmadaw (Army, Navy, Air) families also donated lunch for the patients. According to the news released by Office

of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, Tatmadaw (Army, Navy, Air) families and donors jointly donated five small and 10 big suction machines, 30 trolleys, 10 ambulance structures, 10 syringe pump, ten ECG Machines (3 channel and ten ECG Machines (1 channel), 10 Patient Transport Trolleys, a total of eight items numbering 95 units worth more than Ks 60 million. —MNA■

# Submission Deadline for ASEAN Prize extended

SUBMISSIONS for ASEAN Prize are extended until 3-10-2018 instead of 27-9-2018. The ASEAN Secretariat is calling for nominations for the first ASEAN Prize, which aims to recognize inspiring achievements and contributions of an individual or organization that foster the ASEAN identity, promote the ASEAN spirit, and champion the ASEAN way in designated focus areas such as;

- (a) collaboration between ASEAN Member States;
- (b) collaboration between ASEAN and the world;
- (c) people-to-people engagement among ASEAN Member States;
- (d) economic integration and promotion of standards between Member States, or

(e) outstanding contributions towards ASEAN Community Building

A judging committee, consisting of incumbent and past Secretaries-General of ASEAN, will select the eventual winner, who will be awarded a cash prize of US\$20,000. The inaugural prize will be presented at the ASEAN Leaders Summit in November 2018.

To be eligible, the nominee must be a citizen or an organization in any ASEAN Member States. The nominee need to elaborate within three to five pages in English highlighting the verifiable achievements that the nominee has contributed to the building of a rule-based, people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN Community, and intra-ASEAN

collaborative efforts, for the period of April 2017 to March 2018. The nominee should also share their future plans in continuing the work after winning the prize.

The detailed information for the summary is mentioned in the nomination form. The nominee can download the nomination form from ASEAN Secretariat's website [https://asean.org/?static\\_post=asean-prize-2018](https://asean.org/?static_post=asean-prize-2018) and can submit it to the ASEAN Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Office No. 9, Nay Pyi Taw or [dgasean@gmail.com](mailto:dgasean@gmail.com) by 3-10-2018.

For further information, please visit <http://asean.org/?staticpost=asean-prize-2018>. ■

# Myanmar National Portal launched in Nay Pyi Taw

UNION Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung delivered the opening address at the launching ceremony of Myanmar National Portal, held at the Hilton Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw's hotel zone yesterday morning.

The Myanmar National Portal is a project by the Ministry of Transport and Communications to boost Myanmar's e-Government agenda and to offer a single window public service containing all the websites and e-services of government departments and organizations.

In his opening address, the Union Minister said the development of e-Government is the development of the nation. He said Myanmar e-Government Master Plan 2016 was drawn and the e-Government Steering Committee, Working Committee on Implementation, and subcommittees have been formed.

He said his ministry regularly works to improve connectivity, ease of use and smooth operations. He said that since there is a 90 per cent mobile coverage in the country, they will be taking advantage of it to provide services to mobile users.

He said the public should have access to all the information and services provided by ministries. He said that being the case, his ministry has carried out the Telecom Sector Reform Project, with

loans from the World Bank, and the Myanmar National Portal project in collaboration with Viet Nam's FPT Information System. He said the participation of all government ministries is crucial, as the portal is of national significance. He said ministries have to be responsible for providing accurate information and regular updates. He said only true and comprehensive news and information will create a publicly-beneficial national portal, and requested CIOs from ministries to continue collaborations.

Next, the Chairman of Viet Nam's FPT Information System Board of members Mr. Trieu Duong Dung delivered the welcoming address, and Daw Nwe Ni Soe Yin, Project Director of Myanmar National Portal project, gave an introduction of the project.

Attending the launching ceremony were Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung, Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe, deputy ministers, permanent secretaries, the Commercial Counselor of the Viet Nam embassy in Myanmar, directors-general, chief information officers from government organizations and state and region governments, officials from KMPG, Viet Nam's FPT Information System, and invited guests. —MNA ■



Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung, Chairman of Viet Nam's FPT Information System Board of Members Mr. Trieu Duong Dung and officials open the launching ceremony of Myanmar National Portal in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

# Hong Kong banks hike lending rates for first time in 12 years

HONG KONG — Two of Hong Kong's biggest banks raised their lending rates on Thursday for the first time in 12 years, ending an age of cheap cash that could hit the city's famously red-hot property market.

The moves by HSBC and Standard Chartered came after the Hong Kong Monetary Authority — the city's de facto central bank — lifted its borrowing costs following an increase by the US Federal Reserve.

The HKMA is required to lift rates in line with the Fed owing to the dollar peg.

HSBC boosted its lending rate 12.5 basis points to 5.125 per cent, before Standard Chartered lifted its rate from 5.25 per cent to 5.375 per cent.

"Today's change in rates marks the start of the normalisation cycle for local interest rates and we believe Hong Kong is well prepared for the change," said Diana Cesar, HSBC's chief executive in Hong Kong.

More of the city's commercial banks are expected to follow HSBC's lead and hike their prime rates, meaning higher mortgage payments for loans that are linked to it.

The Federal Reserve raised the benchmark interest rate on Wednesday for the third time this year in a widely anticipated decision, citing the strong US economy and jobs market.

After the HKMA raised interest rates to 2.5 percent, its chief executive Norman Chan warned the public to be "on high alert" over increases and to manage associated risks, adding that property and assets would be affected.

"The current global economic conditions and financial environment are full of uncertainties for Hong Kong," he said.

Hong Kong's finance secretary Paul Chan wrote in his blog earlier this week that the city's low interest rate environment was "coming to an end soon".

—AFP ■



The move by HSBC signals the end of an era of cheap cash in Hong Kong and could have an impact on the city's property market. PHOTO: AFP

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Level 8A, UFC Tower, Corner of Mahabandoola Road & Thein Phyu Road,  
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Dated 28<sup>th</sup> September 2018

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Level 8A, Union Financial Centre (UFC),  
Corner of Mahabandoola Road & Thein Phyu Road,  
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The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Dated 28 September 2018

hh@kcyangon.com

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# The End of Plastic: Eco-fashion becomes catwalk reality

PARIS—It may have been a long time coming, but eco-fashion is no longer a hippie pipe dream.

Biker jackets made from pineapple leaves and leather tanned with olive extract rather than hugely polluting chemicals are now within reach, experts say.

Everyone from young avant garde designers to the big-name brands are racing to hop on the bandwagon, with trainers with soles made from recycled plastic bottles already selling by the million.

Last year alone Adidas sold one million of its Parley trainers—made from plastic fished from the ocean—and the German sportswear giant is ramping up production of a range of similarly recycled styles.

And on Wednesday Yolanda Zobel, the new designer at the futuristic French brand Courreges, did the “unthinkable” and declared that she was doing away with the space-age vinyl that has been the label’s stock and trade since the 1960s.

After a final numbered capsule collection called “Fin de Plastique” (The End of Plastic) that will count down its stocks of vinyl, the German will try to source sustainable or recycled versions of the shiny fabric. “There’s no better world coming if we don’t take actions today,” Zobel said. Attitudes to eco-fashion have “totally changed in the last



Premiere Vision is a hugely influential twice-yearly trade fair in Paris. PHOTO: AFP

few years”, said Marina Coutelan, who helps run Premiere Vision, a hugely influential twice-yearly trade fair in Paris where the movers and shakers of the fashion industry flock in search of new materials and ideas.

## Millennials driving change

With the millennials (those born between 1980 and 2000) now beginning to call the shots in the fashion industry, “we are seeing lots of trendy products from sustainable materials because they have grown up with the idea that we need to be eco-responsible”, Coutelan told AFP.

A case in point are rising stars Rushemy Botter and Lisi Herrebrugh, the Dutch pair who have just been headhunted to take over the Nina Ricci Paris fashion house. “Sustainable fashion was always talked

about,” said 28-year-old Herrebrugh. “Now it is something we can see.”

Their own Botter brand makes hats, scarves and jackets from recycled plastic bags and bottles often found in the sea—a cause dear to Botter, who was born on the Caribbean island of Curacao.

High street chains may still be obsessed with fast, throwaway fashion, but luxury brands are leading the way in trying to rethink the business, said Coutelan.

She points to the French giant Kering, which owns Gucci, Saint Laurent, Balenciaga and Alexander McQueen among others, as one of the pioneers of sustainability.

## Second biggest polluter

“It has reduced its environmental impact by a quarter and hopes to cut

it by 40 percent by 2025,” she said. Even so, fashion is still by some measures the second most polluting industry the world.

Kering until recently owned a 50 percent stake in Stella McCartney, the label that has pushed the ethical and environmental envelope the furthest, refusing to use fur, leather or feathers.

The British designer uses recycled wool and polyester made from plastic water bottles, and intends to stop using “virgin” nylon entirely within two years and new polyester by 2025. Invitations for her Paris fashion week show on Monday proclaim that “Green is the new black” and feature a new cartoon where she stars with Minnie The Minx in a story extolling the virtues of regenerated cashmere.

McCartney told AFP that she would like to go

faster but “the technology we need to reach this point is not yet available in a sustainable and circular way.”

Campaigners say there are multiple ways to make sustainable clothes.—AFP ■

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

### SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Date : 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2018

Invitation for Bids

IDA, Credit No : 5727-MM

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

7. All bids must be accompanied by “Bid-Security”

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

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

## CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V MAERSK WIESBADEN VOY. NO. (1823/1824)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MAERSK WIESBADEN VOY. NO. (1823/1824) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T./M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

## CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V UNI AMPLE VOY. NO. (0260-462W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V UNI AMPLE VOY. NO. (0260-462W/E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

## Wooden library lures bookworms outside Beijing

BEIJING— Deep in the heart of a valley surrounded by rocky hills, a wooden library sits just over a creek on the outskirts of Beijing, seemingly in the middle of nowhere.

Every weekend, hundreds of bookworms flock to Liyuan Library in Jiaojiehe village, a book sanctuary surrounded by chestnut, walnut and peach trees whose branches were used to decorate the building.

The lush environment is what first drew architect Li Xiaodong to the village — the library

has a steel and glass base but its facade is clad with branches and twigs arranged in vertical rows. Visitors cross a narrow wooden bridge which leads to a bright and airy space, sunlight seeping in through gaps in the uneven wood, a design feature.

Bookshelves that double up as walls line the reading area — basically one large room — and readers lounge with tomes on the floor or on elevated platforms.

With space for just 40 people at a time, visitors stand in line to enter the library, which only

opens on weekends.

The library, which opened in April 2012, draws hundreds of visitors every weekend, many of whom are attracted by the design, which makes for great pictures on social media.

“We have now banned taking pictures inside, as some people come here just for taking pictures. They even come in costumes, that’s really disturbing,” owner Pan Xi told AFP.

“We still want to give those who love reading a conducive environment.”—AFP ■



Every weekend, hundreds of bookworms flock to Liyuan Library on the outskirts of Beijing. PHOTO: AFP



French director Claude Lelouch is working on a second sequel to his 1966 hit “A Man and a Woman”. PHOTO: AFP

## Elderly stars give love one last go in sequel to film classic

CAEN — French director Claude Lelouch has started shooting a sequel to his classic romance “A Man and a Woman” with the same actors, 52 years after the original was a box office smash.

The movie has gone down in film legend for its theme tune of the same name, with its “chabadabada, chabadabada” refrain. Lelouch’s production company confirmed Wednesday that filming had begun in Deauville on the northern French coast, the same resort where the 1966 double-Oscar-winning love story unfolds.

Its co-stars Anouk Aimee, now 86, and 87-year-old Jean-Louis Trintignant have both taken up their original roles as a widow

and a widower who refind love.

Lelouch told AFP that he wanted to go back to the heart-breaking story one more time after making a first sequel, “A Man and a Woman: 20 Years Later”, in 1986. “In this film I want to tell how life is stronger than death.

“A Man and a Woman” is a homage to life. It is a love story that tells us that there is always a second chance,” he said earlier.

“The same actors have retaken up their roles. The script is secret, it will be a surprise,” his production company Films 13 said in a statement. As well as its double Oscar victory, the original film won two Golden Globes and the Palme d’Or at the Cannes film festival.—AFP ■

## Saint Laurent walks on water at Paris fashion week

PARIS — Anthony Vaccarello made a splash by having his models walk on water for his Saint Laurent Paris fashion week show Tuesday.

The Belgian designer may have divided opinion since he took over from the “Sultan of Skinny” Hedi Slimane at the French label two years ago, but there was no doubting the chutzpah of his spring summer collection.

Anthony Vaccarello made a splash by having his models walk on water for his Saint Laurent Paris fashion week show Tuesday.

The Belgian designer may have divided opinion since he took over from the “Sultan of Skinny” Hedi Slimane at the French label two years ago, but there was no doubting the chutzpah of his spring summer collection.

With the Eiffel Tower glittering in the background, Vaccarello sent his models down a flooded open-air runway bordered by neon palm trees.

Known for his hyper-sexy leggy aesthetic and for never using an inch of fabric more than the most elastic definition of decency requires, the designer insisted on

his addition to the power dresser’s wardrobe — black leather hot pants.

For those with doubts, they also come in snake skin.

There were also splashes of unaccustomed colour from a man who has up to now at Saint Laurent mainly stuck to a leather-heavy two-tone diet of black

and white.

With actress Charlotte Gainsbourg, models Kate Moss, Cindy Crawford, Korean star Lee Sung Kyung and former French first lady Carla Bruni in the front row, Vaccarello went as far as matching a red retro jacket with a green spotty blouse.

A hippy chic 1970s vibe seemed to spill over from Saint Laurent’s Kering stable mate Gucci — minus the irony.

Lots of red and blue velvet, hussar jackets and wide-brimmed hats summoned up the dying days of flower power.

But despite the oddly disarmingly innocent Jean Seberg/young Mia Farrow look, it still remained Vaccarello, who cannot help himself turning out killer rock chick party animal silhouettes.

As Indian fashion critic Manish D Mishra tweeted dryly, the show was all “nipples blazing and python boots flashing”.—AFP ■



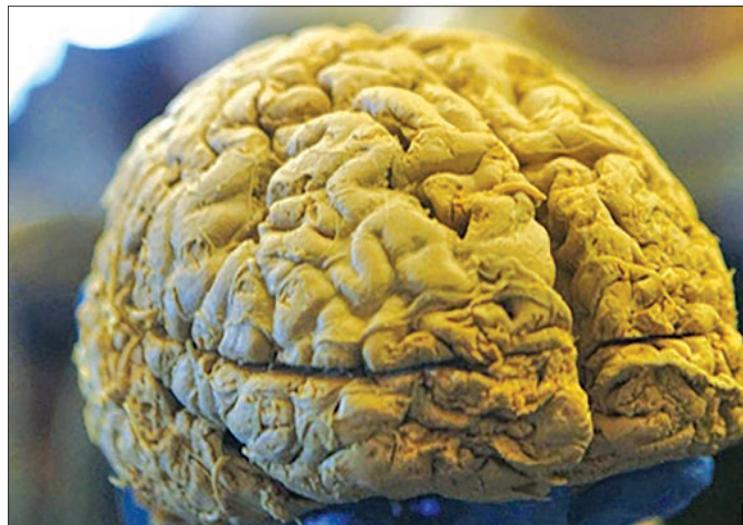
Models walked on water for the Saint Laurent Paris fashion week show. PHOTO: AFP

# Scientists find how brain encodes speech, closing to making brain-speech machine interface

WASHINGTON — American researchers have unlocked new information about how the brain encoded speech, moving closer to developing speech-brain machine interface that can decode the commands the brain is sending to the tongue, palate, lips and larynx.

The study published on Wednesday in the *Journal of Neuroscience* revealed that the brain controls speech production in a similar manner to how it controls the production of arm and hand movements.

Northwestern University researchers recorded signals from two parts of the brain and decoded what these signals represented. They found that the brain represented both the goals of what we are trying to say (speech sounds like “pa” and “ba”) and the individual movements that we use to achieve those goals (how we move our



American researchers have unlocked new information about how the brain encoded speech. PHOTO: XINHUA

lips, palate, tongue and larynx).

The different representations occur in two different parts of the brain.

The discovery could potentially help people like the late Stephen Hawking communicate more intuitively with an effective brain machine interface (BMI)

and those people with speech disorders like apraxia of speech.

“This can help us build better speech decoders for BMIs, which will move us closer to our goal of helping people that are locked-in speak again,” said the paper’s lead author Marc Slutzky, associate professor of

neurology and of physiology at Northwestern.

Speech is composed of individual sounds, called phonemes, which are produced by coordinated movements of the lips, tongue, palate and larynx. However, scientists didn’t know exactly how these movements, called articulatory gestures, are planned by the brain.

Slutzky and his colleagues found speech motor areas of the brain had a similar organization to arm motor areas of the brain.

Scientists recorded brain signals from the cortical surface using electrodes placed in patients undergoing brain surgery to remove brain tumors, keeping the patients awake during surgery and asking them to read words. After the surgery, scientists marked the times when the patients produced phonemes and gestures.

Then they used the re-

corded brain signals from each cortical area to decode which phonemes and gestures had been produced, and measured the decoding accuracy.

The brain signals in the pre-central cortex were more accurate at decoding gestures than phonemes, while those in the inferior frontal cortex, a higher level speech area, were equally good at decoding both phonemes and gestures, according to the study.

This finding helped support linguistic models of speech production and guide engineers in designing brain machine interfaces to decode speech from these brain areas.

The next step for the research is to develop an algorithm for brain machine interfaces that would not only decode gestures but also combine those decoded gestures to form words.—Xinhua ■

## Japan firm signs with SpaceX for lunar missions

TOKYO — A Japanese start-up is to send spacecraft to the moon in a deal signed with Elon Musk’s SpaceX, the Tokyo-based firm said Wednesday. Private lunar exploration company ispace said it would blast a lander and rovers towards the moon on a SpaceX rocket on two separate missions.

The spaceware will first orbit the moon in mid-2020, followed by a moon landing attempt set for mid-2021.

It comes a week after SpaceX confirmed Japanese billionaire Yusaku Maezawa will be the first man to fly around the moon on a SpaceX rocket as early as 2023.

“We share the vision with SpaceX of enabling humans to live in space, so we’re very glad they will join us in this first step of our journey,” ispace CEO Takeshi Hakamada said in a statement.

Hakamada also told reporters the company chose SpaceX as it is “highly credible” and “capable”. SpaceX President Gwynne Shotwell said in a statement that the company is “proud to have been selected by ispace to launch their first lunar missions”.—AFP ■

## Ending decades of doubt, ‘biggest bird’ dispute put to nest

PARIS — After more than a century of conflicting evidence, Anglo-French animosity and a H.G. Wells novella involving murder most fowl, scientists said Wednesday they have finally solved the riddle of the world’s largest bird.

For 60 million years the colossal, flightless elephant bird — *Aepyornis maximus* — stalked the savannah and rainforests of Madagascar until it was hunted to extinction around 1,000 years ago.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a new breed of buccaneering European zoologist obsessed over the creature, pillaging skeletons and fossilised eggs to prove they had discovered the biggest bird on Earth. But a study released Wednesday by British scientists suggests that one species of elephant bird was even larger than previously thought, with a specimen weighing an estimated 860 kilogrammes (1,895 pounds) — about the same as a fully grown giraffe. “They would have towered over people,” James Hansford, lead author at the Zoological Society of London, told AFP. “They definitely couldn’t fly as they couldn’t have supported anywhere near their weight.”

In the study, published in the journal *Royal Society Open*

*Science*, Hansford examined elephant bird bones found around the world, feeding their dimensions into a machine-learned algorithm to create a spread of expected animal sizes.

Until now, the largest-ever elephant bird was described in 1894 by the British scientist C.W. Andrews as *Aepyornis titan* — a larger species of *Aepyornis maximus*. But a French rival of Andrews dismissed the discovery of titan as just an outsized *maximus* specimen, and for decades the debate remained deadlocked.

Hansford said his research proved titan was indeed a different species. But he also found that its bones were so distinct from other elephant bird specimens that titan was in fact an entirely separate genus. Named *Vorombe titan* — Malagasy for “big bird” — the creature would have stood at least three metres (10 feet) tall, and had an average weight of 650 kilogrammes, making it the largest bird genus yet uncovered.

“At the extreme extent we found one bone that really pushed the limits of what we now understand about bird size,” said Hansford, referring to the 860-kilogramme specimen. “And

there were some that led up to that too, so it’s not an outlier — there was a range of masses that are extraordinarily large.”

### Extinct, but not forgotten

A close cousin of the now-extinct moa in New Zealand, the elephant bird belonged to the same family of flightless animals that to-

day includes the kiwi, emu and ostrich. Its petrified eggs still fetch large sums at auction, and it stars in Wells’ 1895 work “*Aepyornis Island*” alongside a pugnacious mercenary named Butcher who improbably ends up living with — and eventually killing — one of the creatures.—AFP ■



Big bird: One species of elephant bird stood over three-metres tall and could weigh as much as a fully grown giraffe. PHOTO: AFP

## Juventus extend Serie A streak, Roma back winning

MILAN—Paulo Dybala and Blaise Matuidi scored early as Juventus extended their perfect start to their Serie A title defence to six games on Wednesday with a 2-0 win over Bologna, as Roma ended their losing streak with a 4-0 success over promoted Frosinone.

The reigning champions have a maximum 18 points, three ahead of Napoli who beat Parma 3-0, with the top two set to go head-to-head in Turin on Saturday.

“We made some mistakes at the end of the match and we were sometimes vulnerable,” said Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri.

“On Saturday it’s a head-to-head with Napoli and it’ll certainly be a great game. I don’t have a line-up in my head right now, as on Friday in training we’ll see everyone together and decide.”

Lazio are third, a further three points adrift, after their fourth win on the trot 2-1 against Udinese ahead of this weekend’s Roman derby against Roma.



Off the mark: Paulo Dybala gets his first goal this season for Juventus.

PHOTO: AFP

Roma, meanwhile, eased the pressure on under-fire coach Eusebio Di Francesco achieving their first three points since their season-opener against Torino over a month ago.

“This is a new beginning for us, a new season has started,” said Di Francesco.

In Turin, Dybala got a rare start up front alongside superstar Cristiano Ronaldo and lashed home his first goal of the season

after 12 minutes in the Allianz Stadium.

The Argentine had initially teed up Matuidi but Lukasz Skorupski cleared the Frenchman’s effort before Dybala acrobatically turned the ball in himself.

Five minutes later World Cup winner Matuidi got his chance to add a second following a Ronaldo cross, with the Portuguese forward having a shot cleared off the near post by Skorupski.—AFP ■

## Myanmar to play against world-class Bolivia football team

AS part of preparations for participating in the 2018 Suzuki Cup, Myanmar national selected men’s football team will play a friendly match against Bolivia national team in Yangon, according to Myanmar Football Federation (MFF).

At present, Myanmar Football Federation and Bolivia Football Federation (BFF) are communicating with FIFA, CONMEBOL and AFC for ensuring that the warm-up match will come true. Further information about the friendly match will soon be released in details, said MFF. The friendly match against one of the South American national football teams will be the first-ever in Myanmar football chronicle. The warm-up match is scheduled at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon at 6 pm on October 13. A grandstand seat is fixed at K5000 and an ordinary seat at K3000 in order to enjoy the historic football match. MRTV and some broadcasting channels are planning to telecast live this friendly match. Bolivia stands at 58<sup>th</sup> position in the world football ranking and played the World Cup in 1930, 1950 and 1994. The current squad is comprised of most players from internal leagues, and renowned players are goalie Carlos Lampe (Huachipato-Chile), and strikers Marcelo Moreno (Wuhan Zall-China), Gilberto Alvarez (Al-Hazen-Saudi), Bruno Miranda (D.C.United-U.S).

Bolivia managed to beat Argentina, Chile, and Paraguay in home matches and was held to a goalless draw with Brazil in South American zone of the 2018 World Cup qualifier matches. Among football powerhouses of the world, Bolivia is a home robust team and has possessed better records of hammering powerhouse teams.

Myanmar national football team will have a rare chance of exhibiting a warm-up match against rival Bolivia. Myanmar football audience will have the chance to cheer home team playing against a world-class South African team on its home soil.—Htut Htut (Twante)

## Barca and Madrid endure surprise La Liga defeats

MADRID—Barcelona conceded twice in 68 seconds and Real Madrid were three down at half-time as La Liga’s two title favourites were each stunned by surprise defeats on Wednesday.

Barca’s 2-1 loss to relegation fighters Leganes was the greater shock but Madrid’s beating was more emphatic, blown away by Sevilla during a torrid 39 minutes at the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan.

For both, it was their first defeat of the season and for both, defensive fragility was the key factor and a major concern with the second round of Champions League games to come next week.

By the end, Atletico Madrid, who had cruised to victory over Huesca on Tuesday and play Real on Saturday, were the biggest winners. After a stuttering start, Diego Simeone’s side will jump above Real with a win at the Santiago Bernabeu.

Sevilla can be a formidable opponent on their own patch but few expected Leganes to inflict what was only Barcelona’s second league defeat in 17 months.

Gerard Pique committed the decisive error, his fluffed clearance allowing Oscar Rodriguez to score Leganes’ second goal in two incredible minutes at Estadio Municipal de Butarque.

Nabil El Zhar had nodded in an equaliser just 68 seconds before and by the end Philippe Coutin-

ho’s sumptuous early volley was reduced to little more than a footnote.

After drawing at home to Girona on Sunday, albeit with 10 men, Ernesto Valverde’s selection also came under scrutiny, after he opted to rotate for the second time in three days.

Against Girona, it was Coutinho, Ivan Rakitic and Samuel Umtiti on the bench and just as they all had to be called upon in the second half at the Camp Nou, so were Luis Suarez and Jordi Alba this time.

“Of course the coach is responsible, a losing coach always feels responsible,” Valverde said. “But obviously it is easy now to talk about the rotations—in the end, matches are analysed on results—but you can’t win the league with only eleven players.”

Barcelona face Athletic Bilbao on Saturday and then Tottenham at Wembley in the Champions League four days later but one point from two of La Liga’s lesser opponents is a concern. So is the form of Pique, who was also at fault against Girona and will almost certainly start with Umtiti sus-



Barcelona’s Argentinian forward Lionel Messi vies with Leganes’ Spanish midfielder Mikel Vesga (R) during the Spanish league football match Club Deportivo Leganes SAD against FC Barcelona at the Estadio Municipal Butarque in Leganes on the outskirts of Madrid on 26 September 2018. PHOTO: AFP