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President to visit Indonesia in the near future

AT the invitation of His Excellency Mr. Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia, President U Win Myint of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar will visit Indonesia in the near future to attend the ASEAN Leaders' gathering to be held in Bali. — MNA ■

State Counsellor visits Kokoron business group

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visited Kokoron business group at Izumizaki village, Fukushima Prefecture, Japan, yesterday.

The State Counsellor is currently in Japan to attend the 10th Mekong-Japan Summit and hold bilateral talks.

Accompanied by Union Ministers U Thaung Tun and U Kyaw Tin, deputy ministers U Min Thu and U Hset Aung, Myanmar Ambassador to Japan U Thurein Thant Zin, Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Ichiro Maruyama and officials, the State Counsellor arrived at Shinshirakawa Station by bullet train at 10.52 am local standard time.

On arrival at Kokoron business group by car, the State Counsellor and delegation were welcomed by Vice Governor Mr Masaki Suzuki of Fukushima Prefecture and Director General of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Mr Yoshinori Suzuki, followed by a bilateral introductory session.

The Director General extended words of greetings. The Vice Governor presented a report on the progress in rebuilding the region, after it was hit by an earthquake in 2011, Mr Kuboki of



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi observing crop fields at Kokoron business group, Izumizaki village. PHOTO: MNA

Izumizaki village on salient points of the village, and Mr Seki and Ms Kumada of Kokoron business group on the structure of the group and its business operations and business partners.

After having a taste of the farm food produced by the group,

the State Counsellor and delegation asked information about the group. The Director General, the Vice Governor and officials gave answers.

After posing for documentary photo together with the Vice Governor, the Director General

and officials, the State Counsellor and delegation visited the crop fields there.

Located in the south of Fukushima Prefecture, Izumizaki village has an area of 35.43 square kilometers. It is 200 kilometers from Tokyo. A total of 6,338 people

— 3,122 males and 3,216 females — of 2,140 households are living in it.

The main crops of the agro-based village are rice and vegetables. Thanks to the bullet trains and highways, the village is also carrying out production business.

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Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker arrives back from Germany



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein being welcomed back by officials. **PHOTO: MNA**

AT THE invitation of Hanns Seidel Foundation, a Myanmar delegation led by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein visited Germany and arrived back at Yangon

International Airport yesterday evening.

The delegation was welcomed back by Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun, Deputy Speaker U Lin Nang Myint and officials.

Members of the delegation Amyotha Hluttaw representative U Aung Kyi Nyunt, Pyithu Hluttaw representative Dr. Daw Than Ngwe and officials from Hluttaw office also arrived back on the same flight.—MNA ■

Chair, member of Independent Commission of Enquiry depart from Myanmar



Ambassador Rosario Manalo (center right) being seen off by officials at Yangon International Airport yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

CHAIRPERSON of the Independent Commission of Enquiry, former Deputy Foreign Minister of the Philippines, former Chair and current Representative of the Philippines to CEDAW, Ambassador Rosario Manalo and member of the commission, former Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, former Permanent Represent-

ative of Japan to the United Nations Ambassador Mr. Kenzo Oshima departed from Yangon yesterday at 5:30 pm.

The Chairperson and member were seen off by Director-General of Strategic Studies and Training Department Daw Kay Thi Soe and responsible officials at Yangon International Airport.—MNA ■

Rakhine State Chief Minister meets local people in Yathedaung Tsp

RAKHINE State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu and party visited Kanaung Gyi Village in Yathedaung Township and met with local people at a monastery in the village.

During the meeting, the Rakhine State Chief Minister focused on socio-economic developments of the local people and peace and law enforcement,

along with the region's development in education, health, agriculture and livestock and breeding sectors.

Afterwards, attendees stated some necessities of the region and responsible officials sought solutions to the issues, followed by the Chief Minister's coordination.

Afterwards, the Chief Min-

ister and party also met with local people in Ywarhit Kay Village and Hteeswel Village.

During the meeting, necessities of the local people were discussed, and the Chief Minister and party donated Ks 3 million for a temporary school building in Hteeswel Village, it is learnt.—IPRD (Yathedaung) ■



Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu meeting with local people in Yathedaung Township yesterday. **PHOTO: IPRD (YATHEDAUNG)**

US group visits Maungtaw Township



Mr Heizman Richard Charies and group visiting a monastery in Taung Pyo Letwe town yesterday. **PHOTO: TAUNG PYO IPRD**

MR Heizman Richard Charies and group from the United States, gathering information in Taung Pyo Letwe town, arrived at a monastery in the afternoon and documented the monastery, classrooms and other buildings that were damaged during the terrorist attacks in

Rakhine State. They also documented burnt-out villages and interviewed the local ethnic people. They left at 3.30 pm.

Mr Heizman Richard Charies and group will also collect information at Mingyi and Tulaturi villages in Maungtaw Township.—Taungpyo IPRD ■

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Rakhine State issue

We are capable of handling our national affairs not only by utilising our sovereign power, but also by being able and willing to do so.

Myanmar respects the sovereignty and dignity of each individual nation, and therefore it will continuously work towards fostering closer friendships that will contribute towards global peace and the improvement of international relations. In this regard, it is also crucial to follow international laws and agreements.

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

State Counsellor visits Kokoron business group

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The village has a healthcare program for elder people beginning from sexagenarians, free medical treatment for juveniles up to age 18, and backpacks and dinner provision program for primary students.

Moreover, the village has complete healthcare services for people age 75 and above and

disabled persons age 65 and over. As for the healthcare of the people age 74 and below, 40 percent of the cash assistance comes from age-wise healthcare funds, 50 percent from the government and 10 percent from health insurance.

Regional business attractions, accommodation programs and public health and enjoyment programs are being carried out



State Counsellor discussing special matters with Kokoron business group officials in Japan yesterday.

PHOTO: MNA



State Counsellor and party pose for a documentary photo together with officials from Kokoron business group in front of the Kokoron business group office. PHOTO: MNA

as prevention against population decrease.

More people are migrating to the village, thanks to environmental conservation activities and the transport links.

Kokoron was set up in 2002 as a non-profit organization. Its goals include generation of job opportunities for people with disabilities and provision of social needs, including housing, food and clothing. The village is running the Living Support Center: Kokoron and the Kokoron-Ya coffee shop as a means of creating occupational opportunities for the disabled persons.

Living Support Center:

Kokoron was established on 1 March 2004 with the aim of supporting people with disabilities and their daily lives in the community through generation of job opportunities.

The Center is hosting talks, job hunting activities, information sharing programs and group-wise activities. The aim of the Kokoron-Ya coffee shop is to promote public health through the distribution of fresh and delicious local agricultural produce.

The State Counsellor and delegation arrived back in Tokyo by bullet train in the evening.

— MNA ■

Press Release: Independent Commission of Enquiry holds third meeting

THE Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE) held their third meeting from 5 to 7 October 2018, in Myanmar.

The Commission met with U Myint Swe, Vice President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Chairman of the Investigation Commission for Maungdaw in Rakhine State (Maungdaw Investigation Commission 2016) and Major General Tun Tun Nyi, Directorate of Public Relations and

Psychological Warfare. ICOE had a working session with U Tun Myat, former member of Maungdaw Investigation Commission in Rakhine State and member of Advisory Board to the Committee for Implementation of the Recommendation on Rakhine State.

During these dialogues, ICOE learned about the experiences and work of the Maungdaw Investigation Commission 2016 which may have relevance

to the work of ICOE. ICOE was appreciative of the openness and willingness to cooperate and collaborate by sharing detailed information and reports of investigations done by the Military and the Maungdaw Investigation Commission 2016. There were candid discussions on the efforts done by the Government to facilitate the repatriation of those who have fled to Bangladesh from as early as November 2017.

The Members of ICOE discussed and agreed on their proposed methodology for investigating the allegations of human rights violation and related issues following the terrorist attacks in Rakhine State. They exchanged views on the key points and issues that ought to be examined. ICOE will start initial steps to gather and analyse information and evidence by setting up a sub-committee. They also discussed the need for

external experts in such areas as information and communication; legal, forensic and criminal investigation.

The fourth meeting of ICOE is scheduled for December 2018.

The website of ICOE will be launched on 12 October 2018.

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Mandalay Business Forum 2018 to be held

MANDALAY Business Forum 2018 will be held on 9 November at Mandalay Convention Center, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

The forum is jointly organized by Myanmar Investment Committee, Mandalay Region government and Mandalay Region Investment Committee (MRIC), supported by New Starlight Group of Companies.

It aims to promote trade and investment for the development of Mandalay Region, showcase business opportunities in Man-

dalay Region, familiarize new business law and regulations and the investment environment of Mandalay Region and widen network between foreign investors and local business communities.

At the event, high-level speakers, officials from the government side and the leading people from the private sector will deliver keynote speeches.

Additionally, there will be site visit tours on 10 November to Myotha Industrial Zone, New Mandalay Resort City Project, Pyin Oo Lwin, Kandawgyi Na-

tional Park and some potential investment areas.

Mandalay, a trading and logistics hub in Upper Myanmar and the second largest city with a population of over 1.2 million people, has set its sight on further industrialization and enhancement of its economic condition as the country is a member country of Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS). It can bring many investment opportunities in the region as it is centrally located and a trade hub in Myanmar.

DICA is holding investment

fairs in order to spur development more evenly among all states and regions.

It has been meeting with both local and international investors to explain the latest developments, such as the recent enactment of the new Myanmar Investment Law and the new opportunities available for investments. Regional and state investment committees have been granting permission to local and foreign investments which do not exceed an initial investment of Ks6 billion or US\$ 5 million. — GNLM ■

Ks25 billion estimated for building transport facilities in Myeik

AUTHORITIES will spend roughly Ks25 billion budget, constructing transport facilities throughout Myeik District in Taninthayi Region within the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

Under the organization of the Ministry of Construction, 89 roads and 60 bridges will be built across the district through its

Road Management Department and Rural Road Development Department.

According to the plan, the ministry's Road Management Department will implement 18 road construction projects and 11 bridge projects with the use of about Ks4.96 billion, whereas about Ks11 billion budgets will

go to the Rural Road Development Department to construct 49 roads and 17 bridges. Special team No. 24 of the Road Management Department will carry out 22 road construction projects plus 32 bridge projects with the use of around Ks9.5 billion budget. For the sake of transparency, in the presence

of MPs, departmental officials, invited guests and tenderers, the first tender was opened on 5 October at the Road Management Department to purchase diesel, tar and gravel, cement, iron rod, wood, sand and other conduction materials for the whole project.—Khin Htoo (Myeik IPRD) ■

Illegal handgun, bullets found in Tachilek



Suspects Aike Wun Lee and Aike Than seen together with the illegal handgun and bullets. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

TWO men have been arrested on Saturday night after police found a handgun and bullets from them during security operations in Tachilek Town in eastern Shan State.

During the operations, local police stopped and searched a suspected vehicle driven by an 18-year-old Aike Wun Lee with Aike Than, 45, sitting in the front passenger seat, near traffic light in Haungleik Junc-

tion at around 11.20pm on 6 October, which resulted in one Glock pistol and seven bullets being found on Aike Than's body.

Police said both men are residents of Wunpon Village in Tachilek.

Action has been taken against the two suspects by the town's police, according to Shan State Arms Order 12 (a). — Maung Yin Kye ■

Men in Pinlebu charged for possession of opium powder

TWO men have been arrested on Saturday night after police found a cache of some packages of white opium powder from them, according to a police report.

Acting on a tip-off, town police stopped two suspected motorbikes between mile posts No. 40/1 and 40/2 on Pinlebu-Kawlin road near Tonphala Village at around 11.30pm on 6 October.

They found 660 grams of white opium powder with

an estimated value of Ks66 million hidden in the motorbike driven by one Sein Myint Aung and Ks76,000 from another motorcyclist Myo Myint.

Police are still investigating the case in an attempt to uncover those in connection with drug smuggling.

The two suspects have been charged under the existing Narcotics and Psychotropic Drugs Law. — Lu Aung (Katha) ■



The two suspects seen together with seized opium powder packages. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

MAMDA suggests car import criteria

By May Thet Hnin

DR. Soe Tun, chair of Myanmar Automobile Manufacturers and Distributors Association (MAMDA), put forward nine points regarding automobile import at the 20th meeting between the Private Sector Development Committee, led by Vice President U Myint Swe, and entrepreneurs, held on 6 October.

He requested that authorities reissue Yangon car registration license, which has been suspended, for newly imported cars and vehicles at sales centers and showrooms, as people have to purchase Yangon slip (import

permit to register in Yangon Region) at an exorbitant price for family-used cars, in return for deregistration of old vehicles.

"It's been a year now, since October of last year, that we stated our concern for delays in Yangon registration system, which is known as the Yangon Vehicle Quota Certificate (YVQC), and we are now putting forward the issue again. Yangon Region government has responded that they still do not have an exact answer, but that the regional government is discussing with the Ministry of Commerce", explained Dr. Soe Tun. Prices of imported cars are high, as the prices are set only

after they are shipped and the dealers have to wait for the car's estimated value. The government should cut red tape, such as a car's estimated value and double-check the value when they are claimed at the port. Therefore, he requested authorities to set the car price, according to purchase agreement and invoice.

Additionally, even though online Myanmar Automated Cargo Clearance System (MACCS) for import/export businesses is already being practiced, paper work is still rampant, causing delays. He suggested that only online MACCS be used for processing. Some motor cars are

found to have installed new auto parts when accidents happen, consuming time and money to be inspected again by the Road Transport Administration Department (RTAD). As a result of this, it would be better if the RTAD collects fines for changing body parts like before, and issue certificate or markings to vehicles that they have examined.

Moreover, he also asked authorities to consider deduction in deposit for sales centers and the prescribed dimension and warehouse criteria.

Additionally, some car sales centers that have already paid their tax have requested per-

mission to close down their operations as they do not receive any information of those vehicles that they are in the process of importing under the consignment system and yet they still have to remit money to foreign dealers.

There are many consignment cars which were imported in 2017 under previous car import policy and they are facing difficulties to get licenses due to high price of slips. Therefore, Dr Soe Tun requested that a new system be practiced to replace the slip system. Finally, he also asked authorities to reduce the fines for those who are late in claiming the containers at the port. ■

Onion price soars as export plunges

ONION export plunged down in September due to high price, compared to August's export volume, according to Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization (Myantrade).

The export price of onion climbed up at Muse border gate with the onion price in domestic market soaring. Onion export fetched 1,950 Yuan in August, whereas the price peaked to a high of 3,500 Yuan in September.

In September, over 3,750 tons

of onions were exported through Muse, which decreased from August's export volume of over 5,720 tons. On 4 October, six trucks loaded with 96 tons of onion entered the Muse trade zone, with a minimum price of 3,100 Yuan and the highest at 3,350 Yuan.

The onion price hike in the domestic market was attributed to low supply in September, as unseasonal rains this year caused flooding in the onion plantations.

— GNLM ■



Labourers carrying sacks of onions on their shoulders. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

Sesame seeds export increase, price remains stable last month

EXPORT of various sesame seeds at Muse gate last month surpassed August's volume, with the price remaining stable, according to Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization (Myantrade). Export to China of various sesame seeds through Muse border gate was registered at 222 tons in September, while Muse gate witnessed 95 tons in August. Meanwhile, the prices remained stable during the past two months, with an estimated value of 10,000 Yuan per ton.

China buys 90 per cent of various coloured sesame seeds, while black sesame seeds are purchased by Japan.

Prices for sesame seeds (some varieties) and black sesame seeds reached a three-year

record high in early September due to high demand when there was a shortage of supply, according to Mandalay market.

The price was Ks155,000 per three-basket bag at the opening time in early July. Then, it gradually increased starting from August and reached up to Ks200,000 in early September.

Nevertheless, prices slipped in the first week of October. Sesame seeds are highly produced in recent days with 750-800 bags daily traded in Magway Region.

Sesame crops are cultivated throughout the year. Magway Region, gaining a reputation as oil pot of Myanmar, is the main producer of sesame seeds which are also cultivated in Mandalay and Sagaing regions.— GNLM ■

Border trade value exceeds \$4.2 billion

THE value of Myanmar's border trade conducted over a time-span from 1 April to 30 September, the six-month interim period prior to this 2018-2019 financial year (FY), reached US\$4.2 billion, recording an increase of \$451 million, compared to the figure in the same period of last FY, according to the statistical report of the Ministry of Commerce.

The total border trade value included a sum of \$2.7 billion in exports and \$1.5 billion in imports. Compared with the last FY, export earnings went up by more than \$384 million, while the import value increased by \$66 million.

This time last year, border trade was valued at \$3.8 bil-

lion. Myanmar conducts border trade with China through the border points of Muse, Lwejel, Kanpikete, Chinshwehaw and Kengtung. The country engages in border trade with Thailand through the gateways of Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee and Mawtaung border gates. The cross-border trade camps between Myanmar and Bangladesh are Sittway and Maungtaung, whereas the country trades directly with India through the Tamu and Reed border gates.

Among all the gateways, the Muse border gate sees the largest volume and value of total border trade, with an estimated value of more than \$2.96 billion during the six-

month interim period, followed by Myawady with \$415 million and Chinshwehaw with \$153 million.

The value of border trade at the Lwejel, Chinshwehaw, Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Maungtaung and Reed stations decreased during the six-month interim period.

Myanmar primarily exports agricultural products, animal products, forest products, minerals, fishery products, manufactured goods and other products, while capital goods, raw industrial materials and consumer products are imported into the country. Currently, some 80 per cent of the country's external trade is carried out through sea routes.—Zwe ■

Global manufacturing PMI drops in September

BEIJING — The world's manufacturing sector expanded at a slower pace in September mainly due to dropping global investment and trade, a Chinese association said Saturday.

The global manufacturing purchasing managers' index (PMI) came in at 54.3 in September, down 0.7 points from August and down 1.6 points from a year ago, the China Federation of

Logistics and Purchasing said in a statement.

A reading above 50 indicates expansion, while a reading below reflects contraction.

"The world's manufacturing sector continued to see relatively fast growth, but the pace of growth has slowed quarter by quarter," the federation said.

In the third quarter of 2018, global manufacturing PMI averaged at 54.5, down from 54.7 in Q2 and 55.7 in Q1, the statement said. —Xinhua ■

US economy booms as elections near, but who gets credit?

WASHINGTON — Control of the US Congress hangs in the balance in hard-fought midterm elections next month. And, even with a booming economy, the party in power does not have the wind at its back.

The lowest unemployment level in nearly 50 years has also not substantially lifted President Donald Trump's standing in opinion polls, and he remains among the least popular US leaders of the last 70 years.

Forecasts point to solid chances that Democrats could wrest control of the House of Representatives away from Republicans, drastically shifting the political landscape in Washington.

Below are some facts on the recent run of the world's largest economy.

How good is the economy?

Quite. By most measures, it is unusually strong. US Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell said last week the outlook was "remarkably positive."

GDP grew at a 4.2 percent clip in the second quarter, the strongest in nearly four years and the fastest among advanced economies — though it was helped by a few one-off factors that are unlikely to be replicated later in the year.

The last time the unemployment rate was this low — 3.7 percent — president Richard Nixon was enacting tax reform and The Beatles were breaking up.

Inflation is rising only slowly, but enough to eat into wages, which also are growing sluggishly.

Job creation through September has averaged 218,000 net new positions a month so far this year, the fastest rate since 2015.

Consumer and business

confidence, as well as measures of services and manufacturing activity, are all at historically high levels. But the housing sector, which can be a leading indicator in the economic cycle, appears in decline, with building and sales steadily weakening.

Wall Street also has been very happy for much of the past 20 months, repeatedly smashing records. But economist Jared Bernstein, adviser to former Vice President Joe Biden, notes that prosperity has not been evenly shared. Corporate after-tax profits rose 14.9 percent in the first six quarters of the Trump era, but mid-level hourly wages gained only 0.5 percent in the same period.

Credit to Trump or Obama?

Economists caution against attributing economic performance, good or bad, solely to presidents.

Trump has forcefully claimed ownership for the current economy but it was former President Barack Obama who presided over most of the recovery.

"There's no question that there's a mixture of credit involved. President Obama took office during the worst downturn since the Great Depression," Douglas Holtz-Eakin, a Republican former director of the Congressional Budget Office, told AFP.

But Trump has slashed taxes and regulations to energize businesses, Holtz-Eakin said.

Following December's tax cuts and a big spending package enacted in February, the US economy does appear to be growing faster than it did in the prior two years — for now — and business investment picked up.—AFP ■

Global stocks fall as US bond yields continue to surge



Global stocks tumbled as US Treasury bond yields continue to surge. Photo: AFP

NEW YORK — US and European stocks tumbled Friday on worries about higher borrowing costs spurred by this week's sudden jump in US Treasury bond yields.

Markets remained focused on yields of the 10-year US Treasury, which rose for the third straight day, this time to 3.225 percent. Analysts said the sudden surge in interest rates had deepened worries about higher inflation and an uptick in costs for loans and mortgages.

Art Hogan, chief market strategist at B. Riley FBR, said the jump this week in yields had been "breakneck" and could be "disruptive" to stocks.

"The bond market has sold

off all week and interest rates have been pushing higher, because traders are worried the Fed is going to have to be more aggressive in its rate hikes," said FTN Financial's Chris Low. "That tightening fear is finally starting to spill over into stocks."

Among major US indices, the Nasdaq fell the most at 1.2 percent. Earlier, London, Paris and Frankfurt all lost at least one percent. The declines in stocks came after the US Labor Department estimated that the country added 134,000 net new positions last month, far weaker than analysts expected and a figure that was likely dented by Hurricane Florence. However, the unem-

ployment rate fell to 3.7 percent last month from 3.9 percent, an unusually large drop and the lowest reading since December 1969.

Analysts viewed the jobs report as good enough to keep the Federal Reserve on course to keep lifting interest rates. The jobs data also followed a trove of positive economic indicators released earlier in the week. Among individual stocks, Tesla Motors slumped 7.1 percent after Chief Executive Elon Musk mocked the US Securities and Exchange Commission on Twitter, sparking worries that an SEC settlement on fraud charges with Musk that let him remain CEO could fall apart.

In Europe meanwhile, shares in Danske Bank stumbled 6.2 percent in Copenhagen, a day after the lender revealed it was being investigated by the US Department of Justice over possible money laundering related to more than 200 billion euros (\$235 billion) that had moved through the Danish lender's Estonian branch.

In London, Unilever shares dipped after the Anglo-Dutch consumer giant axed post-Brexit plans to switch its London headquarters to Rotterdam owing to a shareholder revolt.—AFP ■

Oil giant Aramco IPO by 2021: Saudi crown prince to Bloomberg

RIYADH (Saudi Arabia) — Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said that oil giant Aramco's initial public offering will go ahead by early 2021 after reports emerged the plan had been scrapped, Bloomberg reported.

"I believe late 2020, early 2021," Prince Mohammed told Bloomberg in an interview published late Friday when asked

when he believed the IPO could be launched. "The investor will decide the price on the day. I believe it will be above \$2 trillion. Because it will be huge." The crown prince denied that the kingdom had halted the plan after a media report said that financial advisors working on it had been disbanded. "Everyone heard about the rumours of Saudi Arabia cancel-

ling the IPO of Aramco, delaying that, and that this is delaying Vision 2030," he said. "This is not right." The plan to float around five percent of Aramco — expected to be the world's largest stock sale — forms the cornerstone of a reform programme envisaged by Prince Mohammed to wean the Saudi economy off its reliance on oil.—AFP ■

IMF gathers in Indonesia to focus on global economic tremors

BALI (Indonesia) — Rising protectionism, vulnerable emerging markets and record debt levels: The IMF holds its annual meeting this week in earthquake-stricken Indonesia, as it shines a light on tremors in the global economy.

Finance ministers and central bankers from 180 nations will be among 32,000 attendees in Bali for the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, which takes place every three years outside of Washington. The gathering will be held from Tuesday to Sunday.

The resort island of Bali is 1,125 kilometers (700 miles) from Palu, the city on Sulawesi that

wracked by an earthquake and tsunami on September 28 that left more than 1,500 dead and 1,000 missing.

Despite the distance, security is a major concern for Indonesian organizers.

Bali experienced a series of volcanic eruptions over the summer, while the neighboring island of Lombok was struck by a string of deadly earthquakes.

If there is an earthquake, Jakarta recommends participants stay in the conference center, which, like many hotels in Bali, is built to withstand such seismic events.

In case of tsunami risk, attendees would be evacuated to a



If there is an earthquake, Jakarta recommends participants to stay in the conference center. PHOTO: AFP

nearby building. But the focus of the meeting is averting economic rather than natural disasters.

The trade war launched by US President Donald Trump

against China, along with disputes with allies like the European Union, Mexico and Canada, is a key source of concern.

The dispute caused a

proliferation of protectionist measures in recent months that is weighing more and more on international trade.

—AFP ■



China's central bank is again cutting the amount of cash which most commercial and foreign banks must hold in reserve. PHOTO: AFP

China's Central Bank to cut reserve requirement ratio for fourth time

BEIJING — China's central bank announced Sunday it would reduce the reserve requirement ratio (RRR) for most banks by one percentage point, the fourth time this year the country has sought to free up credit for businesses as they face down \$250 billion in US tariffs. The move to cut the amount of cash which most commercial and foreign banks must hold in reserve, to repay loans obtained via the central bank's medium-term lending facility, will take effect on October 15. The decision is intended to "further encourage the stable development of the real economy, optimise the liquidity structure of commercial banks and financial markets, lower financing costs, and to continue increasing the financial systems'

efforts to support small businesses, private enterprise and innovation," the People's Bank of China said in a statement.

The move will be used to pay down 450 billion yuan (\$65.6 billion) of medium-term lending facilities, it said, adding that it could also free up another 750 billion yuan in funds.

The move is not expected to put depreciatory pressure on the yuan, the statement said, adding that the bank would continue to maintain a "prudent and neutral" monetary policy.

It is the fourth such move this year, as China seeks to blunt the economic impact US President Donald Trump's imposition of \$250 billion dollars of Chinese goods, roughly half of country's exports to the US.—AFP ■

Sayonara Tsukiji! Relocation of Tokyo's famed fish market begins

TOKYO — Hundreds of fishmongers on forklifts and trucks rose before dawn in Tokyo to join a mammoth exodus of vendors as the world-famous Tsukiji market relocates to a new site.

In small vehicles and the market's famed "turret trucks" — one-man flatbeds with a barrel-shaped steering column at the front — they drove out of the Tsukiji site one last time, headed for Toyosu, the market's new home.

The main bridge out from the market was closed to traffic for the move, with security guards in place to wave along the leaving wholesalers who drove in orderly lines between safety cones topped with flashing red and green lights.

Hundreds of the 900 businesses that once handled 480 kinds of seafood worth \$14 million daily — as well as 270 types of fruits and vegetables — are relocating. A total of 2,600 turret trucks and forklifts will drive about 2.3 kilometres (1.4 miles) from Tsukiji to the new site over a period of five days, according to the Tokyo metropolitan government.

The move began a day after the last tuna auction at the market, a pre-dawn ritual for Tokyo's food world that also once drew

crowds of tourists hoping for one of just 120 spots to watch.

The 83-year-old market's move has been in the works for decades, prompted by its run-down state, but it has been a lengthy and controversial process, hindered by pollution rows and construction delays.

The discovery of soil contamination at Toyosu, formerly home to a gas plant, sparked safety fears about the new site and forced local authorities to spend millions of dollars to clean up the area. After experts declared Toyosu safe, the Tokyo governor took the final decision to move the market there in late 2017, ending years of delays. But while the new site promis-

es state-of-the-art refrigeration and will keep gawping tourists away from the business of the market in a gallery behind glass, the move has still left a bitter taste for some. "I feel nostalgic as Tsukiji has been my home ground for 15 years. We are sad to lose the Tsukiji brand," vegetable wholesaler Tsukasa Kujirai told AFP on Saturday.

Opened in 1935, Tsukiji was for many years known only to its vendors and the food industry, but it gained international reknown in recent decades and its tuna auctions even hit the headlines, with one fish going for a record \$1.8 million at the market's New Year's auction in 2013.—AFP ■



A fishmonger cleans his shop at the Tsukiji fish market one last time. PHOTO: AFP

Let's extend our helping hand without any discrimination

DURING one's lifetime, there occur good as well as bad happenings. Depending on one's fortune or misfortune, some people undergo a number of sufferings, called 'dukka', commonly translated as trials, pains, discontentment, stress, or the like, while others come across with an abundance of blessings, called 'thukha', translated as happiness, pleasure or bliss. The amount of suffering and happiness vary from one person to another and based on other factors, they can aggravate or ameliorate one's situation.

According to Buddhism, there are eight unfavourable conditions to attain the teachings of the Buddha, and five enemies of mankind, which includes water, fire and thief. People in Myanmar are going through one or more of these sufferings, depending on where they are located. According to Lord Buddha, these sufferings relate to their fortune or misfortune. Whatever it may be, those undergoing sufferings are also worthy to receive humanitarian aid and assistance without any discrimination.



Extending our helping hands to those in need, regardless of race and religion reflects a genuine

Humanitarian aid is provided to people in need of basic necessities for their survival. People from different communities in Myanmar are going through pain and suffering in the aftermath of conflicts in Maungtau, Rakhine State, while some others are in dire necessity for basic requirements due to internal armed conflicts in their ethnic regions, compounded with frequent natural disasters nationwide.

A matter of special importance when extending our helping hands to those victims of natural and man-made disasters is the availability of funds and an adequate amount of supplies. While Myanmar is

trying its best to continue providing aid to those in need from its own resources, the country is also collaborating with international agencies and donors which wish to give a hand in its extensive rehabilitation plan for the victims.

At present, the UNDP and the UEHRD are cooperating with the Myanmar government's endeavours in the Rakhine State. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is a humanitarian institution which has a long-lasting relationship with Myanmar. In the aftermath of the incidents in Rakhine State, ICRC's humanitarian assistance for the people in the state has been highly effective.

The ICRC has made it its resolve to increase cooperation with the government for those suffering not only in Rakhine State but also in Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin and Shan states. ICRC has been well-known to be the first among other similar organizations to supply aid to victims in conflict-affected areas. It is not only an institution that provides first-aid support in emergency cases, but it's also an organization that provides basic healthcare, water and sanitation needs as well as social support to people in need, regardless of race and religion.

Extending our helping hands to those in need, regardless of race and religion reflects a genuine humanitarian spirit. We encourage other international organisations that have been requested to offer aid to follow the footsteps of the ICRC in its fairness and effectiveness in helping those suffering without any discrimination.

By Khin Maung Myint

INTEGRITY shapes a person. This is an attribute that everyone, irrespective of profession or status must possess, but I doubt whether some people do. A person of integrity is always respected, trusted and relied upon.

Ever since I joined the service in my early twenties, our superiors frequently guided us to observe integrity. In those days I thought that integrity is an attribute of officers or leaders, because one of my mentors used to say that as officers we must have integrity, and OLQ. OLQ is an abbreviation of "officer-like qualities". When we asked him what those OLQs are, he said there are dos and don'ts that officers must observe. In general, any behaviour, manner, conduct or action that could lead us to "unbecoming an officer" must be avoided, he said. Though he didn't go into detail to explain what 'integrity is, I thought I understood what he meant.

Later in life, as I gained more experience and knowledge, I came to realize that the word 'integrity' has a wide range of meanings representing every aspect of human behaviour, manner and character. It's not the attribute of the officers only, but also that of a person of any walk of life, who are worthy of being called a true gentleman.

Definition of integrity

So, let us see what this word means, as the dictionaries define. According to one, it is the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles. Its synonymous



to honesty, uprightness, probity, rectitude, honour, honourableness, good character, principles, ethics, morals, righteousness, morality, nobility, high-mindedness, right-mindedness, noble-mindedness, virtue, decency, fairness, scrupulousness, sincerity, truthfulness, trustworthiness. A person with integrity is acknowledged as a gentleman who is respected and held in high esteem. Here, I would like to point out that wealth, position or status do not define a gentleman, but only integrity does.

However, I would like to emphasize that people in high positions should possess integrity as a must. No one would respect a person who lacks integrity, though they may be feared due to their ranks or positions and the authorities they wield. From my point of view, one should at least be honest, sincere, truthful, have principles, decent, fair, and above

all possesses a good character to be regarded as a gentleman of integrity. This attribute will carry him a long way in his career or business and will be respected and honored by others.

Integrity and leadership

To realize the importance of integrity, I will mention some useful quotes regarding integrity, made by some famous people. Socrates once said "Be as you wish to seem", while Plato's outlook was "Integrity is your destiny - it is the light that guides your way." General Douglas MacArthur defined 'integrity' from the leadership aspect, thus: "A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and the compassion to listen to the needs of others. He does not set out to be a leader, but becomes one by the equality of his actions and the integrity of his intent." Another

famous general and president, Dwight D. Eisenhower said "The supreme quality for leadership is unquestionably integrity. Without it, no real success is possible." American author Zig Ziglar's view is: "It is true that integrity alone won't make you a leader, but without integrity you will never be one."

Integrity in general

Apart from the above quotes made by great philosophers and leaders, there are many made by people from all walks of life. Famous Hollywood actress Oprah Winfrey has this to say about integrity: "Real integrity is doing the right thing, knowing that nobody's going to know whether you did it or not." I totally agree with her: Do what you have to do without advertising it to others or to put it bluntly, do not brag about it.

Barbara De Angelis, a relationship consultant, lecturer, author and TV personality defined integrity, thus: "Living with integrity means not settling for less than what you know you deserve in your relationships; asking for what you want and need from others; speaking your truth, even though it might create conflict or tension; behaving in ways that are in harmony with your personal values; making choices based on what you believe, and not what others believe."

Integrity and character

The character of an individual has much influence on that person's integrity, which is well highlighted by philosopher, es-

sayist, poet and novelist George Santayana as follows: "Our character is an omen of our destiny, and the more integrity we have and keep, the simpler and nobler that destiny is likely to be."

At the beginning of this article, I stated that "integrity shapes a person". This statement is supported by the wise words of George Santayana, who said, "The soul is dyed the color of its thoughts. Dyed only on those things that are in line with your principles and can bear the light of day. The content of your character is your choice. Day by day, what you choose, what you think, and what you do is who you become. Your integrity is your destiny, it is the light that guides your way." In relation to character, Thomas Paine also said, "Character is much easier kept than recovered." So we should take care not to lose it as it would be difficult to recover. You can easily judge the character of a man by how he treats those who can do nothing for him. The integrity of a person is to be measured by their conducts, not by their professions.

Integrity and success

According to the words of the wise, integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful. When you are able to maintain your own highest standards of integrity -- regardless of what others may do -- you are destined for greatness, or integrity is the essence of everything successful. A person of integrity conforms

reality to their words -- in other words, keeping promises and fulfilling expectations, even after circumstances have changed. Losers make promises they often break, whereas winners make commitments they always keep. The glue that holds all relationships together is trust, and trust is based on integrity. People of integrity and honesty not only practice what they preach, they are what they preach. Each person must live one's life as a model to others.

Integrity and truth

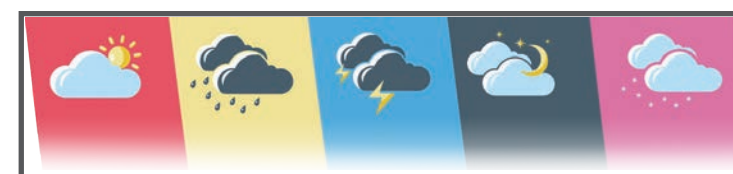
Integrity and truth are inseparable. Truth allows you to live with integrity. Everything you do and say shows the world who you really are, so always be truthful. The best policy is: if it is not right, don't do it; if it is not true, don't say it. One person of integrity can make a difference, thus humanity's fate hangs on personal integrity. Each one of us could make the difference, so we should opt for integrity.

Conclusion

There are over a thousand or so quotations by famous leaders, generals, philosophers, writers and actors, but for the purpose of this article, I chose only those that are related to character, honesty, truth and trust. Which, from my point of view are the most essential qualities that constitute integrity.

Before concluding I would like to highlight the quality of leadership by mentioning what President Dwight D. Eisenhower said. He said, "The supreme quality for leadership is unquestionably integrity. Without it, no real success is possible, no matter whether it is on a section gang, a football field, in an army, or in an office."

Thus integrity is the key to success for every professional. Here I would like to add that, those in politics should also possess high standards of integrity to garner the trust of the people and not to veer away from the moral principles expected of them, under any circumstances. Having said that, allow me to conclude by quoting President Abraham Lincoln: "Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power."



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 7th October, 2018)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (18:30) hrs M.S.T today, the low pressure area over the South Bay of Bengal still persists. It may further intensify into a depression during next (24) hrs. Weather is partly cloudy over North Bay and partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 8th October, 2018: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Nay Pyi Taw, Kayah, Kayin and Mon States, scattered in Upper Sagaing, Magway and Bago Regions, Kachin, Chin and Rakhine States, fairly widespread in Yangon and Ayeyarwady Regions, (Northern and Eastern) Shan State and widespread in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (30-35) m.p.h. Wave height will be about (6 - 9) feet in off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of increase of rain in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions and Rakhine State.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 8th October, 2018: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 8th October, 2018: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 8th October, 2018: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their work to the **Global New Light of Myanmar** at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, or by email to dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with the following information: (1) Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), (2) Own name and (if different) your penname, (3) Your level of education, (4) Name of your School/College/University, (5) A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses, (6) A color photo of the submitter, (7) Copy of your NRC card, (8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.). - Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar



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Turkish police believe journalist killed in Saudi consulate: source

ANKARA—Turkish police have concluded that prominent Saudi journalist and critic Jamal Khashoggi was murdered inside the Saudi mission in Istanbul after going missing Tuesday, according to an unnamed government official.

“Based on their initial findings, the police believe that the journalist was killed by a team especially sent to Istanbul and who left the same day,” the official told AFP on Saturday.

It came hours after police confirmed that around 15 Saudis, including officials, arrived in Istanbul on two flights on Tuesday and were at the consulate at the same time as the journalist.

Khashoggi, a *Washington Post* contributor, had gone there on an administrative errand but “did not come back out” of the building, police had told the state-run Anadolu news agency.

On the back of the preliminary police investigation, Ankara announced Saturday it had opened an official probe into his disappearance. The state-run Saudi Press Agency, quoting an unnamed official at the Istanbul consulate, denied the reports of Khashoggi’s murder.

“The official strongly denounced these baseless allegations,” the agency wrote, adding that a team of Saudi investigators were in Turkey working with local



In his opinion articles, Khashoggi has been critical of some policies of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Riyadh’s intervention in the war in Yemen. PHOTO: AFP

authorities.

Reacting to the news of the alleged murder, the journalist’s Turkish fiancée, Hatice Cengiz, said on Twitter she “did not believe he has been killed”.

In his opinion articles, Khashoggi has been critical of some policies of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Riyadh’s intervention in the war in Yemen.

The former government adviser, who turns 60 on October 13, has lived in self-imposed exile in the United States since last year

to avoid possible arrest.

Prince Mohammed earlier denied in an interview with Bloomberg that the journalist had been inside the consulate and said Turkish authorities could search the building, which is Saudi sovereign territory.

“We are ready to welcome the Turkish government to go and search our premises,” he said, adding that “we will allow them to enter and search and do whatever they want to do... We have nothing to hide”. In the interview published Friday, the Saudi crown

prince also said he understood that Khashoggi had entered the consulate “and he got out after a few minutes or one hour”.

“I’m not sure. We are investigating this through the foreign ministry to see exactly what happened at that time,” he added.

According to his fiancée Cengiz, Khashoggi had visited the consulate to receive an official document for his marriage.

Turkey’s foreign ministry on Wednesday summoned Saudi Arabia’s ambassador over the issue.

Vociferous critic

Khashoggi fled the country in September 2017, months after Prince Mohammed was appointed heir to the throne, amid a campaign that saw dozens of dissidents arrested, including intellectuals and Islamic preachers.

The journalist said he had been banned from writing in the pan-Arab daily *Al-Hayat*, owned by Saudi prince Khaled bin Sultan al-Saud, over his defence of the Muslim Brotherhood which Riyadh has blacklisted as a terrorist organisation.

He has also criticised Saudi Arabia’s role in Yemen, where Riyadh leads a military coalition fighting alongside the government in its war with Iran-backed rebels. *The Washington Post* chose to leave a blank space where Khashoggi’s column would have been in its Friday edition in support of the missing writer.

In an article published by *Al-Jazeera* this week, journalist and analyst Bill Law described Khashoggi as “a brilliant journalist with a fiercely independent mind but with sufficient pragmatism to know just how close to the red lines he could go”.

“His is a voice of reasoned criticism and wise comment that the Saudi crown prince should listen to,” wrote Law, who said he had known Khashoggi for 16 years. —AFP ■

5 injured as train derails in northern Iran

TEHRAN—At least five people were injured as a passenger train derailed in Iran’s northern province of Qazvin on Saturday, Tasnim news agency reported.

The train, bound for the capital Tehran, derailed shortly after leaving the city of Qazvin on Saturday afternoon.

The incident did not cause serious casualties because of the train’s slow speed.

The cause of incident is still under investigation.

In November 2016, two trains collided in Iran’s north-central province of Semnan, which killed 45 and injured 103 others.—Xinhua ■

Syria rebels say shifting heavy arms from Idlib buffer zone

BEIRUT—Syrian rebels said Saturday they have begun withdrawing heavy arms from a planned buffer zone in northwestern Idlib province, ahead of a deadline to set up the demilitarised area.

The Turkey-backed National Liberation Front (NLF) “has started pulling out its heavy weapons from the zone”, the rebel coalition’s spokesman Najji Mustafa told AFP.

The buffer zone, agreed last month between rebel backer Ankara and government ally Moscow, aims to separate regime fighters from the myriad rebel and jihadist forces of the Idlib region.

The accord, reached on September 17, aims to stave off a massive regime assault on the last major rebel bastion by cre-

ating a 15 to 20-kilometre (nine to 12-mile) buffer zone ringing the area.

All rebels in the demilitarised zone must withdraw heavy arms by October 10, and radical groups must leave by October 15.

NLF spokesman Mustafa said the rebel coalition was “maintaining its positions and headquarters with medium and light weapons” inside the buffer zone.

The NLF is the main Tur-

key-backed rebel alliance in the Idlib region, but jihadist heavyweight Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) holds most of the province.

The HTS has yet to announce its stance on the buffer zone deal. —AFP ■



Syrian rebels in the Turkey-backed National Liberation Front (similar to the ones pictured September 2018) have started removing heavy weapons from the buffer zone in northwestern Idlib province. PHOTO: AFP

Kavanaugh sworn into Supreme Court after divisive fight

WASHINGTON—Brett Kavanaugh was sworn in Saturday as US Supreme Court justice following the closest Senate confirmation vote in more than a century, marking a major win for President Donald Trump's drive to move the country's political institutions to the right.

The Senate voted 50-48 to approve Kavanaugh as protesters rallied across the country against a nominee who has been plagued by allegations of sexual misconduct as a young man and had questions raised over his candor and partisan rhetoric.

The prolonged nomination battle has roiled American politics and passions — the vote was disrupted on several occasions by angry protests from the gallery — but handed Trump one of the biggest victories of his presidency.

It drew the line under a bruising nomination process defined by harrowing testimony from a woman who says Kavanaugh tried to rape her when they were teenagers—and by his fiery

rebuttal.

The two-vote margin of victory made it the closest Supreme Court confirmation vote since 1881 — and by far the most contentious since Clarence Thomas in 1991. As Chief Justice John Roberts swore in Kavanaugh during a private Supreme Court ceremony, protesters demonstrated loudly outside, at one point rushing the steps of the court and banging on its ornate bronze doors while some sat on a Contemplation of Justice statue.

"I am here because President Trump mocked sexual assault victims," said North Carolina native Kara Harrington, 50. "It unleashed something inside me. I was assaulted when I was younger and I didn't tell anybody." The confirmation means Trump has succeeded in having his two picks seated on the court — tilting it decidedly to the right in a major coup for the Republican leader less than halfway through his term.

Trump triumphant

During an evening rally in

US Supreme Court justices

Liberals

- Stephen Breyer (Age: 80)
- Ruth Bader Ginsburg (Age: 85)
- Elena Kagan (Age: 58)
- Sonia Sotomayor (Age: 64)

Position vacant

Vacated by retired swing-vote justice Anthony Kennedy

Conservatives

- Samuel Alito (Age: 68)
- Neil Gorsuch (Age: 51)
- John Roberts (Age: 63) - Chief Justice
- Clarence Thomas (Age: 70)

Nominee

- Brett Kavanaugh (Age: 53)

The US Supreme Court

The country's top judicial body
Final arbiter on fundamental legal matters such as abortion, racism, gay marriage rights, death penalty
Justices are appointed for life

Source: US Supreme Court/AFP Photo

The make-up of the US Supreme Court. PHOTO: AFP

Topeka, Kansas, Trump was greeted by prolonged cheers on what he called a "truly historic night." "I stand before you today on the heels of a tremendous vic-

tory for our nation, our people and our beloved Constitution," he told supporters after signing Kavanaugh's commission aboard Air Force One.

A separate, public swearing-in ceremony is planned for 7:00 pm (2300 GMT) Monday in the White House's East Room.—AFP ■

Bosnians vote for leaders of fragmented nation

SARAJEVO—Bosnia and Herzegovina Bosnians head to the polls on Sunday to elect leaders who will steer the future of the poor Balkan nation splintered by ethnic divides that fuelled its 1990s war. The country remains a patchwork of enclaves, with power formally divided among its three main groups: Bosnian Muslims, Serbs and Croats.

While the list of economic woes facing the country is long, many voters say they have lost faith in a political class accused of stoking nationalism to stay in power.

"I think the nationalists will win once again and nothing will change," said Armin Bukaric, a 45-year-old businessman in Sarajevo, echoing a common view on the capital's streets. The Balkan country's complex political system is a relic of the 1992-95 conflict that saw Muslims, Serbs and Croats turn on each other.

The fighting left 100,000 dead, displaced millions and wrecked the country's economy and infrastructure.

A quarter of a century later,



Bosnia remains a patchwork of enclaves, with power formally divided among its three main groups: Bosnian Muslims, Serbs and Croats.

PHOTO: AFP

Bosnia is still governed by the peace accord that stopped the war and sliced the country in two semi-autonomous halves—one dominated by Serbs and the other home to Muslims and Croats.

'Depressing'

On top sits a tripartite presidency that rotates between a Serb, Croat and Muslim member.

One leading candidate for

the Serb seat, Milorad Dodik, is a pro-Russian nationalist who regularly dangles the idea of holding a vote on the secession of the country's Serb-dominated half.

Dodik has led that entity—Republika Srpska—since 2006 and rarely sets foot in Bosnia's capital Sarajevo, which he terms a hostile "foreign territory".

If he wins, one of his partners in the presidency could be Croat

incumbent Dragan Covic, who also advocates drawing deeper communal divisions.

Covic's right-wing HDZ party would like to see the creation of a third entity just for Croats, who currently live in a region with majority Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks).

Tanja Topic, a political analyst, says the purpose of these "ethno-nationalist" policies is to "maintain the status quo and stagnation" that helps keep such leaders in control. Ranko Mavrak, a prominent Sarajevo journalist, described the country's political outlook as "depressing".

"We don't see anything on the horizon that would offer some change to the systems and stereotypes that have governed this country for 25 years since the war," he said in a TV interview.

United by corruption

While nationalists are trying to widen the gulf between different communities, a shared frustration with government corruption has brought some Bosnians together.—AFP ■

Brazil's electoral court verifies digital signatures prior to Sunday election

BRASILIA—The Superior Electoral Court (TSE) held a ceremony on Saturday to verify digital signatures on the electronic ballot boxes filing system, the final technical procedure prior to the general elections.

The verification ensures systems installed at polling stations are the same ones that had been digitally signed by the Federal Public Ministry, the Federal Police and the TSE when the ballot boxes were sealed on Sept. 6.

"We conduct this ceremony to certify the authenticity and originality of the systems distributed to the Regional Electoral Courts," said TSE president Rosa Weber, claiming it is fundamental for the transparency and reliability of the electoral process.

"This guarantees the vote is secret and the election results are secure," she added.—Xinhua ■

Indonesia mulls leaving quake-flattened villages as mass graves

PALU (Indonesia) — More bodies were unearthed from the earthquake-and-tsunami-ravaged Indonesian city of Palu on Saturday, as authorities move closer to calling off the search for the dead trapped under flattened communities and declaring them mass graves.

Officials said Saturday the death toll had climbed to 1,649, with more than a thousand feared still missing in the seaside city on Sulawesi island.

More than 82,000 military and civilian personnel, as well as volunteers, have descended on the devastated city, where relief groups say clean water and medical supplies are in short supply.

After days of delays, international aid has slowly begun trickling into the disaster zone where the UN says almost 200,000 people need humanitarian assistance. But hopes of finding anyone alive a full eight days later have all but faded, as the search for survivors morphs into a grim gathering of the dead.

At the massive Balaroa government housing complex, where the sheer force of the quake turned the earth temporarily to mush, soldiers wearing masks to ward off the stench of death clambered over the giant mounds of mud, brick and cement.

Vast numbers of decomposing bodies could still be buried beneath this once-thriving neighbourhood, the search and rescue agency said.

Two soldiers who are part of the search emerged from a ditch with a body bag sagging in the middle but looking too light to be a corpse — they said they had found the heads of two adults and one child.



Hopes of finding survivors a full eight days after the quake-tsunami have all but faded. PHOTO: AFP

“There are no survivors here. We just find bodies, every day,” said army sergeant Syfaruddin, who like many Indonesians goes by one name.

Health fears

At the flattened Hotel Roa-Roa — where early optimism that survivors might be found faded as the days wore on — rescuers reviewed CCTV footage to get a sense of where the doomed guests could be buried.

In Petobo — another village all but wiped off the map — teams struggled to extract bodies from the muck, often dislodging limbs loosened by decomposition after more than a week exposed to the elements.

The search for survivors has not officially been called off.

But security minister Wiranto said the government had been discussing with local leaders and

religious figures as to when the worst-hit areas would be declared mass graves, and left untouched.

“We have to make a decision as to when the search for the dead will end. Then, we later must decide when the area will be designated a mass grave,” he told reporters late Friday.

Concerns are growing that decomposing bodies could turn into a serious health hazard.

“Most of the bodies we have found are not intact, and that poses a danger for the rescuers. We have to be very careful to avoid contamination,” Yusuf Latif, a spokesman for Indonesia’s search and rescue agency, told AFP from Palu.

“We have vaccinated our teams, but we need to be extra cautious.”

While the World Health Organization says there is no evidence to suggest bodies in such

disaster situations could spark an epidemic, it has warned that those handling corpses are at a risk of contracting diseases like tuberculosis, cholera, and blood-borne viruses.

Thousands of survivors continued to stream out of Palu to nearby cities in the aftermath of the disaster. Hospitals remain overstretched and short on staff and supplies.

In Karawana village, nurse Iyong Lamatowa can offer little more than antibiotics and painkillers to treat those flocking to a makeshift clinic with badly-infected wounds. Project HOPE, a medical NGO, said only two of its 82 staff in Palu had reported for duty since the quake.

“We still don’t know the fate of the clinic doctors, nurses and technicians who usually staff the clinic,” the organisation said in a statement.

Short supplies

Survivors have ransacked shops and supply trucks in the hunt for basic necessities, prompting security forces to round up dozens of suspected looters and warn that they will open fire on thieves.

Hundreds of people Saturday rushed a truck transporting gas cylinders for cooking while a supermarket that opened for business under military guard refused to allow people inside, instead passing goods through the door.

A convoy of five hundred trucks laden with donated food, cooking oil and other essentials was on its way to Palu, agriculture minister Amran Sulaiman said in the devastated city on Saturday.

“Palu’s ordeal is grief for all of us and that’s why everyone is lending a hand to help,” he said.

The United Nations said Friday it was seeking \$50.5 million “for immediate relief” to help victims.

Getting vital supplies to the affected areas has proved hugely challenging, with the number of flights able to land at Palu’s small airport still limited, leaving aid workers facing gruelling overland journeys.

Oxfam had sent water treatment units and purification kits to Palu and Swiss aid teams on the ground were providing drinking water and emergency shelter, both said in statements Saturday.

Indonesia sits along the world’s most tectonically active region, and its 260 million people are vulnerable to earthquakes, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions. —AFP ■

Two dead, one missing as Typhoon Kong-Rey hits S. Korea



Waves crash into a sea wall during heavy swells from typhoon Kong-rey, on Jeju island on 6 October 2018. PHOTO: AFP

SEOUL — Two people died and one person is missing in South Korea as powerful typhoon

Kong-Rey hit the country on Saturday, the government said.

A 66-year-old man died

while crossing a bridge in the city of Gwangju, south of Seoul, the national disaster management agency said without elaborating on the cause of the death.

Another man, aged 83, was found dead after being washed away by a river in a southern county of Yeongdeok, while a 76-year-old went missing after falling into a river in the southern port of Pohang.

The powerful typhoon dumped heavy rain across the country from Friday before moving away from the peninsula Saturday afternoon. —AFP ■

DPRK praises friendship with China on anniversary of ties

PYONGYANG — The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) on Saturday spoke highly of the friendly relations between the DPRK and China on the 69th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

China and the DPRK established diplomatic relations on Oct. 6, 1949, and it is a meaningful day for both the DPRK people and the Chinese people, said the official *Rodong Sinmun*.

The official daily of the ruling Workers’ Party of Korea said in a commentary that the establishment of diplomatic ties served as

an epochal occasion to develop the friendly relations between the two peoples. Created and nurtured by the older generations of leaders of both countries, the DPRK-China friendship is the valuable treasure of the two peoples, the newspaper said, adding that the friendship has been developed and strengthened through generations without wavering in any trials and storms. By analogy to a deep-rooted tree that could brave any weather, the traditional friendship between the DPRK and Chinese peoples was hailed by the newspaper as “impregnable.” —Xinhua ■

Avoiding climate chaos means ‘unprecedented’ change: UN report

INCHEON (South Korea) — The UN’s 195-nation climate science body plunged deep into overtime Saturday to finalise a report outlining stark options — all requiring a global makeover of unprecedented scale — for avoiding climate chaos.

Working through the night, the closed-door huddle in rain-soaked Incheon, South Korea, was to convene a plenary later in the day to hammer through a “Summary for Policymakers.”

Can humanity cap global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit)? What will it take and how much will it cost? Would climate impacts be significantly less severe than in a 2°C world?

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was tasked with these questions by the framers of the landmark 2015 Paris Agreement, which calls for halting the rise in temperatures to “well below” 2°C — and 1.5°C if possible.

That aspirational goal — tacked on to the treaty at the last minute — caught climate scientists off-guard.

“Our understanding of 1.5°C was very limited, all but two or three of the models we had then were based on a 2°C target,” said Henri Waisman, a senior researcher at the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations in Paris, and one of the report’s 86 authors.

Based on more than 6,000 peer-reviewed studies, the 20-page bombshell will make for grim reading when it is released on Monday.

“Leaders will have nowhere to hide once this report comes out,” said Jennifer Morgan, Executive Director of Greenpeace International, and an observer at the talks.

‘Negative emissions’

At current rates of greenhouse gas emissions, Earth will zoom past the 1.5°C signpost around 2040, and as early as 2030.

After only one degree of warming, the world has seen deadly storms engorged by rising seas and a crescendo of heatwaves, drought, flooding and wild fires made more intense by climate change.

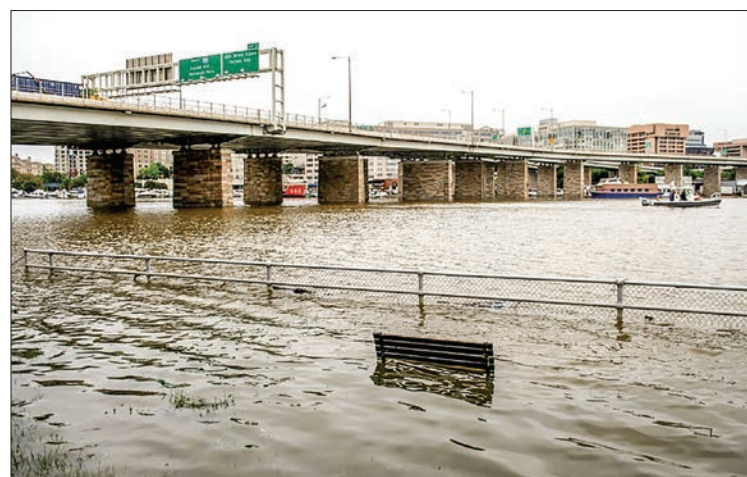
Without a radical course change, we are headed for an unliveable 3°C or 4°C hike.

And yet, humanity has avoided action for so long that any pathway to a climate-safe world involves wrenching economic and social change “unprecedented in terms of scale,” the report said.

“Some people say the 1.5°C target is impossible,” said Stephen Cornelius, WWF-UK’s chief adviser for climate change, and a former IPCC negotiator. “But the difference between possible and impossible is political leadership.” The report is set to lay out four scenarios that could result in Earth’s average surface temperature stabilising at 1.5°C.

The most ambitious — dubbed the “low energy scenario” — would see a radical drawdown in energy consumption coupled with a rapid shift away from fossil fuels and a swift decline in CO₂ emissions starting in 2020.

It would not require a temporary “overshoot” of the 1.5°C threshold, and does not depend on sucking vast quantities of CO₂ out of the air, known as carbon dioxide removal, or “negative emissions.” A second pathway emphasises the need for changing our consumption patterns — eating less meat, travelling less, giving up cars, etc. — along with an overhaul of agricultural and land-use practices, including the protection of forests. —AFP ■



After only one degree of warming, the world has seen deadly storms engorged by rising seas. PHOTO: AFP



Activists have occupied the ancient forest for six years, their protest a symbol of opposition to dirty coal, and they had cause to celebrate — the graffiti reads Hambti stays — after a court suspended razing of the woodland. PHOTO: AFP

‘Hambti stays!’: Thousands join German forest demo in anti-coal battle

BUIR (Germany) — Thousands of anti-coal demonstrators descended on Germany’s Hambach forest Saturday, celebrating an unexpected court victory that suspended an energy company’s planned razing of the woodland to expand a giant open-cast mine.

The ancient forest near Cologne has been occupied by activists for the past six years and become a symbol of resistance against coal energy in Germany, a country that despite its green reputation remains heavily reliant on this dirtiest of fossil fuels.

Basking in early autumn sunshine, young people, families and pensioners flocked to a field next to Hambach forest, a day

after a court in Muenster said it needed more time to consider an environmental complaint against RWE’s upcoming clearing operations. Organisers said 50,000 people had turned out for what they called the region’s “biggest-ever anti-coal rally”. Police however did not confirm the figure.

Chanting “Hambti bleibt!” (Hambti stays) and cheering loudly, the crowd listened to live music and speeches in a festival-like atmosphere. Many held up banners and balloons demanding an immediate exit from coal energy.

“The mood is great,” said Greenpeace spokeswoman Gesche Juergens, welcoming “the strong signal” sent by the

court. “But it’s only a first step. The battle goes on to start phasing out coal.”

The forest’s days had appeared numbered after its owner RWE announced plans to clear half of the remaining 200 hectares (500 acres) from October 15 to expand its massive nearby open-pit coal mine.

Police last month began dismantling activists’ treehouses in a forced eviction that took nearly three weeks and fanned public sympathy for the activists’ cause. Tragedy struck when a freelance journalist covering the evictions died on September 19 after falling through a walkway suspended between two trees. —AFP ■

Iran risks losing 70% of farmlands: environment chief

TEHRAN — Iran faces losing 70 percent of its farmlands if urgent action is not taken to overcome a litany of climate woes, the country’s environment chief Isa Kalantari told AFP.

The Islamic Republic is grappling not only with air, water and soil pollution, as well as drought and desertification, but also with the effect of years of crippling US and international sanctions.

Adding to the dire situation, “we currently use about 100 percent of our renewable water ... according to global standards this figure should not be higher than 40 percent,” said Kalantari, vice president and head of Iran’s Environment Department, in an exclusive interview in Tehran.

“The excessive consumption of water, especially from groundwater is a threat and could have

terrible social consequences,” he warned. If the situation is not brought under control, then “we would lose about 70 percent of our cultivated land in a maximum of 20 to 30 years.”

“The south of Alborz and east of Zagros, if we don’t take swift action, will become unusable for agriculture,” Kalantari added.

Alborz and Zagros are mountain ranges in the north and west of Iran respectively. The majority of Iran’s mostly arid land mass and population centres are located to the south and east of them.

According to the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization, Iran, a country of some 80 million people, predominantly relies on agriculture.

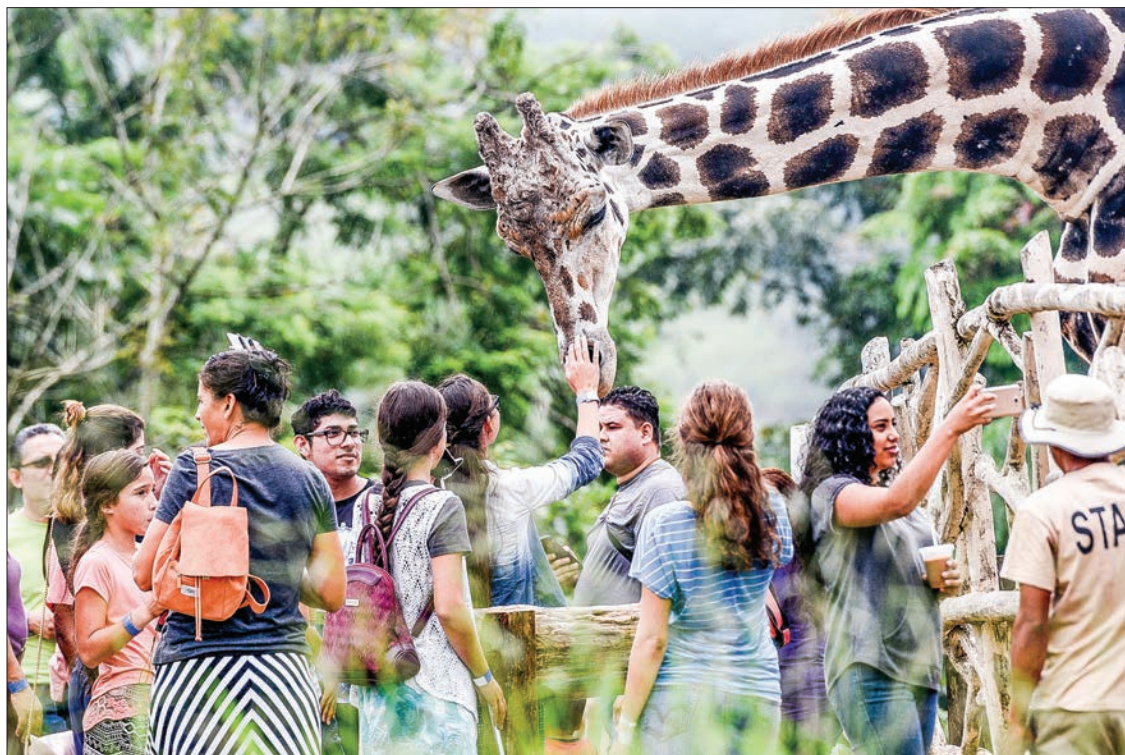
Past errors

Kalantari said there had

been many years of mismanagement of water resources, and mistaken decisions forced by political and economic concerns such as the US sanctions and climate change.

“We basically thought that environment was not that important,” he said. Other countries had also failed to address climate issues introducing policy errors in the 1960s and 1970s.

“We made these mistakes in the 1980s. Then we came to realise that in places that we’d built dams, we shouldn’t have built any, and in places where we should have built dams, we didn’t build any,” he said. The pressure on the country’s resources has also been exacerbated by population growth, with Iranians encouraged to have large families in the years following its 1979 Islamic revolution. —AFP ■



A giraffe greets visitors at Honduras's Joya Grande zoo, which is struggling to stay open. PHOTO: AFP

Honduras zoo struggles to replace the drug money that built it

SANTA CRUZ DE YOJOA (Honduras) — An imposingly tall giraffe, powerful African lions and proud Bengal tigers are among the many highlights of a zoo — created by wealthy drug traffickers — that is like a Garden of Eden in the green mountains of Honduras.

But the Joya Grande animal park is now languishing because of a shortage of funds.

The zoo was allegedly modeled after the Hacienda Napoles — the vast estate of the late Colombian drug kingpin Pablo Escobar — by a violent Honduran cartel known as the Cachiros, which was sanctioned by the United States in 2013.

“The eco-park was very profitable, it was new, we had a lot of investment, but now we lack the capital that the owners had” since their arrests, biologist and

zoo manager Maria Diaz told AFP.

Diaz, who is Guatemalan, is desperately hoping for government economic assistance to keep the park going.

Four months of demonstrations against the re-election last November of President Juan Orlando Hernandez blocked the main access road to the zoo, sharply curtailing the number of visitors.

The facility sits atop a hill 150 kilometers (95 miles) north of the capital city Tegucigalpa. A sign formed of white stones set on a grassy hillside welcomes tourists with the words “Great Jewel Zoo.”

The giraffe stretches out its neck to greet visitors, while zebras leisurely munch on hay in a nearby corral. Further down a steep slope are enclosures for

deer, camels and big, pig-like tapirs — including a newborn — as well as the pools in which hippos wallow.

Next come cages and enclosures containing powerful members of the cat family — African lions, Bengal tigers, jaguars and pumas — followed by bison, llamas, wildebeest, ostriches, peacocks and other exotic animals.

Visitors can rent water bicycles, ride horses or enjoy the zoo's cafeterias, pools and restaurants, as well as the 15 cabins for tourists — who are sorely lacking.

Honduras's Office of Seized Assets (OABI) confiscated the facility from the drug cartel in April 2014, at which point the biologist Diaz — who had been in charge of caring for the animals — managed to obtain a government concession to operate the place for \$7,400 a month. —AFP ■

Composer Sakamoto fulfils childhood dream with animation



Japanese musician Ryuichi Sakamoto has arrived at the 23rd Busan International Film Festival to promote Japanese animation ace Kobun Shizuno's fantastical “My Tyrano: Together, Forever”, with the film having its world premiere on Saturday night. PHOTO: AFP

BUSAN (South Korea) — Oscar-winning composer Ryuichi Sakamoto has spent a career

steeped in high drama but on Saturday the Japanese star revealed he had now realised a childhood

dream by working for the first time in animation.

“I grew up watching Astro Boy,” said Sakamoto, referring to the cartoon crime fighter. “So I have a great respect for this world.”

The 66-year-old Sakamoto first won widespread acclaim for his seminal work on the score for the gritty David Bowie-starring drama “Mercury Christmas, Mr Lawrence” (1983) before he won an Oscar for the Bernardo Bertolucci-directed period epic “The Last Emperor” in 1987. —AFP ■

Banksy shocks art world by shredding £1 mn work at auction

LONDON — British street artist Banksy has stunned the art world with arguably his most audacious prank yet, self-destructing one of his best-known works moments after it fetched more than a million pounds at auction in London.

“Girl with Balloon” had just sold at Sotheby's Friday for £1,042,000 (\$1.4 million, 1.2 million euros) — a joint record for the maverick artist — when it unexpectedly passed through a shredder hidden in the frame.

Banksy posted a video Saturday on his Instagram page accompanied by a quote attributed to Pablo Picasso — “the urge to destroy is also a creative urge” — showing the stunt unfolding and how he pulled it off.

“A few years ago I secretly built a shredder into a painting, in case it was ever put up for auction,” read captions displayed over footage of a man crafting

art automatically shredded itself after coming under the hammer,” the auctioneers added in the statement. Earlier Saturday, Banksy had posted a photo of the shredded work with a caption, imitating an auctioneer, that read: “going, going, gone”.

The post, and reports of a man dressed in black sunglasses and a hat scuffling with security guards near the entrance to Sotheby's shortly after the incident, led to speculation the artist was present to trigger it.

Sotheby's, which could not be reached for further comment on Saturday, did not disclose if it had prior knowledge of the stunt.

Branczik said he was “not in on the ruse”, according to *The Art Newspaper*.

“We are busy figuring out what this means in an auction context,” he reportedly added.

“The shredding is now part



A pre-sale photo supplied by Sotheby's in London on 6 October, 2018 shows “Girl with Balloon” by the British artist Banksy, which sold on October 5 for £1,042,000 and then unexpectedly passed through a shredder hidden in the frame. PHOTO: AFP

the device into a faux-gilt frame.

The video later shows scenes from Sotheby's, where onlookers are left aghast as an alarm sounds and most of the image drops down through the frame and is left shredded.

“It appears we just got Banksy-ed,” said Alex Branczik, Sotheby's head of contemporary art for Europe, in a press release.

“The unexpected incident became instant art world folklore and certainly marks the first time in auction history that a work of

of the integral art work.”

Sotheby's did not release details on the buyer, but reports said the winning bid was made by telephone.

“We have talked with the successful purchaser who was surprised by the story,” the auctioneers said in a statement to *The Financial Times*.

“We are in discussion about next steps.” Banksy, a mysterious artist from Bristol, southwest England, has never confirmed his real identity. —AFP ■

Chinese American scientist wins Genius Grant

LOS ANGELES — Neuroscientist Doris Tsao from the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) was awarded the Genius Grant for her creativity and talent in neuroscience, it was announced here on Thursday. The Genius Grant, also known as the MacArthur Fellowship, is a no-strings-attached award with 625,000 U.S. dollars to people of “outstanding talent,” for their “originality, insight and potential,” according to the MacArthur Foundation.

Tsao is a systems neuroscientist studying the neural mechanisms underlying primate vision. She and her group aim to discover how the brain “stitches together” individual pixels of light, the photons hitting retinas, to create the visual experience of discrete and recognizable objects in space.

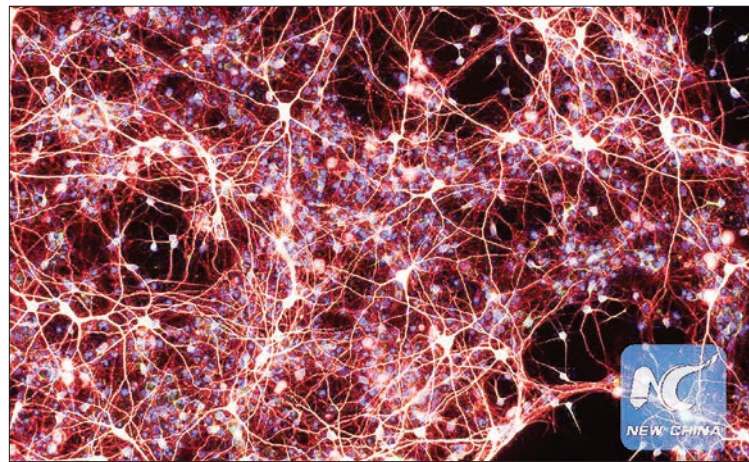
In 2017, Tsao and her team discovered the neural mechanism for face recognition. Even though

an infinite number of different possible faces exist, they found that the brain needs only about 200 neurons to uniquely encode any face, with each neuron encoding a specific dimension of facial variability.

Tsao is widely recognized for pioneering the use of functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to target electrodes for studying visual processing in monkeys. She also demonstrated the existence of “face patches” in the macaque brain.

“I’ve been lucky to be on this journey with incredible mentors, colleagues, students and post-docs. This award is every bit a recognition of their hard work and brilliance,” said Tsao.

She said her lab is taking some completely new directions right now, venturing into new parts of the brain and a new species. —Xinhua ■



File photo shows neurons created from chemically-induced neural stem cells. PHOTO: XINHUA

China’s AC311A light utility helicopter completes plateau flight tests

BELJING — China’s newly-developed AC311A light utility helicopter has completed its plateau flight tests, according to its developer Saturday.

The two-tonne light helicopter model has conducted 41 hours of tests in 91 flights at three plateau airports, said Avicopter under the state-owned Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC). These plateau flight tests were performed respectively at Gonghe and Yushu airports in northwest China’s Qinghai Province, and Yuzhong Airport in northwestern Gansu Province.

These plateau airports are located at altitudes ranging from 2,000 to 4,000 meters. The AC311A has conducted multiple flight tests,

such as near-ground-maneuvering and hovering, targeting to test its capacities of anti-cross wind and sand-prevention at various altitudes in plateau environments.

The model is equipped with the Turbomeca ARRIEL 2B1A heli-engine and an integrated avionics system, with a maximum take-off weight of 2.25 tonnes and a climb limit of 6,000 meters. The model meets China’s surging demands in the general aviation sector for aircraft to be used for border patrol, law enforcement, rescue and relief missions and forest firefighting.

Avicopter is now among the world’s leading helicopter manufacturers with more than 50 models in 12 series. —Xinhua ■

First compelling evidence for a moon outside solar system found

WASHINGTON — American astronomers offered first compelling evidence for the existence of a moon orbiting a gas-giant planet 8,000 light-years away.

The study published on Wednesday in the journal *Science Advances* reported the detection of a candidate exomoon, or moons orbiting planets in other star systems. The exomoon, a satellite of planet Kepler 1625b, is large, comparable to the diameter of Neptune. “This would be the first case of detecting a moon outside our solar system,” said David Kipping, an assistant professor of astronomy at Columbia University, who, together with Alex Teachey at Columbia University, used NASA’s Hubble Space Telescope and Kepler Space Telescope to reveal the object. “If confirmed by follow-up Hubble observations, the finding could provide vital clues about the development of planetary systems and may cause experts to revisit theories of how moons form around planets,” said Kipping. The moon is estimated to be only 1.5 percent the mass of its companion planet, which itself estimated to be several times the mass of Jupiter.

This value is close to the mass-ratio between the Earth and its moon. But in the case of



PHOTO: XINHUA

the Earth-Moon system, an early collision with a larger body is hypothesized to have blasted off material that later coalesced into a moon. However, both Kepler 1625b and its satellite are gaseous rather than rocky, so such a collision may not lead to the condensation of a satellite.

The researchers measured the momentary dimming of starlight as 284 Kepler-discovered planets passed in front of their stars, called a transit and found Kepler 1625b had anomalies.

Then, they used Hubble to scrutinize the planet during its 19-hour-long transit across the face of the star and then detected a second and much smaller decrease in the star’s brightness 3.5 hours later. It was consistent with “a moon trailing the planet like a dog following its owner on a leash,” according to Kipping.

“An extraterrestrial civilization watching the Earth and Moon transit the Sun would note similar anomalies in the timing of Earth’s transit,” said Kipping.

Exomoons are usually difficult to find because they are smaller than their companion planet and so their transit signal is weak and they also shift position with each transit because the moon is orbiting the planet.

Also, the ideal candidate planets hosting moons are in large orbits, with long and infrequent transit times. In this search, the Neptune-sized moon would have been among the easiest to first detect because of its large size. The host planet and its moon lie within the solar mass star’s habitable zone, but they’re gaseous so “unsuitable for life as we know it,” Kipping said. —Xinhua ■

Flaw found in launch pad casing at Vostochny Cosmodrome partially fixed, says operator



The first stage of the work to fix cavities detected under the casing of the launch pad at the Vostochny Cosmodrome has been completed. PHOTO: TASS

BLAGOVESHCHENSK — The first stage of the work to fix cavities (or voids) detected under the casing of the launch pad at the Vostochny Cosmodrome in Russia’s Far East has been completed, the Center for the Operation of Ground-Based Space Infrastructure reported on Friday.

Specialists injected a special solution into the voids that had emerged, the Center’s press office said.

“The first stage of injection works at the Vostochny Cosmodrome’s launch pad is over. The first and the second portions of a special solution were injected into the cavities under the

launch pad’s casing,” the press office said in a statement.

The condition of the launch pad’s casing will be restored to meet the requirements of the design documentation. The timetable for the work stage has been drawn up, the statement says.

In early September, specialists from the Center for the Operation of Ground-Based Space Infrastructure uncovered poor-quality concrete under a section of the launch pad’s casing at the Vostochny spaceport in the Amur Region. However, according to the Center, the defect is not critical.

The Vostochny Cosmodrome is Russia’s first civilian spaceport. In April 2016, the first successful launch was carried out from the space center with the delivery of three satellites into orbit. The Vostochny spaceport will ensure Russia’s full access to outer space and reduce its dependence on Kazakhstan’s Baikonur. —Tass ■

Australia ease pressure on Cheika with remarkable win

SALTA (Argentina) — Australia wiped out a 24-point half-time deficit for a stunning 45-34 Rugby Championship triumph over Argentina in Salta Saturday to ease the pressure on under-fire coach Michael Cheika.

There have been growing public and media calls for Cheika to be axed after six losses in eight matches this season ahead of the trip to South America.

After trailing 31-7 at half-time, the Wallabies ran in five second-half tries and the recalled Bernard Foley slotted all seven of his kicks at goal during the match.

The remarkable comeback outdid that of champions New Zealand earlier in the day when they trailed by 17 points on the hour before snatching a 32-30 victory in South Africa.

New Zealand completed the six-round southern hemisphere championship with 25 points while South Africa were second on 15. Australia were third in the table with nine and Argentina bottom with eight.

Down and seemingly out at half-time after being dominat-



The Wallabies ran in five second-half tries against Argentina to win 45-34. PHOTO: AFP

ed, the Wallabies took control from the second-half kick-off and inched ahead 35-34 on 65 minutes.

A second try from Dane Haylett-Petty stretched the lead to eight points before Foley kicked his only penalty to seal success.

While the win will come as a huge relief to Cheika, there are

far more formidable obstacles lying in wait soon.

They must tackle New Zealand a third time after two heavy losses this season in the dead-rubber third Bledisloe Cup match in Japan on October 27.

Then comes a tour of Europe where Wales and England lie in wait, along with lesser lights Italy.

Argentina suffered a serious blow after 29 minutes when star fly-half Nicolas Sanchez had to retire injured and was replaced by Santiago Gonzalez Iglesias.

Brilliant solo try

It took the Pumas just 105 seconds to go in front as Pablo Matera ran a brilliant angled line to take the ball and burst down

the middle for a try that Sanchez converted.

A bad start for the Wallabies got worse on four minutes when Reece Hodge was dispossessed and two passes set up Emiliano Boffelli for a run to the line with Sanchez converting again.

Australia skipper Michael Hooper powered over from close range after clever running from a lineout and Foley converted to leave his team seven points adrift. But that was as good as it got for the visiting side in the opening half as Argentina scored two more tries and a penalty before a near-capacity crowd in the 20,000-seat stadium.

Patience and powerful running ended with Matias Orlando going over between the posts on 27 minutes and Sanchez converted before being forced off.

Iglesias had been on the field less than two minutes when he scored a brilliant solo try, including a swerve that left Foley for dead. Iglesias converted his try and slotted an angled penalty to give the South Americans a 24-point advantage by the break. — AFP ■

Taolu World Cup 2018 to be held in Yangon

UNDER the supervision of International Wushu Federation (IWUF), Taolu World Cup 2018 will be held at Thuwunna Indoor Stadium in Yangon, on 17 and 18 October.

The Taolu World Cup (TWC) is the official world cup event that is hosted by the IWUF.

The TWC takes place biennially and features the top placing Taolu athletes from the previous world wushu championships.

The 1st TWC took place in Fuzhou, China, in 2016 and My-

anmar Wushu Federation is in charge for the organization of the 2nd TWC, under the auspices of the IWUF. Only four athletes from each nation will be allowed to compete in the championship and 22 gold medals will be awarded in total. Myanmar wushu athletes to compete are Nyein Chan Ko Ko, Thein Than Oo, Sandi Oo and Aye Thitsar Myint.

As for Myanmar, it will be the first time that it is holding the world level Taolu championship.—Shine Htet Zaw ■

International Billiards & Snooker Championship to be held in Myanmar

MYANMAR Billiards & Snooker Federation (MBSF) will hold the 2018 International Championships from 12 to 27 November at Grand Mercure Hotel, Yangon.

About 200 players from 40 countries will compete in the championship.

A total of five categories

will be included in the international championship: 150 UP, Long Point, Master, Men and Ladies.

150 UP and Long Point events will be held from 12 to 18 November, while Master, Men and Ladies events will be held from 19 to 27 November.—Pwint Thitsar ■

Mourinho reveals board backing after United's stunning win over Newcastle

MANCHESTER CITY — Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho revealed he had received a text message of support from the English giants' board ahead of his team's thrilling 3-2 win over Newcastle at Old Trafford on Saturday.

Speculation over Mourinho's position mounted before kick-off following United's poor start to the season and, with his team trailing 2-0 inside 10 minutes, the Portuguese boss looked like he could be on his way out.

But Alexis Sanchez capped United's incredible second-half comeback when he rose to meet Ashley Young's cross and head in the winning goal in the final minute of the game. Afterwards Mourinho admitted he needed an unofficial 'vote of confidence' from a board member, believed to be executive vice-chairman Ed Woodward, before the game to know he could discount a newspaper report that he would be sacked this weekend, regardless of the result against Premier League strugglers Newcastle.

"The ones that read the papers, that are connected with social media, they thought maybe I had gone," said Mourinho.

"If I hadn't had an SMS from my board not to read (the papers) I would have been convinced too," he added.

But 10 minutes into the visit of lowly Newcastle perhaps even Woodward was re-thinking his position.

The visitors' goals resulted from appalling defending from a United side that has looked weak in that department all season, both coming from Newcastle throw-ins which would have been dealt with by an organised defence.

In the seventh minute, Ayoze Perez played a routine through-ball inside full-back Young and Kenedy easily beat him, for skill and pace, before finishing ruthlessly. — AFP ■



Relief for Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho. PHOTO: AFP