President U Thein Sein to attend 10th ASEM in Italy

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Oct—President U Thein Sein left Nay Pyi Taw by air on Wednesday to attend the 10th ASEM in Milan, Italy.

The President was seen off at Nay Pyi Taw Airport by Vice Presidents Dr Sai Maek Kham and U Nyan Tun, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and Union ministers.

The President was accompanied by Union Ministers U Winna Maung Lwin, U Tin Naing Thein, U Ye Htut, Region Chief Minister U Thein Aung, Union Minister U Thein Aung, U Ye Htut, Region Chief Minister U Tun, Commander-in-Chief (Army) Office, Deputy Ministers U Ohn Than and U Myo Aung and officials.

The Asia-Europe Meeting is held in Asia and Europe once in every two years alternatively. Myanmar became member of the ASEM in 2005. President U Thein Sein attended the 9th ASEM in Laos in 2012 for the first time and will attend the 10th ASEM in Europe for the first time.

MNA

Decades-old ships cause IWT navigable transportation capacity decrease

By Aye Min Soe

YANGON, 15 Oct—Inland Water Transport urgently needs to replace its decades-old ships running along the navigable waterways with modern and faster ones to recover from its losses.

The number of navigable transportation service routes operated by IWT has been spirally decreased as the state-owned decades-old ships have caused delays and higher costs and cannot compete with modern ones run by private entrepreneurs, according the ministry.

IWT has been operating passenger cum freight services and ferry services, along the navigable waterways in Myanmar with a fleet of over 400 ships and cargos including 225 powered vessels, 138 passenger-cum cargo ships, 27 cargos, 30 powered barge, one water tender, 22 Tugs, one oil tanker, 149 non-powered vessels, 138 cargo barge, 11 oil barge and 39 station pontoons, according to the last year statistics of Ministry.

Meanwhile, Inland Water Transport, which has been operating its transportation services at losses, is facing challenges for transforming its services from public service to commercial basis with its decades-old ships and to be able to stand on its own budget after the new government adopted a new policy.

“The policy has been changed. But, still, we cannot change our old ships yet. We have to stop some of our navigable transportation services,” said an official of the IWT.

To be able to build passenger and cargo ships including vessels for transportation services along coastal lines, IWT needs to carry out reforms, running its services with joint venture, an official said.

IWT had been operating its transportation at losses and at affordable prices for the people for decades thanks to the budget allocation from the successive governments.

MNA

Printing and Publishing Rules released

The Printing and Publishing Law was enacted on 14-3-2014 under the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Law No 13. Under the sub-section (a) of Section 25 of the law, the Ministry of Information issued the Printing and Publishing Rules under the notification No 48/2014 on 10 October 2014 in accord with the agreement of the Union government.


Moreover, the rules was distributed to Myanmar Press Council (Interim), Myanmar Writers Association, Myanmar Journalists Association, Myanmar Printers and Publishers Association, Myanmar Producers and Publishers Association, Myanmar Periodicals Union and Myanmar Journalists Network.

Those wishing to applying for printing and publishing and renewing the registration are to contact the Copyright and Registration Division of IPRD.

MNA

INSIDE

Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw meets law students

PAGE 3

ACWC meeting highlights protection of women and children

PAGE 3

Reform for revenue collection system is essential

PAGE 8

Inland Water Transport’s ferry on the Ayeyawady River.—PHOTO:VAGABONDTRAVELTALES.COM

GNLM
Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw to discuss bills

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Oct—At the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Session on Wednesday, the Bill Committee of the Hluttaw reported their reviews on two bills sent back from the president with remarks including the Amendment Bill of Constitutional Tribunal Law (2014) and the electricity bill.

The bill committee then submitted their recommendations for the bills. Then, the speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw invited representatives to submit their name to debate the bills. MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw

Pyithu Hluttaw convene its 17th day meeting

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Oct — Pyithu Hluttaw held its 17th day meeting on 15 October here on Wednesday.

Regarding the question of U Aung Zin, representative of Pazundaung township constituency, U Win Myint, deputy minister for Immigration and Population said that Myanmar has taken census to adopt sound policies depending on the number of population.

The Deputy minister also said that the policies on population will include plans for appropriate population for the country, natural resources, economy, social affairs, culture, demographic of population, increasing rate of population, settlement, migration, life expectancy, population density of neighbouring countries, ratio of dependant family members, per capita, education and national security.

U Khin Maung Aye, deputy minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, said that the ministry has been constructing and repairing dams, irrigation facilities, sluice gates for agricultural water in 2013-2014 fiscal year.

He also said that repair and maintenance works at more ponds and dams will be carried out in Mandalay region depending on the budget of 2014-2015.

The central Myanmar regions have water pumping-up system from river and underground, and plans have been made to set up more 16 facilities to pump up river-water and underground water.

The ministry has made five-year plan up to 2015-2016 fiscal year, 20-year plan up to 2030-2031, as well as water supply system will be set up at three regions of dry zones with the support of JICA and 336 water supply system will be set up across the country with the support of UNICEF.—MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw

Land plots at fair price for investors available at Ponnagyun Industrial Zone

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Oct—The 11th regular session of Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) continued for the 17th day at its hall on Wednesday.

Dr Myat Nyana Soe of Yangon Region Constituency No 4 raised questions, asking whether there is a plan to solve the high price for land plots not only for local entrepreneurs but for foreign investors in hiring land plots from the owners.

Deputy Minister for Industries U Thein Aung replied that a management committee has been formed to supervise the construction of factories and industries on the allotted plots.

The plot owners who fail to construct factories and industries on their lands in the project period must return their plots to the government and who cannot complete construction tasks must pay fines to the government. Under the supervision of the industrial zone supervisory committees, respective region and state governments arrange construction of factories and apartments to lower land plot prices. The local and foreign investors are to contact regional and state governments except Yangon Region to have land plots in the industrial zones at fair prices. Investors may rent the land plots at fair price at Ponnagyun Industrial Zone in Rakhine State.

MNA

INTEXPO Myanmar 2014 to boost trade and economy between Myanmar and India

YANGON, 15 Oct—The INTEXPO Myanmar 2014 held at Parkroyal Hotel in Dagon Township was aimed at developing textile industries between Myanmar and India.

With the assistance of Indo-Myanmar Chambers of Commerce and Industry, entrepreneurs from 15 companies of India arrived in Yangon to meet Myanmar businessmen. At the opening ceremony of the expo, Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Gautam Mukhopadhyaya said Myanmar imported textile worth US$ 2 million from India last five years. Now, both countries have improved the border trade routes. In September and October 2014, India’s expos were held in Yangon and Mandalay for three times, he said.

Man-made fibre of India are being used in Europe, Middle East, Asia and the US, totalling over 140 countries of the world.—Aung Thura

Pyithu Hluttaw representatives leave for Singapore

YANGON, 15 Oct—At the invitation of UN Women Singapore Committee, Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) representatives Daw Nang Wah Nu and Daw Nang Sae Awa left Yangon International Airport on Wednesday to attend the Women, Policy and Political Leadership Meeting to be held in Singapore on 16 and 17 October.—MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw representatives Daw Nang Wah Nu and Daw Nang Sae Awa seen at Yangon International Airport on their departure for Singapore.—MNA
Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw meets law students

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Oct — Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) Thura U Shwe Mann received 40 students from Diploma in Business Law and Diploma in International Law of the Law Department of the Mandalay University who observed the 11th regular session of the first Pyithu Hluttaw at the hall of the Hluttaw Complex in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday. Also present at the meeting were Chairman of the Pyithu Hluttaw Economic and Trade Development Committee U Maung Maung Thein, Chairman of the Pyithu Hluttaw Education Promotion Committee Dr Chan Nyein, Secretary Dr Mya Oo and officials of the Pyithu Hluttaw Office.

ACWC meeting highlights protection of women and children

YANGON, 15 Oct — The 9th ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and 13th ASEAN Women’s Affairs Committee meeting was held at Sedona Hotel in Yangon on Wednesday morning.

Chairperson of Myanmar National Women’s Affairs Committee and Chairperson of Myanmar Child Rights National Committee Chairperson of Myanmar Child Rights National Committee Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin delivered an address.

Myanmar is realizing four main rights and three tasks of the child rights in the UN Charter, 10 rights of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and three fundamental rules.

Myanmar enacted Early Child Care and Development Law in February 2014. Myanmar cooperates with relevant organizations in health and nutrition, supply of potable water and sanitation, education and child development and child protection tasks.

The government is implementing 12 sectors of the national strategic plan for women development as of 2013. The meeting urged the delegates to soonest implement the prevention of violence against women and child submitted to the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) held last May.

The meeting and related meetings will be held on 16 October.—MNA

Workshop on role of courts in alternative dispute resolution mechanisms kicks off

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Oct — Under the MoU on Singapore-Myanmar bilateral cooperation in legal affairs, the Supreme Court of the Union and Ministry of Law of Singapore jointly organized the Workshop on role of courts in alternative dispute resolution mechanisms at the Royal Ace Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday.

Supreme Court Judge U Soe Nyunt and Registrar Ms Tan Ai Leen of International Arbitration Centre of Singapore extended greetings.

The workshop focused on role of courts in alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, attended by judicial officers, judges at district level up to 15 to 17 October.

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The meeting and related meetings will be held on 16 October.—MNA

Workshop on role of courts in alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in progress at Royal Ace Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw.—MNA

Gem merchants check gems and jade stones

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Oct — The 4th Gems and Utility Jade Sales continued for the second day at Mani Yadana Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday, visited by 3,392 people. Gem merchants checked the gems and utility jade stones at the Mani Yadana Jade Hall and respective places. They put the proposal for prices to the tender boxes.

On 16 October, 160 gems lots will be sold at open tender. A total of 6,982 lots of utility jade will be sold from 17 to 20 October.

Local gem merchants are to submit the price for gem lots from No 1 to No 160 and the tender winners will be announced on 16 October.

Likewise, winners in the tenders for jade lots will be announced from 17 to 20 October. Thanks to the sales, the gems entrepreneurs will have materials.—MNA
Awards presented to winners in body-building, physical culture contests

Mandalay, 15 Oct—
The Mandalay Region Chief Minister’s Cup Body-building Contest and Mandalay Region Women’s Affairs Organization Patron’s Cup Physical Contest took place at the City Hall in Mandalay on Tuesday.

A total of 27 bodybuilders from all clubs of Mandalay took part in the 60-, 65-, 70-, 75- and above 75 kilos classes and 24 contestants in the physical culture senior and junior events.

Chairman of the Mandalay Region Body-building and Physical Culture Subcommittee U Han Myint presented certificates to the wellwishers who contributed to the organizing the contests.

On behalf of the Mandalay Region Chief Minister, Region Minister for Social Affairs Dr Win Hlaing presented cash award and championship trophies to first prize winner Aung Soe Min (Mylife Club), second prize winner Ni Hlaing gave cash award and trophies for first prize to Nang Lauk Kham, second to Hsu Myint Win of Mylife Gym and third to Tayu Taya Hlwar of Yangon University in the junior physical culture contest. Member of the panel of patron of Mandalay Region Women’s Sports Committee Thudhamma Theingi Daw Myint presented K200,000 each to first prize winners in the respective kilo classes.

Chairperson of Mandalay Region Women’s Sports Committee Daw Ni Hlaing presented cash award and trophies to first prize winner Nang Hsai Mwe Huam of Bahtoo Club of TadaU Township and Nay Chi Tint Wai of Bahtoo Club of Madaya Township in the senior event.

Taninthayi Region Cooperative Syndicate holds AGM

Dawei, 15 Oct —
Taninthayi Region Cooperative Syndicate held the annual general meeting for 2013-14 fiscal year at its office in Dawei of Taninthayi Region on Tuesday.

Chairman of the syndicate U Kyaw Win and heads of Mon State and Taninthayi Region Cooperative Departments made speeches.

BOD member Daw Than Nwe read the BOD report and financial statement and Auditor U Khin Maung Chit the audit report.

The meeting chairman sought the approval for the reports from members of the syndicate.

Managing Director U Than Myint reviewed the discussions of the syndicate members over the BOD work report and financial reports and then sought approvals for two major repairs, sales of syndicate-owned office works and furniture and retendering of land plot and warehouses of the syndicate.

The meeting chairman sought approval from members to extend the term of BOD from four years to five years.

Taninthayi Region Cooperative Syndicate gets 16-bed station hospital

Myingyan District Deputy Commissioner U Myint Thin Aung, Township Administrator U Kyaw Naing and members of the township development supportive committee inspected the site for construction of the new hospital.—Zaw Min Naing (Myingyan)
Abu Sayyaf to negotiate with Philippine FM for German hostages

ZOLONEG, CITY (Philippines), 15 Oct — The Abu Sayyaf rebel group said on Wednesday that it is open to negotiating with Philippine Foreign Minister Alberto Del Rosario for the release of two German hostages.

In an interview with a local radio station, Abu Sayyaf spokesman Abu Rami said they are willing to allow del Rosario to serve as mediator and secure their demands.

“We would like to talk to the Philippine Foreign Affairs chief because his agency isn’t corrupt. We would reiterate to him our agency isn’t corrupt. We serve as mediator and securing to allow del Rosario to serve as mediator and secure their demands,” the spokesman said.

He said they would not impose a deadline if talks would focus on meeting their demands for the release of the two Germans—a ransom of 250 million pesos (5.6 million US dollars) and a halt to the campaign against Islamic State militants by the government.

The group had threatened to kill the two Germans if their demands would not be met by 17 October. One of the two German hostages, Stefan Viktor Okonek, said in a separate interview that he was brought by his captors to a 3-meter by 5-meter pit supposedly for his execution.

“(The Abu Sayyaf) told me this is my grave,” said Okonek, adding that he was separated from his wife, Henrike Dielen, on Monday. The German couple has been in captivity since April, when they were taken away by the militants from their yacht off the western Philippine province of Palawan.

India state elections could unlock Modi reform push

MUMBAI, 15 Oct — Indian voters from two states headed to the polls on Wednesday for the first major elections since Prime Minister Narendra Modi stunned Asia in power five months ago, in a test of support that could unlock a round of delayed economic reforms.

Opinion polls showed Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was likely to win in Haryana and Maharashtra, unseating unpopular incumbents, but fall short of a majority in either state.

State elections allots seats to the Rajya Sabha, or upper house of parliament, where the BJP and its allies do not have a majority. Although less powerful than the lower house, the body still plays a critical role in passing legislation and building the BJP’s seat tally there will help push through reform.

“Urging the people of Haryana & Maharashtra to go out & cast their votes. Youngsters must show the way & ensure record turnout,” Modi posted on Twitter as polling stations opened.

“Modi’s government has put off unpopular decisions on raising the price of natural gas and ending a price cap on diesel. Both measures are expected to be implemented once the elections are out the way,” said Viktor Okonek.

Modi’s caution has disappointed some investors who feel he has moved too slowly on reforms, warning of a first parliamentary majority in more than 30 years on promises of reviving the economy and jobs.

After a weak showing for the BJP in a round of by-elections last month, Modi hit the stump hard in Maharashtra, home to financial hub Mumbai, and Haryana, where north Indian tech-city Gurgaon is located.

The party has never been a major force in either state.

He has addressed dozens of rallies, railing against the Congress party incumbents in the states and trumpeting achievements such as attracting investment promises from Japan and opening bank accounts for the poor.

“Ever since he came to power, prices of vegetables etc. haven’t risen as much has they had earlier,” said Suvidha Kamath, a housewife in central Mumbai. “We cannot judge Modi so soon. Let’s give him a couple of years to prove himself.”

Results of the elections are due on Sunday.

Bagging two more state governments for his party would also make it easier for Modi to move ahead with a much-anticipated national goods and services tax to replace a labyrinth of levies that analysts say restrain the economy.

“Rather than delivering on big bang reforms, Modi’s approach as of now has been on repairing the economy through bridging the gaps which were existing,” said Upasna Bharti, an economist with ING Vysya Bank in Mumbai.

“We should definitely expect Modi’s government to have a bigger appetite for bold reforms if they were to acquire a strong hold in the upcoming two state elections.”

Despite the relatively muted performance of Modi’s government so far, investors still view him positively, as reflected in Mumbai’s financial markets.

Seminar seeks business opportunity on 21-century Maritime Silk Road

BEIJING, 15 Oct — A seminar titled “Building Maritime Silk Road of the 21st Century and Zhuhai Expanding Economic & Trade Cooperation with ASEAN Free Trade Area” was held in Zhuhai City, south China’s Guangdong Province recently.

Nearly a hundred representatives from local government departments and entrepreneurs attended the event.

Xu Ningning, executive president of China-ASEAN Business Council, said in a keynote speech that “New Maritime Silk Road” is a road leading to win-win economic cooperation.

As the Chinese government vows to rejuvenate the Maritime Silk Road, the city of Zhuhai should seize the chance and make use of its geographical advantage, take positive actions to inno-vate pragmatic cooperation, he added.

Xia Baowen, president of SM International Wholesale (China) Centre Sdn Bhd, advised Chinese companies to take advantage of bonded processing zone in Malaysian Port Klang Free Trade Zone to develop overseas market.

He said the Port Klang is the world’s 12th largest and second largest port in Southeast Asia, playing a comprehensive role of industry, commercial, trade and logistics.

Enterprise investing in Port Klang enjoy a preferential policy free of income tax for ten years, he said.

Deputy chief of Zhuhai Commerce Bureau Liu Xiaoman said relevant government departments and enterprises in Zhuhai should give full play to region- al advantages, speed up maritime interconnec-tion and interworking and explore business opportunities brought by the Maritime Silk Road of the 21st century.

The seminar was jointly held by China-ASEAN Business Council Secretariat, Zhuhai Commerce Bureau, and the Investment Promotion and Economic Cooperation Office of Commerce Department of Guangdong Province.

People offer alms to monks during the ceremony marking the 2nd anniversary of the death of King Father Norodom Sihanouk in Phnom Penh on 15 Oct. Cambodia on Wednesday commemorated the second anniversary of the death of the country’s most revered King Father Norodom Sihanouk by offering alms to Buddhist monks and paying tribute to his statue.

Xinhua

A woman casts her vote at a polling station during Maharashtra state elections, in Mumbai on 15 Oct, 2014.—Reuters
Resetting Russia-US relations impossible as long as sanctions are in effect — Medvedev

MOSCOW, 15 Oct.— Resetting Russian-US relations is impossible as long as sanctions against Russia are in effect, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said in an interview with CNBC TV channel.

“It’s absolutely impossible. Let’s be clear: we did not come up with these sanctions. Our international partners did,” Medvedev said. The prime minister noted that any suggestion of a “reset” is out of the question.

By pulling back troops from the border with Ukraine, Russia did not intend “to give a signal” to Washington, Medvedev noted. “This is not a signal to Washington. It is Russia’s domestic decision. This can be interpreted in any way, but this is not a signal,” the premier said. “Any decisions that Russia takes, including those regarding our armed forces, are within our authority, the authority for the Russian president, and are not linked with the situation we witness there (in Ukraine), though we are certainly quite strongly concerned about it,” Medvedev explained.

Medvedev believes that amid Western sanctions, other countries will take niches which European partners held previously on the Russian market.

“Eventually pragmatic considerations, the possibility to earn money will prevail, and these niches, which will become vacant if European producers quit, will be filled,” he said. “I would like to note that we do not seek this, and the current situation can be reversed in theory.”

Itar-Tass

US airbase starts dismantling “Elephant Cage” antenna in north Japan

A ceremony is held in front of an antenna array at the US military’s Misawa Airbase in Aomori Prefecture on 15 Oct, 2014, before the military began dismantling the aged facility, nicknamed the “Elephant Cage,” that was used to intercept radio transmissions during the Cold War era. — Kyodo News

Aomori, Japan, 15 Oct. — The US military began on Wednesday a year-long project to dismantle an aged antenna array nicknamed the “Elephant Cage” at its Misawa Airbase in northern Japan that was used to intercept radio transmissions during the Cold War era.

In 2012 the US military stopped using the array of antennas, about 40 metres high and placed in a circle over 440 metres in diameter, due to their age and changes in communication technology.

The facility went into service in 1965 to intercept transmissions from countries including the former Soviet Union and China.

After the dismantlement, sports facilities for US military personnel and their families are likely to be set up.

Officially called AN/FLR-9, the array was one of two such facilities set up by the US Forces in Japan following the end of World War II. The other in Yomitan, Okinawa Prefecture was demolished in 2007.

Kyodo News

Two Koreas hold 1st general-level military talks in 7 years

SEOUL, 15 Oct.— North and South Korean general-level military talks, the first in seven years, were being held on Wednesday at the truce village of Panmunjom, Yonhap News Agency reported, citing military and parliamentary sources.

The talks, which were last held in December 2007, come amid heightened tensions on the Korean Peninsula in the wake of two brief exchanges of gunfire between the two Koreas’ militaries last week.

“At this moment, I can’t confirm anything,” Unification Ministry spokeswoman Park Soo Jin said at a Press briefing when asked if she could confirm the report.

“We can’t confirm everything regarding inter-Korean relations because there is the other side (to consider),” she added, lending credence to the report.

Yonhap quoted the parliamentary source as saying the talks got under way at 10 am but the North “does not want to make it public.”

Another source from South Korea’s military said the agenda would include “how to relieve inter-Korean military tensions that have been heightened recently.”

Tensions on the Korean Peninsula spiked last week after naval boats of the two sides briefly exchanged gunfire near the western sea border on 7 October.

Three days later, North Korea soldiers on the land border fired anti-aircraft machine guns at balloons carrying anti-Pyongyang leaflets. Some of the shots landed south of the border, prompting the South Korean military to fire back.

There were no reports of casualties.

Inter-Korean general-level talks with the two-star generals representing each side have been held off-and-on since 2004, dealing mainly with issues of easing military tension and building confidence.

In previous such talks, the two sides reached agreements on preventing accidental clashes at sea and discontinuing propaganda activities along the Military Demarcation Line and remove equipment used for propaganda, for example, while they considered the idea of establishing a joint fishing area in disputes areas of the Yellow Sea to prevent clashes.

The latest such talks come some 10 days after high-ranking figures from North Korea made a surprise visit to the South and met with senior government officials here, resulting in an agreement to hold another round of high-level talks in early November at the latest. — Kyodo News

A North Korean flag is seen on top of a tower near the truce village of Panmunjom in the demilitarised zone (DMZ) separating North Korea from South Korea, about 55 km (34 miles) north of Seoul on 25 Sept, 2013.

Kyodo News
Drecun: There is strong network of radical Islam in Kosovo

BELGRADE, 15 Oct — Milovan Drecun, chair of the Serbian parliament’s committee on Kosovo-Metohija (KiM), said on Tuesday that Kosovo’s Interior Minister Bajram Redzepi is trying to ease the gravity of graffiti on the Serbian Orthodox monastery of Visoki Decani that call for the Islamic State and the establishment of the Caliphate.

Redzepi qualified it as an act of vandalism, claiming that the graffiti on the walls of the monastery had been written by three minors.

In a broadcast on Radio-Television of Kosovo 2, Redzepi said that police would talk with the parents of the minors so as to ensure that such nonsense does not happen again.

“Redzepi wants to diminish the gravity of this event, which is actually very serious,” Drecun told reporters in the Serbian parliament.

“In the last 20 years, these areas have become an Islamic Jihad stronghold which has the full potential for recruiting jihadists, which we have seen in the case of Syria and Iraq,” Drecun said.

“Although the network has become regional, there is still no proper response, there is no strong, joint regional action and the action of the entire international community against that,” he warned.

That network is particularly strong in Kosovo-Metohija, where radical Islam is preached in several hundred mosques, the jihadist ideology that emphasizes that Christians are a natural enemy to Muslims,” Drecun said.

“Many children in Kosovo-Metohija grow up with that radical ideology and become an easy prey for jihadists,” he added.

Writing graffiti on the property of the Monastery of Decani is not innocuous at all, and reveals the presence of a network of radical Islam which is especially strong in the areas of Decani and Pec.

That is why the explanation that the minors are responsible for this incident and that this has no gravity cannot possibly be accepted.

“It is even more dangerous if children wrote such messages as this means that they are growing up in the surroundings where radical Islam is being preached and that they can become an easy prey for jihadists,” he added.

Redzepi is trying to ease the gravity of this incident and that this has no gravity cannot possibly be accepted.

People in Pakistan celebrate Malala’s Nobel win:

Girls participating in a gathering hold message boards in Islamabad, Pakistan on 14 Oct, 2014, to congratulate Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani teenager and education activist, on winning the Nobel Peace Prize on 10 Oct.— Kyon News

A Austro anti-terror chief warns of IS threat

VIENNA, 15 Oct — Austria is under “a certain kind” of threat of terrorist attacks from the extremist group of Islamic State (IS), a senior security official said on Tuesday.

About 150 people, most of whom have Russian citizenship and are believed to be Chechens, have travelled from Austria to take part in conflicts in Syria and Iraq, Peter Gridling, director of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution and Counterterrorism, said in an interview with the Kleine Zeitung newspaper.

In addition, a number of others with Turkish, Bosnian, Egyptian, Macedonian and Serbian backgrounds have also taken part in the conflicts, he said, adding that 15 to 20 percent of them are believed to have Austrian citizenship.

“The main problem is with those who return, because we cannot see inside their minds,” Gridling said. “The responses from them range from ‘I have had enough of what I saw there,’ to ‘the Jihad should not only be fought there.’”

Additionally, there are even larger numbers of people in the country — perhaps at thousands — who either approve of the activities of these individuals or are not explicitly opposed to them, although they would not necessarily commit themselves to terrorist plots, he added.

Meanwhile, the director pointed out that most Muslims in Austria are opposed to terrorism, and most mosques and prayer houses are not believed to be part of the radicalization process, with only 20 of the 360 such establishments in the country causing concern.

As regards whether IS would attack Europe, he said that as long as the military advances of the group are stopped, there is no reason for it to make strikes in Europe.

Washington federal court.

Khatallah’s attorney, public defender Michelle Peterson, said she was not allowed to discuss any evidence the government had provided her in connection with the case, but she cautioned against a “rush to judgment.” “It’s certainly not the first time the government has been wrong about Benghazi,” she said.

Four Americans were killed in the attack, including the US ambassador to Libya, Christopher Stevens. The attack ignited a political firestorm in Washington that could still resonate if Hillary Clinton, secretary of state at the time of the attack, runs for president as expected in 2016.

Republicans accused Clinton of failing to put in place security measures to protect US personnel in Libya. In the attack’s immediate aftermath, Obama administration officials, including Susan Rice, currently White House national security adviser, stoked political controversy by initially saying the attack was a spontaneous protest against an anti-Muslim video that had surfaced in the United States.

Evidence later emerged that US agencies had been warning for months about weak security and possible attacks against US facilities in Libya. Evidence also emerged that soon after the attack, the United States had strong reason to believe that organized militant groups had been involved.

US files death penalty charges against Benghazi suspect

WASHINGTON, 15 Oct — A federal grand jury issued a new indictment on Tuesday that includes a possible death penalty against Ahmed Abu Khatallah, a Libyan militant accused of involvement in the September 2012 attacks on the US diplomatic compound in Benghazi, Libya.

The indictment supersedes earlier accusations brought against Khatallah in July, and adds 17 charges, including allegations he led an extremist militia group and conspired with others to attack the facilities and kill US citizens.

Khatallah was captured in Libya in June by a US military and FBI team and transported to the United States aboard a US Navy ship to face charges in

A motorcade believed to be carrying Libyan militia leader Ahmed Abu Khatallah speeds away from the US federal courthouse in Washington on 28 June, 2014. REUTERS
Reform for revenue collection system is essential
By May Hnin Aye

ASEM or the Asia-Europe Meeting is a cooperation forum for Asian and European countries. It was initiated to strengthen dialogue and interaction between Europe and Asia, the two pivotal regions in the world. ASEM is a process of dialogue and cooperation involving 30 countries Europe, 19 countries from Asia, as well as member states of EU and ASEAN, making a total of 51 partners.

ASEM does not have secretariat office, however, the coordination team involves one from member of ASEAN and one from representative countries of Asia, while one from European Union and one representative country of Europe, total 10 groups. A member of ASEAN and a member of EU take the permanent seats, while the two representative members are alternately selected.

The ASEM has emerged after the leaders from Europe and Asia have seen the possible benefits from promotion of cooperation between the two regions due to changing situations in 1990s.

In November 1994 during an official visit, French president Jacques Chirac discussed with Singaporean premier Go Choke Tong to establish ASEM for holding a forum for informal meeting of leaders from Asia and Europe. European Commission issued the paper ‘Towards a New Strategy for Asia’ in July 1994, and it could pave the way for ASEM. Mr Chris Patten, the last Hong Kong Governor of the United Kingdom and later worked at European Commission, took a key role for the establishment of Asia-Europe cooperation.

The inaugural ASEM Summit was held in Bangkok, Thailand, in 1996 and since then the meeting of Heads of State or Government has been organised every two years alternately in Asia and Europe. While ASEM Summit could be held after the bloc was first founded, the ASEM convenes its summit together with its establishment. This is the prominent character of ASEM. Foreign ministers of ASEM meet during the year when ASEM Summit is held in Asia and Europe alternately. Late, ministerial meeting of ASEM have been held every year, together with biannual high-level meeting of foreign affairs ministers. The meetings of economic ministers are also held every two years with occasional meeting of financial ministers. The topics in these meetings include not only issues of Asia and Europe, but also global matters such as anti-terrorism, trade negotiations and future collaboration.

ASEM is different from ASEAN and EU. While the meeting between ASEAN EU is just concerned with the blocs, ASEM covers ASEAN, EU, members of ASEAN and EU or the countries located in Asia and Europe regions. As Myanmar is a member of ASEAN and it is also meting in Asia region, it is a member of ASEM. Therefore, President of Republic of Union of Myanmar is scheduled to attend the 10th ASEM Summit which will be held in Milan, Italy, on 16 and 17 October this year.

The participation of Myanmar in ASEM is very meaningful. Myanmar President will represent for not only Myanmar, but also the ASEM as an rotating charismanship of the bloc. During two decades, Myanmar widens the cooperation of Asia and Europe in the fields of politics, economy, monetary, finance, culture, education, youth and culture. There have been many remarkable events in the history of relation between Myanmar and ASEM. ASEM was established in 1996 and Myanmar becomes a member of ASEM in 1997. Since 1996, Myanmar encountered pressure and restrictions of EU due to the political situations of southeast Asia country. The second ASEM was held in London in 1998, with the participation of of ASEAN, China, Japan, South Korea, and 15 members of the EU. The European side, especially the EU, expressed their strong disapproval of the inclusion of Myanmar in the ASEM. On the other hand, the ASEM demanded the presence of all its ten members in the meeting.

At that time, the ASEM had not taken shape yet. And Myanmar had not yet signed the ASEAN-EU Protocol 1980. The signing of the protocol would mean entering into heated discussions on democracy and human rights issues. At that time, Myanmar was deemed a blockage in Asia-Europe relations. The ASEM had never yielded to demands made by Euro- pean countries for the exclusion of Myanmar from the ASEM. In addition, the bloc displayed their unity by responding that no member of the ASEM would attend the meeting if Myanmar’s participation was ruled out. As the EU preferred the participation of all members of ASEAN to allow all new members of the ASEAN. Even so, the European side limited Myanmar’s participation in various ways. They did not allow Myanmar to take part in discussions; they used Myanmar’s former name, which was Burma; and they wanted Myanmar to send only its foreign minister instead of head of state. Myanmar, together with its ASEAN members, demanded equal partner- ship. As ASEM-related meetings, Myanmar elaborated on its constructive political progress. External elements who were against the Myanmar government at that time took advantage of that dilemma in pressing Myanmar.

Thus, Myanmar could send its foreign minister to the ASEM, which took place in Helsinki, Finland, in 2006. The same thing could be said for ASEM in China in 2008 and in Belgium in 2010. Since 2006, Myanmar has participated in foreign ministers’ meetings, finance ministers’ meetings and economic ministers’ meetings.

With full support from the ASEAN, Myanmar had overcome too many obstacles to join ASEM. Europe presented Myanmar delegates with more difficulty in getting entry visas than Asia did, when the meetings were organized there.

Every obstacle Myanmar had encountered is now a thing of the past. Myanmar delegates enjoy encouragement and support in ASEM. The EU is now all in favour of Myanmar’s democratic reforms. Better relations between Myanmar the EU will help overcome only the relations between the ASEAN and the EU but also the cooperation with the ASEM. At the time of the newly elected government, President U Thein Sein himself attended the ninth ASEM for the very first time, which took place in Vientiane, Laos, on 5-7 November 2012. President U Thein Sein received a warm welcome and extended by leaders of European countries as they showed enormous interest in and enthusiasm about the on-going democratic reforms in Myanmar. In addition, they gave the Myanmar president informal meetings. Among them were leaders from Luxembourg, Denmark, Italy and Finland. Myanmar’s foreign minister was not an exception too. Thus, ASEM has turned out to be a forum that strengthens not only the relations between Asia and Europe but also the relations between Myanmar and Europe.

President U Thein Sein is scheduled to attend the 10th ASEM, which will be hosted in Milan, Italy, from 16 to 17 October. It will be the first time Myanmar will ever participate in ASEM to be held in Europe. As a summit that draws representa- tives of nearly 50 countries from Asia and Europe, ASEM will definitely help Myanmar improve its relations with the international community and vitalize its democratic reforms.

Trs: A+K-TY
Mandalay Region launches performing arts competition

Mandalay, 15 Oct — A ceremony to open the 21st Mandalay Region national races’ performing arts competition was held at the National Theatre on 66th Street in Aungmyethazan Township of Mandalay on Tuesday.

After opening the ceremony, Chief Minister of Mandalay Region U Ye Myint explained the purpose of holding the competition.

Pyae Phyo Khaing (Mandalay)

Advantages of insurance lectured to trainees at driving course

Mandalay, 15 Oct — Myanma Insurance held a talk about its insurance services at the Lamin driving school in Hsinbyukan Ground on Yangon-Mandalay Highway in Chanmyathazi Township of Mandalay on 13 October.

Mandalay Region Manager Daw Toe Sein explained meaning of the insurance, purpose, advantages from insurance and rules.

It was attended by Principal U Lwin Tun and trainees totalling 350.

Thiha Ko Ko

UMFCCI meets with Mandalay Region CCI

Mandalay, 15 Oct — Officials of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and those of Mandalay Region CCI held a meeting at the latter’s office of Yangon-Mandalay Highway in Chanmyathazan Township of Mandalay on Tuesday.

President of UMFCCI U Win Aung urged those present to make concerted efforts for long-term development of the federation and seeking approval for organizational setup and rules.

Chairman of the Mandalay Region CCI U Aung Win Khaing discussed progress of his association and vice chairmen requirement of the association. The president reviewed their discussions.

The special session of the Mandalay Region CCI will be held on 16 October to discuss records of the organizational setup and its rules.

Thiha Ko Ko

New school building put into service in Thathanpin Tsp

Thanatpin, 15 Oct — Bago Region Chief Minister U Nyan Win attended the opening of new school building in Kyonpachaung-wa Village in Thathanpin Township of Bago Region recently.

The chief minister presented K2 million for copy books and school desks to the headmaster of the school. Amyotha Hluttaw representative U Po Zaw explained regional development tasks.

Bago Region IPRD

Uniforms presented to members of Zeyar Green Land (Myinmu) Association

Bago, 15 Oct — Chief Minister of Bago Region U Nyan Win and wife Daw Myint Myint Soe offered rice to 2,803 members of the Sangha at Maha Sivali Ordination Hall of Shwemawdaw Pagoda in Bago on 8 October. Speaker of Bago Region Hluttaw U Win Tin and wife also donated alms to 2,150 members of the Sangha at Kyakhatwaing Pariyatti Monastery and Chief Justice of the High Court U Maung Maung Shwe of Bago Region High Court and wife 700 monks at Maha Kalyani Ordination Hall.

The chief minister presented uniforms to members of four wards.

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Rice and alms donated to members of the Sangha in Bago

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Bago Region IPRD

Myinmu, 15 Oct — A ceremony to hand over uniforms to members of Zeyar Green Land (Myinmu) Association was held in Myinmu of Sagaing Region on Tuesday.

In his address, Chairman of the Township Management Committee U Thein Zaw said that the association has been formed with over 100 members from four wards of the urban area and rural area with the aim of carrying out sanitation of the town and environmental conservation.

He stressed the need to organize the youths and the people to participate in the public welfare tasks.

The chairman and officials presented uniforms to members of four wards.

Under the leadership of the Sagaing Region government, members of the association are carrying out sanitation of the urban area and participating in environmental conservation activities of the township.

Po Kha
US-led air strikes intensify as Syria conflict destabilizes Turkey

MURSITPINAR, (Turkey) / ISTANBUL, 15 Oct — American-led forces have sharply intensified air strikes in the past two days against Islamic State fighters threatening Kurdish forces across the border in Syria. The US-led coalition has been gripped by political turmoil since mass protests in 2011 forced its long-serving president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, to step down. The Houthis, whose stronghold is in Yemen’s northern highlands, have imposed informal control of government ministries in Sanaa and have struck a power-sharing deal with President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi and other political forces. Hadi named Yemen’s capital Sanaa on 14 Oct, 2014. — Reuters

Smoke rises from the Syrian town of Kobani, seen from near the Mursitpinar border crossing on the Turkish-Syrian border in the southeastern town of Suruc in Sanliurfa province on 15 Oct, 2014. — Reuters

Blast in downtown Cairo wounds 12

CAIRO, 15 Oct — A homemade bomb exploded near the Supreme Court in downtown Cairo on Tuesday night, injuring 12 people while also destroying a car and damaging some shop fronts, the interior ministry and security sources said. It was not clear if a particular individual was targeted in the attack, the second in the Egyptian capital in less than a month. There was no immediate claim of responsibility. Last month, a bomb blast near the Egyptian foreign ministry killed three policemen in the worst attack in central Cairo for months. Islamist militant group Ansar Misr claimed that attack. Egypt has faced rising Islamist militant violence since then army chief Abdel Fattah al-Sissi ousted Islamist President Mohamed Mursi last year after mass protests against his rule. He has since cracked down on Mursi’s Muslim Brotherhood, which the government has declared a terrorist group. The Brotherhood says it is peaceful but Islamist militant groups, particularly in the remote but strategic Sinai have stepped up attacks against security forces in recent months. The challenge of containing militants has become more complex since Islamic State fighters expanded their control over northern Iraq and eastern Syria in June and declared a caliphate, inspiring other groups including some based in Sinai and along Egypt’s border with chaotic Libya. While the casualties of Tuesday’s blast were low. But any attack in the capital is bound to cause alarm and cast doubt over the effectiveness of Egypt’s security forces, which have vowed to end the militant bloodshed that has hit tourism, a pillar of the economy. — Reuters

Afghan district governor, police killed in Taleban ambush

LASHKAR GAI, (Afghanistan), 15 Oct — An Afghan district governor was killed along with a policeman while six police were injured after Taleban militants carried out an ambush attack in the country’s southern province of Helmand overnight, said an official on Wednesday. — Xinhua

Houthi rebels take over Yemen’s Hodeidah port — residents

SANAA, 15 Oct — The Shi’ite Muslim Houthi movement which seized Yemen’s capital Sanaa last month has extended its control to the Red Sea port of Hodeidah, deploying checkpoints and taking control of the city’s airport, local officials said. Hodeidah is the second largest port in the impoverished Arabian peninsula nation after Aden, a southern city on the Gulf of Aden. Residents in Hodeidah told Reuters the Houthis had sent forces to all the city’s entry points on Tuesday, including its airport, meeting little or no resistance from security forces. The Houthis’ capture of the capital Sanaa on 21 September stunned Yemenis, who had never expected it was possible.
China inflation slips to near five-year low, more stimulus measures expected

BEIJING, 15 Oct — China’s consumer inflation slowed more than expected in September to a near five-year low, adding to concerns that the world’s largest economies will cool further unless governments take bolder measures to shore up their economies. While much of the decline was due to falling food prices, fuel and other commodities, which are benefiting consumers globally, the data also pointed to broad weakness in the world’s second-largest economy.

Facing mounting risks to growth and rising risks of deflation, Beijing is widely expected to continue rolling out a steady stream of stimulus measures in coming months, though most economists believe it will hold off on more aggressive action such as an interest rate cut unless conditions sharply deteriorate. “Policy makers in Beijing should begin to realize that global inflationary pressures are spreading to China,” said Danusz Kowalcyzk, senior economist at Credit Agricole CIB in Hong Kong.

“The low inflation readings will open the door to further targeted monetary and fiscal easing. There is also less need for a strong currency to offset imported inflation,” the consumer price index (CPI) rose 1.6 percent in September from a year earlier, the National Bureau of Statistics said on Wednesday, missing market expectations for a 1.7 percent rise and down from 2 percent in August.

News study gives details why sleeping on sofa is deadly for babies

Jeffrey Colvin, a pediatrician at Children’s Mercy Hospitals in Kansas City of Missouri, United States, and his colleagues, analyzed data collected between 2004 and 2012 from 24 states on the sleep-related deaths of 7,934 infants aged 12 months or younger.

The research found infants who died while sleeping on sofas were more than twice likely to share the space with others, for instance, with parents who put the baby between themselves and the back of the sofa.

Sofa surfaces often slowed toward the back, allowing babies to easily roll and wedge between the cushions, researchers wrote in the published article. “The study also suggested that infants’ sudden and sleep-related deaths are more likely to occur when infants are sleeping on their side.”

WHO says Ebola epidemic still spreading in West Africa

The Ebola epidemic is still spreading in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia and projections show there could be between 5,000 and 10,000 new cases a week in early December, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Tuesday.

The death toll so far in the outbreak, first reported in Guinea in March, has reached 4,447 from a total of 9,014 cases, WHO Assistant Director General Bruce Aylward said, who said the number of cases in West Africa will exceed 9,000 this week.

While there are signs that rates of infection are slowing in some of the hardest-hit countries, the disease has now reached “more districts, counties and prefectures” than it had a month ago, and cases continued to rise, Aylward said. He stressed it would be “really, really premature” to read success into the apparent slowing numbers in some areas.
Slovenia has a respectable army

BELGRADE, 15 Oct—Zorjan Dragisic, professor at the Belgrade University Faculty of Security, said on Tuesday that it was important to hold the military parade in Serbia as a sign of returning to antifascist tradition, and that Serbia was sending a message that it was a serious country with a respectable army.

There is hardly any country in Europe of similar size and similar economic situation that has such an army as Serbia, Dragisic said for Belgrade-based TV Pink regarding the military parade which will be staged in Belgrade on 16 October to mark the 70th anniversary of the liberation from Nazi occupation in World War II. The parade will be attended by Russian President Vladimir Putin, and Dragisic said all necessary security measures were being taken.

He said that the event would be a parade of tanks, aircraft, helicopters, river flotilla sailing the Danube and Sava rivers, and that Serbia would show new products of its defense industry, infantry weapons, missile systems and armored vehicles and aircraft.

The military parade will show that Serbia plays a significant role in the weapons market, because it produces high-quality weapons and sells it cheaper than the competition, said Dragisic.

Tanjug

Brazil election candidates spar over corruption, nepotism

BRASILIA, 15 Oct — Brazil’s two presidential candidates traded accusations of lies, corruption and nepotism on Tuesday night in a bruising television debate that had no clear winner ahead of the hotly contested on 26 October election runoff. Leftist incumbent President Dilma Rousseff would lead to unemployment and put at risk social benefits gained under 12 years of rule by her Workers’ Party.

Neves charged that the Rousseff campaign propaganda was a pack of lies that had misinformed voters that he was planning to end cash transfer programmes and privatize state banks.

The senator and former state governor hammered his pro-business challenger Aecio Neves. Rousseff retorted by saying she accused him of nepotism by giving government jobs to a sister, uncles and cousins.

At the end of each round of the debate, aides rushed to help the candidates like seconds tending fighters in a boxing ring.

Neves, the market favourite, has gained ground since his surprise result in the first-round vote on 5 October when he bested incumbent Rousseff’s mentor and predecessor, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. But he said Brazil had stopped growing under Rousseff and inflation was out of control. He vowed to restore credibility and investment flows.

Neves denied he would reduce the role of state banks such as Brazilian development bank BNDES, whose loan book is almost three times the size of the World Bank’s. But he called for more transparency in the bank’s lending, and disclosure of loans to commodity-run Cuba to build a container port at Mariel.

Reuters

Russia to base interceptors, front-line warplanes at Yakutia airfield from 2017

KAZAN, 15 Oct — Interceptors MiG-31 and front-line attack aircraft will be based permanently at a Russian Arctic airfield in northernmost Yakutia’s location Tiki starting from 2017, Air Force Commander Colonel-General Viktor Bondarev said.

“Reconstruction of the Tiki airfield will compulsorily begin next year. A formation of front-line warplanes and interceptor fighters MiG-31 will be based at the airfield in 2017. MiG-31 will be also based at an airfield in (administrative center of the Russian Polar Chukotka autonomic area) Anadyr,” Bondarev said during a three-day inspection visit to Air Force facilities under construction.

—Itar-Tass

Photo shows Sukhoi Su-27 fighter jet. The airbase will be established in eastern Belarusian city of Babruysk and deploy Sukhoi Su-27 fighter jets. —Itar-Tass

Japan to work with US for rule of law in Asia: GSDF chief

WASHINGTON, 15 Oct — The chief of the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force pledged on Tuesday to work with the US Army to ensure the rule of law in the Asia-Pacific region, indirectly referring to China’s assertiveness in regional waters where the country is engaged in territorial disputes with its neighbours.

The GSDF and the United States should play the primary role in the Asia-Pacific region and “will be able to share the regional environment based on law and order,” Gen. Kiyofumi Itawata, chief of staff of the Ground Staff Office, told a US Army-related event in Washington.

“It is unfortunate and unendurable, however, that there are nations in the Asia-Pacific region that repeat their attempts to change the status quo by force,” Itawata said. “These nations demand the so-called core interest in their maritime domain” and have the capability to deploy troops from the sea onto islands, he added, apparently referring to China.

The GSDF seeks to launch a force with functions similar to the US Marine Corps by fiscal 2018 in a bid to step up defence of remote islands including the Japan-administered Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea that are claimed by China and Taiwan.

“It is critically important for allies and friendly nations” to work together to avoid having those nations misinterpret that change in the status quo by force is possible, he said.

Itawata told reporters after the event, “I did not intend to name any specific country.” In the South China Sea, China is involved in territorial rows with countries such as the Philippines and Vietnam.

Kyodo News

Russia to open airbase for fighter jets in Belarus in 2016

KAZAN, 15 Oct — Russia is due to establish an airbase in Babruysk, in eastern Belarus, in 2016 and deploy Sukhoi Su-27 fighter jets. Russian Air Force Commander-In-Chief Colonel-General Viktor Bondarev said.

“The airbase of the Russian and Belarusian Air Force will be created in 2016. Su-27 fighter jets will be based there,” Bondarev told reporters during his three-day visit to the facilities under construction.

The Russian aircraft will be stationed at a military airfield, which is expected to be reconstructed.

Russia decided earlier this year to send 24 Su-27SM fighter jets to Belarus’ Baranovich airfield to be used to provide inviolability of the airspace of the Union State of Russia and Belarus.

The Su-27 Flanker is a twin-engine supermaneuverable fighter jet, which can be used to perform various combat operations, including reconnaissance and interception of enemy aircraft.—Itar-Tass

—Itar-Tass

Kazan, 15 Oct — The chief of the Japa- nese Ground Self-Defence Force pledged on Tues- day to work with the US Army to ensure the rule of law in the Asia-Pacific region, indirectly referring to China’s assertiveness in regional waters where the country is engaged in territorial disputes with its neighbours.

Itawata said for Belgrade-based TV Pink regarding the military airfield, which is ex- Itar-Tass

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—Itar-Tass

Photo shows Sukhoi Su-27 fighter jet. The airbase will be established in eastern Belarusian city of Babruysk and deploy Sukhoi Su-27 fighter jets. —Itar-Tass
New Zealand man jailed for receiving narcotics parcels from China

Wellington, 15 Oct — An Auckland man, sentenced to four and a half years Wednesday for his role in smuggling methamphetamine precursor drugs from China, was being used by an organized crime gang, said Customs officials.

Thomas Latu, 23, had imported 3.2 kg of ContactNT hidden inside tinfoil parcels and security cameras, said a statement from New Zealand Customs.

The amount of ContactNT could have yielded nearly a kilogram of methamphetamine with a street value of up to 1 million NZ dollars (783,883 US dollars).

In February last year, Customs officers linked Latu to a number of drug consignments couriers from China and raided his home, where they found more evidence of his involvement.

Latu admitted he was to be paid 500 NZ dollars (392 US dollars) for each package. Customs manager investigations Maurice O’Brien said this was another example of a catcher enticed with cash and gifts to collect packages for an organized syndicate.

“The public is also urged to be wary that criminals operate this way. Don’t allow other people to use your address or accept packages for them unless you are confident of its contents,” O’Brien said in the statement.

Last week, the New Zealand Police named their second police envoy to China, saying they were hoping to build on a string of anti-drug smuggling operations with Chinese counterparts.

Then Police Minister Anne Tolley said in April that Customs and Police staff would also travel to China to take part in target-ed operations and to increase the level of engagement with Chinese enforcement agencies.—Xinhua
Poor eyesight reduced my nerves: Judi Dench

LONDON, 15 Oct — Veteran actress Judi Dench believes losing her eyesight has reduced her nerves when she performs live. The 79-year-old actress suffers from macular degeneration, an age-related eye condition which leads to gradual loss of vision, reported Daily Mirror.

New York, 15 Oct — Michael Keaton, who launched the ‘Batman’ franchise in 1989 before his career as a leading man, is making a comeback in films with new movie ‘Birdman’. Keaton said he did not worry the film might be confused with his own story, reported The New York Post.

There was that moment where you go, ‘Is this going to be an issue in terms of having played Batman?’,” Keaton said at Le Cirque after the movie closed the New York Film Festival.

“There was almost really no time to discuss this because there was so much work to do,” he added.

The movie, which opens this Friday, is set in Broadway’s St James Theatre and shot to look like one continuous take.

Brotherhood brings Pitt, cast together in war film ‘Fury’

LOS ANGELES, 15 Oct — When writer-director David Ayer decided to tackle the “beatem-to-death” World War Two movie genre with “Fury,” he decided to make it an intimate affair for his cast and kill people.”

“Fury,” out in US theaters on Friday, follows five men led by hardened war veteran Wardaddy (Pitt), overcome with fatigue and trucking along in Nazi Germany during the final months of World War Two.

“My (motive) is bringing a cast together and turning them into a family, turning them into brothers,” Ayer said. “I haven’t really seen that level of intense character study in a World War Two movie, and I felt like it was time for that.”

Made for $68 million by Sony Corp’s Sony Pictures Entertainment, “Fury” is an intimate story amid war-torn battlefields. It is projected to open with $25 million at the US box office, according to BoxOffice.com.

Joining Pitt in the tank are actors Shia LaBeouf, John Bernthal, Michael Pena and Logan Lerman, who all underwent an intensive military boot camp to research and bond.

“It’s really tough,” said Pena. “From the rationing to waking up early to being sleep deprived, you’re really having to rely on the other person to get through.”

Pena, who previously worked with Ayer on 2012 police drama “End of Watch,” jokingly compared working with the director to a root-canal dental procedure.

“It’s always scary to do a David Ayer movie because what he likes is to make somebody uncomfortable and film that,” he said.

The experience was new for 22-year-old Lerman, best known for young adult movies such as “Percy Jackson” and “The Perks of Being a Wallflower,” who said he learned a lot about his physical and emotional limits.

“It was very humbling to think about the people that actually have to train like that,” Lerman said.

Ayer said LaBeouf, who has more recently made headlines for bizarre antics including wearing a paper bag on his head for an art installation, “worked his ass off” to prepare for the role of God-fearing gunner Boyd “Bible” Swan.

“The crazy Shia rumors are fun, but the boring truth is he just did a lot of prep to play this character,” Ayer said. “He doesn’t showboat, and he’s so powerful and understated.”

Much of the film takes place in enclosed spaces and the violence, which is often bloody and prolific in battle scenes, aims to give context to the harsh and jarring conditions that scar the men.

“The reality of modern warfare and mechanized warfare is people are just mangled,” Ayer said. “I have to show what they’re reacting to and what they’ve seen for years, to understand the effect it’s had on them.”

Reuters
20 people, including nine foreign trekkers, die in heavy snowfall in Nepal

KATHMANDU, 15 Oct — At least 20 people, including nine trekkers from Canada, Israel, Poland and India, have died in blizzard and avalanches in two mountainous districts in northwestern Nepal, officials said on Wednesday.

Eight Nepalese, two Israelis and two Poles died after being buried by heavy snowfall at the Thorang La pass in the Mustang district, about five kilometres northwest of Khamdanda on Tuesday, chief district officer Baburam Bhandari told Kyodo News by phone.

In the neighbouring Manang district, four Cana
dians and an Indian trekker were buried by an avalanche at Fu village on Tuesday, chief district officer Deven- dra Lamichhane said.

Three local yaku herdiers were buried and killed by an avalanche at Nar village in the same district, Lam ichhane said. The trekkers at Thorang La pass were reported missing after they came under heavy snowfall and strong winds on Tuesday afternoon while crossing the pass, located at an altitude of 5,417 metres.

“T here are 2 metres of snow in the area. Twelve people buried by the snow froze to death,” Bhandari said. Security personnel managed to rescue 22 trekkers in the Mustang area. Most of them were treated for frostbite and altitude sickness.

“No one knows for sure how many people were crossing the pass when weather deteriorated. It is possible some trekkers re main missing,” Bhandari added.

In Manang, three Cana dians and a Nepali member of the trekking team were rescued by helicopter and flown to Kathmandu on Wednesday for treatment.

S Korea handling of Japan reporter could be humanitarian issue

TOKYO, 15 Oct — Japan’s top government spokesman said on Wednesday that South Korea was extending by three months the travel ban imposed on a Japanese journalist facing trial for defaming the president may become a serious humanitarian issue.

Tatsuya Kato, 48, the former Seoul bureau chief of Japan’s Sankei Shimbun daily, was indicted last week on charges of defaming South Korean President Park Geun Ky dani, the travel ban imposed on a Japanese journalist facing trial for defaming the president, according to a copy of a final draft of the report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recently obtained by Kyodo News.

The IPCC’s fifth as sessment report, which will be released later this month, contains a warning that greenhouse gas emissions continue at their current pace, a draft report of the panel showed on Wednesday. Continued emissions will be “increasing the likelihood of severe, pervasive and irreversible impacts for people and natural systems,” according to a copy of a final draft of the report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recently obtained by Kyodo News.

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obtained by Kyodo News.

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Late Ronaldo header poaches three points for Portugal

Portugal’s Cristiano Ronaldo scores during their EURO 2016 qualifying soccer match against Denmark at Parken Stadium in Copenhagen on 14 Oct, 2014.—Reuters

On behalf of my team, all I can say is that we wanted to carry on and that we shielded the Albanian players every step of the way to the tunnel (after the riot broke out).

“The Albanian team said they were unfit physically and mentally to carry on after talking to the officials and they will now decide the fate of this match. We can only regret that football took a back seat but it is difficult to draw any conclusions or make any comments now.”

Albanian captain Lorik Cana told Albanian television: “I saw my players being attacked and hit even inside the tunnel, and even by the stewards. We were not in the right psychological or physical state to continue playing.”

Albanian state television reported that Olis Rama, the brother of Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama, was arrested in the VIP section on suspicion of instigating the flag stunt.

Albanian Interior Minister Saimir Tahiri said that to the best of his knowledge Olis Rama had left the stadium for the airport, according to information he had from Serbia’s interior ministry and Albanian officials in Belgrade.—Reuters

Serbia-Albania match abandoned following drone stunt, brawl

Belgrade, 15 Oct — The politically-sensitive Euro 2016 qualifier between Serbia and Albania was abandoned on Tuesday following a brawl between players from both sides after a flag stunt.

The Group I game, with no away fans permitted, was interrupted when a flag depicting so-called Greater Albania, an area covering all parts of the Balkans where ethnic Albanians live, was flown over the terraces and pitch by what appeared to be a remote controlled mini drone near the end of the first half.

A Serbian player eventually grabbed the flag at the Partizan stadium, prompting an angry reaction from Albanian players and an unsightly melee ensued.

Riot police then moved in when around a dozen fans invaded the pitch and attacked the Albanian players, forcing them to retreat into the tunnel as flares were thrown from the terraces. After a delay of around half an hour, English referee Martin Atkinson abandoned the game, which stood at 0-0.

“What happened is something we can’t comprehend at the moment,” Serbian captain Branimir Ivanovic told reporters.

“On behalf of my team, all I can say is that we wanted to carry on and that we shielded the Albanian players every step of the way to the tunnel (after the riot broke out).”

Albanian team said they were unfit physically and mentally to carry on after talking to the officials and they will now decide the fate of this match. We can only regret that football took a back seat but it is difficult to draw any conclusions or make any comments now.”

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Beaten Americans set up Ryder Cup Task Force

NEW YORK, 15 Oct — Former world number one Tiger Woods and five-times major champion Phil Mickelson have been named on an 11-man United States Ryder Cup Task Force.

The PGA of America, smarting from Europe’s eight win over the US in 10 editions of the team event last month, announced the group would examine “the entire Ryder Cup process” including the selection of the captain and the points qualifying system.

The Task Force will also contain past captains Ray Floyd, Tom Lehman and Davis Love III, players Rickie Fowler, Jim Furyk and Steve Stricker, PGA secretary Paul Levy, PGA chief executive Pete Bevacqua and PGA vice president Derek Sprague. “The Ryder Cup is our most prized competitive asset and the PGA of America is committed to utilizing our utmost energy and resources to support one of the biggest events in all of sport,” said president Ted Bishop.

“The Ryder Cup Task Force, co-chaired by Derek Sprague and Pete Bevacqua, is an exciting and comprehensive initiative that will guide the PGA in developing the right strategy and building ongoing processes and infrastructure for future generations of US teams.”

Woods, who missed last month’s 16 1/2 points to 11 1/2 defeat by Europe in Scotland, welcomed the setting up of the Task Force. “I think this is a great step by the PGA to accomplish what we all want — to win the Ryder Cup,” Woods said.

“The Ryder Cup is very important to every player who has the honour to represent his country. I’m excited to be part of this group.”— Reuters