Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker attends Myanmar Parliamentary Union meeting, meets Danu nationals, media persons

NAY PYI TAW, 18 Nov—The Myanmar Parliamentary Union held meeting 5/2014 at Zabuthiri Hall of Hluttaw Complex, here.

Chairman of MPU Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hlutatw Thura U Shwe Mann and Vice Chairman Speaker of Amyotha Hlutatw (Upper House) U Khin Aung Myint delivered addresses.

Secretary of MPU Deputy Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw U Nan- da Kyaw Swa reported on progress of works and the minutes of the previous meeting.

Member of MPU Dep- uty Speaker of Amyotha Hlutatw U Mya Nyein, speakers of region Hluttaw and responsible persons participated in the discussions.

By Aye Min Soe

YANGON, 18 Nov—The Education Ministry has urged students protesting the National Education Law to engage in a dia- logue, asking them to show “tolerance” as the Compre- hensive Education Sector Review is carried out to re- form the education system step by step.

Union Minister for Education Dr Daw Khin San Yi told reporters on Tuesday the six demands made by the students are over-stopped, inviting the students to hold a dialogue with those who drafted the law and pledging the ministry will report the de- mands of the students to a legislat- tive body.

Students took to the streets from 14 to 17 No- vember in Yangon to protest the National Education Law, making six demands, of which education officials said some points will be satisfied by upcoming bylaws within the national law but some others will need more discussion.

Universities rectors have urged the students to include their demands in university charters that will be written in accordance with the upcoming bylaws.

Strong and weak points of the law can be discovered only when it is implemented in accord- ance with its bylaws, said Dr Than Oo, former presi- dent of Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science who participated in drafting the law.

The bylaws of the Na- tional Education Law are nearly complete and would guarantee the formation of students’ unions, academic freedom and autonomy of universities and institutes, which are included in the demands of the students, he added.

The ministry will im- plement academic freedom

Students urged to be tolerant as reforms carried out step by step

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A Workshop on Mass Event and Disaster Prepar- edness jointly organized by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Re- settlement of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Government of Israel and UNDP is being held in Nay Pyi Taw from 18 to 21 November 2014.

With regard to the workshop, a news crew of the Myanmar News Agency of the Minis- try of Information met Mr. Yehiel Kuperstein, who is an Israeli expert & con- sultant to lead the meeting, at Tongapuri Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw on 17 November 2014 and conducted an inter- view with him.

Q: What is the main objective of the workshop and how have you pre- pared for it ?
A: The main objec- tive of the workshop is to share knowledge on disaster preparedness and man- agement, to strengthen the collaboration between Isra- el and Myanmar on disas- ter management, to build disaster preparedness skills of the disaster preparedness practitioners by sharing Is- raeli methodology and way of thinking in emergency management and to share the principles of emergency response, site and event management and practices of Israel. As preparatory measures, I met with sen- ior Myanmar police of- ficers and those responsible in Yangon yesterday and shared experiences and ex- changed information with them.

More Israeli companies will come to Myanmar with the signing of agreement on protection of investment between Myanmar and Israel

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker attends Myanmar Parliamentary Union meeting, meets Danu nationals, media persons

Hluttaw U Mya Nyein, speakers of region Hluttaw and responsible persons participated in the discussions.

Students urged to be tolerant as reforms carried out step by step

More than 400 stu- dents ended their four-day protest in downtown Yangon on Monday, sending an ultimatum to the gov- ernment to hold a dialogue with them on amending the National Education Law within 60 days or they will stage nation-wide protests against the law.—GNLM

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MPs suggest constitutional change for national stability, development and reconciliation

NAY PYI TAW, 18 Nov — The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on Tuesday discussed the report submitted by a committee responsible for the implementation and amendment of the constitution. Daw Sandra Min of the Zabyuthiri constituency said that constitutional change is not a one-time matter and it needs amending step by step, adding that the purpose of constitutional amendment is to reinforce national reconciliation rather than instigating conflicts. She called for greater cooperation in changing the constitution within the framework of the law to ensure a better future of the country.

U Sai Kyaw Zaw Than of the Shan State constituency-2 pointed out that the report should be discussed with a focus on national stability and development, national integrity, national reconciliation and rule of law. Col Hla Win Aung, a defence services personnel representative, noted that amending the constitution is unavoidable as public desires change with the passage of time, adding that the constitution should be changed in national and public interests in line with the law, if any of its sections or articles limits the efficiency and freedom of executive, legislative and judicial branches.

U Naing Ngan Lin of the Dekkhinathiri constituency expressed his belief that constitutional change will help the democratic system take shape, thereby propelling internal peace processes. He called for a compromise solution to national reconciliation and mutual understanding and trust. U Myint Tun of the Bago Region constituency-10 suggested an increased role of people and their representatives in constitutional amendment.

Pyithu Hluttaw discuss agricultural and fishery sectors

NAY PYI TAW, 18 Nov — Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) convened its 31st day meeting on Tuesday with the discussions of agricultural and fishery sectors.

U Hay Oo, representative of Hinthada Township constituency, asked whether the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation has plans to substitute agricultural lands that cannot be used now for some reasons with new ones and the plans of ministry to promote paddy productions. Deputy Minister U Than Ohn said that double-crop paddy cultivation with irrigation system could cover the loss of paddy fields for some reasons, and the ministry is now issuing permits to individual and companies to use empty or virgin lands for agricultural purposes. He also said that rice sufficiency of the country is 168 percent for the country’s population of 51.42 million, and the government has adopted a 30-year plan for the sufficiency of rice to the population of 100 million by using high-yield varieties, systematic water supply, agricultural methods and enough input items.

Thura U Aung Ko, representative of Kanpetlet Township constituency, asked whether the government has planned to prevent illegal fishing in Myanmar seas. U Khin Maung Aye, deputy minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, said that the ministry is taking actions against illegal fishing by withdrawing fishing rights, limiting fishing boats, days, areas, seasons, type of fishing nets, fish species and licence. He said that the ministry is also monitoring closely the fishing boats by using GPS, and research fishery boats and patrol boats to prevent illegal fishing.

Tuesday’s meeting answered two questions on farming sector, and approved five bills followed by the consent of parliament.

Training Workshop on Mass Event and Disaster Preparedness kicks off

NAY PYI TAW, 18 Nov — Volunteer trainer courses for disaster risk reduction have been conducted in regions and states 20 times and over 1,100 youths from over 300 villages attended the courses, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin said at the opening ceremony of the Training Workshop on Mass Event and Disaster Preparedness at Royal Ace Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday.

She said that buildings are under construction for the natural disaster management school in Hinthada Township of Ayeyawady Region and arrangements are being made for establishment of the emergency state management centre and the data base system for loss in natural disasters. Israeli Ambassador Mr Daniel Zonshine and UNDP Resident Representative Mr Toily Karbanov made speeches. 41 trainees are attending the four-day course.

More Israeli companies will come to Myanmar with the signing...

(from page 1)

Q: As an expert of disaster management, how much experience did you have and what kinds of disaster did you witness?

A: I have been over 20 years in disaster management and witnessed a great deal of disaster in various forms. I am responsible for the construction of dozens of shelters “safe rooms,” secure fences, warning systems and lighting systems country-wide, overseeing tests and research in the field of building durability during explosions and earthquakes and providing guidance to citizens via media during emergencies.

I was extensively engaged in development and acquisition of search & rescue equipment for HFC and civil units while developing doctrines, professional literature, guiding principles & professional techniques for civil protection, mitigation of disasters and search & rescue.

Q: Did you have any comment on disaster management and preparedness in Myanmar?

A: It is still early to make comment on disaster management and preparedness in Myanmar and we need times to be able to do so.

Afterwards, the news crew of Myanmar News Agency (External) interviewed Mr. Daniel Zonshine, ambassador of Israel to Myanmar.

Q: Is there any future program for economic cooperation and exchange visits between Myanmar and Israel?

A: There is a plan for Israeli Minister of Agriculture to visit Myanmar in January, and Israeli senior officials and businessmen are going to follow suit. Last month, an agreement on protection of investment was signed between Myanmar and Israel, making it possible for more Israeli companies to take interest to come and extensively invest in Myanmar. We are committed to more frequently visits not only between senior officials but also between those from business fields and other sectors.

Q: At a time when Israel and Myanmar are in the process of further strengthening friendly ties, we strongly believe that your arrival as a newly credited ambassador to Myanmar will bring fruitful outcomes to our country. How about that opinion?

A: My arrival here is to put Myanmar on the agenda of Israel as well as to promote investment and support reforms being launched in the country. Not like other countries that discovered Myanmar just recently, Israel has long and lasting friendly relations with your country. With friendly ties already in place, we are sure that cooperation between the two countries will be further promoted all the more.
NAY PYI TAW, 18 Nov—Management course on the application for trademarks and registration was opened at the assembly hall of the Ministry of Science and Technology here Monday.

The course is jointly conducted by the ministry and the World Intellectual Property Organization.

Deputy minister Dr Aung Kyaw Myat made a speech at the opening ceremony of the course that intellectual property rights and its related issues are widely connected with economic, foreign investment and technology issues.

He also said that the ministry is working out the development of intellectual property rights, with conducting the courses on management in application of trademarks and in developing experts in this sector.

The five-day course will be trained by experts from the office of intellectual property affairs. —MNA

**Telecommunication show launched in Yangon**

The show is being held at the Myanmar Event Park from 18 to 20 November, with the theme of “Building Networks, Connecting Communities”.

Union Minister for Communications and Information Technology U Myat Hein opened the event on 18 November.

At the opening ceremony, he said that the CommuniCast Myanmar is the first of its kind in Myanmar, and this is an occasion in which telecommunication operators and vendors could display their products, services and software developments.

The first Satellite Forum in Myanmar will also be held in Yangon on 19 November. —MNA

**Ministry launches trademark management course**

NAY PYI TAW, 18 Nov—More than 90 leading suppliers in communications technologies from 20 countries are promoting their services with their participations at the CommuniCast 2014 Myanmar in Yangon.

Deputy minister Dr Aung Kyaw Myat made a speech at the opening ceremony of the course that intellectual property rights and its related issues are widely connected with economic, foreign investment and technology issues.

He also said that the Ministry of Transport on 14 November opened at the assembly hall marks and registration was on the application for trade-mark and discussed capacity en-

**Myanmar Parliamentary Union holds...**

(from page 1)

The Speaker met Danu nationals from Pindaya and Ywangan townships of Danu Self-Administered Zone and Nawngkhio Township in Shan State.

Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann presents souvenir to Danu nationals who observed convening 30th day session of Pyithu Hluttaw. —MNA

**Embassy of Qatar opened in Yangon**

YANGON, 18 Nov—The opening of Qatari Embassy to Myanmar was held at Sedona Hotel in Yangon on Tuesday, with an address by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Thant Kyaw.

The deputy minister and Ambassador of Qatar Mr Jabor A Al-Dosari residing in Bangkok of Thailand formally opened the embassy.

So far, a total of 45 embassies including today’s Qatari Embassy have been opened in Myanmar. —MNA

**Appointment of Ambassador agreed on**

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Nov—The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of H.E. Mr. Hassan Bin Mohamed Rafei Al-Emadi as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Qatar to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar with residence in Yangon.

Mr. Hassan Bin Mohamed Rafei Al-Emadi was born in 1937. He got Bachelor of Arts from Department of Linguistics and Eastern Studies, Cairo University in 1987.

He served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar from 1980 to 1981, and he was transferred to the Ministry of Education as Head of Department of Studies and Researches from 1981 to 1998. He was transferred back to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1998.

He served at the Office of Undersecretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 1998 to 2001, at the Embassy of the State of Qatar to the Republic of India from 2001 to 2003, at the Embassy of the State of Qatar in Cairo from 2003 to 2005 and as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Qatar to the Republic of India from 2005 to 2013.

He is married with two sons and three daughters. —MNA
Ownerless motorboat with sawn timber seized in Amarapura

Mandalay, 18 Nov
A mobile team led by Director U Thein Win of Commercial and Consumer Affairs Department seized an ownerless motorboat at Shwekyetyet Jetty in Amarapura Township, Mandalay, on 11 November.

The motorboat carried 0.67 ton of sawn teak timber, 51.89 tons of sawn ironwood timber and related materials worth K50.3 million. Mobile team officials handed over the seized items to Forest Department and Customs Department.

The mobile team is carrying out its tasks by checking ships to prevent illegal trade along jetties and ports in Mandalay along Ayeyawady River as of 1 November this year.

Min Htet Aung
(Mandalay Sub-printing House)

Volunteer course regarding traffic accidents conducted in Mandalay

Mandalay, 18 Nov
A ceremony to open the volunteer course for prevention of traffic accidents on road, organized by Myanmar Red Cross Society, was held at Golden Country Hotel on 65th Street between 31st and 32nd streets in Chamayethazan Township, Mandalay, on 17 November.

Director Daw Khin Khin Shein of MRCS, Head of Mandalay Region Social Welfare Department U Kyaw Win, Head of Mandalay Region Health Department Dr Kyaw Soe, Deputy Commander of No 11 Traffic Police Branch Police Major Thein Ko Ko and officials attended the opening of course.

A total of 68 trainees attended the two-day course in which officials gave lectures and practical works on traffic rules enforcement, prevention traffic accidents and rescue works to them.

Thiha Ko Ko
(Mandalay)

Trains added with coaches for convenience of passengers

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Nov
Trains of Myanmar Railways running along Bagan-Mandalay route become more reliable for the local people in open season.

In consequence, the trains have been linked with more coaches for passengers and cargos, according to the station superintendent of Natogyi Station, Mandalay Region, recently.

To give convenient transport service to the passengers, the three-coach train on Bagan-Mandalay route was added one more for regular running, he said.

The local train had been added one cargo carriage to seven for many months, said a worker of Myanmar Railways.

Locals voiced thanks for Myanmar Railways for adding carriages and coaches for the trains to enable them to have convenient travelling.

Khin Zar Mon Myint
(Law)

Children receive medical checkup from MCWA

Mandalay, 18 Nov
Members of Township MCWA, department officials and health staff performed medical checkup at 50 children under two in Ottarathiri and Shwenatha wards.

Shwe Ye Yint

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Shwe Ye Yint
**Automatic industrial production technology show kicks off**

Mandalay, 18 Nov — Germany-based Festo technological company held a show of automatic industrial production machinery, training machinery, bio-based machinery and mobile robot technology at Mandalay City Hall on Monday.

Faculty members and students of Mandalay University of Technology, instructors from Defence Services Technological Academy, executives of Mandalay Engineering Society, executives of Mandalay Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry and guests attended the show.

Arrangements are being made to open the industrial production training school in Myanmar so as to improve capacity of Myanmar youth and generate jobs for the locals.

German experts gave training to 12 faculty members from Ministry of Science and Technology and donated six sets of training machinery worth US$ 25,000 to Technological University (Yadanabon Cyber City).—Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

**Wall magazine, photo gallery display documentary photos**

Myanaung, 18 Nov — Myanaung Township Information and Public Relations Department in Ayeyawady Region has opened a wall magazine, photo gallery and documentary photo book show in commemoration of the 94th anniversary of National Day at its library as of 16 November.

Documentary photos are on display at the wall magazine and photo gallery where students view photos, books and publications daily.

*Win Bo (Myanaung IPRD)*

**Tube-well sunk for rural development in Minbu Township**

Minbu, 18 Nov — Myamna Shukhin Cooperative Society takes responsibility in sinking a two-inch diameter and 200 feet deep tube-well in Kontha Village of Minbu Township, Magway Region, in 2014-15 fiscal year, spending the rural development fund.

Director U Kyaw Swe of Rural Development Department of Magway Region made a field trip to inspect progress of sinking tube-well.

Head of Minbu Township Rural Development Department U Aung Phone Lin and officials explained progress of sinking tube-well and requirements.

**Pyinmana Sugar Mill to resume crushing of sugarcane on 19 November**

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Nov — The sugar mill owned by Pyinmana Sugar Mill Co Ltd in eastern part of Pyinmana in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area will come into operation for 2014-15 fiscal year as of 19 November, according to Assistant Mill Manager U Nyunt Tin.

The sugar mill opens 31 upruchase centres in Pyinmana, Pobbatiri, Dekkhinathiri, Ottarathiri and Lewe townships to purchase sugarcane from local growers.

The company buys K300,000 per ton of sugarcane this year. The company gave tractors and fertilizers to the farmers during the cultivation season, and the farmers are to pay cost of using the tractors and fertilizer to the company after selling the sugarcane.

The sugar mill plans to operate its crushing sugarcane from 19 November to 15 March this year. Last year, it could crush over 130,000 tons of sugarcane. Pyinmana Township scored top in production of sugarcane in the region, said the assistant mill manager.

*Ko Gyi Kyaw (Pyinmana)*

**Villagers get better communication service in central Myanmar**

Pyinsi, 18 Nov — Three communication towers have been erected in Pyinsi model village in Natogyi Township, Mandalay Region.

Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd erected one CDMA tower, Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications one tower on the expressway and Telenor (Myanmar) one tower.

Local people from over 1,000 houses of the village have easy access to the whole nation as well as the globe through telecommunication services.

*Khin Zar Mon Myint (Law)*
Australian, Indian PMs seek early conclusion of FTA negotiations

SYDNEY, 18 Nov — The leaders of Australia and India agreed in talks on Tuesday to speed up negotiations for a bilateral free trade agreement, as well as to boost defence and security ties.

A joint statement issued after the talks between Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott and his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi said the two leaders directed that FTA negotiations "be brought to an early conclusion to realize the potential of commercial relations."

"Calling those relations "underdeveloped," Abbott said he and Modi "spent quite some time this morning talking about what we need to do to really crank up the trade relationship."

Speaking later at a joint Press conference, Abbott said he hopes a free trade deal can be sealed by the end of next year. Negotiations were launched in May 2011 and the sixth round is scheduled to be held in December.

Last year, bilateral trade was worth A$15 billion (US$13 billion), 10 percent of the value of Australia's trade with China, its largest trading partner.

Head of newly created Agency for Public Safety named in S Korea

SEOUL, 18 Nov — South Korean President Park Geun-hye on Tuesday named former navy admiral Park In Yong as head of a new agency responsible for public safety, according to a presidential spokesman.

Park "has been considered as the right person to lead the new Agency for Public Safety, which will be launched as the control tower for disaster management for extensive experiences accumulated as a frontline commander, and also in personnel, strategy and education," Min Kyung Wook told reporters.

The new agency, to be officially launched on Wednesday, came into being after Park ordered a set of drastic measures, including the disbandment of the coast guard, following a tragic ferry sinking in April that left more than 300 dead or missing, most of them high school students who were on an excursion.

The government came under a storm of public criticism for its bungling of rescue operations.

The captain and his crew of the 6,825-ton Sewol were accused of abandoning the vessel while hundreds remained aboard.

Last Tuesday, a district court handed a 36-year prison sentence to the captain, 68-year-old Lee Jun Seok, after convicting him of gross negligence leading to the loss of life. Prosecutors had sought the death penalty on charges of murder.

The court also found the chief engineer, who left the vessel without helping injured colleagues, guilty of murder and gave him a 30-year jail term, while it handed out terms ranging from five to 20 years imprisonment to 13 other crew members.

Indonesia vows to sink illegal fishing ship

JAKARTA, 18 Nov — Indonesian President Joko Widodo said on Tuesday that he ordered the country's navy to sink foreign ships intruding the country's maritime territory and stealing fish and other resources.

The order was made following the reports of rampant illegal fishing in the country's waters that has led Indonesia suffers a huge economic loss. "Sink it directly. Let's sink up to 100 illegal fishing ships so that the others would be reluctant to do so," Jokowi, as the president is known, stressed at the State Palace. Nevertheless, the president ordered to evacuate all the crews and those on board first before the sinking. The policy aims at protecting the country's resources at sea from illegal exploitation, said Jokowi.

The president unveiled that over 5,000 ships illegally exploit Indonesia's resources at sea every year.

That makes the country suffers financial loss of about 300 trillion rupiah (about 24.712 billion US dollars) annually, said Jokowi.

Indonesia is an archipelago consisting of about 17,500 islands.—Xinhua

China, Cambodia vow to deepen military ties

BEIJING, 18 Nov — Chinese and Cambodian military officials on Tuesday vowed to deepen military relations through strengthened exchanges and further cooperation. Chinese Defence Minister Xu Qiliang and visiting Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces Pol Saroeun made the pledge during their one-hour meeting.

"China and Cambodia are good friends sharing weal and woe," Xu said. "We have worked together since diplomatic ties were forged 56 years ago." Xu vowed joint efforts to enrich bilateral relations through enhanced military exchanges. "The friendship between China and Cambodia was built upon mutual trust and support," Saroeun said, adding that the two nations attached great importance to developing ties with China and sought to further bolster bilateral relations between the two countries and their armed forces. Saroeun said they held a five-day visit to China, which started Sunday, accompanied by senior military officials from the Army Headquarters, the Navy, the Air Force and the National Military Police, totaling 14 members.—Xinhua

Vietnam to host nuclear forum, Atomex Asia 2014

HO CH MINH CITY, 18 Nov — The nuclear industries' suppliers forum, Atomex Asia 2014, will be held here on Wednesday and Thursday, with the attendance of representatives of Vietnam and international energy agencies, as well as the leading nuclear companies in America, said organizers in a Press release on Tuesday.

Atomex Asia 2014 will have two primary sections: plenary sessions and exhibitions. The discussions are planned on the prospects for the development of the nuclear energy in Southeast Asia. Participants also had the chance for the development of the nuclear power technology and safety control, localization and requirements for atomic industry suppliers, personnel training and insurance of public acceptance.

At the exhibition, suppliers will present their products and services directly to the country's representatives and seek new partners for cooperation on energy development. 

Industry Suppliers Forum Atomex is a series of annual events aiming to facilitate talks and cooperation among nuclear suppliers organized by ROSATOM all over the world since 2011.

Sideline events will include a painting exhibition on "Energy for harmony: nature around nuclear power plants" and movie shows on nuclear power technology.

According to ROSATOM, more than 340 Vietnamese students have undertaken courses in nuclear technology in Russia in 2014-2015. In 2014, 150 Vietnamese experts completed training courses at two reactors of Russia's Rostov nuclear power plant. Vietnam and Russia have since 2010 signed agreements and contracts on building a nuclear power plant with two reactors and a nuclear research and technology centre in Vietnam. —Xinhua
SERBIA has major opportunity, country is on the right track

SYDNEY, 18 Nov — Serbia has a major opportunity, Germany Vice Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel said in Belgrade on Monday, adding that the path Serbia wants to take is the right one and that Berlin will justify the great trust Serbia has in the partnership with Germany.

We are ready to offer a fair partnership to Serbia and the Western Balkans, and there is a lot that can be done, Gabriel said addressing a joint news conference with Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic.

Gabriel expressed the belief that the EU path is difficult, but he also noted that Serbia has a major opportunity to complete it successfully.

The reform process demands much from Serbia and we support everyone on this path, Gabriel said and expressed surprise by the power of the prime minister who is able to deal with all these problems.

He said that the most important matter at this point is for Serbia to launch the EU accession talks, adding that the question as to which chapters would be opened “high degree of uncertainty.” Australia itself put forward many measures first touted as important chapters would be opened “high degree of uncertainty.”

Gabriel underscored that from the standpoint of business, most important chapters comprise Chapters 23 and 24 that cover rule of law and legal state.

Gabriel underscored that Europe needs Western Balkans and Serbia, and added that peace and stability on the continent can be secured only through unity.

Serbia not asking for money, but for investments, support

Serbia is not asking Germany for money, but for investments and support that will enable it to become a normal, modern and developed country as soon as possible, Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic said on Monday.

Serbia is facing the big and important task of creating better conditions for business, Vucic said at a press conference with German Vice Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel, thanking the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Monetary Fund, Germany and other international financial institutions and countries that support the reforms in Serbia.

Serbia has major opportunity, country is on the right track

Abe to dissolve lower house Friday, postpones tax hike

Senior lawmakers of Japan’s ruling Liberal Democratic Party meet at the Diet building in Tokyo on 18 Nov, 2014. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is expected to call a snap election later in the day. — Kyodo News

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said on Tuesday he will dissolve the lower house Friday for a general election and postpone a planned consumption tax hike by 18 months to April 2017.

Abe said he is calling a snap election to see if his decision not to raise the consumption tax to 10 percent next October can gain public support amid growing signs of weakness in the Japanese economy. “I will resign if the ruling coalition fails to secure a majority (in the lower house seats),” Abe said at a press conference when asked about the House of Representatives election in December.

Abe’s tax decision came out of concern that the second round of the two-stage tax increase would only hurt the economy further.

The Japanese economy has contracted for two quarters in a row since the consumption tax rate was raised from 3 percent to the current 8 percent in April.

“I reached the conclusion that the tax hike should be postponed by 18 months to make it certain the success of Abenomics,” Abe said, referring to his policy mix of aggressive monetary easing, fiscal spending and a growth strategy.

“Another sales tax increase next October, following the one this past April, would jeopardize Japan’s bid to exit from deflation,” he said, while stressing that there will not be another postponement of the tax increase.

Abe instructed his Cabinet ministers the same day to compile a stimulus package to bolster the flagging economy. — Kyodo News
It is therefore essential that all of us must try to understand the core principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which are in fact nothing new but drawn from religious teachings. It is clear that every religion has taught people how to behave well and how to treat others with respect. Wilson Mizner, an American dramatist, once put it that “Be nice to people on your way up because you will meet them on your way down.”

In this age of modern civilization, globalization has demanded us to learn to embrace a world of diversity in terms of dignity and equality by dropping all our differences. Frankly speaking, even people with some education have a sense to realize that the promotion of the universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms is the foundation of justice and peace in every society. It would not be far wrong to conclude that human rights flourish only in a caring and humane society. If we all want to brand our world civilized, we should act accordingly. If we assume ourselves to be human beings, we should act accordingly. It is undoubtedly reasonable to assume that only civilized people value human rights and fundamental freedoms. Otherwise, we would be humans in disguise.

Let’s civilize ourselves first

By Kyaw Thura

It goes without saying that all members of the human family are born free and equal in dignity and rights. In this 21st century, everyone should enjoy the right to freedom of speech and worship and freedom from want and fear. In fact, these rights are the highest aspiration of all human beings. The onus is on every government to observe human rights and fundamental freedoms. If people are deprived of their inherent rights, social unrest entails and ends in barbarous acts.

A tranquil retirement

By Pho Thit

On retirement after serving for a long period in an establishment, some look forward to the freedom from the burden of work, some are fearful about the financial, social and other adjustments they would have to make, some do not give much thought to it as they already have other things lined up and some are reluctant to retire, because of their strong attachment to their work. Topmost in the mind of many of those who are about to retire is the amount of time they would have to turn to religion that they have neglected for a long time due to their pre-occupation with their work. Like many of my fellow retirees, the day when I did not have to get up at the usual time, and finish the daily preparations to go to work finally arrived. The first week was most liberating and was almost like the ten-day Thingyan vacation that all government employees enjoy. The only difference was that there was no need at all to think of piles of work waiting at the office after the vacation. I pulled out the books that I had always wanted to read from the bookshelf, and made a list of the places and people that I had wanted to visit for a long time. It was only after the end of the first week of retirement that I began to miss my work and my colleagues. I often wondered what was happening at my former workplace. I began to envy other members of the family and neighbours who left their house for work every morning, as I had done previously. In the beginning, it was difficult for me to return to the home of my family members from work and to listen to their chatter about their work. But most of the time, they were too tired to talk and when I asked about their work and their colleagues they would often laugh and comment that I had become very curious about matters and people that were of little concern to me. I started to welcome phone calls which had been a nuisance for me for so many years, and also thought of people I could phone. Slowly, the bookshelf lost its appeal and the news in the newspaper and TV were no longer as interesting as they were in the first week. I thought, perhaps, I should turn to the Internet for more interesting fare. But after calculating the cost of a few use, I found it too costly for a pensioner and had to cut down its use. In short, I began to fret about how to use up the extra time that was now available to me.

The third week was depressing, and I began to feel that I was leading a meaningless existence. I thought that the best way to find solace was to turn to religion. Fortunately, probably knowing about this phase in the life of a novice pensioner, my former colleagues had given me not only books on meditation and Buddhism, but also sermons of well-known Sayadaws on CDs as parting gifts. They brought a degree of comfort and some meaning to life and they awakened in me a desire to try meditation. But much as I strove to meditate, as instructed by the Sayadaws, I found it difficult to concentrate, or to stay still even for a few minutes. After listening to the daily sermons on impermanence, suffering, and mortality, and seeing in the newspapers, the obituaries of some acquaintances who were no older than me, I became greatly interested in my health. I became more noticeable to my friends and acquaintances who were of little concern to me. I made several visits to the doctor, and after a number of tests, I found that I was on the onset of several diseases that people who led sedentary lives suffer from and gave me of long list of pills to take regularly. He also gave me a lengthy list of food that I could eat and those I should avoid. I became obsessed with food and took to reading about nutrition and healthy food. I made frequent visits to the kitchen during cooking time to make sure that no unhealthy ingredients were used. I even tried to force my family to follow my diet. There was also a mania to create order in my life starting with putting things in order in the house and this strong desire led to squabbles with the younger members of the family who did not want to forsake their disorganized ways.

Not long after, Thadingyut arrived. Some of my younger colleagues came to pay their respect individually and in groups. How glad I was to see them! I was overwhelmed by their kindness and thoughtfulness and they suggested ways on how I could keep myself occupied to maintain my health. One told me about how he had joined a walking group so that he could keep fit. Another told me about the social activities her mother was taking part in after her retirement. A third colleague told me about a meditation centre not far away from where I lived where his father goes regularly. A fourth colleague told me about her aunt who was also a volunteer at a Dhamma school for young children. Another told me about a family friend who was also a member of the board of trustees of an orphanage run by a sayadaw. Still another told me about her elder sister who was attending a part-time language diploma course after another at YUFL and enjoying the company of her younger classmates.

I realized how self-centred and disgruntled I had become after retirement, instead of becoming more tranquil and relaxed, having been liberated from the care of work. I also began to appreciate that retirement was an opportunity to use the time I had in my hand as I wanted to. But at the same time, I realized that I should not waste it, as time becomes more valuable as one gets older and reaches the twilight of one’s life. At the same time, I comprehended that the money a job does not make a person useless. It does not also mean that he/she must become inactive, or isolated. Indeed, as my younger colleagues know, I am happy to try many ways to spend time profitably. For those who still enjoy the challenges of life, they could venture on a second career that is more of their liking. For those who want to contribute something to society, there are so many social activities they can take part in as volunteers. For those who have no time to have a hobby when they were young, they could start a hobby, like painting or gardening, without the need to consider retirement from a failure. For those keen on promoting their health, there are many groups of older citizens interested in enhancing their health and they are most happy to welcome new members. For those who wish to pursue a more tranquil life, there are monasteries and religious organizations in nearly every village in Myanmar to take refuge in.

For those of us who have retired, and the shadows around us are beginning to gather, it is important to realize that life is precious, and one is very fortunate to be able to survive beyond the age of six-five. Our society still needs us, and we can still contribute a lot to the social and moral development of the next generation. Therefore, it is we need to make best use of the time we have, not only for ourselves, but also for all living beings.
Surgeons at Yangon General Hospital successfully treat heart stabbing victim

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 18 Nov — Yangon General Hospital, Myanmar’s largest public hospital, on Monday announced that emergency surgery was successfully performed on a patient who was stabbed in the heart, a serious and rapidly fatal injury whose successful treatment is rare even in developed countries, according to Prof Dr Zaw Wai Soe.

“The patient’s signs are stable and no surgery-related problems have been found,” said Consultant Cardiovascular Surgeon Dr Aung Zaw Myo, who participated in the operation, clarifying his life-saving procedures in the resuscitation room.

U Myint Soe, who survived after surgery on 28 September, said he feels good thanks to the efforts of the medical team which provided emergency care, which plays a critical role in saving lives.

According to the hospital’s data, head injuries are one of the leading causes of death among emergency patients, especially in men, while sudden cardiac arrest is most common in adults.

To reduce the death rate of emergency cases, the hospital needs more professionals engaged in emergency medicine, Prof Dr Zaw Wai Soe said while explaining the role of modern equipment and facilities in immediate health care services.

As part of a strategic plan by the Ministry of Health to improve emergency medical services in the region, plans are underway to add 25 to 50 specialists across the country each year with the assistance of two Australian medical institutions.

Currently, 25 specialists and five senior nurses have been selected to attend next year’s master and diploma programmes in emergency medicine, according to Dr Hla Myint, medical superintendent of Yangon General Hospital.

A young man makes paddy dry in a field out of Kyein-ni-pyin camp in Pauktaw Township. About 1,000 Muslim households are accommodated at 126 eight-roomed buildings in the camp, one of four in the township. Apart from being provided with bags of rice by WFP monthly, the camp people are allowed to do paddy growing and fishing. —GNLM/PHOTO: YE MYINT

A group of kids seen in front of breastfeeding space at Kyein-ni-pyin camp in Pauktaw Township on Monday. It is one of four in the township with 26,612 Muslim population. “The camp sees health care services thrice a month,” said one of the heads of the camp. GNLM/PHOTO: YE MYINT

A young man makes paddy dry in a field out of Kyein-ni-pyin camp in Pauktaw Township. About 1,000 Muslim households are accommodated at 126 eight-roomed buildings in the camp, one of four in the township. Apart from being provided with bags of rice by WFP monthly, the camp people are allowed to do paddy growing and fishing. —GNLM/PHOTO: YE MYINT

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A group of kids seen in front of breastfeeding space at Kyein-ni-pyin camp in Pauktaw Township on Monday. It is one of four in the township with 26,612 Muslim population. “The camp sees health care services thrice a month,” said one of the heads of the camp. GNLM/PHOTO: YE MYINT
EU says it has no plans for sanctions on Israel

BRUSSELS, 18 Nov — The European Union has no intention of imposing sanctions on Israel if it takes steps to block a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict, the EU’s new foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said on Monday.

European diplomats have said the EU is looking at new ways to press Israel to halt its building of settlements on land the Palestinians want for a state, as frustration over the construction programme reaches a new high.

Israel’s Haaretz newspaper said on Monday it had obtained an internal EU document on sanctions that could be taken against Israel if it took actions that would prevent a viable Palestinian state. They included possible measures against European companies working in settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, it said.

Mogherini said the EU had no plan of this kind.

The Haaretz article referred to an internal working document requested by EU governments some time ago that only formed a “technical working hypothesis,” she said.

A discussion among EU foreign ministers on Monday was more about “how to start a positive process with the Israelis and Palestinians to relaunch a peace process,” “It was not

White House reviewing policy toward US hostages held by militants

WASHINGTON, 18 Nov — President Barack Obama has ordered a comprehensive review of US policy governing efforts to free Americans being held by militant groups overseas, the White House said on Monday.

In recent months, Islamic State militants have beheaded three Americans, including Peter Kassig, an aid worker and former US Army Ranger, whose death was announced in a video released by the group on Sunday.

“The administration’s goal has always been to use every appropriate resource within the bounds of the law to assist families to bring their loved ones home,” White House National Security Council spokesman Alistair Baskey said in a statement.

“In light of the increasing number of US citizens taken hostage by terrorist groups overseas and the extraordinary nature of recent hostage cases,” added Baskey, “this summer President Obama directed relevant departments and agencies, including the Departments of Defence and State, the FBI, and the Intelligence Community, to conduct a comprehensive review of how the US government addresses these matters.”

The administration could not detail all the steps it was taking to free US hostages, but Baskey said “we will continue to bring all appropriate military, intelligence, law enforcement, and diplomatic capabilities to bear to recover American hostages. Those efforts continue every day.”

ABC News reported that a Pentagon official wrote last week to US Representative Duncan Hunter that the review would include an emphasis “on examining family engagement, intelligence collection, and diplomatic engagement policies.”

It added that a 11 November letter to Hunter from Christine Wornuth, undersecretary of defence for policy, did not explicitly address the issue of ransom payments, which it is US policy not to pay.

ABC News said Hunter wrote the White House in August after the beheading of US journalist James Foley by Islamic State, urging Obama “to guarantee we are maximizing our recovery efforts.”

Islamic State previously killed US journalist Steven Sotloff and British aid workers David Haines and Alan Henning.

French, Dutch hostages held by Qaeda appeal in video

PARIS, 18 Nov — Al-Qaeda’s north African arm, AQIM, has issued a video of a French national and a Dutch national they are holding hostage in which the two men urge their respective governments to negotiate for their release.

The video, posted on a popular jihadi forum by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb’s media branch, is divided into two scenes showing each hostage in a different location.

The first shows Frenchman Serge Lazarevic, who has been held in the Sahara for almost three years since being kidnapped in Mali, wearing a black turban and sitting in the passenger seat of what appears to be a 4x4.

“I am very sick, my kidneys hurt and I am suffering from very high blood pressure... I fear my life is in danger since the French intervention in Iraq,” the hostage said.

“I ask you Mr President (Francois Hollande) to do everything to free me because you are responsible for everything that will happen to me,” he said, ending his statement with a message to his family.

The French president’s office said in a statement that the video had been authenticated by intelligence services.

“It is a recent proof of life that we had been expecting for a long time,” the statement read, adding that the president was in touch with regional countries to use all forms of dialogue to release the hostage.

The last public proof of life for Lazarevic was in June. Philippe Verdon, another Frenchman kidnapped alongside Lazarevic, was killed by his captors in northern Mali.

The second segment shows Dutch national Sjaak Rijke, who was taken by force from a restaurant in Timbuktu in November 2011 during a trip across the Sahara.

“It’s my suffering from very high blood pressure... I fear my life is in danger since the French intervention in Iraq,” the hostage said.

“I ask you Mr President (Francois Hollande) to do everything to free me because you are responsible for any harm that comes to me. Please help me.”

Reuters could not independently verify the footage of Rijke.

Neither man relayed any specific demands by AQIM, but they both alluded to the release of an American soldier in May in return for five high-profile Afghan inmates held by the US military in Guantanamo Bay.

France launched an intervention against al-Qaeda-linked militants in its former colony Mali in January 2013 that has since created a 3,000-strong counter-insurgency force to track down Islamist militants, including AQIM, in the desert spanning from Mauritania in the West and southern Libya in the West.

New Zealand’s Labour Party elects former union boss as leader

WELLINGTON, 18 Nov — New Zealand’s opposition Labour Party elected former trade union head Andrew Little as its fourth leader in as many years on Tuesday as it looked to rebuild itself and end divisions after its heaviest election defeat in more than 30 years.

Little replaces David Cunliffe, who stepped down after the centre-left party slumped to its worst showing since 1922 with 25 percent of the vote in the 20 September general election.

He beat out three opponents, including the current deputy and the finance spokesman, in a contest that gave the party’s broader membership and affiliated trade unions a vote. Little, 49, a former head of the biggest union and president of the party, has said Labour feared its traditional working-class supporters and centrist voters with policies such as a capital gains tax and raising the age of pension eligibility.

David Cunliffe, who stepped down after the centre-left party slumped to its worst showing since 1922 with 25 percent of the vote in the 20 September general election, was announced in a video released on Monday.

In this file photo, EU Foreign Policy Chief, Italian Foreign Minister Federica Mogherini, holds a news conference at the European Parliament in Brussels on 2 Sept, 2014. —Reuters

US President Barack Obama

In this file photo, EU Foreign Policy Chief, Italian Foreign Minister Federica Mogherini, holds a news conference at the European Parliament in Brussels on 2 Sept, 2014. —Reuters

REUTERS
Iraqi security forces enter Baiji refinery: police colonel, state TV

Baghdad, 18 Nov — Iraqi security forces entered the country’s largest refinery for the first time on Tuesday after officials of battling Islamic State militants who had surrounded it, a police colonel and state television reported.

“The first Iraqis force, the anti-terrorism force called Mosul Battalion, entered Baiji refinery for the first time in five months,” police colonel Saleh Jaber, of the Baiji refinery protection force, told Reuters.

State television flashed news of the advance but did not show footage. Neighbours said one of the attackers was a driver for the state-run company.

Smoke rises from a oil refinery in Baiji, north of Baghdad on 19 June, 2014. — Reuters

Up to five dead in suspected Palestinian attack on Jerusalem synagogue

Jerusalem, 18 Nov — Two suspected Palestinian men armed with axes and knives killed up to five people and wounded four in a Jerusalem synagogue on Tuesday before they were shot dead by police, Israeli media said, the worst such attack in years.

A spokesman for Israel’s ambulance service told Army Radio medics were treating nine people, five of them critically wounded. Israel’s Zaka emergency response team said there were a number of fatalities at the scene.

Israeli media said four or five people had been killed.

“We are viewing this as a terrorist attack,” police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said. Media reports said one of the attackers was armed with a gun.

Violence in Israel and the Palestinian Territories has surged over the past few weeks.

Five Israelis and a foreign visitor have been deliberately run over and killed or stabbed to death by Palestinians in the past month.

About a dozen Palestinians have also been killed, including those accused of carrying out those attacks.

Residents trace the violence in Jerusalem back to July, when a Palestinian teenager was burned to death by Jewish assailants, an alleged revenge attack for the abduction and killing of three Jewish teens by Palestinian militants in the occupied West Bank.

The summer war in Gaza and a row over access to a Jerusalem compound sacred to Muslims and Jews alike have also been triggers for violence. — Reuters

Frenchman seen in Islamic State video of beheadings

London/Paris, 18 Nov — A Frenchman is believed to have been among Islamic State jihadists appearing on a video showing the severed head of US aid worker Peter Kassig, but a British man denied earlier reports his medical student son was there too.

Sunday’s announcement of Kassig’s death, the fifth such killing of a Western captive by Islamic State, formed part of a video that also showed the beheadings of at least 14 men Islamic State said were Syrian military pilots and officers.

France’s interior minister said analysis by the DGSI security service suggested that one of the men shown herding prisoners to the execution site was Maxime Hauchard, 22, a French Muslim convert from the Normandy region. “This analysis suggests with a very high probability that a French citizen could have directly participated in carrying out these abject acts,” Bernard Cazeneuve told journalists.

French security services were analysing the footage to determine if a second fighter was also French, but Paris prosecutor Frederic Molins told reporters it was too early to say.

The parents of Kassig, a 26-year-old medic and former US Army Ranger who took the name Abdul-Rahman Kassig after his conversion to Islam, called for prayers for captives in Syria and Iraq in a brief statement on Monday at their Indianapolis church.

“If a person can be both a realist and an idealist, then that’s Peter,” said Kassig’s mother, Paula Kassig, reading words written about her son by one of his former teachers. “Peter has earned the right to be both... Peter’s life is evident; that he’s been right all along; one person can make a difference.”

The Kassigs had repeatedly appealed to Islamic State to spare their son, who had begun converting to Islam before his capture in Syria in October 2013. They said his conversion was a sincere process. —Reuters

Truck bomb hits foreign base in Afghan capital, kills two

Kabul, 18 Nov — A truck bomb hit a base for foreign forces in Afghanistan’s capital early on Tuesday, killing two Afghan security guards, police said.

The Islamist Afghan Taliban, ousted from power by an American-led coalition in 2001, claimed responsibility for the attack at the base on the eastern outskirts of Kabul.

Bomb attacks targeting foreign troops and Afghan government officials and security forces have intensified as the international military coalition draws down, leaving the fight against the Taliban insurgency mostly to Afghan forces.

Tuesday’s explosion targeted a foreign base in the Pul-e-Charkhi district in eastern Kabul, and at least two Afghan security guards were killed, said Afghan officials and Kabul’s police chief.

He said investigations were under way, but early reports indicated that the truck bomb was large enough to rattle windows several kilometres away in Kabul’s central diplomatic district.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in an emailed statement that the truck bomb was aimed at an intelligence centre of foreign troops.

He said a suicide bomber started the attack and several insurgent gunmen breached the walls of the base. — Reuters
Tokyo, 18 Nov — English conversation schools with unique teaching programmes are attracting students who have specific purposes in learning practical English.

Goover English School sends students to families in US military bases in Japan so that they can talk with Americans about a wide range of issues, such as current news, music and food, as if they were in the United States. Goover has tied up with families in four US bases in Tokyo and Kanagawa Prefecture, including Yokota Air Base and Camp Zama, for the after-school teaching programme.

Students pay 3,500 yen for a 50-minute one-to-one lesson, aside from a one-time admission charge of 35,000 yen and a monthly basic fee of 5,000 yen. “As things students see (in US bases) are different from what they see in their everyday life, they can learn about the cultural and social background” of America in addition to English, said Atsushi Suzuki, president of the Tokyo-based school operator.

Many students at Goover have specific purposes in learning English, such as studying abroad in the future and using the language in their work, Suzuki said. Some students visit US bases all the way from Hokkaido and Kyushu.

We Inc in Tokyo offers what it calls “customized” lessons to teach English conversation needed for specific venues, such as clothing stores, restaurants, hotels, beauty shops and estate agents. Instructors and students act as customers and addressing a student in the role of a store worker during the trial say a verdict may discourage the region’s tourism, and that Giglio had lost 43,000 visitors due to the disaster.

A consultant to Goover’s local government, Carlo Scarpa, asked the same court for 190 million euros in damages, most of it for tarnishing the island’s image, according to a source present during the proceedings.

The two officials spoke during an ongoing trial against Concordia Captain Francesco Schettino, who is being tried for multiple charges, including manslaughter, causing a shipwreck and abandoning ship.

The switch will allow Japan’s int’l airports to speed up the number of passengers not correcting their names, found English topping a list of lessons both men and women want to take.

“Demand for situational English conversation lessons will grow stronger” as Japan steps up preparations for the anticipated increase in foreign visitors for the Summer Olympic Games in Tokyo in 2020, said Nahoko Negishi, editor-in-chief of the magazine.—Kyodo News

Tokyo, 18 Nov — Facial recognition machines will be introduced for immigration screening of Japanese passengers at airports possibly in fiscal 2017 to reduce waiting time amid a growth in visitors from abroad according to Justice Ministry sources.

The switch will allow more passport control staff to be shifted to process foreign passengers, the source said. The plan comes after trials of biometric machines from five companies conducted in August and September produced relatively low error rates, according to the ministry’s Immigration Bureau.

A ministry panel of experts reported a present to Justice Minister Yoko Kamakawa on Tuesday saying identity recognition technology has improved sufficiently to make full use of it.

In this summer’s trials involving 32,341 volunteers aged 13 or older, the rate of passengers not correctly identified dropped to as low as 0.26 percent for the best of the machines tested, according to the ministry. They trials were conducted at two international airports for Tokyo — Narita and Haneda. In a 2012 trial, a machine by one of the five companies produced an error rate of 17 percent, high enough to discourage the ministry from going ahead with the scheme at the time. New trials were held in the summer as the ministry expects more people to visit Japan ahead of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

Biometric recognition machines compare images of arriving passengers’ faces with facial photo data in chips in their passports.

Failed identity matches in the tests resulted from people wearing glasses or when hair overlapped their eyebrows, according to an immigration official. “We hope we can aim at early introduction by taking steps to improve accuracy,” the official said. Japan introduced automated passport control gates in 2007 for Japanese passport holders and foreigners living in Japan. They allow passengers to bypass manned passport control counters and get through fingerprint-based machine checks. Now available at four international airports in Nagoya and Osaka, they require fingerprint registrations in advance and the number of users has not been growing, officials said.
Thai hospital inaugurated in Cambodia

PHNOM PENH, 18 Nov — Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen on Tuesday inaugurated a Thai-funded hospital, which targets middle- and high-class patients.

The 50-million-US dollar Royal Phnom Penh Hospital is a tertiary care hospital managed by Bangkok Dusit Medical Services Public Company, Chairman of the Bangkok Dusit Medical Services Prasert Prasatthong said at the inauguration ceremony. “The Royal Phnom Penh Hospital was built according to international standards at the inauguration ceremony. "The Royal Phnom Penh Bangkok Dusit Medical Services Prasert Prasatthong said Medical Services Public Company, Chairman of the hospital will also increase confidence in for-

Some 40 doctors from Thailand, Cambodia, the United States, Switzerland and France are ready to serve patients at the hospital, he added. Speaking at the ceremony, Prime Minister Hun Sen said such an international-standard hospital so that they can spend less money,” he said. “The hospital will have access to better medical services. “Patients will be no need to travel to Bangkok for medical services because they can choose this well-equipped hospital there and bringing contact with farm animals from Britain and the Netherlands, which are being pestered by avian influenza, after imposing a ban on ducks and chickens from Germany, Seoul’s ag-

A newspaper advertisement was part of quarantine measures aimed at preventing the spread of avian flu in South Korea, the minis-

try said, noting that it had nothing to do with the safety of poultry products here.

The ministry asked po-
tential visitors who travel to Europe to refrain from making contact with farm animals there and bringing any poultry from the affect-
ed countries.—Xinhua

5.9-magnitude quake hits 154 km ENE of Bitung, Indonesia

HONG KONG, 18 Nov — An earthquake measuring 5.9 on the Richter scale jolted 154 km ENE of Bitung, Indonesia 04:47:18 GMT on Tuesday, the US Geological Survey said. The epicentre, with a depth of 35.0 km, was initially determined to be at 1.8939 degrees north latitude and 126.4993 degrees east longitude.—Xinhua
**ANGELINA JOLIE Says POW Film Helped with Motherhood**

Angie shared her thoughts about her new film "Unbroken" on the red carpet while promoting it in Australia. She said that the film helped her with her own struggles as a mother.

**Japanese Tough Guy Actor Ken Takakura Dies at 83**

Takakura, a legendary Japanese actor, passed away at the age of 83. He was known for his tough and principled gangster roles in over 100 movies.

**Robert De Niro to Play Father in 'Joy'**

The 71-year-old actor is hosting a special screening of his new film "Joy" in Sydney, Australia. He is also set to star in HBO's "Westworld" next year.

**Loved My 'Horrible Bosses 2' Role for Its Wildness: Jennifer Aniston**

Aniston revealed that she loved her role in "Horrible Bosses 2" because it allowed her to be free and not feel inhibited, giving her the chance to really let loose.

**Anthony Hopkins, Ed Harris Lead Stars on HBO's 'Westworld'**

Hollywood stars such as Sir Anthony Hopkins and Ed Harris will lead the cast of HBO's "Westworld," a futuristic adult amusement park set during a robot malfunction.
German World Cup documentary pulls in crowds despite bad reviews

The Hague, 18 Nov — The Dutch public prosecutor (OM) is investigating racist reactions on social media to a ‘selfie’ made by players of the Dutch national soccer team, Dutch newspaper De Telegraaf reports on Tuesday.

After the preliminary study, in which the OM collects the facts, a decision on possible prosecution will be taken. Last week international Leroy Fer posted a photo, made by colleague Memphis Depay, on Instagram and Twitter. On the picture Fer and Depay pose with seven other international players, all coloured. It led to a flood of responses, including racist, with people comparing the players with monkeys, slaves and Black Pete, a controversial black figure during the current ‘Sinterklaas’ celebration in the Netherlands.

“I cannot imagine this occurs in 2014 in the Netherlands,” Fer said in De Telegraaf. “The comments hurt me deeply. I am sad and disappointed at the same time. I feel like people want to say that I do not belong in the Dutch national team. These fans probably produced the loudest cheer when I scored at the World Cup against Chile.”

Netherlands captain Robin van Persie also stood up against racism. “This makes me very sad,” Van Persie said. “It is shocking that this is still happening in 2014. We all represent the Dutch national team and color is no issue. This should be tackled hard. It’s time to set an example.”

Answering questions in the parliament on Monday Dutch Minister of Security and Justice Ivo Opstelten called the comments “disgusting” and announced to handle the issue “seriously.”

Prosecutor examines racism against players of Dutch national team

Washingon, 18 Nov — Scientists investigating a huge die-off of starfish along North America’s Pacific coast have identified a virus they say is responsible for a calamitous wasting disease that has wiped out millions of the creatures since it first appeared last year.

The scientists said on Monday they identified the pathogen as the Sea Star Associated Densovirus, or SSaDV, after ruling out other possible culprits including certain bacteria, protozoans and fungi.

More than 20 species of starfish, also called sea stars, from southern Alaska to Baja California are dying from a wasting disease that causes white lesions to appear beneath the animal’s body sags, ruptures and spills out its internal organs.

“They basically fall apart into a pile of goo on the bottom of the sea floor,” said Cornell University biological oceanographer and microbial ecologist Ian Hewson, who led the study in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

SSaDV is a parovirus, a tiny form of virus that can cause illness in animals and people.

“Many researchers detected it in older starfish samples, museum specimens from as early as 1942. They said it may have been present at low levels for years and only recently became a large-scale threat due to some kind of viral mutation, environmental trigger, starfish overpopulation or other factor.”

“It’s probably the largest epidemic in marine wildlife that we know of,” Cornell ecologist Drew Harvell said.

“That’s the million-dollar question in all this: Why now? What is it that created the conditions for this outbreak? And we don’t have the answer to that. But certainly a viral mutation would be one explanation,” Harvell added.

The disease was first spotted in June 2013 and has shown no signs of slowing. There are 10 million noviced with a Munich hairdresser because she doesn’t know who he is, and then-coach Juergen Klinsmann furious at being thanked at table tennis by an assistant.

Reuters

Virus implicated in massive die-off of North American starfish

Virginia Beach, 18 Nov — A behind-the-scenes documentary film about Germany’s successful campaign to win the 2014 football World Cup in Brazil pulled in the crowds in Germany on its opening weekend, despite woeeful reviews.

Critics assailed “Die Mannschaft” (The Team) as a sugar-coated, corporate PR-style production, a far cry from a more critical and stirring movie by independent filmmaker Sonke Wortmann about the 2006 World Cup, which Germany hosted.

But that didn’t stop 420,000 people from packing cinemas, according to distributor Constanin, to see forward Thomas Mueller serving teammates in a pink Bavarian dirndl dress after losing a bet, and his fellow striker Luuk Podolski pushing a reporter into a pool.

The 85-minute film, which premiered on Thursday on 600 of Germany’s 2,000 cinema screens, includes some of the key moments of Germany’s six wins and one draw en route to winning the cup with a 1-0 victory over Argentina.

But it also has many tedious scenes of coach Joachim Loew looking moody as he walks along a beach, and of players hiding with mobile phones while lying around the pool or waiting in airport lounges.

“It’s shallow, banal and doesn’t tell us anything we don’t already know,” wrote Fabian Scheler in the national daily Die Zeit. “It’s nothing more than 90 minutes of uncritical self-congratulation.”

“There’s nothing new in this film — unless you’re interested in knowing what Philipp Lahm ate for breakfast after the final or how Mario Goetze plays table tennis,” wrote Spiegel Online critic Peter Ahrens. “What you see over and over again is players staring down at their smartphones.”

The German football federation made the film, hoping to repeat the success of Wortmann’s 2006 documentary “Deutschland: ein Sommermärchen” (Germany: A summer fairy tale), which 4 million people saw in German cinemas.

But that picture, which also captured something of the party atmosphere that surrounded the 2006 tournament, even though the hosts only came third, had a far more successful opening weekend with more than 1 million tickets sold.

Wortmann gave audiences glimpses of mild-mannered striker Miroslav Klose — who this year became the top goalscorer in World Cup finals — getting noised up with a Munich hairdresser because she doesn’t know who he is, and then-coach Juergen Klinsmann furious at being thanked at table tennis by an assistant.

Reuters

A starfish, also known as a sea star suffering from a wasting disease epidemic was shown in this handout photo courtesy of Kevin Lafferty of the United States Geological Survey, provided on 17 Nov. 2014.

REUTERS
Sunderland, Queens Park Rangers fined for not controlling players

London, 18 Nov — Sunderland and Queens Park Rangers have been fined £20,000 each for failing to control their players in two separate Premier League matches, the Football Association said on Monday. Both clubs admitted the charge of “failing to ensure their players conducted themselves in an orderly manner”, the governing body said on its website.

Sunderland’s fine related to an incident in the 76th minute of their 1-1 draw against Everton at the Stadium of Light on 9 November. Sunderland players reacted angrily to referee Lee Mason’s decision to award Everton a penalty for a foul by Sunderland striker Connor Wickham on Seamus Coleman.

QPR were punished for the reaction of their players to referee Mike Riley’s decision to deny striker Charlie Austin two goals — both in the eighth minute — in the 2-2 draw with Manchester City at Loftus Road on 8 November.

Croatia FA urges ‘end to hooliganism’ after Italy trouble

Zagreb, 18 Nov — The Croatian Football Association (HNS) has urged the country’s government and “the entire society” to combat hooliganism after flare-throwing Croatia fans marred the Euro 2016 qualifier against Italy in Milan on Sunday.

The visiting fans twice halted play, tossing flares onto the San Siro pitch and later clashed with the police. Croatian media reported that 17 fans were arrested.

“These hooligans have shocked soccer-loving Europe and deserve nothing but condemnation of the entire society. We call upon the Croatian judiciary to process all those who took part in the incident,” HNS said in a statement entitled ‘Let’s put an end to hooliganism’ and posted on their website.

“We also urge the other segments of the Croatian society, starting with the government, to see those incidents as the last straw, which will prompt all those in power to an energetic and decisive action,” it said.

Croatian fans have a history of unruly behaviour ranging from racism and fascist chants to flare-throwing and clashes with the police.

“Such incidents are obviously the result of the failure to act earlier. They are a shame for the Croatian state and have resulted in unforeseeable consequences for Croatian soccer and the national team,” the HNS statement said.

Swiss Davis Cup dreams clouded by injury and row reports

London, 18 Nov — Switzerland’s potential Davis Cup fairytale this weekend has become clouded by uncertainty over the fitness of Roger Federer and suggestions of strained relations between the all-time great and his team mate Stanislas Wawrinka.

The country is on tenterhooks to learn whether its favourite son Federer, struggling with a back injury, can recover from injury in time to cap his matchless individual career by joining Wawrinka and winning a first team ‘World Cup’ for his nation against France in Lille.

Everything had been going swimmingly in Federer’s historic quest until Saturday evening’s semi-final of the ATP World Tour finals, in which he ousted his equal in form pal Wawrinka in an epic three-setter.

Yet not only did the draining final moments of Federer’s win raise his old back trouble, forcing him to withdraw before Sunday’s final against Novak Djokovic, but the late tension of the match also caused Wawrinka to offer sharp, unimpressed words towards his opponent’s support team at courtside.

John McEnroe, the former American firebrand now commentating for ESPN, only threw more fuel on the flames with his revelations that the two players were engaged in a long post-match debate.

“Something went on in the locker-room, there was a long talk between the players that extended well into the night,” said McEnroe.

“And the stress of that — I can’t confirm all of this — but a lot of this went on and I don’t think that helped the situation.”

Near the end of an increasingly stressful match which was only settled by a final set tiebreak during which Federer picked up his injury, it had appeared Wawrinka was unhappy with the exuberance of the celebrations of Federer’s camp, led by his wife Mirka and father Robbie.

Real’s Croatia midfielder Modric suffers injury blow

Real Madrid’s Luka Modric (R) celebrates with team mate Daniel Carvajal after he scored against Villarreal during their Spanish first division soccer match at the Madrigal stadium in Villarreal on 27 Sept, 2014.

Real Madrid midfielder Luka Modric is set to miss the rest of the year with a thigh injury, the La Liga leaders said in a statement on Monday. Modric went off injured in the first half of Croatia’s Euro 2016 qualifier in Italy on Sunday and team doctor Boris Nemec’s initial fears that tendon damage would keep him on the sidelines for over a month have been confirmed by tests at his club.

“An examination by medical staff from Real Madrid have discovered a tear in a thigh tendon in his left leg,” Real said.

Modric, with his precise passing and fluid movement in midfield, has been a key figure in Real’s bright start to the season that sees them top La Liga with 27 points from 11 games.— Reuters

Croatia’s supporters throw flares onto the field during their Euro 2016 qualifying soccer match against Italy at the San Siro stadium in Milan on 16 Nov, 2014. — Reuters

Real Madrid’s Luka Modric (R) celebrates with team mate Daniel Carvajal after he scored against Villarreal during their Spanish first division soccer match at the Madrigal stadium in Villarreal on 27 Sept, 2014. — Reuters

Everton’s Leighton Baines (L) scores a penalty past Sunderland’s goalkeeper Costel Pantilimon during their English Premier League soccer match at the Stadium of Light in Sunderland, northern England on 9 Nov, 2014. — Reuters

Real Madrid’s Luka Modric (R) celebrates with team mate Daniel Carvajal after he scored against Villarreal during their Spanish first division soccer match at the Madrigal stadium in Villarreal on 27 Sept, 2014. — Reuters

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