Vice President U Nyan Tun meets executive director of World Economic Forum

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Nov—Vice President U Nyan Tun received Executive Director Philipp Rösler of the World Economic Forum and party at Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday. They discussed the vision of Myanmar for its development in annual meetings of the World Economic Forum and the East Asian Economic Forum, the process of economic reform, and investment opportunities for international organizations and businesses. It was also attended by deputy ministers U Thant Kyaw and Daw Lei Thein and Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar U Soe Min.—MNA

EU Working Together For Myanmar:
EU Announces Cooperative Strategy

YANGON, 25 Nov—Since the beginning of the historic transition period, the European Union and its Member States have been actively engaged in supporting Myanmar’s economic, social and political development. There can, however, be no standing still. Reforms must continue and need support.

On 24 November 2014, the European Union and its Member States, together with the Government of Myanmar, presented the Joint EU Development Partners’ Transitional Strategy for Myanmar 2014-2016. This ground breaking strategy will maximise cooperation and efficiency between the European Union and its Member States in their support of Myanmar by utilising a single, joint framework in the implementation of development initiatives.

The single framework that will guide the European Development Partners in their assistance to Myanmar represents the EU’s and its Member States’ commitment to aid effectiveness, working together to make a strong contribution to Myanmar’s ongoing development.—GNLM

World Bank looks to improve farmers’ access to irrigation in Myanmar

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 25 Nov — The World Bank is developing a project to improve the agricultural sector in Myanmar, an official of the global multilateral institution told the Global New Light of Myanmar on Tuesday.

The project, which is aimed at improving existing irrigation systems of the country and offering extensive services to Myanmar farmers, is being formulated in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation of Myanmar, he said.

The US$100 million project will be implemented in Myanmar following the approval of the board of the executive directors of the World Bank Group, which is expected to take place next month, he added.

Recently, the World Bank released a new report titled “Myanmar: Rice Price Volatility and Poverty Reduction”, pointing out that rice price volatility is the highest among net rice exporting countries in Asia, preventing Myanmar’s rice farmers from earning high profits and keeping many families at or close to poverty income levels.—GNLM/PHOTO: YE MYINT

Photo shows a woman winnowing in a field in Myanmar, where rice is the main farm income source, providing livelihoods for over 50% of the population. The World Bank says rice price volatility in Myanmar is the highest among net rice exporting countries in Asia, preventing Myanmar’s rice farmers from earning high profits and keeping many families at or close to poverty income levels.—GNLM/PHOTO: YE MYINT
Pyidaungsu Hluttaw accepts proposal for six party round-table talks

Nav Pyi Taw, 25 Nov — The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw accepted a proposal Tuesday to hold round-table talks among six parties, namely, the president, the speaker of the Pyithu Hluttaw (lower house), the speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw (upper house), the chairperson of the main opposition National League for Democracy, a representative of ethnic parties and the commander-in-chief.

U Myint Tun, representative of Bago region constituency (No. 1), submitted the proposal, suggesting the talks to develop a constitution which is suitable for the existing situation of the country and to create opportunities for the future of the country.

At the 33rd day of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, U Thein Swe, representative of Ann township constituency, said the 2008 Constitution has resulted in parliamentary and democratic systems in the country, saying that systematic steps must be taken in charter amendment.

Daw Khin Saw Wai, representative of Yadanaung township constituency, said the priority of constitutional amendment should be placed on changing some articles which are major hurdles to this endeavor, and also suggested that all the relevant bodies consider the future of the state.

Major Kyaw Naing Huu, military representative, said that the Tatmadaw, together with the public, is taking part in the efforts of national unity and the peace building process, commenting that the amendments are to be carried out in line with the Constitution, at U Tin Mya, representative of Sagaing region constituency, said that the amendment process should be carried out in accordance with the suggestions of parliamentarians.

U Thein Zaw, representative of Myitkyina township constituency, said that the amendment process should not rely on the biases of political parties, ethnicity and organizations, but rather be based on the welfare of people and the country, with a focus on national reconciliation.

U Nanda Kyaw Swa, chairman of the Constitution Amendment Implementation Committee, urged the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw to discuss constitution amendment processes at the 12th regular session of this Hluttaw after reviewing the report of the committee and discussions of 140 parliamentarians.

Pyithu Hluttaw Car substitution programme extended to March 2015

Nav Pyi Taw, 25 Nov — Deputy Minister U Chan Maung of the Rail Transportation Ministry said a program aimed at taking aging vehicles off the roads will be extended from the end of 2014 to March 2015 at Tuesday’s session of Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House).

Under the programme, the owners of cars over 20 years old, locally made autos and three-wheeled cars can exchange their vehicles for a permit that allows them to import a car with the registration fee waived.

During the 34th day of the Amyotha Hluttaw (upper house), the deputy minister said that many old cars remain on the roads despite this programme, not because of the owners’ preference. Under this program a total of 14,000 locally made cars, more than 500 three-wheelers and over 130,000 old vehicles have been exchanged for permits.

Responding to a question by a Seikkan Township parliamentarian, Dr Win Myint, deputy minister for health, said expenditures on state health care services come from the budget of the ministry, at a cost of US$11 per citizen, excluding operational costs such as salaries for staff, accommodation, electricity and fuel.

The deputy minister also said that the World Health Organization has suggested the standard cost should be between $30 and $45 each year.

He noted that the budget allocation of the health ministry for the 2014-2015 fiscal year is $652 billion, or 3.84 per cent of the overall budget, which is 0.94 per cent of GDP.

Each person in Myanmar is required to pay from 65 to 80 per cent of health care costs.

Dr Win Myint also said that the country will need a public healthcare insurance system in the future, and the country is expected to see overall health care services of population coverage, service coverage and cost coverage in 2030.—MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw Three bills passed at Amyotha Hluttaw session

Nav Pyi Taw, 25 Nov — The Amyotha Hluttaw on Tuesday approved the union budget bill, which the Pyithu Hluttaw had returned with remarks.

The Pyithu Hluttaw also returned a bill with remarks concerning salaries, allowances and facilities for members of committees at state/region levels, which came under discussion at the Amyotha Hluttaw.

A representative of Chin State constituency-2 stressed that the Constitution recognizes the role of such parliamentarians as being the same as that of parliamentarians at the union level, adding that parliamentarians deserve the privileges the Constitution provides.

He spoke in favour of the remarks added to the bill by the Pyithu Hluttaw. The Amyotha Hluttaw also approved two other bills.—MNA

World Bank looks to improve... (from page 1 in) in Myanmar is the highest among net rice exporting countries in Asia, preventing Myanmar’s rice farmers from earning high profits and keeping many families at or close to poverty income levels.

According to the new study, rice prices rose by 40 percent between 2009-2013, increasing pressure on Myanmar’s overall food security and export competitiveness.

The report revealed that the main cause of rice price volatility in Myanmar is heavy concentration of price fluctuations to maintain rice stocks at or close to poverty income levels.

It highlighted the importance of investments in agriculture, infrastructure and an improved business environment for lowering rice price volatility.

Lower costs of doing business and improved access to finance for rice mill owners and traders would reduce storage costs and increase private stocks, acting to smooth price fluctuations.

The report suggested that price volatility in Myanmar could be reduced by spreading rice production more evenly over the marketing year and stressing the need for farmer’s improved access to irrigation, availability of seeds with different harvesting periods and growth durations, and advice on production technologies.

The report said that rice is the main farm income source for Myanmar, where the livelihoods and improved of over 50 per cent of the population depend on the performance of agriculture. Rice accounts for 70 per cent of Myanmar’s total cultivated area and 30 per cent of the value of its agricultural production.

The World Bank has produced a series of reports on Myanmar’s rice cultivation and industry as part of its overall technical assistance to the country.
Senior General
Min Aung Hlaing
receives EU ambassador

Nay Pyi Taw, 25 Nov—Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing held talks with Ambassador of the European Union Office Mr Roland Kobia at Bayintnaung Guest House in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday.

They exchanged views on promotion of relations between Myanmar and EU, the prospects of relations between their armed forces, endeavours of the Myanmar armed forces, the process of peace and stability in Rakhine State, national unity, and the 2008 Constitution.

Amyotha Hluttaw speaker visits Thailand, receives honorary doctoral degree in law

Bangkok, 25 Nov—Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint, currently on a visit to Thailand at the invitation of Professor Pornpetch Wichitcholchai, president of the National Legislative Assembly, laid a wreath at the statue of King Rama II on 24 November, sources said.

U Khin Aung Myint met Prof Pornpetch Wichitcholchai for a discussion at the latter’s office.

U Khin Aung Myint said that legislation is of great importance in national reconstruction, recognizing the multi-functional aspects of both the National Legislative Assembly and the National Reform Council.

In connection with the Ko Tao murder case in which two Myanmar nationals have been charged, the Amyotha Hluttaw is following the matter, the speaker said.

Speaking of economic relations, the speaker stated that Myanmar and Thailand are interdependent economies, whose cooperation will ensure economic growth for both countries.

He showed appreciation for Thailand’s invitation by saying that he visited Thailand even at the current crucial time of the issue of constitutional amendment coming under discussion at the parliament.

Speaker U Khin Aung Myint met NRC Chairman Mr Thienchay Keeranan at the latter’s office.

U Khin Aung Myint said that Thailand is further down the path in the practice of democracy than Myanmar, stressing three major factors in democratization, which he said are stability, education and economic growth.

In a discussion with Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, Speaker U Khin Aung Myint called for promotion of bilateral relations between the two countries, stressing that Myanmar cannot enjoy economic growth without Thailand and vice versa.

He also toured the Grand Palace and the Temple of the Emerald Buddha.

On 25 November, he attended a convocation ceremony at Ramkhamhaeng University, which conferred an honorary doctoral degree in law on him.

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Aung Myint arrived back in Yangon in the afternoon.

Media roundtable discussion held on challenges to rising ASEAN

Yangon, 25 Nov—The 3rd ERIA Editors Roundtable, jointly organized by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia and the local Mizzima Media Group, was held here Tuesday on the theme of “challenges to a rising ASEAN”.

The event was attended by Union Information Minister U Ye Htut, Professor Hidetoshi Nishimura, executive director of ERIA, ASEAN Secretary-General Le Luong Minh, Chief Editor of Mizzima Media U Soe Myint and journalists from local and foreign media groups.

Nishimura and U Soe Myint delivered opening speeches, followed by a discussion on the topic “Myanmar-ASEAN Beyond 2015” proposed by the union minister.

The 3rd ERIA Editors Roundtable: Challenges for Rising ASEAN in progress.

The participants discussed the possible consequences of the establishment in 2015 of the ASEAN Economic Community during Malaysia’s chairmanship of the grouping, the future challenges of the bloc, as well as the preparations of Myanmar.

NHK of Japan, the National Multimedia Group of Thailand, Fairfax Media of New Zealand, the Asian Wall Street Journal and the People’s Daily of China also exchanged views on the future of the media industry.

At the end of the talks, the ASEAN secretary-general answered questions by journalists.

Senior Communication Advisor Kavi Chongkittavorn of ERIA then made a closing speech of the event.

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The 3rd ERIA Editors Roundtable: Challenges for Rising ASEAN in progress.
Inter-primary school sports meet held in Thaton District

Thaton, 25 Nov — The Thaton District Inter-Primary School Sports Meet was held at the sports ground at Thawo Npar Seik High School in Thawo Npar Seik Township, Thaton District, on Tuesday.

District Education Officer Daw Kyi Kyi Mar gave words of encouragement to the students to become selected for state-level competitions.

Primary students from four townships of Thaton District participated in the 50-m, 100-m and 200-m races, high jump, long jump and football events.

Township Administrator U Tun Tun Naing, the district education officer and officials presented prizes to the winners in respective events. The sports meet will be held up to 27 November. Outstanding students will be selected to take part in the Mon State level sports competitions, according to the district education office.

Thet Oo (Thaton)

Myanmar journalists visit Ruili checkpoint

Ruili, 25 Nov — Chairman of the Upper Myanmar Journalists Association U Htay Aung and party together with Mr Zhang Jian (a) U Htay Myint of the Dehong Prefecture Chamber of Commerce visited the tax free zone at the Ruili border gate in China on 19 November.

At the border checkpoint, they viewed goods with the use of modern machinery. Dehong Prefecture has six border checkpoints. Of them, Shweli checkpoint is one of the tax free gates.—Htay Myint Maung

Hole-in-one sunk at the Royal Mingalardon Golf Club

Yangon, 25 Nov — U Khin Maung Aung scored an ace at the 16th hole of the Royal Mingalardon Golf Club in Yangon on 22 November, striking a Volvik 1 ball with a Marumalexim Roof #7.

At that time, he was playing together with U Aung Moe Kyaw, U Hla Maw Oo, U Zaw Min and Mr. Peter.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Health knowledge shared with villagers in Natmauk Tsp

Natmauk, 25 Nov — An health education talk was held at a monastery in Kyaukse and Kyunbok villages, Natmauk Township, Magway Region, on 22 November. Deputy Township Administrator U Tint Zaw and Dr Nyunt Shwe Aung of Shwepandaw Station Hospital explained the construction of a latrine at each house and the timely treatment of dysentery.

Officials presented 110 commodes to local people. The deputy township administrator and departmental officials visited the village and viewed construction of a latrine at each house.

Hla Win (Township IPRD)
Copy books donated to basic education schools in Mandalay

Mandalay, 25 Nov

— With the assistance of the Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation, the Mandalay Region Women’s Affairs Organization and Region Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee, copy books to basic education schools in Mandalay Region.

The donation ceremony for the copy books took place at the office of the Mandalay Region WAO on Theikpan Street in Mandalay on 24 November.

Chairwoman of the organization Daw Su Su Lwin presented 2,325 copy books to the chairwomen of township WAOs.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Myawady Tsp police commander holds press conference

Myawady, 25 Nov — Myawady Township Police Force Commander Major Aung Ngwe held a press conference at the district police force in Kayin State on Tuesday.

Police Major Aung Ngwe explained the duties and functions of the police, the pay scale of police servicemen, the outbreak of crimes in the township, and the cooperation of people in providing information to the police.

The commander and officials replied to queries raised by departmental officials and media.—Tan Tun Oo (Myawady Twp)

Tube-well sunk to supply potable water to locals

Natmauk, 25 Nov—The Natmauk Township Rural Development Department sank a tube-well in Kywahtoogan Village in the township as part of rural development works.

The tube-well is being supervised by officers of the Township Rural Development Department.

Upon completion, the tube-well will benefit over 500 local people of the village, said an official.

Hla Win (Township IPRD)

Malaria control course given to volunteers in Myanaung Tsp

Myanaung, 25 Nov — The opening ceremony of a malaria control course for volunteers was held at the hall of Township Health Department in Myanaung Township, Ayeyawady Region, on Monday.

Dr Tin Nilar Win of the Township People’s Hospital explained the outbreak of malaria in the world and Myanmar. She said the disease kills 1 million people across the world and 1,200 in Myanmar per year.

Township malaria inspector U Tin Aung said that volunteer health workers are to provide health care services to malaria patients within 24 hours to reduce the outbreak of severe malaria and the death rate from malaria.

Volunteers from 25 village-tracks in the township are attending the course, which will last up to 28 November.

Win Bo-Township IPRD

Illegally extracted logs seized at Amarapura

Amarapura, 25 Nov — A mobile team (Mandalay) seized timber logs concealed under a bamboo raft at Shwekyetyet jetty in Amarapura, Mandalay Region, on 21 November.

The mobile team led by Director U Thein Win of the Commercial and Consumer Affairs Department checked the bamboo raft on 21 November and found 51 ironwood and hardwood logs weighing 6,471.4 tons worth K1.632 million.

The mobile team handed over the logs to the Forest Department. Action is being taken against 11 persons from the raft under the Forestry Law at Amarapura Myoma police station.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Two Myanmar journalists’ groups meet in China’s Ruili

Ruili, 25 Nov — A delegation of the Upper Myanmar Journalists’ Association led by Chairman U Hay Aung on a visit to China met a 15-member delegation led by Mr Zhang Jian of Dehong Prefecture Chamber of Commerce and officials.

It was also attended by Mr Zhang Jian of Dehong Prefecture Chamber of Commerce and officials.

The vice mayor urged the Myanmar journalists to cooperate in strengthening China-Myanmar friendly ties.—Hay Myint Maung

Ruili Vice Mayor hosts lunch for Myanmar journalists

Ruili, 25 Nov — Vice Mayor of Ruili Mrs Cai Ying Chum (a) Daw Khin Nwe Oo hosted a lunch in honour of the visiting Myanmar journalists delegation at Tai Mei Hao Restaurant on 19 November.

An official explains control of malaria disease for volunteers of villages in Myanaung Township.
Korean opposition lawmaker raps indictment of Japanese reporter

SEOUL, 25 Nov — A veteran South Korean opposition lawmaker slammed South Korea’s prosecution on Tuesday for indicting a Japanese journalist for defamation against South Korea’s military leader during the 1980 Olympic Games.

He declined to give further details, but said the government had ordered agents to search for Kato and his communications data.

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The journalist was arrested in Seoul on Friday and is due to be sent to a detention facility on Tuesday.

The Seoul Central District Court is expected to seek a plea from Kato on the first day of hearing.

The indictment is not in line with legal principles and precedents, and global standards concerning freedom of the press,” said Moon, who was defeated by Park in the presidential election in 2012. “(The indictment) has become something of a shameful thing in the international community,” he said.

In an article published online on 3 August, Kato suggested Park was not at her office for seven hours on 16 April, the day the Sewol ferry sank with the loss of 300 lives, possibly because she was engaged in a secret rendezvous with a recently divorced former aide.

Kato cited hearsay among stockbrokers and quoted from the Chosun Ilbo, a major South Korean newspaper that first reported the rumour but has not similarly been charged with defamation.

A conservative South Korean civic group filed a defamation suit against the Sankei bureau on 9 August over the article, prompting the prosecutors to open an investigation.

Asian leaders begin arriving in Nepal for SAARC summit

KATHMANDU, 25 Nov — Leaders from seven South Asian nations began arriving in Kathmandu on Tuesday to attend the 18th South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation summit on Wednesday and Thursday.

The government has ruled out the sort of intervention schemes that led to the pasting of the previous Yingluck Shinawatra-led government as they are costly and cause a build-up in stockpiles that then become difficult to sell.

Several rubber farmers, based mostly in the south, supported anti-government protesters earlier this year that culminated in the coup, but some say they feel betrayed because the junta had failed to soften the blow of plunging rubber prices.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, the army chief who led the coup, has warned farmers not to stage any demonstrations.

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Serbia’s military, defence capabilities to be boosted

BELGRADE, 25 Nov — The cooperation with the European Defence Agency (EDA) will boost Serbia’s military and defence capabilities, Serbian Defence Minister Bratislav Gasic said on Monday during a meeting with EDA Chief Executive Claude-France Arnauld.

Gasic and Arnauld agreed that it is important to intensify cooperation in the fight against improvised explosive devices, as well as in the area of precision-guided munition. Potential areas of military cooperation are also cyber defence and unmanned (land) platforms, the Serbian ministry said.

“The cooperation with the EDA will boost Serbia’s military and defence capabilities, and, at the same time, our interoperability with EU member states,” Gasic noted.

He particularly thanked the agency for granting access to its data bases — the Collaborative Data Base, the Defence Test and Evaluation Base and the European Defence Research Centres Portal. “The engagement of the Ministry of Defence as part of the EU Joint Security and Defence Policy is significant due to Serbia’s European integration process,” the two officials said at the meeting.

The significance of joint projects is “heightened by the current economic crisis and defence budget cuts in European countries,” they also said.

Active involvement in the concept of the Joint Security and Defence Policy is reflected by the aspiration towards boosted engagement in crisis management operations, development of joint projects and improved administrative capabilities for more active cooperation with the EU. The EDA chief executive said that Serbia, as a relatively new partner of the agency, is yet to set the cooperation parameters and the main reason of her visit to Belgrade.

Development of joint projects with the EDA and EU member states was made possible in December 2013 through the signing of an administrative agreement with the Defence Ministers.

At least 12 buildings go up in flames in violence-torn Ferguson area

FERGUSON, 25 Nov — At least a dozen buildings were set on fire in Ferguson, Missouri, most of them destroyed, in a wave of civil unrest following a grand jury’s decision not to indict a white police officer for fatally shooting an unarmed black teenager in August, police said on Tuesday.

St Louis County Police Chief Jon Belmar also said he personally had heard about 150 gunshots fired during a night of looting, arson and clashes between demonstrators and police that resulted in at least 29 people arrested. Although no serious injuries have been report-
ed, he said the disturbanc-es Monday night and early Tuesday morning were “much worse” than the unrest that erupted in the immediate aftermath of the shooting of 18-year-old Michael Brown by police officer Darren Wilson on 9 August.—Reuters

US defence chief Hagel to step down

WASHINGTON, 25 Nov — US President Barack Obama said on Monday that Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel will be stepping down, a development that apparently came as a surprise to defence officials in Japan who see the United States as Tokyo’s closest security ally.

Hagel, a former senator who took office in February 2013, is resigning as Obama’s administration struggles to deal with mounting tasks such as containment of Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria and US withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Hagel, the only Republican in Obama’s national security team, is expected to serve as head of the Defence Department until Obama nominates his successor.

Names of people floated in US media as a potential next Pentagon chief include Michelle Flournoy, a former undersecretary of defence.

Obama decided to replace Hagel after Democrats suffered a crushing defeat in the midterm elections in the face of dissatisfaction among many voters about the administration including concern about US military and defence capabilities.

At the same time, Obama’s White House and the head of the Pentagon had open disagreements over the Islamic State and other key security issues prompting some in Congress to criticize Hagel. Obama effectively sacked Hagel, according to CNN.—Kyodo News

Putin, Medvedev to discuss oil and gas projects with Vietnam’s ruling party chief

MOSCOW, 25 Nov — President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev on Tuesday are expected to meet in Sochi with the Secretary General of the Vietnamese Communist Party, Nguyen Phu Trong, in the Kremlin press service said.

Putin’s talks with Nguyen will concentrate on large joint projects in the oil and gas sector, in the nuclear power industry and industrial cooperation, as well as on a buildup of cultural and humanitarian contacts. “The sides will take a close look at the prospects for further comprehensive partnership in the light of agreements that Russia and Vietnam reached during Putin’s official visit to Hanoi in November 2013,” a spokesman for the Kremlin press service said. “The two leaders will also examine pressing regional issues.”

The government’s press service said at the same time that Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev hopes to discuss bilateral economic relations and a free trade zone agreement between the countries of the Eurasian Customs Union (Armenia, Belarus, Russia, and Kazakhstan) and Vietnam.

“One more item to come under consideration is a buildup of interparty contacts between the Unit-ed Russia party and the Communist Party of Viet-nam,” the press service said.

On the eve of the visit, Nguyen Phu Trong said in an interview with TASS that his exchanges of opinion with Russian leaders would target well-specified measures and steps that are necessary for the consolidation and further growth of partnership between Vietnam and Russia in all the existing areas of coopera-tion.

“My visit to Russia will take place on the background of progress of Vietnamese-Russian relations and all-embrac-ing strategic partnership,” he said. “President Putin, other Russian leaders and I will assess development of this relationship in recent months and will look, among other things, at the implementation of bilateral agreements at top level and the pace of implementation of large-scale projects.”

Specifically, the talks will focus on investment, energy, production of oil and gas, atomic energy, de-fence, and security.

At the same time, Nguyen said he hopes to discuss cooperation at the level of regions, the situation with the populous Vietnamese community in Russia and the expansion of people’s diplomacy.

Apart from a purely bilateral agenda, Putin and Nguyen also hope to consider a possible coordination of steps in the international arena.

“Vietnam is conducting an independent multi-vector foreign policy based on self-determina-tion, aspirations for peace, cooperation, development, and international integra-tion,” Nguyen said. —Itar-Tass
Why improve communication skills

By Myo Myint

Communication skills are the abilities to convey our ideas, feelings, attitudes, perceptions, wants, needs, knowledge, etc. in a precise and lucid manner in accordance with the intention of the person communicating the message, either in the spoken, or written form, face-to-face or via communication devices, such as phone, e-mail, and video conferencing. Since communication is usually a two-way interaction between two or more persons, one must also include listening and reading skills among the communication skills.

Communication is not just merely using words. Spoken communication also involves the use of a variety of features to express different nuances of meaning such as, body language which include facial expressions, posture, gestures; tone of voice; eye contact; proximity between speaker and listener, etc. On the other hand, written communication exploits choice of word, order of words, sentence patterns, the sound system of the language concerned, the organization of texts, size and design of letters of the alphabet, etc. to gain specific communicative effects. In addition, interpretation of human communication is made more complex due to the fact that more than one meaning can be conveyed by a single utterance, and indirectness is frequently used to communicate different shades of meaning including the opposite of what is said. Moreover, such non-verbal features as the style and colour of one’s clothes and hair, and for women and some men, the use of certain kinds of jewellery, makeup, lip-stick, perfume, etc. may be employed to subtly convey information about the personality of a person.

There are many reasons for communication skills to have come to be regarded as a vital life skill in the 21st century. Firstly, it would be extremely difficult to fulfill even our most basic needs and wants, as anyone who has had the experience of travelling in a foreign country whose language he/she does not know will attest to. Secondly, just as our appearance creates the first impression, so does the way we write. Thirdly, communications skills are important in our social dealings both within the family as well as with friends, acquaintances, and strangers as they can improve relationship or worsen it. Fourthly, good communication skills are required by many jobs, especially those that relate to dealing with the public, whether it is the position of a salesperson, or that of a CEO, as seen from the many job advertisements in newspapers. Fifthly, the higher one’s position in the hierarchy of the organization, the wider his/her need to interact with people from other cultures and countries, in different situations.

In Myanmar, with the advent of market economy, expansion of small and medium enterprises, growth in employment opportunities, increase in young people pursuing higher education both at home and abroad, and greater interaction with foreigners and foreign countries for business, tourism and other purposes, effective communication, including the ability to use a foreign language, especially the English language, and the ability to translate and interpret, has risen to the forefront of the skills much in demand these days. On the other hand, with more parents going out to work and the advent of extended families, there seems to be less opportunity for young people to communicate with people of different ages, cultures and backgrounds, etc., to adjust the interaction interesting when and where appropriate, to make one’s communication appropriate to the audience - age, job, status, interest, education background, knowledge, etc., to adjust the style of one’s language and tone.

The goals of schools and universities should include the promotion of effective communication, as it is not just a vital life skill as pointed earlier, but because it is also a great advantage for one’s professional life. In order to adjust the length of one’s interaction making one’s communication relevant to the topic being discussed to maintain the attention of one’s audience. Communication skills can be taught as part of the Myanmar and English language courses, or it could be integrated in all the subjects that students have to study. The latter has the advantage of giving more opportunity to use communication skills in practice by students across the curriculum and also strengthening linkage among knowledge, cultural norms, thinking and communication which are vital not only for students but also for those in employment. Below are some of the prerequisites to develop communication skills:

1. overcoming shyness, brevity and reluctance to talk, so that one can interact with both people one is familiar with as well as strangers.

2. being aware of the audience - age, job, status, interest, education background, knowledge, etc., to adjust the style of one’s language and tone.

3. being aware of the setting, the place and occasion where the interaction is taking place, to make one’s communication appropriate to the having relevant knowledge, vocabulary and structure to interact on a wide range of topics making one’s communication informative, so that it will be worth paying attention to be aware of how much time is available in order to adjust the length of one’s interaction making one’s communication relevant to the topic being discussed to maintain the attention of one’s audience making one’s communication well-organized to make it comprehensible to the audience giving turns to talk to one’s listener(s), so that one will not be regarded as dominating the interaction too much.

We appreciate your feedback and contributions.
If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email wallace.tun@gmail.com with your name and title.
Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish “Letter to the Editor” that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

 workout for 9.

10. giving examples, relevant to the topic and participants, and injecting a bit of humour, when and where appropriate, to make the interaction interesting

11. using polite language to show one’s regard for one’s audience and to create rapport

12. using appropriate tone of voice, body language, gestures, and posture to enhance the interest of audience

In order to promote the above mentioned qualities in students to enhance their communicative skills, schools and universities will need to give sustained attention to their development. Schools will need to create a culture of interaction from the very first day students enter school. Teachers should begin their training on communication at the lower primary level by asking students questions and by answering their questions patiently and maintaining young children’s eagerness to talk. When students get to the upper primary level and are old (See page 9)
Nay Pyi Taw, 25 Nov.—A delegation led by Vice Chairman of the Ethnic Affairs Committee of Vietnam Deputy Minister Mr Ha Hung of the Social-ist Republic of Vietnam called on Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Thet Naing at the ministry on Tuesday morning. During the call, they focused on further promoting ties between ethnic groups of the two nations and development tasks.

The Vietnamese delegation visited the Gems Museum, paid homage to Uppatasanti Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw and attended a dinner hosted by Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Tin Aung Chit.

The 60th Anniversary Commemorative Coin Presenting Ceremony at the Embassy of Japan

Yangon, 25 Nov.—According to the press release of the Embassy of Japan in Myanmar the 60th Anniversary Commemorative Coin Presenting Ceremony was held on 24th November 2014. Mr. Tashi HIGUCHI, Ambassador of Japan presented a commemorative silver coin (which featuring Bagan Archaeological site at the obverse and the logo of 60th Anniversary of the establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Myanmar and Japan with the representation of Padavuk and Cherry flowers representation at the reverse side) to Mr. Ko Ko who designed the 60th Anniversary logo mark.

The Embassy of Japan requested the Ministry of Culture in Myanmar to design the official logo. Receiving the request, the National University of Arts and Culture (Yangon) held the intramural competition and there were 48 entries from 14 students. A logo designed by Mr. Ko Ko, has been chosen as the 60th Anniversary official logo. The official logo was used for all 60th anniversary events conducted both in Myanmar and Japan through 2014.

The Ministry of Finance, Japan and Japan Mint are working on accepting orders for production of other countries’ coins with the cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Now, the Japan Mint has received the order for production of coins commemorating the “60th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Myanmar and Japan”, from the Central Bank of Myanmar. Some coins will be delivered to the Central Bank of Myanmar, and in Japan, the Japan Mint sells the coins.

Obverse

Reverse

Why improve communication...

(from page 8)

enough to participate in group work, they should be assigned to talk on simple topics such as their family, or pet or friends. The aim at this stage is to promote fluency rather than skillfulness, so students should be freely allowed to express themselves, without teachers correcting their mistakes. Reading begets knowledge, and knowledge facilitates interaction and development of thinking skills. When students are in the lower secondary level and are able to do independent reading, they should be assigned short extensive reading tasks, so that they will acquire a wide range of knowledge, a large stock of vocabulary and a variety of sentence patterns. To get use to speaking in front of an audience and overcome shyness, students should be asked to perform short role plays, tell short stories, or do brief presentations on what they have read, in front of the whole class. To instill communication skills, all teachers, whatever subject they teach, should have a few minutes of discussion with students at the beginning of class on the previous lesson and end the class with a few minutes discussion or question answer session giving students opportunity to express their views and to satisfy their desire for more information. As students get to the high school level, more challenging activities that require preparation, such as impromptu talk, poem and essay competitions, and poster drawing and newsletter production and presentation contests should be conducted, as they are interesting ways to promote effective communication.

At the university level, communication skills of students should be promoted in a more formal and systematic way. As many opportunities as possible should be given to students to discuss among themselves as well as with their teachers, and group activities should be utilized as much as possible to provide all students in the class the chance to communicate. At this level, communication skills and academic studies should be well integrated. Students should be trained to integrate the knowledge they have gained from pre-scribed courses with what they have learnt from their independent studies and be able to communicate the information to others effectively. Regarding this matter, in addition to written tutorials discussion should also be held. To familiarize students with different types of communication situations, students should be taught the different formats, styles and purposes of different communication events, such as presentations, chairing meetings, reports, negotiations, giving instructions, debates, etc. In addition, rather than wait for students to develop effective interaction by themselves, higher education institutions should give practice to their students to communicate effectively in specific communication situations relating to their specializations, such as, interaction in courts for those studying law, product promotion for those doing business studies, giving instruction for those training to be teachers, interacting with library users for those studying library science, interacting with patients for those studying medicine, etc.

Teachers need to also train students to use the right tone, the right speed of delivery, body language, gestures, postures, visual and audio aids, and wear clothes appropriate to the occasion. They should also be made aware of the need to communicate, their audience and adjust their interaction in response to the reaction their listeners.

He said that although

the quality of glass produced by the industry is on par with imported glass, the industry’s marketing is weak, adding that if necessary, a glass showroom will be opened for sales in Yangon.

He urged the workers to try their best for the long-term production of glass and take responsibility and accountability in their tasks.

Vice-Senior General Soe Win and party with Vietnamese senior military officers.—Myawady

Nay Pyi Taw, 25 Nov.—A delegation led by Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win arrived at Noi Bai Airport in Hanoi, Vietnam, on Monday to attend the 15th ASEAN Chiefs of Army Multilateral Meeting (ACAMM-15) and the 24th ASEAN Armies Rifle Meet (24th AARM).

The vice-senior general and party were welcomed by General Director Lieutenant General Nguyen Duc Than of the People’s Armed Forces Training Department of Vietnam and senior military officers, Myanmar Ambassador U Win Hlaing, Military Attaché Brig-Gen Nyunt Hlaing and officials. The Myanmar delegation proceeded to the Melia Hotel.

Myawady

Union minister meets with staff of No 36 Heavy Industry (Kyaukse)

Nay Pyi Taw, 25 Nov.—No 36 Heavy Industry (Kyaukse) needs to better utilize marketing to let the public and construction entrepreneurs know about its production of quality glass, Union Minister for Industry U Maung Myint said at a meeting with personnel of the industry in Kyaukse, Mandalay Region, on Sunday.

He said that although

the industry produces over 4,000 tons of coloured glass, clear glass, laminated glass, tempered glass, and mirror glass per year.

The union minister also visited No 33 Heavy Industry (Kyaukse Cement Plant) that can produce 400 tons of cement per day. At present, a 5,000-ton cement plant is under construction at the No 33 Heavy Industry—MNA.

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Six powers, Iran to extend nuclear talks until 1 July

VIENNA, 25 Nov

Six major powers and Iran agreed on Monday to extend their talks on Iran’s nuclear ambitions until 1 July, a source close to the negotiations told Kyodo News.

And Reuters quoted British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond as saying the parties to the talks — Britain, China, France, Russia, the United States, Germany and Iran — will extend their negotiations until the end of June next year.

The seven had hoped to forge a framework agreement for Iran’s nuclear programme by a Monday deadline, but so far a final pact has not been reached.

The talks, designed to keep Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons, are apparently deadlocked over when Western powers might lift sanctions on Iran, to what extent Iran would be able to pursue peaceful use of nuclear energy and what limits would be placed on Iran’s uranium enrichment activities.

The foreign ministers of the seven countries held a plenary meeting after the decision to continue negotiations to work out details such as how long the sides will continue to work toward an agreement and where the next round of talks will be held.

Reuters has reported the meetings will be in December, likely in Vienna or in Oman.

The Associated Press quoted a US diplomat as saying as saying the ministers hope to see broad political progress by 1 March and details determined by 1 July.

In July this year, Iran and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany had agreed to extend talks until Monday.

But after last week’s meetings, including between US Secretary of State John Kerry and Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, it appears the talks, while not yet at the “framework” stage, have progressed enough for the sides to continue negotiations into next month, and possibly beyond.

Under an interim deal struck in November last year, Iran committed itself to rolling back some of its nuclear activities in return for limited relief from international sanctions while talks for a lasting solution continued.

The Western powers continue to allege Iran is seeking nuclear weapons capability, but Tehran rejects that claim, insisting its nuclear development is for peaceful purposes only.

Kyodo News

UK faces biggest terrorism threat in its history — minister

LONDON, 25 Nov — Britain is facing the biggest terrorism threat in its history and has foiled around 40 major plots since suicide bombers attacked London in 2005, Home Secretary Theresa May said on Monday.

The government would on Wednesday set out new laws to take on the militants, May added, including legislation making it easier for security services to track attackers online, and check if radicalised fighters were flying into Britain.

“When the security and intelligence agencies tell us that the threat we face is now more dangerous than at any time before or since 9/11 we should take notice,” the home secretary (interior minister) said in a speech.

Insurance companies would be banned from providing cover for random payments under the new legislation and airlines would be banned if they failed to provide information on passengers flying to Britain, she added.

The government has said Britons returning from fighting in Syria and Iraq provide one of the most serious threats.

May said around 40 terrorist plots had been disrupted since four young Britons carried out suicide bomb attacks in London in 2005, killing 52 people.

These included attempts to conduct Mumbai-style gun attacks on British streets, blow up the London Stock Exchange, bring down airliners and murder a British ambassador and military service men, she added.

“Almost all of these attacks have been prevented,” May said. “But the terrorists only have to be lucky once.”

Planned new measures include giving police the power to seize for up to 30 days the passports of British and foreign nationals suspected of travelling to participate in terrorist-related activities, said May.

The new laws will also make it easier for police to identify who is using an internet service at any given time.

London’s top police officer on Sunday said authorities are increasingly worried about a “lone wolf”-style attack and have foiled four or five plots this year.

On Monday, Mark Rowley, Britain’s top counter-terrorism officer, said police were “stretched” but had stepped up their efforts, making 271 arrests this year. Warning the threat would remain high for several years, he said the public’s help was needed in spotting potential attackers.

Around half of Britons travelling to Syria are now considered as being newly radicalised and not previously known to police, Rowley said.

“I would never use the word inevitable but of course, terrorists do sometimes succeed,” he added. “We are going to do everything we possibly can to do to stop that happening.”

Rowley said the government has made Britain its top counter-terror priority and that “the target, as well as those to be targeted and the timing were all specified for him, as well as the provision that the (attack) be carried out in al-Ahsa”.

The leader had picked three followers, and these had scouted out the target, seized a car, killed its owner, and used it in the attack.

The spokesman said security forces carried out operations “to arrest every one affiliated with this terrorist group, whether those who pledged allegiance to the leader of the group, or participants, supporters, financiers, or those who provided cover”.

Two Saudis and a Qatari were killed as they resisted arrest, along with two security officers, the ministry said.

Authorities had already said that among the detainees were people believed to have fought for Sunni jihadists in Syria or who had previously been jailed for fighting for al-Qaeda.

As the birthplace of Islam and a champion of conservative Sunni doctrine, Saudi Arabia is an important ally for Western countries battling Islamic State, and its monarchy a symbolic target for the militant group itself.

Although it has backed rebel groups fighting alongside jihadists against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, Saudi Arabia has also taken steps to stop its citizens joining militants in Syria or Iraq, or giving them money.

Reuters

France says Iran nuclear talks progressed on key issues including enrichment

VIENNA, 25 Nov — France’s foreign minister said on Tuesday talks between Iran and the major powers over its nuclear programme had been “pretty positive” and there was progress on key issues in the six-nation talks.

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French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius arrives for a meeting in Vienna on 21 Nov, 2014.—REUTERS

Saudi Arabia says Islamic State ordered attack on Shi’ites in al-Ahsa

DUBAI, 25 Nov — Saudi Arabia has arrested the four main suspects in an attack on Shi’ite Muslims this month and believes it was ordered by Islamic State militants from abroad, the state news agency cited an Interior Ministry security spokesman as saying on Monday.

Seven members of the Sunni-ruled kingdom’s Shia minority were shot dead in the Eastern Province district of al-Ahsa on 3 November as they marked their holy day of Ashoura.

Saudis, Arabia, the world’s top oil exporter, put down an upsurge of Islamist militancy a decade ago, but fears that jihadist groups such as Islamic State or the al-Qaeda affiliate Nusra Front now operating in Syria or Iraq will radicalise Saudis to mount a new wave of strikes inside the kingdom.

Last week, the ministry said militants were trying to attack Saudi Arabia, but that it was not aware of any evidence that the al-Qaeda attack had been coordinated with Islamic State.

On Monday, the ministry spokesman said 77 suspects had been arrested so far, and that they were believed to include the four main perpetrators.

The leader had picked three followers, and these had scouted out the target, seized a car, killed its owner, and used it in the attack.

The spokesman said security forces carried out operations “to arrest every one affiliated with this terrorist group, whether those who pledged allegiance to the leader of the group, or participants, supporters, financiers, or those who provided cover”.

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—Reuters
Turkey, US ease strains on Islamic State but differences remain

ISTANBUL, 25 Nov — Turkey and the United States smoothed over some differences in the fight against Islamic State during a weekend visit by US Vice President Joe Biden, but the talks heralded little in the way of deeper military cooperation between the NATO allies.

Turkey has been a reluctant partner in the US-led coalition against Islamic State, refusing to take a frontline military role despite an 1,200-km (750-mile) border with Iraq and Syria and thereby intensifying Western concern that it is a weak link in the struggle against the insurgents.

Biden ended two days of meetings in Istanbul with no guarantee that Turkey would sign up to the US-led cooperation by, for example, allowing the use of Turkish air space or a US base in its territory, officials said. Kabul has suffered a 13-year civil war and May 2014 air strike killed seven Iraqi civilians.

"I think we came to a much greater clarity about where we need to go from here," said a senior US official following the talks. Ankara and Washington were in "complete agreement" on the threat from Islamic State, the official said, as well as the need for an effective ground force in Syria to work in coordination with the air strikes and push the insurgents back, building on progress made in Iraq.

Turkish and US forces will train 2,000 moderate Syrian rebels at a base in the central city of Kirsehir as part of the plan, a Turkish Foreign Ministry official said.

Turkish soldiers have also already trained some 230 Kurdish peshmerga fighters in northern Iraq and will give similar assistance to a new national army unit in Baghdad in support of the government's struggle against Islamic State.

"In Iraq, Ankara and Washington's viewpoints are very much closely aligned. The problem remains Syria, where strategically they want the same thing — a new order without Assad — but technically, divergences remain," said Sinan Ulgen, head of the Centre for Economic and Foreign Policy Studies in Istanbul.

Yemeni security forces free eight hostages, kill seven kidnappers

SANAA, 25 Nov — Yemeni security forces freed seven Yemeni hostages and one foreigner in a special operation in which seven al-Qaeda kidnappers were also killed, the country's supreme security committee said.

The committee, in a statement published by state news agency Saba, did not disclose the nationality of the foreign hostage nor say where in Yemen the operation took place. It was not immediately clear when or where the kidnappings had occurred.

One member of the southern town of Incirlik for coalition air strikes. Turkish leaders, in turn, received no signal that their demands for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's removal from power or that Washington establish a no-fly zone in Syria would be met.

But officials on both sides said the differences were more about strategy than objectives, and the meetings — including a four-hour discussion between Biden and Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan — had been an opportunity to clear the air and set a sometimes acrimonious relationship on aurer footing.

"They didn't sit there and sign their names on the bottom line on a whole host of agreements. But actually, I thought we came to a much greater clarity about where we need to go from here," said a senior US official following the talks.

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Baghdad car bomb kills eight people, fighting west of capital

BAGHDAD, 25 Nov — A car bomb exploded in a market in northern Baghdad’s Shaab neighbourhood on Monday, killing eight people and wounding 22, police and medics said.

Another bomb in the capital’s southeast killed two people, sources said.

Earlier this month, the United Nations said a Sierra Leonean water engineer working in the Arabian Peninsula country on a sanitation project had been freed more than a year after being kidnapped by unidentified armed men.

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Grand jury decides against charges in Ferguson shooting, unrest erupts

FE R G U S O N , 2 5 N o v — Violence flared again in the St Louis suburb of Ferguson on Monday, with gunshots heard and tear gas fired, after a Missouri grand jury decided not to indict a white police officer over the fatal shooting of an unarmed black teenager in August.

Angry crowds took to the streets around the Ferguson police department after the grand jury determined there was no probable cause to charge officer Darren Wilson with any crime for the shooting of 18-year-old Michael Brown.

St Louis police reported heavy automatic gunfire late on Monday in the area near where Brown was shot and killed on 9 August. The Federal Aviation Administration issued temporary flight restrictions for the city.

Protests were also staged in New York, Chicago, Washington DC, Seattle and Oakland over a case that has highlighted long-standing racial tensions not just in predominantly black Ferguson but across the United States.

“They determined that no probable cause exists to file any charge against officer Wilson,” St Lou- is County Prosecutor Bob McCulloch told reporters in Clayton, Missouri, the St Louis suburb where the grand jury met.

Wilson could have faced charges ranging from involuntary manslaughter to first-degree murder, Mc- Culloch said.

Storefront windows were smashed near the Ferguson Police Depart- ment, and at least one po- lice cruiser and another vehicle on the street were set on fire. Gunshots were heard and police responded with volleys of tear gas and flash-bang canisters.

Brown’s family said through their attorneys they were “profoundly dis- appointed” by the grand ju- ry’s finding.

“When we understand that many others share our pain, we ask that you chan- nel your frustration in ways that will make a positive change,” the family said in a statement.

Attorneys for Wilson, who has avoided the spot- light since the shooting, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

President Barack Obama called for protesters to remain peaceful and for po- lice to show restraint.

“We are a nation built on the rule of law and so we need to accept that this de- cision was the grand jury’s to make,” Obama said in a televised news conference.

“We need to recognize that the situation in Ferguson speaks to broader chal- lenges that we still face as a nation. The fact remains that in too many parts of this country a deep distrust exists between police and communities of colour.”

Ahead of the news, a crowd of several hundred people gathered outside the Ferguson Police Depart- ment, and may have began to scream angrily as word of the grand jury’s decision spread.

“Murderers, you’re nothing but murder- ers,” one woman shouted through a megaphone at officers clad in riot gear.

A group of protesters briefly mobbed a police car, throwing rocks and knocking out its windows, prompting a group of of- ficers clad in riot gear to advance. Sounds of gun- shots briefly caused police to take cover behind their vehicles. A Walgreens drugstore was set alight.

“They need to under- stand that when you put your son in the ground, that’s a pain that you can never overcome,” said Paul- lette Wilkes, a 40-year-old teacher’s assistant. “People are trying to process it. I think once they process it they will continue to burn and loot because they’re angry.”

Missouri Governor Jay Nixon called up the Na- tional Guard ahead of the announcement to protect against the kind of rioting that flared in the weeks after Brown was shot and killed.

Some activists de- scribed the decision to preemptively activate the guard as unnecessarily heavy-handed, particularly following complaints that police inflamed crowds in August by responding in a heavily militarized posture with tear gas and rubber bullets.

The grand jury, with nine white and three black members, began meeting in late August and heard evidence that included wit- nesses to the prosecution as well as a private pathologist hired by the Brown family to review the shooting. Nine jurors needed to agree to bring charg- es. McCulloch declined to say if the jury’s decision was unanimous, noting that grand jury proceedings are completely secret and that only the jury members themselves know the de- tails of the proceedings.

A federal probe into the shooting is continuing, and US Attorney General Eric Holder emphasized in a statement that the Justice Department investigators had not yet reached any conclusions, “Though we have shared information with local prosecutors during the course of our inves- tigation, the federal inquiry has been independent of the local one from the start, and remains so now. Even at this mature stage of the investigation, we have not prejudged any of the evidence,” he said.

REUTERS

Bulava missile to be launched from Alexander Nevsky submarine in late November

M OSCOW, 2 5 N o v — Russia’s Borei class strategic submarine, the Alexander Nevsky, is due to launch the Bulava missile later this month, a source in the headquarters of the Russian Navy told ITAR-TASS on Tuesday.

“It is planned that in late November the Alexander Nevsky will fire the Bulava from the Barents Sea at the Kura test range on the Kamchatka Peninsula,” the source said. The launch is due on 28-30 November. “Like previ- ously, the launch will be made from the submerged posi- tion of the submarine,” he added.

The latest launch of the Bulava missile was conduct- ed on 29 October. The Yury Dolgoruky Borei-class strate- gic nuclear-powered submarine test-launched the missile at the firing range Kura on the Kamchatka Peninsula from the Barents Sea. The Borei-class submarine cruiser had the full set of 16 missiles on board for the first time.

Borei-class submarines armed with ICMs Bulava are expected to make backbones of Russian marine strate- gic nuclear forces before 2025 to 2030.

After an abortive test-firing in September 2013, Rus- sian Defence Minister Sergey Shoigu ordered to make at least five additional test launches of Bulava.—ITAR-TASS.

BELGRADE, 2 5 N o v — Serbia understands its obligations in the EU integration process well and will continue to align its positions to those of the EU, says Serbia’s chief EU negotiator Tanja Miscevic.

“The gradual align- ment to the joint positions of the EU foreign and secu- rity policy will continue be- cause we have undertaken that responsibility with the signing and the coming into force of the Stabilisation and Association Agree- ment. I have no doubt that we will become closer to those positions every day because EU membership is our strategic orientation, and we understand our obli- gations in the EU integra- tion process well,” Misce- vic said on Monday’s issue of Vecernje novosti.

Serbia is complete- ly ready for the opening of Chapter 32 on financial control, for which it has the support of all EU member states except Germany, which wants Chapter 35 — the normalization of ties between Belgrade and Pris- tina — to be one of the first chapters opened, she said.

Asked if the opening of the chapter is condition- al on consenting to Kosovo being given a seat in the UN and signing a peace agreement with Pristina, Miscevic responded that the condition is the imple- mentation of the Belgrade Agreement and that there is no mention whatsoever of Kosovo’s membership in the UN, and added that it would be not possible to request that from Serbia.

“The obligation from the entire process, under the Negotiation frame-work, is an agreement on comprehensive normali- sation, not a peace agree- ment,” she noted.

Miscevic said that, immediately after the for- mation of the government, Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic expressed readiness for dialogue with Pristina at the highest political lev- el, but that the negotiations came to a standstill due to a government crisis in the province, and that not a single round of negotiations has been held since March.

“Serbia’s chief EU ne- gotiator said that she hopes that the first stage of the negotiation process will be complete in half a year.

“The fact that, with most chapters, we know where we stand and what we need to do next is very important for us, and we have clear negotiation strategies,” Miscevic said.

Tanjug

The Alexander Nevsky submarine

Serbia’s chief EU negotiator Tanja Miscevic. — Tanjug

Justice for Mike Brown

Protesters demonstrate after the decision by a Missouri grand jury not to indict a Ferguson white police officer in the fatal shooting of unarmed black teenager Michael Brown, in front of the White House in Washington on 24 Nov, 2014.

Reuters

Global New Light of Myanmar

WORLD
INVITATION FOR TENDER

This is an announcement/invitation to tender for the supply of the following items:
1,500 bags 50 kg bags (75 MT) of Urea fertilizer
1,500 bag (75 MT) of compound fertilizer (16-18-13s)

Conditions: Payment for 625 bags (31 MT) of the above compound fertilizer order will be paid upon delivery; the remaining items are to be provided on credit at an interest rate of 1.5% a month.

The deadline for submission of tenders is the 10th December 2014.

For further detailed information, list of villages, quantities to be supplied per village, and the tender forms, please contact the Welthungerhilfe Office at:
Welthungerhilfe
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Hlaing Tha Yar, Yangon
Tel/Fax: 01687416
Email: noomkhamyan@gmail.com

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WEATHER REPORT

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 26th November, 2014: Isolated light rain or thundershowers are likely in Tanintharyi Region and weather will be partly cloudy in Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions, Kayin and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters.
OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of continuation of light rain or thundershowers extreme in the Southern Myanmar areas.

Colombia rebel chief says peace talks suspension destroyed confidence

BOGOTA, 25 Nov — Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos “destroyed” confidence in the peace process by suspending talks and violated the terms of an agreement that brought the rebels to the negotiating table, FARC guerrilla leader Rodrigo Londono said.

Londono, known by his nom de guerre Timochenko, said in a statement published on Monday that Santos had “overturned the board game” when he halted talks last week and breached terms that allowed the negotiations to start in 2012.

The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) captured army General Ruben Darío Alzate and two others on 16 November, a move that outraged Santos and prompted him to call off talks until the three are released.

The group had taken two soldiers captive the previous week.

While the rebels have agreed to free the hostages, talks may be difficult to restart without “diverse considerations,” Londono said in a statement dated Saturday and signed from the mountains of Colombia, without giving details.

“The president, with his suspension, overturned the board game we were playing and destroyed confidence,” said Londono, who has made secret trips to Cuba to meet his negotiating team. “Ordering the suspension of the process violates in flagrant form not only his own rhetoric, but also the terms of the general agreement.”

Government and Marxist FARC representatives in Havana are following a general agreement that sets out negotiation rules to end the war that has killed over 200,000 people since it began in 1964.

The five-point agenda was meant to be negotiated without interruptions, said Londono.

The FARC said it would release Alzate along with a lawyer and soldier taken hostage as they left a boat in the poor, crime-ridden coastal region of Choco.

Two soldiers seized in eastern Arauca province are expected to be freed on Tuesday.

Alzate is the high-ranking military hostage ever taken by the FARC.

The suspension of talks is the most serious setback to peace efforts after months of complex discussions resulted in partial accords on three out of the five agenda items. While the rebels’ decision to free the captives may sideswipe critics of the peace process who say they are not serious about ending the war, the FARC has not yet said when Alzate will be freed.

The group has in the past drawn out the release of high-profile captives as media attention keeps it in headlines at home and abroad.—Reuters

At least 10 killed in Cairo building collapse

CAIRO, 25 Nov — An eight-floor residential building collapsed overnight in Cairo, killing at least 10 people and injuring seven others, security sources said on Tuesday.

The sources said the casualty figure was expected to rise as emergency response crews worked to remove trapped residents from the rubble in a northeast district of the capital. It was not immediately clear what caused the structure to buckle, but such incidents are not uncommon in Egyptian cities where many new apartment buildings are put up in violation of safety standards and old ones are routinely neglected. A civil protection official told the state news agency four nearby buildings had been evacuated.—Reuters

Obama meets with four US Nobel Prize laureates

WASHINGTON, 25 Nov — US President Barack Obama met with four of the winners of this year’s Nobel prizes on Monday, and pledged to boost government aid in the field of scientific research.

The event at the White House was not open to the press but Japanese-born scientist Shuji Nakamura, who won the Nobel Prize in Physics, told reporters Obama had said he understood the significance of Nakamura’s development of energy-efficient blue light-emitting diodes.

The other participants were Eric Betzig of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and William Moerner of Stanford University, who both won the Nobel Prize for Chemistry, and John O’Keefe of University College London, who won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. Both Nakamura and O’Keefe have US nationality. During the meeting Obama underscored his administration’s “commitment to science” and highlighted the “strength of the American scientific community,” according to the White House.

The four laureates delivered lectures at an event at the Swedish Embassy in Washington the same day. Organizations in Sweden award Nobel prizes, except for the peace prize which is awarded by a Norwegian committee.

Shuji Nakamura, professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara, delivers a lecture at the Embassy of Sweden in Washington on 24 Nov, 2014.

Kyodo News
‘Horrible Bosses 2’ reunites goofball trio for kidnapping comedy

Cast members Jason Bateman (L), Charlie Day (C) and Jason Sudeikis of the film "Horrible Bosses 2" pose for a portrait during a photo call in Beverly Hills, California on 10 Nov, 2014. REUTERS

Los Angeles, 25 Nov — After an unsuccessful attempt to murder their “Horrible Bosses” in the 2011 hit comedy, goofball buddies Nick, Kurt and Dale reunite in a sequel deciding to go into business for themselves and eliminate the need for managers. Or so they think.

“Horrible Bosses 2,” out in US theatres on Wednesday, sees Jason Bateman, Charlie Day and Jason Sudeikis as three hapless best friends who start a business buoyed by a large order placed by billionaire entrepreneur Bert Hanson, played by Oscar-winner Christoph Waltz.

“In this movie, it’s about the 1 percent versus 99 percent,” Sudeikis said in an interview. When Bert manipulates the guys to bankrupt their new business, Nick, Kurt and Dale decide to kidnap Bert’s charming-yet-crazy son Rex, played by Chris Pine. Naturally, things go awry quickly for the trio.

Cue an elaborate ransom plan, car chases with Jamie Foxx and raunchy scenes with a sex-addicted dentist, played by Jennifer Aniston, as the guys attempt to get their lives back and indulge their darkest desires.

Aniston, who swaps her usual girl-next-door character to strip down and play the saucy Dr. Julianna Harris once again in her first-ever sequel, said she enjoyed reprising the role of the unapologetic, overconfident dentist.

“If it’s known a fact that sequels can be tricky, they can go pretty downhill, and we really didn’t want that to happen because we love this so much,” Aniston said.

“I love this is... being as outrageous as possible,” she said, adding that the film plays into the raunchy “hard R-rated” comedies that are proving successful with current audiences.

The Time Warner Inc-owned Warner Bros’ film opens ahead of the US Thanksgiving holiday weekend and is projected to gross $28 million in US theatres in its opening weekend.

The earlier “Horrible Bosses” grossed $209 million at the worldwide box office, according to BoxOffice.com, as theatre-goers embraced its tongue-in-cheek take on workplace revenge.—Reuters

Actress Rachel McAdams added to HBO’s ‘True Detective’ cast

Actress Rachel McAdams arrives at the Metropolitan Museum of Art Costume Institute Gala benefiting the opening of “Charles James: Beyond Fashion” in Upper Manhattan, New York, on 5 May, 2014. REUTERS

Los Angeles, 25 Nov — Rachel McAdams, Taylor Kitsch and Kelly Reilly have joined the cast for the second season of HBO crime thriller “True Detective,” the premium cable channel said on Monday.

The three will join two previously announced stars, Irish actor Colin Farrell and US actor Vince Vaughn, in the eight-part miniseries, which was a big hit for HBO earlier this year and received five Primetime Emmy awards.

The second season is in production in California and revolves around three police officers, a career criminal and a murderer, HBO said.

Farrell, 38, will play compromised detective Ray Velcoro, and Vaughn, 44, will star as criminal mastermind Frank Semyon in the series from writer Nic Pizzolatto.

HBO said McAdams, the 36-year-old “Midnight in Paris” actress, would play an uncompromising and ethical sheriff, while “Lone Survivor” actor Kitsch, 33, will play a California Highway Patrol motorcycle officer. Reilly, a 37-year-old entrepreneur Bert Hanson, played by Oscar-winner Christoph Waltz.

“I think it’s a known fact that sequels can be tricky, they can go pretty downhill, and we really didn’t want that to happen because we love this so much,” Aniston said.

“I love this is... being as outrageous as possible,” she said, adding that the film plays into the raunchy “hard R-rated” comedies that are proving successful with current audiences.

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Selena Gomez gets emotional during AMA’s performance


The 22-year-old ‘Come and Get It’ hitmaker emotionally delivered the lyrics of her song before a star-studded audience consisting of her best friend Taylor Swift, host Pitbull, Jennifer Lopez, among others, reported Us magazine.

The audio of Gomez’s teary, pre-recorded phone conversation, as previously heard in the music video of the single, played as Gomez closed her eyes in preparation for her solo.

“When I was on stage and I was thinking of... I know him though, and I know that I know his heart, and I know what he wouldn’t do to hurt me,” she was heard saying in the audio.

Gomez’s performance was complete with raw hand emotions as she softly crooned lyrics like “Hand over heart, I’m praying, that I’m gonna make it out alive.”

The singer’s dramatic live performance also included equally emotional visuals thanks to a state-of-the-art screen behind her projecting a giant moon, lightning storm, a weeping woman, and wings.

As the performance ended, Gomez’s eyes welled up with tears and she began crying.—PTI

I like playing vamp: Nicole Kidman

Nicole Kidman: I was the kid that loved the wicked witch in The Wizard Of Oz.—PTI

Los Angeles, 25 Nov — Oscar-winning actress Nicole Kidman, who stars as a villain in the new Paddington Bear film, says she is happy to play “the bad girl”. The 47-year-old Australian actress said she loved the witch in 1993 American musical fantasy film The Wizard Of Oz, reported Sky News.

“Well obviously, I was the kid that loved the wicked witch in The Wizard Of Oz, so of course I grew up to be the girl who wants to play the villain in a movie. I’m always happy to play the bad girl. I just get to have fun, and it’s obviously all done with a smile,” Kidman said.

Paddington’, directed by Paul King, sees Kidman as Millicent, a sinister taxidermist with her eye on the beloved animal. The film opens on Christmas day, 28 November.—PTI

Idris Elba to play villain in ‘X-Men: Apocalypse’?

Los Angeles, 25 Nov — Actor Idris Elba’s name is doing the round as the main villain in ‘X-Men: Apocalypse’, whose production is set to begin early next year. Elba is said to be one of the three actors being considered for the negative role in the Bryan Singer movie, reported Ace Showbiz.

Tom Hardy’s name had earlier cropped up but the actor is apparently no longer in the race. If Elba’s name is finalised, he will step in the role of Apocalypse, an ancient and immortal mutant. ‘X-Men: Apocalypse’ will be released in summer 2016. Actors are sought for the roles of young Cyclops and Jean Grey.

Taylor Swift strips at American Music Awards


Swift, 24, dressed in an ankle length rose golden frock began singing ‘Black Space’, by sitting at a long dining room table with a man, reported the Daily Mirror.

Towards the end of the performance Swift ripped the frock off to show a mini dress.
Swiss museum to accept part of Nazi loot art trove

BERLIN, 25 Nov — A Swiss museum has reluctantly agreed to accept part of a billion-euro art bequest from the late Cornelius Gurlitt, a German recluse whose secret collection included masterpieces looted from their Jewish owners by the Nazis.

Christoph Schaeublin of the Bern Art Museum (KMB) announced in Berlin it would accept all artworks bequeathed by Gurlitt which experts had ascertained had not been stolen by the Nazis. Others would remain with German authorities while their provenance is checked.

“This wasn’t an easy decision for us and there were no shunts of joy,” Schaeublin said, admitting that the museum had to be persuaded by German Culture Minister Monika Gruetters.

“Any works of art deemed to be looted art or even considered likely to have been looted art will never darken the doorstep of the KMB,” said Schaeublin, president of the museum’s board of trustees. He said they would “not even touch Swiss territory”.

When Gurlitt died in May aged 81, the museum discovered it had been named sole heir to his collection of over 1,200 works. They had been hidden for years after Gurlitt stumbled upon them in a raid on his Munich flat in 2012 after he was caught with a large amount of cash on a train from Zurich.

The improbable treasure trove of Modernist and Renaissance masterpieces, which includes works by Chagall and Picasso, was assembled by his father Hildebrand Gurlitt, a dealer charged with selling what Adolf Hitler dismissed as “degenerate” art.

“We will do everything in our powers to return art looted by the Nazis to the descendants of the Nazi regime’s victims as quickly as possible,” said Gruetters.

A government task force has identified three pieces indisputably taken by the Nazis which would be returned — by Max Liebermann, Henri Matisse and Carl Spitzweg.

The World Jewish Congress welcomed the agreement. “In my view, it is the right decision by Bern to refuse the toxic part of this collection,” WJC President Ronald Lauder said.

“I thank Germany for living up to its responsibility by ensuring that all issues relating to the looted art of the Gurlitt collection will be settled in Germany, and in Germany only,” he said in a statement.

Chris Marinello of the firm Art Recovery, representing the Rosenberg family which claims ownership of “Sitting Woman” by Matisse, said the return of looted art would now be sped up.

“We are looking forward to the expedient return of the Matisse and all the looted works to their rightful owners in the coming weeks,” Marinello told Reuters by phone from London.

The facade of the Bern Art Museum is seen in the Swiss capital of Bern on 24 Nov, 2014.— Reuters

Pele hospitalised for urinary infection

Brasilia, 25 Nov — Three-times World Cup winner Pele was taken to hospital on Monday with an urinary infection, local media have reported, the second time this month he has been admitted for medical treatment.

The 74-year old former Brazil player was admitted to the Albert Einstein Hospital in Sao Paulo but officials there released only a brief statement with no details about his condition.

Widebly regarded as the finest player to play the game, he had an operation to remove kidney stones earlier this month.

He won three World Cups as a player and was named “Football Player of the Century” by world soccer body FIFA, “Athlete of the Century” by the International Olympic Committee, and a “national treasure” by Brazil’s government. — Reuters

Digital tsar urges Europe not to weaken net neutrality rules

BRUSSELS, 25 Nov — The European Union’s new digital tsar voiced alarm on Monday at the efforts of some EU governments to water down equal Internet access, just as EU plans for “net neutrality” were being echoed in the United States by Barack Obama.

Andrus Ansip, the former Estonian prime minister who this month became Vice President for the Digital Single Market in the European Commission, told Reuters he was “really worried” by new proposals from states to let Internet service providers offer, to some degree, different data speeds to different customers.

“All the traffic has to be treated equally,” Ansip said in an interview. “The Internet has to stay open for everybody.”

The president of the United States is using our wording — the wording of the European Parliament in the United States of America,” he said. Draft legislation in the United States seeks to prevent content providers — big video streaming services, for example — from buying faster delivery than smaller competitors can afford.

Obama made a rare intervention on the issue two weeks ago when he said that no company should be stuck in the “slow lane” because it could not pay for faster access. That sentiment is central to proposals from the EU Commission that were strengthened by EU lawmakers in April.

Ansip’s warning was directed at a proposal from Italy, which holds the rotating chair of EU inter-government meetings, to give network providers some leeway to offer different speeds.

The growth of data-hungry services such as Netflix, Skype and Spotify has strained the capacity of Internet service providers. They now say they should be allowed to give priority to some traffic over others.

“It is allowed to have higher speeds — but not at the expense of others,” said Ansip, who championed high-tech development during his nine years as prime minister, turning ex-Soviet Estonia into a model for a connected economy. “Access to the Internet has to be one of those basic rights.”

Ansip also said big digital service providers such as Google, which is facing a Commission anti-trust inquiry — needed to be supervised to ensure they did not abuse dominant market positions.


Pele waves next to a public telephone booth with an image of his face painted by Brazilian artist Sipros after he autographed it, during the Call Parade art exhibition in Sao Paulo on 8 May, 2014.— Reuters

Brazilian soccer legend Pele was taken to hospital in Sao Paulo with an urinary infection, local media have reported, the second time this month he has been admitted for medical treatment.

The 74-year old former Brazil player was admitted to the Albert Einstein Hospital in Sao Paulo but officials there released only a brief statement with no details about his condition.

Widebly regarded as the finest player to play the game, he had an operation to remove kidney stones earlier this month.

He won three World Cups as a player and was named “Football Player of the Century” by world soccer body FIFA, “Athlete of the Century” by the International Olympic Committee, and a “national treasure” by Brazil’s government. — Reuters

MITV MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(26-11-2014, Wednesday) 6:00 am * Paritta by venerable Mingun Sayadaw
6:30 am * Physical Exercise
7:00 am * News / Weather Report
7:20 am * Myanmar Language
8:00 am * News / International News
8:30 am * TV Drama Series
9:00 am * News / International News
9:45 am * Documentary
10:00 am * TV Drama Series
11:45 am * Approaching Science Discovery World
12:00 noon * News / International News / Weather Report
12:30 pm * Hlutaw Image
2:45 pm * Gita Mahar (Mono Classical Songs)
3:15 pm * TV Drama Series
4:45 pm * University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) — First Year (Myanmar)
5:00 pm * News
6:15 pm * 2014 Suzuki Cup (Live) (Myanmar & Singapore)
8:30 pm * News / International News / Weather Report
Hlutaw Image
People Talks
Fine Arts-Boson of Dramatic Performance

MYANMAR TV

(26-11-2014 07:00 am – 27-11-14 07:00 am) MST
* Local News
* Myanmar Traditional Wicker Ball (Chinlone)
* World News
* Great Minds of Myanmar (Anthropologist U Kyaw Win)
* Local News
* Kyakhteeyoe: My Father The Porter
* World News
* Applied Myanmar Traditional Martial Art-(Part-1)
* Local News
* Entrepreneur: Chaw Khin Khin
* World News
* Colonial Buildings and a New Yangon
* Local News
* Image of The Monks
* World News
* In The Studio “Ying”
* Local News
* Marketable Goods- (Straw painting)
* World News
* Green Grocer
* Local News
* Kyakhteeyoe: Mountain Drivers
* World News
* Will you feed the pigeons
* Local News
* Choral Dance By Female Dancers
* World News
* Myanmar Masterclass: Fantastic Art
* Local News
* Food Trip (Episode 10) (Part -2)
* World News
* In the Studio “Gonn Shain Wint Htal”

Wednesday, 26 November, 2014 | 15
LONDON, 25 Nov — Nathaniel Clyne’s late equalizer earned high-flying Southampton a 1-1 draw at Aston Villa on Monday, denying Paul Lambert a much-needed victory in his 100th match in charge of the Premier League strugglers.

England international Clyne’s rasping strike for second-placed Saints after 81 minutes left 16th-placed Villa still searching for their first win since 13 September.

Gabriel Agbonlahor benefited from Southampton goalkeeper Fraser Forster’s rush of blood to the head to fire Villa ahead after 29 minutes, the stopper racing out of his box to clear, only for Agbonlahor to beat him to the ball. The striker kept his composure to slot home Villa’s sixth league goal of the season, the lowest in England’s top four divisions.

“It’s a good point gained against a team who had swept everything in front of them aside and if you look at the money spent by these sides it’s a big difference from us,” Lambert told the BBC.

“We’ve got six first team players out at the minute so I can’t criticise the team.” Southampton appeared out of sorts despite a confident opening, their best moment coming when Brad Guzan was forced to make a sprawling save to deny Sadio Mane, tipping his low shot around the post. But the visitors plugged away after the break and took home a point when Ryan Bertrand pulled the ball back for fellow full back Clyne, who made his England debut but earlier this month, to smash past Guzan from 12 metres. Ronald Koeman’s Southampton side, who had risen to second on the back of eight wins from nine games, are six points behind leaders Chelsea after 12 matches.

“I didn’t come for one point tonight. I thought we had a team good enough to win but after conceding it was very difficult,” the Dutchman said.

“We didn’t create as many chances as we should have and we missed some fitness and some quality, it was a misunderstanding defensively that made it more difficult for us.”

Southampton now face a tough test of their credentials to mount a sustained challenge for a top four place with their next three games against Manchester City, on Sunday, then Arsenal and Manchester United.

Argentina face holders Uruguay in Copa America

SANTIAGO, 25 Nov — World Cup runners-up Argentina face holders Uruguay, who knocked them out of their home tournament four years ago, and Brazil will meet Colombia in a World Cup rematch in the group phase at the 2015 Copa America.

Hosts Chile, looking to win the world’s oldest active international tournament for the first time, were handed an easier draw in the Chilean Pacific coast resort of Vina del Mar on Monday. Lionel Messi’s Argentina, top seeds in Group B in which they will also meet Paraguay and Jamaica, will be looking to avenge their upset defeat by Uruguay on penalties in the quarter-finals at the 2011 event they staged.

Brazil, with the gifted Neymar as captain, will be looking to recover from their disappointing World Cup as hosts this year under new coach Tite. They also face Peru and Venezuela in Group C.

The talented Chile side spearheaded by Alexis Sanchez, who also face Ecuador and Bolivia in Group A, will fancy their chances of ending their wait for a first crown. “It’s hard to see a (title) candidate today... Let’s hope that in this Copa America recent history, which has turned out to be complicated for the host team, is reversed,” Chile coach Jorge Sampaoli told reporters.

Uruguay, with a record 15 titles, will miss striker Luis Suarez at the 11 June - 4 July tournament while he continues to serve his nine-match FIFA ban for competitive internationals by biting Italy’s Giorgio Chiellini at the World Cup.

Suarez contributed four goals including one in the 3-0 win over Paraguay in the 2011 final in Buenos Aires as Uruguay won the tournament that also saw 2004 and 2007 champions Brazil knocked out in the quarter-finals.

Chile and Colombia hope to continue their run of good form, which was evident at the World Cup finals in Brazil, with the hosts narrowly beating both in successive knockout rounds.

Rio 2016 mascots combine Brazilian fauna, flora

RIO DE JANEIRO, 25 Nov — The official mascots for the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games are hybrids of Brazil’s native fauna and flora, the local organizing committee has announced.

The Olympic mascot is a combination of a cat, monkey and bird while its Paralympic counterpart is a mix of plants found in Brazilian forests, according to rio2016.com.

“The mascots represent the diversity of our culture, of our people.” Rio 2016 brand director Beth Lula said on the organizing committee’s official website. “They represent our joy, our way of being. Both of them are magical creatures with super powers and relate naturally with the young audience, who we want to engage with our event so much.” The general public will have until 14 December to vote on the three sets of names for the emblematic figures. The options are Oba and Eba; Tiba Tuque and Esquidim; and Vinicius and Tom. Oba and Eba are Brazilian slang words to express surprise, with connotations of happiness and celebration. Tiba Tuque and Esquidim are indigenous words expressing a desire to dance while Vinicius and Tom are a reference to legendary Bossa Nova musicians Vinicius de Moraes and Tom Jobim.