Myanmar, Vietnam to forge bilateral ties

NAY PYI TAW, 11 March — President U Thein Sein and visiting Vice President Madam Nguyen Thi Doan of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam discussed promotion of bilateral ties here Wednesday.

The two sides held talks on opportunities of investments in defence and security measures, cooperation in international and regional affairs, banking, telecom, agriculture, livestock and tourism industry.

The meeting was attended by Union Ministers U Winna Maung Lwin, U Soe Than, U Myint Hlaing, U Zeyar Aung, Dr Kan Zaw and U Ye Htut, as well as Vietnamese ambassador to Myanmar Pham Thanh Dung.

Year 2014 is the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Myanmar and Vietnam, reaching US$ 239.28 million of bilateral trade volume—Myanmar’s export volume is $56.05 million and that of Vietnam is $183.23 million—in the present fiscal year which will end this month.

President U Thein Sein, as well as a prime minister of previous government, has made four visits to Vietnam, including one presidential visit in March 2012.

Vietnamese President Truong Tan Sang also visited in November 2012.

Myanmar UV index to hit dangerous levels: expert

The UV index is forecast to reach 12.6 in Yangon Region, 10.9 in Mandalay Region, 12 in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area and Magway Region, 12.5 in Bago Region, 12.5 in Ayeyawady Region, 12.9 in Taninthayi Region, 12.7 in Kayah State, 12.4 in Kayin State, 12.3 in Mon State, 11.6 in Rakhine State, 12.3 in Shan State (South) and 12.2 in Shan State (East).

UV indexes between 10 and 11 can be harmful and pose several health risks, authorities have warned.

The UV index is an international standard measurement of the strength of ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun at a particular place and time.

Small amounts of UV radiation can be beneficial. It is essential for the production of Vitamin D, and under medical supervision can be used to treat a number of diseases, including rickets, psoriasis, eczema and jaundice, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

However, at high levels, UV radiation can damage the skin and eyes over time. Worldwide, some 12 to 15 million people become blind annually from cataracts, of which up to 20 percent may be caused or exacerbated by sun exposure, according to the WHO.

Over the past two years, Yangon has seen summertime UV readings nearly reach 13.

Summer in Myanmar lasts from March to May.

Myanmar Pham Thanh Dung.

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Summer in Myanmar lasts from March to May.

Monks from Letpadan protest allowed to return to monasteries as release of some students underway

NAY PYI TAW, 11 March—Members of Sangha Nakaya Committee in Letpadan Township and authorities interrogated ten monks who participated in the column of student protesters in Letpadan on 10 March.

According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, they vowed to stay away from party politics, social affairs and student protests in the future and to abide by the instructions of the State Sangha Nayaka Committee, and they were allowed to return their monasteries.

Similarly, the police are interrogating 127 detainees including 107 males and 20 females rounded up.

Correction

Please read Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Ohn Than instead of U Tun Than in the second paragraph of fourth column in the byline under the headline of “Seed supply shortfall prompts invitation to private investors” on the front page of this daily issued on 11-3-2015.—GNLM

Delhi Dialogue VII focuses on India-ASEAN business ties

NEW DELHI, 11 March—Delegates from India and ASEAN discussed the potential for increased economic integration Wednesday on the opening day of a meeting to strengthen relations between the 10-member (See page 9)
Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approves loan for MPF

Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Kyaw Zan Myint said that Myanmar Police Force is responsible for the rule of law, community tranquility, prevention of drug trafficking, and public services and it is now taking more comprehensive measures for life security, stability and the rule of law.

As a result, it has developed more police but it faces with 69.25 percent shortage of vehicles and the Yuan 246 million loan will enable the police to buy required vehicles and vessels. The deputy minister also told the session that the vehicles and vessel will be purchased through tender in a transparent manner. The session approved the loan from China’s Exim Bank for Myanmar Police Force.

Then, representatives discussed the union revenue bill. At today’s session, two bills sent back with remarks by the president were approved by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and the bill committee reported its finding on bills amending the mercantile customs act and the inland customs act. — MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw

Government to reclaim about 39,000 acres of farmlands in 2015-16 FY

Nav Pyi Taw, 11 March — Loan from EXIM Bank of China for Myanmar Police Force was discussed at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session in Nav Pyi Taw on Wednesday.

Chairman of the committee U Mya Win replied that corruption cases need firm evidences and information from investigation report to take action against the lawbreakers. It is not easy to enquire corruption cases at the law offices and courts under disguise of clients. Depending on the cases, investigation and taking action will be undertaken under the anti-corruption law.

U Than Myint of Wundwin Constituency asked about reclamation of mechanized farm plots and disbursement of long-term loans for reclamation of modern farmlands. Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Ohn Than explained that the government has reclaimed 34,376 acres of mechanized farmlands including 711 acres with the assistance of Japanese Institute for Irrigation and Drainage-JIID and Japan International Cooperation Agency-JICA and Korea International Cooperation Agency-KOICA from 2011-12 to 2014-15 fiscal year. In 2015-16 fiscal year, the government will spend its fund on 4,500 acres of farmland, loans from India on 30,400 acres of land and International Fund for Agricultural Development-INFAD on 4,000 acres of land. Moreover, 20,400 acres of farmlands will be reclaimed with the loan from India and 4,000 acres with IFAD in 2016-17 fiscal year. A plan is underway to reclaim 2,000 acres by spending loan from IFAD in 2017-18 fiscal year. Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank has no plan to disburse long-term loans to farmers for paying back it through installment.

Monks from Letpadan protest . . .

(From page 1) At Letpadan protest site in order to hand over real students who are studying at schools, colleges and universities to their parents. Authorities are contacting the parents of the students to hand over them properly based on empathy for their parents, leniency, and intention to allow them to continue their studies. However, action will be taken against those who committed criminal acts, instigate instability and lead the protests behind the scene.

About 16 students from Yadanabon University led by Chairman of All Burma Students' Federations, LEDN, and lead the protests behind the scene. However, action will be taken against those who committed criminal acts, instigate instability and lead the protests behind the scene. However, action will be taken against those who committed criminal acts, instigate instability and lead the protests behind the scene.

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

Myanmar banks connect to worldwide card network

Yangon, 11 March — Myanmar bank customers will soon be able to use debit card services worldwide following an agreement between the Myanmar Payment Union and major Japanese credit card company JCB.

MPU/JCB co-branded debit cards will be issued from this year, MPU CEO U Zaw Lin Htut said Wednesday at the signing of the master license agreement between the partner companies.

Under the agreement, MPU member banks will issue the co-branded cards linking to their customers’ savings accounts. The cards will be accepted through the JCB international network, which includes some 27 million merchants in 190 countries and territories.

“With the strong leadership of MPU in the financial industry, JCB promises to share its experiences and knowledge of the payment business to contribute to the healthy development of Myanmar’s payment industry,” said Mr. Kimihisa Imada, Deputy President of JCB International Co.

JCB launched its card business in Japan 1961 and began expanding worldwide in 1981. CEO U Zaw Lin Htut of MPU said the new cards using JCB’s chip technology will be released in three to six months.

“MPU card users who want to replace their cards with the new ones have to apply at their respective MPU member banks,” he added. Established in 2011, the MPU, the only electronic payment network in Myanmar, includes 21 banks and has about 1 million users. In his speech at the ceremony, Chairman U Mya Than of MPU said, “We hope that our partnership will introduce more attractive services and more customers will prefer using MPU-JCB co-branded cards not only domestically but also all over the world with JCB’s acceptance network.” —GNLM
Vice President U Nyan Tun receives Vietnamese counterpart

**Vice President U Nyan Tun receives Vietnamese counterpart**

A joint trade committee of Myanmar and Viet Nam, which was formed in 2012 with annual meeting, has been scheduled to hold talks on bilateral trade this month in Nay Pyi Taw.

U Nyan Tun invited Vietnamese investments in livestock, agriculture, forestry, trade, telecom, transportation, banking, hotel, mining and energy sectors. The meeting was attended by vice presidents U Thant Kyaw, U Khin Zaw, U Khin Maung Aye, U Zin Yaw, U Aung Htoo, Dr Pwint Hsan, Dr Lin Aung, Daw Lei Lei Thein and Dr Sai Kyaw Ohn, as well as Vietnamese ambassador to Myanmar Pham Thanh Dung.

In the evening Vice President U Nyan Thun hosted a state dinner for Vietnamese Vice President Madam Nguyen Thi Doan at Kempinski Hotel in the evening.

**Political parties urged to register not later than 30 April**

**Refresher course on foreign economic relations opened in Nay Pyi Taw**

**Union FM meets Saudi Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs**

**Appointment of Ambassador agreed on**

**Union FM meets Saudi Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs**

**Appointment of Ambassador agreed on**

Nay Pyi Taw, 11 March—The Union Election Commission issued a press release dated 11-3-2015 that the commission allows establishment of political parties by at least 15 persons under the Section 3 of the Political Parties Registration Law.

There remains over seven months to the general elections to be held in late October or early November 2015. Those wishing to set up political parties are to apply at the UEC, not later than 30 April 2015, so as to establish and register the political parties in time and to carry out electoral tasks and canvassing before the elections.

Economic counselors play a crucial role in improving the lives of people, promoting human resources and poverty alleviation in the country, he added.

Also present at the opening ceremony were Union ministers U Soe Thein, U Win Myint and U Win Shein, the deputy minister, the directors-general and high-ranking officials.

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Thousands of students sit matriculation exam in Tatkon Tsp

TATKON, 11 March — Students across the country began sitting the national matriculation examination on Wednesday, with local authorities arranging traffic safety and security measures, as well as stable electricity supply, for the benefit of those taking the tests.

Tatkon Township in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area has opened five exam centres expected to accommodate a total of 3,150 students. —Zaw Min Naing (IPRD)

Hluttaw fund contributes to development of township

MYINGYAN, 11 March — Myanmar’s national assembly, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, allotted K100 million to Myingna Township, Mandalay Region, for public works projects aimed at narrowing the development gap between rural and urban areas.

The funds were spent on construction of bridges, culverts, earthen roads and water supply facilities.

The works were inspected by U Win Myint, a representative of the lower house, the Pyithu Hluttaw, who is also secretary of the Pyithu Hluttaw Banking and Monetary Development Committee, as well as Township Administrator U Tun Thein Aung and officials. —Zaw Min Naing (Myingyan)

Myawady Township to implement literacy campaign in 2015 summer

MYAWADY, 11 March — Myawady Township authorities outlined the progress of the summer 2015 literacy campaign at the coordination meeting on 9 March, with Director U Aung Maung of Kayin State Education Office in attendance.

Myawady District management committee secretary U Aung Win Thein explained strategies to raise the literacy rate across the nation, including Myawady Township.

The township authorities laid down a plan to implement the summer literacy campaign in 2015 with participation of 1,490 school students and 134 teachers, together with 150 university students, to conduct 142 teaching sessions in the township.

The campaign took place from 1 April to 15 May last year across the nation. According to government statistics, Myanmar’s literacy rate in 2013 was over 95.13 percent. Myanmar Education Research Bureau is projecting the figure will further rise following successive literacy campaigns. —Hein Lin Aung (IPRD)
Residents welcome full-time electricity supply

NAY PYI TAW, 11 March — Residents of Yay-Ohsin village, Pobbathiri Township, welcomed the arrival of non-stop electricity supply on 11 March. Nay Pyi Taw Council oversaw the works to connect the village to the electricity grid in cooperation with Electricity Supply Enterprise.

Council member U Than Htay ceremonially switched on the control of power supply for the village, urging locals to use electricity efficiently.

While in Pobbathiri Township, the council member briefed locals on other development projects.

Tun Tun Win (Pyinmana)

Navy columns seize teaks in Kachin, Shan States

NAY PYI TAW, 11 March — Military columns confiscated teaks, vehicles and sawmills in Kachin and Shan states from February 15 to March 10. Defence Services personnel are taking part in control of illegal trafficking in drug and natural resources in cooperation with other departmental officials.

One Chinese was also arrested in the operations, and 24 vehicles, seven sawmills, seven generators, 308.671 tons of teak, 1,218 teak logs, 8 tons of Padauk, 30 logs of Padauk and 9,222 tons of Tamalan timber were confiscated.

During operations in Mabein Township of Shan State, 802 logs of teak (333,828 tons), two logs of Padauk (1,916 tons) and 8 logs of Tamalan (0,5552 tons) were seized.

Other confiscations in Bhamo Township of Kachin State and Mansi Township and Mabein Township of Shan State were one Chinese, 24 vehicles, one sawmill, 14 generators, 642.499 tons of teak, 1,208 logs of teak, 9.6 tons of Padauk, 30 logs of Padauk and 9.77 tons of Tamalan timber.

The operations of military columns were aimed at controlling illegal arm procurement of ethnic groups which trafficked natural resources to neighbouring country.—Myawady

Wushu training course proves popular with students in Mandalay

MANDALAY, 11 March — More than 200 students from the Mandalay area have this month begun a Wushu training course at Bahtoo Stadium in Chanayethazan Township, Mandalay.

The course in the sport derived from Chinese martial arts was offered by a wushu sub-committee under the Mandalay Region Sports and Physical Education Committee.

“In the basic Wushu course, youths take training in morning and afternoon sessions,” secretary U Kyaw Aye of the Wushu subcommittee said.

The one-month training course runs until early April, with a second-round course planned for 20 April to 18 May.—Tun Maung (Mandalay)

Military columns seize teak logs, sawmills, vehicles and pieces of sawn timber in military operations.—Myawady

Anti-drug campaign involves education, crop eradication

MYAWADY, 11 March — The government has been destroying illegal poppy crops in remote parts of the country, as well as providing education on the dangers of narcotics, as part of its nationwide anti-drug campaign. On Tuesday morning, residents from Mepale village in Myawady Township heard about the dangers of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, including health risks, from Police Major Aung Si of No 32 Anti-Drug Squad, Police Captain Kan Win of Anti-Human Trafficking Squad and departmental officials.

Hein Lin Aung (IPRD)

Surprise inspections target fuel, storage stations

Mandalay, 11 March — Officials of Myanmar Petroleum Product Enterprise under the Ministry of Energy have been checking private fuel stations and storage stations in Mandalay Region to confirm the proper quality and quantity of fuel is being sold to customers.

A combined team comprising officials of Mandalay Region Petroleum Product Enterprise, the Fire Services Department and the General Administration Department also conducted fire safety checks at the stations.

“Fuel stations that sell low-quality fuel will have their sales licenses revoked.” Managing Director U Thant Sin of MPPE said, adding that low-quality fuel can damage vehicles.

The team took samples of fuel from stations to the laboratory of the ministry for analysis.

Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)
Parents of former Thai princess jailed for two-and-a-half years

BANGKOK, 11 March — The parents of a former Thai princess were jailed for two-and-a-half years on Wednesday for defaming the monarchy following investigations into the actions of several family members accused of corruption and misusing their royal connection.

Srirasmi Suwadee, formerly known as Princess Srirasmi, is divorced from Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn. His parents, Aripon and Wananthane Suwadee, were found guilty of violating Article 112 of Thailand’s criminal code which says anyone who “defames, insults or threatens the king, the queen, the heir-apparent or the regent” will be punished with up to 15 years in prison.

“Both accused are guilty of royal defamation and are sentenced to 5 years in prison reduced to 2 years and six months,” a judge said in delivering the verdict.

Last month they confessed to charges including misuse of their royal connection that led to a former neighbor being jailed on a bogus fraud charge 12 years ago.

Last year several of Srirasmi’s relatives were arrested in a purge of officials allegedly involved in corruption. Some were also accused of defaming the monarchy.

Srirasmi relinquished her royal title in December following months of speculation over her future.

The imprisonment of her relatives comes at a sensitive time in Thailand, including heightened anxiety over the health of the revered but ailing King Bhumibol Adulyadej, 87, and nervousness about what a royal succession might bring.

Thailand’s monarchy is protected by some of the world’s strictest lese-majeste laws.

Rights groups say lese-majeste prosecutions have spiked since the army seized power in May, as the military burnishes its reputation as the defender of the royal family. — Reuters

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Court summons India’s ex-PM Singh in coal corruption case

NEW DELHI, 11 March — An Indian court summoned former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Wednesday over accusations of criminality and corruption over the award of a coal field during his term, in a blow to the Gandhi dynasty that ruled India until last year.

A special court under the Central Bureau of Investigation summoned the former prime minister along with billionaire Kumar Mangalam Birla and another official to appear on 8 April, a source at the agency said.

“I am upset, but this is a part of life,” the mild-mannered 82-year-old told reporters at parliament, where he is a member of the upper house. Singh has not been charged with any crime but is being investigated for criminal breach of trust, criminal conspiracy, cheating and corruption, a lawyer for the prosecution said on condition of anonymity.

The maximum sentence for criminal breach of trust is life imprisonment.

Singh is a respected economist credited with pushing through 1990s free-market reforms that unshackled India from its socialist past. Recognisable in his trademark blue turban, glasses and beard, he played a prominent role managing the 2008 financial crisis.

Singh ruled as prime minister with a coalition led by the Gandhi dynasty’s Congress party. His second term was mired in corruption scandals and accusations that party leader Sonia Gandhi called the shoes in his government, tarnishing his image.

“We have done nothing wrong and we have nothing to hide,” said Ambika Soni, a senior Congress leader close to the Gandhis. The Gandhi lineages stretches back to India’s first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. The family ruled for much of the period from independence in 1947. Most coal block awards made by Singh’s government, which ran India for a decade, were overturned late last year by the Supreme Court, which ruled the process illegal.

The case known as “Coalgate” came to light in 2012 after a government auditor said the exchequer had lost as much as $33 billion because of collusion between officials and private firms to depress the cost coal field awards.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government, which ousted the Singh administration last May, is now in the process of re-auctioning the fields in a process key to reducing India’s heavy dependence on coal imports.

Auctions of the first 32 blocks have brought in a projected $32 billion (21.23 billion pounds), Coal Secretary Anil Swarup told Reuters.

“In the UPA regime there was ... ad-hocism that prevailed, favouritism that prevailed,” said OVL Narasimha Rao, a spokesman for Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party, referring to the former ruling coalition. — Reuters

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Bangladesh police stood close by during blogger Avijit Roy attack

DHAKA, 11 March — The wife of an American blogger and critic of religious extremism who was hacked to death in Dhaka last month said that police stood nearby when the couple were attacked on a university campus in the Bangladeshi capital.

Avijit Roy, an engineer of Bangladeshi origin, was killed by machete-wielding assailants when returning from a book fair. His wife, Rafida Bonya Ahmed, suffered head injuries and lost a finger. “While Avijit and I were being ruthlessly attacked, the local police stood close by and did not act,” Rafida told Reuters.

“They delayed the government to “stop a legal culture of impunity, where writers can be killed without the killers being bought to trial”. Bangladesh’s anti-terrorism unit said last week it had arrested Farabi Shafir Rahman in connection with the attack. — Reuters

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Japan marks 4th anniv of deadly disaster

A girl in the northeastern Japan city of Ishinomaki prays on 11 March, 2015, for her friends killed in the deadly earthquake and tsunami that struck on the same day four years earlier. The disaster left more than 18,000 people dead or missing and triggered the continuing Fukushima nuclear crisis. — KYODO NEWS

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Singapore’s train service delayed as student’s leg got stuck

SINGAPORE, 11 March — Singapore’s train service was delayed again on Wednesday morning, after a female student’s leg got stuck between the train and platform.

A photo showing a female student sitting on the platform and her left leg stuck between the train and platform at North East Line’s Hougang station was seen on Singapore’s social media in the morning.

The incident, which happened at around 7:50am, led to service delay during the morning rush hour.

Until 9am, there were still large crowds of commuters at the line, Channel NewsAsia reported.

This follows a series of breakdown of train services over the last month. Just two days earlier, services along the Bukit Panjang LRT was suspended for 23 hours due to power trip and fire. It was not until 4:40 pm on Tuesday did train services of both directions resumed.

Singapore’s train operator SMRT said in a statement. SMRT had earlier pledged to do better on rail network reliability last week, after over five breakdowns were reported over the last month.

Singapore’s Land Transport Authority urged SMRT “to continue to put maximum effort and resources into this,” saying that such frequent service disruptions were “unacceptable.” — Xinhua
Survivor discusses experience of atomic-bombing after 70 years

OKAIA, 11 March — Toshie Irie, 83, said her experience about an atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945 as seen in this file photo taken in Kitahiroshima outside the western Japanese city on 21 Oct, 2014. This year marks the 70th anniversary of the US atomic-bombing of the city. — Kyodo News

Toshie Irie talks about her exposure to radiation from the atomic bombing dropped on Hiroshima in 1945 as seen in this file photo taken in Kitahiroshima outside the western Japanese city on 21 Oct, 2014. This year marks the 70th anniversary of the US atomic-bombing of the city. — Kyodo News

Senior students who had been working in an urban district under a student mobilization programme were severely wounded but managed to walk back to the school dormitory. Irie said she had kept awareness of the possibility at all time.

Irie said the sight of the yellow fluids running down their burned arms was unbearable for her. Unable to stand the horrors around her, she left the dormitory a few days later.

When she reached her home after walking for seven hours, she gave a sigh of relief but at the same time felt a strong sense of guilt at having left so many schoolmates behind.

Since the war, Irie had hesitated from disclosing her own exposure to radiation because prejudice against such people was rampant in those days, she said, noting that people believed disease from the atomic bombing was contagious. Irie said she had kept her exposure to radiation secret when she married, as marriage to atomic-bomb victim was considered impossible at that time.

When she became pregnant for the first time, she was gravely concerned about the possible effects on the baby’s health but had nobody to turn to for advice. About 30 years after the end of World War II, Irie applied for official designation as a surviving A-bomb victim to eligible for public financial support for medical treatment.

Meanwhile, her husband began to talk several years later about his experience following the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, including moving a large number of dead bodies on straw mats and washing the mats to remove the pus and yellow fluids left on them from burn wounds.

He was later recognized as an A-bomb victim for public financial support.

Irie said she now has no reason to hide her exposure, but she has yet to share her experience with the younger members of her family. Recently, however, she began to feel obliged to convey what she knows about the war and the atomic bombing to them.

“A dangerous society is looming large,” Irie said, offering the government to designate information as secrets on national security grounds and government moves to allow the exercise of the right to collective self-defence. “Persons who don’t know the brutality of war are in charge of politics,” she lamented. “We must not return to those days. Nobody should repeat such an experience.”

Korean Air flight attendant in “nut rage” case sues chairman’s daughter

SEOUL, 11 March — A flight attendant at the centre of a “nut rage” case that resulted in the death of a young television reporter.

Korean Air Lines chairman Kim Do-hee, hit, shoved,几句， was sentenced to a year in prison for killing a young television reporter. Four others, who say they were members of the MQM, have already been jailed for the same crime.

The MQM denied they were members of the party.

Pyongyang declares 2015 “DPRK-Russia Year of Friendship”

PYONGYANG, 11 March — The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) on Wednesday declared the year 2015 a year of friendship between the DPRK and Russia, reported the official KCNA news agency.

This is the first year of friendship between the two countries, which is aimed at developing “the bilateral relations onto a new higher stage in various fields including politics, economy and culture under a mutual agreement,” said KCNA.

The two countries plan to intensify exchanges of delegations visits and contacts, and jointly hold cultural events in cities including Pyongyang and Moscow.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Korean Peninsula from the 70th anniversary of Russia’s victory in its Great Patriotic War.

On 11 January, the Kremlin said Pyongyang had confirmed its top leader Kim Jong Un would come to Moscow in May for celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the Soviet Union’s victory over Nazi Germany and its allies.

Pakistan paramilitary raids HQ of major party MQM in volatile Karachi

ISLAMABAD, 11 March — A Pakistani paramilitary force raided the headquarters of a major political party on Wednesday in the country’s biggest city, officials said, recovering weapons and arresting suspects wanted for several crimes, including the murder of a journalist.

The paramilitary Sindh Rangers launched the raid on the headquarters of the Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM) in the violent southern port city of Karachi, home to 18 million people, where the party holds a stranglehold on politics.

“Five to six men are those who are criminals and we have their record,” Capt. Moeedul Taher Mehmoon of the Rangers told media. “There were certain people who have been awarded death sentences by court.”

Although MQM members have been arrested before, there has not been an incursion into the party’s heavily defended headquarters since the military raided it in 1992. MQM’s opponents say the party engages in extortion and frequently kills opposition activists.

The MQM denies the allegations, saying its own party workers are targeted by others.

In addition, the MQM is involved in a political and economic war against the MQM’s political rival, the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), which is a member of the governing Pakistan Democratic Movement.

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Xinhua

A paramilitary soldier displays weapons recovered during a raid on the Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM) political party’s headquarters in Karachi on 11 March, 2015. — Reuters

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Mere words not enough to achieve development goals

By Aung Khin

A key goal of the ASEAN Economic Community is to encourage the competitiveness and expansion of small and medium enterprises in accordance with the Strategic Action Plan for ASEAN SME development (2010-2015).

The bloc has developed the ASEAN SME Guidebook with the aim of raising awareness of the financial facilities and market opportunities available to SMEs within the 10-member bloc.

In implementation of the AEC, the different levels of economic development of ASEAN Member states should be considered seriously. At present, there are vast differences in the level of economic development between some member countries, with the gaps largely attributable to differences in the stability, management, and mindset of state leadership.

The Asian Development Bank recently recognized that Cambodia, with gross domestic product expansion at an average annual rate of 6.5 percent between 2007 and 2014, now ranks among the world’s fastest-growing economies.

The country managed to rapidly reduce poverty from nearly 50 percent of the population in 2007 to 19 percent in 2012. The ADB has predicted growth of 7.3 percent in 2015 due to well-managed inflation, a stable exchange rate and sustained competitiveness.

The ASEAN Framework for Equitable Economic Development (AFEED) was introduced in 2011 for member states to enable regional economic integration based on the principles of inclusive and sustainable growth, poverty alleviation and narrowing the development gap. This is in theory.

In practice, the economic development of member countries largely relies on individual states. Organizations in respective countries need to assess whether their works can help reduce poverty. If they are not confident of this, they need to consider reforms to better enable them to help meet this goal.

International financial institutions and other groups should consider the situations and management of organizations before they provide support. Mere words are not enough to build up a developing state. Economic hardship can have many negative consequences, such as displacement of people or rising crime rates.

Government and business leaders, as well as ordinary citizens, must seek to ensure their own country does not lag too far behind the rest of the regional community.

Sky and Underground Trains

By San Shwe Aung

Traffic woes are grave concern for everybody in Yangon nowadays. Huge amount of energy and valuable time are lost on the road travelling during every working day. Nation, as a result, has lost annually million of man-hours which otherwise would have been contributed to the productivity towards nation building.

Arrival of new cars in Yangon and other cities must be welcome. Introduction of new vehicle import policies has benefited many middle class families, who otherwise could not have afforded sky rocket high car prices just 4 years ago. Government has adjusted the car policy several times over the last 3 years to mitigate the congestion of traffic in the big cities particularly in Yangon and Mandalay.

Among many regulations in relation to car inputs and production, there should be one rule, very important to have sky and underground mass rapid transit trains rather sooner than later. It is costly to invest initially but unavoidable for efficient city transport. We are sure that the Government has plans in the pipe line, to build underground and sky mass rapid transport systems in our cities. Several international multi-lateral bodies and technology companies would undoubtedly be involved with relevant Government agencies in the process of feasibility studies, ELA, SIA, planning, funding and implementing.

Citizens are aspiring with burning desire to overcome the traffic woes which they face daily now. In not so distant future, our citizens will enjoy travelling quickly to their works, schools, businesses and loved ones and will be relieved of worries associated with traffic jam in the cities, should we have rapid underground and sky train systems.

References:
Government sought peaceful protest resolution: Union Information Minister

Nay Pyi Taw, 11 March — The forced dispersal of student protesters by police was “a sorrowful incident,” but the government tried as hard as it could to achieve a peaceful settlement in line with its policy, Union Minister for Information U Ye Htut said in an interview on Tuesday.

The union government had sought to “avoid undesirable incidents” since the start of demonstrations aimed at amending the national education law, U Ye Htut told Skynet Up to Date Channel following the breaking up of the demonstration on March 10 in Letpadan, about 90 miles north of Yangon.

While expressing sorrow about the situation, he denounced the idea of taking to the street to fight instead of seeking change through the legislative process or parliament.

“Despite requests for peaceful negotiations, student protesters tried to penetrate the police blockade and the police were legally obligated to disperse them,” the information minister said.

He said the student protesters’ decision to march to Yangon instead of choosing democratic or parliamentary processes was the cause of the conflict.

The information minister said the government’s handling of the protest will have no impact on democratic reform, stating that when demonstrators on Wall Street were removed by police, or when protesters in Ferguson were dispersed with the use of tanks, “nobody spoke of US democracy having backtracked.”

As for the elections scheduled for later this year, the information minister said “political stability, the rule of law and resolving differences in accordance with the state constitution are essential for the elections, and elections will be successful if the government is able to continue its efforts for the rule of law.”—MNA

Bill committee hear public suggestions on amendment of National Education Law

Nay Pyi Taw, 11 March — Amyotha Hluttaw’s Bill Committee heard public suggestions of four persons on amendment of National Education Law here Wednesday.

The meeting was also attended by members of Amyotha Hluttaw’s Politics, Economy and Legal Affairs Commission and listened to the different ideas of U Khin Maung Lwin, vice president of Hotel and Tourism Training School; U Hein Linn, director of Thiri Myint Myat Agro Company; Writer U Nay Win Aung (The Sixth Hitlar) and U Tin Min Kyaw, retired tutor at Lukhaw Technological University, together with the witness of media.

Committee’s chairman U Khin Maung Yi said public suggestions will be put into redrawing draft for National Education Law, believing ideas of the four persons will be very supportive of the bill.

The Bill committee invited public opinions on February to draw a draft National Education Law. —MNA

Matriculation examinations for 2015 commences

Nay Pyi Taw, 11 March — A total of 597,768 students of 632,209, accounting for 94.55 percent peacefully sit the matriculation examinations in 2015 at 1,355 centres across the nation on its first day, Wednesday.

Overseas exam centres are opened at 21 Myanmar’s embassies abroad. Hospital exam centres are also opened at Yangon General Hospital, Chin, Shan (South), Mon and Kayin regions, Kyaikmaraw, Kanbalu and PyinOoLwin townships.—MNA

Delhi Dialogue VII focuses on India-ASEAN...

(from page 1)

regional bloc and the world’s largest democracy.

Under the theme “ASEAN-India: Shaping the Post 2015 Agenda,” the two-day Delhi Dialogue VII for the first time included dedicated business sessions.

Business representatives discussed ASEAN participation in Make in India, a programme to make the country a global manufacturing hub, as well as integration of regional production networks and value chains.

In his inaugural address, Mr. Anil Wadhwa, Secretary (East) of India’s Ministry of External Affairs, said trade between India and ASEAN, its fourth-largest trade partner, was far below its true potential.

“We hope the FTA in goods, when reviewed, will lead to better efficiency and results,” the Secretary (East) said.

Since the signing of the ASEAN-India free trade agreement in goods and services and its first day, Wednesday, Overseas exam centres are opened at 21 Myanmar’s embassies abroad. Hospital exam centres are also opened at Yangon General Hospital, Chin, Shan (South), Mon and Kayin regions, Kyaikmaraw, Kanbalu and PyinOoLwin townships.—MNA

in 2009, the value of trade between the dialogue partners has risen from under US$44 billion in 2009-2010 to over US$74 billion in 2013-2014.

Dr. APK Mochtan, Deputy Secretary General of the ASEAN Secretariat, also said bilateral trade and investment must be increased to reach its potential.

He noted that the combined GDP of ASEAN nations and India was US $2.4 trillion and India was ASEAN’s seventh-largest trading partner. The bilateral trade volume is projected to rise from $70 billion in 2014 to $100 billion in 2015. Against the backdrop of total ASEAN export-import trade of $2.5 trillion, the ASEAN-India trade figures were abysmal, he said.

ASEAN and India are waiting for ratification of the trade in services agreement in July and conclusion of the negotiation for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) within this year.

The dialogue will include further discussion from political leaders, business leaders, and academics on its final day. —GNLM

Study for new maritime training centre under way

By Khanga Thanda Lwin

Yangon, 11 March — Myanmar’s seafaring industry could soon receive a boost from construction of a new maritime training centre, with interested parties meeting recently to discuss the feasibility of the project, a Myanmar Maritime University official revealed Monday.

The inaugural meeting involved representatives from MMU and the Korea Maritime and Ocean University, with attendees discussing the potential for the project to be implemented under the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) 2015 Academic Partnership Programme.

The meeting also heard about the difficulties faced by Myanmar’s maritime schools under the current system.

“The country sees more maritime training centres than before. But those schools are still in need of modern simulators and teaching aids,” a training officer said.

“Education is a tool for maritime industry growth,” said a senior maritime official who welcomed the project, urging local seafarers to improve their English language skills to gain employment opportunities.

The Myanmar and South Korean universities signed a memorandum of understanding on academic cooperation at the meeting.—GNLM

Tatmadaw arrests three Kokang insurgents, seizes arms and ammunition, narcotic drugs

Nay Pyi Taw, 11 March — Kokang insurgents opened fire at military columns at the site, east of Pasinkkyaw on 10 March morning but the insurgent withdrew from the area due to attacks of Tatmadaw columns.

In the afternoon, the army troops, acting on tip-off, searched a house in ward 2 of Laukkai and seized arms, ammunition and narcotic drugs.

A map shows armed conflicts between Tatmadaw and Kokang insurgents in Laukkai region.—Myawady

Union Minister for Information U Ye Htut.

MNA

GNLM
West should pay attention to Kosovo, Libya, not just Crimea

Venezuela’s Maduro seeks decree powers to face US ‘imperialism’

CARACAS, 11 March — Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro on Tuesday asked parliament for decree powers in response to new US sanctions, in a move opposition critics slammed as a power-grab.

If as expected the government-controlled National Assembly approves his request for an “Enabling Law”, it would be the second time the 52-year-old successor to Hugo Chavez has gained these expanded powers since winning elections in 2013. “I’ve come to ask for an Enabling Law to confront the aggression of the most powerful country, to defend the interests of the US State Department against this beautiful nation,” Maduro told parliament.

“This is a law that will prepare our country, may we never be caught off guard.”

His adversaries say he is using the worst flare-up with Washington during his nearly two-year rule to justify autocratic governance, sidetrack parliament and distract attention from a shrinking economy and chronic product shortages.

“Nicolas, are you re-seeking the Enabling Law to make soap, nappies and medicines appear, to lower inflation?” satirized opposition leader Henri-Que Capriles. “It’s another smoke-screen.”

Conforming Venezuela as Washington’s No 1 adversary in Latin America after a rapprochement with Cuba, the United States has taken its gloves off against Maduro, characterizing his security threat and sanctioning seven officials.

In terminology that has also been used for measures against nations such as Iran and Syria, President Barack Obama’s administration declared a “national emergency” due to “the unusual and extraordinary threat” from Venezuela.

A visa ban and financial block were slapped on seven officials, ranging from the head of national intelligence and a state prosecutor to the national police chief and various military officials, for their alleged role in suppressing Maduro’s domestic opponents or corruption. Maduro hailed the seven as “heroes” and named one interior minister.

Despite improving ties with Washington, communist nation Cuba was quick to join Venezuela’s mockery of the US language.

“Venezuela a threat to the United States? Thousands of miles away, without strategic arms and without resources or officials to conspire against a country, the declaration is barely credible and reveals the real aims of those behind it,” Cuba’s government said in a statement.

Despite the diplomatic tensions, the United States is Venezuela’s top trading partner, and the OPEC member’s crude sales even rose in February to 796,000 barrels per day. Venezuela’s heavily traded bonds have slipped amid the dispute, which began from Monday. The benchmark 2027 issue was off 2 points, or nearly 5 percent, to a bid price of 39.44.

US-Cuban tensions have escalated amid since Maduro’s accusations that Washington was behind an alleged coup plot and the arrest of an opposition Caracas mayor accused of conspiracy.

Clinton says used personal email account for convenience

New York, 11 March — Hillary Clinton, under attack for using a personal email address to conduct US State Department business, defended the practise on Tuesday as a matter of “convenience.”

But her comments failed to calm critics, who accused her of secrecy.

“Over her administration post two years ago, Clinton concealed she wished she had used a government email address as secretary of state but said she violated no rules and did not send classified material through the private account.”

Clintons, the presumed front-runner for the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination, has come under fire for using an email server from her New York-area home and a personal account as the top US diplomat. Critics raised concerns that the arrangement allowed her to hide important facts about her tenure and put her correspondence at a security risk.

“I opted for convenience to use my personal email account, which was allowed by the State Department, because I thought it would be easier to carry just one device for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) member. I mean Yugoslavia, and the situation with Kosovo’s unilateral declaration of independence without any referendum,” the Itar-Tass news agency quoted Lavrov as saying.

He said that the aggression against Iraq had been carried out “under blatantly false pretences” and there had been a “general abuse of the UN Nations Security Council mandate in Libya.”

Nationalist leaders in Ukraine openly called for banning or destroy- ing Russians in Crimea a year ago, but not one of our Western partners reacted to these statements, Lavrov said.

Tanjug

Italy court upholds Berlusconi acquittal in prostitution case

Rome, 11 March — Italy’s highest court on Tuesday confirmed an acquittal for former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi on charges of abuse of office and paying for sex with a minor, giving him his boost as he is trying to hold onto his role as a conservative leader.

At the first trial in 2013, Berlusconi, 78, was convicted and sentenced to seven years in prison. But that ruling was overturned in an appeal. The Urbi- tan that acquitted him last year.

The Rome court, in a ruling that is now definitive, rejected an appeal by Milan prosecutors to overturn the acquittal and to hold a new trial. Berlusconi was accused of paying for sex with former teenage night-club dancer Kharima El Mahroug, known by her stage name Ruby the Heartstealer, during “bunga bunga” erotic parties at his palatial home near Milan when he was prime minister in 2010.

He was also charged with abusing his authority to get El Mahroug, who was 17 at the time, released from police custody over unrelated theft accusations.

The trial was the most sensational Berlusconi faced. It mesmerised Italy with its lurid accounts of sex parties. A stream of would-be starlets on his TV channels took the stand as witnesses.

AC Milan’s president and former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi arrives before the match against Fiorentina at San Siro stadium in Milan, on 26 Oct, 2014.—Reuters

Tuesday’s ruling came at a time when the conservative leader is struggling to hold together his Forza Italia party and maintain a front-line role in Italian politics.

Last month Berlusco- ni pulled out of a pact with Prime Minister Renzi over reform of Italy’s voting system and political apar- atus, complaining that Renzi had excluded him from the choice of who should become the new head of state.

On Tuesday Forza Italia voted against Ren- zi’s political reforms in the Chamber of Deputies, but 18 party deputies wrote a public letter of dissent. They lamented a lack of in- ternal party democracy and said they had only obeyed Berlusconi’s instructions out of loyalty to their leader.

Forza Italia has steadily lost support since Ber- lusconi was convicted for tax fraud in 2013. As a re- sult of that sentence he lost his seat in the Senate and was barred from holding any public office.

According to most polls the party now has only 13-14 percent of the vote. That puts it behind Renzi’s Democratic Party, the anti-establishment 5-Star Movement and the anti-immigrant Northern League whose leader Matteo Salvini seems to be eclipsing Berlusconi as the prominent figure on the Italian right.—Reuters
Graphic torture photos from Syria on display at United Nations

UNITED NATIONS, 11 March — Britain, France, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United States are holding an exhibit at the United Nations of graphic photos taken in Syria by a former military police photographer that show what appear to be evidence of brutal torture.

About two dozen of some of the 55,000 photographs taken — some showing eye gougings, strangulation and long-term starvation — went on display at UN headquarters in New York this week as the conflict in Syria enters its fifth year.

Former war crimes prosecutors have described the pictures as “clear evidence” of systematic torture and mass killings in Syria’s three-year-long civil war. The photographer has been identified by the code name “Caesar.” The pictures were smuggled out of Syria by a former member of the group “Caesar” between 2011 and mid-2013.

“We hope that this exhibition will serve as a reminder of the imperative to pursue a political solution to the conflict with utmost urgency to end the suffering of the Syrian people,” he said.

The UN Security Council viewed the photos during an informal meeting in May 2014 and again in September 2014, but no resolution was adopted.

The UN Security Council voted unanimously in September 2014 to refer the conflict to the International Criminal Court for possible prosecution of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the civil war.

Islamic State video shows killing of teen accused as Israeli spy

DEIR EZZOR, 11 March — A video posted online by Islamic State militants on Tuesday showed a boy falsely identified as an Israeli spy being executed.

“Operation ‘The Seventh’ has been completed,” said the video, published by the group’s Furqan media outlet, showing Musallam, 19, sitting in a room wearing an orange jumpsuit, talking about how he had been recruited and trained by Mossad. He said his father and elder brother had encouraged him.

After that, it showed Musallam being escorted to a field and then being shot in the head by a boy described as an older, French-speaking fighter as one of the “cubs of the caliphate.”

“The video could not immediately verify the authenticity of the footage, which also appeared on Twitter feeds used by Islamic State supporters.”

Islamic State officials said they were aware of the video but could not confirm that it was authentic.

The video, about 13 minutes long, showed Musallam on his knees when the boy armed with a pistol and wearing a military uniform fires one bullet into Musallam’s forehead. The boy then fired three more shots into his body.

In the video, Musallam said he had joined Islamic State to report to the Israeli Mossad on weapons caches, bases and Palestinian recruits. Israel and his family denied that he was an Israeli spy.

An Israeli security official had said Musallam went to Syria to fight for Islamic State in October last year.

Iraqi troops, militia retake strategic town north of Tikrit from Islamic State

AL-ALAM, (Iraqi), 11 March — Iraqi troops and militias drove Islamic State insurgents out of the town of al-Alam on Tuesday, clearing a final hurdle before a planned assault on Saddam Hussein’s home city of Tikrit in their biggest offensive yet against the ultra-radical group.

The power base of executed former president Saddam’s clan, Tikrit is the focus of a counter-offensive against Islamic State by more than 20,000 troops and Shi’ite Muslim militias known as Hashid Shaabi, backed by local Sunni Muslim tribes.

If Iraq’s Shi’ite-led government is able to retake Tikrit it would be the first city clawed back from the Sunni insurgents and would give it momentum in the next, pivotal stage of the campaign — to retake Mosul, the largest city in the north.

A Reuters photographer saw dozens of families, who earlier fled al-Alam to escape Islamic State rule, return to the town, celebrating and slaughtering sheep for the victorious forces.

“I announce officially that the town is under the total control of security forces, the Hashid Shaabi (Popular Mobilization) units and local tribal fighters,” said local mayor Laith al-Jubouri.

“We rejoice in this victory and we want al-Alam to be the launchpad for the liberation of Tikrit and Mosul,” he told Reuters by telephone.

Mosul in the far north is the largest city held by the ultra-radical Islamic State, who now rule a self-declared cross-border caliphate in Syria and Iraq.

But the ultra-radical group over the past few months has gradually lost ground in Iraq and the army, Shi’ite militias and Kurdish peshmerga forces, backed by air strikes carried out by a US-led coalition of mainly Western and allied Arab states.

The United States says Baghdad did not seek actual backup from the coalition in the Tikrit campaign. Instead, support on the ground has come from neighbouring Iran, Washington’s longtime regional rival, which backs the Shi’ite-dominated security forces and militia who sought revenge on local Sunni residents for the Speicher killings.

Some houses were also set alight in al-Alam, local officials said houses had been set on fire by the militia.

An Interior Ministry source said two of the ministry’s armored vehicles were hit by Islamic State missiles or rockets north of al-Alam, and heavy clashes were taking place. He did not give details of casualties.

A local official said security forces and militias had regained control over the Ajil oilfield northeast of al-Alam, but other sources said the situation was still unclear.

Black smoke columns could still be seen rising from the area and Jubouri, the al-Alam mayor, said Islamic State fighters set alight in al-Alam, backfires still inside.

Islamic State has sent reinforcements to Tikrit from other parts of its “caliphate” further north, where it came under attack on Monday from Kurdish forces around the oil-rich city of Kirkuk. A Kurdish commander said his forces would press on with their offensive and had captured another village on Tuesday. They had stopped in an area called Kwas, but would resume in coming days, Major General Omar Hasan said.

Reuters

Al-Alam to escape Islamic State fighters. If Iraq’s Shi’ite-led government is able to retake Tikrit it would be the first city clawed back from the Sunni insurgents and would give it momentum in the next, pivotal stage of the campaign — to retake Mosul, the largest city in the north.

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Reuters
Cuban dissident leader fends off leadership challenge

HAVANA, 11 March — One of Cuba’s most prominent dissidents appears to have fended off a challenge to her leadership of a women’s opposition movement, but with her reputation dented after disgruntled followers accused her of abusing her authority.

Berta Soler is leader of the Ladies in White, a group that won the European Parliament’s 2005 Sakharov Prize for freedom of thought. The US government periodically cites the group for its contribution to human rights worldwide.

Soler accused her of abusing her authority. But an internal schism led to calls for her resignation, with defected members accusing her of abuse of authority, arbitrarily expelling members and misusing funds.

After pro-Soler Ladies shouted down a critic, calling her “traitor” in a video that spread on the Internet, Soler convened a referendum. Final results were to be released on Wednesday, but Soler said on Tuesday night she had all but clinched victory. Of 233 ballots issued, 108 have come back in her favor but culminated victory. Of 233 ballots issued, 108 have come back in her favor but culminated victory. Of 233 ballots is issued, 233 ballots issued, 108 have come back in her favor but culminated victory.

Asked if she considered it a victory, Soler said, “It’s looking that way, but I want to wait until tomorrow.”

The public fight has only added to the difficulties for Cuba’s tiny dissident community, which faces challenges when unified.

Police harass and detain them, and the Communist government accuses them of being unpatriotic mercenaries working for the US government.

Tokyo, 11 March — The situation still remains risky at the crippled Fukushima Daiichi power plant four years after nuclear meltdowns occurred in 2011, the chairman of Japan’s nuclear regulator said on Wednesday, vowing utmost efforts to avoid further trouble there.

“There have been quite a few accidents and problems at the Fukushima plant in the past year, and we need to face the reality that they are causing anxiety and anger among people in Fukushima,” Shunichi Tanaka told personnel at the Nuclear Regulation Authority on the fourth anniversary of the nuclear disaster.

Mitigations still occur regularly at the radiation-leaking complex in Fukushima Prefecture, where decommissioning work is continuing after it was heavily damaged in the massive earthquake and tsunami that hit northeastern Japan on 11 March, 2011.

Late last month, Tokyo Electric Power Co, the plant operator, said highly radioactive rainwater has flowed into the Pacific Ocean every time it has rained, in the latest revelation of a series of contaminated water leakages from the seaside plant.

The number of accidents involving plant workers has also increased as the decommissioning work becomes more complex. In one accident in January, one worker died after falling into a 10-metre-high rainwater storage tank.

“There are numerous risks that could cause various accidents and problems,” Tanaka said, urging TEPCO to continue efforts to enhance the plant’s safety.

The chairman also voiced concern that the lessons from the world’s worst nuclear crisis since the 1986 Chernobyl accident may fade from people’s memories as time passes by.

“As regulators, we must not forget what we’ve learned from Fukushima,” Tanaka added.

After being hit by the magnitude-9.0 earthquake and ensuing tsunami, the six-reactor Fukushima Daiichi plant lost nearly all the power it had and consequently its ability to cool most of the units. The Nos 1 to 3 reactors suffered nuclear meltdowns, while hydrogen explosions damaged the buildings housing the Nos 1, 3 and 4 units.

— Kyodo News

University of Oklahoma expels two leaders for racist singing

Oklahoma City, 11 March — The University of Oklahoma has expelled two students for playing a role in singimg a racist song at a fraternity event that went viral on social media last weekend.

The controversy played out on social media, with an online fundraising campaign launched for a black cook who lost his job because of the closure.

Another video purportedly showed the fraternity’s white house mother using a racial slur.

William Bruce James II, one of the Oklahoma fraternity’s few black members, said the SAE chapter was undergoing a cultural change since he was a student there, from 2001 to 2005. “The guys in that house now, to their credit, have not faced any sanctions. They’ve been involved in the investigation. Its house on campus has not faced any sanctions.

The university said more people could face punishment, depending on the outcome of its probe.

Oklahoma, 11 March — A student there, from 2001 to 2005. “The guys in that house now, to their credit, have not faced any sanctions. They’ve been involved in the investigation. Its house on campus has not faced any sanctions.

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— Reuters

Fukushima plant still posing risks 4 yrs after meltdowns

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— Kyodo News

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV EVER ABLE VOY NO (340N)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV EVER ABLE VOY NO (340N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12.3.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.
Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.
No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

PHONE: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV TAUNG GYI STAR VOY NO (1005N)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV TAUNG GYI STAR VOY NO (1005N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12.3.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.
Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.
No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

PHONE: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV KOTA RESTU VOY NO (RSU-435)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA RESTU VOY NO (RSU-435) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12.3.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.
Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.
No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

PHONE: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV THAI BINH STAR 01 VOY NO (-)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV THAI BINH STAR 01 VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12.3.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.
Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.
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PHONE: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV MUNICH TRADER VOY NO (RY-1503-03N)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV MUNICH TRADER VOY NO (RY-1503-03N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12.3.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.
Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.
No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

PHONE: 2301185

UK shoppers would switch brands, pay more to avoid use of slaves

LONDON, 11 March — The majority of shoppers in the United Kingdom would switch brands or pay higher prices to avoid the use of slave labour in the products they buy, a rights group poll showed on Wednesday.

Two-thirds of consumers would stop buying a product if they learned that its manufacture involved exploiting workers, and more than half would pay up to 10 percent more for slave-free goods, according to the Walk Free Foundation. A government-backed draft law, the Modern Slavery Bill, aims to tackle exploitation by requiring businesses in Britain to disclose what action they have taken to ensure their supply chains are slave free, and is expected to be passed before elections in May. The International Labour Organization estimates that globally, millions of forced labourers are generating some $180 billion a year in profits for those who exploit or enslave them.

Consumer responses include switching brands or paying higher prices. The foundation commissioned a survey of 2,000 adults across the United Kingdom to examine their shopping habits and purchases of food, tea and coffee, clothing and accessories and electronics.

Almost 70 percent of consumers who buy luxury brands and around 60 percent of those who buy low and mid range products would switch brands or pay more if they knew slavery was involved in their production, the poll showed.

Reuters
Marvin Gaye’s heirs win $7.4 million for ‘Blurred Lines’ plagiarism

LOS ANGELES, 11 March — Heirs of the late soul singer Marvin Gaye won a $7.4 million judgment on Tuesday against recording stars Robin Thicke and Pharrell Williams, who a jury found plagiarized the Motown artist in the creation of their hit single “Blurred Lines.”

The US District Court jury in Los Angeles sided with Gaye’s estate, finding that parts of his 1977 hit “Got to Give It Up” were lifted by Thicke and Williams for their 2013 R&B chart-topper.

The jury awarded Gaye’s heirs $4 million in actual damages plus $3.4 million in profits the duo made. Thicke and Williams were found to have derived from their copyright infringement.

Several other parties sued by Gaye’s estate, the rapper TI and various music companies, were cleared of infringement.

Gaye’s daughter, Nona Gaye, hugged her attorney and wept as the court clerk read the verdict capping a weeklong trial that explored the boundaries between artistic inspiration and theft.

“Right now I feel free, free from, honestly, from Pharrell Williams and Robin Thicke’s chains and what they tried to keep on us, and the lies that they told,” she said.

Neither Thicke nor Williams was present for the verdict.

Their lawyer, Howard King, said they were keeping their options open. “It’s a lot of money. It’s not going to bankrupt my clients. It’s a disappointing number,” he said.

The attorney for Gaye’s estate, David diệni’s attorney, said they would seek an injunction to halt further distribution of “Blurred Lines.”

The suit cited magazine interviews given by Thicke in which he admitted drawing on “Got to Give It Up” when producing their own hit. “It’s a hit, it’s a hit, it’s a hit,” he said.

The attorney for Gaye’s estate, Busch, said they would seek an injunction to halt further distribution of “Blurred Lines.”

The verdict is being filmed in a rainforest and disappeared.

The Variety movie industry magazine first reported the injury on Tuesday when a man with a parrot on his shoulder and dressed as a pirate tried to disrupt filming on the set. The man was armed with a knife, but ran into the rainforest and disappeared.

Movie star Johnny Depp injured in Australia

SYDNEY, 11 March — Actor Johnny Depp will fly back to Australia for surgery after injuring his hand on his latest film set. It was not clear how Depp sustained the injury, but it was reportedly not on the set of the Pirates of the Caribbean 5: Dead Men Tell No Tales, which is being filmed in a rainforest in southern Queensland.

The famed actor is the star of the immensely successful franchise now in its fifth episode.

The Variety movie industry magazine first reported the injury on Wednesday, and the film’s publicist then confirmed Depp would fly back to the US for the treatment. The film, with a reported 190 million US dollar budget, has been in production for several weeks at a secret location near the Gold Coast tourist city. It was also disrupted on Tuesday when a man with a parrot on his shoulder and dressed as a pirate tried to disrupt filming on the set. The man was armed with a knife, but ran into the rainforest and disappeared.

Disabled Finnish punks prepare to rock Eurovision

HELSINKI, 11 March — Perti Kurikka, 58, wants to make it perfectly clear while he and the other members of his Eurovision contestant Finnish band have disabilities, they know how to rock.

“It is nice that we are gaining popularity. But we are not softies. We are straight up rockers,” he said, demonstrating with an “air guitar” how hard he intends to play at the popular Eurovision song contest in May.

Kurikka, Kari Aalto, Sami Helle and Toni Valti- talo play together in a band called Pertti Kurikka Nimi- paivat — which means Pertti Kurikka’s Name Day in Finnish.

Many say the nomination has given a much-needed voice to disabled people.

“Last month they won a popular vote to represent Finland in the Vienna finals and have since been touted as one of the favourites to follow Austrian drag queen Conchita Wurst’s triumph last year. “The whole band is a little bit in shock. We are going to Vienna and that’s going to be a really big step for us because it’s going to be so many people over there,” 41-year-old Sami said at the band’s studio, which is in a workshop for disabled people.

If we win then we win, if we lose then we lose, but it’s going to be fun!”

The band members have made several record- ings and toured Britain, the United States and Germany since they got together at the workshop six years ago.

Their songs often comment on life in an institution and call for human dignity. The Eurovision entry song “Aina mun pitaa” (Always I must) lists things one must do, like sleep and eat well and see a doctor, and things one might not be allowed to do, like eating sweets and watching TV.

“Our message is: Believe in yourselves. That’s the only thing because if you don’t believe, then you can’t do anything. Follow your dreams.” — Reuters

Taylor Swift insures her legs for USD 40 million?

LOS ANGELES, 11 March — Pop star Taylor Swift has reportedly got her legs insured for USD 40 million.

It is believed that the 25-year-old singer’s team looked into how much her legs were worth in case any- thing happens while she is on stage, reported Grazia magazine.

“It seems like a ludicrous sum, but if something was to happen to her legs, Swift wouldn’t be able to give her signature stage performances. Her USD 200 million career would be in big trouble,” a source said.

The Blank Space singer was said to be “embarr- sassed” when she found out how much her legs were worth.

“She thought her legs were possibly worth a million, but an USD 40 million shocked her. She’s even a little embarrassed about it” the source said.

The paperwork for insurance is now said to be going ahead in time for Swift’s “1989” world tour, which kicks off in May.

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Harrison Ford’s plane lost power before LA crash — investigators

LOS ANGELES, 11 March — Actor Harrison Ford’s vintage airplane lost engine power shortly before he crash-landed at a Los Angeles golf course last week, a report released on Tuesday said.

The preliminary findings from the National Transportation Safety Board confirm Ford’s own radio transmissions reporting an engine failure to the control tower at the Santa Monica Airport last Thursday as he brought the plane down on the eighth fairway at the golf course. Ford, 72, known for playing the iconic characters Indiana Jones in “Raiders of the Lost Ark,” and its sequels and Han Solo in the “Star Wars” franchise, was seriously injured in the crash of the 1942 single-engine Ryan Aeronautical ST-3KR plane, which is also known as a PT-22 Recruit.

The crash, which occurred a short distance from houses, follows years of complaints by residents in the heavily populated beachside community that the airport interferes with their quality of life.

The National Transportation Safety Board’s report released on Tuesday said Ford’s plane “sustained substantial damage following a loss of engine power and subsequent forced landing after take-off from the Santa Monica Municipal Airport.” Ford made a left turn back to the airport when he lost power and on his descent the aircraft struck the top of a tree and crashed onto the golf course, about 800 feet (244 meters) southwest of the approach end of a runway, the report said.

The report does not name Ford as the pilot and sole occupant of the plane but his spokeswoman has confirmed it was him.

The NTSB is continuing its investigation of the crash following its initial findings released on Tuesday.

Ford was taken to a hospital, where he was listed in fair to moderate condition. He was still in the hospital on Monday, according to a report from ABC News. A spokeswoman for the actor declined to comment on Monday and she could not immediately be reached on Tuesday.— Reuters

**Hamburg ahead of Berlin in local support for 2024**

BERLIN, 11 March — The northern port city of Hamburg has edged ahead of capital Berlin in their head-to-head race for the German candidacy for the 2024 Olympics, recording stronger local support in a poll, the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) said on Tuesday.

Hamburg has 64 percent of local residents in favour of a Games candidacy while just over one in two Berliners (55 percent) showed support for an Olympic bid.

“We are delighted with the support for the Olympic and Paralympic Games and especially that in both cities there was an increase (of support),” said DOSB President Alfons Hoermann.

“Now we have a good basis for the decision making process.”

The poll was conducted in February over the telephone with a sample of 1,500 citizens over the age of 14 in both cities.

The DOSB is set to name its preferred option on 16 March before its members decide on the final German selection on 21 March.

Hamburg is pitching a Games on the water, making use of inner-city land while Berlin, hosts of the 1936 Olympics, is highlighting its use of Olympic stadium is pictured with the Olympic rings in Berlin on 9 March, 2015. — Reuters

**Think tank says US farm bill payments to peak with 2015 crop**

CHICAGO, 11 March — Government support for US grain farmers under the new five-year farm bill will peak with the coming 2015 crop, the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute said in a new report.

The 2014 farm bill replaced traditional direct payments to farmers with support tied to market prices, with farmers needing to choose one of two basic formulas by 31 March.

One, called Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC), makes payments based on moving five-year average prices at the county level. The other, called Price Loss Coverage (PLC), provides payments when national average prices fall below fixed reference prices. Farmers commit to one option for all five years.

“Payments under 2014 farm bill programs increase when crop prices fall,” said FA-PRI said in its 2015 US Baseline Briefing Book. The think tank estimated that $3.9 billion in ARC and PLC payments for last year’s 2014 crop would be made after fiscal 2016 begins on 1 October.

“ARC spending is greatest in 2015/16 but declines in later years as the moving averages that determine benchmark prices adjust,” FA-PRI said. “Projected average ARC and PLC payments peak with the 2015 crop at about $6.5 billion but decline to $3.4 billion for the 2018 crop.”

FA-PRI, based at the University of Missouri, said actual ARC and PLC payments are likely to differ greatly from the projected averages, given price and yield volatility.— Reuters

**Actor Harrison Ford’s damaged airplane is taken away after its crash landing at Penmar Golf Course in Venice, Los Angeles California on 6 March, 2015.**

**The sun rises behind a corn tassel in a field in Minooka, Illinois, on 24 Sept, 2014. — Reuters**

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**Actor Harrison Ford’s damaged airplane is taken away after its crash landing at Penmar Golf Course in Venice, Los Angeles California on 6 March, 2015.**
PORTO, 11 March — Four stunning strikes helped Porto reach the quarter-finals of the Champions League with a thumping and thoroughly deserved 4-0 win over a flat Basel side on Tuesday that gave them a 5-1 aggregate success.

The Portuguese side, who along with Chelsea are the only unbeaten teams in this season’s competition, took it with an excellent first-half free kick from Yacine Brahimi, which set the tone for an evening of superb long-range efforts.

His opener was followed by equally impressive second-half strikes from Hector Herrera, Casemiro and Vincent Aboubakar with all four of the goals coming from outside the penalty area.

Porto were without their top scorer Jackson Martinez, but the Columbian’s replacement, Cameroonian Aboubakar had an excellent game, causing Walter Samuel and Fabian Schaer in the Basel rear-guard endless trouble.

After a period of early pressure, Basel were pegged back and the opening goal of a frenetic first half came after just 14 minutes.

Casemiro made a clean tackle to win the ball in the attacking third, putting Cristiano Tello through on goal. He was up-ended on the edge of the box by Samuel and from the resulting free kick, Brahimi knocked an arching ball past Basel keeper Tomas Vaclik into the goal.

With Porto beginning to get up a head of steam, the match was broken up by a serious tackle to the hosts’ defender Danilo, who was flattened by his own keeper Fabiano, as the Brazilian came to heal a long ball away.—Reuters

Porto’s Alex Sandro Lobo (L) fights for the ball with FC Porto’s Derdi Gonzales during their Champions League round of 16 second leg soccer match at Dragao stadium in Porto on 10 March, 2015. REUTERS

Wednesday March 11 —

David Villa opened the scoring with a close-range finish in the 9th minute, and//-

By the 22nd minute, Portugal were three up. Ronaldo and HLV Benfica’s Beirão helped their side to a comfortable win.

“Despite the result, the match was a difficult one for us,” said coach Mendes. “We were able to control the game from the beginning and were able to get the three points.”

Meanwhile, Casemiro and Brahimi put the icing on the cake, scoring two goals each to secure a comprehensive victory.

Porto manager Jorge Jesus said: “This was a great performance by the players, especially in the second half. We were able to create a lot of chances and were able to take them.”

The victory sees Porto through to the quarter-finals of the Champions League, where they will face defending champions FC Porto.

MADRID, 11 March — Holders Real Madrid survived a huge scare when they lost 4-3 to Schalke 04 in the Champions League on Tuesday but squeezed into the quarter-finals 5-4 on aggregate thanks to record European marksman Cristiano Ronaldo.

Coming hard on the heels of a 1-0 defeat at Athletic Bilbao in La Liga last weekend, the loss to a

YANGON, 11 March — Myanmar football teams met with opponents at different tournaments at home and abroad on Wednesday.

In Mandalay, Myanmar women’s team trounced Sri Lankan team in its debut with a wide margin of 16-0 result in the qualifiers of women’s football tournament for the 2016 Brazil Olympic Games.

In a tune-match held in Japan, Japan U-22 team beat Myanmar youth team with a 9-0 result.

The match between Ayeyawady United and Persib Bandung ended at 1-1 draw in the AFC Cup while South Korea’s Gangwon routed Yadanarbon with a 9-0 result.

In Mandalay, Myanmar’s U-15 team routed Sri Lanka’s U-15 team 16-0, first leg in Gelsenkirchen 2-0, Schalke came to head a long ball and darted across the penalty area before firing into an empty net, seemed to have settled the tie but Sane’s brilliant leveller at 3-3 gave Schalke renewed hope.

Schalke midfielder Tranquillo Barnetta came close in the 62nd minute and Real full-back Alvaro Arbeloa burst through in the 65th but was denied by a fine save from Timon Wellenreuther. Ronaldo’s brace took his goals tally past Barcelona’s Lionel Messi (76) and former Real striker Raul (77) in European games. He also matched Messi’s record of 20 Champions League doubles and took his total for the season to 41 goals in 38 appearances in all competitions, also level with Messi. Real’s defeat meant they missed a chance to set a record for consecutive victories in Europe’s elite club competition. They equalled the mark of 10 straight wins set by Bayern Munich in 2013 when they beat Schalke in the first leg.

Porto’s Alex Sandro Lobo (L) fights for the ball with FC Porto’s Derdi Gonzales during their Champions League round of 16 second leg soccer match at Dragao stadium in Porto on 10 March, 2015. REUTERS

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