Vice President U Nyan Tun inspects Settlement and Land Records Department training school, plantations

NAY PYI TAW, 23 March — Vice President U Nyan Tun inspected the central training school of the Settlement and Land Records Department in Taikkyi Township, Yangon Region, on Sunday.

Principal of the school for land record development, Deputy Minister U Ohn Thun, briefed the vice president about courses conducted there.

U Ohn Thun, and the director-general of the department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, further explained the department’s collection of land survey data, crop production and farmland management.

The vice president said the success of land resources management relies on correct policies and effective land management, the foundation of which is systematic maps that match the situation on the ground.

The lifeblood of the information structure is the high skills, competence and honesty of staff of the Settlement and Land Records Department, and the training school plays an important role in nurturing such staff, according to the vice president.

In conclusion, the vice president urged the officials to build trustworthy information infrastructure for the public. The vice president observed an advanced course for survey and land records and an exhibition booth at the school.

Afterward, the vice president proceeded to the private teak plantation of Phyoo Sithu Trading Co., Ltd in Paukkhaung Township, where Deputy Minister U Aye Myint Maung and officials of the company outlined projects for greening Bago Mountain Range and conservation of forest resources.

After hearing the reports, the vice president pointed out that it is important to preserve the forests in Bago Mountain Range for posterity with the cooperation of the government, the private sector and the public. Later, the vice president inspected log houses and furniture made of crowded teak trees and the 1,000-acre teak plantation in Ottwin.

Forest coverage of the mountain range increased from 25.83 percent in 2010 to 26.2 percent in 2015.

Modern Singapore’s founding father, Lee Kuan Yew, dies at 91

SINGAPORE, 23 March — Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore’s first prime minister, died on Monday aged 91, triggering a flood of tributes to the man who oversaw the tiny city-state’s rapid rise from a British colonial backwater to a global trade and financial centre.

In his lifetime, Lee drew praise for his market-friendly policies but also criticism at home and abroad for his strict controls over the press, public protest and political opponents.

The government has declared a period of national mourning until his funeral on Sunday. Lee’s family will hold a private wake in the next two days, then his body will lie in state at parliament from Wednesday to Saturday.

Lee, a British-educated lawyer, is credited with building Singapore into one of the world’s wealthiest nations on a per capita basis with a strong, pervasive role for the state and little patience for dissent.

Tributes poured in from around the world heralding the statesmanship of a man who had the ear of policymakers in both Washington and Beijing.

“Lee Kwan Yew’s passing is as much a loss for the international community as it is for Singapore,” China’s President Xi Jinping said.

Obama said in a statement that “Lee’s views and insights on Asian dynamics and economic management were respected by many around the world, and no small number of this and past generations of world leaders have sought his advice on governance and development.”—Reuters

By Aye Min Soe

YANGON, 23 March— Authorities have approved the sale of chicken and duck products, including eggs, at markets in the Yangon municipal area following safety inspections for avian flu.

The Department of Veterinary and Slaughter House of the Yangon City Development Committee said chicken and duck meat and eggs may be sold once the seller has received approval.

The department is currently making poultry farms in the region carry out bio-security measures, while also conducting regular inspections of farms, a department official said.

The department has raised awareness of bird flu disease and urged farmers to quickly report suspected cases following the recent outbreak in Monywa.

The Ministry of Health has raised alert levels to prevent the spread of the bird flu virus across the country since the outbreak, culling more than 1,500 chickens and 20,000 quails in the area.

The Ministry of Health announced that four workers with fever symptoms from the chicken farms in Monywa were tested after the outbreak, but none were infected with bird flu virus.

The country has seen seven outbreaks of bird flu from 2003 to 2014. Since the first in 2003, Myanmar has implemented the National Strategic Plan for Prevention and Control of Avian Influenza and Human Influenza Pandemic.

The Ministry of Health decided recently to increase funding as much as necessary to prevent a pandemic, Dr Soe Lwin Nyein, the Deputy Director-General of the Communicable Diseases Control Department said, quoting the Union minister.

At a recent meeting in Nay Pyi Taw, Union Minister of Health Dr Than Aung gave the green light to the funding increase, urging (See page 3)

Local authorities have urged farmers to follow their instructions on preventing the bird flu disease.—PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE
Govt schedules meeting for salary increment

NAV PYI TAW, 23 March — Union government will meet on Wednesday to discuss proposed salaries for civil service staff before submitting it to the parliament, according to the letter of President Office to the Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann officially urged the Union government to submit the proposed salaries by March 3 to be able to pass the 2015 Union Budget Bill. The salary increment process will include discussion with Ministry of Finance and relevant departments, putting the amount of proposed salaries into figures of ministries, relevant boards and funds of state/region governments.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw took record on the Highway Bill that needs approval of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. U Win Shinn, Union Minister for Finance, presented Senator U Thein Sein’s message, calling on approval of Hluttaw for agreement to establish ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO).

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw also discussed proposals of Dr Myat Nyana Soe, secretary of the bill committee and Brig-Gen Kyaw Kyaw Tun, deputy minister for Home Affairs, on approval of bill on land and tax.

U Thein Aung, deputy minister for Industry, explained President’s suggestion on transferal of allocated budgets for other projects, and it was discussed joint bill committee and parliamentarians.

Regarding discussion of Daw Dwe Bu, an MP from Injanyan Township constituency of Kachin State, on Union Tax Bill 2015, Union Minister Dr Ko Ko Oo, Union Minister for Science and Technology explained copyrights law, Deputy Minister for Education U Thant Shin explained that under the free education system of 2014-2015 fiscal year for primary schools, the ministry allocated funds to all basic education schools based on the number of schoolchildren.

The deputy minister said that in last fiscal year schools with 100 primary level children were given K800,000 (US$800), those with 200 children K1000,000 ($1,000), with 300 children K1.2 million ($1,200), with 400 children K1.4 million ($1,400), with more than 400 children K1.6 million, and K4,000,000 for each affiliated primary school.

U Thant Shin also clarified on the query of U Than Myint, an MP of Wundwin constituency that the ministry is cooperating with the Ministry of Health for health programmes at schools the whole year.

Oil price falls impacts on revenue from natural gas export

NAV PYI TAW, 23 March — Dramatic fall of oil price in global market has affected export of Myanmar natural gas, said Deputy Minister for Energy U Myint Zaw to Pyithu Hluttaw on Monday.

Regarding the query of U Thein Lwin, an MP of Chaung constituency, the deputy minister said although revenue from the sales of natural gas has declined, the ministry will manage to meet the income from this sector as in previous years.

U MYint Zaw also promised the ministry will operate more joint-venture businesses with foreign companies to avoid monopolies of international firms in the domestic market, while the respective agencies are examining fuel qualities and market price.

While transportation charges have also declined due to the falling fuel price, the Ministry of Energy will cooperate with other ministries and agencies for the fall of commodity prices.

Regarding query of Daw Nan Sue Awa, an MP of Hpa-an constituency, Kayin State, on education funds for basic education schools, Deputy Minister for Education U Thant Shin replied that under the free education system of 2014-2015 fiscal year for primary schools, the ministry allocated funds to all basic education schools based on the number of schoolchildren.

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U Aung Thein Lwin, an MP of South Okkalapa constituency, urged the government to address trade deficit through prioritizing export sector of the country.

His suggestion was recorded by the Lower House, and Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint said the ministry has relaxed some restrictions on trade sector, remarking that both total expenditure of the country and amount of foreign direct investment have increased.

He also said one of the reasons for trade deficit is due to more import items for investment sector, suggesting that enactment of laws for value-added products, and establishments of export/import bank and trade promotion board will help develop a business model that emphasizes on export sector.—MNA

Myanmar to undertake first nationwide kidney health study

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 23 March — Myanmar’s first nationwide survey on kidney-related diseases will begin later this year, with the aim of improving hospital treatment and programmes aimed at prevention, a renal specialist said Sunday at a ceremony to mark World Kidney Day. Plans are under way to designate renal registries in both rural and urban areas, Prof Khin Thida Thwin said.

The survey will be conducted by the renal department at Thingangyun Sanpya Hospital under the Ministry of Health, with pharmaceutical companies providing financial assistance. “The project is expected to begin this year, but we still need both volunters and funds for the survey,” Prof Khin Thida Thwin said. The initiative is designed to help reduce the risks involved with renal diseases and other related health problems, according to sources at the renal department.

While such a nationwide survey has not yet been conducted, some hospitals’ records show one-fifth of patients presenting to renal departments are diagnosed with chronic kidney disease. Kidney specialist Prof U Khin Maung Hlay said a study had found nearly 10 percent of the world’s population lives with chronic kidney disease, with experts estimating a 17% increase in ten years.

Kidneys help remove waste products and excess fluid from the blood and control blood pressure, with doctors suggesting high fluid intake to prevent kidney failure, but warning patients already with kidney failure not to drink too much water. World Kidney Day has been marked on the second Thursday in March world-wide since 2006 with the aim of raising awareness of the role the kidneys play in maintaining good health.
Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets British WWII veterans’ association president

At the meeting in Nay Pyi Taw Monday, Mr Slim has offered to help Myanmar War Veterans Organization and has recognizing the role of the Tatmadaw in Myanmar’s transition to democracy.

Mr John Slim is the son of Field Marshal William Joseph “Bill” Slim who commanded the Burma Corps during World War II. Mr John Slim retired from the armed forces with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, receiving an honorary promotion to Colonel. He was appointed the Order of British Empire (OBE) the following year. He is also honorary patron of the Graham Layton Trust and serves on other British social organisations.

The senior general and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla enjoyed entertainment of veteran artistes in commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day at Thabin Hall of Zeyathiri Beikman, here, on Monday evening. A total of 20 veteran artists performed many Myanmar classical songs and music to the accompaniment of Myawady Band. One more entertainment will be presented on 24 March.—Myawady

ASEAN Single Window Agreement signed

The 19th AFMM focused on global and regional economic situations clarified by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Asian Development Bank and ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office.

The delegation discussed results of Yangon Meeting and future tasks for last year’s financial inclusion conference, ASEAN financial cooperation, investment in ASEAN infrastructure, cooperation in ASEAN insurance, ASEAN custom and revenue, and a report on monitoring progress of ASEAN processes. The Union Minister, on behalf of Myanmar, signed the ASEAN Single Window Agreement.

During the trip, the union minister met with deputy finance ministers and deputy governor of central banks of ASEAN countries.

The AFMM Retreat took place at Royale Chulan Hotel. On 21 March, the union minister attended the ASEAN finance ministers and ASEAN-EU Business Council Meeting, the gathering of ASEAN finance ministers and youth entrepreneurs of ASEAN countries, a working lunch of ASEAN finance ministers and AEAN-US Business Council and the coordination meeting between ASEAN finance ministers and central bank governors of ASEAN countries.

Navy to conduct military exercise

The increased expenditure will go to stocking medicines and personal protective equipment, upgrading the national laboratory in Yangon, reinforcing ICU (Intensive Care Units) facilities and monitoring infectious diseases at entrances to Myanmar including border areas, according to the Ministry of Health.

UNION MINISTER U NYAN TUN AUNG MEETS JAPANESE AMBASSADOR MR TATESHI HIGUCHI

Yangon, 23 March — Japanese government has granted much assistance for transport sector in Myanmar. Union Minister for Transport U Nyan Tun Aung told Japanese Ambassador Mr Tateshi Higuchi at the hall of Marine Administration Department, here, on Monday.

He said that Japanese government provided three storm radars worth US$40 million, three Cherry ferries worth US$14 million to run along Pansodan-Dala route, navigation equipment worth US$12 million for safety of airports, US$400 million for two of five ports at Thilawa region and donation of US$700 million for construction of Hanthawady International Airport.

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Lack of pay hinders recruitment of electoral workers

Myitkyina, 23 March — Election sub-commissions struggle to attract workers due to a lack of pay, participants in an election reporting course heard on 20 March.

“We are carrying out our tasks voluntarily without getting any salary or fees from the government,” Chairman of Kachin State Election Sub-commission U Nyung Shwe told media at the course held at Hotel Madira in Myitkyina, Kachin State.

Although the chairman of the Union Election Commission and members receive salaries from the government, chairman and members of region, state, district and township sub-commissions do not receive payment until after the fourth year of the five-year government term. They are given daily allowance and travel allowance when they attend the meetings.

More than 370 youths under training of Buddhist culture

Dawei, 23 March — More than 370 young trainees began courses in mediation Sunday under the guidance of experienced Buddhist monks.

Mogok meditation branch No 15 in Dawei, Taninthayi Region, opened its five-day summer cultural course, the 129th of its kind, at its hall, where vice chairman U Kyee Shwe explained the management of the branch and what trainees can expect.

As of Sunday, Bhaddanta Pannadipa (Seikpyu) of Dhamma Pyinsari monastery in Mayangon Township, Yangon, and Ashin Nanadipa of Maha Thatipahtana Vihara in Hlegu Township, gave lectures on basic Buddhist culture, meditation and teachings of the Lord Buddha in Pali, English and Myanmar languages.

Mango growers expect good prices in Mandalay

Mandalay, 23 March — Mango growers in Mandalay Region are expecting good prices this season due to strong demand, but large crop yields resulting from favourable weather may put downward pressure on prices.

At present, most growers and buyers have agreed to sell the fruits to respective brokerages, but the growers forecast high yield of fruits may push down prices in the market.

Teams of agriculturists have been sharing their knowledge of cultivation technology and other insights with growers. They aim to help propel Myanmar mangoes onto the international market, while also establishing locally grown produce within the domestic market.

Dredging drains for proper flow of water in urban area

Dawei, 23 March — Dawei Township Development Affairs Committee and JCB Company cooperate in dredging the drains for proper flow of water in monsoon and for prevention of inundation at streets in Myothit Ward, Dawei, Taninthayi Region.

Drains along eight streets in the ward were dredged with the use of heavy machinery.

Secretary of Taninthayi Region Government U Tin Thein who is also Deputy Director-General of General Administration Department in Taninthayi Region inspected progress of dredging.

Township officials reported on daily works of dredging the drains.

Po Shwe Thun (Dawei)
**Regional**

**Pakistan military parade showcases latest weaponry**

Islamabad, 23 March — The Pakistani government on Monday showcased its latest military arsenal, including short-range nuclear-capable missiles and missile-carrying drones, at a Pakistan Day parade in the capital Islamabad.

President Mamnoon Hussain and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif took the salute from contingents of the army, navy, air force and paramilitary troops. Speaking at the parade, Hussain said Pakistan wants friendly relations with all its neighbours and seeks to resolve all pending issues with India.

Pakistan Day is observed to commemorate the resolution passed by the Pakistan Muslim League in 1940 that eventually led to the creation of Pakistan in 1947 with the breakup of British India. The military parade also showcased Pakistan's medium-range Shaheen-1 and long-range Shaheen-2 ground-to-ground missiles. Military aircraft staged a fly-past over the parade grounds.

No parades had been held since 2008 owing to the lack of a secure venue and the growing threat of terrorism. — Kyodo News

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**Cyclone on course to smash into Australian coast a second time**

Sydney, 23 March — Three days after making landfall, Cyclone Nathan continued to threaten Australian coastal communities, with 400 residents of a remote northern island on Monday ordered to evacuate after meteorologists warned the storm was intensifying.

It is the second time since late February that people living in Goulburn Island off Australia’s Northern Territory have had to evacuate to escape a tropical cyclone. “Police have the power to force people to evacuate,” said regional commander Bruce Porter of the Northern Territory Police. “We do not however, expect to enforce this, as residents are cooperating with the evacuation.”

Sparingly populated with little in the way of industry, the island 300 km (185 miles) north-east of Darwin is comprised largely of marshlands harbouring an abundance of wildlife including crocodiles, fish, dugong, and turtles.

Nathan crossed the eastern Australia coast on Friday before weakening over land only to regain much of its punch as it crossed over the tropical waters off the Northern Territory.

Tropical cyclones typically weaken rapidly over land, where they are cut off from their primary energy source — warm water. For this reason, coastal communities are particularly vulnerable to damage from a tropical cyclone as compared to inland regions.

Meteorologists said Nathan was moving north-west at 12km (7 miles) per hour and would strengthen over open water before again making for land.

The storm is expected to reach a category 3, moving parallel to the coast before turning south-west toward land late on Monday or early Tuesday, according to Australia’s Bureau of Meteorology.

Cyclone category three is classified as severe and generating wind gusts of between 165 and 224km (100-140 miles) per hour over open flat land.

In February, Cyclone Lam smashed near the same coastline, displacing about 200 people and destroying some 50 homes.

Meteorologists warn such cycloonic activity may increase with the chance of El Nino weather pattern in 2015 by raising ocean surface temperatures in the coming months.

El Nino can lead to drought in Southeast Asia and Australia and heavy rains in South America, hitting production of food such as rice, wheat and sugar.

Meteorologists this month forecast that the chance of an El Nino developing this year had risen to about 50 percent. — Reuters

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**Abe, Jokowi vow to boost security, economic cooperation**

Tokyo, 23 March — Japan and Indonesia agreed on Monday to boost cooperation in the security and economic areas, with Tokyo offering 140 billion yen (about $1.17 billion) in low-interest loans for construction of a mass rapid transit system in Jakarta.

In a summit in Tokyo, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Indonesian President Joko “Jokowi” Widodo welcomed the signing of a defence cooperation pact that involves Japanese capacity-building assistance for Indonesian forces, as well as bilateral cooperation in peacekeeping missions and defense equipment development, according to Japanese officials.

Abe and Jokowi, who is on his first visit to Japan since becoming president last October, agreed to launch a “Japan-Indonesia maritime forum” to expand cooperation in the maritime field such as ensuring maritime security and Japan’s assistance in promoting Indonesia’s marine-related industries, the officials said.

The leaders also agreed to set up a ministerial dialogue to boost economic and industry cooperation, including Japan’s aid in building infrastructure in Indonesia.

They affirmed a plan to promote talks between their defence and foreign ministers in line with an agreement struck between Abe and Jokowi’s predecessor, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, in December 2013 to launch so-called “two-plus-two” security talks.

The two countries have yet to hold such talks.

In an effort to ensure regional peace and stability, Abe and Jokowi called on China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to speed up consultations toward an early conclusion of a legally binding code of conduct aimed at reducing territorial and maritime conflicts in the South China Sea.

The leaders urged Beijing and other claimant states such as the Philippines and Vietnam to exercise restraint and settle the issue based on international law.

Indonesia aims to serve as a fulcrum between the Pacific and the Indian Ocean under Jokowi’s maritime axis doctrine, which calls for eliminating the sources of conflict at sea such as piracy and violations of sovereignty.

After a four-day state visit to Japan through Wednesday, Jokowi will travel to China and hold talks with President Xi Jinping, according to the Indonesian Foreign Ministry. — Kyodo News

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**Nightclub fire kills five people in Cambodia**

Phnom Penh, 23 March — Five people died in a fire that erupted early Monday morning at a nightclub located in southern Cambodia, a military police officer said.

In Nun, deputy military police chief of Svay Rieng province, told Kyodo News by phone that the fire broke out around 3:20 am at Star Karaoke and Disco in the city of Bavet on the border with Vietnam, killing four men and a woman.

All the victims were Cambodians ranging in age from 18 to 34. In addition to the deaths, another man was seriously injured.

According to In Nun, the electrical wiring at the club is believed to be the primary cause of the fire.

Bavet is located 167 kilometres southeast of the capital Phnom Penh. — Kyodo News
Female SDF officer welcomes pressure as 1st Japanese at NATO HQ

Brussels, 23 March — Chizu Kurita is feeling the pressure of being the first Japanese officer to be dispatched to the NATO headquarters in Brussels to strengthen ties between Japan and the US-dominated military alliance, but sees “good opportunities” too.

Li Col Kurita of the Ground Self-Defense Force is tasked with incorporating women’s viewpoints into security policy, such as boosting women’s roles in the military sphere and participation in peace-building activities during her two-year assignment, which started in December last year.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization was formed in April, 1949 and now consists of 28 countries across North America and Europe.

Given the scarcity of Asian officials at the NATO headquarters, Kurita, 40, jokingly said, “I feel as if I were a rare animal.” Kurita was born in the city of Kyoto in March, 1975 and decided to become a Self-Defense Forces officer when she was a high school student as a result of talking with a former member. She joined the SDF in 1997 upon graduation from university and has since been considering women’s roles in the military.

Kurita was dispatched to East Timor in 2011 as part of a UN peacekeeping operation. The experience helped her meet NATO’s conditions for being assigned to the alliance, and she was selected under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s policy of promoting women’s social advancement.

While in East Timor, Kurita saw first-hand the problems women there faced including sexual assault and hardships caused by insufficient infrastructure such as during childbirth.

Kurita hopes to utilize all these experience during her work at NATO and for the rest of her career in the SDF.

When the assignment to NATO was offered to Kurita, her husband, also an SDF member, encouraged her to take it. “You are the only one that can do it,” he was quoted as saying.

Among the opportunities, Kurita hopes to take advantage of is the chance to learn French, one of the official languages in Belgium.

Kyodo News

5.7-magnitude quake jolts Taiwan: CENC

Beijing, 23 March — A 5.7-magnitude earthquake jolted the sea off the east coast of Hualien, Taiwan at 6:13 pm on Monday (Beijing time), according to the China Earthquake Networks Centre.

The epicenter was monitored at 23.8 degrees north latitude and 121.7 degrees east longitude, with a depth of 20 kilometres, the centre said in a statement.

The island’s seismological agency measured the quake at 5.4-magnitude, with a depth of 26.3 km, adding that the epicenter was 35.8 km off Hualien County government.

The quake was felt in Taipei and there has been no immediate reports of casualties.

Xinhua

Big blaze in inter-Korean border parkout, no casualties reported

Seoul, 23 March — A big blaze was put out about two hours after the fire broke out in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) in South Korea.

The fire, which started from a South Korean guard post located some 600 metres north of the Military Demarcation Line, spread to the South Korean side of the demilitarized zone and reached the South Korean military from where firefighting helicopters were sent to the site after receiving approval from the Defense Ministry.

Li Tao, a South Korean firefighting authority, said the fire was extinguished at about 3:10 pm while firefighters were putting out live embers. No casualties have been reported.

The South Korean military was quoted as saying that DPRK soldiers were seen extinguishing embers near the site, indicating a near completion of their firefighting.

The Dora Observatory is South Korea’s northernmost point in its western front, near which the inter-Korean transit office is situated for customs, immigration and quarantine activities.

China’s says ties with Japan heading in good direction

Beijing, 23 March — Yu Zhengsheng, the Chinese Communist Party’s fourth-ranking leader, said on Monday that steps toward improving relations with Tokyo are gradually getting back on a positive track.

“Sino-Japanese relations are currently improving. The force is not strong yet, but it is heading in a good direction,” Yu said during a meeting in Beijing with a group of senior lawyers of Japan’s ruling coalition parties, one of the politicians said.

Yu said China’s forthcoming commemorations to mark the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II are not intended to fan resentment against Japan and therefore are a good chance to mend bilateral ties chilled over territory and views on wartime history.

Kyodo News

Four foreigners go on trial in Indonesia on terrorism charges

Jakarta, 23 March — Four Uyghur-speaking foreigners who were found carrying fake Turkish passports last year went on trial in Jakarta on Monday for alleged involvement in terrorism activities.

The four men — identified as Ahmet Bozoglan, 27, Abdul Basit Tuzev, 23, Abdullah, 28, and Ahmet Mahrmut, 20 — were being tried along with four Indonesian prisoners in the North Jakarta District Court.

The eight defendants were indicted under the 2003 Antiterrorism Law for “having an intention” to join the militant group Mujahidin Indonesia Timur headed by Santoso, one of Indonesia’s most wanted terror suspects.

Police say the four foreign suspects do not speak Turkish among themselves but instead use Uyghur, the language of a Muslim ethnic minority group in China’s restive far-western region of Xinjiang where scores of violent incidents linked to separatism have occurred in recent years.

They went on trial as Turks, even though Turkey’s embassy in Jakarta does not recognize them as Turkish citizens, nor has the Chinese government recognized the eight as Uyghurs.

Four Uyghurs who were found by Indonesian immigration authorities while travelling to Europe were recognized as Chinese nationals.

The eight defendants are accused of being part of an “evil conspiracy” to aid and abet acts of terrorism and to provide financial and material assistance to Santoso’s group, which has been linked to Jemaah Islamiyah, believed to be the Southeast Asian wing of al-Qaeda.

They were arrested last September while on their way to Poto Regency on Sulawesi Island, known to be a magnet for Islamist radicals following bloody clashes there between Christians and Muslims between 1999 and 2001 that left about 1,000 people dead.

A peace pact ended the Peso conflict in 2001, but Islamic extremists affiliated with Jemaah Islamiyah continue to be active there.

In December, Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs Tedyjo Edhy Purdijatno warned that at least 110 foreigners identified as Islamic State militants have been detected in Poto, a development he called “very worrying.”

Kyodo News

Japan Ground Self-Defense Force Lt Col Chizu Kurita, the first Japanese official dispatched to the headquarters of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Brussels, is seen in this photo. She was dispatched as the advisor to NATO’s Committee for Women, Peace and Security in the office of the Secretary General in December for approximately two years.

Kyodo News

China says ties with Japan heading in good direction

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Kyodo News

Chinese Democratic Party Secretary General Sadakazu Tanigaki (C) and Komeito party Secretary General Yoshihisa Inoue (L) meet with Yu Zhengsheng, the Chinese Communist Party’s fourth-ranking leader, in Beijing on 23 March, 2015. The meeting marked another sign of increased communication between the two countries, whose ties have long been chilled over territory and views on wartime history.

Kyodo News

Liberal Democratic Party Secretary General Sadakazu Tanigaki (C) and Komeito party Secretary General Yoshihisa Inoue (L) meet with Yu Zhengsheng, the Chinese Communist Party’s fourth-ranking leader, in Beijing on 23 March, 2015. The meeting marked another sign of increased communication between the two countries, whose ties have long been chilled over territory and views on wartime history.

Kyodo News
Greek PM warns Merkel of ‘impossible’ debt obligation

ATHENS, 23 March — Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras warned German Chancellor Angela Merkel that it will be “impossible” for his country to service debt obligations due in coming weeks if the European Union does not give his country any short-term financial assistance, the Financial Times reported on Sunday.

The warning was sent to Merkel in a letter dated on 15 March and came just before she agreed to meet Tsipras on the sidelines of an EU summit last Thursday.

Tsipras on the sidelines of the EU summit last Thursday warned that if the European Central Bank does not “reevaluate” its stance on Greece, “we are surprised at the timeliness, tone and content of the letter, which the Western media have called unaccept- able.”

Greece’s Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras

Representatives at Tsipras’s and Merkel’s office were not immediately available for comment.

“It ought to be clear that the ECB’s special restrictions when combined with disbursement delays would make it impossible for any government to service its debt,” Tsipras wrote. The Greek PM said his country was committed to fulfilling its obligations in good faith and to close cooperation with its partners. But he also warned Merkel that failure to find short-term funding could lead to much bigger problems, the newspaper said.

Tsipras said servicing the debts would lead to a sharp deterioration in Greece’s already depressed social economy, “a prospect that I will not countenance.”

Merkel and Tsipras have sought to play down the drama of the Greek leader’s first official visit to Berlin on Monday, but open skepticism among the chancellor’s allies has spawned media portrayals of a Western-style showdown.

Although Merkel acknowledged last week that she and Tsipras would talk “and perhaps also argue,” she said it would not be a defining moment in the standoff between Athens and its euro zone creditors over the terms of its 240 billion-euro bailout deals.

US will not take floor at UN rights debate on Israel, Palestinians

GENEVA, 23 March — The United States will not take the floor at the main UN human rights forum on Monday during the annual debate on violations committed in the Palestinian territories, a US spokesman in Geneva told Reuters.

The step, which is unprecedented at the 47-member state forum where Washington unfailingly defends Israel, follows signals that the Obama administration is undertaking a “reassessment” of relations with the Jewish state.

“The US delegation will not be speaking about Palestine today,” a US spokesman in Geneva told Reuters in response to a query as the debate began. He declined further comment.

Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s administration acknowledged on Sunday that his election-eve disavowal of a Palestinian peace process had caused a rift with the White House, but blamed US President Barack Obama’s unprecedented criticism on a misunderstanding.

Russia threatens to aim nuclear missiles at Denmark ships if it joins NATO shield

COPENHAGEN, 23 March — Russia threatened to aim nuclear missiles at Danish warships if Denmark joins NATO’s missile defence system, in comments Copenhagen called unacceptable and NATO said would not contribute to peace.

Denmark said in August it would contribute radar capacity on some of its warships to the missile shield, which the Western alliance says is designed to protect members from missile launches from countries like Iran. Moscow opposes the system, arguing that it could reduce the effectiveness of its own nuclear arsenal, leading to a new Cold War-style arms race.

In an interview in the newspaper Jyllands-Posten, the Russian ambassador to Denmark, Mikhail Vanin, said he did not think Denmark fully understood the consequences of joining the programme.

“If that happens, Danish warships will be targets for Russian nuclear missiles,” Vanin told the newspaper.

Asked to respond, NATO spokeswoman Oana Lungescu said Denmark was a staunch member of the alliance and NATO would defend all allies against any threat.

“We have made clear that NATO’s ballistic missile defence is not directed at Russia or any country, but is meant to defend against missile threats. This decision was taken a long time ago, so we are surprised at the timing, tone and content of the statements made by Russia’s ambassador to Denmark,” she said. “Such statements do not inspire confidence or contribute to predictability, peace or stability,” she added.

Tensions between Moscow and the West have grown since the imposition of economic sanctions on Russia over a pro-Russian rebellion in eastern Ukraine. NATO has recorded increased activity by the Russian navy and air force in the Nordic region.

No missiles are to be placed on Danish soil under the NATO programme, but they could be deployed some day in Greenland, a part of the kingdom, according to Jyllands-Posten.

“Denmark will become a part of the threat against Russia. It will be less peaceful, and relations with Russia will be damaged,” Vanin said, adding that Russia has missiles which would be able to penetrate the future missile shield.

Denmark’s foreign minister Martin Lidegaard said Vanin’s comments were unacceptable.

“Russia knows very well that NATO’s missile defence is not aimed at them,” Lidegaard told Jyllands-Posten.

NATO’s top military commander, US Air Force General Philip Breedlove, told a Brussels conference on Sunday that the comments from the Russian ambassador were the “next step” in a campaign against countries that joined the shield.

“Romania came under great pressure when they became a part of the (missile shield), Poland is coming under great pressure and now anyone else who wants to join in to this defensive capability will come under this diplomatic and political pressure,” Breedlove said.

US President Barack Obama (L) listens as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu delivers a statement to the media from the Colonnade outside the Oval Office of the White House in Washington on 1 Sept, 2010.—Reuters

Britain tells United States: We’ll always fight by your side

LONDON, 23 March — British Defence Secretary Michael Fallon told the United States on Monday his country would always be at Washington’s side on the battlefield “when the chips are down”, part of a concerted campaign to assuage US fears over British defence spending.

The US army’s chief of staff said earlier this month he was very concerned about the impact of spending cuts on British defence and future cooperation with London, traditionally a staunch US ally.

Ahead of an unusually close national election on 7 May, Prime Minister David Cameron’s Conservatives and the opposition Labour Party are under pressure from lawmakers across the country to commit to protect defence spending after the ballot.

Both have dodged firm pledges.

Fallon, who held talks with US Defence Secretary Ash Carter earlier this month, said Washington and concerned British lawmakers had nothing to worry about.


When the chips are down, the UK will always be by their side,” Fallon wrote in the Daily Telegraph. “Our American friends know that the UK is not about to let down its guard.”

Fallon said Britain’s finances were on a firm foundation, that it was investing in its military and had the biggest defence budget in the EU, and that it was putting its capabilities to work in places like Iraq.

The United States knew it could rely on Britain, he said, saying that when Carter greeted him in Washington earlier this month he told him: “Thank God we’re in this together.”

Reuters
PERSPECTIVES

Tuesday, 24 March, 2015

It is difficult to change mindset overnight

By Myint Win Thein

Physical conditions have a great influence on thoughts of people. For example, people demand more wages when they have to work for others, but when the same people become employers, they try to get more profits by paying their workers lower wages. This is because of their new physical conditions of being employers and their thoughts have changed completely. It is sure that they will continue to demand if they are still working for their employers.

Therefore, it can sometimes be very difficult for people to change their mindsets as long as the physical conditions around have not changed yet. Unless the physical conditions change, they will continue to behave in the same way as they have done for years. It is also the case with some countries struggling to change from an old system to a new one. Some bad practices of the old still persist for some time however much the international community help them.

It is common in the international relations that some developed countries pour in their support when an underdeveloped country tries to change to a new system. However, their support proved vain as long as the physical conditions of the country have not changed. In such countries, conferences, forums and workshops on the best practices of the developed countries failed to produce the desired results.

Write for us

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.

Human population on this Earth is infected with TB! Innovations are indicated to Mycobacterium infection

Dr. Aung Soe & Aung Kyaw Moe
Retired State Medical Superintendent

Myanmar is one of the world’s 22 high-TB-burden countries. So also is one of the 27 high-Multi-Drug-Resistant-TB (MDR-TB) burden countries. TB prevalence rate in Myanmar is 3 times higher than global average and one of the highest TB prevalent countries in Asia. Annual Risk of Infection (ARI) was 1.5 percent in 2009. An estimated 9000 cases of multi drug TB occur each year. Extensive drug resistant TB (XDR-TB) has been reported since 2003. According to Annual Report 2011 of NTP, NTP is usually doing passive case findings in all DOTs townships and also started active case finding activities using mobile teams based in Yangon and Mandalay. Diagnosis is mainly done by sputum smear microscopy. Case finding activities are strengthened by radiological examination. Culture and Drug Susceptibility Testing (DST) are carried out at National TB Refer- ence Laboratory (Aung San) and Upper Myanmar TB laboratory (Mandalay).

Lamp probe assay, liquid culture and DST using Myco- bacterial Growth Indicator (MGIT) were introduced in both TB laboratories in 2010.

Around the world steps to stop tuberculosis (TB) are having an impact. Today, the epidemic is continuing its decline. But the rate of decline is far too slow, and TB still takes a life every 20 seconds. Millions of people are being benefited from treatment through coordinated national efforts, but millions more are still missing out. Unless we accelerate action, the numbers of those falling ill will continue to expand.

Together, we need to help prevent infection, find all people who are ill far earlier and provide treatment for all. WHO has a Stop TB Strategy that can do this and a Global Plan to Stop TB that sets the course, of course, is the key depart- ment responsible for under- taking health researches in collaboration with pro- gramme managers. Bio medical TB Research is mainly directed towards the areas which help is the case-detection, rapid and improved diagnostic methods for TB and MDR-TB, rates and patterns of anti-TB drug resistance, prompt and effective treatment and under- standing of the molecular epidemiology. Molecular methods help diagnosing conventionally those difficult to diagnose patients who transmit infection to the communities. So also, molecular methods help early detection of TB-HIV co-infections and extra-pulmonary TB. (Extra-pulmonary means TB occurring in organs of the body other than lungs, such as, brain-cover- ings, lymph glands, abdomi- nal organs, reproductive or- gans, urinary system, including kidney, bladder etc.). Amplification tech- niques such as Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) also plays an important role of rapid diagnosis. PCT diag- nose TB in-negative HIV/ TB cases and inconclusive chest X-rays. Accuracy of Loop-mediated isothermal amplification (LAMP), diagnostic method was dis- cussed during Myanmar Health Research Congress 2012. Histopathological ex- amination (HPE) was con- sidered as a gold standard. LAMP diagnosed 57 (79%) tuberculous lymph adenitis (enlargement of nodes at arm-pit, neck, abdomen, groins etc) due to influenza- tion, as a natural de- fense-mechanism to block the spread of infection and 15 (21%) non tuberculous lymphadenitis cases. Moreover, DNA-based innovative methods are needed for epidemiological purposes, it is learnt. Out- break of investigations, epi- demiological links, labora- tory cross contaminations, distinction between pre-in- fection and reactivation, analysis of transmission be- tween sub populations etc involve Molecular Strain Typing of M. tuberculosis by DNA banding based method.

Collaboration with USA, Australia, UK and other EU nations, Japan, Republic of Korea and other eastern countries, ASEAN co-members is beneficial for DMR, NTP, Universities of Medicine and others domestic institutes and organizations. Modest KOI-CA has assisted infectious diseases scrutinizing labo- ratory research building in DMR-LM premises is one of the symbolic evidence of Myanmar-Republic of Korea collaboration.

In controlling tubercu- losis, media inclusion is crucial. I believe. Health edu- cation is simple digestive domestic languages in one of the cornerstones to get rid of TB from the list of public health problems. Community participation, of course, is necessary, as World TB Day falls on 24 March.
Myawady, 23 March — Courses on domestic science and advanced tailoring at the Women’s Vocational Training School in Myawady, Kayin State, concluded on 20 March. The school has helped hundreds of local women find jobs by providing knowledge through training courses and helping them establish their own businesses, district deputy commissioner U Lwin Ko Oo said.

Officials presented awards to outstanding trainees and viewed their graduation works. An official of the Labour Department presented labour registration cards to the trainees. — Htein Lin Aung (IPRD)

Vocational courses help local women find employment

World TB Day talks outline role of designated free clinics

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Meiktila General Hospital to admit more patients at new buildings

Meiktila, 23 March — The Ministry of Health provided K300 million to Meiktila General Hospital in the 2013-14 fiscal year for health care services to local residents with medicines free of charge.

At present, the hospital admits about 200 patients from Meiktila, Pyawbwe, Wundwin, Thazi, Kyauk-padaung, Mahlaing and Taungtha townships daily.

The Ministry of Health spent K300 million on installing a two two-storey patient wards and an operating theatre.

At present, three new buildings, each with 200 beds, are ready to admit patients. — GNLM-018

Kachin State to get parliament building next year

Myitkyina, 23 March — Construction of a parliament building for Kachin State started on 10 October 2014 beside Myitkyina-Myitsone road in Mankhein Ward, Myitkyina.

Civil engineers said that it will take at least two years for the construction of the 281-square-foot one-storey building.

The government allotted K219.87 million to Manaw Ayeya and Bamah- ti construction companies for the project in the 2014-15 fiscal year.

While the government has formed new assemblies for regions and states, Kachin State’s Hluttaw meetings are being convened at the office of state government.— GNLM-004

Election sub-commissions to release voter lists on 15 June

Myaungmya, 23 March — In preparation for the 2015 general elections, Myaungmya and Labutta district election sub-commissions recently opened the basic voter list compilation course at the hall of Myaungmya District General Administration Department in Ayeyawady Region.

Chairman of Region Election Sub-commission U Aung Myint gave an opening address on techniques for listing voters.

U July Ko Ko of the International Foundation Electoral System (IFES) explained the process of compiling voter lists across the nation. A total of 23 trainees from Myaungmya District and 13 from Labutta District took courses on 18 and 19 March. According to the regional election sub-commission, voter lists must be compiled at the end of May 2015 and released on 15 June. — Aung Min (IPRD)

World TB Day talks outline role of designated free clinics

Nay Pyi Taw, 23 March — To commemorate World Tuberculosis Day, Dr Nang Kyawt Khang of Pobothiri Township Hospital gave lectures Monday on control of the disease across the world to local residents at the hall in Yanaung Village.

Nurse Grade-I Daw Saw Myint of the Township Health Department explained TB infection and symptoms, as well as health care services of designated clinics with medicines are provided free of charge.

At the talks, they emphasized the WHO-endorsed therapy known as directly-observed treatment, short course, or DOTS.

The talks was attended by Health Assistant-1 Daw Nang Shwe Htay, health staff and local residents. — Shwe Ye Yint

Shadaw Village in Tatkon Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area gets a library building on 22 March. In conjunction with the opening ceremony of the library worth K1.4 million, wellwisher U Kyaw Hlaing-Daw Yu and family donated books and publications worth K100,000 to the library through officials.

Tin Soe Lwin (TATKON IPRD)

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Syrian insurgents ‘mimicking ruthlessness’ of army: rights group

BEIRUT, 23 March — Insurgent groups in Syria have carried out scores of indiscriminate attacks that have killed and maimed civilians in violation of the laws of war, a Human Rights Watch report said on Monday.

The report said armed groups could not point to abuses by government forces and allied militias to justify their own violence, which it said had often targeted areas with a high concentration of religious minorities.

“We’ve seen a race to the bottom in Syria, with rebel groups mimicking the ruthlessness of government forces from escalating consequences for civilians,” said Nadim Houry, HRW’s deputy Middle East director.

The Syrian crisis started in March 2011 with Arab Spring-inspired protests against President Bashar al-Assad. The uprising turned into armed conflict as the security forces cracked down on protesters.

Four years on, more than 200,000 people have been killed in a civil war pitting the army and allied militias against a range of insurgent groups, including hardline jihadists such as Islamic State and mainstream rebels.

The report covered attacks between January 2012 to April 2014 in and around Damascus and Homs. Some attacks were claimed by groups such as al-Qaeda’s Syria wing Nusra Front and the ultra-hardline Islamic State, HRW said.

However, members of the “Free Syrian Army” and other rebel groups also appear to have carried out deliberate, deadly attacks on civilian areas, the HRW report found.

Free Syrian Army is a name adopted by a plethora of mainstream rebel groups that often operate independently of each other. Some of these groups have received support from Assad’s Western and Arab foes. The research was based on victim and witness accounts, on-site investigations, videos and information on social media. It described attacks using car bombs, mortars and rockets.

The report documented 17 car bombings and other explosions in the Damascus countryside, central Syria and various locations in Homs.

Many of the areas targeted have a large population of religious minorities including Christians, Alawites, Shi’ites and Druze which are seen by Sunni Muslims in Syria as supportive of the government, the report said.

Assad is an Alawite and his allies include the Shi’ite Islamist government in Iran.

The report urged the United Nations Security Council to refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court and impose an arms embargo on forces implicated in committing or facilitating systemic abuses, whichever side they were fighting on.

TUNIS, 23 March — One Tunisian soldier was killed and two wounded in a landmine blast on Sunday in a central region bordering Algeria where security forces have been fighting Islamist militants, authorities said.

Tunisian forces are set by terrorists near the Algerian border in Kef province,” army spokesman Bel Hassen Ouslati said.

Tunisia has emerged as a model of democratic transition four years after the revolt that ousted Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali.

But its armed forces have clashed with militants in remote areas near Algeria’s border and authorities estimate thousands of Tunisians have travelled to fight alongside Islamists in neighbouring Libya and in Syria.

Bodies of three Japanese slain in Tunisia to return to Japan on Tuesday

The bodies of three Japanese tourists who were killed by the terrorist attack in Tunisia last week are scheduled to return to Japan by air late Tuesday afternoon, a source close to the matter said on Monday.

The planned return of the victims’ bodies on a commercial jet to Nara airport near Tokyo may be delayed if an ongoing arrangement with the Tunisian government encounters a problem, according to the source.

The victims are Machiyo Narusawa, a 66-year-old resident of Tokyo’s Arakawa Ward, Chemi Miyazaki, a 49-year-old resident of Sayama, Saitama Prefecture, and her daughter Haruka, 22. Three other Japanese were injured in the shooting rampage on a museum in Tunis last Wednesday that killed 21 people and left more than 40 others injured—Kyodo News
Vietnam reports outbreak of avian H1N1 flu among human

HANOI, 23 March — Vietnam has diagnosed the first outbreak of avian H1N1 flu on humans in 2015, said Vietnam’s Ministry of Health’s General Department of Preventive Medicine (GDPM) in the capital Hanoi on Monday.

On Thursday, Vietnam, a total of 33 victims, who mostly are students at a primary school in Central Highlands Lam Dong province, some 1,050 km south of Hanoi, were reported with symptoms of fever, coughing, and running nose, stated the GDPM.

Samples of these victims have been tested to give positive results with avian H1N1 flu, which caused an epidemic in Vietnam in 2009, Vietnam’s state-run television VTV quoted a report in the GDPM as saying on Monday.

The 33 above-mentioned cases can temporarily dismissed from school for isolation and medical treatment.

The GDPM representative advised local authorities to cooperate with the healthcare sector for early detection of new H1N1 flu case, so that they will be isolated, diagnosed and treated promptly.

Singapore, 23 March — Oil prices dropped almost a percentage point on Monday after Saudi Arabia said over the weekend that the market defined prices and the kingdom would not unilaterally cut its output to defend prices.

Since oil prices started to fall in September, analysts have expected OPEC’s biggest producer to eventually curb its output as it has done many times in the past to support prices.

Yet Riyadh has so far opted to keep its output stable to protect market share against non-OPEC producers such as the United States — where production has soared as a result of the shale exploration boom, and Russia.

Benchmark Brent crude oil futures was trading at $54.82 a barrel at 5:48 am, down 50 cents from their last settlement. US WTI crude was down 64 cents at $45.93 (31 pounds) a barrel.

A customer prepares to fill up his tank in a gasoline station in Nice on 5 Dec, 2014.—Reuters

Oil prices drop after Saudi Arabia says it will not cut output alone

A customer prepares to fill up his tank in a gasoline station in Nice on 5 Dec, 2014.—Reuters

Nikkei rises to 15-yr high in morning after Wall St gains

TOKYO, 23 March — The Nikkei index rose to a 15-year high Monday morning as investors grew more open to taking risks after shares on Wall Street gained firmly before the weekend.

The 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average rose to 209.49 points, or 1.07 percent, from Friday to 19,769.71. It briefly climbed to 19,775.68, the highest intraday level since April 2000.

The broader Topix index of all First Section issues on the Tokyo Stock Exchange was up 13.23 points, or 0.84 percent, to 1,593.74.

The market opened higher on the back of the strong performance of US stocks on Friday, with the Nasdaq index rising for the fifth straight day to the highest level in 15 years.

Analysts said investors continued to be confident that Japanese stocks will continue their bull run, as businesses look for growth in the US economy.

A customer prepares to fill up his tank in a gasoline station in Nice on 5 Dec, 2014.—Reuters

Medical staff working with Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF) prepare to bring food to patients kept in an isolation area at the MSF Ebola treatment centre in Kailahun on 20 July, 2014.—Reuters

Slow Ebola response cost thousands of lives: MSF

DAKAR, 23 March — The slow international response to the West Africa Ebola outbreak created an avoidable tragedy that cost thousands of lives, a leading medical charity said in a report that first working in the dark.

The world’s worst Ebola epidemic has killed over 10,200 people in the three most affected countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone since March 2014 when it was first confirmed in the forest region of Guinea.

Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), which first raised the alarm about Ebola, said in a report published Monday that everyone from national governments to the World Health Organization (WHO) had created bottlenecks that prevented the epidemic being quickly snuffed out.

“The Ebola outbreak has often been described as a perfect storm: a cross-border epidemic in countries with weak public health systems who had never seen Ebola before,” said Christopher Stokes, MSF’s general director, in the report.

“It is too convenient an explanation. For the Ebola outbreak to spiral this far out of control required many institutions to fail. And they did, with tragic and avoidable consequences.”

In a scathing report titled “Pushed to the limit and beyond”, MSF said its warnings in June that the epidemic was out of control and that it could not respond on its owns were dismissed as alarmist.

Guinea and Sierra Leone downplayed the epidemic and accused MSF of spreading fear and panic.

In June, the Sierra Leone government told the WHO to report only lab-confirmed deaths — falsely reducing the death toll, the report said.

Kenema hospital refused to release Ebola patients such as the United States — where production has soared as a result of the shale exploration boom, and Russia.

When MSF first declared there was an unprecedented Ebola outbreak at the end of March, the WHO rejected the assessment. It finally declared a public health emergency on 8 August, prompting a belated international response.

MSF branded the response a “global coalition for inaction” and said by the end of August, it had to turn away patients in Liberia leaving many to die in their homes or on the streets.

“Hesitation led to horror,70 percent from the new three-year business and profitability and return to shareholders under its new three-year business strategy.”

TDK gained 140 yen, or 1.6 percent, to 9,130 yen for the next business year announced a target to reach zero Ebo-

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“We had to make horrendous decisions about who we could let into the center,” said MSF coordinator Rosa Crestani, who worked at the organization’s Ebola center in Monrovia, which could only been opened for 30 minutes a day because of the demand for beds.

“We could only offer one minute per patient. It was an incomprehensible exercise only one minute per patient. It was an incomprehensible exercise only one minute per patient. It was an incomprehensible exercise only one minute per patient. It was an incomprehensible exercise only one minute per patient. It was an incomprehensible exercise only one minute per patient. It was an incomprehensible exercise only one minute per patient.
**Sri Lankan president gives back land to Northern Tamils**

Tokyo, 23 March — Sri Lanka has returned land to the Northern Province of the country, a step towards peaceful reconciliation. The return of the land is part of the government's efforts to resolve issues faced by the people in the North and East. Sri Lanka is committed to building peace and reconciliation among Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim communities, and to eradicating the mistrust, fear and suspicion among communities. The government has already given high priority to resolve land issues of the people in the North and East," Sirisena said. The president said the government is also now implementing a program to rebuild the religious places in the eastern and northern provinces devastated by war.

**Japanese tourist missing in South Australia**

Sydney, 23 March — Police in the state of South Australia on Monday said a 52-year-old Japanese male tourist has gone missing on the state’s far west coast. The police said in a statement that they have completed a search of the area which began on Saturday and have been searched for a total of 520 days earlier than usual. The police believe the items belong to the tourist, who may have been cycling in the area, the state, and that the last confirmed sighting of him was on 11 March at the coastal town of Ceduna. The Japanese Consulate in Melbourne which has jurisdiction over the area has not disclosed the man’s name or other details.

**Cherry trees come into bloom in Tokyo, two days earlier than last year**

Tokyo, 23 March — Cherry trees have come into bloom in the Japanese capital, two days earlier than last year and three days sooner than usual, the Japan Meteorological Agency said the same day.

**Bank Holiday**

All Banks will be closed on 27th March (Friday) “Armed Forces Day” and 4th April (Wednesday) “Bank Holiday Day” 2015 being public holidays under the Negotiable Instrument Act.

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**Sri Lanka’s example in nuclear disarmament**

The mayors of the two Japanese cities that suffered US atomic bombings in 1945 on Monday urged the central government to support an Austrian document among UN members that calls for a ban on nuclear weapons. Vienna unveiled its “Austrian Pledge” document at an international conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. In mid-January, it asked UN members to express their support for the paper. After the meeting, Taue told reporters that Japan’s nuclear umbrella serves as a “constraint in some sense” when Japan seeks to display leadership in nuclear issues. “But I want Japan to transcend such discussion...and take a new step toward a nuclear-free world,” Taue said. Sources close to the matter have said Japan plans not to support the document and that the United States, its security ally, is urging it not to.

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**Tour of North Chennai**

The president said that the last confirmed sighting of the man was on 11 March at the coastal town of Ceduna. The Japanese Consulate in Melbourne which has jurisdiction over the area has not disclosed the man’s name or other details.

**Kyodo News**

**Kyodo News**

**Kyodo News**
HK court hands down life sentence to man who dismembered parents

HONG KONG, 23 March — The Hong Kong High Court sentenced a 31-year-old man convicted of killing his parents and dismembering their bodies to life imprisonment on Monday.

Henry Chau was given two life sentences, one for killing his father Chau Wing-ki, 65, and the other for killing his mother Siu Yue-t-yee, 63, and a 56-month prison term for preventing the lawful burial of a deceased person. According to court testimony, Chau lured his parents to an empty residential flat in March 2013, killed them and dismembered their bodies.

Prosecutors gave a gruesome account of the murder case that at one point in the trial prompted the discharge of two jurors on grounds of psychological distress. Chau, who has already served time in prison for mishandling the bodies. He was released following the conviction handed down Friday as he has already served time in prison.
US rapper Kendrick Lamar scores UK album number one

LONDON, 23 March — US rapper Kendrick Lamar scored his first British number one album on Sunday when his “To Pimp A Butterfly” knocked Sam Smith’s “In the Lonely Hours” off the top spot in its first week of release, the Official Charts Company said on Sunday.

Lamar’s follow-up to his 2012 debut had already broken global records for music streaming service Spotify when it was streamed more than 9.6 million times on the service on Monday. British singer-songwriter Smith, however, retained his position at the top of the Official Singles Chart for a second week with his collaboration with John Legend, “Love Yourself”.

I drank loads of water to lose weight: Khloe Kardashian

LOS ANGELES, 23 March — Reality TV star Khloe Kardashian has revealed she drinks five litres of water a day. Khloe, 30, said she lost weight after watching the TV show "Keeping Up with the Kardashians." She switched to good old-fashioned diet and exercise, reported People magazine.

The film also stars Marie Avgeropoulos and is in theaters now.—PTI

Hard to predict film’s success: Will Ferrell

LOS ANGELES, 23 March — “Get Hard” star Will Ferrell feels it is hard to predict the success of his films. The 47-year-old actor said he had no sense of how well his projects would perform when released, reported Digital Spy.

“Sadly no. I have no sense whatsoever. My barometer hasn’t gotten any sharper. I think anyone who says they know right away, they are lying. When you see the edited film, you just have to feel, ‘We made something that feels different, fresh and new and it has a strong point of view.’ It’s up to the gods at that point.”

You never know when a movie is going to hit the zeitgeist for whatever reason, whether it’s release date, what’s out there at the same time, are people in the mood to see a comedy at a certain point? All those factors you really aren’t in control of. I don’t feel like my gauge is sharpened in any way,” he said.

LOS ANGELES, 23 March — James Corden will launch his late-night talk show “The Late Late Show” with Hollywood stars Tom Hanks and Mila Kunis. The first broadcast of The Late Late Show, will air on Monday night on CBS.—Reuters

Fictional TV presidents more popular than Obama

WASHINGTON, 23 March — Whether it’s the earnest Josiah Bartlet from “The West Wing” or the manipulative Frank Underwood in “House of Cards,” Americans prefer television presidents to their real-life PO-TUS, President Barack “No Drama” Obama.

A Reuters-Ipsos poll taken this month found 54 percent of Americans held an unfavourable opinion of Obama, known for his cool and cautious presidential style, while 46 percent were favourable.

In contrast, asked to imagine that David Palmer of “24” was president, 89 percent of those who had seen the real-time Fox counterterrorism drama said they held a favourable rating of the decisive president played by Dennis Haysbert.

Martin Sheen’s Jed Bartlet of “The West Wing” — beloved by Democrats, including many who work in Obama’s White House — was rated favourably by 82 percent of its NBC viewers.

In the dark universe of “Battlestar Galactica” on SyFy, president Laura Roslin, played by Mary McDonnell, drew a 78 percent favourable rating among fans of her quest to find earth and escape the Cylons, a race of humanoid killer robots.

With Americans sharply divided along partisan lines, it is unlikely that any real-life president could achieve sky-high favourability ratings, said Tevi Troy, a presidential historian and author of “What Jefferson, Ike Watched, and Obama Tweeted,” a study of popular culture in the White House.

“Pretty much half the country is going to be predisposed against you just because that’s the way we line up with Republicans and Democrats,” Troy said.

Unlike fictional presidents, with their camera-ready looks and perfect timing, real-life presidents sometimes stumble. Republican Ronald Reagan, who was an actor before turning to politics and eventually becoming president, was an exception, Troy said.—Reuters
**Djokovic fells Federer to keep Indian Wells title**

**Indian Wells, 23 March** — World number one Novak Djokovic fought off a determined challenge from Swiss great Roger Federer on Sunday to claim back-to-back titles at Indian Wells and celebrate his 50th tournament win on the ATP Tour.

The Serb made hard work of his 6-3, 6-7(5), 6-2 victory in the BNP Paribas Open final, giving up the second set after serving three double-faults, but he recovered to clinch a fourth tournament at Indian Wells following victories in 2008, 2011 and 2014.

Djokovic joins Federer as the only other man to win the tournament four times. Enjoying a fine season that started with a fifth Australian Open triumph, Djokovic thrashed finalist Andy Murray, the man he beat at Melbourne Park, and showed the same ruthless beat at Indian Wells.

Andy Murray, the man he beat at Indian Wells on Sunday, became the only other man to win the tournament four times.

He dropped just four points on serve and after taking the opening set, it was hard to see how the 33-year-old Swiss could recover.

But Federer, trailing 4-3, lifted his game to break Djokovic, bringing the Californian crowd to their feet.

Djokovic served for the championship at 5-4 in the tiebreak but gave up two double-faults, allowing Federer to force a third set that had looked an unlikely prospect.

World number one Djokovic stole an early break and looked back in command at 2-0, but Federer rallied again to break back.

Ultimately it was double-faults from the Swiss that proved costly, allowing Djokovic to break again and then hold firm for victory.

“I thought overall it was a great match from my side, very solid, great intensity, great commitment to hit every ball,” said Djokovic.

“Credit to Roger for fighting through. Showed again why he’s a competitor and champion, somebody that never gives up. When we got to the third set obviously it was anybody’s game.”

Djokovic’s win moved him above coach Boris Becker in terms of career titles at Indian Wells, with 10.

**Halep battles back to claim Indian Wells crown**

**Indian Wells, 23 March** — Simona Halep won the BNP Paribas title with a 2-6, 7-5, 6-4 victory over former world number one Jelena Jankovic in a pulsating final at Indian Wells on Sunday.

Serbian Jankovic was serving for the title at 5-4 in the second set but world number three Halep won the next three games and battled back for the biggest title of her career.

“I don’t know how I won today because I didn’t play my best,” Halep said. “I didn’t play good tennis but I just wanted to fight till the end.”

“I just had the confidence that I have my chance here in this tournament, and I just did everything to get it. I got it, and I’m really happy.”

The tense encounter had both players making plenty of mistakes but 23-year-old Halep displayed determination to secure her third title of the year following Shenzhen and Dubai.

The 30-year-old Jankovic, who had a testy exchange with her coach, showed clear signs of nerves when she had the title within her grasp in the second set and tired badly in the third.

Halep had a bye before reaching the quarterfinals but was broken back on both occasions, the Romanian fighting for every point before finally closing out the 63-minute set.

Both players struggled on serve in the third but Halep captured the decisive break at 5-4 to secure her 11th WTA title.

“I think at the end of the second set I got a little bit nervous,” Jankovic said. “I got a little bit tentative and that was my big mistake. I let her come back into the match.”

“Kind of let those nerves take the best out of me. That shouldn’t happen.”

**Japan’s Ito youngest winner on table tennis World Tour**

Japan’s Mima Ito speaks to reporters after defeating Petrissa Solja of Germany 4-2 in the women’s singles final of the German Open table tennis tournament in Bremen, Germany, on 22 March, 2015.

The 14-year-old Ito became the youngest player to win an International Table Tennis Federation World Tour tournament.

KYODO NEWS

**Bremen, Germany, 23 March** — Japan’s Mima Ito beat Petrissa Solja of Germany in the women’s singles final at the German Open on Sunday, becoming the youngest to win on the table tennis World Tour.

The 14-year-old Ito, ranked 38th in the world, defeated world No 4 Feng Tianwei in the semifinals 4-0 before battling past 45th-ranked Solja 4-2 in the final.

“I was able to make it this far after breaking through the early competition,” said Ito, who attends Osaka’s Shoyo Junior High School. “I had contained my feelings of happiness but now I am exploding with happiness. I was determined to be aggressive till the end in the final,” she said. Ito drove the limelight last year at the German Open when at the age of 13 she teamed with countrywoman Miu Hirano, who is the same age, in women's doubles to become the youngest World Tour winners. —Kyodo News

**Jovanov (SRB) with the championship trophy after he defeated Roger Federer (SUI) 6-3, 6-7, 6-2 in the finals of the BNP Paribas Open at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden.** —REUTERS

**Novak Djokovic (SRB) with the championship trophy after he defeated Roger Federer (SUI) 6-3, 6-7, 6-2 in the finals of the BNP Paribas Open at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden.** —REUTERS
Myanmar U-20 team to play tune-up matches in Serbia

YANGON, 23 March — Myanmar U-20 team left Yangon for Serbia on Sunday afternoon to make preparations for taking part in the FIFA U-20 World Cup New Zealand 2015 and to play tune-up matches.

Myanmar youth team is scheduled to play tune-up matches with Serbian I-20 team on 26 and 29 March.

At Myanmar Football Federation Office, the president of the federation encouraged the players to improve their football skills for securing remarkable victory in the FIFA Cup.

MFF has plans to hold turn-up matches in some European countries in addition to Serbia.— MFF

Lethal Suarez gives Barcelona 2-1 win over Real

Barcelona’s Luis Suarez celebrates after scoring a goal against Real Madrid during their Spanish first division “Clasico” soccer match at Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona, on 22 March, 2015.— Reuters

BARCELONA, 23 March — A lethal finish from Luis Suarez gave Barcelona a 2-1 victory over Real Madrid in a typically frantic ‘Clasico’ on Sunday as they stretched their lead over their rivals at the top of La Liga to four points. While the personal battle between Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo captured the attention before the game, it was Uruguayan Suarez who settled the Nou Camp contest with a deft touch and a deadly strike into the corner of the net after 55 minutes.

Barcelona went ahead against the run of play when French defender Jeremy Mathieu headed home his first league goal for the Catalan club from a Messi free kick after 18 minutes. Ronaldo had already hit the crossbar but he made no mistake after 30 minutes when he slotted the ball past keeper Claudio Bravo following a delightful back-flick by Karim Benzema.

Real pressed forward with Gareth Bale having a goal harshly ruled out for offside and Benzema missing a golden chance before Suarez took his opportunity.

Barca finished the stronger as they secured a significant victory in the title race that moved them on to 68 points from 28 games, four ahead of second-placed Real with 10 matches left.

“There is still an eternity to go and also we have the Champions League to think about. It would be a mistake to take anything for granted,” Barca’s Javier Mascherano told reporters.

“Against a team like Madrid you always have to give your all as they push you to the limits both physically and mentally. We put a lot into this game especially when you consider we played in midweek (against Manchester City).” The pressure is growing on Real coach Carlo Ancelotti with the team having one win from five games in all competitions. Real defender Sergio Ramos said: “We gave our all but we lacked luck in the first half, and they controlled the game better after that. The difference is only four points and we are going to keep fighting in the league. We will not ease up.”

The main doubt in the Barca lineup was whether Sergio Busquets would be fit to start and he began on the bench with Mascherano continuing in central midfield. Toni Kroos returned to pull the strings in the centre of the pitch for Real after being rested in their victory over Levante last weekend.

Real started well, overpowering Barca in midfield, and from one of their attacks at pace Benzema crossed for Ronaldo whose side-foot volley from a narrow angle hit the underside of the crossbar. Ramos lost his man though at a free kick from Messi and Mathieu had plenty of space to head home and give Barca the lead. The game became more hectic with Neymar missing in front of goal and at the other end Ronaldo bringing Real level.

United’s Mata sinks Liverpool as Chelsea go clear

LONDON, 23 March — Juan Mata’s marvellous volley helped Manchester United beat Liverpool in the race for Champions League qualification while his former club Chelsea nervously regained their six-point lead in the Premier League on Sunday.

At the end of a week where English clubs have failed to reach the last eight of the Champions League for the second time in three years, attention has quickly turned to next term’s competition with United now handing placed for a return.

Their Mata-inspired 2-1 win at Anfield left them five points clear of their old rivals in fourth, the Champions League playoff spot, as United seek a return to Europe’s top table after this season’s glaring absence.

They were aided by pumped-up Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard being brainlessly sent off for stamping on Ander Herrera 38 seconds after coming on as a halftime substitute.

By that time Liverpool trailed 1-0 through Mata’s neat first-half finish and the Spaniard added his second after Gerrard’s dismissal with a stunning left-foot acrobatic volley.

Daniel Sturridge pulled a goal back before Wayne Rooney missed the chance to add a third when Simon Mignolet saved his injury-time penalty.

“I think it’s my best game in a United shirt,” Mata, a bit-part player under Louis van Gaal until recently, told Sky Sports. “The second goal has to be up there with my best. After Steven Gerrard was sent off we needed a second goal because they pushed us to the end.

“It was important for me. The last few months I’ve not had the best moment. It is the manager who decides but I’m happy today.”

Chelsea remain well on course for the title despite a lacklustre performance in a 3-2 win at Hull City. They now boast 67 points with nine matches left and have a game in hand on second-placed Manchester City.

Chelsea substitute Loic Remy made sure the West Londoners went six points clear when his 77th-minute shot squirmed under Allan McGregor.

“After the international break we will go back to one match per week, except our game in hand. I believe we can finish the season very strong,” said Mourinho.— Reuters