Myanmar, Japan focus on development of Thilawa, Dawei SEZs

Union Government announces cancellation of development projects near Shwedagon Pagoda

By Aye Min Soe

YANGON, 7 July — The Ministry of Electric Power announced Tuesday it is introducing a rapid application process for electrification of private industrial sites, with requests to be processed within five days.

The ministry is introducing the new procedures in order to boost industrial enterprises across the country, and will set up one-stop service offices to handle the entire process of connecting businesses to the grid, according to the ministry.

It will assign a permanent representative to each ministry line and power supply boards in respective regions and states.

Currently, the ministry is generating around 43,500 kilowatt hours daily from 39 power plants, including 25 hydropower stations, 13-gas fired power plants and one coal plant, with total installed capacity of 4839.9 megawatts.

The ministry has set a target of supplying power to the entire country by 2030, but faces challenges in the form of ageing transmission lines, lack of capital investment and technology, and public opposition to implementing major hydro and coal projects.

A coal-fired power plant in Shan State built in 2005 is currently generating 120 megawatts, and a feasibility study has been made on a further 11 coal-fired plants.

The ministry and private investors have signed a memorandum of understanding on the construction of a 300-megawatt power plant in Yangon Region and a 50-megawatt power station in Taninthayi Region.

In addition, foreign firms have agreed to invest in nine coal-fired power plants with capacities ranging from 270 to 2,640 megawatts across the country.

On completion, these plants are expected to generate more than 9,000 megawatts.

By Khain Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 7 July — Authorities in Myanmar investigated human trafficking cases involving a record six child victims in June, police said Tuesday.

“This is a record number, compared to previous months,” Police Captain Min Naing of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Division of MPA told The Global New Light of Myanmar.

Three of the victims were "females aged between 13 and 16, from Yangon, Mandalay and Sagaing regions, as well as Kayin and Kachin states" who were trafficked overseas for marriage or labour.

The other three were forced to work as prostitutes in Myanmar.

Police were able to rescue all of the victims except one girl who was sold as a bride in China, Police Capt Min Naing said.

Under Section 24 of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law enacted in 2005, trafficking in persons, especially women and children, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend from a minimum of 10 years to a maximum of life.

The authorities last month uncovered 10 cases, rescuing 12 of 17 victims and arresting 20 traffickers, the majority of whom were women. According to the police, 66 trafficking cases have been recorded between January and June this year. Sixteen cases occurred in Shan State, while Mandalay, Yangon and Kachin were the next highest.

Other regions, except for the capital Nay Pyi Taw, Taninthayi Region and Rakhine State, accounted for less than seven cases.

The police arrested 113 traffickers in the first half of the year, but 59 suspects remain at large.

A total of 1,189 trafficking cases have been investigated nationwide between 2006 and June this year, with police rescuing more than 2,000 victims and arresting 2,144 traffickers, according to the official figures.
Joint committee submit bills to Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Nay Pyi Taw, 7 July — The Joint Bill Committee on Tuesday submitted reports and findings on bills to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, including those containing remarks from President U Thein Sein.

Members of the committee read out the boiler bill, the amendment bill on the law of the Union Election Commission and the bill on the reservoir law.

MPs are invited to discuss these bills in the current session of parliament.

U Saw Hla Tun, secretary of the Joint Bill Committee, and members then sought parliamentary approval of the budget bill.

Staff shortages, technical faults caused voter list problems: officials

Yangoon, 7 July — Yangon Region electoral officials on Tuesday said human error, technical faults and a shortage of staff were to be blamed for problems with voter lists for the upcoming general election.

Individuals and political parties have voiced doubts about the motives and reliability of electoral sub-commissions after the revelation of errors such as failure to collect voter list information door to door, dead people remaining on lists, and scores of incorrectly listed names and birthdates.

Township electoral officials said voter lists were compiled by pensioners and civil service staff who took part as volunteers, with insufficient numbers to properly carry out the work. They also said some families did not inform immigration officers about dead relatives remaining on family lists.

An election sub-committee chairman in Yangon West District said some eligible voters did not know their birthdates, with 30 June commonly listed in such cases, in line with the international norm.

However, authorities of electoral sub-committees said eligible voters could cast their ballots in the election, scheduled for late October or early November, even if there were minor errors in their details.

The voters can also ask for correction of their names with the authority of polling station officers on election day, the officials said.

Volunteers compile voter lists at election sub-committee office.—Po Htaung

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Two local people check their names in voter list. —Po Htaung

Yangon chief minister urges strict security measures for Martyrs’ Day

Yangoon, 7 July — A work coordination meeting was held at Yangon Region Government Office on Tuesday for the success of the 68th Anniversary of Martyrs’ Day.

Present at the meeting were Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, region ministers, chairmen and members of organizing sub-committees and officials.

At the meeting, the chief minister said that the government also does not want to damage the religious edifices and cultural heritages including the Shwedagon Pagoda for development and held negotiations with the companies to cancel the projects.

As the companies were unable to cancel the project, they also gave their consent to the cancellation of the projects in Dagon Township in Yangon, the government issued the announcement on cancellation of project on Tuesday.

Correction

Please read 944.01 million euro instead of 949 million euro in the headline and 6th line of first column in the news under the headline “Gems emporium concludes with 949 million euro worth of gems and jade sales” on page 2 of this daily issued on 7-7, 2015.—MNA

As cleanliness around the city is very important, don’t litter.

Are you talking to people?

Not just to people, but also to garbage trucks.

Cartoon Bahan Aye Min
**Myanmar, Japan focus on development of Thilawa, Dawei SEZs**

**Nay Pyi Taw, 7 July**—President U Thein Sein received a delegation led by Mr Yohei Sasakawa, Special Envoy of the Government of Japan for National Reconciliation in Myanmar, at the hall of the Presidential Palace, here, Tuesday.

The president and Mr Sasakawa, who is Chairman of the Nippon Foundation and Sasakawa Foundation, discussed improvement of education and human resources, development of the Thilawa and Dawei Special Economic Zones, development of border regions and the peacemaking process.

Also present at the talks were Union Ministers Lt-Gen Wai Lwin, Li-Gen Thet Naing Win, U Soe Than, Dr Daw Khin San Yi and Dr Than Aung, deputy minister U Thant Kyaw and officials.

The Japanese delegation was accompanied by Admiral Dennis Blair, Chairman of the Board and CEO of Sasakawa-USA Foundation and former U.S. Director of National Intelligence, and former general Shigeru Iwasaki, special adviser to the Japanese Ministry of Defence.—MNA

**Vice President visits state high schools in Lashio**

**Nay Pyi Taw, 7 July**—Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham and Union Minister U Kyaw Hsan visited state high schools in Lashio, northern Shan state, on Tuesday.

During the visits to six high schools, accompanied by deputy ministers and departmental heads, the vice president gave K 5 million to each school for education funds.

Dr Sai Mauk Kham said the government is providing more funds year by year to support the education sector, adding that the local community should inform parliamentarians and local authorities of their needs.

Teachers and school board trustees explained development programmes and areas for which funding is needed.

The vice president said the government’s core objectives in the education sector include supporting teachers and students to promote their qualities. He also urged the teachers to nurture outstanding students for the country.—MNA

**Union Defence Minister meets delegation of Australian National University**

**Nay Pyi Taw, 7 July**—Union Minister for Defence Lt-Gen Wai Lwin received Professor Andrew Walker of South Asian Studies and party of College of Asia and the Pacific of Australian National University at the ministry on Monday.

They exchanged views on progress in peace talks with armed ethnic group, national reconciliation, signing of nationwide ceasefire agreement, and human rights matters.

Also present the meeting were Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Kyaw Nyunt and officials.—MNA

**U Soe Nwe presents Credentials to His Majesty of Cambodia**

**Nay Pyi Taw, 8 July**—U Soe Nwe, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Kingdom of Cambodia, presented his Credentials to His Majesty Preah Bat Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanoni, King of Cambodia on 1 July 2015, in Phnom Penh.—MNA
**Farmers hire agricultural machinery in Yinnabin District**

**TATKON, 7 July —** A ceremony to upgrade a basic education high school branch to a full-fledged BEHS was held in Magyibin village, Tatkon Township, on 6 July. Established as a primary school in 1941, the school was initially upgraded to a basic education high school branch in 2013 before becoming a BEHS this year. At present, the school located on a 4.64-acre plot admits 1,072 students from 22 villages. Officials of Nay Pyi Taw Council also attended a ceremony to open an upgraded BEHS branch in Hionbo village.

Local authorities and Ministry of Education have upgraded dozens of schools throughout the township, according to the Township Education Department.

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**Taungtha Tsp honours outstanding students, teachers**

**TAUNGTHA, 7 July —** The basic education high school in Taungtha held a ceremony at its hall recently to honour outstanding students. Officials presented prizes to outstanding matriculation student Maung Myat Min Khaiing and 50 needy university students. Mandalay Region Hluttaw speaker U Win Maung presented headmaster U Aung Hay with gifts for outstanding teachers and school heads, before presenting prizes to students who passed the 2015 matriculation examination with flying colours.

Mandalay Region Minister for Planning and Economy U Aung Zan and officials also presented prizes to distinction winners from 23 basic education middle and high schools.

At the 20th prize presentation ceremony, 781 outstanding students and teachers received a total of K4.066 million in cash awards.

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**Mandalay Region to issue land plots to pilot project villages**

**MANDALAY, 7 July —** One village in each of 23 Mandalay Region townships will receive farming plots under a pilot land management project. Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Ye Myint announced at a meeting at the region government office on 6 July.

The chief minister urged officials to carry out land management and issuance of certificates for plots in line with the rules and regulations.

Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Breeding U Myint Than discussed procedures for issuance of land plot certificates.

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**Villagers evacuate landslide-hit areas**

**SALIN, 7 July —** Flooding from the Ayeyawady River recently caused landslides in Salin Township, Minbu District. Local authorities evacuated 17 households from four villages in the landslide-hit areas, according to the Minbu District police force. Villagers and officials moved six households from Thayetkon village, two from Thanatkon village, four from Ngwethoong village and five from North Achinpyit village to areas safe from landslides.

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**Kyaw Zeya**

(Magway)
Defence personnel’s data feared leaked after cyberattack

Tokyo, 7 July — Some information about defence personnel may have been leaked after a Tokyo hotel mainly used by Defence Ministry officials and Self-Defence Forces members suffered a cyberattack in May, sources close to the matter said on Tuesday.

A computer at Hotel Grand Hill Ichiigaya, run by the mutual aid society for the ministry’s employees, began sending irregular transmissions after an employee clicked a file attached to an email that month, the sources said. It is apparently the first case in Japan in which a computer at a Defence Ministry-related organization has been hacked.

The hotel, however, said there was no leak of confidential information as the ministry’s system is different from that of the hotel.

The hotel has isolated all its computers from the Internet and “is investigating if any information on guests has been sent out.”

Defence Minister Gen Nakatani told a Press conference that the hotel’s computer system is not connected to that of the ministry and mutual aid society, emphasizing the breach “will not affect the Defence Ministry.”

According to the sources, the Defence Ministry notified the hotel on 11 June of the irregular transmissions having been made with an outer server.

It was then found that one computer was infected with a virus after an employee opened an attached file received on 22 May and titled “The announcement of a meeting,” the sources said.

Fumiaki Yamasaki, a cyber security expert and adjunct professor at University of Aizu, said the Defence Ministry “needs to strengthen its crisis management,” warning that if addresses, numbers and information on family members were leaked the data could be misused. Figures from the National Center of Incident Readiness and Strategy for Cybersecurity show that approximately 5.08 million cyberattacks occurred against the Japanese government and related organization in fiscal 2013.—Kyodo News

India’s Mahindra Group, British firm to jointly produce underwater warfare equipment for Navy

NEW DELHI, 7 July — India’s automobile major Mahindra Group on Tuesday said it had tied up with British firm Ultra Electronics to produce underwater warfare equipment for the Indian Navy, in what is seen as a major push to Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s “Make in India” initiative.

“The two companies have come together to build and supply new generation advanced systems like the torpedo defence system, integrated anti-submarine warfare defence suite and mine counter measure equipment,” Mahindra Defence, a subsidiary of the group, said in a statement.

It added “Their offerings will also include anti-submarine warfare vessels, submarine safety equipment and sono-buoys, among others.”

The Indian Navy has so far been importing a major part of underwater war-fighting equipment from other countries.

The Mahindra Group last week joined hands with European major Airbus Helicopters to make defence choppers for the country’s military.

China holds ceremony to commemorate start of war with Japan in 1937

BEIJING, 7 July — China on Tuesday held a ceremony to mark the 78th anniversary of an incident widely seen as having triggered the start of major hostilities with Japan.

The ceremony to commemorate the 1937 Lugou Bridge Incident, also known as the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, is the start for a raft of activities being held this year in China to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II.

Participated in by Liu Yunshan, the Communist Party’s fifth-ranked leader, it was held at the Museum of the War of Chinese People’s Resistance Against Japanese Aggression near the bridge on the outskirts of Beijing.

Unlike last year, however, Chinese President Xi Jinping did not attend the ceremony.

Although the Chinese government is ramping up its denunciations of Japan’s past militarism, Beijing’s relations with Tokyo have markedly improved from a year ago, with increased high-level political contacts taking place in recent months following Xi’s two meetings with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

A skirmish between Japanese and Chinese troops near the bridge on 7 July, 1937 developed into a full-scale warfare that lasted until Japan’s surrender to the Allied Powers in 1945.

Last year, Xi became the first Chinese president to attend an official ceremony to mark the anniversary of the incident, delivering a speech saying that China will fight any attempt to sanitize the history of Japan’s aggression during the war in apparent criticism of Abe.

The highlight of China’s 70th anniversary activities will be a major military parade to be held on 3 September in Tiananmen Square, with the attendance of Xi. The date is regarded by China as its victory day of what Beijing calls the eight-year war of resistance against Japanese aggression.

Thai military court releases 14 student protesters

BANGKOK, 7 July — A Thai military court on Tuesday released 14 students held for almost two weeks for holding anti-coup protests in defiance of a ban on public gatherings, but the charges against them have not been dropped.

There had been growing calls for their release, including from the United Nations and the European Union, and public shows of support for the 14 have taken place across Thailand and among the Thai diaspora over the past few days.

Thailand’s military overthrew the previous democratic government last year after months of political unrest. The junta has since stifled dissent, barring political gatherings and debate.

“Police asked to extend the students’ detention but today the court threw out that request,” said Kisan-dang Nutjarat, a lawyer for the students.

“They have released the kids from prison today. There are no conditions and there was no bail,” he said, adding that charges against the students had not been dropped.

The students, part of a coalition of university groups from around Thailand, held street demonstrations across Bangkok against the ruling junta, known as the National Council for Peace and Order. They were arrested last month and charged with sedition.

Scores gathered outside a military court in Bangkok on Tuesday, shouting slogans and holding signs, to show their support for the students as 150 police officers stood guard nearby.

The 2014 coup ousted the government of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, Thailand’s first female prime minister and a scion of the Shinawatra political family.

Thailand has been bitterly divided for a decade between supporters of Yingluck and her brother, former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was himself ousted by the army in 2006, and the traditional establishment in the capital and the south.—Reuters

A woman posts a message to show support for 14 students who have been arrested, on a board near the Bangkok Art and Culture Centre (BACC) in Bangkok, Thailand, on 3 July, 2015.—REUTERS

Var Kimhong (L, front), Cambodian senior minister in charge of Border Affairs, holds a special meeting with Ho Xuan Son (R, front), Vietnamese deputy foreign minister in charge of Border Affairs, in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 7 July, 2015. Cambodian and Vietnamese border chiefs convened a special meeting here on Tuesday to discuss border issues following recent incidents along the border line.—XINHUA

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Iran demands end to UN missile sanctions, West refuses

VIENNA, 7 July — A dispute over UN sanctions on Iran’s ballistic missile programme and a broader arms embargo were among issues holding up a nuclear deal between Tehran and six world powers on Monday, the day before their latest self-imposed deadline.

“The Iranians want the ballistic missile programme lifted. They say there is no reason to connect it with the nuclear issue, a view that is difficult to accept,” one Western official told Reuters. “There’s no appetite for that on our part.”

Irani and other Western officials confirmed this view. The foreign ministers of the six powers — Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the United States — met on Monday with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Iran’s ambassador to IAEA Ali Akbar Salehi wait for photographers during a meeting at the hotel where the Iran nuclear talks are being held in Vienna, Austria on 6 July, 2015.—Reuters

“The Western side insists that not only should it (Iran’s ballistic missile programme) remain under sanctions, but that Iran should suspend its programme as well,” an Iranian official said.

“But Iran is insisting on its rights and says all the sanctions, including on the ballistic missiles, should be lifted when the UN sanctions are lifted.”

Separately, a senior Iranian official told reporters in Vienna on condition of anonymity that Teheran wanted a United Nations arms embargo terminated as well.

A senior foreign diplomat said a removal was “out of the question”.

The deal under discussion is aimed at curbing Teheran’s most sensitive nuclear work for a decade or more, in exchange for relief from sanctions that have slashed Iran’s oil exports and crippled its economy.

The United States and its allies fear Iran is using its civilian nuclear programme as a cover to develop a nuclear weapons capability. Iran says its programme is peaceful and an agreement would be the most important milestone in decades towards easing hostility between the United States and Iran, enemies since Iran’s revolutionary war captured 52 hostages in the US embassy in Teheran in 1979.

An Iran official told the semi-official Tasnim news agency that the talks could continue until 9 July, echoing some Western diplomats. A White House spokesman in Washington said it was “certainly possible” the deadline could slip.

A deal could reduce the chance of any military strike against Iran’s nuclear facilities, something Washington has refused to rule out, and the possibility of a wider war in the Middle East, where conflicts already rage in Iraq, Syria and Yemen.

Iranian leaders have warned that Iran would respond to any attack by targeting US interests and Israel.

“Iran is a fake tempoary state. It’s a foreign object in the body of a nation and it will be erased soon,” the state news agency IRNA quoted former president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani as saying.

Iran refuses to recognise Israel, which is widely believed to be the Middle East’s only nuclear power and has nuclear work that may have military purposes.

Iran’s nuclear programme as a threat to its existence. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Iran’s nuclear talks with six world powers was a “historic opportunity”.

“it will give them a jackpot of hundreds of billions of dollars with which to continue to fund their aggression and terror — aggression in the region, terror throughout the world,” he told reporters in Jerusalem.

If there is a nuclear deal, it will include a draft UN Security Council resolution that, once adopted, would terminate all UN nuclear-related sanctions while simultaneously re-imposing other existing restrictions on Iran.

The six powers argue that removing those measures could further destabilise the region.

“Ifouse process is going on to try and conclude by the deadline,” a senior Western diplomat said, referring to Tuesday.

A German diplomat, however, said “failure is not ruled out.” Iran’s state news agency IRNA quoted an Iranian official saying that “serious differences” remained after the ministerial meeting.

US President Barack Obama must submit the deal to Congress by 9 July in order to get an accelerated 30-day review. If it is submitted later, the Republican-led Congress would have 60 days to review it, providing more time for the deal to unravel.

In parallel with the powers’ talks, delegates from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) were due to hold talks with Iranian officials in Teheran on Monday, following a visit to IAEA chief Yukiya Amano last week.

The powers want Iran to grant more access to IAEA inspectors and to answer its questions about previous nuclear work that may have had military purposes.

Japan Innovation Party leader Yorihisa Matsuno said on Tuesday he would not accept a vote on the ruling parties’ bills if they seek a vote only after brief deliberations on counterproposals, Matsuno said during a meeting with party executives.

Last week, Sadakazu Tanigaki and Yoshitsugu Inoue, the secretary generals of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and its coalition partner Komeito, met to confirm their push for the bills’ lower house passage on 16 July, according to lawmakers.

The ruling camp is keen to pass the bills in the House of Councillors and enact them into law by the end of the extended Diet session on 27 September.

But Osaka Mayor Toru Hashimoto, also supreme adviser of the Japan Innovation Party, has said he is not in favour of a vote on the bills next week unless there is sufficient parliamentary support on the counterproposals.

Opposition parties have remained critical about an early vote on the bills in the lower house in light of strong public concerns about them.

Efforts by the administration of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who heads the LDP, to push for Diet passage of the bills have also hit a snag after legal experts called into question the constitutionality of the security bills during a parliamentary committee session and a fallout caused by anti-media remarks by LDP’s junior lawmakers.

In a meeting last month, these lawmakers close to Abe lambasted media critical of the government’s security policies. The security legislation would enable Japan to exercise the right to collective self-defence, or coming to the aid of the United States and other friendly nations under armed attack even when Japan itself is not attacked, and also engage in more peacekeeping operations abroad.

Brazilian media highlights new US espionage scandal

RIO DE JANEIRO, 7 July — New leaked information has confirmed that Brazil’s President Dilma Rousseff and even her cabinet members had been spied on by the US government, which drew if more US investments in Brazil, as evidenced by her trip to Washington, she should ensure that US companies are not given any undue advantages over local businesses, such as advanced information obtained through legal monitoring of phone and email activities.

O Estado de Sao Paulo also pointed out Wikileaks’ stance that the information proves that the United States was carrying out an active campaign of economic espionage against Brazil. Meanwhile, local press also underlined Brazilian and US government’s responsibility on the matter. Economic daily Valor recalled that, during her trip to the US, Rousseff said that the episode had been over when asked about the issue.

After the new espionage information was leaked, the Presidency’s Social Communication Secretariat released an official statement saying that President Rousseff trusts US President Barack Obama and that the matter was indeed over. BBC Brazil reported that, according to the Secretariat, Obama reassured Rousseff that the monitoring was over and that there would be no more spying on the Brazilian government and companies.

Tokyo, 7 July — The opposition Japan Innovation Party said on Tuesday it will submit its counterproposals on security legislation to the House of Representatives on the following day, in a bid to challenge the controversial bills that would expand the overseas operations of the Self-Defense Forces.

Yorihisa Matsuno, the party’s leader, took aim at moves by the government and ruling bloc to rush to voting on the bills in the lower house next week.

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Greece faces last chance to stay in euro as cash runs out

**Reuters**

BRUSSELS / ATHENS, 7 July

— Greece faces a last chance to stay in the euro zone on Tuesday when Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras puts proposals to an emergency euro zone summit after Greek voters resoundingly rejected the austerity terms of a defunct bailout.

With Greek banks rapidly running out of cash and the European Central Bank slowly tightening the noose on their funding, Tsipras must persuade the bloc’s other 18 leaders, many of whom are exasperated after five years of Greek crisis, to open negotiations for a major new loan to enable the country to continue paying its bills.

The leaders of Germany and France, the currency area’s two main powers, said after confering on Monday that the country was still open to a deal to save Greece from plunging into economic turmoil and ditching the euro.

But forecasters caution that a catastrophic event involving militants since the 7/7 London attacks, the threat from terrorism continues to be as real as it is deadly — the murder of 30 innocent Britons whilst holidaying in Tunisia is a brutal reminder of that fact. But we will never be cowed by terrorism.

In the early hours of 7 July a decade ago, four young British Muslims travelled down to London

Britain remembers 7/7 victims 10 years after London bombings

**Reuters**

LONDON, 7 July — Britain will fall silent on Tuesday to commemorate the 10th anniversary of attacks targeting London public transport which killed 56 people, the first suicide bombings by Islamist militi- ants in western Europe.

Relatives of the victims, survivors, royalty and senior politicians will gather to remember those killed in the 7 July 2005 bomb- ings with emotions still raw after a massacre in Tunisia last month, Britain’s worst loss of life in an incident involving militants since the London attacks.

“Today the country comes to- gether to remember the victims of one of the deadliest terrorist atroc- ities in modern Britain,” Prime Minister David Cameron said in a statement.

“No man or woman, city or region, will ever forget the shock and horror of that day. But more than that, we will never accept that their sacrifice was in vain. For, in the past decade, we have seen a transformation in the way we live, in the way we travel. Britain is a safer place.”

Muhammad ‘Abdul Bari, a survivor of the London bombings, said:

“London was changed forever. The days are long gone when you could walk about London without having to pay attention to your surroundings. The increased police presence is crucial. I am worried about what the future holds.”

Cuba ranks US blockade top obstacle to ties

**Xinhua**

HAVANA, 7 July — Since Washington and Havana announced their decision to restore diplomatic ties on Wednesday, the Cuban government and people have strongly and repeatedly demanded that the United States lift its almost half-a-century-old embargo against the island na- tion.

The Cuban government puts the US blockade on top of its list of obstacles to the normalization of bilateral ties due to the huge losses it has inflicted on many sectors of the Cuban society.

Tourism, the main foreign exchange re- sources, is among the sectors that are most vulnerable to the blockade, according to Cuba’s official daily Granma.

Agricultural sector has been hit hard because of the difficulties in importing supplies, additional freight expenses, and not being able to use the US dollar in financial transactions.

The losses caused by the blockade from May 2013 to April 2014 reached 307 million dollars, according to the Cuban Ministry of Agriculture.

In addition to the economy, education in the island nation has also been severely affected.

Cuban access to primary ma- terials, supplies, new technolo- gies, equipment and tools for ed- ucation, especially in the field of special education, has been impeded, according to Granma.

The blockade has barred over 22,000 students with needs for special education from having access to adequate resources.

Humberto Montalvo, an au- dio technician in his 50s, said that the US treatment of the Cuban people is “criminal” as the block- ade has affected every aspect of the Cuban society and people’s life.

Although US President Bar- rack Obama is currently trying to lift the blockade against the Caribbean island, the chance is remote as he lacks enough sup- port from the Congress, which is dominated by conservative Republi- cans.
Myanmar needs reforms to compete with neighbours

By Aung Khin

A capital inflows from abroad are integral to the country’s economic development, it is important that official policy focuses on encouraging foreign investment by putting in place the right infrastructure and attractive tax arrangements.

Neighbouring countries competing for foreign investment look to other developing nations to learn from their examples. Some have been quite successful, recording sharp increases in gross domestic product and per capita income.

Before investing in Myanmar, foreign firms must consider the potential impact of the country’s electricity supply, road networks and logistics on their businesses. In making their investment decisions, they will often make comparisons with the infrastructure of neighbouring countries. If Myanmar cannot fulfil the fundamentals for manufacturing activities of foreign firms, it will not be seen as an attractive destination.

Many of Myanmar’s skilled workers ply their trades in developing countries, both within the region and further abroad. Incentives should be provided for those with in-demand skills to repatriate. High-tech companies will recognize their abilities and experience working in developing countries. These highly skilled workers can share their knowledge with locals who have limited exposure to international environments.

Establishment of deep seaports and special economic zones are not enough to turn Myanmar into a wealthy country. By and large, these projects are more beneficial to the investor countries.

Economic reform requires the transformation of many sectors. Laws should be amended for the prosperity of the country and people. Public wealth is more important than the prosperity of individuals. Myanmar should not hesitate to institute genuine and effective economic reforms in order to make the country a strong competitor in the region.

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.

You can submit a text of up to 500 words. Please let us know if you wish to sign your name.

Commitment To Democracy

Kyi Mun

Why should we all be wholeheartedly committed to establishing democracy in Myanmar? The answer is: We all should be passionately committed to building democracy in Myanmar because democracy has proved in the whole history of the world to be the best available and feasible form of political system. It has been indisputably proved that man is the most intelligent being in the whole wide world. In fact, man is endowed not only with the best form of intelligence; man is also endowed with compassion of the highest kind. Man possesses insight as well as loving kindness. So, man is fully entitled to live and move and has his or her being in liberty, equality, fraternity, justice, peace, progress and prosperity. Democracy has proved to be the fairest, the most pragmatic system of government that delivers the best form of justice. So, most of the countries of the world have opted for the democratic form of government of the people, by the people, for the people.

Now, let’s explore how we can nurture, cultivate and establish democracy with courageous commitment in the following manner:

C for Courage to Stand for Democracy
O for Objectives
M for Motherland First
I for Integrity-driven
T for Total Democracy Leadership
M for Mobilizing the People for Democracy
E for Endeavoring To Cultivate Democracy
N for Never Wavering In Establishing Democracy
T for Total Commitment To Democracy

COURAGE TO STAND FOR DEMOCRACY

The fight for democracy has a long and arduous history. Myanmar has the history of fighting against the British colonialism, Japanese Fascism, the struggle for national independence and many kinds of internal conflicts. But, Myanmar has a unique history of standing for fairness, justice, the rule of law, human rights and freedom. Myanmar has a unique culture of Wisdom & Compassion. So, all of us, the true Myanmar citizens, must resolutely stand for establishing democracy in Myanmar with all our minds, with all our hearts, with all our strengths.

OBJECTIVES

Objectives for establishing democracy in Myanmar should be:

• Freedom, Sovereignty, Independence
• Liberty, Equality, Fraternity
• Human Rights, Justice, the Rule of Law
• Separation & Independence of (The Executive) Government, Legislation and Judiciary
• Economic Development & Modernization
• Scientific & Technological Advancement & Modernization
• Educational Advancement & All-round Development
• Socio-cultural Development and Refinement
• National DefenseCapabilities Development & Modernization
• Ecological Protection & Renewal

MOTHERLAND FIRST

Establishing democracy in Myanmar, all of us must put the Motherland First & Foremost. Racial, factional, sectarian and partisan interests must give preference to the interests of the Motherland. As we all love our biological mother, we all should love our Motherland with all our minds, our hearts, with all our souls and with all our strengths.

MISSION

Our MISSION is TO BUILD DEMOCRACY IN MYANMAR NOW. Democracy building must be our HIGHER PURPOSE. Our definite AIM & OBJECT is ESTABLISHING DEMOCRACY in MYANMAR NOW and For Ever. In other words, OUR MISSION IS THE PURSUIT OF DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES AND TOTAL COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC VALUES. We all love democracy, only democracy, nothing but democracy.

INTEGRITY-DRIVEN

Establishing democracy is a good thing, a noble aspiration and practically necessary condition for the people of Myanmar. Myanmar is a predominantly Buddhist (Theravada) country, Theravada Buddhism profoundly professes to genuinely practice Loving-kindness, Compassion, Theistic Joy and Equanimity. There is no room for Egoism, Selfishness, Self-serving practices in Buddhism. In Buddhism, honesty, austerity, charity, service (Veyāvicca) and friendliness always come first. So, democracy building in Myanmar should undoubtedly be integrity-driven.

TOTAL DEMOCRACY LEADERSHIP

Democracy cultivation in Myanmar should be characterized in the following manner:

• People-focus
• Mass-Participation
• Integrity-oriented
• Continuous Quality Improvement In Democracy

The Total Democracy Leadership must see to the Total Quality Development of:

• Personal Democracy Practices
• Interpersonal Democracy Practices
• Managerial Democracy Practices
• Organizational Democracy Practices
• People’s Democracy Practices

• National Democracy Practices
• MOBILIZING THE PEOPLE FOR DEMOCRACY

Democracy is a national and people affair. Establishment of democracy must encompass the entire people and the whole country. People must be empowered in:

• Political Advancement
• Economic Advancement
• Educational Advancement
• Socio-cultural Advancement
• Technological Advancement
• Environmental Advancement

The broad masses of the people have got to have the awareness of their rights and responsibilities in the forward march to democracy.

ENDEAVORING TO CULTIVATE DEMOCRACY

The entire history of the whole world has been the history of the people’s struggle for democracy. Just as a cathedral has to be built by human ingenuity, expertise and labor, so also democracy must be built by the vision, mission, core values, goal, objectives and strategy of the people. If we are united in this Endeavour, we and the next generations will be able to enjoy the fruits of democracy, which we and the future generations really deserve.

NEVER WAVERING IN ESTABLISHING DEMOCRACY

We all must embrace democracy dearly.
We all must build democracy clearly.
We all must enjoy democracy cheerfully.
We must never waver or falter in our struggle for democracy.

There is a popular saying in Myanmar to the effect that: “It is better to die than to be enslaved”. So, we must have:

• Passionate Purpose
• Purposeful Patience
• Proactive Pursuit
• Positive Practice

in building democracy.

TOTAL COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRACY

Come one, come all! We must be totally committed to establishing democracy in Myanmar, with all our minds with all our hearts, with all our souls and with all our strengths.

We must be:

✓ Bold, Brave & Brilliant
✓ Proud, Patient & Purposeful
✓ Strong, Serene & Successful

in our forward and upward struggle for democracy!

CONCLUSION

All ends well that ends well.
Long live democracy!

U Kyi Mun residing in Yangon is a consultant of NAING Group Capital Co.,Ltd.
Entrepreneurs focus on longevity of oil mills

Mandalay, 7 July — Mandalay Region Oil Mill Entrepreneurs Association and Yoma Bank organized a workshop on development of oil mills at the Victory Hotel in Aungmyethazan Township on 5 July.

Director U Myo Thu of the Trade Promotion and Consumer Department spoke on the occasion while deputy director U Swe Tin Kyu explained consumer protection. Oil millers in Yangon, Mandalay, Sagaing, Magway and Bago regions discussed development of oil mills in Myanmar. Ngwe Thazin Oil Mill owner U Aung Shwe noted the longevity of small-and medium-scale local oil mills.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Fisheries Department releases fingerlings to rural lakes

Myingyan, 7 July — Myingyan District Fisheries Department in Mandalay Region released fingerlings into village lakes recently.

Head of District Fisheries Department U Thaw Tun Oo and staff released 25,000 fingerlings to lakes in Myingyan and Ngazun townships with the aim of developing the fishery sector and promoting fish production. They distributed pamphlets on conservation of fish species and breeding to local people.

Zaw Min Naing (Myingyan)

Company officials, staff donate cash, notebooks to needy students

Mandalay, 7 July — The Ngweyi Pale Group of Companies, producers of Crown brand cement and Hsunweli sugar, recently donated stationery and cash to orphanages and training schools under the Social Welfare Department.

Managing Director U Thein Myint, officials and staff donated meals, stationery and more than K2 million to 189 students and teachers of Ngasobtiak orphanage in Chanayethazan Township, as well as lunch, stationery, uniforms and K988,400 to the school for girls of Social Welfare Department in the same township. They also donated lunch and K68,000 to the Youth Training School on 12th Street in Aungmyethazan Township.

They also donated notebooks for more than 3,500 students of monastic education schools, basic education schools and orphanages in Mandalay in the last week of June.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Rural Development Department set to sink tube-wells, build water tank

KhinU, 7 July — The Rural Development Department has sunk a tube-well in Yeayekon Village in KhinU Township, Sagaing Region.

The department is scheduled to sink three tube-wells and three tanks in villages in the township in this fiscal year. A tank is being constructed by the department to supply water to local people through a 1,400-foot-long pipeline.

Head of KhinU Township Rural Development Department Daw Cho Cho Nwe estimated that the department will spend K9.95 million on laying the water pipelines.

KhinU Soe Wai

Education officials discuss draft laws

Falam, 7 July — Falam District education officials recently gathered for a seminar to discuss draft education laws at the Falam No 2 basic education high school.

Falam Township Education Officer U Thein Swe Myint discussed the draft basic education law and National Education Law while Tiddin Education Officer U Ngho Soon explained the draft technical and vocational education law. Tunzang Township Education Officer Daw Cein Lam Nyaung spoke about the draft private education law.

The Falam township education officer said, “The seminar sought discussions on the draft laws to be submitted to the Ministry of Education so that we can contribute to implementation of the national education law.” —District IPRD

Bodybuilders, physical culture competitors take to stage

Mandalay, 7 July — Mandalay Region Bodybuilding and Physical Culture Subcemeite held its bodybuilding contest and pageant at the city hall, here, on 5 July.

Arkar Hein (Black Pearl Gym) came first in the junior bodybuilding contest, followed by first runners-up Khin Maung Tun (Bahtoo) and Ko Ko Maung (Hercules). Sai Chit Ngwe (Mogok) took the open first prize ahead of Nyi Ni Phyu (Black Pearl Gym) and Arkar Hein (Black Pearl Gym). Arkar Hein and Sai Chit Ngwe respectively secured the Mr Shwe Mann awards in junior and senior classes.

Ma Hsu Myint Win (Hercules) and Ma Nay Chi Tint Win (Bahtoo Club) respectively won the junior and senior physical culture contests.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)
Islamic State target Iraq’s Haditha town with vehicle bombs

Iraqi security forces and people stand outside houses that were damaged after an Iraqi Sukhoi jet accidentally dropped a bomb in Ni’iryah district in Baghdad on 6 July, 2015. Reuters

Reuters

Dubai / Aden, 7 July — Three brothers have been arrested by Saudi and Kuwaiti authorities for involvement in a suicide bombing at a Saudi man on a Shia Muslim mosque in neighbouring Kuwait last month, Saudi state news agency SPA reported on Tuesday.

The ultra-radical Sunni Muslim Islamic State group said it carried out the attack, which killed 27 people and appeared aimed at stoking sectarian hatred in the energy-rich Gulf.

The three Saudi brothers, who were not identified, were part of the crime of the sinful terrorist bombing that targeted the Imam al-Sadeq mosque in Kuwait”, SPA quoted a security spokesperson for the interior ministry as saying.

One was arrested in Kuwait and will be extradited to the kingdom, another was arrested in the western Saudi city of Taif and a third was taken into custody after a shootout at a house near the Kuwaiti border that wounded two policemen.

A fourth brother lives in Syria and is a member of Islamic State, an interior ministry spokesman added.

The bombing was Kuwait’s deadliest militant attack, and the most lethal in any of the six hereditary-gulf Arab states since a campaign of al-Qaeda bombings was stamped out in four Arab states a decade ago.

The attack has raised concerns about the number of young Saudi men willing to travel to attack Shia in their smaller Gulf Arab states and so make good on a threat by Islamic State to step up violence in the holy fasting month of Ramadan.

The group claimed two suicide bombers carried out on 22 May and 29 May on Shia mosques in eastern Saudi Arabia, where the bulk of Saudi Arabia’s Shia minority lives.

The Saudi branch of the militant group has said it wants to clear the Aramco Peninsula of Shia and urged young men in the kingdom to join its cause.

Brothers arrested over links to Islamic State bombing in Kuwait — Saudi media

Dubai, 7 July — Three brothers have been arrested by Saudi and Kuwaiti authorities for involvement in a suicide bombing by a Saudi man on a Shia Muslim mosque in neighbouring Kuwait last month, Saudi state news agency SPA reported on Tuesday.

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Air strikes kill nearly 100 in Yemen, cast shadow on truce talks

Dubai / Aden, 7 July — Nearly 100 people were killed on Monday in air strikes across Yemen, the Houthis-run state news agency reported, as a Saudi-led coalition stepped up its campaign against the Iranian-backed Houthi group to try to restore exiled President Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi.

The Houthis-run Saba news agency said 54 people had been killed in a series of raids in the Amran Province, north of the capital Sanaa, including 40 who had been shopping at a market in an area called Lower Houb in the EyaalYa’zid district.

It said a number of women and children were among the dead.

Saba said Saudi-led war planes had also killed more than 40 people in a raid on a livestock market in the town of al-Foyoush near the capital.

Local residents also reported 30 deaths in a raid they said apparently targeted a Houthi checkpoint on the main road between Aden and Lahj. They said 10 of the dead were Houthi fighters.

A spokesman for the Saudi-led coalition could not immediately be reached for comment. But a spokesman has previously said the coalition does not target civilians.

UN special envoy to Yemen Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed held talks with officials from the dominant Houthi group to try to restore a key ceasefire agreement.
Samsung Electronics posts 6.1 bln USD in Q2 operating profit

SEOUL, 7 July — Samsung Electronics posted 6.9 trillion won (6.1 billion US dollars) in operating profit for the second quarter, a regulatory filing showed on Tuesday. The 6.9 trillion-won profit was up 15.38 percent from the previous quarter, but was down 4.03 percent from a year earlier. Samsung’s operating profit got back on a recovery track in the past three quarters after bottoming at 4.08 trillion won in the third quarter of last year. The profit was 5.29 trillion won in the fourth quarter of last year, before recording 5.98 trillion won in the first quarter and 6.9 trillion won in the second quarter.

Preliminary figure for the second quarter revenue was 48 trillion won, up 1.87 percent from the previous quarter but down 8.31 percent from a year ago. The company did not unveil its estimates for net profit and a breakdown of business when announcing the preliminary figures. The final results will be made known later this month after an external audit.

Malaysian senior official: SBSR industry to provide 55,000 jobs by 2020

BEIJING, 7 July — Dato’ Mah Siew Kiong, the minister in charge of the Malaysia Industry Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT), said that the Ship Building Ship Repair (SBSR) industry has been identified as one of the new growth industries under the 11th Malaysian Plan.

The SBSR industry is expected to generate RM6.33 billion (about 1.67 billion US dollars) in Gross National Income (GNI) and provide 55,000 jobs by 2020, he added. According to a latest MIGHT report, the revenue generated for the past four years by the SBSR industry has remained at the range of RM7 to 8 billion (about 1.84 to 2.10 billion US dollars) annually.

After coal, can better health save West Virginia?

WILLIAMSON, (WV), 7 July — With coal trains chugging past in the distance, Jack Perry watches as his wife, Margie, plants row upon row of Hungarian pepper seedlings in the community garden that residents of this West Virginia coal town call the “Garden of Eat’n.”

“The peppers they sell at the stores don’t taste anything like this,” says Perry, a retired coal worker. His grandfather brought over the original batch of seeds in the early 1900s when he arrived from Hungary to work in southern West Virginia’s mines.

The coal industry that sustained the generation of the people here is on life support in Williamson and surrounding Mingo County, battered by exhausted mines and competition from natural gas. Williamson’s faded sign welcoming drivers to “the heart of the billion dollar coal field” now competes with billboards for weight loss and pain clinics, and the main street is lined with empty storefronts and pawn shops.

Unlike their neighbours in Kentucky, where there have been state-sponsored economic transition efforts, West Virginians have been largely left on their own to respond to coal’s decline. The state’s politicians have focused on fighting federal emissions regulations in Congress and in court, blaming the Obama administration for imposing what they say are crippling costs on the industry.

But many people here argue that hope rides less on the outcome of court challenges and more on things as humble as Margie Perry’s peppers. She sells her produce at a locally funded farmers’ market in this town of 3,000, part of a community movement called “Sustainable Williamson.”

The project’s 11-year-old brainchild of Dr. Dino Beckett, a Williamson native who left home to attend medical school but returned a dozen years ago. Now 45, with two children of his own, Beckett is determined to help restore the town to the thriving place his parents knew.

“Our approach to the transition away from coal is holistic community development,” says Beckett, sitting in the Williamson Health and Wellness Centre that serves as headquarters of Sustainable Williamson. He sees a local-foods movement as a way to help some of the least-fit people in America get healthier, while laying the foundation for eventual large-scale agricultural and economic development on coalfields once flattened for mining.

“A lot of people don’t associate health with entrepreneurship,” Beckett said. “But if we help people get healthy, the workforce is going to get healthy and they are going to want to work and participate in activities that help their families.”

Mingo County is located in what the US Agriculture Department labels a food desert: an area lacking access to affordable, healthy food. The county places near the top of almost every poverty-associated ranking — number 3 of West Virginia’s 55 counties in drug overdoses; second in chronic pulmonary disease — and has one of the worst life expectancy rates in the country, according to the National Centre for Health Statistics.

Leasha Johnson, head of the Mingo County Economic Development Authority, said Mingo’s land use plan envision converting former mine sites into a variety of uses, from cattle grazing to hog and chicken farms, air transportation and wood products.

One small company — Freedom Seed and Feed — is piloting a project on a reclaimed mountaintop coal mine in Williamson to grow industrial hemp. The company has been promoting the use of hemp in fibers, milk, and building materials like cement and concrete.

Shelley Moore Capito, West Virginia’s Republican senator, echoed that need to remake old mine sites for farming and small manufacturing. But Capito, a leading voice against the Obama administration’s regulations limiting carbon emissions from coal plants, has been reluctant to match Kentucky’s interventionist approach.

“My solution would be to bridge the skills gap, such as coal to gas training,” she says, referring to opportunities limiting carbon emissions from coal plants, has been reluctant to match Kentucky’s interventionist approach.

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Tokyo university food festival under pressure over hygiene concerns

KYODO NEWS

Tokyo, 7 July — Pacific Rim countries pursuing a free trade initiative are arranging to hold ministerial talks from 28 July in Hawaii with the aim of reaching a broad agreement there, Japanese Economic and Fiscal Policy Minister Akira Amari said on Tuesday.

The United States, Japan and 10 other countries came up with the plan amid growing hopes for an early signing of the Trans-Pacific Partnership after US President Barack Obama was granted the power last week to seek congressional approval for trade deals with limited interference by lawmakers. One negotiation source said the ministerial meeting will take place for two days after 29 July, but Amari said it is undecided how long the negotiations will last. Amari told a Press conference that Japan is willing to “play the last card” at the planned ministerial meeting to end the prolonged TPP negotiations, and urged other members of the initiative to do so as well.

The talks among ministerial-level officials from the 12 countries will follow “several days of meetings there between chief negotiators” for the TPP, according to a report by the Inside US Trade magazine. It remains uncertain whether the negotiations will conclude through the planned ministerial meeting, the report said, noting the talks will take place even if the chief negotiators fail to make progress. The ministers involved in the TPP negotiations last met in November, whether the negotiations would reduce the number of customers, said a female student in her junior year.—Kyodo News

World’s oldest man
Sakari Momoi of Japan
dies at 112

SAITAMA, (Japan), 7 July — Sakari Momoi, a Japanese man recognized by Guinness World Records as the world’s oldest living male, died of chronic kidney failure at the age of 112 at a hospital in Tokyo on Sunday, the municipal office said. Momoi, formerly a teacher who lived in the city of Saitama, near Tokyo, was recognized by Guinness as the oldest man in August 2014 after a man in Japan, the Health, Labour and Welfare Ministry said.—Kyodo News

Tokyo, 7 July — A man recognized by Guinness World Records as the world’s oldest living male, died in June 2014 at the age of 111 in the United States.

Momoi taught agriculture as a principal at public high schools in Saitama and Fukushima prefectures.

When the Saitama mayor visited him at a rest home in Tokyo in September 2013, Momoi recited Chinese poetry by heart in a resonant voice and appeared to be doing well, eating three meals a day, officials said.

Following his death, Yasutaro Koide, a 112-year-old man in Nagoya, has become the oldest man in Japan, the Health, Labour and Welfare Ministry said.—Kyodo News

Photo taken on 6 July, 2015 shows the Forth Bridge in South Queensferry at Firth of Forth, Scotland. The Forth Bridge in Scotland in northern Britain was officially inscribed as a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO) World Heritage site, it was announced on Sunday.

Xinhua
WEATHER REPORT
FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 8th July, 2015: Rain will be scattered in Kayah State, fairly widespread in Sagaing and Mandalay Regions, Kachin State and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of regionally heavy falls in Rakhine State and isolated heavy falls in Bago, Yangon, Ayeawady and Taninthayi Regions, Kayin and Mon States. Degree of certainty is (100%).
STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with rough seas are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40) m.p.h. likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40) m.p.h.
OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Increase of rain in the Central Myanmar areas.

Malaysian investigators freeze accounts in probe related to PM

KUALA LUMPUR, 7 July — Malaysian authorities said on Tuesday that several bank accounts were frozen in an investigation into allegations of funds channeling into Prime Minister Najib Razak’s personal accounts. A special task force has frozen six accounts believed to be related to the case, a statement said.

The special task force has also transferred documents on 17 accounts in two banks, as well as seizing several documents related to non-compliance of the central bank’s rules and procedures, it said.

Kuala Lumpur. 7 July — Malaysian Attorney-General Abdul Gani Patail, central bank governor Zeti Akhtar Aziz, Police Chief Khalid Abu Bakar and Anti-Corruption Commission chief Abu Kasum Mohamed, signaling a joint investigation effort.

The Wall Street Journal reported last week that some 700 million US dollars has been transferred to Najib’s personal accounts, some via the debt-ridden state investment fund 1MDB. The prime minister’s office and 1MDB have since denied the reports. Najib has denied any wrongdoing, saying he was weighing on legal actions against Wall Street Journal.

Najib said Malaysia’s longest serving prime minister and his former mentor, Mahathir Mohamad, was behind the latest “malicious accusation”, Mahathir has openly called for Najib to step down.

In a recent blog post on Tuesday, Mahathir continued his criticism on Najib, saying such allegations were ungrounded and had no merit and are not representative of the country.

 Clarkson. 7 July — Australian marine experts are desperately trying to save a whale stranded in a Great Barrier Reef lagoon off Northern Queensland. The stranded Dwarf Minke whale, estimated to be six to eight metres long, was first reported to the authorities on Friday.

However, it is believed to have been stranded inside the Elford reef, approximately 100 kilometres offshore of Cairns for three weeks. On Tuesday, Australian wildlife officers are attempting to coax it out through the maze of reefs separating the lagoon from the open water.

The Australian authorities believe the whale swam into the lagoon through a narrow passage, becoming disoriented.

The Australian authorities say the whale is in good health.

In response to a Crime Statistics Report on 18 June, which dubbed the Melbourne’s northwest as the city’s “red zone” for illegal gun confiscation, Idles said: “It is concerning that every second day a firearm is being located in a car, and about every six days there is a firearm incident.”

“Either a drive by (shooting) will occur or a shooting that someone is not fat.”

Figures suggested an unregistered firearm was being found in a car every second day.

Idles said on Tuesday the officers were just trying to do their job. “When these two officers put on a uniform last night, they didn’t expect to be a target they went out there to serve the community,” he said.

“The gunman had a total disregard for human life, and in particular the life of police officers.”

Inkling into Australian girl’s death for swallowing lithium battery to start next week

SYDNEY, 7 July — An inquest will begin next week to examine whether an Australian hospital could have done more to prevent the death of a young girl who swallowed a lithium battery.

Summer Steer was four years old when she ingested a 2cm lithium button battery.

She was twice taken to Noosa Hospital in Queensland suffering symptoms including a sore throat and temperature and black bowel movements, local media reported.

But she was sent home both times before she began vomiting blood at home.

The third time she was taken to the hospital doctors finally x-rayed her and spotted the battery.

But Summer died two hours later. The inquest will examine why she was not x-rayed sooner, among other procedural issues.

“Gun culture” in Australia’s Victoria leaving police at risk

MELBOURNE, 7 July — Australia’s Victorian police have again issued a warning about Melbourne’s growing “gun culture” after a police officer was shot on Tuesday while attempting to pull over a car.

The shooter is yet to be apprehended. “The environment of policing has changed,” Idles told 3AW radio on Tuesday morning.

“Shooting is out there, and it’s dangerous for our (police) members every time they go out to work.”

It is the second time in a month that Idles has spoken out about Melbourne’s insidious gun culture which has increased dramatically in the past decade and is often putting his members at risk.

In response to a Crime Statistics Report on 18 June, which dubbed the
Lady Gaga and Tony Bennett “cheek-to-cheek” at Montreux jazz fest

Montreux, (Switzerland), 7 July — Pop star Lady Gaga and crooner Tony Bennett brought a mix of Cole Porter, Duke Ellington, Frank Sinatra and even Edith Piaf to a sell-out crowd spanning generations at the Montreux Jazz Festival on Monday night.

Legendary producer Quincy Jones introduced the odd American couple, praising Gaga as a singer who had “blown his mind.” He also recalled working on the musical arrangement for Bennett’s 1966 hit “Girl Talk.”

“The would be Claude’s definite dream,” Jones said, referring to Claude Nobs, the late founder of one of Europe’s most prestigious summer music festivals, now in its 49th edition.

Bennett, the only person in the famed Stravinsky Auditorium wearing a jacket and tie, and the blond Gaga, appearing first in a long shiny silver dress with plunging neckline, opened with “Anything Goes,” a Cole Porter tune of the 1930s.

The pair of New Yorkers then sang “Check to Check” by Irving Berlin, the title track from their 2014 album of jazz standards for which they won a Grammy Award in February.

Bennett, just weeks shy of his 89th birthday, and Gaga, already a six-time Grammy winner at age 29, delivered 30 songs during their 100-minute non-stop show, backed by nine musicians.

“We’re selling our album around the world, please buy it. She really needs the money,” Bennett quipped.

Gaga, born Stefani Joanne Angelina Germanotta, is better known for her hits “Pokerface” and “Poker Face.”

Gaga hit the high notes in Montreux in half a dozen eye-popping outfits, changing backstage during Bennett’s solos.

During love ballads, she gave him hugs or kisses on the cheek.

For their “I Won’t Dance” duet, she wore a black dress and long gloves, with glittering eye brows.

In “I Can’t Give You Anything But Love,” Gaga played the vamp in a red feathered dress with transparent top. For “Let’s Face the Music and Dance” her silver dress with chain belt gave her the allure of the swinging 60s.

She sat back-to-back with pianist Michael Renzi cabaret style for “Everytime We Say Goodbye,” another Cole Porter hit.

Taylor Swift’s ‘Blank Space’ video fastest to reach 1 billion views

Los Angeles, 7 July — Taylor Swift’s “Blank Space” video, which was released online via Vevo last November, has hit one million views and become the fastest to do so.

The former country star took to Twitter to share her excitement after hearing the news. “The Blank Space video just became the fastest to hit 1 billion views on @Vevo,” she told her 60 million followers. “(And) Bad Blood is #1 at pop radio for a 3rd week. THANKS GUYS!!!,” the 25-year-old singer added.

“Blank Space” was released late last year as the second single off Swift’s massively successful fifth studio album 1989. Its cinematic music video was directed by Joseph Kahn and was made available on Vevo last November. Swift is currently in the North American leg of her 1989 world tour to support her first pop effort. The tour opened last May and is scheduled to finish in December. — PTI

Disney seeks continued tax exemption from Anaheim, California

Los Angeles, 7 July — The “happiest place on Earth” will keep a special tax exemption in Anaheim, California, for 30 more years if the City Council approves the Walt Disney Co’s plan for a $1 billion-plus expansion of its theme park complex in the city.

The five-member council is expected to vote on Tuesday on the company’s proposal to go ahead with its Disneyland Resort makeover in exchange for a continued waiver of any future admission tax the city might impose on entertainment venues.

The resort’s current exemption was granted by the city in 1996 and is due to expire on 30 June, 2016.

No entertainment gate tax has ever been levied by the city of Anaheim, but an extension of Disney’s special waiver would reimburse the company for any such taxes imposed during the next three decades, municipal spokeswoman Ruth Ruiz said.

Disney and its supporters say the exemption is merited because of the huge economic benefit Anaheim derives from the resort, which is the largest employer in the city and Orange County as a whole, accounting for 28,000 local jobs.

“We are happy to be able to support the City in its economic development efforts, and throughout the years, have thrived on the support of the community,” they said.

Another council member who backed the original tax exemption, has gone on record opposing the plan to renew it, citing an estimated $500 million in unfunded pension obligations now faced by the city.

“Chaining the hands of future residents on their ability to impose taxes will jeopardize the city’s financial health,” he was quoted as saying in the Orange County Register.

Disney’s plan calls for breaking ground by the end of 2017 and finishing construction by 2024. A study commissioned by Disney projected the project would support an average of 2,600 local jobs a year, and lead to creation of 2,100 permanent jobs.

People watch “World of Colour — Celebrate! The Wonderful World of Walt Disney” during Disneyland Diamond Celebration in Anaheim, California on 22 May, 2015. — Reuters

Arnold Schwarzenegger

London, 7 July — Superstar Arnold Schwarzenegger has revealed that he doesn’t like the fact that Paramount has been heavily using James Cameron, the original creator of the “Terminator” series, to market the new film. Schwarzenegger, 67, said “Genisys” is good enough to stand on its own without relying on Cameron, who had no creative involvement in the sci-fi blockbuster, reported Digital Spy.

The studio earlier this month premiered a promotional video in which Cameron told fans, “You’re gonna love this movie”, and said he considers it the true third film in the series. Schwarzenegger said, “I do not like the idea that the studio went out and used it as a promotional material for the movie because I always felt that if you do that, it looks kind of like you need James Cameron to say something good about the movie. “Which we don’t, because the movie is a straight 10, it’s a fantastic movie.”

However, Schwarzenegger admitted that he was grateful for Cameron for taking the time to watch the latest Terminator and share with him his views. “I think that it was a great kind of a experience in a way to have James Cameron call me and say, ‘I just saw the movie’, because I had no idea he was going to go and see the movie,” he said. — PTI

‘Terminator Genisys’ shouldn’t use James Cameron name:

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Disney and its supporters say the exemption is merited because of the huge economic benefit Anaheim derives from the resort, which is the largest employer in the city and Orange County as a whole, accounting for 28,000 local jobs.

“Anaheim has been an economic success story thanks to its policies and initiatives that allow businesses to invest and thrive,” Disneyland Resort President Michael Colglazier said in a statement.

But Mayor Tom Tait, a City Council member who backed the original tax exemption, has gone on record opposing the plan to renew it, citing an estimated $500 million in unfunded pension obligations now faced by the city.

“Chaining the hands of future residents on their ability to impose taxes will jeopardize the city’s financial health,” he was quoted as saying in the Orange County Register.

Two other council members support an extension, while two others have said they are undecided.

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People watch “World of Colour — Celebrate! The Wonderful World of Walt Disney” during Disneyland Diamond Celebration in Anaheim, California on 22 May, 2015. — Reuters
New York, 7 July — A record 25.4 million TV viewers in the United States watched the United States beat Japan 5-2 in the final of the FIFA Women’s World Cup, a new high for any soccer match televised in the country, according to Nielsen ratings data on Monday.

Sunday’s contest in Vancouver, Canada, was broadcast live by Fox Sports and was by far the most-watched TV broadcast of the night, Nielsen figures showed.

The number of viewers shattered the average 18.2 million audience that tuned in for the men’s USA v Portugal match on cable channel ESPN in the early rounds of the World Cup in Brazil in 2014.

Sunday’s audience also crushed the 13.5 million who watched the American women take on, and lose against, Japan in the 2011 World Cup final.

The two-hour-long telecast handily beat entertainment shows such as “Big Brother” on rival CBS and “Celebrity Family Foot” on ABC. Fox’s post-match live discussion drew a whopping 14.6 million people, according to Nielsen.

Fox is a unit of Twenty-First Century Fox Inc, ABC is a unit of the Walt Disney Co and CBS is a unit of CBS Corp.—Reuters

Susannah Mushatt Jones (2nd L) celebrates her 116th birthday at Vandalia Senior Center in New York City on 8 July, 2014 handout photo obtained by Reuters on 6 July, 2015, alongside Executive Director Paul Curiale (2nd R), Councilwoman Inez Barron and former Councilman Charles.—Reuters

United States goalkeeper Hope Solo (1st) hoists the FIFA Women’s World Cup trophy as she and her teammates pose with their medals after defeating Japan in the final of the FIFA 2015 Women’s World Cup in Vancouver on 5 July, 2015.—Reuters

World’s oldest person celebrates 116th birthday in New York City

Susannah Mushatt Jones marked the occasion privately with family and a public celebration is planned for Tuesday, according to the Gerontology Research Group.

Jones was born in Alabama in 1899 and after graduating from high school moved north in 1922 to New Jersey and then New York, where she worked as a housekeeper and childcare provider, according to the Guinness World Records and the Vandalia Senior Centre in the New York City borough of Brooklyn, where she lives.

Jones, who retired in 1965, says lots of sleep is the secret to her longevity. Guinness said in confirming her status as the oldest living person. She also said she never smoked or drank, according to Senior Centre officials.

Jones has lost her eyesight and has difficulties hearing, said Robert Young, director of the Los Angeles-based Gerontology Research Group’s Supercentenarian Research and Database Division.

She was the third of 11 children born to sharecroppers, and her grandparents were slaves, according to a book written about her by a family member, Young said.

The book, “Susannah Our Incredible 114-Year-Old Aunt,” said she is mostly African-American and some Native American ancestry, he said.

She never had children but has more than 100 nieces and nephews. Of her husband, according to the nursing home, she says: “I don’t know what happened to him.”

Jones inherited the title of world’s oldest living person after the 17 June death of Jeralean Talley, who was 116, in Michigan.

She is the third consecutive American to hold the title of world’s oldest person, Young said.

The world’s second oldest person is Emma Morano-Martinozzi, a 115-year-old woman living in Italy, according to the Gerontology Research Group.

The oldest verified person was Jeanne Calment of France, who died in 1997 at 122 years and 164 days, Young said.—Reuters

United winger Nani signs three-year deal with Fenerbahce

Ankara, 7 July — Portuguese winger Nani has joined Fenerbahce from Manchester United for six million euros on a three-year deal, the Turkish league runners-up announced on Monday.

“I am delighted with the way fans reacted to my transfer, I can promise that I will give all my heart to the club,” Nani, 28, told a news conference at the club’s Sukru Saracoglu stadium.

“My main objective will be to help the team win titles. I had a great season, I am feeling great and my self-confidence is really high at the moment,” said Nani. He spent last season on loan at Sporting Lisbon, scoring 11 goals, having joined United in 2007 from the Portuguese club.

He had been told he was not part of United manager Louis van Gaal’s plans. Nani, who won four Premier League titles and the Champions League at United, signed a five-year deal with the Old Trafford club in September 2013.—Reuters
Djokovic recovers as match suspended, Serena wins

LONDON, 7 July — After three hours and two minutes of twilight combat, Novak Djokovic and Kevin Anderson were forced off court with their last 16 clash tantalisingly poised at two sets all and their Wim-bleden audience begging for more.

The match was halted as dusk closed in after world number one and defending champion Djokovic had fought back from two sets down having been thoroughly outplayed by a fired up Anderson before rediscovering his A-game.

It was a remarkable conclusion to a day when a whirl of predictability had permeated the hectic schedule in men’s and women’s draws.

Serena had earlier ousted big sister Venus in the battle of the Wil- liams siblings, while Rog- er Federer, Andy Murray and Stan Wawrinka had claimed comfortable victories.

In fact, the action elsewhere was remarkably tame in comparison to the eb and flow of the drama on Court One.

Few had predicted Anderson would be able to mix it with Djokovic, except maybe the Serb himself who said the status-que 2.03 metre South Af- rican was in the form of his life heading into the match.

He was not wrong, which few succeed.

The first two sets ended with Anderson edging nervy tiebreaks, before Djokovic revved into gear storming through the third 6-1 and clinching the fourth 6-4 to leave the match in the balance and the crowd wanting more.

Sadly for them, the offi-cials disagreed and boos rang around the arena as play was suspended until Tuesday.

The closeness of the encounter was in contrast to much of what had gone before.

The clash between the Williams sisters, who have won 10 Wimbledon singles titles, should have been the between the siblings, the pre-game hype massive-ly outliers the action on court, with Serena rattling through the opening eight points, and maintaining a stranglehold to wrap up the contest in 68 minutes.

She is now unbeaten in grand slams in 25 matches and edging closer to hold- ing all four majors at the same time for the first time in her career — although given the sensi-tivity of the occasion, any excitement was kept under wraps.

“It’s hard to feel excit-ed about (beating) someone you root for all the time no matter what and you love so much and is your best friend in the world,” said Serena, whose next step en route to a 21st grand slam title will be against Victoria Azarenka in the quarter-finals.

Federer was given the swiftest of workouts against 20th-seeded Spaniard Roberto Bautista Agut, who became the latest player to exit in double quick time at the hands of the seven-time champion without making an impact on the Swiss’s serve.

At one stage it looked like the Spaniard would struggle to finish the match as the trainer was called onto court to tend to an ankle injury, but he battled on in a 6-2, 6-2, 6-3 defeat.

The result extended the closeness of the encounter in contrast to much of what had gone before.

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Mayweather stripped of title

Floyd Mayweather Jr in attendance as the Houston Rockets play against the Los Angeles Clippers during the first half in game three of the second round of the NBA Playoffs at Staples Centre, Los Angeles, CA, USA on 8 May, 2015.—Reuters

Barcelona, 7 July — Barcelona have added an extra creative option in midfield by agreeing to sign Turkey playmaker Arda Turan from La Liga rivals Atletico Madrid, the Spanish and European champion-ions said on Monday.

Barca will pay 34 mil- lion euros (£27.7 million) for Arda, plus another seven million in variables, and the 28-year-old’s contract will be for five years, the club said on their website (www.fcbarcelona.com).”

As things stand, however, he will not be able to play until January as Barca have been banned by FIFA from registering new signings until then, after they broke rules on the transfer of foreign under-18 players.

The deal to sign Arda was also complicated by the fact that the club are in the midst of a presidential election campaign and are being administered by a special commission, which had to approve the transfer.

The commission in- cluded an unusual clause which means whoever wins the 18 July election has the option within two days of selling Arda back to Atletico less 10 per cent of the fixed fee of 34 million euros.

Arda became a huge- ly popular figure with the Atletico fans in his four seasons in the Spanish capi-tal after joining from Gal- atasaray.

With his ability to un-lock stubborn defences with a killer pass, the stocky and heavily-built midfielder was a key figure in Atleti-co’s charge to a first La Liga title in 18 years and their run to the Champions League fi-nal in 2014-15.

Arda was made his debut for Turkey in 2006 and helped Fatih Terim’s side reach the semi-finals of Euro 2008, where they lost 3-2 to Germany.

He spoke about his role on the pitch in an interview published on FIFA.com in October.

“I take care of organiz-ing the attack,” he said.

“When we’re under the cosh, I can hold up the ball to give my team mates a breather, maybe forcing someone into fouling me.

“Before kickoff my heart rate is off the scale but once the whistle blows, I’m completely fit.”

“On the pitch I’m at ease, though I’m not sure why that happens. I’m probably a bit crazy.”

“Arda may struggle to get a regular starting spot in a Barca midfield which also features Andres Iniesta, Ivan Rakitic and Sergio Busquets but would be a useful player to bring off the bench in the second half.”

Reuters

Maria Sharapova of Russia celebrates after winning her fourth round match against Zarina Diyas of Kazakhstan at the 2015 Wimbledon Championships in Wimbledon, southwest London, on 6 July, 2015. Sharapova won the game 2-6, 6-4, 6-4.

There was no upset in sight as the fourth seeds in the men’s and women’s draw went through in straight sets as Wawrinka edged Belgium’s David Goffin 7-6(3), 7-6(7), 6-4 and Maria Sharapova beat plucky Kazakh Zarina Diyas 6-4, 6-4.

The remaining days of the tournament are also likely to be quieter and less controversial after Australi-an hot-head Nick Kyrgios was beaten in four sets by Richard Gasquet.