Yangon’s traffic lights to be upgraded

By Aye Min Soe

YANGON — Yangon City Development Committee said on Wednesday that 154 traffic lights in Yangon Municipality will be upgraded to ease traffic congestion in the commercial capital.

The new traffic lights will feature CCTV cameras and will be linked to each other via a control tower that will be constructed as part of the project, a spokesperson from YCDC’s information department told The Global New Light of Myanmar on 2 September.

The three-storey control tower will be constructed on a 100 square foot area in Peoples’ Park. Construction work is expected to begin in November and the tower is scheduled to be completed within three months.

The upgrade will ensure a smoother flow of traffic and prevent unnecessary build-ups of vehicles, the spokesperson said.

YCDC is injecting K20 billion (US$15.6 million) of the state’s reserve budget into the Design, Installation and Commissioning of Yangon Comprehensive Traffic Control System, which is targeted to be completed in the 2015-2016 fiscal year, said YCDC’s Secretary U Kyaw Soe at a pre-tender meeting at YCDC with companies on Tuesday.

YCDC has almost finished laying out underground cables for the purposes of the project, he added. So far 54 companies, including local and joint-venture firms, have bought tender forms, of which 28 attended the pre-tender meeting with YCDC.

YCDC will require the new traffic lights to have at least one hour of backup power so as to prevent traffic lights failing when electricity supplies are cut from the grid.

YCDC did not disclose how many companies will be selected to roll-out the project in the four municipal districts, or the date of the tender submission deadline.

The spokesperson said that the municipality has 188 traffic lights in the municipal area, of which 11 have already been upgraded with the assistance of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The Japanese technology collects traffic data, sends it to the central control system and runs traffic lights without assistance from traffic police.—GNLM
I will do my utmost to carry out the peace process, just as I have been during presidency

NAY PYI TAW — The following is the full text of monthly radio address delivered by President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein.

My fellow citizens:

As I have done previously, I would like to give you the monthly update on the work of my government and the developments that have taken place in our country in the month of August.

In July and August, many states and regions of the country were seriously affected by flooding. Despite the lack of experience and resources, the country was able to respond to these challenges because of the collective spirit and efforts of all citizens. During this time of need, it was truly an honor to see the sense of community and the Myanmar traits of compassion and altruism. Of particular note were the actions of the young people in fulfilling their duties as citizens. Though their creative ideas and tireless efforts, young people summoned up the entire nation to respond to the floods. At the same time, we must honor and praise the relief efforts of the civil society, Tatmadaw, police, firefighters and government personnel. We must also thank the assistance provided by the international community.

In addition to rescue and relief efforts, we must begin to undertake rehabilitation work simultaneously – an effort that will require the participation and cooperation of the public.

Rescue, relief and rehabilitation efforts will be prioritized and carried out comprehensively in accordance with short- and long-term plans. Long-term plans must also be drawn up and effectively implemented for all-round rehabilitation of the socio-economic situation of flood victims. Immediate needs such as food, shelter, access to health, and schooling for school-age children must be prioritized. I have also been traveling to flood-impacted areas to provide words of encouragement to the victims and other necessary guidance for relief efforts. I have also instructed government agencies to work together with the public and civil society to facilitate better cooperation on issues that will require joint effort.

Additionally, it is important that all citizens living in flood-affected areas are able to exercise their right to vote. The Union Election Commission is working to recompile voter registration lists damaged in the floods and the government pursuant to its authority is doing its part including reissuing household registrations and national registration cards.

The upcoming 2015 general elections are a crucial step forward for our country’s democratic reforms. Therefore, it is imperative that the elections are free and fair. The elections are also an important step for the establishment of a new Myanmar that is desired by the citizens of this country. Therefore, each member of the electorate bears a responsibility. In particular, I urge each and every citizen qualified to vote to exercise his or her rights to vote. In casting your votes, it is important to choose candidates who are qualified, accountable and will truly represent the will of the people. Only then, will a democratic, open and free society that we all envision emerge from the 2015 general elections.

I would like to say a few words about the role of political parties and candidates competing in the 2015 general elections. In a few days, campaigning will begin for the political parties and I understand that each party will campaign to the best of its abilities to succeed in the elections. We welcome any campaign that adheres to democratic principles and complies with the rules, regulations and codes of conduct set forth by the Union Election Commission.

However, our country is a multi-ethnic society with many traditions, customs and religious beliefs. Because of our diverse political parties, when campaigning, must take great care to not cause damage to social harmony or harm our diverse religious beliefs. I also urge all political parties to act responsibly and avoid incitements that could harm national reconciliation and national unity. Instead of blaming each other or acting in a manner that could harm national reconciliation, I urge all political parties to campaign on their respective platforms based on how they envision bringing about the aspirations, objectives and plans for a new Myanmar desired by their constituents. In particular and despite our differences, the political forces should strive to sustain our new political culture of dialogue.

My government, under its executive authority and within the bounds of its executive powers, will ensure that the elections are free and fair. We will also strive to make sure that there is political stability before and after the elections and that there is a smooth and stable transition of power to a new political setting that will come about in accordance with the wishes of the people. I would like to tell all of you know also that we have taken the initiative and made the necessary plans for civil society and international election monitoring organizations to observe and monitor the upcoming elections. Intimately tied to the democratic transition process, there has also been significant progress and developments made in the peace process. The representatives of the government and the ethnic armed organizations announced on August 7, 2015 that they were able to approve the final text of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.

Two overriding goals and promises critical to national reconciliation and lasting peace are included in the agreement: to resolve armed conflict through political settlement and to build a union based on democratic and federal principles. To achieve this, long standing demands of the ethnic armed organizations as well as the guarantees and plans for the political dialogue process are also included in the agreement. The immediate benefit arising from the signing of this agreement is that the people living in conflict areas will begin to see the fruits of peace and experience it firsthand. As all of you know, there have already been improvements on the ground in terms of human security and safety in some areas because we were able to reduce armed hostilities even while negotiating for peace.

Our internal armed conflict is one of the main reasons why our country has fallen behind others in terms of progress and development. And because our internal armed conflict impacts the lives of every individual living within our country, I look at the peace process as an important cause that has meaning and value for all Myanmar citizens. And since the peace process impacts the lives of each individual and the future of our country, I promise all of you again that I will do my utmost to carry out the peace process just as I have been doing during my presidency. That said, it is important to sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement and begin the political dialogue process as soon as possible. I have already invited the ethnic armed organizations to sign this agreement. I would like to call on them again from here and invite them to sign the NCA as soon as possible.

We have been trying to put forward poverty alleviation and socio-economic development as aims of the economic reforms since my government came into power. To achieve these aims, we have also enacted laws that fit our times and reflect our circumstances in addition to developing necessary infrastructure and investment. Through these efforts, we were able to agree on a minimum daily wage of 3,600 kyats that is in line with the current conditions of the country and this will come into effect beginning September 1, 2015.

I would like to conclude by recapping again that I will do my very best to achieve peace, promote economic development and build a better future for our young generations.

I wish you all good health and happiness.

NAY PYI TAW—Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Ko Ko received a delegation led by Mr Rajesh Chhana, Co-chair of the Asia-Pacific Group on Monetary Laundering-APG at the ministry on Wednesday.

Both sides cordially discussed and exchanged views on assistance of APG and International Monetary Fund and their advice for implementation of the plans of Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

Also present at the meeting were Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Soe and officials of Myanmar Police Force.—MNA
President delegation in Beijing

BEIJING — President U Thein Sein travelled to China on Wednesday to attend commemorations marking the 70th anniversary of the Victory of the World Anti-Fascist War.

The president was seen off from Nay Pyi Taw by Vice Presidents Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senator General Min Aung Hlaing and union ministers.

The president is accompanied by Union Ministers U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Hla Tun, U Khin Maung Soe, U Zeyar Aung and U Ye Htut, as well as Lt-Gen Yar Pyae of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army).

On arrival in Beijing, the president and his entourage were welcomed by former Chinese Ambassador Mr Pan Guang Xue, Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Hong Liang and Myanmar Ambassador to China U Thut Linn Ohn.

Meetings were held with CITIC Co Ltd Chairman Mr Chang Zheng Min and China-Myanmar Friendship Association Chairman Mr Geng Zhiquan at China World Hotel in Beijing.

In the evening, the president attended an informal dinner hosted by Chinese President Xi Jinping and his wife.—MNA

Plans underway for International Day of Democracy on 15 Sept

NAY PYI TAW — Parliament is the lifeblood of a country and an engine for democratic reform, Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann told a capacity enhancement meeting in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday.

The speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Union Parliament) and Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) spoke of plans to enable parliamentarians to enhance their capacities, adding that arrangements are underway to observe the International Day of Democracy at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 15 September with the theme of ‘Public Participation for Democracy,’ as set by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

The speaker said that public participation plays a vital role in achieving democratic reforms and said he looked forward to seeing engagement among youth during this year’s International Day of Democracy, which falls on 15 September.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Inter-Parliamentary Unit (IPU), the United Kingdom’s House of Commons, the Hans Seidel Foundation, the Cuso International Organisation and the Myanmar Scholarship Alumni Association (MSAA) discussed plans for capacity building programmes.

Before the meeting, Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann had met with Cuba’s Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Victor Daniel Ramirez Pena.—MNA

UEC takes questions from media on election

YANGON — The Union Election Commission held a press conference in Yangon on Wednesday to answer questions from the media.

The press conference was led by UEC Chairman U Tin Aye and attended by around a hundred journalists from 61 media groups.

Questions raised included the eligibility of voters, voter education, a code of conduct for candidates and parties, the formation of a monitoring committee and issuing voter registration certificates.

Journalists raised questions about how corrections can be made to voters’ lists, the number of candidates rejected, the regulations for covering election news for local and foreign journalists, using public property for the purpose of campaigning, the issuance of voters’ registration cards, inviting international observers to elections, arrangements for elections in flood-hit areas and voting booths in army areas.—MNA

Signing ceremony for TVET Teacher Training Institute

NAY PYI TAW — Union Minister of Science and Technology Dr Ko Ko Oo attended a signing ceremony of a Record of Discussion between Korea International Cooperation Agency KOICA and the Department of Technical and Vocational Education at the ministry on 1 September.

The director general of the department and chairman of KOICA Mr Nam Kwon-Hyung signed the Record of Discussion and exchanged notes.

The Record of Discussion allows for plans to set up a technical and vocational education (TVET) teacher training institute to enhance capacity building among teachers and coordinators, and to work on research surveys and development for technical and vocational education.—MNA

Government plans old-age annual payment

YANGON — The government plans to introduce a nationwide annual payment for those aged over 65 in the next fiscal year of 2015-16, according to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

During a ceremony on Wednesday in Yangon, Deputy Minister Daw Su Su Hlaing and ministry personnel provided financial assistance to 35 senior citizens aged 100.

According to official statistics, there are 25,000 senior citizens aged between 90 and 100 across Myanmar.

The government has so far provided sums of K200,000 each to the 1,179 people over 100 years of age, in addition to certificates of honour signed by President U Thein Sein. The funds for the payments have come from a pooled fund that receives 25 percent contributions from the monthly emoluments of the president and his cabinet members.

Meanwhile, a pilot project is underway in Kachin, Mon and Kayah states to provide financial assistance to women who are over six months pregnant. The deputy minister said on Wednesday that the support will be provided until children reach two-years of age.—Win Win Maw

President U Thein Sein being welcomed by officials at Beijing International Airport.—IFRD

Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann shakes hands with Cuban Ambassador Mr Victor Daniel Ramirez Pena.—MNA

Government plans old-age annual payment
Free vaccinations and medicines for infants and pregnant women

TATKON—Pregnant women and children under 18 months old received medicines and vaccinations at Tatkon Township’s Saya San general administrative ward office on 2 September. Mothers expressed thanks for the life-saving free medical care provided to their children.

A senior nurse vaccinates a pregnant woman in health care service activity in Tatkon Township.—Tin Soe Lwin

NAY PYI TAW—Zabuthiri Township Agriculture Department organized a demonstration on systematic use of fertilizer and spraying at the model plot of Korea International Cooperation Agency in Tegyigon village-tract on 31 August.

Before the demonstration, Head of Township Department of Agriculture U Aung Din explained dissemination of agricultural techniques suitable for nature of target areas to the local farmers while staff of the department gave lectures on collective spraying in the paddy field and systematic use of fertilizers to grow up the paddy plants. The staff together with local farmers broadcast fertilizers and sprayed the farmlands at the demonstration.—Ko Pauk (Okkar Myay)

Election guidance given in Kyaukme

KYAUKME—Guidance on the upcoming general election was provided at the General Administration Office in Kyaukme of Shan State on 1 September.

Township Election Sub-commission Chairman U Soe Tun together with officials explained various aspects of the election, including rules, regulations and penalties, advance voting, the counting of votes and rules governing the conduct of political parties.

Approximately 200 ward and village administrators attended the session.—Myint Aung (Ko-Ma)

Workshop brainstorms ways to increase pass rates

MANTONG—A workshop was held to discuss ways to increase pass rates during the 2015-2016 academic year at Mantong’s Basic Education High School in the Palaung Self-Administered Zone in Shan State recently.

The township’s assistant education officer U Lamar Tha led discussions on boosting pass rates, with input given by teachers on matters such as timetables, the monthly syllabus, the number of exams and questions per exam, after-school classes and devising project plans.

The three-day workshop was attended by 315 education personnel.—Myint Aung (Ko-Ma)

Donations given to flood-hit schools

NAY PYI TAW—Donations for flood-damaged schools across Myanmar were made by staff and students from Kyitaungkan Basic Education High School in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on 1 September.

The headmistress of the school in Pobbathiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, Daw Than Htay, said in her speech that K700,000 had been donated by the school council secretary Maung Pya Wai Aung.—Shwe Ye Yint

World Breastfeeding Week launched in Zeyathiri Tsp

NAY PYI TAW—World Breastfeeding Week and Nutrition Development Week were launched at Zeyathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area in cooperation with the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association and Department of Public Health on 1 September.

At the township’s General Administration Department, township MCWA Chairperson Daw Hla Hla Win shared nutrition and nursing tips. Awards were given to the students who won an essay writing competition on nutrition. Township Health Officer Dr Tin Tin Moe Win handed out gifts to mothers, Vitamin A to children and vitamin supplements and iron tablets to pregnant women.—Soe Thu Aung

Officials of MMCWA provide nutritious foods and medicines to pregnant women in Zeyathiri Township as part of Nutrition Development Week activities.—Soe Thu Aung
Mandalay Region steps up police security for general elections

MANDALAY — In preparation for the general election on November 8, the Mandalay Region government has enforced tighter security measures across the region since July 6.

Police patrols have been intensified by adding 557 police personnel in the region, which has resulted in lower rates of petty theft.

Between January and the end of July this year, 27 cases of robbery were solved in the region, according to the region’s police department.—Thiha Ko Ko

165 public-works carried out in Takon’s rural areas

TATKON — World Bank delegate Mr. Nodoka and a delegation met with the Department of Township Rural Development under the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development. The meeting was held to discuss implementing public-centered works in rural areas and was held at the department’s Tatkon township office in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday.

Township officer U Soe Min Latt explained his department’s public-centered works, which involve 186 villages. Locals prioritised the 165 projects to be carried out within the first-year plan’s funds of 1.78 billion kyat as follows: 65 for building roads and bridges, 75 related to other infrastructure, 22 rural water supply projects and three electricity supply works.

Mr. Nodoka and the delegation discussed plans for choosing next year’s projects and aid distribution.

Tin Soe Lwin

Illegally imported chicken destroyed in Dawei

Dawei — Deputy Township Administrator U Aung Kyaw Myint and departmental officials checked 10 chicken shops, five pork shops and seven dried fish shops at the Strand Market of Township Development Affairs Committee in Dawei, Tanintharyi Region, on 1 September.

They gave talks on avoiding sales of inappropriate goods.

The officials destroyed 11.57 viss of illegally imported frozen chicken from the market.—Po Shwe Thun (Dawei)

Electricity supplies to improve in Meiktila and Wundwin

MEIKTILA—Mandalay Region’s Electric Power Corporation started works for improving power supplies to Wundwin and Meiktila towns from 29 August.

The project involves moving lamp posts and cables from clearing the extended road between Wundwin and Thedaw townships of trees and installing new equipment at the 33 KVA sub-power station in Meiktila.

Electricians led by Meiktila District electrical manager U Zaw Win Naing are carrying out the installation of power lines under the supervision of Meiktila District electrical manager U Mon Aung Zay.—Chan Thar

MEIKTILA — A Security training course will be held in preparation for the upcoming November 8 general election, according to Meiktila township police force commander police Major Maung Shwe. A total of 293 special policemen have already been assigned security duties during the elections.

Scheduled from October 20 to 31, the 11-day course will include basic military training, police manuals, lectures on criminal law and electoral procedures.

The middle-school licemen have already been passed special policemen aged between 18-45 were recruited for their special police service at their respective native areas. They will be on duty from October 15 to November 13 with a salary of K150,000, the police commander said.—Chan Thar

New asphalt road links Shantae model village with highway

MEIKTILA — An asphalt road stretching 5,400-foot and connecting Yangon-Mandalay Highway with the Shante model village in Meiktila Township of Mandalay Region was completed on 1 September.

Construction works began in early July, with the project being financed by the region’s K58 million aid fund.

The construction of the road was supervised by the township office for rural development. Locals donated an additional K4.5 million to extend the road to the village’s monastery.

The new road is located on a critical junction to villages in nearby Thazi township and will allow for a smoother transport route for the area’s products to reach Meiktila.—Chan Thar
China’s Xi urges resumption of North Korea talks

BEIJING — Chinese President Xi Jinping called for a resumption of multilateral nuclear talks with North Korea on Wednesday and said he opposed any move to worsen tension.

North and South Korea averted a full-on military confrontation last week and reached an agreement to improve ties following a rare exchange of artillery fire over their heavily fortified border.

Xi made his call during a meeting with South Korean President Park Geun-hye in Beijing. Its significance lies in the fact that China has all along upheld the aim of a denuclearised Korean peninsula, the maintaining of the peninsula’s peace and stability, and resolving issues via dialogue and consultations,” Xi said, according to China’s Foreign Ministry. China believed previous agreements reached during so-called six-party talks with North Korea - which include the United States, Japan, Russia and South Korea - should be fulfilled, along with relevant UN resolutions, he added. Numerous efforts to restart the talks since they were last held more than six years ago have failed. China “opposes all actions which may cause tensions” and all sides should work hard to resume talks, Xi said.

Park told Xi she appreciated China’s help in defusing tension with North Korea that had pushed the neighbours to the brink of conflict. “I hope to share candid opinions with President Xi about the Korean peninsula’s political situation today as tensions continue to remain on the peninsula,” Park said at the meeting, according to a report provided by her office.

Chinese President Xi Jinping (R) shakes hands with South Korean President Park Geun-hye at The Great Hall Of The People on September 2, 2015 in Beijing, China. —Reuters

Malaysia police to question ex-PM

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysian police want to question former premier Mahathir Mohamad about anti-government comments, a spokesman said on Wednesday, in what appeared to be a bid to stifle the veteran leader’s campaign to bring down the prime minister.

Mahathir, still a hugely respected and influential figure, made surprise appearances at a protest in Kuala Lumpur on the weekend, calling for a “people’s movement” to topple Prime Minister Najib Razak over a financial scandal.

“The man (Mahathir) made several allegations in his speeches .. that warrants police action,” police spokesman Azmawi Ahmad said. Inspector-General of Police Khalid Abu Bakar would take a statement from Mahathir, she said.

It was not clear if Mahathir would face any charges.

Mahathir, known as a tough prime minister with an authoritarian bent for 22 years until 2003, is prime minister with an authoritarian bent for 22 years until 2003, is still a huge political force in Malaysia, six years after he was ousted from power.

As far as I am aware, he has not been approached by the police yet. We will comply with the police on whatever is needed,” the aide, Sufi Yusoff, told Reuters.

Mahathir, 90, was once Najib’s patron but has become his fiercest critic in recent months after reports of a mysterious transfer of more than $600 million into an account under Najib’s name.

Najib has denied any wrongdoing says he did not take any money for personal gain but, nevertheless, faces the biggest crisis of his political career.

He has tightened his grip on power through a series of steps to sideline dissenters and muzzle critical media. Many Malaysians were stunned by Mahathir’s decision to join the protests, organised by anti-corruption activists, in an unprecedented act of defiance of the prime minister.

The two are stalwarts of the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), the party that has led coalition governments since the country’s independence in 1957, and whose antagonism has raised fears of a split. One UMNO leader said Mahathir had “crossed over the line”. The police questioning of the country’s longest-serving leader would appear to raise the political stakes for both sides. —Reuters

PARK began a three-day trip to China to attend its commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the end of World War Two in Asia, and is scheduled to attend a military parade on Thursday.

Park’s sixth summit meeting with Xi highlighted the growing ties between the neighbours, as China has grown increasingly frustrated with North Korea.

China, North Korea’s sole major ally, backed it in the 1950-53 Korean War, with late leader Mao Zedong’s eldest son dying in the conflict with the South and its allies. China, the world’s largest importer, is now South Korea’s biggest trading partner. South Korea is one of the few developing countries that runs a surplus with China.

Choe Ryong Hae, secretary of the Central Committee of North Korea’s Workers’ Party, will also attend China’s military parade, but it is unclear whether Choe will meet the South Korean leader.

Choe is close to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.—Reuters

Thai police say closer to cracking Bangkok bomb case

BANGOK — Police claimed significant progress on Wednesdays in finding the mastermind of Thailand’s deadliest attack after an admitted man admitted being near the Aug. 17 shrine blast and fingerprints tied him to the room of a suspected bomber.

The unidentified man arrested less than a kilometre from the Cambodian border on Tuesday had told police he was not the bomber, but was in same area the night when a massive explosion killed 20 people. “It’s natural that the suspect will deny it did it, but we still have to continue to look into that,” national police chief Chakkthip Chaijinda told reporters.

“There is no case has progressed about 70 percent already,” the latest suspect was “definitely connected” to the attack and had stayed in the same Nong Chok area of Bangkok as another man arrested in a raid last weekend.

The watchlist found stacks of fake passports, TNT, C4 and fertilizer. Police have received a torrent of criticism for leading a patchy probe and statements from top officials about possible perpetrators, motives and information extracted from suspects have been contradictory, speculative and often cryptic.

Police spokesman Prawut Thawornsi says the latest suspect’s prints were found on explosives in the same room.

“The man... may be the person who took the bomb out of the room or brought the bomb to the location of the incident,” Prawut said on TV. The investigation has gained momentum since the weekend raids, before which the authorities had little more than a low-resolution surveillance camera video of a man in a yellow shirt leaving a rucksack at the popular Erawan Hindu shrine moments before the blast. With no claim of responsibility, speculation has centred on sympathizers of Uighur Muslims, opponents of the military government, southern ethnic Malay rebels and foreign extremists. Thailand’s forced repatriation of 109 Uighurs to China in July caused international outrage and saw protestors smash windows andransack parts of its consulate in Istanbul.

Many Uighurs transit through Southeast Asia to try to get to Turkey, which has a large diaspora.—Reuters

Malaysia police to question ex-PM Mahathir on anti-government comment

Former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad (C) waves as he attends a rally organised by pro-democracy group “Bersih” (Clean) near Central Market in Malaysia’s capital city of Kuala Lumpur, August 30, 2015.—Reuters
S Korea’s Park thanks China for help easing tension with North

BEIJING — South Korean President Park Geun-hye on Wednesday thanked China, during a summit meeting with President Xi Jinping, for help in defusing recent tension with North Korea that had pushed the neighbours to the brink of an armed conflict.

The rivals averted a full-blown military confrontation by reaching an agreement last week to improve ties following a rare exchange of artillery fire over their heavily fortified border.

“I appreciate China for playing a constructive role in easing the recent tense situation on the Korean peninsula by closely communicating with us,” Park said at the meeting, according to a pool report provided by her office.

“I hope to share candid opinions with President Xi about the Korean peninsula’s political situation today as tensions continue to remain on the peninsula.”

Park began a three-day trip to China to attend its commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the end of World War Two in Asia, and is scheduled to attend its massive military parade on Thursday.

Park’s sixth summit meeting with Xi highlighted the rapidly growing ties between the Asian neighbours, even as Beijing has grown increasingly frustrated with North Korea.

China, whose sole major ally, backed North Korea in the 1950-53 Korean War, has lately been the most assertive in pressing for the denuclearization of the country.

China, the world’s largest exporter, is now South Korea’s biggest trading partner. South Korea is one of the few developed countries that runs a surplus with China.

In his opening remarks at the meeting with Park, however, Chinese President Xi Jinping did not directly address the recent tension but highlighted the growing ties between the South and China particularly in trade and financial cooperation.

“China and the Republic of Korea are good friends and strong promoters of regional and world peace. Looking at history, our two peoples’ struggle has been very similar in our quest to liberate our people,” Xi said.

North Korea’s top defence body urged the South to be “discreet in words and deeds” over the pact to end the military standoff, accusing Seoul of claiming victory.—Reuters

Online advertising shines in sputtering Thai economy

BANGKOK — Unfazed by Thailand’s faltering economy, businesses are pencilling in bigger budgets for digital advertising as they target Thai consumers via smartphone apps, social networking forums and video-sharing websites.

Digital advertising spending this year is forecast to jump by two-thirds to a record 9.9 billion baht ($277.47 million) in Southeast Asia’s second-largest economy, according to the Digital Advertising Association of Thailand (DAAT). While that lags the 44 percent and 53 percent growth in 2014 and 2013, respectively, the near-term outlook for online advertising looks sharply up as advertisers increasingly target Thai consumers in the virtual world.

DAAT, which gathers data from 17 agencies that represent 80 percent of spending in the market, has recently upgraded its growth forecast for digital ad spending to 62 percent from its previous estimate of 33 percent. Social media like Facebook and video ads on Google’s YouTube account for the biggest share of online advertising spending.

Stocks in Thailand’s new media companies have soared. Diversified media firm Plan B Media PCL has more than doubled since its February debut, and analysts expect earnings growth to top 50 percent this year. In contrast, the overall media and publishing sector index has slumped. It is one of the worst performers on the Thai stock market this year.

Overall advertising spending dropped 2 percent in the first seven months, dragged down by a decrease in ad spending from newspapers and magazines, Thakol Banjonggruck, analyst at KK Trade Securities, wrote in a note to investors. “Advertising spending is expected to rise 3 percent this year based on the country’s GDP growth forecast of 2.5 percent.

However, there is some risk that growth may be weaker, because slower-than-expected economic growth and political uncertainty could prompt advertisers to hold off their advertising budget,” Thakol said.—Reuters

N Korea warns S Korea not to damage accord of improving ties

BEIJING — North Korea on Wednesday criticized South Korea for making “dishonest” comments over recent hard-won agreement aimed at defusing tensions, urging it to prevent their relations from turning for the worse again.

A statement released by the North’s powerful National Defense Commission said that its expression last week of “regret” does not mean an apology for a landmine explosion in the heavily-fortified demilitarized zone on Aug. 4 that maimed two South Korean soldiers and triggered the tensions.

It said South Korean officials “should not make a foolish misinterpretation” of the agreement and “refrain from such act as threatening the hard-won peace.”

After four days of marathon negotiations, the two Koreas reached a six-point agreement on Aug. 25 that called for more high-level dialogue between them and pulled themselves back from the brink of serious military confrontation.

In exchange for the reg"ret, South Korea stopped blasting anti-Pyongyang propaganda messages via loudspeakers positioned at their border areas, which it had resumed for the first time in 11 years in retaliation for the explosion.

The statement reported by the North’s state-run Korean Central News Agency warned South Korea not to “discredit in words and deeds” over the pact to end the military standoff, accusing Seoul of claiming victory.—Kyodo News

China, Vietnam vow to work for long-term stable relations

NEW YORK — China and Vietnam have pledged to properly handle their differences and work for the long-term stable and sound development of their relations.

“China is willing to work with Vietnam to consolidate our traditional friendship, promote our strategic mutual trust and properly handle our differences so as to push forward the long-term stable and sound development of our bilateral relations,” said China’s top legislator Zhang Dejiang.

Zhang made the remarks while meeting with Vietnamese National Assembly Chairman Nguyen Sinh Hung on the sidelines of the Fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments, which kicked off on Monday and runs through Thursday.

Zhang, chairman of the Standing Committee of China’s National People’s Congress (NPC), said the NPC is willing to carry out various kinds of exchanges with the Vietnamese National Assembly to enhance cooperation between the two countries.

Vietnam values its “comradely and fraternal” relations with China, stands ready to boost friendly cooperation with China and properly manage their differences to preserve the overall health of bilateral ties, Nguyen said.—Xinhua

A tourist holding a parasol walks by a barbed-wire fence decorated by South Korean national flags at the Imjingak pavilion near the demilitarized zone separating the two Koreas in Paju, South Korea, August 22, 2015.—Reuters

Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with South Korean President Park Geun-hye at The Great Hall Of The People in Beijing, China September 2, 2015.—Reuters
We appreciate your feedback and contribution.

The salaries of government employees were raised recently in a bid to meet the rising costs of living. However, raising salaries can actually have a negative impact on the market because it causes costs to spike further.

It's common knowledge that a few months after pay scales go up, the immediate benefits are wiped out by ever-increasing costs of living. Meanwhile government employees cannot enjoy the benefits of a raise and may even be negatively affected by the drawbacks that arise. It is clear that one of the main reasons for rising commodity prices is inflation, which is the greatest enemy of low-income earners such as low-level government employees. And although it's not been long since the government upped the salaries of its employees, rising prices caused by inflation due to a strengthening US dollar and the calamity of the floods have cancelled out the pay rise.

This is a scenario that has been playing out in Myanmar for decades, yet no one seems to have found a solution. It is therefore advisable that low level government employees should be given inflation-adjusted salaries rather than raising their salaries frequently and causing price volatility.

Thursday, 3 September, 2015

Making the case for inflation-adjusted salaries

By Myint Win Thein

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Thursday, 3 September, 2015

Start Your Own Enterprise

Huiin Tin Tun

Before we start our enterprise, we must have two eyes, one is Economic Eye and another one is Dhamma (Moral) Eye. Mind-centred religion will make balanced economical enterprises to gain profit and to give (generosity/charity) (sharing)

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Myanmar hosts annual ASEAN Defence meeting

NAY PYI TAW — Myanmar hosted the 19th ASEAN Regional Forum-Heads of Defence Universities, Colleges and Institutions Meeting (HDUCIM) in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday.

An address was given by Vice-Senior General Soe Win, the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and Army Commander-in-Chief.

The two-day meeting drew defence services delegates from Brunei, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor, Vietnam, China, India, Japan, South Korea, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Russia, Mongolia, the United States and Australia.

Topics discussed included enhancing strategic cooperation in the region, enhancing cooperation through military education and building regional security cooperation. The meeting was also attended by senior military officers of Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Brig-Gen Moe Myint Tun, Commandant of National Defence College Brig-Gen Myo Moe Aung and officials. — Myawady

Public donates relief supplies for 119 flood-hit monasteries in Monyoo

YANGON — Relief provisions were donated to 119 monasteries in flood-hit areas of Monyoo Townships in Bago Region on Wednesday.

A donation ceremony was led by Union Minister for Religious Affairs U Soe Win, who presented donations of rice, cooking oil, robes, umbrellas, slippers, alms bowls, fans, steel bowls and spoons and juice from well-wishers. A sum of K10 million was also donated to a fund for the monasteries.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs has also sent donations from the public to monasteries in flood-affected areas in Pwintbyu, Kalay, Sittway and Monywa townships. — MNA

Start Your Own Enterprise

(on page 8)

on your business of each structure? “Financial”: 1. Have you evaluated your personal financial situation? 2). Have you researched the start-up costs of your business? 3). Have you evaluated the capital and resource investment requirements to begin your enterprise? 4). Do you have a working knowledge of financial statements? 5). Do you have access to business capital at an affordable interest rate and workable terms? 6). Have you developed profit projections for the first three years of your business? 7). Can your family continue to pay its monthly obligations if your business sustains a loss during its start-up year? 8). Do you understand the basics of record keeping? Other enterprises can follow these hints by adding some requirements it may be necessary.

Embody values (value respect and relationship) is the quality of a great leader. The leader is the one who knows the way, who goes the way, who shows the way and who leads the way. Social enterprise is a different way of doing business. A social enterprise is a business that trades for a social purpose. The social aims of the business are of equal importance to its commercial activities, and this combination is often referred to as the ‘double bottom line’. Like any business, a social enterprise focuses on generating an income through the sale of goods and services to a market but the added value of a social enterprise comes from the way in which it uses its profits to maximise social, community or environmental benefits. Both social enterprise and business planning come with their own sets of jargon and terminologies. Wherever practical, we have attempted to explain the meaning of any jargon that you should expect to encounter. The social enterprise sector is both vibrant and developing. If you are unfamiliar with social enterprise, you can find out more by consulting various websites about social enterprises which will direct you to further sources of information. The journey of your enterprise start from Motivation, Preparation, Assessment, Test Your Idea, Exploration, Business Planning and then Start Up. Have a good start.

About the author:
U Tin Htun
Freelance Management and Development Consultant, former International UNV UNCHS/ILO/UNIDO Cooperative and Small Business Specialist in Malawi and Kiribati /UNDP Community Empowerment and Development Specialist in Bangladesh

YANGON — A Fugitive who stabbed two policemen to death in Thanlyin on Wednesday has been apprehended and is now in police custody.

Tin Myint killed the unarmed policemen as they tried to arrest him at a local guest house. In addition to double murder charges, he also faces charges of robbery, stealing and assault dating back to 2014. Another policeman was killed by two men in Insein Township in July while in pursuit of a fugitive. Myanmar Police Force arrested 3,564 fugitives between September 2014 and July 2015. — GNLM
Hundreds of migrants protest at Budapest station, want to go to Germany

BUDAPEST — Hundreds of migrants protested in front of Budapest’s Eastern railway station on Wednesday, shouting “Freedom, freedom” and demanding to be let onto trains bound for Germany but the station remained closed to them.

More than 2,000 migrants, including families with children, were waiting in the square at the station in sweltering heat.

Asked if Hungary would again let migrants board trains to Germany as it did on Monday, a spokesman for the government said it would observe European Union rules.

“In the territory of the EU, illegal migrants can travel onwards only with valid documents and observing EU rules,” he said.

“A train ticket does not overwrite EU rules.”—Reuters

Big guns in east Ukraine fall silent, two more die from wounds in Kiev protests

KIEV — A fragile truce between Ukrainian government forces and pro-Russian separatists appeared to be holding on Tuesday as both sides made a renewed effort to silence their guns and make the much-abused ceasefire work.

Sporadic shelling and shooting, which each side has blamed on the other, had ensured a steady mounting death toll despite the ceasefire called as part of a peace plan worked out in Minsk, Belarus, in February. Government and separatist representatives agreed last week to strive to end all violations from Tuesday.

A Kiev military spokesman said first signs were that parties to the Minsk deal were adhering to the call for a more effective truce to mark the start of a new school year.

“As of 12 p.m. there were no reports of violations by the illegal armed groups. Now the situation is calm,” the spokesman, Oleksander Motuzanyk, said. No soldiers had been killed or wounded over the past 24 hours, he said.

However, two more guardsman have died from wounds sustained in violent protests outside Ukraine’s parliament, the national guard said.

The Minsk agreement, brokered by the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, Germany and France, is regarded as the bedrock of international efforts to end the conflict in Ukraine’s eastern regions. More than 6,500 people have been killed since a separatist rebellion erupted there in April 2014.

But violent nationalist-led protests outside parliament on Monday and political opposition inside to reforms indicate that President Petro Poroshenko may struggle to win broad support for the Minsk deal.

Several explosive devices, including smoke bombs and one grenade, were thrown from the crowd at the parliament during a rowdy debate on constitutional amendments that would give greater self-governance to rebel-held areas in the east. One guardsman was reported on Monday as having been killed in the unrest and nearly 90 wounded. Police detained 18 people, including a person who had thrown a grenade. Police say he is the member of nationalist Svoboda political party.—Reuters

Biden is top choice of Democrats if Clinton falters

WASHINGTON — US Democratic voters would choose Vice President Joe Biden as their preferred candidate for president in 2016 if current frontrunner Hillary Clinton shows signs of faltering, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll released on Tuesday.

More than 38 percent of Democrats polled said they would vote for Biden in the Democratic Party nominating contest, if polling indicated that Clinton would lose to a Republican candidate.

Thirty percent of Democratic voters said they would back liberal Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders should Clinton, a former secretary of state, run into trouble, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll conducted from Aug. 28 through Sept. 1.

Fewer than a quarter of voters said they would stick by Clinton. The survey suggested that while Clinton’s support is broad, voters are far from committed, which could indicate risks for her if Biden were to jump into the race.

Biden has been consulting with advisers over whether she should launch a 2016 presidential bid. With the first Democratic presidential primary debate planned for Oct. 13, Biden is under pressure to make a decision within the next few weeks.

A total of 499 people who identified themselves as Democrats took part in the poll, which had a credibility interval of plus or minus 5.1 percentage points.

Clinton remains the top choice for Democratic voters, with more than 44 percent favoring the former first lady, according to Tuesday’s Reuters/Ipsos polling data. Sanders had the support of a quarter of those surveyed, and Biden almost 17 percent.

But Clinton’s lead narrowed in recent days as her polling numbers fell below 50 percent in August and as Sanders, a self-described socialist, drew a bit closer.

Sanders’ campaign has focused on wealth inequality and the economic struggles of the middle class. He has drawn large crowds and has appeared to gain traction especially among students, according to Reuters/Ipsos polling. Voters in various polls have said they lack trust in Clinton as she struggles with a controversy over her use of a private email server for official business during her tenure as the top US diplomat. The FBI is investigating the security of the private server and any classified information on it. Clinton says she did nothing wrong and only used the private account out of convenience.

An August interview survey of 22 voters who had participated in Reuters/Ipsos polling and supported Biden found many of them describing the vice president as “honest,” “genuine” and “trustworthy.”—Reuters

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko (R) greets Austrian diplomat and OSCE Ambassador Martin Sajdik after their meeting in Kiev, Ukraine, in this September 1, 2015 handout photo provided by the Ukrainian Presidential Press Service.—Reuters
Congo militia leader goes on trial in test of international criminal justice

THE HAGUE — A Congolese militia leader goes on trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC) on Wednesday accused of crimes including murder and the use of child soldiers during the early 2000s.

Rwandan-born Bosco Ntaganda is the fourth person to face trial at the court in connection with a series of brutal conflicts that have for decades afflicted the mineral-rich province of Ituri in Congo’s northeast.

The trial will be the first test of a new team assembled by court prosecutor Fatou Bensouda, who has promised to ensure that cases are investigated and prepared more rigorously after a series of high-profile failures.

Known as “The Terminator” during his time commanding the Patriotic Forces for the Liberation of Congo, and indicted in 2006, Ntaganda remained on the run for years, fighting in a series of conflicts on and around Congo’s border with Rwanda.

“We believe he ordered his troops to attack, pillage, rape, persecute and kill civilians belonging to Lendu, Ngiti and other ethnic groups,” Bensouda said on Tuesday.

“We believe he recruited hundreds of children into the UPC (Union of Congolese Patriots) and used them to kill and to die in the fighting; and girl soldiers to be routinely raped.”

In 2013, alone and fearing for his life, Ntaganda became the first person to surrender to the court voluntarily, handing himself over. The United Nations has since given him asylum in the Rwandan capital Kigali.

Set up in 2002 to prosecute the most serious international crimes, the ICC has until now convicted only little-known warlords from the Ituri conflicts. Other cases, like that against Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta, have collapsed after witness withdrawals undermined already brittle cases.

Many of its high-profile indictees, from Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir to All-Islamic State son of late Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, remain at large, their governments refusing to hand them over.—Reuters

South Africa may increase nuclear power — newspaper

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa’s future energy mix could include an even higher share for nuclear power than the 9,600 megawatts (MW) already planned, the Business Day newspaper reported on Tuesday, citing an interview with a government official.

It said a new version of South Africa’s integrated resources plan, which projects its electricity requirements and suggests the energy generation mix needed, will be released in March. “Given that we have a climate change commitment to fulfil, it should not surprise people that the viability of a much larger nuclear contribution in the long term should be tested,” said the newspaper.

China, France, Russia, the United States and South Korea, as well as Japan and Canada, have all expressed interest in the project and have signed or are close to signing cooperation deals with South Africa on trade and technology exchange.—Reuters

South Africa may increase nuclear power — newspaper

Three Pakistani police killed in raid targeting Taliban

PESHAWAR (Pakistan) — Militants killed three police officers and wounded several more on Wednesday in a botched police operation on a Pakistani Taliban hideout in the southwestern city of Peshawar, police and residents said.

Pakistan, a nuclear-armed nation of 190 million, is plagued by a Taliban insurgency, sectarian violence and terrorism.

The police ran into trouble during a pre-dawn raid, when one of the militants suspected inside a home opened fire with a semi-automatic weapon, Peshawar police chief Mian Saeed said.

Another suspect fired rocket-propelled grenades at the team, according to a second police official in the city’s Umarra area.

“Overall, three police personnel were martyred and seven officers were wounded, and one sniffer dog also sustained injuries,” Saeed said.

One of the attackers was killed by police returning fire and the rest escaped, he said.—Reuters

Friendly fire from Saudi-led coalition kills seven in Yemen

ADEN — Seven supporters of President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi were killed on Tuesday by friendly fire from a Saudi-led air strike in north Yemen, tribal sources said, as pro-Hadi forces converged on Marib in preparation to attack Houthi fighters in the region.

In the southern port city of Aden, unidentified gunmen on motorcycles shot dead two leaders of a local force allied with Hadi in separate attacks on Monday, regional officials said.

Saudi-led forces have been waging an air campaign against the Iran-aligned Houthis since March to try to halt the Shiite rebels’ expansion and restore the exiled Hadi to power.

Tribal sources said two members of a local force allied with Hadi were also wounded when Saudi-led jets targeted them by mistake in an area known as al-Khazan, east of the capital Sanaa, during a clash with Houthi fighters.

Hadi supporters had been reinforcing local tribal fighters with newly-ly-trained recruits and armoured vehicles supplied by the Saudi-led coalition in what regional media had said were preparations for an assault to retake Sanaa from the Houthis.

Hadi supporters, who had been on the retreat since the Houthis seized Sanaa a year ago, have made gains in recent weeks with Saudi-led support, capturing Aden and advancing on the strategic southwestern city of Taiz.

But the United Nations says the fighting has often targeted civilians.

In Geneva, the United Nations said on Tuesday that 95 civilians had been killed in the past two weeks in Taiz, where a collapse in health care services and an outbreak of dengue fever are compounding a dire humanitarian situation.

“The United Nations is alarmed by the steep increase in the number of civil casualties in Taiz in recent weeks,” U.N. human rights spokeswoman Cecile Pouilly told a news briefing.

Yemen’s third-largest city, has become the latest frontline in a five-month war between Houthis militiamen from the north and supporters of Yemen’s exiled government, which is backed by the West and Saudi Arabia.—Reuters

Turkish warplanes attack PKK targets after soldier killed in attack

ISTANBUL — Turkish F-16 warplanes bombed Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) positions in southeast Turkey on Wednesday after the militants killed a soldier in the area, Turkey’s armed forces said.

Clashes between Turkish and the militants, who have bases in the northeastern province of northern Iraq, have become a daily occurrence since a two-year-old ceasefire fell apart last month, leaving peace negotiations in tatters.

PKK fighters armed with rifles opened fire at 7:05 a.m. (0405 GMT) on troops conducting searches on a road in the Semdinli district of Hakkâri province, near the borders with Iran and Iraq, the general staff said on its website.

In the ensuing clash, one soldier was killed and two were wounded and flown to hospital.

Two F-16 jets then destroyed PKK firing positions in the area, where attack helicopters, drones and military reinforcement were also operating.

Some 70 members of Turkey’s security forces have been killed since PKK attacks began in early July.

The state-run Anadolu Agency says more than 900 PKK militants have been killed in southeast Turkey and in Iraq since July 22.

The PKK, designated a terrorist organisation by Turkey, the United States and European Union, took up arms in 1984, and more than 40,000 people have since been killed.

The violence had halted after Ankara began talks with the group’s jailed leader Abdullah Ocalan in 2013.

There appeared to be progress towards a peace deal, but it was undermined before June’s parliamentary election by domestic politics and Kurdish involvement in the civil war in neighbouring Syria.—Reuters

Turkish construction firm says 18 workers kidnapped in Baghdad

ANKARA — Eighteen Turkish workers were kidnapped on Wednesday morning, the head of their firm, Nurul Holding, told Reuters.

“People dressed in military uniforms broke down the door at 3 a.m. (0000 GMT) and abducted all these people,” Nurul Holding, based in southern Burdur province, said.

A spokesman for the Iraqi interior ministry had earlier said 16 people were taken.—Reuters

Congo militia leader goes on trial in test of international criminal justice

The government aims to procure nuclear reactors to generate 9,600 MW by 2030 but the newspaper said that could be “enhanced further”, as the government aims to fulfil its targets to mitigate climate change.

Analysts have estimated that the current nuclear building plans could cost as much as $100 billion, making it the country’s biggest ever infrastructure project.

However, Energy Minister Tina Joemat-Pettersen said neither the price nor the contractor had been determined.

Opposition parties have expressed concern about the cost and that agreements to build the nuclear plants will be made behind closed doors without proper public scrutiny.

China, France, Russia, the United States and South Korea, as well as Japan and Canada, have all expressed interest in the project and have signed or are close to signing cooperation deals with South Africa on trade and technology exchange.—Reuters
Hundreds of Eurostar passengers stranded by migrants trying to get through tunnel

CALAIS, (France) — Hundreds of passengers were stranded for hours on five Eurostar high-speed trains after reports that migrants were blocking the tracks leading to the tunnel under the English Channel and were attempting to climb aboard.

According to the Eurostar Twitter feed, three of the trains then went on to London early on Wednesday, while two others returned to their original departure stations in London and Paris.

Eurostar had announced on Twitter late on Tuesday that it was holding its trains “whilst authorities deal with trespassers” and said the trespassers had been spotted on the tracks at the station in Calais. The trains stayed in place as the trespassers were removed from the tunnel and away from the tracks, it said.

Local media reported that the trespassers were migrants attempting to cross into the United Kingdom through the Eurotunnel, also known as the Channel. So far this year, thousands of refugees have attempted to make the dangerous crossing.

Passengers on one of the London-bound trains, which stopped less than a mile (1.6 km) from the tunnel, were told at one point to be very quiet and listen for the sound of people climbing on the roof. A helicopter with a searchlight then circled the train as guards walked the tracks looking for migrants, but seemingly none were spotted.

Passengers wrapped in thermal foil blankets given out by emergency services after their Eurostar train was stranded at Calais Station, after intruders were seen near the Eurotunnel, in Calais, France September 2, 2015. — Reuters

“Technically, we have three. Operationally, we really have only two,” Obama told reporters in the coastal town of Seward, named after Secretary of State William Seward, who negotiated the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867.

Obama will have to convince Congress to pick up the tab for any new icebreakers, each of which comes with a price tag of about $1 billion.

“The devil, as always, will be in the funding and procurement details,” said Heather Conley of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, who has studied the need for more Arctic icebreakers.

The region also needs enhanced navigation aids, satellite communications, deep water ports and other related investments not mentioned in the White House announcement, Conley noted.

At a time of dwindling fresh air and bottled water. But when some attempted to leave the station to cross the English Channel by ferry, French gendarmes stopped them, saying that customs and immigration laws required that the passengers return to Paris. However, Eurostar tweeted that the train, ES9055, “is unable to be used to take passengers in Calais back to Paris and alternative options are being sought.”

“We’ve been abandoned on a platform somewhere in the cold with NO INFORMATION,” tweeted one of the passengers, Danny Bell. “And enlighten me - at 4am in the middle of nowhere what are those options? For hundreds and hundreds of people?”

Eurostar has offered to exchange tickets.— Reuters

French president pledges to do everything to identify Paris fire’ causes

PARIS — French President Francois Hollande on Wednesday vowed to dig out the causes of a fatal blaze in Paris northern suburbs, according to his office.

“Everything is done to shed light on the cause of this drama and get all the necessary information about what happened,” Hollande said.

“A fire broke out at around 5 a.m. local time (0300 GMT) in the 18th district of French capital in a private building, killing eight people, including two children. It started on the ground floor before spreading into the stairwell, local medias reported.”

A hundred firefighters were mobilized to contain the blaze that was under control, the Elysee said.

Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said an investigation is ongoing, adding “it’s too early to determine the cause of the fire.”— Xinhua

Greek coast guard seizes ship with weapons bound for Libya

ATHENS — Greek authorities have seized a freighter carrying an undeclared shipment of weapons en route from Turkey to Libya, coast guard officials said on Wednesday.

A coast guard patrol boat raided the vessel on Tuesday, 20 nautical miles northeast of Crete. The freighter, with a crew of seven and which had sailed from the Turkish port of Iskenderun, was escorted to Heraklion port on the island.

The United Nations has imposed an embargo on weapons shipments to Libya.

“Everything is done to carry out search and rescue and oil spill response missions.”

Huntington Ingalls Industries Inc, which built the newest US icebreaker and delivered it in 1999, said it was keen to bid on new hardened ships for the Coast Guard.

General Dynamics Corp, the other large US military shipbuilder and a possible bidder in an ice breaker competition, said it was also very interested, and touted its expertise in manufacturing heavy- and medium-weight steel commercial ships.

The company that built the other existing US, icebreakers, Lockheed Shipbuilding and Construction, has exited the business and its shipyard was shut down in 1988. It usually takes up to 10 years to build an icebreaker. It was not immediately clear when any proposed new vessel might be ready.

The White House also said the government should start planning for additional vessels. The Coast Guard has previously recommended it needs eight icebreakers, although no administration budget has yet included the huge funding request.

Coast Guard officials have said other agencies will have to chip in to help finance the purchase of new icebreakers.— Reuters
CLAMS DAY NOTICE
MV BANGKACHAI VOY NO (138)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV BANGKACHAI VOY NO (138) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.9.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W(4) where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.
Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.
No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS WONGSAMUT OCEAN SHIPPING CO LTD.
Phone No: 2301186

CLAMS DAY NOTICE
MV KOTA TAMPAN VOY NO (TPN-655)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA TAMPAN VOY NO (TPN-655) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.9.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.
Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.
No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES
Phone No: 2301185

CLAMS DAY NOTICE
MV LINDAUNIS VOY NO (001IS)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV LINDAUNIS VOY NO (001IS) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.9.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.LP where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.
Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.
No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS CHINA SHIPPING LINES
Phone No: 2301185

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER )

(14/2015)
Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars and Myanmar Kyats,

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Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 1st September, 2015 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

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Moderate quake strikes off eastern Indonesia
JAKARTA — An earthquake measuring 5.6 Richter scale hit southeastern parts of Indonesia, the Meteorology and Geophysics Agency said on Thursday.

An earthquake measuring 5.6 on the Richter scale jolted eastern parts of Indonesia earlier Wednesday.

An earthquake measuring 5.6 on the Richter scale hit southeastern parts of Indonesia on Thursday.

Indonesia is prone to quakes as it lies on a vulnerable quake-prone zone.

—Xinhua

PICTURE OF THE DAY
People gather at the art installation Serpent Mother during the Burning Man 2015 "Carnival of Mirrors" arts and music festival in the Black Rock Desert of Nevada, September 1, 2015. Participants are still arriving from all over the world for the sold-out festival to spend a week in the remote desert to experience art, music and the unique community that develops.—REUTERS
VENICE — The Venice Film Festival is having a good run with opening films winning Oscars, including best picture last year for “Birdman”, and hopes to stay on a winning streak with the mountain disaster film “Everest” kicking off the 72nd edition on Wednesday.

“Everest” is directed by the relatively unknown Baltasar Kormakur from Iceland but boasts an all-star cast, including Jake Gyllenhaal, Keira Knightley and Josh Brolin re-acting a real-life disaster that befell several expedition teams on the world’s highest mountain in 1996 — filmed in 3D to boot.

It is not competing for the “Lion d’Or” top prize but is just this kind of film that Alberto Barbera, the festival’s director, is looking for as an opener — having seen its hit in only with “Birdman” but also with the space thriller “Gravity” the year before.

“The most difficult thing is to identify the film for the opening night because it’s a sort of a special category of film,” Barbera told Reuters in an interview. “It has to be spectacular enough, not too violent because the audience of the opening night is different from the rest of the festival.”

“It’s made of guests, representatives of the public institutions, authorities, whatever, not cinephiles, so you have to find a mix of elements that combine the many expectations of the audience,” he said.

Barbera is proud not only of grabbing “Everest”, showing out of competition, but also for huting a raft of prestigious films, directors and actors for a festi- val that in some film circles, before Barbera took the reins a few years ago, was said to be sinking into the lagoon, with the rest of Venice.

Some of the top movies in the competition strand include Eddie Redmayne playing the title role in the biopic “Yitzhak Rabin”, “Rabin, the Last Day”, and “Beasts of No Nation”, which stars Idris Elba (“Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom”) and is based on a novel about a child soldier in Africa.

Out of competition, the festival will host the premiere of “Black Mass”, with Johnny Depp portraying the Irish-American gangster Whitey Bulger, and “Spotlight”, starring Michael Keaton as an editor involved in the Boston Globe’s Pulitzer-Prize win- ning investigation of pedo-phile priests serving in the Roman Catholic church in Boston.

“Venice has been doing a really good job in the last couple of years of focusing the lineup,” said said... but the public don’t get it somehow.” Harket said when interviewed by Reuters, explaining how the public soured on the band after songs like “Take On Me” and “Take On Me” became less popular. The band, which was formed in 1982 and split in 1996, has announced plans to reunite for a new album.

“The band is back together,” Harket said in an interview with Reuters. “We are working on new material and expect to release it next year.”

The reunion comes after the group’s 1990s hit “Take On Me” became a viral sensation on the internet, leading to a surge in ticket sales for their upcoming tour.

“The band is more popular than ever, and we are excited to bring our music to new audiences,” Harket said. “We are working with some of the biggest names in the business to put on the best show possible.”

The reunion was confirmed by the band’s management, who said they were “reunited and ready to rock.”

The group’s lead singer, Morten Harket, said the band was “more than happy” to reunite after a long break. “We miss playing together and can’t wait to get back on stage,” he said.

The band’s original members, Paul Waaktaar-Savoy and Magne Furuholmen, have also expressed their excitement about the reunion. “We are looking forward to seeing our fans again,” Furuholmen said.

The reunion is expected to take place in early 2016, with dates planned for North America, Europe and Asia.

Meanwhile, the band’s upcoming album is expected to feature new material, as well as reinterpretations of their most famous songs. The band has also hinted at a potential tour in support of the new album.

The reunion comes as the band’s classic hit “Take On Me” becomes a viral sensation on social media, with millions of views on YouTube and other platforms.

“I had no idea this song would become so popular,” Harket said. “We are humbled by the support and can’t wait to bring our music to new audiences.”

The band has also announced plans to release a new single in early 2016, with more details expected to be announced soon.

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Los Angeles named US bid candidate for 2024 Games

LOS ANGELES — Los Angeles was officially selected on Tuesday as the American candidate city that will bid to host the 2024 Summer Olympics after Boston pulled out of the race in July, the US Olympic Committee said.

Los Angeles, which has hosted the Summer Games twice before, in 1932 and 1984, will be among the front-runners and joins a race that includes heavy favourite Paris, Rome, Budapest and Hamburg. “It is my distinct honour today to formally name the city of Los Angeles as the US bid city to host the 2024 Olympics,” USOC Chief Executive Officer Scott Blackmun told a news conference held just off the beach front in Santa Monica.

The final obstacle facing the city’s candidacy was cleared earlier Tuesday when the Los Angeles City Council voted unanimously to pursue a bid for the 2024 Games, giving Los Angeles the chance to become the only city besides London to host the Olympics three times.

The resolution adopted on a 15-0 vote by the council allows the city to negotiate financial terms of a hosting deal and bow out if it cannot reach agreement with Olympic officials.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) will elect a winning bid in September 2017. “LA has the proven experience in hosting the Games, and knows how to deliver world-class events for athletes and an extraordinary experience for fans,” Blackmun said in a statement. “Coupled with the city’s culture of creativity and innovation, we are confident LA can deliver an outstanding Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2024.”

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said: “Today, I am proud to officially launch our bid in partnership with the USOC as we aim to bring the Olympic and Paralympic Games back to the US for the first time in 28 years. “It is an honour for any city to host the Olympic Games, and Los Angeles is uniquely prepared for this task. With the unanimous support of our City Council, we are ready to serve and strengthen the Olympic Movement and build a new Olympic legacy.”

The USOC had been under pressure to find another potential host with the IOC having set a Sept. 15 deadline for interested cities to submit a letter of intent. —Reuters

West Brom’s Berahino angry as dream move joins failed deals

LONDON—West Bromwich Albion’s Saido Berahino has suggested he will never play for the club again after failing to secure a last-minute transfer to Tottenham Hotspur as several players did not get the moves they wanted on a frenetic deadline day.

England under-21 striker Berahino was the subject of four failed bids from the London club and reacted angrily on Twitter, saying he would not play for the Midlands outfit again under chairman Jeremy Peace.

“Sad how I can’t say exactly how the club has treated me, but I can officially say I will never play (for) Jeremy Peace,” he said.

While Peace responded by saying he had made it clear to Spurs that West Brom would not accept a bid for Berahino so late in the window, he admitted the player had been unsettled by what he called Tottenham’s “antics”.

Berahino’s was among a number of high-profile deals that failed to get over the finish line, including goalkeeper David De Gea’s transfer from Manchester United to Real Madrid and Everton defender John Stones’ proposed move to Chelsea.

The breakdown in De Gea’s deal has led both teams to blame each other for a bureaucratic failure to file all the documents in time for the transfer to be processed. Stones put in a transfer request and was the subject of three bids of 20, 26 and finally 30 million pounds ($45.91 million), which were all rejected by Everton who held firm and insisted that the player was not for sale. —Reuters
MIC Club wins AYA Bank
Futsal Open Cup

Berto ‘on a mission’ to unseat Mayweather

YANGON — Myanmar Imperial College’s Futsal Club won the championship trophy after defeating Khittaya Club 10-2 in the final match of AYA Bank Futsal Open Cup 2015 held at the National Indoor Stadium-1 in Yangon’s Thawwunna Township on 1 September.

Winner Club took the third position with a 5-3 win over VUC at the same venue.

The President of Myanmar Football Federation U Zaw Zaw presented the championship trophy to MIC club and a K3 million ($2350) cash prize. Players received individual gold medals. Cash prizes of K2 million went to second prize winning club, K1.5 million to the third prize and K1 million to the fourth.

A prize of K500,000 for the best and fairest team award went to VUC Club, while K300,000 went to the best goalkeeper, Kyaw Htet Aung of Winner Club, as well as best all-round player of the championship, Nyein Min Soe of Winner Club.— MFF

LOS ANGELES — Andre Berto will go into his welterweight title fight against Floyd Mayweather in Las Vegas next week as a heavy underdog but also as a man “on a mission” as he bids to end his fellow American’s perfect 48-0 record.

Berto, 31, has blinkered himself from all the hype and hoopla that usually surrounds the build-up to a Mayweather bout and claims he has never been fitter as he prepares to step into the ring at the MGM Grand Garden Arena on Sept. 12.

“I’ve had a tremendous training camp, a long camp but a tremendous camp,” twice former welterweight world champion Berto told reporters on a conference call on Tuesday. “I’ve never run harder. I’m definitely in the best shape that I’ve ever been in.

“I’ve worked with a lot of different sparring partners. Floyd is a very skilled fighter but I think I bring a combination of speed and power to the table. I think I have a better athletic ability. I can keep up with Floyd. ‘Mayweather, widely regarded as one of the best defensive fighters ever, will put his unbeaten record on the line against Berto, a man who has lost three of his last six fights and is viewed by some as an easy opponent for their welterweight clash.

Should five-division world champion Mayweather win the WBC and WBA welterweight title bout as expected, in what he has said will be the final fight of his career, he would match the 49-0 record of former heavyweight great Rocky Marciano.

“It would be something huge, not just for me but for the sport,” Berto said, when asked how much value he would place on a surprise victory over Mayweather. “Floyd has been an icon for quite some time now and he’s on his way to try to match a record. So for me, being the gym-hungry fighter coming in to take that away from him, that would be huge.”

Mayweather, who improved to 48-0 by beating Manny Pacquiao in a ‘mega-fight’ in May that took five years to finalise and became the richest bout in boxing, is known for his trash talking and his flamboyant approach to life outside the ring. Berto, however, prefers to leave all the hype to others while preparing for fights. “I don’t get caught up in all the hoopla and all the crazy shit. “I don’t want to get caught up and caught off guard. I’m on a mission.” — Reuters

Newcastle’s new boys will take time to gel, says Wijnaldum

LONDON — Newcastle United’s new boys will take time to gel but the side will be a force going forward in the Premier League, summer recruit Georgino Wijnaldum has said. Newcastle have reportedly spent over 50 million pounds ($76.55 million) this summer on Cheick Mbemba, Wijnaldum, Florian Thauvin, Aleksandar Mitrovic and Ivan Toney.

“We have good players but now we must make sure we show we are a good team,” the 24-year-old Wijnaldum, the third most expensive signing in the club’s history, was quoted as saying by the Chronicle. “When a lot of players come to a club it can be difficult to gel because you don’t know each other properly. “However, we are going to train hard to make sure we do know each other. Then we can be a big team going forward,” the Netherlands international added.— Reuters