Ko Moe

PUNITIVE action will be taken against those found to be squatting on state-owned and private land as of today, said Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein at a press briefing yesterday.

The chief minister added that a list of squatters will be compiled within 45 days as part of a broader plan to conduct research on the development of Yangon Region where the squatter problem is seen as a challenge by the regional government.

Although the Chief Minister revealed the existence of plan to solve the problem, he did not address particular details regarding content or implementation.

While making the squatter lists, fingerprints and photographs of squatters will be collected before issuing identity cards to them, said the chief minister, adding that transferring ownership of the cards to anyone other than the card recipient is not allowed.

A regional order will be released in designated areas to compile lists of local squatters. Police personnel will accompany teams making lists there. Those squatters who oppose the order will be arrested and charged under section 188 of the 1861 Penal Code (disobedience to order duly promulgated by a public servant).

According to the regional government, action will be taken against listed squatters if they are found dwelling in other places. The regional government pledged to crack down on gangs enjoying squatting benefits.

In his address the chief minister said that listed squatters will be accommodated at temporary shelters and jobs will be found for them.

Minister for Security and Border Affairs Col Tin Aung Tun said that there would be no more room for criminals in squatting locations, which, he said, have become a haven for them.

According to sources there are more than 8,000 squatter houses in Hlinethaya Township where Yangon’s biggest industrial zone is situated and more than 600,000 people residing in them.

Govt to attract investment in less developed regions

THE Department of Investment and Companies Administration has stated that less developed regions of Myanmar could see an increase in investment were taxes to be reduced to make such business ventures more attractive.

Foreign investors have already invested heavily into urban centres of the country such as Yangon and Mandalay, but investment in less developed regions would undoubtedly result in more employment opportunities for local residents.

“We will reduce taxes on income of foreign companies should they invest in less developed parts of the country. This article will be included in the new foreign investment law that is currently being drawn up,” said the director from the Department of Investment and Companies Administration.

Less developed areas of the country such as Chin, Kayah and Rakhine States primarily require basic housing and road infrastructure, together with access to electricity, which presents a special opportunity for potential investors.

“The most important aspect of investment is tax. If reduction of taxes are to be made to encourage investment into these regions then I believe the agricultural sector should be given priority,” said economist Dr Soe Htun.

Current domestic and foreign investment laws will be combined in a bid to increase both forms of investment into the country, while a new Myanmar Investment Commission will be formed which will issue permits for investors. As such, foreign companies eying business opportunities
Pyithu Hluttaw approves bills revoking People’s Council Law and State Council Law

THE Pyithu Hluttaw entered its 32nd day session, approving the bills to revoke the People’s Council Law and State Council Law with no objection yesterday.

During a Q & A session, Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Dr Tun Win replied that 2,526 acres of Wet Toe farmland that has 3,726 acres in total will be set aside for local farmers to use.

The ministry plans to produce quality products from 1,200 acres in cooperation with the private sector, added the deputy minister.

He insisted that the 3,726-acre Wet Toe farmland was established by the government without confiscating any land from farmers. Regarding the conservation of Moegok lake, the deputy minister said that the lake’s water storage capacity increased from 203 acres to 600 acres after silt dredging and related works with the use of K1.9 billion from the special fund.

Further works on sustainability of the lake include the repairing of the spillway and its drainage system, works that will be undertaken by the Township Development Department and supporting committees.

—Myanmar News Agency

Amyotha Hluttaw session continues

THE Amyotha Hluttaw session continued for its 29th day with a question and answer session and discussions on two bills yesterday.

In his response, Union Minister for Construction U Win Khaing said that construction of a suspension bridge in MraukU Township, Rakhine State can be undertaken after silt dredging and related works with the use of 3,726 acres after silt dredging.

Win replied that 2,526 acres of Wet Toe farmland that has 3,726 acres in total will be set aside for local farmers to use.

The ministry plans to produce quality products from 1,200 acres in cooperation with the private sector, added the deputy minister.

He insisted that the 3,726-acre Wet Toe farmland was established by the government without confiscating any land from farmers. Regarding the conservation of Moegok lake, the deputy minister said that the lake’s water storage capacity increased from 203 acres to 600 acres after silt dredging and related works with the use of K1.9 billion from the special fund.

Further works on sustainability of the lake include the repairing of the spillway and its drainage system, works that will be undertaken by the Township Development Department and supporting committees.

—Myanmar News Agency

Strong winds wreak havoc in Hpa-an

STRONG winds battered the Hpa-an village of Nganetpya on the evening of May 24, destroying homes and scattering bamboo along roads.

The Hpa-an General Administration Department (GAD), together with the township police and fire department, arrived on the scene to assist with clearing the bamboo from the roads.

“The wind has yet to subside. As far as I know, the roofs were ripped right off six homes,” a teacher from the township said.

The monastery was also battered by the storm. Bamboo was also ripped off at the root by the winds and was strewn across the road,” said Daw Aye Aye Soe, a teacher from Nganetpya Village.

U Aung Ye Min, head of the Hpa-an Township Fire Services Department, explained that difficulties were encountered during the debris being cleared from the roads, and villagers had to call in assistance from the Fire Rescue Team, while rice storage facilities suffered rain damage after winds blew off their roofs, exposing rice to the rain.

—Myitmakha News Agency

Deportation preparations made for six Chinese nationals

PREPARATIONS are currently being made for the repatriation of six Chinese nationals, for whom an order of deportation was issued in May at the Naypyidaw office of the Ministry of Immigration and Population, according to the Kengtung Township immigration department.

The Chinese nationals were found to have crossed illegally into Myanmar and arrested at a dwelling within the Hsaunsai Ward-1 of Tachileik on 30 April 2016. They were later fined and sentenced to be deported in accordance with immigration procedures at the Tachileik Township court of law on 16 May.

[The Chinese nationals] will be repatriated to China via Mong La Special Region-4. The Kengtung Department of Immigration, along with other individuals concerned, will be responsible for escorting the trespassers to the border,” said U Moe Maung Maung Khin, head of the Kengtung Township Department of Immigration and Population (DIP).

The Chinese nationals were temporarily detained at the Tachileik Police Station during the morning of 24 May before being transferred to the Kengtung Township DIP. Plans are currently being made for their repatriation to China via Mong La Special Region-4 with a security escort.

The six Chinese nationals in question are Li Hailing, Shi Mingchang, Zeng Peng, Lai Janjie, Zou Yongkang and Zhang Bin. They were all charged under Article 7.1 of the 1947 Myanmar Immigration Act.

—Myitmakha News Agency
UNION Minister for Foreign Affairs Daw Aung San Suu Kyi met Mr. Vijay Nambiar, United Nations Secretary-General’s Special Adviser on Myanmar, at her office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The two representatives talk on the ongoing peace process and matters related to present and future cooperation between Myanmar and the United Nations. — Myanmar News Agency

UNION Minister for Foreign Affairs Daw Aung San Suu Kyi welcomes Mr. Vijay Nambiar. PHOTO: MNA

UNION Government
Republic of the Union of Myanmar
President’s Office
Notification 9/2016
4th Waning of Kason, 1378 ME
(Wednesday 25 May, 2016)
Reformation of Union Government

1. Under the provisions stated in article 200 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and section 6 (a) of the Union Government Law, the Union Government has been reformed with the following persons:

(1) U Htin Kyaw
President
(2) U Myint Swe
Vice-President
(3) U Henry Van Thio
Vice-President
(4) Daw Aung San Suu Kyi
Union Minister
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of President’s Office
(5) Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe
Union Minister for Home Affairs
(6) Lt-Gen Sein Win
Union Minister for Defense
(7) Lt-Gen Ye Aung
Union Minister for Border Affairs
(8) U Kyaw Tint Swe
Union Minister for Office of the State Counsellor
(9) Dr Pe Myint
Union Minister for Information
(10) Thura U Aung Ko
Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture
(11) Dr Aung Thi
Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation
(12) U Thant Sin Maung
Union Minister for Transport and Communication
(13) U Ohn Win
Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation
(14) U Pe Zin Tun
Union Minister for Electricity and Energy
(15) U Thein Swe
Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population
(16) U Khin Maung Cho
Union Minister for Industry
(17) Dr Than Myint
Union Minister for Commerce
(18) Dr Myo Thein Gyi
Union Minister for Education
(19) Dr Myint Htway
Union Minister for Health and Sports
(20) U Kyaw Win
Union Minister for Planning and Finance
(21) U Win Khaing
Union Minister for Construction
(22) Dr Win Myat Aye
Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Rehabilitation
(23) U Ohn Maung
Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism
(24) Nai Thet Lwin
Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs
(25) U Tun Tun Oo
Attorney-General of the Union

2. The Director-General of the Office of the Union Government shall be the secretary ex officio of the Union Government under the provision stated in section 6 (b) of the Union Govern-

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw signed the announcement of the name changes of two ministries yesterday, as approved by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

The Ministry of Health is now renamed the Ministry of Health and Sports (MOHS), while the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs has undergone a name change in Myanmar language only.—Myanmar News Agency

Two ministries renamed

>> From page 1

Squatting in Yangon is categorised into five different types in which the squatting of home-

less people for housing need and squatting for ‘commercial purpos-
es’ are included, said Deputy Di-
rector U Tun Naing Ko of Yangon Region government office, adding that the number of squatters is growing year after year. Figures showed that there are estimated 170,000 squatters in Yangon’s north district, 93,000 in south district, 8,000 in the west district and 150,000 in the east district. 53 per cent of all Myanmar interstate migration is to Yangon, according to a report by the Social Policy & Poverty Research Group.

Yangon gov’t reveals ...

Govt to attract investment ...

>> From page 1

Records of the Department of Investment and Companies Ad-

istration indicate that so far during this 2016-17 fiscal year, investment in the construction sector amounts to just 0.06 per cent. US$37.767 million, with in-

vestment in the electricity sector considerably more so at 30.89 per cent, over US$15 billion.—Myir-
makha News Agency

Over 30 pedestrian overpasses to go up over Yangon circular railway

“Some people walk across the tracks rather than using pe-
desrian overpasses. Therefore, we are planning to build pedes-
trian overpasses for people after finishing the fencing,” said an officer from Myanmar Railway.

Myanmar Railways will fence the tracks with great care because of some nega-
tive response from the public. —200

MYANMA RAILWAYS plans to build over 30 pedestrian over-

passes as part of the circular rail-

way upgrading project to ensure the safe passage of pedestrians.

Myanmar Railway is build-
ing two pedestrian overpasses at the new Thamine railway station and Yaeku circular train station, and it will also build other over-

passes after finishing the fenc-
ing of the circular line.

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw
signed the announcement of the name changes of two ministries yesterday, as approved by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

The Ministry of Health is now renamed the Ministry of Health and Sports (MOHS), while the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs has undergone a name change in Myanmar language only.—Myanmar News Agency

Govt to attract investment ...
Yangon passenger bus lines to be reduced

THE Central Supervisory Committee for All Private Bus Lines (Yangon Region) plans to reduce the over 300 passenger bus lines operating across the city to 50, a spokesperson said.

U Hla Aung, chairman of the committee, said the move is part of an initiative by regional authorities to provide better transportation services to local commuters who are facing difficulties because of the unsystematic operations of different bus lines, which mostly run on the same routes.

He added: “We are putting more effort to operate bus lines and routes systematically. The new scheme is expected to solve passengers’ problems with public transport buses.”

The current number of buses will remain unchanged as the committee will only decrease the bus lines. Some private bus lines will become public companies. Currently, there are 357 passenger buses running in the city.

The exact date for the implementation of the new scheme has not been fixed yet.

The new public transport system aims to help reduce traffic congestion and balance the ratio between the buses and passengers.— 200

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services kicks off visit to Thailand

AT the invitation of Supreme Commander of Thailand General Sommai Kaotira, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing kicked off his visit to Thailand yesterday.

The Senior General was welcomed at the Royal Thai Army headquarters in Bangkok by General Sommai Kaotira. The two held talks there concerning cooperation between the two armed forces and governments of the two countries as well as the issue of domestic peace.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing also met with Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand General Tanasak Patimapragorn and discussed matters relating to cooperation in culture and tourism.— Myawady

Crime NEWS

Diesel bowser over turns in Htichaint

AN eight-wheel diesel bowser en route to Myitkyina from Mandalay being driven by one Aung Myint Shwe with Myo Zaw Lin on board overturned due to brake failure near Naypy mountain, Htichaint township on Monday.

The break failure caused the turn-over between mileposts 112/7 and 112/8. The driver Aung Myint Shwe, 34, has been charged by police.— U Ye (Katha)

Illegal logs seized from six-wheel vehicle

AUTHORITIES from the Forestry Department seized illegal logs from a six-wheel vehicle on Sagaing-Swelbo road near Thitchogon village on 22 May.

Acting on a tip-off, officers and staff form Forestry Department searched a vehicle en route to Mandalay from Buda-erpartment searched a vehicle en route to Mandalay from Buda-

AUTHORITIES from the Forestry Department seized illegal logs from a six-wheel vehicle on Sagaing-Swelbo road near Thitchogon village on 22 May.

Acting on a tip-off, officers and staff form Forestry Department searched a vehicle en route to Mandalay from Buda-erpartment searched a vehicle en route to Mandalay from Buda-

Illegal logs being confiscated by authorities. Photo: Myo Win (Sagaing)

The passenger bus being seen on fire. Photo: Zaw Myo Htite (Pyin Oo Lwin)

Fire destroys passenger vehicle on Mandalay – Pyin Oo Lwin road

AN outbreak of fire caused by electric short circuiting destroyed a passenger vehicle carrying about 40 passengers on the Mandalay- Pyin Oo Lwin road on Monday.

The accident occurred between mileposts 204 and 205. The vehicle was damaged. However, no one was reported to be injured.

The fire took three fire engines with the firemen to put out the blaze. The police are searching for reckless car driver called Gadon who had fled the scene.— Zaw Myo Htite (Pyin Oo Lwin)

Car accident kills two in Mahlaing Township

A TRAILER collided head on with a motorcycle between mileposts 335/5 and 335/4, Mahlaing township on Monday, leaving two dead.

The trailer vehicle, being driven by one Thein Tun, 40, collided with a motorcycle being driven by one Than Zaw, 31, with Ah Nge Lay on board. The reason for the collision is not yet known.

The collision killed the motorcycle driver and the passenger on the spot. The driver has been charged by police.— Kyaw Kyaw (Mahlaing)

Illegal logs being confiscated by authorities. Photo: Myo Win (Sagaing)

Heroin seized in Katha Township

LOCAL police in Katha township seized yaba from a house in Huaunttali village, Katha township, Sagaing region on Monday.

Acting on a tip-off police searched the home of one Tun Zaw and discovered heroin weighing 1.95 grams. Police have filed charges against him under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.— Lu Aung (Katha)
UMFCCI, private sector initiate action to solve Port delays

The Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) and private sector representatives have taken steps to solve the serious delays that are currently impacting Myanmar’s trade capability.

UMFCCI President U Win Aung held a meeting with services providers, customs brokers, freight forwarders and container truck owners to help the Government overcome recent backlog problems.

U Win Aung said the group formed a working committee that would report its findings and recommendations to Yangon Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, and related government ministries as soon as possible.

Congestion and delays in loading and unloading processes at Yangon’s sea ports undermine Myanmar’s economic growth by slowing down export and import capability,” U Win Aung said.

“The private sector must contribute to help improve vital areas of overseas trade including custom clearances, transportation and port management.”

The working committee comprises Port owners, the Myanmar International Freight Forwarders’ Association, the Myanmar Mercantile Marine Development Association, the Myanmar Customs Brokers Association and the Myanmar Container Trucks Association.

The committee members will work out of at the UMFCCI headquarters in Lanmadaw Township and report back to the Government within two weeks. It will also cooperate with the Government to implement the agreed plan.

The group yesterday agreed the most urgent tasks would be:
1. To compile a list and make a report on the containers that are left unclaimed for over 60 days. 2. Devise quick turn-around methods to clear out and replace empty and unused containers.
3. Get shipping companies to report detailed freight logistics activities. 4. Customs clearance and containers loading- unloading processes to continue 24-hours a day.
5. Report recommendations to the Chief Minister of Yangon and the related ministries as soon as possible.—GNLM

No need to bother with meter bills

The Thailand based technical company True Money’s meter bill system is now available in Yangon to facilitate meter bills payments including services for those who do not have a bank account.

The system has been jointly established by True Money Myanmar and the Connect N Pay Company. The two companies signed an agreement on 18 May at the Park Royal Yangon.

True Money counters have been installed in electrical apparatus stores, tea shops, restaurants, phone kiosks, hotels, hospitals and various places in the community. The system allows people to pay meter bills via True Money machines with a code number printed on their bill from the YCDC and the YESB. This service is now available in the Northern and Western Districts of Yangon.

The payment system is designed for meter bills as well as other charges from the YCDC. A service charge of K500 is collected for each payment. The system will also charge a K500 service fee for monthly payments made by a household, said Ko Tun Tun Lin, the managing director of True Money Myanmar.

“The True Money counter is not available for those who do not pay their bills before deadline. These people can pay only at the office relevant to the bill said U Pyae Sone, managing director of Connect N Pay.

Currently, there are around 1,000 True Money agents and it is expected that there will be around 6,000 agents by the end of the year. True Money has been planning to extend the following services: postpaid billing, buying tickets, subscribing to news journals, money exchanges and mobile payment systems.

People who wish to work as an agent of True Money can contact the following number - 01 2305360. True Money machines can be installed free of charge.—Thun Wathan

Ministry of Commerce to purchase 30,000 tonnes of reserved rice

UNION Minister Dr Thun Myint of the Ministry of Commerce said that 30,000 tonnes of reserved rice will be purchased at harvest time.

The Ministry of Commerce will buy the rice through coordination with the rice federation and is now in negotiations to decide in what manner the rice will be bought, what price will be offered, how the rice will be stored and how it will be distributed. A working committee has been established by True Money Myanmar Customs Brokers Association that will work out of at the UMFCCI headquarters in Lanmadaw to facilitate meter bills payments including services for those who do not have a bank account. The system has been jointly established by True Money Myanmar and the Connect N Pay Company. The two companies signed an agreement on 18 May at the Park Royal Yangon.

True Money counters have been installed in electrical apparatus stores, tea shops, restaurants, phone kiosks, hotels, hospitals and various places in the community. The system allows people to pay meter bills via True Money machines with a code number printed on their bill from the YCDC and the YESB. This service is now available in the Northern and Western Districts of Yangon. The payment system is designed for meter bills as well as other charges from the YCDC. A service charge of K500 is collected for each payment. The system will also charge a K500 service fee for monthly payments made by a household, said Ko Tun Tun Lin, the managing director of True Money Myanmar.

“The True Money counter is not available for those who do not pay their bills before deadline. These people can pay only at the office relevant to the bill said U Pyae Sone, managing director of Connect N Pay.

Currently, there are around 1,000 True Money agents and it is expected that there will be around 6,000 agents by the end of the year. True Money has been planning to extend the following services: postpaid billing, buying tickets, subscribing to news journals, money exchanges and mobile payment systems.

People who wish to work as an agent of True Money can contact the following number - 01 2305360. True Money machines can be installed free of charge.—Thun Wathan

Vehicles without permit at Yangon Port to be confiscated

VEHICLES without an import permit from the Ministry of Commerce will be confiscated and vehicles stranded at Yangon Port will be scrutinised, it has been learned.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein stressed the need to solve Port delays that are currently impacting Myanmar’s trade capability. U Win Aung said the group formed a working committee that would report its findings and recommendations to Yangon Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, and related government ministries as soon as possible.

Congestion and delays in loading and unloading processes at Yangon’s sea ports undermine Myanmar’s economic growth by slowing down export and import capability,” U Win Aung said. “The private sector must contribute to help improve vital areas of overseas trade including custom clearances, transportation and port management.”

The working committee comprises Port owners, the Myanmar International Freight Forwarders’ Association, the Myanmar Mercantile Marine Development Association, the Myanmar Customs Brokers Association and the Myanmar Container Trucks Association. The committee members will work out of at the UMFCCI headquarters in Lanmadaw Township and report back to the Government within two weeks. It will also cooperate with the Government to implement the agreed plan.

The group yesterday agreed the most urgent tasks would be:
1. To compile a list and make a report on the containers that are left unclaimed for over 60 days. 2. Devise quick turn-around methods to clear out and replace empty and unused containers. 3. Get shipping companies to report detailed freight logistics activities. 4. Customs clearance and containers loading- unloading processes to continue 24-hours a day. 5. Report recommendations to the Chief Minister of Yangon and the related ministries as soon as possible.—GNLM

Mixed seabass, soft-shell crab farming flourishing in Myeik

MIXED breeding of saltwater seabass and freshwater soft-shell crabs is flourishing in Myeik District, causing breeders to extend their farming operations onto 10 additional acres of land. The expansion is the work of Dr. U Maung Maung Lin from the Min Zarni breeding company.

Dr. U Maung Maung Lin explained that the expansion was necessary to keep pace with demand. He said that his company had been able to extend its farming operations because of the success of mixed breeding. Mixed breeding produces offspring that are partly saltwater and partly freshwater. This allows the offspring to be kept in a range of sizes. Seabass are typically kept in larger cages while soft-shell crabs are kept in smaller cages.

Dr. U Maung Maung Lin said that his company planned to extend its farming operations to include both seabass and soft-shell crabs. He said that the expansion would allow his company to increase its output of seabass and soft-shell crabs.

Seabass and soft-shell crabs are both harvested from the Andaman Sea. Seabass are typically harvested from large cages while soft-shell crabs are typically harvested from small ponds. Dr. U Maung Maung Lin said that his company planned to extend its farming operations to include both seabass and soft-shell crabs. He said that the expansion would allow his company to increase its output of seabass and soft-shell crabs.

Dr. U Maung Maung Lin said that his company planned to extend its farming operations to include both seabass and soft-shell crabs. He said that the expansion would allow his company to increase its output of seabass and soft-shell crabs.

Dr. U Maung Maung Lin said that his company planned to extend its farming operations to include both seabass and soft-shell crabs. He said that the expansion would allow his company to increase its output of seabass and soft-shell crabs.

Dr. U Maung Maung Lin said that his company planned to extend its farming operations to include both seabass and soft-shell crabs. He said that the expansion would allow his company to increase its output of seabass and soft-shell crabs.

Dr. U Maung Maung Lin said that his company planned to extend its farming operations to include both seabass and soft-shell crabs. He said that the expansion would allow his company to increase its output of seabass and soft-shell crabs.

Dr. U Maung Maung Lin said that his company planned to extend its farming operations to include both seabass and soft-shell crabs. He said that the expansion would allow his company to increase its output of seabass and soft-shell crabs.

Dr. U Maung Maung Lin said that his company planned to extend its farming operations to include both seabass and soft-shell crabs. He said that the expansion would allow his company to increase its output of seabass and soft-shell crabs.

Dr. U Maung Maung Lin said that his company planned to extend its farming operations to include both seabass and soft-shell crabs. He said that the expansion would allow his company to increase its output of seabass and soft-shell crabs.

Dr. U Maung Maung Lin said that his company planned to extend its farming operations to include both seabass and soft-shell crabs. He said that the expansion would allow his company to increase its output of seabass and soft-shell crabs.

Dr. U Maung Maung Lin said that his company planned to extend its farming operations to include both seabass and soft-shell crabs. He said that the expansion would allow his company to increase its output of seabass and soft-shell crabs.

Dr. U Maung Maung Lin said that his company planned to extend its farming operations to include both seabass and soft-shell crabs. He said that the expansion would allow his company to increase its output of seabass and soft-shell crabs.
Cambodia revives Australia refugee deal with planned Nauru visit

PHNOM PENH — Cambodia said on Tuesday it will send a team to a South Pacific detention centre next month to interview two refugees who have volunteered to be resettled, reviving an agreement with Australia that seemed on the verge of collapse.

Australia has vowed to stop asylum seekers sailing from Indonesia and Sri Lanka and landing on its shores, instead intercepting boats at sea and holding them on board in camps in Papua New Guinea and Nauru.

Cambodia agreed with Australia in 2014 to take in refugees from Nauru in exchange for A$40 million ($28.56 million) in aid, but it later threatened to withdraw from the agreement. Only five people have gone to Cambodia under the pact and three of them later chose to go back home. But now two more might be on their way.

“Our team is ready to go and interview two more refugees who volunteered to be resettled,” Tan Sovichea, head of the Interior Ministry’s refugee unit, told Reuters on Tuesday.

Sovichea said his three-man team would fly to Nauru in the first week of June to vet the refugees, an Iranian man and woman.

Rights groups have condemned Australia for trying to resettle refugees in poorer countries such as Cambodia, which is frequently accused of human rights abuses and has an economy less than one per cent the size of Australia’s. — Reuters

ASEAN defence ministers meet to discuss South China Sea, security

VIENNATIANE — Issues relating to the South China Sea dispute were projected into the spotlight of the annual meeting of Association of South East Asian Nations’ defence ministers in the Lao capital Vientiane on Wednesday, as China’s aggressive actions in pressing contested claims to territory in the water continues to raise tension in the region.

The ministers from the 10 ASEAN member nations gathered under the theme of “Promoting Defence Cooperation for a Dynamic ASEAN Community” for a two-day meeting to discuss regional and global security threats as well as nontraditional security challenges, which saw the South China Sea issue listed as a top agenda item.

The ministers will also reiterate “the importance of maintaining peace, stability and security as well as upholding freedom of navigation in, and over-flight above, the South China Sea as provided for by universally recognised principles of international law,” the draft said. Besides the South China Sea, the meeting aims to strengthen defence and security cooperation in the region, which has one of the strongest military presences in the world.

“The ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting needs to increase capacities, solidarity and unity, and also improve and commit itself to dealing with security threats in an effective and timely manner,” said Laos’ Defence Minister Lt. Gen. Chansanne Chanyalath at the opening of the meeting.

The ministerial meeting will be followed by an informal meeting with China’s defence minister to discuss the capacity-building and ASEAN-centric development of regional security mechanisms, said Thai Defence Spokesman Maj. Gen. Kongcheep Tantawanich.

The meeting will conclude Thursday as the ministers are scheduled to attend a commemorative event, marking the meeting’s 10th anniversary, by opening a photo gallery at the Lao People’s Army Museum while making visits to the country’s defence academy and satellite company. — Kyodo News

G-7 to vow to use all policy tools to spur global growth at summit

ISE (Japan) — Group of Seven leaders will start a two-day meeting Thursday in central Japan at which they are expected to pledge to use all policy tools — monetary, fiscal and structural — in what Prime Minister Shinzo Abe calls the G-7 version of “three arrows” to spur global economic growth.

The leaders are also likely to express “strong opposition” to island construction and militarization of outposts in the South China Sea in a declaration to be issued after the summit, a veiled criticism of Beijing’s unilateral actions to assert its claims to disputed islands and atolls.

The G-7 nations will similarly try to show a united response to the refugee crisis in Syria, the threat from Islamic State in Ukraine, North Korea’s missile and nuclear weapons development, as well as tax evasion in the wake of the massive leak of documents on tax havens known as the “Panama Papers.”

The G-7 response in the global economy, Abe has expressed eagerness to strike a G-7 accord on coordinated fiscal action to spur global demand. But due to Germany’s resistance to calls from Japan and the United States for boosting fiscal stimulus, the leaders are likely to settle on a vague agreement to use all policy tools — monetary, fiscal and structural — depending on conditions and resources in each country, according to Japanese officials.

For Japan, if Abe gains agreement from other G-7 leaders to take all possible measures to foster growth, it could give him an excuse to justify delaying a consumption tax increase planned for April next year. A tax hike would put a drag on the economy. Citing trade and investment as the driving forces of growth, the G-7 leaders are expected to underscore the significance of the US-led trade liberalization initiative known as the Trans-Pacific Partnership, according to diplomatic sources. — Kyodo News

Photo taken on 25 May, 2016, from a Kyodo News helicopter shows Shima Kanko Hotel, the venue of the two-day summit of Group of Seven leaders from 26 May, in the central Japan city of Shima. Photo: Kyodo News
Asians to ease worries about US election: Obama

HO CHI MINH CITY (Viet Nam) — US President Barack Obama sought on Wednesday to ease growing Asian worries about the raucous election campaign to succeed him which has been dominated by the incendiary rhetoric of mogul Donald Trump, now the Republican Party’s nominee.

“I think other people sometimes look at our election system and say ‘what a mess,’” Obama told a townhall meeting with young leaders in Viet Nam’s Ho Chi Minh City, formerly Saigon.

“But usually we end up doing okay because the American people are good people ... Sometimes our politics doesn’t express all the goodness of the people,” he said, without referring specifically to any of the presidential candidates.

Obama made the comments just before ending a three-day trip to Viet Nam, whose high point was an announcement that Washinghton’s ban on sales of lethal weaponry to the country — a vestige of the Viet Nam War — would be completely lifted.

Obama repeatedly insisted that lifting the embargo was not a response to Beijing’s assertiveness in the South China Sea. Critics accused Washington of throwing away a powerful lever it had to press communists in the region.

Many fear Trump will feed insecurity in nations worried about China’s growing power, embolden nationalists and authoritarian rulers, and unnerve Obama’s pivot to the Asia-Pacific.

At the townhall in Ho Chi Minh City, a young woman who had been an exchange student in Montana asked Obama what he thought of the prospect that Trump or Democratic candidates Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders following him to the White House.

“Usually, eventually the voters make good decisions and democracy works,” replied Obama, whose criticism of Trump has sharpened since he all but clinched the Republican nomination. “Things are going to be ok. I promise.”

Thousands of people lined the streets of Ho Chi Minh City for a second day to cheer enthusiastically and wave mini-flags of Viet Nam and the United States as Obama drove by on his way to the airport for a flight to Japan.

At his freewheeling townhall, where he was greeted with a standing ovation, Obama noted that two-thirds of the country’s population were born after 1975, when the war ended with North Vietnamese tanks rolling into Saigon to bring US-backed South Viet Nam under communist rule.

Obama prodded Viet Nam’s leaders on political freedoms during his visit after criticism of the government were prevented from meeting him. When a woman reporter at the townhall asked him about supporting arts and culture, he segued into an appeal for people to be allowed to express themselves.

However, his unusual long one-country visit was warm and mostly about strengthening diplomatic and economic relations.

Annual US-Viet Nam trade has swelled from $450 million when ties were normalised in 1995 to $45 billion last year. Washington is a big buyer of Viet Nam’s televisions, smartphones, clothing and seafood.

Obama repeatedly touted the benefits of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade pact, of which export-led Viet Nam will be one of the biggest beneficiaries, if it survives opponents in Washington concerned about competition and a loss of US jobs.

He also talked about the challenges of climate change when asked about the drying-up of the Mekong River in the rice-bowl delta of southern Viet Nam, urging Southeast Asian countries to work together.

The Mekong River, which sustains 60 million livelihoods as it flows through Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Viet Nam, is under threat from at least 39 hydro-electric dams being built or under development upstream of Viet Nam, most of them in China.

Low river levels have allowed seawater to penetrate rice fields, ruining vast swathes of cropland in the fertile delta.

Obama did not name any of the upstream countries but said the United States would provide smaller member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) with technical assistance and evaluations of what needs to be done.

“Hopefully that information can be used to negotiate on an international level to try to prevent some projects that might have very bad effects,” he said. “One of the things that we’ve seen in ASEAN is that when small countries band together as a unit, then the power magnifies.”

Japan is the final stop on Obama’s swing through Asia, where he is attending a summit of the Group of Seven industrialised nations starting Thursday.

—Reuters

Australia immigration policy threatens to hijack election agenda

SYDNEY — Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull’s election agenda focusing on jobs and growth is at risk of being hijacked by the country’s harsh immigration policy and controversial network of offshore detention camps for asylum seekers.

Canberra has vowed to stop refugees sailing from Indonesia and Sri Lanka to offshore detention camps.

A protester from the Refugee Action Coalition holds a placard during a demonstration outside the offices of the Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection in Sydney, Australia, on 29 April 2016. Reuters

A protester from the Refugee Action Coalition holds a placard during a demonstration outside the offices of the Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection in Sydney, Australia, on 29 April 2016. REUTERS

Malaysia’s 1MDB says has made full payment of centreal bank fine

KUALA LUMPUR — Scandal-hit Malaysian government fund 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) said on Wednesday it has made full payment of a fine imposed on it by the country’s central bank.

Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) said last month that it had issued a letter of administrative compound to the fund for failing to comply with bank rules. “1MDB confirms that it has today made payment, in full, of the compound, in compliance with the decision of BNM,” the fund said in a statement.—Reuters

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Electricity and Energy

Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise

(Invitation for Open Tender)

7/2016

Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars and Myanmar Kyats.

Sr. No Tender No Description Remark

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No</th>
<th>Tender No</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>IFB-008(16-17)</td>
<td>Piston Rubbers for F-1600 Rig Pump</td>
<td>US$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>IFB-009(16-17)</td>
<td>Ex ZJ 70 L Drilling Rigs (3) Items</td>
<td>US$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4” ERW Steel Line Pipe, API 5 L, Grade A</td>
<td>10,000 MTR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>DMP/L-007(16-17)</td>
<td>Server Computer (DAQ) and UPS (2 KW)</td>
<td>Ks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) Items</td>
<td>Tender Closing Date &amp; Time -</td>
<td>16-6-2016, 16:30 Hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 23rd May, 2016 at the Finance Department, Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise

Ph: - 495 67 - 411097 / 411206
Bioavailability of nutrients is a major limitation for the plants. They need to be able to absorb these nutrients effectively in order to grow properly. The bioavailability of nutrients depends on several factors, such as soil type, pH, temperature, and the presence of other nutrients in the soil. These factors can affect the availability of nutrients, making it difficult for plants to obtain the necessary nutrients to grow. The bioavailability of nutrients can also be affected by the quality of the water used for irrigation. If the water contains too much salt or other minerals, it can make it difficult for plants to absorb the necessary nutrients. This can result in stunted growth, reduced yields, and decreased overall health of the plants. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the water used for irrigation is of good quality and that the nutrients are in a form that can be easily absorbed by the plants. This can be achieved through the use of nutrient-fortified water, irrigation systems that minimize the loss of nutrients, and proper soil management practices. Additionally, the use of organic fertilizers can help to improve the bioavailability of nutrients by adding organic materials to the soil, which can help to improve the structure and fertility of the soil. Overall, ensuring the bioavailability of nutrients is crucial for the growth and health of plants, and it requires a combination of good water management, proper soil management, and the use of appropriate fertilizers.
Moscow poised to hand over prisoner Savchenko to Ukraine: reports

Ukrainian military pilot Nadezhda Savchenko looks out from a defendants’ cage during a court hearing in Moscow, Russia, on 6 May, 2015. Photo: Reuters

MOSCOW — Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko was flying to Russia on Wednesday to bring home detained Ukrainian servicewoman Nadiya Savchenko, in exchange for the release of two Russians held by Kiev, Russian media and a source close to the swap said.

Handing over Savchenko, whose release has been demanded by Western governments and who has become a national hero in Ukraine, would ease tensions between Moscow and the West a few weeks before the European Union decides whether to extend sanctions on Russia.

Russia’s Interfax news agency quoted an unnamed source as saying Poroshenko’s aircraft was en route to the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don.

On board his plane, the agency said, were Yevgeny Yerofeyev and Alexander Alexandrov, who both told Reuters in interviews last year they are Russian special forces soldiers who were captured while carrying out a secret operation in eastern Ukraine.

The plan, according to the source quoted by Interfax, was for Poroshenko to deliver the two Russians and pick up Savchenko and take her home.

Asked by Reuters if the exchange was now underway, a source close to the arrangements said: “Yes.”

Savchenko, a military pilot, volunteered to fight with a ground unit against pro-Moscow separatists who rose up against Kiev’s rule in eastern Ukraine.

She was captured and put on trial in southern Russia, charged with complicity in the deaths of Russian journalists who were killed by artillery while covering the conflict.

A Russian court in March sentenced her to 22 years in jail.

While in Russian jail, she was elected a member of the Ukrainian parliament and is widely seen in Ukraine as a symbol of resistance against Russia. —Reuters

Vucic: I need combative government, will speak with everyone

BELGRADE — Serbia’s Prime Minister-designate Aleksandar Vucic said Tuesday that he is still not able to talk about the composition of the new government, noting that he needs a combative government and combative ministers committed to its goals, regardless of the difficulties.

“I still do not know the names of the ministers,” Vucic told a press conference.

This is not a matter of whether the government will be an expert or a party-based government, he said.

“I am close to naming a combative government with clear, unambiguous and precise goals. I need combative people, regardless of whether they are in a party or not, people who will fight for the agreed goals even when the going gets tough,” Vucic said.

There is still no decision on whether the electoral list led by the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) will form coalitions or not, he said.

“I would like to hear everyone and speak with everyone,” Vucic said, but noted that including everyone in the government is unrealistic.

Asked if he will offer Socialist Party of Serbia leader Ivica Dacic to join the government, Vucic responded that, as with everyone else, he is ready to speak with Dacic.

The SNS will early next week send invitations to all who are open to discussions about Serbia’s future, he announced.

“If you see someone take part in the discussions, it will not mean that they will be part of the government, but that we are ready to talk about major problems in society, about greater tolerance and about what we can do in the coming period,” Vucic said.

Asked if the new government’s programme is really as reported in the media, Vucic said that the media have carried headers relating to ten major points.

“That cannot be a programme, those are points that are important, but it is not comprehensive,” Vucic said.

—Tanjug

North Korean officials to meet with ex-US officials in Sweden: Yonhap

SEOUL — North Korean officials plan to meet with former US State Department officials during a seminar set to be held in the Swedish capital Stockholm around Sunday, Yonhap News Agency reported from Washington on Tuesday.

Han Song Ryol, director of the US Affairs Department of the North Korean Foreign Ministry, and his deputy Choi Sun Hee are expected to attend the seminar set to be held at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the report said.

Thomas Pickering, a retired US State Department employee who served as undersecretary of state for political affairs from 1997 to 2001, and Evans Revere, who also served in the US State Department, are being mentioned as likely attendees to the seminar. —Kyodo News

Lightning, thunderstorms kill 23 in north India

NEW DELHI — At least 23 people were killed in northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh due to thunderstorms and lightning, officials said Wednesday.

The lightning and thunderstorms have struck the western and central parts of the state since Monday evening.

“A total of 23 deaths were reported in lightning and thunderstorms,” an official said.

“The winds accompanying the bad weather uprooted hundreds of trees, electric poles and roadside hoardings, disrupting train and road services in the affected areas.

The severe storms also damaged mango crops in mango belt of Malihabad of Lucknow, Meerut and other western districts, officials said.

Reports said several flights going to Delhi were diverted to Lucknow and later allowed to land in the national capital after the weather improved.—Xinhua

Swedish court upholds Assange arrest warrant

STOCKHOLM — A Swedish court upheld on Wednesday the arrest warrant for Wikileaks founder Julian Assange.

Assange, 44, is wanted by Swedish authorities for questioning over allegations, which he denies, that he committed rape in 2010.

“The district court finds that there is still probable cause for the suspicion against JA (Julian Assange) for rape, less serious incidents, and that there is still a risk that he will depart or in some other way evade prosecution or penalty,” the court said in a statement.

Assange avoided possible extradition to Sweden by taking refuge in Ecuador’s embassy in London.—Reuters

Russia says holding off air strikes on Nusra Front in Syria

MOSCOW — Russia’s defence ministry said on Wednesday it was holding off from striking rebels with the al Qaeda-affiliated Nusra Front to give other armed groups time to move away from Nusra positions.

The ministry said in a statement it had received requests from multiple armed groups, mainly in Damascus and Aleppo, asking for a pause in air strikes.

The ministry said taking those requests into account, it had decided to allow more time before it starts air strikes on the Nusra positions.—Reuters

Three security personnel killed in firing in NW Pakistan

ISLAMABAD — At least three security personnel were killed when unknown gunmen opened fire on a paramilitary forces’ vehicle in Pakistan’s northwest city of Peshawar on Wednesday morning, reported local Urdu TV channel Samaa. According to the reports, the firing incident happened at about 9:40 am (local time) on the ring road of the city when a vehicle carrying three paramilitary Frontier Corps (FC) personnel came under attack by three gunmen riding on motorcycles. Police and rescue teams rushed to the site shortly after the firing was reported.—Xinhua
Netanyahu clinches coalition deal, makes far-right Lieberman defence chief

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu clinched a coalition deal on Wednesday that will make far-right opposition legislator Avigdor Lieberman’s ultranationalist Yisrael Beiteinu party a government minister, following a spate of killings in Bangladesh and warnings that two groups, including the Islamic State, were planning to launch attacks in the region.

Lieutenant General Benja, who lives in a settlement in the occupied West Bank, said he had no evidence implicating local or foreign groups.

The agreement on a political partnership will be signed at 11 am (0800 GMT), a negotiator for Lieberman’s ultranationalist Yisrael Beiteinu party said.

Since winning an election last year, Netanyahu has said he would struggle to widen his one-seat majority in the legislature, and he began negotiating with Lieberman after coalition talks failed last week with the centre-left Zionist Union, the main opposition party.

Lieberman’s return to power — he is a former foreign minister — is likely to stir disquiet at home and abroad given his past rhetoric against Israel’s Arab minority, US-sponsored peace talks with the Palestinians and regional powers Egypt and Turkey.

Palestinian officials said that with Lieberman, who lives in a settlement in the occupied West Bank, back in the cabinet prospects for reviving statehood negotiations that collapsed in 2014 had grown dimmer.

The pact between Netanyahu’s conservative Likud party and Yisrael Beiteinu, after several days of intensive negotiations, will give the four-term prime minister control of 67 of parliament’s 120 seats, up from his current majority of 61.

“Broadening the government, with the inclusion of the Yisrael Beiteinu party in the nationalistic coalition, is an important and required step that will ensure its stability,” Likud negotiator Yariv Levin said in a statement, confirming an agreement had been reached.

Lieberman’s swearing in as defence minister was expected to take place next week, with Netanyahu holding the second-most important cabinet post in the interim.

Yisrael Beiteinu will become the sixth party in Netanyahu’s religious-nationalist coalition.

Netanyahu has said coalition talks lasted five days and that they would enable greater stability.

Ten killed in suicide attack near Afghan capital

KABUL — A suicide bomber killed at least 10 people and wounded four on Wednesday in an attack on a bus carrying staff from an appeal court west of the Afghan capital, Kabul, officials said, and the Taliban claimed responsibility.

The attack came on the same day the Taliban announced a new leader to succeed Mullah Akhtar Mansour, who was killed in a US drone strike at the weekend.

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid said the attack on staff from the judicial system was in response to the Afghan government’s decision this month to execute six Taliban prisoners on death row. Other attacks would follow, he said.

“We will continue on this path,” he said in a statement.

The decision by President Ashraf Ghani to execute the prisoners on death row was taken as part of a tougher policy toward the Taliban following a suicide attack by the insurgent movement which killed at least 64 people in Kabul. An interior ministry spokesman said 10 people had been killed and four wounded in Wednesday’s attack, while the Taliban said 22 people had been killed or wounded.— Reuters

Islamic State ‘falsely claiming’ attacks in Bangladesh

DHAKA — Islamic State is trying to ride a wave of religious radicalisation by falsely claiming a spate of killings in Bangladesh, a government minister said, adding that there was enough evidence implicating domestic militant groups.

Analysts say that as Islamic State loses territory in Iraq and Syria and its finances get drained, it may be trying to build affiliates in countries such as Libya, Egypt and Bangladesh for jihadists to launch attacks locally and cheaply.

But Shahriar Alam, Bangladesh’s state minister for foreign affairs, told Reuters in an interview that no local or foreign agency had found any presence of Islamic State in the country.

“Those claims (of killings) are definitely false,” Alam said on Tuesday. “But what we’ve agreed with our partnering countries is that we’ll not argue over it—that sends a wrong message.”

His comments came just days after a EU delegation said there was an unprecedented threat to human rights and freedom of expression in Bangladesh and urged Dhaka to tackle the challenge to protect its international reputation.

Since February last year, the Muslim-majority South Asian nation of 160 million has seen the killing of at least 26 people, including five secular bloggers, a publisher and two gay rights campaigners.

Al Qaeda has claimed some of the attacks, while Islamic State has claimed 17 killings since first taking responsibility for murders in Bangladesh in September last year, according to US-based monitoring service SITE.

Alam said it was an attempt to “ride the wave” without being involved at all.

“We know from Syria that there is no such common ground for Islamic State and al-Qaeda. They can’t be on the same platform,” he said. “But the funny thing is that in some instances both have claimed responsibility here.”

The government has said that two groups, Ansarullah Bangla Team and Jamaat ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh, were behind the attacks as part of their campaign to establish a sharia-based Muslim state.”Islamicist violent extremism has gained so much ground (around the world),” Alam said.

“The question is whether Bangladesh is vulnerable. Bangladesh has always been vulnerable because of the low level of education, lack of employment. But till date, the global religious organisations, the terrorist groups, haven’t been able to make any presence in Bangladesh, let alone make it their base,”— Reuters

Afghan Taliban appoint new leader after Mansour’s death

KABUL/PESHAWAR — The Afghan Taliban named one of former leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour’s deputies to succeed him on Wednesday, after confirming Mansour’s death in a US drone strike at the weekend.

Mansour will be replaced by Haibatullah Akhunzada, who was named in a United Nations report last year as the Taliban’s former chief justice, said Zabihullah Mujahid, the Taliban’s main spokesman, in the statement.

Strajuddin Haqqani, head of a feared network blamed for many high-profile bombs attacks in Kabul in recent years, and Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob, son of Taliban founder Mullah Mohammad Omar, will serve as deputies. The announcement, following a meeting of the Taliban’s main shura, or leadership council, ended days of confusion during which the Taliban declined to confirm the death of Mansour in a drone strike in Pakistan on Saturday.

“All the shura members have pledged allegiance to Sheikh Haibatullah in a safe place in Afghanistan,” the statement said. “All people are required to obey the new Emir-ai-Momineen (commander of the faithful).”

Haibatullah Akhunzada, believed to be around 50 years of age and a member of the powerful Noorzia tribe, is from Kandahar, in the south of Afghanistan and the heartland of the Taliban.— Reuters
HANOI — Vietnamese dissident Nguyen Quang A spent much of Tuesday as a tourist with plainclothes cops — eating fish noodle soup, visiting a temple and a fortune teller — returning home just as President Barack Obama took off from Hanoi aboard Air Force One. “It was a compulsory tour,” joked Quang A, 69, a well-known critic of the Communist Party who is famous for creative stunts of his own to make Viet Nam’s leaders pay more than lip-service to political inclusiveness.

Quang A, a former IT entrepreneur, was one of more than 100 Vietnamese who tried to run as independents for last weekend’s election to the parliament, which is tightly controlled by the Communist Party. Almost all failed to get on the ballot. Dissent was once the domain of a tiny number in Viet Nam who met behind closed doors or found themselves behind bars. It is not as rare these days. Before Obama’s visit, a spat of protests erupted over a mass fish kill along the central coast. However, the media is censored and the most outspoken critics of the party’s monopoly on power face harassment, arrest and jail for “anti-state propaganda.” Quang had an inkling he wouldn’t make it to his Hanoi home on Tuesday morning, he uploaded the image on Facebook and typed in a message: “May be intercepted, arrested. Advising so people know.”

It took only a few minutes before 10 plainclothes police bundled him into a car and drove him away. They weren’t giving him a free ride to Obama’s hotel, where the US delegation had set up a meeting with activists and civil society leaders to discuss Viet Nam’s deep-rooted resistance to guaranteeing human rights and political freedom. “That was just a cheap trick by those who have no understanding,” Quang said of being forced to be a tourist. “I don’t judge these security officials. I judge their bosses, their minds are just so addled.” At least two other dissidents were blocked on Tuesday from seeing Obama, who only a day earlier had announced the scrapping of an arms embargo on Viet Nam, dubbing it a necessary step in a new alliance between two countries with shared concerns about China’s military clout. Washington had for years told the communist-rulled state for years that a rollback of the ban on sales of lethal weapons would depend on its commitment to free speech and stopping the harassment, arrest and jailing of its detractors.

“There are still areas of significant concern in terms of freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, accountability,” Obama said, acknowledging some activists were stopped from seeing him. —Reuters

Local residents react as President Obama leaves after having a dinner with Anthony Bourdain at a restaurant in Hanoi.

Photo: Reuters

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**

MV DALARNA VOY NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV DALARNA VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26.5.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P.L, 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 Claim’s 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: M/S FJI BENTLING
CHARTERING & SHIP MANAGEMENT
PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301928

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**

MV VEGA LUPUS VOY NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV VEGA LUPUS VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26.5.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/M.I.P.L 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 Claim’s 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: M/S MCC TRANSPORT
(S’PORE) PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

**ADVERTISE WITH US!**

- We are Myanmar’s highest-circulating English language daily newspaper
- We offer competitive ad rates
- Your ad will be seen by a wide and influential readership

Email: subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Phone: 09 250107962, 09 251022355
Protesters throw rocks, bottles at police outside Trump rally in New Mexico

NEW MEXICO — Protesters threw rocks and bottles at police officers who responded with pepper spray outside a rally for presidential candidate Donald Trump in Albuquerque, New Mexico, police said.

Hundreds of protesters tried to storm the convention centre in New Mexico’s biggest city, knocking down barricades and throwing objects at a door and then hurling rocks and bottles at mounted police in riot gear, the Albuquerque Police Department said on Twitter Tuesday and video posted online showed. Several police officers were injured, the police tweeted.

Protesters chanted anti-Trump slogans, held anti-Trump signs and waved Mexican flags before the demonstration descended into chaos with some protesters standing on top of police cars.

Television footage showed officers responding by using pepper spray and smoke bombs to disperse the crowd.

Police said they made arrests both outside and inside the rally, where protesters continually interrupted Trump’s speech.

Protests have become common outside rallies for Trump, the party’s presumptive nominee, who has polarized opinion with his rhetoric against illegal immigration. He abandoned a rally in Chicago in March after clashes between his supporters and protesters.

He has accused Mexico of sending drug dealers and rapists across the US border and has promised to build a wall and make Mexico pay for it.

According to CNN, his supporters chanted “build that wall” during his rally on Tuesday in Albuquerque where a little less than half of the population is Hispanic or Latino.

“Watching thugs (and) punks in Albuquerque — en route to California. They don’t even know what they are protesting,” Trump aide Dan Scavino said on Twitter.

Trump heads on Wednesday to a rally in Anaheim, California, which has a growing Latino minority.

— Reuters

Stabbed Japanese pop idol called police for help during attack

TOKYO — A young woman who was stabbed numerous times by a fan just before she was scheduled to make an appearance on a pop idol show in Tokyo last weekend called police for help in the middle of the assault, investigative sources said Wednesday.

“Help me,” Mayu Tomita, a 20-year-old college student, screamed during an emergency call to police at 5:05 pm Saturday, around 100 seconds before a witness called the police to report that a man was stabbing a woman in the neck. Tomita remains in a critical condition.

The incident took place near the entrance of the building where Tomita was scheduled to appear at an idol event in Koganei, western Tokyo. Tomita had earlier reported to the police that she was being harassed on social media by Tomohiro Iwazaki, who was arrested at the scene. The police said he has admitted to stabbing her.

The police previously had registered her name, address and telephone number, as well as the possibility that Iwazaki, 27, may attend the event and cause trouble.

After her emergency call, the Metropolitan Police Department dispatched police officers to her residence rather than the venue as the operator failed to confirm her location, the sources said.

The police have not revealed that they received an emergency call from the victim, previously saying a witness had reported the attack.

The police are planning by the end of next month to revise their system to enable the location of an emergency caller to appear automatically on an operator’s screen if the caller is on a watch list, the sources said.

The police are planning to upgrade the system eventually to make the same functionality available for all emergency phone calls, they added. — Kyodo News

Protesters picket outside the event site before Republican US presidential candidate Donald Trump begins a rally with supporters in Albuquerque, New Mexico, US on 24 May. Photo: Reuters

Stabbed Japanese pop idol called police for help during attack

TOKYO — A young woman who was stabbed numerous times by a fan just before she was scheduled to make an appearance on a pop idol show in Tokyo last weekend called police for help in the middle of the assault, investigative sources said Wednesday.

“Help me,” Mayu Tomita, a 20-year-old college student, screamed during an emergency call to police at 5:05 pm Saturday, around 100 seconds before a witness called the police to report that a man was stabbing a woman in the neck. Tomita remains in a critical condition.

The incident took place near the entrance of the building where Tomita was scheduled to appear at an idol event in Koganei, western Tokyo. Tomita had earlier reported to the police that she was being harassed on social media by Tomohiro Iwazaki, who was arrested at the scene. The police said he has admitted to stabbing her.

The police previously had registered her name, address and telephone number, as well as the possibility that Iwazaki, 27, may attend the event and cause trouble.

After her emergency call, the Metropolitan Police Department dispatched police officers to her residence rather than the venue as the operator failed to confirm her location, the sources said.

The police have not revealed that they received an emergency call from the victim, previously saying a witness had reported the attack.

The police are planning by the end of next month to revise their system to enable the location of an emergency caller to appear automatically on an operator’s screen if the caller is on a watch list, the sources said.

The police are planning to upgrade the system eventually to make the same functionality available for all emergency phone calls, they added. — Kyodo News

The police previously had registered her name, address and telephone number, as well as the possibility that Iwazaki, 27, may attend the event and cause trouble.

After her emergency call, the Metropolitan Police Department dispatched police officers to her residence rather than the venue as the operator failed to confirm her location, the sources said.

The police have not revealed that they received an emergency call from the victim, previously saying a witness had reported the attack.

The police are planning by the end of next month to revise their system to enable the location of an emergency caller to appear automatically on an operator’s screen if the caller is on a watch list, the sources said.

The police are planning to upgrade the system eventually to make the same functionality available for all emergency phone calls, they added. — Kyodo News
LOS ANGELES — Oscar-winning actress Jennifer Lawrence once took a drug during the production on “The Hunger Games,” but that was unintentional.

The Oscar-winning actress, 25, made the shocking revelation when playing a game of “True Confessions” with Jimmy Fallon and John Oliver on “The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon”, reported Ace Showbiz.

“I once took an Ambien before filming a scene in ‘The Hunger Games’,” she said, letting the two funnymen guess whether she told a truth or a lie.

“Were you sleeping in this scene?” Fallon asked.

“No, in fact, I was dancing,” Lawrence replied. “I woke up and I thought it was something else, it was like normal to take it,” Lawrence further explained.

Oliver pointed out that she could cause a trouble for the studio if that was true, but she insisted that no one paid attention to “The Hunger Games” franchise right now since people are focused on “Star Wars” movies.

Both Fallon and Oliver guessed that it was true.

“It’s plausible, it’s reckless, I kind of like it, if it’s not true I’m going to be very sad,” Oliver reasoned. And Lawrence admitted that it did really happen.—PTI

LOS ANGELES — R&B star Beyonce was forced to postpone her show at the TCF Bank Stadium in Minneapolis, Minnesota for 45 minutes because of the severe weather.

The 34-year-old was scheduled to take the stage at 08:30 PM, but law enforcement and the staff decided to evacuate the stadium at 08:15 PM because of the approaching lightning.

Concertgoers were asked to move to either the TCF Bank Stadium concourse or to Mariucci and Williams Arena, reported Ace Showbiz. Fortunately, the concert didn’t get canceled. After a 45-minute delay, fans were told to return to their seats “in a calm and orderly fashion.”

“I am so honoured to be here tonight. Thanks for riding with me through the storm,” Bey told the crowd once she appeared on stage.—PTI

LOS ANGELES — “The Door”, the latest heartbreaking episodes of popular series “Game of Thrones”, was accidently released early by HBO.

The Sunday episode saw the demise of a fan-favourite character while also revealing the mystery behind his name but some fans got a chance to watch the show early on the HBO Nordic platform “temporarily due to a technical issue”, a network spokesperson told Variety.

Before the episode could be taken down, the ‘GoT’ fans ripped the episode and posted it online.

“Game of Thrones” is one of the most popular and pirated shows on the internet.

TorrentFreak reported that the copies of the episode were widely circulated on torrent and streaming sites before HBO could take down links to the pirated copies.

For many fans it was a spoiler as details about the plot twist at the end of the episode spread online.

“The Door”, fifth episode in the season six of the show, revealed Hodor’s heroic destiny and fans learned the tragic reason why the gentle giant could only say one word, “Hodor.”

Actor Kristian Nairn played Hodor on the show.

The latest episode also saw the death of the Bran’s dwarfess Summer.—PTI

LOS ANGELES — Former lovers Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez and former One Direction star Zayn Malik will be the stars to beat at the 2016 Teen Choice Awards after landing three nominations each.

The “Baby” hitmaker scored nods for Choice Male Artist, Choice Song (Sorry) and Choice Male Hottie in the first wave of nominations each.

The “Baby” hitmaker scored nods for Choice Male Artist, Choice Song (Sorry) and Choice Male Hottie in the first wave of nominations each.

The “Baby” hitmaker scored nods for Choice Male Artist, Choice Song (Sorry) and Choice Male Hottie in the first wave of nominations each.

The “Baby” hitmaker scored nods for Choice Male Artist, Choice Song (Sorry) and Choice Male Hottie in the first wave of nominations each.

The “Baby” hitmaker scored nods for Choice Male Artist, Choice Song (Sorry) and Choice Male Hottie in the first wave of nominations each.

The “Baby” hitmaker scored nods for Choice Male Artist, Choice Song (Sorry) and Choice Male Hottie in the first wave of nominations each.

The “Baby” hitmaker scored nods for Choice Male Artist, Choice Song (Sorry) and Choice Male Hottie in the first wave of nominations each. —Reuters

LOS ANGELES — “The Door”, the latest heartbreaking episodes of popular series “Game of Thrones”, was accidently released early by HBO.

The Sunday episode saw the demise of a fan-favourite character while also revealing the mystery behind his name but some fans got a chance to watch the show early on the HBO Nordic platform “temporarily due to a technical issue”, a network spokesperson told Variety.

Before the episode could be taken down, the ‘GoT’ fans ripped the episode and posted it online.

“Game of Thrones” is one of the most popular and pirated shows on the internet.

TorrentFreak reported that the copies of the episode were widely circulated on torrent and streaming sites before HBO could take down links to the pirated copies.

For many fans it was a spoiler as details about the plot twist at the end of the episode spread online.

“The Door”, fifth episode in the season six of the show, revealed Hodor’s heroic destiny and fans learned the tragic reason why the gentle giant could only say one word, “Hodor.”

Actor Kristian Nairn played Hodor on the show.

The latest episode also saw the death of the Bran’s dwarfess Summer.—PTI

LOS ANGELES — Forme...
Childhood goes up in smoke for Indonesian tobacco farm workers

PROBOLINGGO (Indonesia) — Thirteen-year-old Siti Maryam says she suffers headaches and nausea after harvesting tobacco leaves with her bare hands during four years of working on her family’s farm in Indonesia.

Maryam, who is among the thousands of children a rights group says work in hazardous conditions on farms in the world’s fifth-biggest producer of tobacco, spoke to Reuters in a field near the east Java city of Probolinggo.

“I feel dizzy, get headaches and feel like vomiting,” said Maryam, listing symptoms that match thousands of children a rights group’s farm in Indonesia.

Indonesia is one of the world’s fastest-growing markets for tobacco products, with about $16 billion of cigarettes sold last year in the country of 250 million, an increase of 13 per cent from 2014, says market research firm Euromonitor International.

But a lack of information leaves families oblivious to the risks their children face while working on tobacco farms, said Margaret Wurth, a researcher for New York-based Human Rights Watch. Several big companies lack procedures to screen out tobacco that involves the effort of children working in hazardous conditions, the group said in a report on Wednesday.

“As a result, these companies risk contributing to the use of, and benefiting from, hazardous child labour,” it added.

The group interviewed 227 people, among them 132 children aged between 8 and 17, who said they worked on tobacco farms in four Indonesian provinces.

But the report risks generalizing the whole of Indonesia and some children do work in non-hazardous conditions on tobacco farms, the chairman of the Indonesian tobacco farmers’ association, Soeseno, told Reuters.

“The root of the problem is poverty in certain small villages,” he said. Parents getting children to help is in line with cultural norms in some areas, Soeseno, who goes by one name, like many Indonesians, said by telephone.

Customers do not normally ask whether child labour is involved, said Suradi, a trader who buys tobacco from farmers in Probolinggo for resale.

“When I send the tobacco to the storehouse it only depends on the quality,” he told Reuters.

Human Rights Watch said it contacted some of the biggest companies operating in Indonesia, such as Philip Morris International Inc, Djarum Group and PT Gardang Garam Tbk.

Philip Morris welcomed the report, sustainability officer Miguel Coleta told Reuters, adding that the company sourced almost 70 per cent of its tobacco through direct contracts with Indonesian farmers, versus 10 per cent four years ago.

But change requires many stakeholders to cooperate, including the Indonesian government, he added. “We are talking about a massive market, millions of people,” Coleta said in an interview. “It’s not something easy to reform overnight.”

Indonesian tobacco firms Djarum and Gardang Garam did not respond to Reuters’ requests for comment. In the tobacco field in Probolinggo, a dozen children helped to sow seeds, earning about 10,000 to 15,000 rupiah ($0.73 to $1.10) for working seven hours a day. “I work here just to help my parents and help to fulfill our needs,” said 15-year-old Warada.

Bidders fail to reach minimums for two rare US coins at auction

NEW YORK — Two legendary US coins, one of them more than 200 years old, that were on the auction block on Tuesday in New York City did not sell after bidders failed to reach minimum reserved prices, according to Sotheby’s.

A bid of $10,575,000, the most ever offered for a coin, was placed on an extremely rare Draped Bust Silver Dollar, but it failed to reach the consignor’s reserve price, Sotheby’s auction house said in a statement.

A phone bid of $7,285,000, the highest ever offered for a coin, was placed on another extremely rare coin, a 150-year-old, that were on the auction block on Tuesday in New York.

The pieces were highlights of the fourth coin auction series of the D. Brent Pogue Collection, which is working in collaboration with the auction house and Stack’s Bowers Galleries.

Some 61 coins from the Pogue Collection, which in recent years has become the most valuable coin auction series in history, were sold for more than $16.7 million during the auction at Sotheby’s headquarters in New York.

The collection focused on non-machine manufactured currency made from 1793 to 1830s, said David Tripp, Sotheby’s worldwide senior numismatic consultant.

“All the coins in the Pogue collection were struck and produced in these early years when things were really handmade and so there are all sorts of peculiarities,” Tripp told Reuters TV.

The 1804 Silver Dollar, originally owned by the Sultan of Muscat in 1835 and then by the Childs Family Collection for more than 50 years, was purchased by D. Brent Pogue in 1999 for $4 million.

One of the five most valuable coins in the world, the silver dollar features blue and gold tones and a portrait of America’s Lady Liberty staring skyward, with stars bordering the coin’s edges. —Reuters

The Sultan of Muscat-Brands-Childs 1804 Silver Dollar. Photo: Reuters

Japanese artist wins award at Chelsea Flower Show

LONDON — Japanese landscape artist Kazuyuki Ishihara’s work, called “Senri-Sentei-Garage Garden,” won a gold medal at the Chelsea Flower Show in London on May 24 for his creation of the garden reflecting the changing of the seasons in Kyushu, southwestern Japan.

Supplied photo taken May 2016, shows Japanese landscape artist Kazuyuki Ishihara’s work, called “Senri-Sentei-Garage Garden.” Ishihara won a gold medal at the Chelsea Flower Show in London on May 24 for his creation of the garden reflecting the changing of the seasons in Kyushu, southwestern Japan.

Photo: Kyodo News

Ishihara, who is one of three gold medal winners in the Artisan Garden Award and also won the President’s Award for his “Senri-Sentei-Garage Garden” in which a veranda and a garage are decorated with pine trees and autumn leaves. The 58-year-old designer said he created the garden to show the transition of the seasons in Japan, imagining his home town of Nagasaki, and also hoped to bring some cheer to people in Kyushu after it was heavily damaged by powerful earthquakes in Kumamoto Prefecture in April.

Ishihara has been a regular competitor at the prestigious annual show, first held in 1913, and has now won eight gold medals since 2006.—Kyodo News
Mourinho agrees terms with Man United – Sky TV

ENGLISH soccer’s biggest club seem to have secured the services of the sport’s most colourful manager after Jose Mourinho, according to Sky TV reports, agreed personal terms with Manchester United on Tuesday.

After a trophy-laden career with Porto, Chelsea, Inter Milan and Real Madrid, Mourinho is set to replace Dutchman Louis van Gaal, who was sacked on Monday, with a remit to bring back the glory days the club once took for granted under Alex Ferguson.

The 53-year-old, sacked by Chelsea in December seven months after winning his third Premier League title at the London club over two spells, had been constantly linked with the United job as Van Gaal struggled to make an impression at Old Trafford.

The Dutchman was dismissed two days after steering United to their first FA Cup success in 12 years when they beat Crystal Palace 2-1 after extra-time in Saturday’s Wembley final.

Van Gaal’s preferred possession-dominated playing style at a club more readily associated with fast, direct attacking, was widely criticised, and it appeared to take his players time to adapt.

Mourinho is also known for pragmatism, however, relying on a strong defensive foundation and hard-working midfielders and strikers.

He has a history of success wherever he has managed and a proven track record in the English game.

Mourinho won the UEFA Cup and Champions League as well as the domestic double twice in his two seasons at Porto and led Chelsea to their first top-flight title in 50 years in his first campaign, retaining it the following season.

He also won the League Cup and FA Cup before moving to Inter where he won Serie A as well as the Champions League and Italian Cup.

Mourinho helped Real to their first La Liga crown in four years and on returning to Chelsea, he again won the Premier League before an unexpected-ly poor – and troubled — start to the 2015-16 season led to his sacking. — Reuters

Easy for Djokovic and Nadal, Murray suffers, Kerber out

PARIS — Novak Djokovic, Rafael Nadal and Serena Williams barely got their shoes dusty at the French Open on Tuesday as all three top women’s seeds went out and Andy Murray survived the first round by the skin of his teeth.

World number one Djokovic, back on the Philippe Chatrier Court where Stan Wawrinka snatched the title from his grasp a year ago when a career slam loomed, crushed Taiwan’s Lu Yen-hsun 6-4, 6-1, 6-1.

Nadal found big-serving Australian Sam Groth even more compliant than the Spaniard had begun his tilt at a 10th Roland Garros title with a 6-1, 6-1, 6-1 victory.

Reigning champion and top seed Williams completed the Chatrier programme by polishing off Slovakia’s Magdalena Rybarikova 6-2, 6-0.

Predictable day three most definitely was not, though.

Germany’s Angelique Kerber, who four months ago downed Williams to win the Australian Open, was sent tumbling out by flying Dutchwoman Kiki Bertens who won 6-2, 3-6, 6-3.

Third seed Kerber was troubled by a shoulder injury while later fifth seed Victoria Azarenka, the former world number one, hobbled out with a knee injury against Italy’s Karin Knapp when she trailed 4-0 in the deciding set.

The women’s draw has now lost three of the top seven seeds after Italian Robert Vincenz’s demise on Monday.

“First rounds are always tough in the tournament, especially for me. What can I say? It happens,” Kerber told reporters. It rarely happens to the leading men though.

Djokovic has not exited a slam in the first round since the 2006 Australian Open and a repeat never looked possible as he began a familiar quest for the one major title to elude him.

“It’s not the first time that I’m experiencing such anticipation and expectations,” Djokovic said.

“Whether or not I’m going to have a chance to fight for a trophy that’s in Almighty’s hands, I can’t influence that, but I can certainly give my best.”

Nadal’s only taste of a round-one defeat came at Wimbledon three years ago and there was never any chance of another meltdown as he leaked just three unforced errors.

World number two Murray is equally reliable — his last first-round exit coming at the 2008 Australian Open.

That record looked in serious peril on Tuesday, however, as he became embroiled in an engrossing battle of wits with Czech qualifier Radek Stepanek, at 37 the oldest man in the draw.

Murray, 29, had partially dug himself out of a deep hole on Monday night when he lost the first two sets to an inspired opponent before winning the third and taking a 4-2 lead in the fourth when bad light intervened.

Despite the precarious nature of his position, most expected Murray to overwhelm Stepanek when play resumed. Having levelled it up, however, Stepanek rediscovered the unorthodox wizardry that so flummoxed Murray on Monday and came within two points of becoming the oldest man since Jimmy Connors (aged 38) in 1991 to win a round at the French Open. — Reuters

Spurs striker sees Kane and able partnership with Vardy

PARIS — Tottenham Hotspur forward Harry Kane believes he and Leicester City marksman Jamie Vardy will provide England with one of the most formidable strike partnerships on display at next month’s Euro 2016 tournament in France.

Kane edged out Vardy by a single goal in the race for the Premier League golden boot after netting 25 times to become the first Englishman to scoop up the award since Sunderland’s Kevin Phillips 16 years ago.

The pair both scored in Turkey in Manchester on Saturday’s Wembley programme by polishing off Thailand’s Lu Yen-hsun 6-4, 6-1.

Nadal found big-serving Australian Sam Groth even more compliant than the Spaniard had begun his tilt at a 10th Roland Garros title with a 6-1, 6-1, 6-1 victory.

Reigning champion and top seed Williams completed the Chatrier programme by polishing off Slovakia’s Magdalena Rybarikova 6-2, 6-0.

Predictable day three most definitely was not, though.

Germany’s Angelique Kerber, who four months ago downed Williams to win the Australian Open, was sent tumbling out by flying Dutchwoman Kiki Bertens who won 6-2, 3-6, 6-3.

Third seed Kerber was troubled by a shoulder injury while later fifth seed Victoria Azarenka, the former world number one, hobbled out with a knee injury against Italy’s Karin Knapp when she trailed 4-0 in the deciding set.

The women’s draw has now lost three of the top seven seeds after Italian Robert Vincenz’s demise on Monday.

“First rounds are always tough in the tournament, especially for me. What can I say? It happens,” Kerber told reporters. It rarely happens to the leading men though.

Djokovic has not exited a slam in the first round since the 2006 Australian Open and a repeat never looked possible as he began a familiar quest for the one major title to elude him.

“It’s not the first time that I’m experiencing such anticipation and expectations,” Djokovic said.

“Whether or not I’m going to have a chance to fight for a trophy that’s in Almighty’s hands, I can’t influence that, but I can certainly give my best.”

Nadal’s only taste of a round-one defeat came at Wimbledon three years ago and there was never any chance of another meltdown as he leaked just three unforced errors.

World number two Murray is equally reliable — his last first-round exit coming at the 2008 Australian Open.

That record looked in serious peril on Tuesday, however, as he became embroiled in an engrossing battle of wits with Czech qualifier Radek Stepanek, at 37 the oldest man in the draw.

Murray, 29, had partially dug himself out of a deep hole on Monday night when he lost the first two sets to an inspired opponent before winning the third and taking a 4-2 lead in the fourth when had light intervened.

Despite the precarious nature of his position, most expected Murray to overwhelm Stepanek when play resumed. Having levelled it up, however, Stepanek rediscovered the unorthodox wizardry that so flummoxed Murray on Monday and came within two points of becoming the oldest man since Jimmy Connors (aged 38) in 1991 to win a round at the French Open. — Reuters