The third day of President U Htin Kyaw’s visit to India included a ceremony as well as substance.

The day started with a welcoming ceremony for U Htin Kyaw and his wife Daw Su Su Lwin at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi, India yesterday.

Indian President Mr. Pranab Mukherjee and Prime Minister Narendra Modi cordially greeted the President and his wife at the ceremony.

After posing for photos together with the Indian President and the Prime Minister, U Htin Kyaw inspected the honour guard.

Next, the President and wife paid tribute to Mahatma Gandhi at the Raj Ghat and signed the visitors’ book.

The President then received the Indian External Affairs Minister Ms. Sushma Swaraj at Taj Palace Hotel.

Afterwards, the President attended a working luncheon hosted by Modi at Hyderabad House.

During their talks at the luncheon, Modi and U Htin Kyaw witnessed the exchange of several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) which included four major deals including one for the construction of as many as 69 bridges on the Tamu-Kyee-kon-Kalewa Road section, which is considered a trilateral highway in Myanmar.

The two sides also exchanged MoUs on construction of Palewa-Yargyi road section on the highway, cooperation in traditional medicine and renewable energy sectors.

Modi said Myanmar holds a unique position in India’s neighbourhood, adding that the longstanding cultural and historical linkages between the two countries form a solid foundation of the bilateral relations.

This is the first top-level engagement between India and Myanmar since the new government took office in Myanmar.

U Htin Kyaw is on a four-day visit to India seeking support in the ongoing rebuilding efforts in Myanmar. Myanmar wants India to step up its role in several sectors ranging from infrastructure and education to healthcare and energy.

The two sides also discussed further cooperation in economic, cultural and trade sectors, projects being implemented by the two countries, India’s technology assistance and training to Myanmar, border security and development, demarcation of the remaining boundary sections, promotion of cooperation between the two Parliaments, technology and necessary assistance for restoration of quake-hit religious edifices and matters related to India’s support for Myanmar’s peace and national reconciliation process and the exchange of support between the two countries in the international arena were discussed.

Then, the President and the Indian Prime Minister held a joint press briefing on bilateral cooperation. A joint statement was released afterwards.

In the afternoon, the President and his Indian counterpart held talks on bilateral relations and economic cooperation between the two countries.

In the evening, the President held talks with his Indian counterpart on bilateral relations and economic cooperation between the two countries.

The last official event of the day was a dinner hosted by Mukherjee for the President and wife. The two presidents exchanged toasts during the dinner.

—Myanmar News Agency
Pyithu Hluttaw holds Q & A session, discussions on proposal

PYITHU Hluttaw continued for its 22nd day with a question and answer session yesterday.

Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Tun Win responded to a call for construction of a bridge in Gwa Township of Rakhine State, saying that there were no plans to build a 1,200-foot reinforced concrete bridge over a creek between Gwa and Myay Ngau village at the moment because time is required to test the soil and develop a structural design in cooperation with the Ministry of Construction.

On behalf of the Rakhine State government, the deputy minister replied to a call for construction of a retaining wall in Taungup Township, saying that it would be built in accordance with the regional government’s priority list in a supplementary budget for the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

He also answered a question about Tintat-Padu road in Sagang Township, pledging that roadwork and repair of box culverts will be carried out by the ministry’s rural development department during the open season.

Next, Pyithu Hluttaw representatives debated a proposal calling on the Union government to review monthly allowances and expenses granted to members of election sub-commissions.

Then, member of the Union Election Commission U Hla Tint replied to discussions of the lawmakers and Pyithu Hluttaw approved the proposal to be put on record.

—Myanmar News Agency

AMYOTH Aung Hluttaw approves Elders Draft Law

AMYOTH Aung Hluttaw approved the Elders Draft Law at its 22nd day session yesterday, with the Bill Committee reading out its report regarding the draft law and Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye submitting a proposal to approve the bill to the parliament.

During a question and answer session, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye elaborated on the natural disaster management fund of K20 billion, saying that more than K3 billion was spent on disaster preparedness measures, water supply, rehabilitation of victims and socioeconomic development undertakings.

Regarding dams and reservoirs in Hinthada District of Ayeyawady Region, the Union minister assured that spillways were constructed to provide safe release of floodwaters from the dams and arrangements have been made for release of water from the dams before reaching its maximum storage levels.

Regular dam inspections for ensuring durability were being undertaken in accordance with rules and regulations, added the Union minister.

Next, he responded to a call for flood prevention measures to be installed in Mrauk-U of Rakhine State, saying that the regional government will spend K248 million on dredging of Kan Hla creek to ensure the proper flow of water in the township.

Studies and necessary measures are being conducted by teams of experts from the Ministry of Construction, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation and the Ministry of Border Affairs to protect the township from flooding, he added.

A report was submitted to the government through the national disaster management committee to implement the projects to develop rivers and ensure durability of dams and irrigation facilities with the help of international assistance, said the Union minister.

— Myanmar News Agency

ASEAN to enhance weather information

THE 38th Meeting of the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Meteorology and Geophysics took place in Yangon yesterday, in order to support the requirements of ASEAN member countries in the field of meteorological and geophysical environmental issues.

The participants of the meeting will discuss and adopt the ‘Work Plan of SCMG from 2016 to 2025, to share the knowledge on Monitoring Network of the Tsunami Early Warning System in ASEAN, member countries to share technological information on Weather Radar Basic & Routine Maintenance and Real-Time Radar Rainfall Estimation & Forecasting, to be discussed on the possible technical cooperation between ASEAN countries and International Organizations.

The meeting will end on 31st August.

In her opening remarks, Director-General of the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology Dr. Hin Nye Thi, said through this ASEAN meeting, stakeholders can receive technology and all other knowledge for weather forecasting and also for geophysics. She added that it is also quite beneficial to our country Myanmar is conducting training and technology exchange programmes in cooperation with international organisations to enhance the capabilities of services in meteorology and geophysics. ASEAN member countries and entities outside of ASEAN such as the World Meteorology Organization and the Japan, China and Korea meteorology agencies joined the meeting that will last until the end of the month. — Aung Thura

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaiing Than receives Mrs. Katrin Bammach, PHOTO: MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker meets FNF project director

SPEAKER of Amyotha Hluttaw Mahn Win Khaiing Than received Mrs. Katrin Bammach, project director for Myanmar and Thailand of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the call, they discussed matters related to the FNF’s assistance to development of Hluttaw.

Also present were Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung and officials of Amyotha Hluttaw Office. — Myanmar News Agency
A joint organizing committee for the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong met at Thangala Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw.

In his address, Dr Tin Myo Win, Vice Chairman of the joint committee, said that he was inspired by the people and proud to have joined ethnic brethren, political leaders and officials of the government for the Union Peace Conference.

Next, P’doh Saw Kwe Htoo Win, another Vice Chairman of the committee, said that all people want the conference to proceed and the onus is on the joint committee to make the conference successful.

He went on to say that political dialogue is set to begin afterwards, expressing his belief that compromise would be reached to put an end to armed conflicts.

He called for participation of those present in the approval process for successfully holding the conference.

Likewise, U Utu Wai, also a vice chairman of the committee, said that the main aim of the committee is to successfully organize the peace conference, expressing his hope that peace would be possible after the conference.

Next, those present held discussions on decisions of the first joint organizing committee and reports presented by the political dialogue organizing working committee.

At the invitation of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, will pay a working visit to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar from 30 to 31 August, 2016. Mrs. Ban Soon-taek, wife of the United Nations Secretary-General, will accompany him.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi enjoyed a music concert by the 95-member Thailand Philharmonic Orchestra (TPO), celebrating the friendship between Myanmar and Thailand at Myanmar International Convention Center-2 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Also present were Pythu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Thaw, Union ministers, the chairman of the Nay Pyi Taw Council, the Thai ambassador to Myanmar and guests.

The TPO’s international musicians performed both Myanmar and Thailand songs at the concert.

At the end of the concert, the State Counsellor presented a bouquet of flowers to the musicians of the TPO.

The concert tour of the TPO is a cooperative project of Mahidol University, the Royal Thai Embassy, the Embassy of Germany and the Goethe Institute, the German Cultural Center in Myanmar, representing a mission of friendship as well as an activity to celebrate two auspicious occasions: His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand’s Accession to the Throne and Her Majesty Queen Sirikit’s Birthday Anniversary on 12 August 2016.

United Nations Secretary-General on working visit to Myanmar

At the invitation of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, will pay a working visit to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar from 30 to 31 August, 2016. Mrs. Ban Soon-taek, wife of the United Nations Secretary-General, will accompany him.

Opening ceremony of Union Peace Conference — 21st Century Panglong to be broadcast live

The opening ceremony of the Union Peace Conference — 21st Century Panglong will be broadcast live on 31st August morning by the Myanmar Radio and Television.

The conference will commence at the Myanmar International Convention Centre 2 in Nay Pyi Taw and the live broadcast will be launched at 9:45 am on 31st August.
10,000 people to receive free healthcare by Shweparami Health Foundation

MORE THAN 10,000 needy people across Kyaukpyu Township in Mandalay Region will receive free medical care provided by Shweparami Health Foundation next month.

Under its programme, the foundation plans to offer health-care services at Shwenandaw Monastery in the township between 1 and 5 September to poor residents.

A total of 60 specialists will take part in the programme to treat a wide range of diseases including head and neck diseases, diabetes, cleft lips, cleft palates and women's diseases.

“If the medical team find patients who need surgery, the foundation will take them to Yangon as well as the Mandalay region to treat their diseases at general hospitals equipped with modern surgical machines,” said a member of the foundation.

From Our Heart Group, a philanthropic organization, also donated 27 million kyats to the SHF to successfully implement the public health programme.—200

People-Centred Research Camp, technical distribution forum opened

THE opening ceremony for the People-Centred Research Camp on Agriculture, along with discussion about a technical distribution forum, was held at the Myoma Camp, Paukkhaung Township, Pyay District, Bago Region on Friday.

At the ceremony, the Region Hluttaw representatives and township administrator delivered formal speeches and agricultural experts elaborated upon insects, pests and soil to the attendees. They then responded to queries raised by attendees.

Present at the ceremony were government officials, members of Agriculture and Livestock and Rural Development Committee and farmers.—(017)

No injuries reported after vehicle overturns

A TRUCK driver and conductor escaped injury after a cargo truck skidded off the road between Yangon and Mandalay and overturned on Sunday.

The truck loaded with agricultural machinery being driven by 37-year-old Than Myo Aung overturned near mile post Nos. 265/3 and 265/4 on the old Yangon-Mandalay highway in Zeyathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw after the driver lost control. No casualties or injuries were reported, police say.

Police are still investigating the case.—Maung Lwin (Talkhon)

Myanmar, Asia Foundation ink MoU

A signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and The Asia Foundation was held in Yangon yesterday.

U Aung Lynn, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Gordon Robert Hein, Senior Vice President of The Asia Foundation, signed the MoU. Also present at the signing ceremony were the director-general, the deputy director-general and officials from the Strategic Studies and Training Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and representatives from The Asia Foundation.—Myanmar News Agency

Crime NEWS

Murder case occurred in Bahan Township in Yangon

A WOMAN was killed and her nine-year-old daughter injured at around 1.30 a.m. on 29 August.

Aung Zin Bo, the first cousin of the victim’s husband, is believed to be connected to the murder because he was found near the victim, Ma Khaing Marla, on the first floor of the two-story house by Daw Tin Tin Aye, who lives on the ground floor.

Daw Tin Tin Aye said she heard the screams of a child from the upper floor of the house. She encountered Aung Zin Bo, who said that no problems had occurred on the first floor.

After Aung Zin Bo left, Daw Tin Tin Aye went upstairs and discovered the victim’s dead body and her injured daughter.

Aung Zin Bo, the suspect for the murder. Photo: Police

Man charged with murdering his wife

A WOMAN on Friday was stabbed to death allegedly by her husband in Pyay, a town in Bago Region, with police arresting the suspect the next day.

According to investigators, a quarrel occurred between the victim, Ma Kay Kay (aka Ma A La Win) and her husband Poe Tha Htoo (aka Myo Nyunt) at around 3:30 p.m. on 26 August. The victim left her home for her sister’s residence after the quarrel but agreed to return home when her husband apologized.

She was allegedly killed by her spouse on the way back to her home near a fuel station located on a bypass road in Ywabaw Ward in Pyay Township at around 7 p.m. on that day, police say.

Township police arrested the suspect at his home in Khattaya Myothit Ward the next day. The suspect has been charged under the Criminal Law.—Ko Lwin (Swa)

One of two prison escapees arrested by police

ONE of two jail breakers who escaped from the men’s jail in Khanti Township in Sagaing Region has been rearrested by local authorities, police confirmed on Sunday.

Nine inmates escaped from the prison after a window was broken at Khanti Myoma Prison on Friday, seven of whom were immediately seized by police. An eighth inmate, Soe Naing Lin (aka Hse Ni or Kyaw Htoo), 26, of Homalin Township, was arrested by police on Saturday.

Ya Pop, 27, of Khanti Township, remains at large. —Myo Win Tun (Monywa)

Photo: Police

No casualties or injuries were reported, police say.

Police are still investigating the case.—Maung Lwin (Talkhon)

Photo: Maung Lwin (Talkhon)
Industrial zones deal with electricity challenges

The industrial zones which are currently operational are faced with an insufficiency of electricity, even though there are new industrial zone projects being opened across the nation, said entrepreneurs who have invested in the industrial zones.

Although efforts are being made to launch the new industrial zones, the old industrial zones need to be improved, they said. Small-and-medium sized enterprises comprise the majority of businesses in the zones and are facing monetary difficulties. The lack of reliable electric power has made them dependent on the manual labour force in the manufacturing process instead of machines that require electricity. The infrastructures in the zones are seriously under-developed, said U Ko Lay, an industrial entrepreneur.

Assistance with this problem is a must for promoting manufacturing in the industrial zones, entrepreneurs said.

Although there are over 1,300 acres of land in the Shwe Pyitha industrial zone, only half of factories are operational. Some plots of land are vacant.

“Taxes have been reduced to make the zone attractive for investors,” U Ko Lay said, adding that some plots of land are still vacant because people are waiting for the electricity. Thus, they have not been able to start their factories.

Import costs for vehicles below 1350cc engine power set at US$5,000

NEW Cost, Insurance and Freight (CIF) values for imported automobiles with below 1350cc engine power will be set at US$5,000 starting next year, it is learnt from the Customs Department.

This action will come into force after the model year of imported cars is officially fixed. The CIF values on import of 1350cc cars will be submitted to the vehicles import supervisory committee.

Only cars with an approved slip are entitled to pay the prescribed value of US$5,000. The CIF prices will be levied on brand new, left-handed cars on the basis of car invoice price.

To be able to fix the CIF values of new 2017 cars, the CIF values will be set depending on the car prices set by the manufacturer.

The change will not be dramatic, officials said.

“CIF values won’t change very much. We will set reasonable prices,” said an official from the Customs Department.

KFC to open new branch in Mandalay within six months

THE world-renowned Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) fast-food restaurant chain plans to open a new branch in Central Myanmar within six months. KFC has already opened several branches in Yangon, with others planned in the country’s major cities. It takes a minimum of six months to open a new branch, enough time to train new employees, KFC officials said.

Since the American fast-food chain opened its first restaurant on Bogoke Aung San Road in downtown Yangon in June 2015, some consumers have criticised KFC for being too expensive. But KFC officials said their prices in Myanmar are actually cheaper when compared to KFC restaurants in other countries.

The opening of the first restaurant attracted large crowds that queued for hours. To meet continued consumer demand, KFC made a decision to open more outlets in Myanmar. Officials said KFC and competitors such as Lotteria have changed the eating habits of Myanmar residents.

KFC is the first major US fast food chain to open in the country.—Union Daily

KFC seen at the Yangon International Airport on 13 June 2016. (PHOTO: NA ZAW MOE)

Singapore Airlines and Silk Air started to run from New YIA

TWO Singapore-based airlines, Singapore Airlines and Silk Air, are moving their operations to New Yangon International Airport (YIA) Terminal 1 starting 26th August, it is learnt.

“We decided to move to Terminal 1 to facilitate our passengers because the New YIA can handle more travelers and offer services such as the restaurants,” said Mr. Clive Quek from Singapore Airlines. “We can offer the best service to arriving and departing travelers at Yangon International Airport Terminal 1,” said Mr. Sulaiman Zainul Abidin, the chief executive officer of the Yangon Aerodrome Company, which operates the new airport. Singapore Airline and Silk Air are currently offering flights from 36 countries to 98 destinations.—Min Thu
Indonesian church attacker ‘obsessed’ with Islamic State leader — senior minister

MEDAN — A knife-wielding Indonesian teen who tried to attack a priest at a church during a Sunday service was found in the attacker’s backpack that said “I love al-Baghdadi,” Chief Security Minister Wiranto told reporters, referring to the leader of the Middle Eastern militant group Islamic State (IS).

“From the cellphone that was seized by security forces, this youth was obsessed with Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi,” Chief Security Minister Wiranto told reporters, referring to the leader of the Middle Eastern militant group Islamic State (IS).

Wiranto, who goes by one name, said a note was found in the attacker’s backpack that said “I love al-Baghdadi” but added the suspect had no known links to existing militant networks.

There were no serious casualties in the latest attempted attack, which happened in a church in Medan, northern Sumatra. Police said the attacker had attempted to stab the priest, who suffered minor injuries, and detonate a crude home-made bomb but failed after being restrained by other worshippers.

The suspect, identified as 17-year-old Ivan Armadi is under interrogation. Police seized bomb-making materials from his home after the attack and said he had learned to assemble a bomb through online research.

Counter-terrorism officials have said there are hundreds of IS sympathisers in Indonesia, where the vast majority of Muslims practice a moderate form of the religion. The country suffered its first IS-linked attack in January, when four people died in a gun and bomb bomb assault.

A worker fogs the corridor of a public housing estate in the vicinity where a locally transmitted Zika virus case was discovered, in Singapore on 29 August, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

SINGAPORE — Officials sprayed insecticide and cleared drains of stagnant water in residential areas of Singapore at high risk of further Zika infections on Monday after 41 locally transmitted cases were confirmed in the city state.

Workers wearing fogging machines traveled methodically through high-rise public housing estates in seven separate areas of the island, inspecting planting pots closely as they sprayed insecticide via thermal fogging machines.

The health ministry on Saturday confirmed Singapore’s first locally-transmitted case of Zika, with the tally rising to 41 just a day later. All of the infected people were either residents of the Aljunied district or workers at a construction site owned by GuocoLand in the area.

“We expect to identify more positive cases,” the ministry said on Monday in its latest update on the outbreak.

“Given that the majority of Zika cases are asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic, and mosquitoes in the affected areas may already have been infected, isolation of positive cases may have limited effect in managing the spread,” it added.

Singapore, a major regional financial centre and busy transit hub, which maintains a constant vigil against the mosquito-borne dengue virus, reported its first case of the Zika virus in May, brought in by a middle-aged man who had been to Brazil.

GuocoLand, which is headquartered in Singapore and has developments across Asia, was ordered on Saturday to stop work on the building site where 36 of the infected people worked. It will remain closed until the company rectifies the conditions that allowed mosquitoes to breed and steps up preventative measures, the health ministry said.

The Zika virus, carried by mosquitoes, was detected in Brazil last year and has since spread across the Americas. It poses a risk to pregnant women because it can cause severe birth defects. It has been linked in Brazil to more than 1,600 cases of microcephaly, where babies are born with abnormally small heads.

The World Health Organisation said on Sunday it did not know “which lineage of Zika is circulating” in Singapore or “what the level of population immunity is to this lineage of Zika in Asia.” Singapore’s health ministry said some 19 mosquito breeding habitats were detected and destroyed in its first sweep of the Aljunied area on Sunday when it fumigated around a third of the 6,000 homes.

Philippines’ Duterte offers reward for corrupt police linked to drugs

MANALA — Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte on Monday promised rewards running to tens of thousands of dollars for information leading to the capture of police officers protecting drug syndicates and warned corrupt officials they would face “a day of reckoning.”

In a National Heroes Day speech, Duterte said there would be no let-up in a “war on drugs” in which — according to police figures — more than 1,900 people have been killed since he came to power two months ago.

Police say the toll of about 36 people a day is a result of drug dealers resisting arrest or gang feuds.

Duterte railed against critics who have complained that the poor who trade drugs to make a living are being targeted by the police, but added that army generals, city mayors, governors and police involved in the drug trade must also be stopped.

“I consider the fight against drugs a war. There is a crisis in this country, it is drugs. It has infected every nook and corner,” he said in the speech to retired and serving soldiers, government officials and foreign diplomats.

Singling out corrupt policemen known as “ninjas,” who take pay-offs from drug lords, Duterte said he was placing a 2 million peso ($43,000) bounty on their heads, telling their colleagues to “squeal on your friends”.

Duterte, who won a May election on a promise to wipe out drugs and dealers, last month named about 160 officials, judges, police and soldiers who he said were protecting drug traffickers or selling drugs in their communities.

The United States, a close ally of the Philippines, said last week it was “deeply concerned” about the reports of extra-judicial drug killings and it urged Duterte’s government to ensure that law-enforcement efforts “comply with its human rights obligation.”

The crackdown and some strongly worded criticism Duterte has made of the United States since coming to power present a dilemma for Washington, which has been seeking to forge unity among allies in Asia in the face of an increasingly assertive China, especially in the strategic South China Sea.

This month, two UN human rights experts urged Manila to stop the extra-judicial executions and killings. Duterte responded on Monday and took steps to leave the United Nations. In his speech on Monday Duterte scoffed at accusations that he was trampling on human rights and said law enforcers should not worry about criminal liability while acting on his campaign.
BEIJING — Chinese President Xi Jinping has reshuffled three top provincial-level Communist Party posts as he seeks to place his men in key positions ahead of a once-every-five-years congress next year, and more new appointments are likely soon.

The party congress is expected to be held next autumn, as Xi steps up his push to impose strict Islamic law, and its allies including al-Qaeda and its allies, is a concerted Islamist-backed campaign of violence in a region with a large ethnic minority Muslim population.

The current party boss, Zhang Chunxian, is expected to move to Beijing to take over a senior role in a party building committee that Xi is overseeing as part of his efforts to instil greater discipline in the corruption-racked party, the source said.

Xi and Lou worked together when Xi was party boss in Shanghai, according to their official resumes, having previously served as a deputy governor and propaganda chief, among other roles. Xi, who is Xi Jinping's predecessor, Chen Quangguo, belongs to China's majority Han Chinese ethnic group.

The party congress, expected to be held next autumn, will focus on Xi appointing more new people into major provincial party and government positions, sources with ties to the leadership say.

In a brief dispatch on Sunday, the official Xinhua news agency named two people with whom Xi had previously worked as the new party chiefs in the strategically located southwestern province of Yunnan and the populous southern province of Hunan. The provincial party chief outranks the governor.

In Yunnan, bordering Myanmar, Laos and Viet Nam, Chen Hao replaced Li Jiheng, while in Hunan, Du Jiajiao had assumed the party's top job, Xinhua said.

Both Chen and Du worked with Xi when he ran China's commercial capital, Shanghai, as its Communist Party chief from a year in 2007, according to their resumes.

“Xi is close to both of them due to their time together in Shanghai,” a source with ties to the leadership told Reuters, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Tibet, considered one of the country's most politically sensitive regions due to periodic anti-Chinese unrest, is a devoutly Buddhist Himalayan region, also has a new party chief, named by Xinhua as Wu Yingjie.

Wu has spent almost his entire career in Tibet, according to his official resume, having previously served as a deputy governor and propaganda chief, among other roles.

Xi, who like his predecessor Chen Quangguo, belongs to China's majority Han Chinese ethnic group.

China says its rule has brought prosperity and stability to Tibet, rejecting claims from Tibetan exiles and rights groups of widespread repression.

Xinhua said on Monday that Chen would move to Xinjiang as its party boss, another unruly part of the country, due to what the government says is a concerted Islamist-backed campaign of violence in a region with a large ethnic minority Muslim population.

The current party boss, Zhang Chunxian, is expected to move to Beijing to take over a senior role in a party building committee that Xi is overseeing as part of his efforts to instil greater discipline in the corruption-racked party, the source said.

Xinhua said Zhang would be given another post, but did not say what.

A second source said the governor in Shanxi, a coal-rich northern province beset by corruption scandals, would move to Beijing to take over as transport minister.

Li Xiaopeng is the son of former premier Li Peng, who was deeply involved in the military crackdown on student-led demonstrations for democracy around Beijing's Tiananmen Square in 1989.

The second source said Xi ally Lou Yangsheng, currently a deputy party boss in Shanxi, would be named acting provincial governor, pending approval by the local legislature.

Xi and Lou worked together when Xi was party boss in the eastern province of Zhejiang from 2003 until early 2007.

The State Council Information Office, which doubles as the party's spokesman's office, did not respond to a request for comment. — Reuters

Pakistan Supreme Court dismisses civilian appeals against military convictions

ISLAMABAD — Pakistan's Supreme Court on Monday upheld verdicts and death sentences in the cases of 16 civilians convicted of terrorism-related offences by military courts, the first time the highest court has ruled on the legality of cases tried by the military.

A five-member bench ruled that the appellants had not proved the military violated their constitutional rights or failed to follow procedure, in a blow to some activists who contend the courts routinely violate people's rights.

Pakistan's government empowered military courts to try civilian terrorism suspects in January 2015, following an attack by Pakistani Taliban militants on a school in Peshawar that killed more than 150 pupils.

The military has so far convicted 104 civilians in the secret tribunals. Of those, 100 have been sentenced to death, and four to life imprisonment. All but six are said by the military to have confessed.

Those whose appeals were dismissed on Monday included nine members of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and two al-Qaeda members, according to Pakistan's military. Two convicts are said to have been involved in the Peshawar school killings.

Pakistan has been battling the TTP, an umbrella organisation of militant groups fighting to impose strict Islamic law, and its allies including al-Qaeda since 2007.

Lawyers for all 16 convicts contended their clients had been tried in secret, without access to legal counsel of their choice, and that their confessions had been recorded illegally. They also claimed they were denied access to military court records when preparing their appeals.

The complaints echoed those made by lawyers and families of those convicted by the courts to Reuters. Two families and one lawyer said they had been threatened after filing appeals. Several told Reuters that confessions were “coerced” by the military.

Sajid Ilyas Bhatti, the deputy attorney general representing the government, denied the appellants' claims, saying they had been accorded their rights.

He argued that military court proceedings were “immune from challenge on the ground of any alleged violation of the fundamental rights”.

In its 182-page judgment, the court concluded that the appellants failed to prove wrongdoing on the part of the military authorities. — Reuters

Thai police link beach-town bombings to Muslim insurgency

BANGKOK — Thai police identified on Monday a third suspect wanted in connection with a wave of bombs in tourist towns this month that killed four people and for the first time linked the attacks to Muslim separatists operating in the far south.

Thai security authorities have been under increasing pressure to link previous attacks blamed on Muslim insurgents for the first time with links to previous attacks blamed on the Muslim insurgents.

The three suspects for which we have obtained an arrest warrant are known to have ties to other previous attacks in the southern provinces,” deputy national police spokesman Kissana Phathanacharoen told Reuters.

Police identified the third suspect as Asamin Katemedi and said he was also wanted in connection with a 2015 bomb attack on the tourist island of Samui.

Four Thai people were killed in the coordinated bomb attacks in various tourist town south of Bangkok this month and dozens were wounded, including foreigners.

The military government, apparently loath to spread alarm in the tourist industry, the one bright spot in a generally flat economy, at first dismissed any suggestion the Muslim separatists battling the predominantly Buddhist country's government might be to blame.

Authorities even hinted that supporters of ousted populist premier Thaksin Shinawatra might be to blame.

But police issued an arrest warrant for a third suspect on Monday said all three of the people they were looking for were Muslim and associated with a separatist group.

The State Council Information Office, which doubles as the party’s spokesman’s office, did not respond to a request for comment. — Reuters
Opinion

Co-operation between Myanmar and India

Khin Maung Aye

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw has reached an agreement with the Indian government during his visit to India that co-operation between Myanmar and India needs to be enhanced in order that inclusive growth and development can be further facilitated. Also, peace, prosperity and stability in the two countries and also in the region as a whole can be promoted. In this function, the leaders of the two countries have expressed their support for the continuation and re-strengthening of dialogue within the framework of existing bilateral institutional mechanisms.

It is also worth mentioning at this juncture that the Indian government has expressed support for the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong. This is an indication of India’s being a good neighbor. In regard to security and defense cooperation, India has reaffirmed its commitment to the security of terrorism and insurgent activities in all their forms and manifestations. Both countries have reiterated their commitments to have respect for the sovereign power and territorial integrity of India and Myanmar, as well as to continue to practise the policy of not allowing any insurgent organizations to exploit their land for launching of hostile activities against the other side.

Concerning the development and prosperity of the people residing in areas bordering the two nations, the two leaders have come to an agreement to promote bilateral co-operation to achieve overall socio-economic development in the border areas. In addition, it is heartening to learn that India has expressed its support for the progress in the reform process inclusive of Myanmar’s effort regarding national reconciliation.

In this function, the two countries have agreed that the delegations of India and Myanmar will continue to work together closely during the deliberations at all relevant UN forums. In regard to regional co-operation, Myanmar side has informed the Indian side that State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi will participate in the forthcoming Outreach Summit between BRICS and BIMSTEC partners to be held in India on 16 October of this year. India has welcomed her visit, which is a sign that Myanmar is now better participating in both regional and global activities.

1. At the invitation of H.E. Shri Pranab Mukherjee, President of the Republic of India, H.E U Htin Kyaw, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, paid a State visit to India from 27-30 August, 2016. He was accompanied by his wife Daw Su Su Lwin. Apart from his official engagements in New Delhi, President U Htin Kyaw visited places of historical and cultural importance, including Bodhgaya and Agra.

2. President U Htin Kyaw was accompanied by a high level delegation including the Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture, the Union Minister for Transportation and Communication, the Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Manpower, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, and other senior officials. He was accorded a ceremonial reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan on August 29, 2016. The President of India hosted a banquet in his honour.

3. President U Htin Kyaw paid tribute and respect to the memory of Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat.

4. H.E. Smt. Sushma Swaraj, External Affairs Minister of India, called on President U Htin Kyaw in New Delhi.

5. The Indian leadership congratulated the President of Myanmar on the victory of the National League for Democracy after general elections in Myanmar in November 2015. They expressed support to the new Government in all its endeavours for the well-being of the people of Myanmar, including in development of democratic institutions. The India side also offered to share India’s own experiences in evolving parliametary rules, procedures and practices as well as in managing Union-State/Region relations, allocation of powers and resources between the Union and States etc.

6. President U Htin Kyaw held wide-ranging discussions with H.E. ShriPranab Mukherjee, President of India and H.E. ShriNarendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. While reviewing bilateral issues, both sides agreed that greater bilateral cooperation between India and Myanmar is required in order to promote inclusive growth and development and contribute to peace, prosperity and stability in both countries and in the region as a whole. They expressed support for the continuation and reinvigoration of dialogue within the framework of existing bilateral institutional mechanisms, namely Joint Consultative Commission, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Consultative Committee, National Level Meeting, Sectoral Level Meeting, Regional Border Committee, Border Liaison Meetings, Heads of Survey Department Meeting etc.

7. The Indian leadership expressed support to the national reconciliation and peace process of the Government of Myanmar under the “21st Century Panglong Conference”.

8. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen bilateral security and defence cooperation, which is crucial for maintaining peace and stability along the long common border. They reaffirmed their shared commitment to fight the scourge of terrorism and insurgent activity in all its forms and manifestations.

9. They reaffirmed their shared commitment to fight the scourge of terrorism and insurgent activity in all its forms and manifestations.

10. Referring to the ongoing discussions between the two sides on maritime security, both sides agreed that Maritime Security Cooperation in the Bay of Bengal is vital for both countries.

11. The two sides reviewed ongoing development cooperation initiatives being undertaken with technical and financial assistance from the Government of India, including in the areas of connectivity and capacity building, health and education infrastructure, agriculture, information technology, industrial training, and various training programmes.

12. The two sides expressed satisfaction at the progress made in the implementation of Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project. The two sides agreed that the completed facilities at Sittwe and Dhalu will be operationalised by December 2016 and the modalities of their operation and maintenance be finalised by the end of the year.

13. Identifying the need for specific focus on the development and prosperity of the people in border areas, both sides agreed to enhance their cooperation to bring about over all socio-economic development in the border areas by undertaking both infrastructure development and micro-economic projects, including the construction of roads and bridges, and related training activities in accordance with the MoUs on India-Myanmar Border Area Cooperation.

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email kr@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with your name and title.

Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish “Letter to the Editor” that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Draft Joint Statement Issued on the Occasion of the State Visit of the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to India

“Both sides agreed to enhance their cooperation to bring about over all socio-economic development in the border areas by undertaking both infrastructure development and micro-economic projects”

“Their reaffirmed their shared commitment to fight the scourge of terrorism and insurgent activity in all its forms and manifestations”

See page 9 >>
Draft Joint Statement Issued...

14. The two leaders noted with appreciation the substantial progress made in upgrading the Yangon Children’s Hospital and the Sittwe General Hospital with technical and financial assistance from India. The Myanmar side thanked India for this important partnership initiative with state-of-the-art medical equipment. The two sides expressed satisfaction at the functioning of the Myanmar Institute of Information Technology (MIIT) as well as on the establishment of the Rice Bio-Park at Yeinz University in Nay Pyi Taw. They reviewed progress in establishing the Advanced Centre for Agricultural Research and Education (ACARE) in Nay Pyi Taw. These institutes will emerge as centres of excellence that will be able to address the capacity building needs of Myanmar’s IT and agricultural sector respectively. Both sides expressed satisfaction at the successful upgrading of the India-Myanmar Centre for the Enhancement of IT Skills (IMCETIS) in Yangon, which has emerged as a premier ICT training centre in Myanmar. Language Laboratories at Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw, e-Resource Centre at Nay Pyi Taw as well as the computerisation of the Central Land Records Development Training Centre (CLRDT) at Taikkyi in Yangon region. The Indian side offered assistance for undertaking small development projects in areas and sectors considered priority by Government of Myanmar. The Indian side also offered assistance to the Myanmar side to enhance agricultural productivity by undertaking initiatives such as programme on germplasm enhancement, development of seed models, training and extension of farmers in Myanmar, training and demonstration of improved agro-techniques and other capacity building projects. The two sides agreed to exchange information on skill development initiative that could be undertaken to provide useful employment opportunities while meeting the needs of industry of both start-ups.

15. The two sides agreed to promote trade and expand cooperation, especially in agriculture, banking, power and energy sectors. Both sides expressed satisfaction that the trade between the two countries has shown resilience to the global trends. They agreed that both Governments would work to identify and remove various impediments to bilateral trade. In this context, both sides appreciated the useful deliberations at the India-Myanmar Business Conclave held in Yangon in May 2016 which was attended by a high-level business delegation led by Indian Minister of Commerce and Industry Nirmala Sitharaman. Indian side conveyed that leading Indian companies are prepared to invest in Myanmar’s hospitality and automobile sector, and requested that this may be facilitated.

16. The Indian leadership thanked Myanmar for accepting its request and giving alience to the State Bank of India to open a bank branch in Myanmar, and sought support while it sets up its office in Myanmar. Both sides expressed confidence that the commencement of direct banking operations would help greatly to expand bilateral trade and commerce.

17. The two leaders also expressed their hope that the modalities of operation of border haats may be finalised soon so that trade can also start taking place through border haats.

18. Both sides agreed that an arrangement for supply of pulses from Myanmar to India would be in the mutual interest of Myanmar farmers and Indian consumers. They encouraged Indian companies to cooperate with Myanmar farmers to ensure the quality of pulses production and thus ensure better marketability of the produce in India.

19. The President of Myanmar thanked India for the power supply that commenced from India across the Moreh-Tamu border on April 8, 2016. Both sides agreed that this is a small but critical step towards further integrating our countries and economies for the mutual benefit of the two peoples. Both sides also expressed satisfaction on strengthening of the transmission network to increase supply in future.

20. In order to provide a framework for bilateral cooperation in this key sector, the Indian and Myanmar leaders resolved that the proposed MoU between India and Myanmar on Cooperation in the field of Power should be negotiated at the earliest.

21. The Indian side invited Myanmar to participate in the Internationale Solar Alliance Initiative, which is intended to allow solar resource rich countries to address their special needs and collaborate to reduce costs and improve generation capacity.

22. The two sides recognised the presence of Indian companies in the oil exploration and hydrocarbon pipeline sectors and agreed to further expand this collaboration. Myanmar side agreed to invite Indian companies to participate in competitive tender for petrochemical and petroleum products marketing infrastructure and setting up LPG terminals.

23. Reviewing ongoing bilateral cultural exchanges and cooperation, both sides agreed to further promote cultural and academic exchanges. The Myanmar side requested India to provide financial and technical assistance in restoring of pagodas damaged by the recent earthquake in central Myanmar. They expressed satisfaction that the ‘Festival of India’ in Myanmar that was held with popular support and participation.

24. The two sides agreed to encourage people-to-people contact and facilitate movement of people across land borders of the two countries. The two sides also discussed on setting up immigration facilities at the Tamu-Moreh and Rhy-Zawkathar border crossing points at an early date.

25. The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to work closely together in international multilateral organisations and, in this context, agreed to make efforts to coordinate national positions on important issues that figure high on the international fora. Recognising that terrorism is one of the most serious threats to the international peace and security, and underlining that there can be no justification whatsoever for acts of terrorism, the two sides called for further strengthening of the international legal regime to combat terrorism, and in this context, called for early finalisation of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism presently being negotiated in the United Nations. Both sides recognised that early reform of the UN Security Council is an essential element in the overall effort to reform the United Nations to make it more representative, effective and better adapted to the needs of the 21st Century. Myanmar reiterated its support for India’s efforts to become a permanent member in an expanded and reformed UN Security Council.

26. India expressed its support for the progress made by Myanmar in its ongoing reform process under difficult circumstances including its efforts towards achieving an inclusive and broad based national reconciliation. In this context, both sides agreed that the delegations of India and Myanmar will continue to work together closely during deliberations in all relevant UN fora.

(ii) The MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Renewable Energy

(iii) The MoU on Cooperation in the Construction/Upgradation of the Bridges and Approach Road in Tamu-Kygome-Kakewa section of the Trilateral Highway in Myanmar.

(iv) The MoU on Cooperation in the Construction/Upgradation of Kalewa-Yagyi road section of the Trilateral Highway in Myanmar.

27. During the visit, the following documents were signed:

(i) MoU on Cooperation in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine

(ii) The MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Renewable Energy

28. Both sides welcomed the various steps taken to strengthen regional cooperation under BIMSTEC. The Myanmar side thanked the President of India for the warm and gracious hospitality extended to him and to the members of his delegation during their stay in India.

29. The President of Myanmar thanked the President of India for the invitation to the President of India to visit Myanmar at mutually convenient dates. The invitations were graciously accepted, and it was agreed that dates for these visits would be decided by mutual consultations through diplomatic channels.

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“The Myanmar side requested India to provide financial and technical assistance in restoring of pagodas damaged by the recent earthquake in central Myanmar.”
Germany Chancellor Angela Merkel and British Prime Minister Theresa May address a news conference following talks at the Chancellery in Berlin, Germany on 20 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Options sought as Merkel's radio silence complicates path to soft Brexit landing

BERLIN — Triggering the procedure for Britain to exit the European Union is like turning off the engines on an airplane, a top European diplomat says: best only do it if you can see a landing strip. Otherwise, all parties risk a messy outcome.

When Britain makes its exit move — by invoking Article 50 of the EU's Lisbon Treaty — it will set the clock running on a two-year deadline to leave the EU. Keen to avoid a crash landing, officials on both sides are scoping out how to proceed.

Options include the 'neverland' possibility of simply not invoking Article 50, trying back channel talks to sharpen Britain's sense of what scenarios are possible, and hopping from an interim outcome to a more permanent post-Brexit landing site.

The first option is a non-starter for German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Europe's most powerful leader and the first one Theresa May met after becoming British prime minister last month.

"The EU can't accept that," said a source close to Merkel, who has no desire to see Britain leave but has a pragmatic focus on holding the rest of bloc together, and does not believe Britain will hold a second referendum on its EU membership.

Even if the British economy's resilience in the immediate aftermath of the country's June 23 vote to leave the EU eases the economic pressure on Britain to press ahead with Brexit, May herself has said "Brexit means Brexit".

She has, however, said Britain will not trigger the exit procedure this year.

For the British government, the dilemma of when and how to make a Brexit landing is complicated by a refusal on the part of EU leaders, led by Merkel, to discuss potential outcomes until Britain invokes the exit procedure.

"We won't talk beforehand," said the source close to Merkel, speaking on condition of anonymity. Another German government official stressed the strict line: "The trickiest area is the pre-negotiation: "We won't talk about substance."

In the absence of formal pre-negotiations, the British government must work through the second option: peering through gaps in the clouds of European officialdom to try to work out what its post-Brexit 'landing' options are.

Such back channelling could help the British work out what is realistic in order to avoid EU negotiators bullying at their position, and the clock running down on the two-year deadline.

"You can only nail it down if you are in the realm of the possible," said one European official.

A likely trade-off between EU market access (which Britain would prefer) and the free movement of people (which is does not want) will probably leave a few achievable 'landing points', leaving British officials to try to identify these in informal meetings with cagy counterparts.

Here, they may yet find a way forward. There have been indications from at least one government that there may be room for discussions, rather than negotiations, in advance of Britain triggering Article 50.

German officials have also signalled they are ready to make some concessions to strike a deal with Britain. European Affairs Minister Michael Roth has held out the possibility of London achieving "special status" in its ties with the EU after Brexit.

But European leaders do not want Britain to hold the bloc hostage by horse trading on the terms of an exit before it commits to leave. So even if British officials sharpen their sense of the kind of deal they can strike, they still face a tight timeframe to clinch a post-Brexit settlement with the EU.

Behind the scenes, there has been a growing realisation in Europe's capitals that the two-year window for negotiating Brexit is far too short.

This raises the third option being mooted by some European officials: an interim framework for Britain's ties with the EU, based on an existing model similar to that of Norway or Switzerland.

"That might be a temporary solution," said sources.

Further talks could then result in another landing spot beyond the two-year negotiating window offered by Article 50.

A spokeswoman for May said the prime minister and her government were going for a "British deal", to get the best for the country.

The trickiest area is the crunch trade-off between market access and the free movement of people, which is sacrosanct to EU leaders. "The price on free movement for prosperity is high," the European official said.

One option to reduce the flow of people to Britain is for it to firm up rules around benefits such that only people from other EU countries with a firm job offer can move to the UK.

Merkel has said May some breathing space to work out her negotiating position, resisting calls from Paris and Brussels - in the days immediately after the Brexit vote — for Britain to leave the EU "as soon as possible". — Reuters

US drone enters Iran's airspace, leaves after warning — Tasnim

ANKARA — Iran's military detected a US drone entering Iranian airspace on Monday and warned it to leave, which it subsequently did, Iran's Tasnim news agency reported.

"Iran's army air defence detected and warned an American drone in the eastern airspace of the country. It was coming from Afghanistan. The drone left the area," Tasnim quoted the Iranian military as saying.

Tasnim gave no details on how the Iranian authorities had warned the unmanned drone to leave its airspace. — Reuters

Australia seizes record cocaine haul on cruise ship, arrests three Canadians

SYDNEY — Australian customs officers seized a record 95 kg (210 lb) of cocaine from a cruise ship docked in Sydney Harbour following a joint operation at the weekend and leading to the arrest of three Canadians, they said on Monday.

It was the biggest drug seizure at an airport or a cruise ship in Australia, Tim Fitzgerald, a regional commander at the Australian Border Force, said.

Customs officers boarded the vessel and searched cabins with the help of sniffer dogs, they said in a statement.

"It was during the search of the cabin ... that we identified a number of suitcases in the cabin itself that were locked. Imager or trace technology was used to scan the outside of those suitcases and as a result a number of tests came positive for the presence of cocaine," Fitzgerald said.

The Canadians were charged with importing a commercial quantity of cocaine, for which the maximum penalty is life imprisonment. — Reuters

Job placement office for people aged 50 or older opens in Kitakyushu

KITAKYUSHU, (Japan) — Local and labour authorities opened a job placement office Monday for people who are 50 years old or older in the southwestern Japanese city of Kitakyushu, Fukuoka Prefecture.

The office named "Senior Hello Work Tobata" is the first public employment security office targeting the older generation in Japan, the authorities said.

Statistics show the ratio of people seeking jobs who were at least 45 years old was 45.5 per cent among job seekers across Japan as of May.

"We are aiming to create a city where seniors can work. We would like to build a successful model for the vitalisation of the local economy by accepting many people," Kitakyushu Mayor Kenji Kitahashi said at an opening ceremony for the office run by the city government of Kitakyushu and the Fukuoka labour bureau of the labour ministry.

The opening of an employment support office targeting a specific age group became possible under a strategic special zones programme.

Seigo Nakano, 65, who visited the office, said, "They kindly showed me how to write a resume. I hope I can land a job that I want." — Kyodo News

A-Bomb Dome fragments to be given to dome designer in Czech Republic

HIROSHIMA — Hiroshima University said Monday it will donate fragments of the so-called Atomic Bomb Dome it found in a nearby river to relax a Czech architect who designed the building that barely survived the US atomic bombing in World War II.

Reuben Kayo, a researcher at the university, has been working with others for several years finding fragments of irradiated buildings as part of efforts to highlight the horrors of the atomic bombing, according to the university.

Some decorations and fragments of the Atomic Bomb Dome have been discovered in the Motoyasu River that flows just in front of it. Kayo and others plan to visit Czech Republic in mid-September to meet with relatives of architect Jan Letzel and donate some of the items they found.

The dome was originally a building that was completed in 1915. It was used as an industrial promotional hall until the atomic bomb detonated about 160 metres away. All of the people inside died, but parts of the building remained intact. The skeletal structure, which has become a symbol of peace, was inscribed into UNESCO's list of World Heritage sites in 1996. — Kyodo News
Suicide bomber kills 45 in Aden attack: medical charity

ADEN — A suicide bomber killed at least 45 people when he drove a car laden with explosives into a compound run by local militias in Aden on Monday, Medecins Sans Frontieres said, in one of the deadliest attacks in the southern Yemeni port city.

The official said at least 60 other people were brought into a nearby hospital run by the medical charity in Aden’s Mansoura district.

No one claimed responsibility for the attack, but it resembled previous suicide bombings which Islamic State said it carried out in the city. A security source said the attack targeted a school compound where conscripts of the Popular Committees, forces allied to the internationally recognised President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi, were gathering for breakfast.

The blast rocked the area and sent debris flying, sending residents fleeing, one witness said.

Islamic militants have exploited an 18-month-old civil war between the Houthi and Hadi’s supporters and launched a series of attacks targeting senior officials, religious figures, security forces and compounds of the Saudi-led Arab military coalition which supports Hadi.—Reuters

Syrian Kurdish spokesman says Manbij reinforced, but not by YPG

ALEPPO — A spokesman for the autonomous Kurdish region in Syria said on Monday that local military forces in the Syrian cities of Manbij and Jarablus are being reinforced, but not by Kurdish YPG militia.

The spokesman was responding to comments from regional security sources that YPG fighters appear to be reinforcing Manbij, captured this month from Islamic State, with weapons and personnel.

Manbij and Jarablus lie to the west of the Euphrates river, an area of northern Syria which Turkey and the United States have told the Kurdish YPG forces to withdraw from.

“There are reinforce-ments, but not by the YPG. Because the YPG are east of the Euphrates, not in Manbij or Jarablus,” said Ibrahim Ibrahim, head of the Rojava Media Office. Rojava is an autonomous political federation in northern Syria run by Syrian Kurdish parties and their allies.

He did not identify the forces being sent to Manbij and Jarablus, but he said military councils in both cities are made up of local fighters and some Free Syrian Army rebel groups which are allied to the US-backed anti-Islamic State alliance the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).

The Kurdish YPG militia, which makes up a large part of the SDF, said it had withdrawn east of the Euphrates in line with US and Turkish demands after the SDF drove Islamic State out of Manbij.—Reuters

Turkish army thrusts deeper into Syria, monitor says 35 villagers killed

KARKAMIS, (Turkey) — Turkey’s army and its allies thrust deeper into Syria on Sunday, seizing territory controlled by Kurdish-aligned forces on the fifth day of a cross-border campaign that a monitoring group said had killed at least 35 villagers.

Turkish warplanes roared into northern Syria at daybreak and artillery pounding what security sources said were sites held by the Kurdish YPG militia, after the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported fierce overnight fighting around two villages.

Turkey said 25 Kurdish militants were killed in its air strikes and denied there were civilian casualties.

There was no immediate comment from the YPG, but forces aligned with the group have said it had withdrawn from the area prior to the assault.

Turkey, which is also battling Kurdish insurgents at home, sent tanks and troops into Syria on Wednesday to support its Syrian rebel allies. The Turkish-backed forces first seized the Syrian border town of Jarablus from Islamic State militants before pushing south into areas held by Kurdish-aligned militias. They have also moved west towards Islamic State areas.

Turkish officials say their goal in Syria is to ensure as much about securing Kurdish forces do not expand the territory they already control along Turkey’s border as it is about driving Islamic State from its strongholds.

However, the Turkish offensive has so far focused on forces allied to the Kurdish-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a coalition that includes the YPG, an Observatory source said.

The SDF has support from the United States — which sees the group as an effective Syrian ally against Islamic State, putting Turkey at odds with a fellow NATO member and further complicating Turkey’s five-year-old civil war.

The conflict began as an uprising against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and has since drawn in regional states and world powers.

The Observatory, a Britain-based monitoring group with a network of sources in Syria, said Turkish-allied forces had seized at least two villages south of Jarablus, with the group’s assets and Khalid Abdullah, that were held by militias loyal to the SDF.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

**MV BANGKACHAI VOY. NO (147)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BANGKACHAI VOY. NO (147) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30.8.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of SPW-5 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 WONGSAMUT OCEAN SHIPPING CO LTD.**

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

**MV KOTA HARTA VOY. NO ( )**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA HARTA VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 29.8.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.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 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 ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

**MV AYSAN VOY. NO ( )**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV AYSAN VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30.8.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.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 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 LAND AND SEA SHIPPING**

Phone No: 2301185
Brazil’s Dilma Rousseff takes stand in impeachment trial

BRASILIA — Suspended President Dilma Rousseff will make a last stand in Brazil’s Senate on Monday in an impeachment trial that is widely expected to remove her from office and end more than a decade of leftist rule by her Workers Party.

Rousseff, who is being impeached on charges of breaking budget laws, has denied wrongdoing and denounced the nine-month impeachment process that has paralyzed Brazilian politics as a conspiracy to overthrow her and roll back policies that have favoured Brazil’s poor during 13 years of Workers Party governments.

But a deep recession that many Brazilians blame her for and a huge corruption scandal involving state-run energy company Petrobras [PETR4.SA] have undermined Rousseff’s popularity since she was re-elected in 2014.

Her vice president, Michel Temer, has been interim president since mid-May, when Rousseff was suspended after Congress decided it would continue the impeachment process that began in the lower house.

If the Senate convicts Rousseff on Tuesday or Wednesday as expected, Temer, 75, will be sworn in as expected, Wednesday as expected, his term through 2018. His Cabinet ministers will support him.

Rousseff’s female president.

A survey published this week showed 53 senators in a two-year recession. Rousseff has lost her base of support in Congress, his Democratic rival for the 8 November election, should release detailed medical records. “I have no problem in doing so,” he said.

Trump said his first priority on taking office next January would be the immediate deportation of thousands of undocumented immigrants who remain in the United States despite having committed crimes.

“These international gangs and cartels will be a thing of the past,” he said. “Their reign of terror will be a thing of the past,” he said.

Trump said his first priority on taking office next January would be the immediate deportation of thousands of undocumented immigrants who remain in the United States despite having committed crimes.

“These international gangs and cartels will be a thing of the past,” he said. “Their reign of terror will be a thing of the past,” he said.
BEIJING — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has called on young people to be a “death-defying corps” in defending his regime, official media said Monday.

Kim’s request was made in his speech delivered at a rare congress of North Korea’s main youth association in Pyongyang, at a time when his regime is keen to secure strong support across the board.

The congress of the Kim II Sung Socialist Youth League, which is governed by the ruling Workers’ Party of Korea and plays an important role in the country’s social system, held its first congress in 23 years over the weekend.

In his speech, Kim stressed the need for the youth league to “strengthen its organisations and increase its martial function and role in every way,” according to the Korean Central News Agency.

Kim was also quoted as saying that the organisations and North Korean young people should become “vanguards and shock brigades in building a socialist power.”

The two-day congress of the youth league, formed in 1946 by the country’s founder, adopted a decision to rename the association Kimilsungist-Kimjongilist Youth League, according to KCNA.

The congress, the ninth of its kind, was not held while the current leader’s late father Kim Jong Il was in power. A torchlight gala was held at Pyongyang’s May Day Stadium on Sunday to mark the latest convention, which was also attended by the current leader, who is in his early 30s.

The events took place after the ruling party held its first congress in 36 years in May and at a time when North Korean officials are apparently more concerned about the possible impact of the influx of information from foreign countries and market-oriented elements gradually expanding in North Korean society.

The country’s major organisation for women, the Democratic Women’s Union of Korea, is scheduled to hold its first congress in 33 years in November. North Korea’s official media had earlier said the congress of the youth league would kick off on Friday. However, it seems it did not and the reason behind the delay of the opening remains unclear.—Kyodo News

CHICAGO — In a community in the western suburbs of Chicago live a group of aviation enthusiasts who turn the backyards opening into a mini airport and park small airplanes in garages. Among those planes, one was built by a Chinese-American engineer.

Being an engineer of Nokia, David Hu started to make an airplane in 2006. For the past 10 years, from drawings, buying materials and parts, polishing, assembling to testing, David worked all by himself in his spare time.

The plane weighs about 590 kg, and has a top speed of some 290 km per hour and a mileage of 644 to 724 km.

After passing all technical evaluations by the US Federal Aviation Administration, the plane made its maiden flight in June this year.

“I have flown airplanes most of my life, this is one of the best airplanes I have ever flown. Mechanically it is perfect, sound,” John Musgrave, instructor of Blue Sky Aero Inc., told Xinhua.

He also said the plane is “very safe,” adding that “everything in the airplane is certified aircraft parts.”

Since its June maiden flight, the plane has so far flown 32 hours in two months, averaging two to three hours per week. And no problem has occurred.

“This is a 10-year journey. There are a lot of challenges for my family to support me, a lot of problems along the way emotionally, physically, financially. Like any kind of big project, but I am glad that we made it,” said Hu, after flying his plane from nearby Morris Airport back home Sunday.

“I have done this flying. So I can now turn the page of my life to a new page, looking forward to the next step,” Hu said.—Xinhua

Chinese-American engineer builds his own plane

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after 

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV ESM CREMONA VOY. NO ( 156 )
Consignees of cargo carried on MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO ( 156 ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 29.8.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT 
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY 
AGENT FOR: M/S ORIENT OVERSEAS 
CONTAINER LINES
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV MAERSK ABERDEEN VOY. NO ( )
Consignees of cargo carried on MV MAERSK ABERDEEN VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30.8.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P 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 (SP’ORE) 
PTT LTD
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV MERATUS GORONTALO VOY. NO ( )
Consignees of cargo carried on MV MERATUS GORONTALO VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30.8.2016 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 Claim’s Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT 
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY 
AGENT FOR: M/S YANG MING LINE 
PTE LTD
Phone No: 2301185
Mexican singer Juan Gabriel performs at the 10th annual Latin Grammy awards in Las Vegas, Nevada in 2009. Photo: Reuters

Mexican singer Juan Gabriel dies of heart attack at 66

MEXICO CITY — Mexican singer Juan Gabriel, a musical icon across Latin America for more than 40 years, died on Sunday of a heart attack at age 66, broadcaster Televisa reported.

The prolific songwriter and performer, who's known for his powerful love ballads, died in a hospital in Santa Monica, California, Televisa reported. He was due to perform on the red carpet for the first time in a decade, and Rihanna performed four times to mark her lifetime achievement award.

Juan Gabriel, whose real name was Alberto Aguilera, was born in 1950 into a poor family in the western Mexican state of Michoacan and rose to sell millions of copies of his albums and have his own star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Gabriel, who lived much of his young life in the border city of Ciudad Juarez, entertained generations of Latin Americans with his energetic performances of songs such as “Querida” and “Amor Eterno” in glittering mariachi outfits.

A voice and a talent that represented Mexico, Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto said on Twitter. “His music, a legacy for the world.” — Reuters

Famous singer Juan Gabriel performs at the 10th annual Latin Grammy awards in Las Vegas, Nevada in 2009. Photo: Reuters

Beyonce storms Video Music Awards, Rihanna gets lifetime award

NEW YORK — Beyonce dominated the MTV Video Music Awards on Sunday, prowling the stage with a 15 minute medley from her powerful “Lemonade” album and taking home eight statuettes, including the top prize — video of the year.

On a night when women ruled, Britney Spears returned to the VMA stage for the first time in a decade, and Rihanna performed four times to mark her lifetime achievement award.

Beyonce brought the house down at New York’s Madison Square Garden, stringing together five of her “Lemonade” album tracks about betrayal, revenge and female empowerment in a song and dance routine that brought a long standing ovation.

VMA organisers had announced only three hours before Sunday’s show began that Beyonce would perform. The singer arrived on the red carpet accompanied by the mothers of three African-American men who have died at the hands of US police in the past two years.


She also won best female video and prizes for choreography, editing, and long form video in the awards that are voted on by fans.

Where Beyonce was angry and bold, Spears, 34, dressed in a sparkly gold leotard and matching over the knee boots was slinky retro pop. It was the “Toxic” singer’s first time on the VMA stage since her humiliating 2007 performance when her personal and professional life was falling apart, and follows the release of a new album last week. — Reuters

Beyonce accepts the Female Video of the Year award during the 2016 MTV Video Music Awards in New York, US, on 28 August 2016. Photo: Reuters

Rihanna accepts the Michael Jackson Video Vanguard Award during the 2016 MTV Video Music Awards in New York, US, on 28 August. Photo: Reuters

Thriller ‘Don’t Breathe’ tops North American box office

LOS ANGELES — New thriller “Don’t Breathe” opened in the number one spot at the North American box offices this weekend, with 26.1 million US dollars in ticket sales.

As a small budget film, “Don’t Breathe” was made for just 9.9 million dollars, delivered 2.6 times its budget in North America and received a “B+” from first-night moviegoers on CinemaScore.

“Don’t Breathe” is an R-rated suspense horror flick, shot on a modest budget, said comScore analyst Paul Dergarabedian. He credited a “terrific” trailer for drumming up attendance.

Out of America and Canada, “Don’t Breathe” brought in an estimated 1.9 million dollars from seven international markets. “Suicide Squad” was in second place after three consecutive weekends leading, with 12.1 million dollars weekend and nearly 283 million dollars in receipts over four weeks.

Focus and Laika’s “Kubo and the Two Strings” dropped 37 percent in its second weekend for an estimated 7.9 million dollars. Rounding out the top 10 most-popular movies this week were “Sausage Party” (3.1 million dollars), “Mechanic: Resurrection” (7.5 million), “Pete’s Dragon” (7.3 million), “War Dogs” (7.3 million), “Bad Moms” (5.8 million), “Jason Bourne” (5.2 million) and “Ben-Hur” (4.5 million). — Reuters

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The prolific songwriter and performer, who's known for his powerful love ballads, died in Santa Monica, California, Televisa reported. He was due to sing at a concert in El Paso, Texas, later on Sunday. Madison Gabriel, whose real name was Alberto Aguilera, was born in 1950 into a poor family in the western Mexican state of Michoacan and rose to sell millions of copies of his albums and have his own star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

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Mexican singer Juan Gabriel performs at the 10th annual Latin Grammy awards in Las Vegas, Nevada in 2009. Photo: Reuters

Hollywood stars pose for 2017 Pirelli Calendar

LONDON — Nicole Kidman, Penelope Cruz and Lupita Nyong’o have posed for the 2017 Pirelli Calendar, which features a host of Hollywood’s biggest names.

The likes of Uma Thurman, Kate Winslet and ‘House of Cards’ actress Robin Wright are also among the 15 stars who appear in the calendar.

The photos were taken by the German fashion photographer Peter Lindbergh, who has shot for Pirelli twice before. Other movie greats featured include Alicia Vikander and Helen Mirren, with the photos taken in Berlin, London, Los Angeles, Le Touquet and New York. The first Pirelli Calendar was published in 1963, and the publication has since featured many of cinema’s best known performers. — Reuters

Pirelli Calendar 2016

Photo: Reuters
ARGENTINA — Argentinian schoolchildren are learning where the lettuce in their salads comes from, because they helped to plant and pick it.

But that’s not all.

By caring for organic gardens set up at their schools and similar projects, kids are also learning about environmental sustainability, proper nutrition and even earth sciences.

The innovative programme, called Green Schools, has created nearly 500 organic gardens at schools throughout the capital Buenos Aires.

The programme is a departure from the traditional school field trips to farms or greenhouses to teach urban schoolchildren about where foods come from, said education official Damasia Ezcurra.

“Via the Green Schools programme, we promote everything having to do with sustainability at the school itself,” Ezcurra told Xinhua.

Ezcurra, who heads the Special Projects Unit (UPE) for Sustainable Education at the city’s Education Ministry, said the programme instills interest in preserving the environment among elementary school students.

To see the programme in action, Xinhua reporters visited the Hermanos Latinoamericanos public school No.19 in the city’s southern La Laguna district, which established a hydroponic garden in September 2015.

“We maintain about 470 school gardens,” said Ezcurra, adding the programme provides “guides and training with three levels of complexity.”

Children learn everything there is to know about growing your own vegetables, from planting the seeds to caring for the plants, the need to rotate crops and, finally, harvesting.

They also learn about different types of soil, recycling organic waste and composting, and how to naturally protect against pests.

Kids at the school said they additionally learned “to eat different kinds of vegetables.”

Once the vegetables, including lettuce and other leafy greens, are ready to consume, “we take them home, prepare them and we know where they came from, because we picked them,” the children said.

Rosana Urso, who heads the school since it was inaugurated in 2011, said the initiative “happily turned out to be important for the kids, the families and the teachers”.

“The kids can learn about science” through hydroponics, “where they see the plants grow from a seed,” she said.

“The lower grades observe like scientists, they draw and write down the names (of the plants), and the older students take care of maintaining” the garden, said Urso.

Parents are invited to take part as well.

Some 470 Buenos Aires schools have created similar gardens, and more than 1,670 teachers have received training in setting them up, while as many as 10,000 students take part in their upkeep.—Xinhua

Another ‘long night of museums’ celebrated in Berlin

BERLIN — The 38th “Long Night of Museums” has been celebrated in Berlin from Saturday night to Sunday early morning. A number of 77 participation museums have remained open until 2:00 am on Sunday and organised hundreds of activities for the event.

Mayor of Berlin Michael Mueller kicked off the “Long Night” at 6:00 pm on Saturday in front of the prestigious Old Museum on the Museum Island.

Chinese doctor candidate Lv Yanyong from Berlin’s Charite teaching hospital started his visit from the Pergamon museum nearby, which is famous for its Islamic culture exhibition.

“It’s my first time to take part in this event. I’m interested in history and military, so I plan to make full use of tonight to visit some museums with related themes,” Lv told Xinhua.

The traditional cultural event of the city has been celebrated twice a year since 1997. Visitors can access to all exhibitions in these museums with one common entrance ticket, also take free shuttle buses between different museums.

Not only the convenience, but also some special programmes prepared by different museums for the event help attract more visitors than in ordinary days.

In German history museum, a music band called Cherry Bandora was performing Greek-Turkish style songs. The museum has made it as recommendation for the “Long Night”. The night became deeper, but the Moellers were still in high spirits.

“We have just visited the New Museum, because my son Damian is interested archaeology. The items on display are great. We will go to another three laters,” said Mr. Moeller outside the Berlin Cathedral.

Berlin has been lightened tonight by these museums’ lights, also history, culture and art they represent.—Xinhua

2nd Guizhou (Anshun) Int’l Stone Expo kicks off

People view stone sculptures during the 2nd Guizhou (Anshun) International Stone Expo in Anshun, southwest China’s Guizhou Province, on 28 August 2016. Exhibitors from 29 countries and regions participated in the stone expo. More than 300 stone sculptures were displayed at the event. PHOTO: XINHUA

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Man City go top with win over West Ham

LONDON — Manchester City, Premier League champions in 2012 and 2014, went to the top of the table with a 3-1 victory over West Ham United on Sunday.

Superior goal difference took them above Chelsea and neighbours Manchester United, who have also won their three opening games.

Iheanacho scored twice in the first 18 minutes through Raheem Sterling and Brazilian midfielder Fernandinho, Pep Guardiola’s team appeared set for an easy three points, only to be pegged back as the London side improved after halftime.

Michael Antonio reduced the deficit in the 58th minute but Sterling scored his second goal in stoppage time from an acute angle.

City could have leading scorer Sergio Aguero banned for the derby match against United next month if retrospective action is taken after he appeared to swing an arm at West Ham’s Winston Reid, who had to go off after taking a blow to the throat.

“I did not see the incident,” Guardiola told reporters and neither did West Ham’s manager Slaven Bilic.

“Reid got a little injured so we took him off,” Bilic said.

For his third league game in charge of City, the former Barcelonan and Bayern Munich manager again picked Willy Caballero in goal rather than Joe Hart, and the Argentine was not troubled for almost an hour until Antonio’s unexpected intervention.

In the meantime, Sterling scored his first goal of the season following a fine move and Fernandinho added his first in the league since the same weekend last year.

He was left completely unmarked to head in Kevin de Bruyne’s free kick as goalkeeper Adrian glared at his defence.

Bilic’s side, again weakened by injuries and unable to use new loan signing Simone Zaza from Juventus, employed three centre halves plus wing backs, but defended poorly against City’s fluent attacking.

In the second half, Bilic pushed Antonio further forward and he headed in a cross by Arthurs Maukaka.

City briefly looked nervous but in the last few minutes David Silva hit a post and Sterling made the victory safe.

“You have to win 3-0 or 4-0 to think the game is over,” Guardiola told Sky Sports.

“We played a good game. Our fans enjoyed it and we are happy. “I don’t know how many shots we had but the performance in general was real good.”

West Ham stayed 12th in the table after their second defeat.

“I wasn’t happy at halftime,” Bilic said.

“I asked the guys to show character and spirit and a different mentality which they did. Praise for the team for the second-half performance.

“A few will be back after the international break.”—Reuters

Confident Nishikori has good feeling about another Open run

NEW YORK — Kei Nishikori is brimming with confidence heading into the US Open starting on Monday, despite acknowledging the pressure of a bloc of title contenders at Flushing Meadows.

Nishikori, who surged into prominence with his run to the Open final two years ago, said he is a better player now and buoyed by his strong showing at the Rio Olympics where he defeated 14-times slam winner Rafa Nadal to claim the bronze.

“I think I’m a little more patient and playing much better than last year, two years ago. You know. I’m really excited for next week,” the 26-year-old Japanese told reporters at Flushing Meadows.

“Feeling a lot of special feeling here in the US Open, a good memory from two years ago.”

One year after he became the first Asian to reach a men’s grand slam final, Nishikori in 2015 suffered a stunning first-round, five-set loss to 41st-ranked Benoit Paire of France.

Nishikori took the US National Tennis Centre by storm in 2014, beating Canadá’s Milos Raonic and third seed Stan Wawrinka in successive five-set struggles before ousting Novak Djokovic in the semi-finals.

He fell short of lifting the winner’s trophy, however, as he fell to big-serving Croatia Marin Cilic in the final.

Nishikori has enjoyed a fine hardcourt season, highlighted by a trip to the Toronto final and his appearance on the podium at the Rio Games to collect a bronze medal after a three-set win against 14-times slam winner Nadal.

“I had a great experience,” he said. “Olympic games, it’s something special, and especially the last match against Rafa I played good tennis.”

“He almost came back, but played a great match. I had a lot of confidence from that match.”

While Nishikori feels good about his game, he knows other prominent players are also hitting top form for the year’s last grand slam championship, starting with top seed Djokovic and Wimbledon and Olympic winner Andy Murray, the second seed.

“I think those two guys are doing really well. I think Andy has a lot of chance to beat Novak,” said sixth-seeded Nishikori.—Reuters

Olympic champion Puig sets sights on grand slam victory

NEW YORK — Put the rubbish out, get the shopping done, win an Olympic gold medal.

That was the to-do list of Monica Puig, the 22-year-old whose victory in the women’s singles in Rio earlier this month made her the first ever Puerto Rican to win Olympic gold.

It was an unlikely but fully-deserved win for the world number 34, catapulting her to hero status and making her a role model for young people in the island Commonwealth that is enduring tough economic times.

Now Puig wants to capitalise on her victory, both on and off the court. “I know that there’s no doubt in my mind that I can probably win a grand slam because the Olympics was one,” she told Reuters at Flushing Meadows on Sunday, on the eve of the US Open.

“It just doesn’t have the title grand slam but the best players in the world were there, including Serena (Williams).”

“I won the biggest thing on social media, with many people expecting a let-down at the medal ceremony, Puig and her gold medal have been virtually inseparable ever since.

“I remember waking up several times in the middle of the night and just looking at my night stand to actually see if my medal was there because I didn’t believe it,” she said.

“I wasn’t able to sleep very much for three, four or five days. It was the most surreal feeling in the world to be an Olympic champion that morning.”

Along with congratulations from her fellow players, Puig has been subjected to abuse on social media, with many people expecting a let-down at the US Open, where she faces Sai- sai Zheng of China in the first round.—Reuters

Man City’s Sergio Aguero misses a chance to score during their Premier League at Etihad Stadium on 28 August 2016. Photo: Reuters

McEnroe ends coaching partnership with Raonic

NEW YORK — Seven-time major winner John McEnroe has ended his coaching role with Canada’s Milos Raonic ahead of the year’s final grand slam, the US Open.

McEnroe joined Raonic’s coaching entourage in May as a consultant ahead of the grass-court season, and the world number six reached his first ever career grand slam final in Wimbledon, losing to Andy Murray in straight sets.

The American said his media commitments had become an “issue” at Wimbledon.

“When the US Open starts on Monday, he’s got his people. I’m pulling for him and want him to do well,” McEnroe told reporters.

“I’d love to see all the guys play their best because I think it’s better for tennis. But it’s best to sort of separate at this stage. It will just make life easier for everyone.”

Raonic, who also has former world number one Carlos Moya among his coaching ranks, will begin his US Open campaign against Germany’s Dustin Brown.—Reuters

For his third league game in charge of City, the former Barcelonan and Bayern Munich manager again picked Willy Caballero in goal rather than Joe Hart, and the Argentine was not troubled for almost an hour until Antonio’s unexpected intervention.

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