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CLEARING THE WAY FOR THE USA

State Counsellor invites investment after Obama pledges to lift sanctions

FOLLOWING US President Barack Obama's pledge to lift sanctions against Myanmar, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi called on US business communities yesterday to invest in Myanmar.

Speaking at a dinner hosted by the US-ASEAN Business Council in Washington DC yesterday, she said that lifting sanctions involved a political risk and economic risk in some ways, but added that "It is time now for our people to depend on themselves, to go forward with the help of our friends."

President Obama announced his intent to terminate the National Emergency status with respect to Myanmar, nearly 20 years after economic and financial sanctions were first imposed on the country after he met and discussed these issues with the State Counsellor during her first visit to the United States in her new capacity.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi invited American companies to make investments in the country to ensure that Myanmar's economy grows healthily and sustainably into a developed economic system, urging investors to help the country to build up business that is free from corruption.

"We need investment from those who are prepared to work with us in the battle against corruption," she said.

"We believe in responsible business practices and responsible government practices." she added.

Before the dinner, the State Counsellor held talks with US Secretary of Commerce Ms Penny Pritzker on the promotion of bilateral trade and investment and the potential for cooperation between the two countries' economies at Blair House.— *Aye Min Soe*

MIC foresees influx of US investment

THE Myanmar Investment Commission has announced that it expects to see much more direct investment from US companies following the lifting sanctions on Myanmar as announced by President Obama following his meeting with State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in Washington this week.

"If we see sanctions lifted, there will be more foreign investments from the US in our country. When we held the Investment Outreach Programme in New York in September 2015, foreign investors were interested in that programme and wanted to invest and establish many enterprises in our country. However, they wanted to invest only when sanctions on our country were lifted," said Director-General of the Directorate of the Investment and Company Administration U Aung Naing Oo.

The restoration of the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) could also bring privileges such as lower import tariffs and more exports from the garment and textile sectors.

The United States eased a number of sanctions against Myanmar earlier this year to support political reform but maintained most of its economic restrictions with an eye toward penalising those whom it viewed as hampering the democratically elected government.

US investment in Myanmar reached over 248 million US dollars as of August this year.— *GNLM*

State Counsellor poses for a documentary photo with Senate Majority Leader Senator Mitch McConnell and party. PHOTO: MNA

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with US Congressional Leaders

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi held separate talks with US Congressional Leaders in the US capitol Washington, DC on Thursday.

During a meeting with House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, the State Counsellor held talks with the Congresswoman on further relations and cooperation between Myanmar and the United States and US congressional support for Myanmar's democratic transition.

Next, the State Counsellor met with Senate Majority Leader Senator Mitch McConnell and Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid and party. They discussed matters related to the sustainability of democracy in Myanmar, bilateral cooperation between the two nations, measures against human trafficking and assistance to human resources development to aid the fight against illegal trade.

Likewise, the State Counsellor addressed a VIP brunch organised by the National Democratic Institute (NDI), International Republican Institute (IRI) and House Democracy Partnership (HDP) at the capitol.

Next, the State Counsellor visited Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School and held cordial discussions with students.

In the evening, the State Counsellor attended a dinner jointly hosted by US Chamber of Commerce and US-ASEAN Business Council at Four Seasons Hotel and delivered an address at the event.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw discusses signing of OPRC Convention

THE Pyidaungsu Hluttaw put on record the goodwill visit of President U Htin Kyaw to India and the appointment of Dr Tun Naing as deputy minister for Electricity and Energy and that of U Win Maw Tun as deputy minister for Education.

Deputy Minister for Transportation and Communications U Kyaw Myo explained why the country should sign the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation (OPRC 1990 Convention) as proposed by the President.

In his explanation, the deputy minister spoke of the benefits of becoming a signatory to the Convention, stressing that the country's new economic opportunities would see more foreign oil tankers coming and going, thereby raising the risk of oil spills.

As a signatory, the country would receive prompt and effective assistance in order to minimise the damages caused by oil pollution incidents.

Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than invited interested representatives to discuss the issue in the next parliamentary session.

Education Deputy Minister U Win Maw Tun sought parliamentary approval for the formation of the Commission for National Education Policy in line with the National Education Law, saying that the commission would be formed with 21 members, who he said have been chosen. The proposal won parliamentary approval.

The commission will report on its undertakings to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and the government at least every six months, he added.

MPs also discussed loans to be taken from the Asian Development Bank and the French Development Agency.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than. PHOTO: MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw

U Kyaw Myo. PHOTO: MNA

U Sai Kyaw Moe. PHOTO: MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw records proposal related to e-government system implementation

WORKS are currently underway to develop policies related to the Data ID card System, Digital Government Strategy and e-Government System, Deputy Minister for Transport and Communications U Kyaw Myo told the Pyithu Hluttaw while responding to a proposal calling for efficient e-government system implementation yesterday.

Government organisations have launched their own websites in order to enable the people to have better access to departmental information, said the deputy minister.

He added that people can get information about services provided by departments through mobile applications. He also said that the country's teledensity reached 95.46% as of August this year.

According to the deputy minister, e-government procedures are ongoing with the installation of fibre connections for state/region government offices including Nay Pyi Taw.

The deputy minister pledged to urge the departments concerned to carry out the necessary measures to ensure visits to government websites work on mobile phones browsers.

A draft master plan for the e-government system developed by the former Communication and Information Technology Ministry in cooperation with the Asian Development Bank in 2014 was revised with suggestions from local and foreign experts before it was put forward to the President's Office.

The deputy minister also elaborated on the ongoing Myanmar National Web Portal project and mid-term and long-term plans for the e-government system.

Next, the deputy minister stressed the need for forming a leading committee for the National Information and Communication Council that will take care of the implementation of e-government procedures.

According to the deputy minister, the leading committee will be formed and directed by the President's Office.

Then, the deputy minister called on the Pyithu Hluttaw to put the proposal on record.

During yesterday's Pyithu Hluttaw session, nine lawmakers held discussions on the proposal and the Hluttaw decided to record it.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Amyotha Hluttaw

National Committee on Rights of Persons with Disabilities to be formed soon

WORKS are underway to approve the formation of a National Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye told the Amyotha Hluttaw yesterday.

The ministry has received a proposed list of the members to the Council from Myanmar Federation of Persons with Disabilities, added the minister.

In his response to a parliamentary question, the Union minister said that the recently-drafted Rights of Persons with Disabilities rules was sent to the Myanmar Federation of Persons with Disabilities for suggestions and the rules are slated for finalisation before March next year following seminars involving stakeholders.

During yesterday's session, Union Minister for Construction U Win Khaing answered a call for upgrading of a road in Kyauktaw Township of Rakhine State, pledging that Kannar Road, the main road of the township, will be upgraded into an 18-foot tarred road during the next fiscal year.

Likewise, Union Minister for Religious and Cultural Affairs Thura U Aung Ko replied to a question calling for a master plan to preserve Thayekhittaya Pyu Old City in line with UNESCO standards, saying that cultural heritage conservation and management plans have been drawn up.

The Union minister stressed the need for the government to take a leading role at the national level in the comprehensive plan covering the whole region including Pyu Old City. —*Myanmar News Agency*

U Win Khaing. PHOTO: MNA

Thura U Aung Ko. PHOTO: MNA

Dr Win Myat Aye. PHOTO: MNA

Heads of service organizations transferred, approved and appointed

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has transferred Rector Professor Dr Daw Theingi Hline of the University of Medical Technology (Mandalay) under the Department of Health Professional Resources Development and Management of the Ministry of Health and Sports to the University of Medical Technology (Yangon) under the same ministry as Rector from the date she assumes charge of her duties.

Moreover, the President has confirmed the appointment of Director-General Dr Thein Win of Higher Education Department under the Ministry of Education on expiry of the one-year probationary period.

Besides, the President has appointed Deputy Director-General U Kyaw Moe Tun of International Organizations and Economic Department under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Director-General of the same department, Deputy Director-General Daw Tin Tin Ohn of Securities Exchange Supervisory Commission Office under the Ministry of Planning and Finance as Director-General of the same office and Deputy Director-General U Kyaw Soe of the Civil Service Affairs Department under the Union Civil Services Board as Director-General of the Civil Service Selection and Training Department on probation from the date they assume charge of their duties. — *Myanmar News Agency*

Tatmadaw launch operations against KKO splinter group in Wah Boh Taung-Kyonhtaw, Methawaw regions

THE Tatmadaw has carried out 'combined operations' on a motorway from Myaing Gyi Ngu to Methawaw, an area of Klo Htoo Baw Karen Organisation (KKO) splinter group led by Kyaw Thet and San Aung. The Tatmadaw claims that it is strictly adhering to the terms of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.

The Tatmadaw has provided health care services and relief supplies to 3,874 local people who fled the areas where clashes broke out and who are now in Myaing Gyi Ngu region where they were temporarily accommodated.

With the release of statement 3/2016 which is believed to have declared the war against the State and the Tatmadaw, the splinter group shelled Tatmadaw troops on Yinn Paing bridge on the Myaing Gyi Ngu-Methawaw motorway on 3 September and conducted mine attacks, fired heavy artillery at Tatmadaw and Border Guard Force bases and exploded mines at Kawkareik fire station from 4 to 8 September. On 11 September, the Tatmadaw launched combined operations with limited targets in Wah Boh Taung-Kyonhtaw region and Methawaw region. There were 13 skirmishes between Tatmadaw troops and the splinter group until Thursday.

The release of the statement followed a clash between the BGF and a group led by Nar Ma Kyar who kidnapped five villagers and took away two elephants on 29 August. Nar Ma Kyar was killed in the clash.

The group launched mine attacks on a military convoy carrying food between Kyondoe and Kawkareik on 21 August. Likewise, the group exploded mines near the Mahar Hpa-an garment factory in Hpa-an.

Although the regional government and Tatmadaw gave warnings to the KKO splinter group several times as the group was accused of extorting people travelling on the Myawady-Thinganyin-aung-Kawkareik motorway, the group failed to respond.

Aside from the alleged extortion, the group disturbed motorcades of the Kayin State Chief Minister and the commander.—*Myawady*

MoU aims to offer job opportunities to local engineering students

THAILAND-based SCG Co will ink a memorandum of understanding with a government-run training school to teach an industrial science programme in Mawlamyine Township in Mon State to create more employment opportunities.

U Aung Moe, the principal of the training school, said the programme allows students who pass the matriculation examination to join urban engineering, electrical power, industrial engineering and electricity programmes.

The signing of the MoU is estimated to be made next month, he added. Negotiations have been conducted between the two parties since January this year to sign the new programme.

Under the MoU, 20 outstanding students from the electrical power and industrial engineering field will be invited to join intensive training for the first time with a Thailand-based company in November.

Plans are underway to grant third-year students to join the intensive training to pursue not only theoretical lessons but also hands-on courses on relevant subjects.

Because of accommodation barriers, the training school can only accept around 40 students per course per year. Students with high marks top the priority lists for acceptance.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi speaks to students in a round-table discussion on a visit to Roosevelt High School in Washington, US, 15 September 2016. PHOTO: MNA

Peace makers discuss national level political dialogues

Ye Khaung Nyunt

Peace makers discuss at 5th meeting on reviewing the framework for political dialogues. PHOTO: PHO HTAUNG

THE 5th meeting on reviewing the framework for the political dialogue was held in Yangon yesterday, taking one more step into laying down framework for the dialogues.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Tin Myo Win, Chairman of the preparatory committee for holding the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong, said the national level political dialogues are expected to begin in October within the framework.

Pado Saw Kwel Htoo Win, Secretary of the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee, said the launch of the national-level political dialogues would represent " all-inclusiveness" with opinions and voices of the peoples including ethnic peoples.

The participants of the meeting reached an agreement for the chapter 4 of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement and discussed the Chapter 5 of the NCA today.

"Today discussion can be seen as a success and we will review how we will discuss the national-level political dialogue," said Salai Hlyan Hmon Sar Khaung.

The delegation for political negotiation-DPN did not attend the meeting as they have not yet finished their discussion, said Dr Tin Myo Win in his opening remarks at the meeting.

Today meeting was attended by 15 representatives from the government, 16 representatives from the signatories to the NCA and 15 representatives from the political parties.

Korean firm to donate oxygen cylinders to Kyaukpyu General Hospital

KOREA Daewoo Co will donate K4.6 million worth of oxygen storage cylinders to the 100-bed general hospital in Kyaukpyu Township in Rakhine State this month, it has been learned.

The donation ceremony is scheduled to be held on 20 September at the district hospital where 50 empty oxygen cylinders will be offered.

The company reportedly decided to contribute the oxygen storage units after word got around that the oxygen requirements of the hospital had increased due to the introduction of oxygen therapy in conjunction with a local philanthropic organisation, the main oxygen donor for the hospital.

The hospital needs between 80 and 120 oxygen cylinders per month to treat patients with liver diseases and surgical patients. —*Myitmkha News Agency*

Donors seen together with Oxygen cylinders. PHOTO: MYITMKHA NEWS AGENCY

Price of betel nut from Rakhine state decreases

THE price of betel nut from Rakhine state has decreased, apparently because betel nut from other regions has entered Rakhine state, according to a local betel nut trader. Betel nut from Rakhine state is mainly exported to Bangladesh and India. Previously, a betel nut in Rakhine state sold for K200,000 per 25 viss (a viss is approximately 1.6 kilograms). However, now betel nut sells for K90,000 per 25 viss.

"I have never seen betel nut at these prices. There has been lower demand from Bangladesh. I think the price of betel nut will decrease again because it is in abundance." said U Kyaw Zan Aung, a betel nut trader from Minbyar township. —*Myitmakha News Agency*

Patient death leads to investigation, discovery of unlicenced doctor practicing medicine

ACCORDING to the results of an investigation into a patient's death, the deceased sought medical attention at a clinic in Mone 2 ward, Kyaukkyi Township, Taung-Oo District, Bago Region. It has been revealed that the clinic doctor who tended to the patient was operating without a medical licence.

The clinic in question was opened and operated by a Dr. Nay Phone Naing (former Tatmadaw Captain) (M.B.B.S YGN), according to local crime reporter Ma Phyu Phyu Moe.

"The clinic has been operating for three years. Locals believed that the doctor has a valid licence as he has an official looking signboard. Following the death of one of his patients, police revealed that he was not, in fact, licenced to operate the facility." added Ma Phyu Phyu Moe.

The deceased patient was identified as U Pan Day alias Lar Lu, 35. According to police, U Pan Day arrived at the clinic at around 1 a.m on Tuesday complaining of severe stomach pains. The patient claimed that he had been unable to eat for four or five days due to a mysterious stomach ailment. Dr. Nay Phone Naing issued U Pan Day a quantity of unidentified medicine. U Pan Day died at approximately 10 a.m on Wednesday. The body was taken to the local general hospital.

U Pan Day was the third patient of the clinic known to have died following consultation. The two other deceased patients have been identified as U Bu Tha Ni and U Pho Thein.

Of U Bu Tha Ni's clinic experience, his widow stated the following;

"(Dr. Nay Phone Naing) treated (my husband) with an intravenous drip two times. Following the drip, he shook in a violent seizure and seemed to lose his mind. He mouthed words but no sound came."

It was the brother in law of U Pho Thein who went to police following his death. Police officer Than Htike Htwe is currently investigating the case under the official policy of the Medical Council.—*Thaw Tar (Myitmakha)*

Vehicle overturns on Yangon-Mandalay highway

A VEHICLE overturned on the Yangon-Mandalay highway due to excessive speed in the early hours of yesterday morning.

According to an investigation, the coach bus was being driven at high speed by one Kyaw Kyaw Oo when it overturned into the median of the highway between mileposts 15/7 and 16/0 after the driver lost control.

No one was injured in the accident. Police have filed charges against the driver.—*Than Oo*

Tenders called for construction of K6 billion Ayeyawady Hluttaw

TENDERS have been called for the construction of a new Ayeyawady Region Hluttaw, estimated to cost K6 billion, Myitmakha News Agency has been told by the director-general's office of the current Hluttaw.

Interested parties reportedly have just two days, between September 14-15, in which to submit an application bid for tender which must include a design and expenses in detail.

"The decision to call tenders for the building's design was made during a meeting on September 5. The project will start to be implemented with approval of central government with a regional government budget of K2.8 billion," said U Aung Kyaw Khine, speaker of the Ayeyawady Region Hluttaw. The acceptance of bids for tender was announced on September 10, while applications will reportedly be scrutinized by a 28-member Hluttaw Construction Committee, headed by the speaker of Hluttaw.

The building project will reportedly include construction of the central Hluttaw building, the parliamentary chamber, overnight accommodation for Hluttaw MPs and housing for Hluttaw staff.

According to a statement by U Htun Min Zaw, director general of the Ayeyawady Region Hluttaw, the Hluttaw will be constructed on a 12.6 acre plot of land within the current housing compound of Ayeyawady regional government ministers, located in Pathein, the region's capital.

The Myanmar Architects' Association will aid in selecting a successful bidder, while the tender process will reportedly be conducted in a transparent manner with a detailed expenses budget to be calculated. —*Myitmakha News Agency*

Crime NEWS

Heroin and Yaba seized in Hsenwi, Shan State

A LOCAL anti- drug squad in lashio seized heroin weighing 715 grams and 5,850 yaba pills from one Ma Lu Yar who was on board a passenger vehicle at Hsenwi entrance gate on Wednesday. The police also seized heroin weighing 390 grams from one Ma Htut Naung who was onboard the same bus.

On the same day, police stopped a vehicle being driven by one Win Kyaw Khine with Htein Lin Naung and Zin Min Oo on board on Taunggyi- Meiktila road. Upon conducting a search, the police discovered 7,985 yaba pills.

Similarly, police seized 4,000 yaba pills from motorcycle rider Nay Zaw Lin with Ma Ni Lar on board on Pinlaung – Nay Pyi Taw road. Police have filed charges against all suspects under the Anti-Narcotic Law. —*Myanmar Police Force*

Criminal suspects seen together with drugs seized. PHOTO: MPF

Explosive devices found in Magwe

FIVE explosive devices were found by Ko Zaw Win Maung, a labourer working on Magwe-Taungdwingyi road, near milepost 323/1, Magwe township on Thursday as he was digging to install cables. Authorities from the village called the police who arrived a few minutes later and investigated.

The devices were 11 inches in diameter and 16 inches long. Police handed over the five devices to Capt. Aye Min Aung's local Tatmadaw specialist team. —*Zayar Tu (Magwe)*

LOCAL Business

Negotiations being made among authorities to set up new industrial zones nationwide

Ko Moe

NEGOTIATIONS have been made between the relevant authorities to establish new industrial zones in states and regions, said U Aung Naing Oo, director-general of the Department of Investment and Company Administration.

To promote the country's manufacturing industry, further foreign direct investment will be invited by the DICA after negotiation with the region and state governments, he said at a recent press conference in Yangon.

Land allocations for the new project are needed by the concerned governments before any work can move forward, said U Aung Naing Oo.

Plans are underway to set up the new industrial zones in strategic areas without transportation problems.

Currently, 29 industrial zones have been established in Yangon Region with 1,299 warehouses. The increasing land price in the zones is main barrier for international investors.

Some foreign companies from Hong Kong and Korea have shown greater interest in investing in the garment industry, which requires a large number of labourers to operate.

The Myanmar Investment Commission permitted US$383.877 million worth of foreign direct investment this year. The MIC also granted 21 local businesses with total investments of $96.059 million.

China is the largest investor in Myanmar, with over $18 billion in investment, followed by Singapore with over $13 billion, Thailand with over $10 billion and Hong Kong with 7 billion.

Export value of minerals and finished industrial products declines by US $500 million

THE export value of minerals and finished industrial products as of 2 September this fiscal year declined by nearly US$500million when compared to a similar period last year , according to the statistics of the Ministry of Commerce.

The export value as of 2nd September in this fiscal year reached US$4,834.581million. Myanmar exported agricultural products including rice, fish, livestock, minerals including jade, forestry products, natural gas and finished industrial products, it is learnt. Out of these categories, agricultural products, livestock, fish products, forestry products and other exports were exported at a higher volume than the same period in the last fiscal year. But the export volumes of minerals and finished industrial products was down. The export value of mineral products slumped by over US$298million, whereas that of the finished products decreased by over US$264million.—*Ko Htet*

Central Economic Zone in Muse to be opened in 2018

THE construction of the Central Economic Zone in Muse border area of Myanmar and China is 80 per cent complete, and the zone is slated to be opened in 2018, said an official from New Starlight Company, the developer of the project.

Muse is the largest trading point between Myanmar and China, constituting 25 per cent of Sino-Myanmar trade.

Currently, the market stalls accommodating vendors are being sold in six-year installments in an arrangement with Ayeyawady Bank. Sixty per cent of the shops are already sold out, officials added. Muse is situated in Northern Shan State on the Shweli River. This construction project is being jointly implemented by the Shan State government and New Starlight Company. The whole project comprises six zones, with zones one through three designated as commercial and zones four through six designated as residential. The project is being carried out on 294.789 acres of land.—*200*

A farmer plants sugarcane traditionally at a farm near Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

Wilmar Great Wall Sugar Factory to buy 850,000 tonnes from sugarcane growers

THE Wilmar Great Wall Sugar Factory in Sagaing Region plans to buy around 850,000 tonnes of sugarcane from local growers this year, the factory's spokesperson said.

U Myint Ko Than, spokesperson, said that the factory already bought around 600,000 tonnes of sugarcane at a price of K40,000 per tonne between May and September this year from Tagaung, Htigyaing, Thabeikkyin and Katha townships.

Last year, the factory collected over 700,000 tonnes of sugarcane at a price range between K35,000 and 36,000 per tonne, he added.

Production of sugarcane plantations thriving in villages across Htigyaing Township, Katha District, Sagaing Region this month, is estimated to increase because of weather condition, said U Aung Myo Lwin, a grower from Myataung Village. He said the company provided three-year advanced payment to local growers at a price of K300,000 per acre.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Myanmar earns over $470 million from re-export of sugar

MYANMAR received over 470 million US dollars from the re-export of sugar to China between April and the second week of September, according to the figures of the Commerce Ministry.

The country re-exported more than 860,000 tonnes of sugar to China and earned over $470 million over the past five months.

Myanmar legally re-exports imported sugar from India and Thailand to the world's most populous country via two routes—the Tamu-Monywa-Mandalay-Muse route and the Kawthaung-Yangon-Mandalay-Muse route—according to Mandalay Sugar commodity depot.

Myanmar lacks advanced refining machinery. That is the main challenge for local manufacturers to produce quality sugar.—*Kyu Kyu*

Marble exploration in Naypu Taung earns more revenue

THE mining of marble in Naypu Taung quarry by Myanmar Simco Song Da Joint Stock Co., Ltd is increasingly earning more revenue, said U Ohn Win, the Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation.

During 32nd day Pyithu Hluttaw session held on 14th September, the Union minister elaborated on large-scale marble extraction in Naypu Taung quarry in Taungup Township of Rakhine State, saying that No 1 Mining Enterprise received US$3,278.782 as 3 per cent mineral tax and $21,202.82 as 20 per cent production sharing following the export of 612.1846 metric tonnes by the Myanmar Simco Song Da Joint Stock Company Limited (MYSICO), a Vietnamese company. The company has to pay in the regular payment for lease.

According to the Union minister, the marble extraction enterprise is operating with an investment of $18.147million under a 20-year contract.

The Vietnamese Company was given permission to mine marble by the Myanmar Investment Commission and the Ministry of Mines. The extraction enterprise entered into an agreement with the No.3 Mining Enterprise on 16th March, 2012 under a production sharing system.

Pyithu Hluttaw representative Daw Ni Ni May Myint from Taungup called for the sharing agreement to show transparency to the public. It is noted that No.1 Mining Enterprise will get 20 per cent while MYSICO will receive 80 per cent when the price of marble is lower than US$649 per cubic meter. If the marble sells between US$650 and 749 per cubic meter, the state-owned No.1 Mining Enterprise will receive 25 per cent. And the state will get 30 per cent if the price of the marble is higher than US$750 per cubic meter. —*Myitmakha News Agency*

Typhoon kills at least 11 in southeast China; another on the way

SHANGHAI — The world's strongest storm this year killed at last 10 people in China when it hit the southeast coast, the government said on Friday, as rescuers scoured flooded streets and work crews struggled to restore power to more than a million homes.

Typhoon Meranti had largely dissipated by Friday afternoon, a day after it swept in from the Pacific Ocean, clipping the southern tip of Taiwan, and making landfall near the Chinese port city of Xiamen, in Fujian Province.

The storm killed seven people in Fujian and three in neighbouring Zhejiang Province, state media and the government said. Eleven people were missing.

More than 330,000 people were returning to their homes on Friday after being forced to flee a storm that meteorologists said was the world's biggest this year.

The typhoon killed one person and injured 38 on Taiwan where people were on Friday preparing for another, Typhoon Malakas, which was forecast to bring heavy rain on Saturday.

An ancient bridge is seen collapsed as typhoon Meranti hits southeast China, in Yongchun, Fujian Province, China, on 15 September 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Meranti was the strongest typhoon to hit that part of China's coast since 1949, the Xinhua state news agency said. Pictures on state media showed flooded streets, fallen trees and crushed cars in Xiamen.

Three power transmission towers were blown down in the city and utility crews were trying to restore power. Across Fujian, 1.65 million homes had no electricity, Xinhua reported.

Dozens of flights and train services were cancelled on Thursday, disrupting travel at the beginning of a three-day Mid-Autumn Festival holiday.

Typhoons are common at this time of year, picking up strength as they cross the warm waters of the Pacific and bringing fierce winds and rain when they hit land.—*Reuters*

Viet Nam to pilot cloud seeding

HANOI — A project on a new kind of cloud seeding or rain making will be conducted on a trial basis in central Viet Nam next month. An Sinh Xanh Science and Technology Company in the central city of Da Nang has proposed the Vietnamese government allocate 5,000 billion Vietnamese dong (224 million US dollars) to the local firm so that it can buy vessels and aircraft to actively make rain to deal with drought or prevent flooding, daily newspaper *Tien Phong (Pioneer)* reported on Friday.

The firm's general director Phan Dinh Phuong said that vessels will pump seawater to pipes fixed at the height of some 5 km by helicopters or balloons. The pipes will discharge the water to most cloudy areas over the sea. Heavier clouds will result in rain in the sea, so that downpour will not cause flooding in urban areas. —*Xinhua*

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Court rules against Okinawa's move to block US base relocation

NAHA, (Japan) — A Japanese court ruled on Friday that Okinawa Gov. Takeshi Onaga illegally revoked his predecessor's approval for landfill work needed to move a key US air base within the island prefecture, delivering a blow to his efforts to block the relocation plan.

The former governor's approval for land reclamation was "legal," while Onaga acted illegally by not complying with the central government's order to retract his revocation, the Naha branch of the Fukuoka High Court said in the first judicial judgment on the high-profile dispute between Tokyo and Okinawa that is certain to be appealed by the prefectural government.

The legal wrangling ensued after Onaga revoked last October his predecessor Hirokazu Nakaima's 2013 permission in connection with the transfer of the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma from a crowded residential area to the less populated Henoko coastal area of Nago. "There was no overstepping of discretionary power when the former governor issued the landfill approval," Presiding Judge Toshiro Tamiya said in the ruling. With neither the central government nor the Okinawan government showing signs of compromise, the case is certain to go to the Supreme Court. The top court may issue its final word on the case within the current fiscal year ending March.—*Kyodo News*

Japan to boost South China Sea role with training patrols with US

WASHINGTON — Japan will step up its activity in the contested South China Sea through joint training patrols with the United States and bilateral and multilateral exercises with regional navies, Japanese Defence Minister Tomomi Inada said on Thursday.

Inada said in a speech at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington think tank, that Japan's increased engagement in the area, where Japan shares US concerns about China's pursuit of extensive territorial claims, would include capacity building for coastal nations.

Japan also has its own dispute with China over territory in the East China Sea.

Inada said that if the world condoned attempts to change the rule of law and allowed "rule bending" to succeed, the "consequences could become global."

"In this context, I strongly support the US Navy's freedom-of-navigation operations, which go a long way to upholding the rules-based international maritime order," she said.

"Japan, for its part, will increase its engagement in the South China Sea through, for example, Maritime Self-Defence Force joint training cruises with the US Navy and bilateral and multilateral exercises with regional navies," she said.

Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Mustin (DDG 89) transits in formation with Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force ship JS Kirisame (DD 104) during bilateral training in South China Sea in 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

Japan would also help build the capacity of coastal states in the South China Sea, said Inada, before heading for talks with US Defence Secretary Ash Carter at the Pentagon.

Japan said this month it was ready to provide Viet Nam with new patrol ships, in its latest step to boost the maritime law-enforcement capabilities of countries locked in territorial rows with China.

It also agreed to provide two large patrol ships and lend up to five used surveillance aircraft to the Philippines, another country at odds with China over sovereignty issues in the South China Sea.—*Reuters*

Philippines is not 'little brown brother' of US — foreign minister

WASHINGTON — The Philippines is firmly committed to its alliance with the United States but will not be lectured on human rights and treated like a "little brown brother," the country's Foreign Minister Perfecto Yasay said on Thursday.

Speaking in Washington after recent remarks by the Philippines' outspoken new President Rodrigo Duterte that have strained relations with the United States, Manila's main ally, Yasay said some of Duterte's remarks had been misunderstood.

He said Duterte had explained that his call for the withdrawal of US special forces from the southern Philippines was only a temporary measure to keep them out of harm's way while Philippine forces undertook an offensive against Abu Sayyaf militants.

Yasay also said Duterte's opposition to joint maritime patrols with the United States concerned the Philippines' "exclusive economic zone," not joint patrols within 12 nautical miles of its coast.

The latter patrols, aimed at preserving the territorial integrity of the Philippines, "must continue, because this is our commitment to the United States," Yasay said at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies think tank.

The Philippines and the United States share concerns about China's pursuit of broad claims in the South China Sea, which overlap with those of Manila and other neighbours.

Washington and Manila agreed earlier this year on joint patrols in the South China Sea and a Pentagon spokesman said three had been conducted from March until July.

Yasay rejected criticism of Duterte's war on drugs, in which thousands have been killed, saying that Philippines would never condone illegal killings, and said relations with Washington should be based on mutual respect.

"I am asking our American friends, American leaders, to look at our aspirations," he said. "We cannot forever be the little brown brothers of America. ... We have to develop, we have to grow and become the big brother of our own people.

"You (have to) manage it correctly. You do not go to the Philippines and say 'I am going to give you something, I am going to help you grow, but this is the check list you must comply with — we will lecture you on human rights'."

Yasay stressed that Duterte was "firmly committed to keep and respect alliances, including that with the United States."

He said Manila was "not at this point in time" prepared to sit down and discuss its territorial disputes with China bilaterally, given that the two sides differed on what the framework for any such discussions should be.

Duterte's abrasive and sometimes contradictory comments, including calling President Obama a "son of a bitch," have caused anxiety in Washington, where the Philippines has been seen as an important ally in standing up to China in Asia.

Yasay did not address testimony in the Philippines senate earlier in the day from a self-confessed hit man who said Duterte issued assassination orders while mayor of a city where activists say hundreds of summary executions took place.

Asked to comment on this testimony, a spokeswoman for the US State Department, Anna Richey-Allen, reiterated past comments that it was "deeply concerned" by reports of extrajudicial killings "by or at the behest of government authorities."

"We strongly urge the Philippines to ensure its law enforcement efforts comply with its human rights obligations,"she said.—*Reuters*

Philippines Foreign Affairs Secretary Perfecto Yasay speaks during a news conference at the Department of Foreign Affairs in Pasay city Metro Manila, Philippines on 27 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Water protests in technology hub expose urban India's growing pains

BENGALURU — Oracle employees were at work on Monday when protesters entered their nine-storey building in India's technology hub, Bengaluru, and asked them to leave in support of demonstrations that had erupted across the city over a water dispute.

By early afternoon, one of the US software giant's biggest overseas offices had been evacuated, two employees there told Reuters, as had the Bengaluru premises of dozens of multinationals and Indian firms that stayed shut on Tuesday to ensure staff safety.

A spokeswoman for Oracle in India said no one was available to comment on the incident.

Two days of violence, in which protesters torched buses and clashed with riot police after a court ordered Karnataka state to share water from a river with another region, have exposed the growing pains of the dynamic technology hub's chaotic boom.

"They come and live here, which means our resources are being used by them. Tomorrow, if there is no water in the city, will they have an office here?" said 30-year-old local activist Keerthi Shankaraghatta, who led a group that staged peaceful calls to shut down several offices during the protests.

Videos posted on his Facebook page show employees from companies including Accenture and ICICI Bank being escorted out of their offices.

ICICI declined to comment. Accenture did not respond to a request for comment.

Bengaluru businesses have faced four days of disruption this month after the water protests and an unrelated strike, hitting operations in a city that accounts for a significant chunk of India's $97 billion in information technology exports.

The head of Indian drugmaker Biocon jokingly referred to Bengaluru as "Bandhaluru", using the Hindi word "Bandh" for closed.

Employees of two large Indian companies told Reuters their buses were stopped and rocked by protesters, who asked them to join the demonstrations.

Cars and trucks registered in the neighbouring state of Tamil Nadu were smashed and set on fire. A 22-year-old IT worker, who declined to be identified, said she saw a police van in flames.

"For the first time, I felt unsafe in a city I love so much," said Prejin Joe, who runs a tech startup in Bengaluru and is originally from another southern state, Kerala.—*Reuters*

Men ride a motorcycle past a lorry in Bengaluru, which was set on fire by protesters after India's Supreme Court ordered Karnataka state to release 12,000 cubic feet of water per second every day from the Cauvery river to neighbouring Tamil Nadu, India, on 12 September 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Australia's wheat crop threatened as La Nina climate indicator rises

SYDNEY — The quality of Australia's near-record wheat crop will likely be hit, as a sudden spike in a climate indicator shows there is a high chance of crop-damaging rains linked to a La Niña weather event over the next few months, analysts and traders said.

The La Niña — which brings cooler, wetter weather for much of Australia's key wheat growing region on the east coast — had in 2010 decimated the region's crop and downgraded the quality of the grain to animal feed.

As of now, Australia, the world's fourth-largest exporter of wheat, is expected to harvest its second-largest crop on record during the 2016/17 season after near-perfect conditions across much of the country, the country's chief commodity forecaster confirmed this week.

But with the Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) — that measures sea level pressure differences and is one of a number of indicators of a La Nina — rising to its highest level in two months, analysts and traders say the outlook for Australia's silo-bursting supplies remains in doubt.

"The SOI after remaining in neutral range has risen above seven, a threshold for La Niña. Today it is at 11.8 which means there are higher chances of La Niña developing in the near future," Rajesh Singla, head of agriculture research at Societe Generale, said on Friday.—*Reuters*

Opinion

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 ***ce@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.

Be representative and responsive as well

Kyaw Thura

THERE is a general notion that parliament is a central institution tasked to reflect the will of the people, make and amend laws and hold the executive and judicial branches to account. This will require the legislature to do much soul-searching to identify the challenges of today so as to ensure the quality of democracy. This central institution has a primary mission, which is to promote democracy as a universal value in exercising its constitutional rights.

According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a strong parliament is a vital sign of a healthy democracy. To be so, the parliament must be truly representative of the whole population and responsive to their immediate needs. In addition, the law makers must take bold steps to reconcile the conflicting interests and aspirations of different ethnic communities, apart from adapting laws to meet the current social and political trends in transparent and effective ways.

All things considered, the people want a parliament that truly pays heed to their voices and earnestly serves their interests. Therefore, the parliament should be democratic, accessible, accountable, effective, representative and responsive. The legislative body should make it sure that the other two bodies, executive and judicial, are at least fully accountable to the people in their discharge of public interests.

It is, therefore, absolutely imperative for all the parliamentarians to keep reminding themselves of the perception that in democracy all power is invested in and derived from the hands of the people.

Building an Inclusive Financial Sector in Myanmar: The Road Ahead

By Alexandra Drees-Gross and Nagavalli Annamalai

MYANMAR's financial sector is undergoing a historic transition. It has witnessed a number of reforms and liberalizations since 2012: private banks have expanded their operations rapidly; more than 1.4 million debit cards have been issued for the first time; thousands of ATMs have been set up; and credit to the private sector has grown steadily, albeit from a low base.

The financial sector's growth has been driven in large part by the increase in demand for financial services from the private sector. In Myanmar's largest cities, stores are opening in shiny new malls and selling imported goods, clothing and electronics. Hotels and guest houses are bursting with tourists from all over the world, raising the demand for services, restaurants, tour guides, and handicrafts. All of these businesses and entrepreneurs need a range of financial services to operate, conduct trade and invest.

However, Myanmar's financial sector remains inefficient, uneven, and concentrated in urban areas. The majority of financial transactions is still conducted in cash. According to the World Bank's FINDEX global database, approximately 95 percent of adults, including teachers and nurses, receive their salaries in cash, which is the highest ratio in the ASEAN region. One ill consequence of this is that large transactions often incur additional costs related to securely transporting bundles of cash.

The lack of an effective payments system takes its toll on many people. For example, Daw Moe Tun, a real estate agent in Yangon, says that interbank payments often take many days to process. In fact, interbank payments are naturally only available to those who have access to the formal financial system. Only an estimated 21 percent of Myanmar adults had a bank account in 2014, making up just a handful of Daw Moe Tun's clients. Compared to nearly 80 percent in neighboring Malaysia or Thailand and 50 percent across the ASEAN region, Myanmar still has some of the lowest levels of financial access in the world.

Firms overwhelmingly identify a lack of access to financial services as the top obstacle to doing business; this affects all major sub-sectors, namely manufacturing, retail, and services. The result is that, no less than individuals, firms too rely heavily on money lenders, family or informal sources of credit -- typically paying higher rates for access to loans and for shorter tenors.

What are potential policy options to build an inclusive financial sector?

Fortunately, there are many lessons to draw from both regionally and internationally. Thailand and Malaysia, for example, faced similar transitions and challenges in building robust and stable financial systems following the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997-1998. Both have achieved success in increasing financial access to very high levels by international standards.

In Thailand, the financial system incurred massive costs as a result of the crisis in terms of a drop in asset quality and profitability; this prompted a comprehensive emergency restructuring plan. Although Myanmar's financial system is not in crisis, elements of the Thai restructuring experience — special audits of weak banks, followed by recapitalization, debt restructuring and corporate governance reforms -- provide useful lessons. After containing the immediate crisis, the Thai authorities aggressively pursued financial regulation and supervision reforms. These reform efforts were coordinated under a Financial Sector Master Plan Phase I, running from 2004–08, which aimed to improve the financial system's efficiency, broaden access to finance, and improve consumer protection.

Malaysia's post-Asian Financial Crisis experience also offers good lessons in devising clear and well implemented financial sector reform plans. A Financial Sector Master Plan covering 2001–2010, led by the Bank Negara Malaysia, and a parallel Capital Market Masterplan led by the Securities Commission, supported a restructuring and consolidation of the financial sector. These master plans were underpinned by a strong regulatory and supervisory framework. Implementation of these two strategic plans enabled Malaysia to diversify and modernize its financial sector, establish a stable financial system, strengthen regulatory capacity and increase financial inclusion (access to and usage of tailored financial services). At 92 percent, Malaysia now has achieved one of the highest levels of financial inclusion in the world.

The Government of Myanmar, together with the private sector, industry and stakeholders has recently laid the groundwork for continued modernization of its financial sector with the launch of two strategic documents, namely, the Financial Inclusion Roadmap 2015-2020 and the Myanmar Financial Sector Development Strategy (FSDS). The strategy includes a broad vision and strategic plan for building a large, more efficient and more competitive financial system over the coming years, with three broad priorities:

Myanmar's financial sector remains inefficient, uneven, and concentrated in urban areas.

Strengthening financial sector legal, regulatory, and supervisory framework. The new Financial Institutions Law enacted by Parliament in January 2016 represents a major milestone in terms of strengthening the overall financial sector legal, regulatory and supervisory framework. This will certainly help to increase stability of the financial system and certainty for private sector participants while fostering competition. Amongst other things, the new Financial Institutions Law installs a comprehensive framework for the implementation of the Basel Core Principles, which are international standards for effective banking supervision; and improving soundness of the banking sector. The law also helps to level the playing field between private and state owned banks; provide adequate provisions relating to consumer protection in internet and mobile banking and e-money activities; and promote the transparency of the financial sector. Implementation of the law and strengthening banking and non-bank supervision also remains a top priority going forward. At the same time, improvements in the law in the areas of governance, insolvency procedures and non-bank financial institutions resolution will be important.

Modernizing financial sector infrastructure. Modernizing the financial sector infrastructure by reducing manual, paper-based processes, and high levels of cash transaction could help reduce costs, risks and inefficiencies as noted above. The Central Bank of Myanmar has already taken important steps in establishing the regulatory framework for mobile financial services. Globally, banks, microfinance institutions, mobile network operators, and other providers are increasingly using mobile phones and point-of-sale devices, along with networks of small-scale agents, to offer basic financial services at greater convenience and lower cost than traditional banks. This presents an important opportunity in Myanmar given that 70 percent of the poor live in rural areas, largely unserved by existing banks.

Reforming state-owned banks. Government ownership of financial institutions is typically associated with lower financial development, more financial instability, and slower economic growth. Myanmar is dominated by state-owned banks, many of which lack financial sustainability. The Government has already indicated its interest in reforming these major state-banks. In the next phase of reform, it will be important to clarify policy mandates and the objectives of state-ownership. There are many models from which to draw, as more than 96 countries worldwide have sizable ownership stakes in financial systems as of 2013 according to the Global Financial Development Report. In Indonesia, for example, government efforts to improve corporate governance of the state-owned banks have contributed to improved financial stability since the Asian Financial Crisis.

Access to financial services is vital to reducing poverty and boosting prosperity. Financial inclusion will be central for Myanmar to succeed in its historic transformation for the benefit of its people.

Alexandra Drees-Gross is a Senior Financial Specialist and Nagavalli Annamalai is Lead Counsel at the World Bank. This op-ed is based on the World Bank Group's policy note "Financing the Future: Building an open, modern and inclusive financial system," prepared by Alexandra Drees-Gross, Nagavalli Annamalai, Sau Ngan Wong, Nang Htay Htay, Nataliya Mylenko, Jose de Luna Martinez, Kiyotaka Tanaka, Balakrishnan Mahadevan and Ivan Mortimer-Schutts.

Ayeyawady Bridge (Yadanabon) being seen 1,000 ft away from the boats. PHOTO: AUNG THANT KHAING

Mandalay bans vessels from mooring near Ayeyawady Bridge (Yadanabon)

"A new ban on vessels from mooring near Ayeyawady Bridge (Yadanabon) aims to ensure the durability of the bridge," said U MaungMaung-Nyunt, director of the Mandalay Region Road Department under the Ministry of Construction yesterday.

No mooring is allowed for vessels within a distance of 1,000 feet upriver from the bridge, said the director, expressing his concern an untended or broken down boat could potentially collide with the bridge due to the current, causing structural damage.

There is the difference between stopping one boat and ten boats at the bridge; the affordable load is limited for this bridge but the businessmen couldn't be aware seriously. The construction boat must stop here but they have duty for it.

According to a sand businessman, there were five people who can run their businesses. But now, they have stopped theirs as there is no permission to stop the boats after noticing two times. —*Aung Thant Khaing*

Drawing up of real estate services law seeks to regulate the property market

A piece of legislation concerning real-estate services will be drawn up and presented to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, the Myanmar Real Estate Services Association (MRESA) has informed Myitmakha News Agency.

"This matter of drawing up legislation and submitting it to parliament has been reviewed and accepted by the Commission of Assessment of Legal Affairs and Special Issues of the Pyidaungsu Hllutaw.

As such, this association will work to have this legislation drawn up and enacted," said U Khin Maung Than, chair of the MRESA.

The drawing up of real-estate services legislation will reportedly include participation from the Bill Committee, Ministry of Construction, Department of Urban and Housing Development, Attorney-General's Office, branches of the MRESA, and experts.

"If this law can become a reality, there will no longer be any mistakes made in the buying and selling of real estate. Frameworks of the law will mitigate inflation and stabilize the fluctuation of prices in the real estate market. At the moment, brokers are those who happen to have a connection between buyer and seller. The passing of the law would regulate this," said U Than Oo, deputy chair of the MRESA.

Points will be included in the draft legislation that would control the economic benefit of real-estate agents through the law, as well as points which would allow for the conduction of local and foreign real-estate partnerships.

The MRESA was founded back in June 2012. It operates 15 branches in each state and region of the country, including Naypyidaw, boasting a membership of over 4,700.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

POEM:

" Congratulations ! General Aung San's Daughter"

Congratulations ! Aung San Su Kyi, my junior dear,
The 2016 Harvard Humanitarian of the Year !
You really deserve for such a prize,
It's the most valuable and priceless prize.
You do reap for what you sow, it's quite clear.
What you've done is amazingly great,
As a humanitarian, you're never too late.
Like you, no one can do, my dear.
In Myanmar, in the whole world, you're very dear.
What more prizes are coming ? Shall we wait?
You're the very first State Counsellor of Myanmar.
You've been the first Nobel Peace Prize Winner in Myanmar
No average woman can do such a thing.
So, among old pals, you're still the in-thing.
No such lady can appear in our land of Myanmar.
You're the perfect humanitarian !
And also the flawless politician.
Oh! you're one in a million.
No, you're one in a billion.
You're worth for the prize as you're disciplinarian.

Daw Aye Aye Pyone
(Retired teacher)

Letter to the Editor

To Chief Editor ,
Global New Light of Myanmar
Sir,

With the gone days many including me buy newspaper just for advertisement and obituary notice, without bothering to read the whole paper. But now and nowadays the trend has been reversed and many readers turned their eyes to read the content especially opinion column. To say the turth. I am one of it. Thanks to the contributors and freelance writers, who share their knowledge, opinion and ideas of respective fields. The list will be too long to add all those writers.

I am grateful to them for their endeavours that enlighten us giving valuable information too. My simple and humble request through Your esteemed daily is to take an initiative and spare a line or two lines under the caption of "Thought for today" "Thought provoking" "Point to ponder " "Chicken soup for soul" with any inspirational quote. I mean to include great thought, great saying, great advice by great people. Manytimes, a wise quote is enough for a direct U turn for many to change their mindset.

With Thanks
Maung Ni

Couple found dead in separate places

HUSBAND and wife were found dead in two separate places with stab wounds in Tatkon township, Nay Pyi Taw, according to the local police station.

Police found the body of Major Way Phyo Aung near mile post 8/4 on Tatkon-Pinlaung road in the capital city on Tuesday and that of his wife Dr Khin Sandi Kyaw three miles away from her husband on Wednesday.

The families of the deceased have brought charges against each other, with the man's family saying that they found their son slain with stab wounds and his five-year-old daughter asleep in the car.

The township' police are carrying out an investigation into the case.—*Than Oo (Lay Myat Hnar)*

Myanmar's organic chilies hot stuff in Singapore

A further twenty-two tonnes of organic chilies, planted by the Pioneer Star Company in Mandalay Region, will be exported to Singapore, the company has told Myitmakha News Agency.

The second consignment of chilies to be sent to the global financial center reportedly comes after the inaugural two-tonne batch was found to be devoid of chemicals and harmful pesticides.

"Singapore has requested a further consignment of our chilies from our test-field site. The chilies grown on our site are categorized into three — A, B and C — dependent upon their quality, with only chilies from category A being exported. As well as the first batch of chilies coming up clean from traces of chemicals, their fine quality has got Singapore to request them to be exported all year round," said Kyaw Soe Thu, a staffer from the Pioneer Star Company.

A viss (1.6 kilograms) of the organic chilies fetch K600 on the domestic market, while reportedly costing K520 for export minus transportation charges.

"I've been growing chilies for a long time, and it's only now that we're starting to export them abroad. The domestic chili market is good, adding that with the opening up of a foreign market, we have two sources of revenue. We're going to expand our chilies crops starting from this month," said Win Naing Htun, an organic chili grower from Mandalay Region's Saingmarlan village.

Citing difficulties in educating each chili farmer on organic cultivation methods, the Pioneer Star Company began its operations small, partnering with a select-few regional farmers to experiment cultivation on a test plot of land. — *Myitmakha News Agency*

Myanmar's organic chillies. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

European Council President Donald Tusk (3rdL), European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker (2ndR) and European Parliament President Martin Schulz (L) pose for a group photo with Slovakia's Prime Minister Robert Fico (C), Slovakia's President Andrej Kiska (3rdR) and Speaker of the Slovakia's National Council Andrej Danko (2ndL) at the Government office ahead of the upcoming European Union summit- the first one since Britain voted to quit- in Bratislava, Slovakia, on 15 September, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

European leaders seek elusive 'road map' after Brexit shock

BRATISLAVA — Reeling from Britain's decision to leave, the European Union's remaining 27 states met on Friday to inject momentum into the ailing EU project even as they acknowledged deep divisions over the refugee crisis and the economy.

Years of economic crisis have pushed up unemployment in many member states, while a spate of attacks by Islamist militants and a record influx of migrants have unsettled voters, who are turning increasingly to populist, anti-EU parties.

The "informal" summit — so-called because any formal one still has to include Britain until it leaves the bloc — is aimed at restoring public faith in the European Union, which for decades was seen as a guarantor of peace and prosperity but is now, officials acknowledge, in an "existential crisis".

"Everyone is aware of the situation. Britain has decided to leave and there are questions about the future of Europe," French President Francois Hollande said before the meeting in the Slovak capital.

"Either we move in the direction of disintegration, of dilution, or we work together to inject new momentum, we relaunch the European project."

Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said: "Europe should stop sleepwalking in the wrong direction."

The aim in Bratislava is to agree a "road map" for reform of the EU that can be finalised over the next half year. More concrete proposals would be presented at a summit in March of next year that coincides with the 60th anniversary of the bloc's founding Treaty of Rome.

But because of divisions on some of the biggest issues, leaders are expected to stick to areas of common ground.

They will pledge closer defence cooperation and agree to bolster security along the EU's external borders, as well as discussing new initiatives to generate growth and jobs.

"All these countries have an interest in fighting terrorism, in a more secure Europe, in preventing uncontrolled migration, all have an interest in economic cooperation to create more jobs," said Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte.—*Reuters*

US lawmakers say Afghanistan corruption threatens future spending

WASHINGTON — US senators questioned State Department officials closely on Thursday about corruption in Afghanistan and said failure to address it could cause them to rethink the billions of dollars the United States spends there each year.

"I don't know what the political will here in the United States will be to continue to support the Afghans in light of what is going on there," said Democratic Senator Robert Menendez, a senior member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Menendez described himself as someone who has been supportive of US Afghanistan policy, but said he would "have a totally different view" if the government in Kabul does not act.

On Wednesday, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) issued a report that strongly criticized Washington for pouring billions of dollars into Afghanistan with so little oversight that it fuelled corruption and undermined the US mission.

The United States spends $5 billion per year in Afghanistan, about $4 billion for defence and national security and another $1 billion in civilian assistance, plus billions more for the cost of the thousands of troops and military contractors there.

Richard Olson, the State Department's special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, agreed that corruption can undermine governance. But he called Afghan President Ashraf Ghani "a committed partner" in fighting corruption.

Ghani, Olson said, has taken steps including addressing the Kabul Bank scandal, cancelling a fuel contract and setting up a monitoring and evaluation committee with experts on anti-corruption.

"It is a dramatically different situation from what it was prior to 2014," Olson testified.—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

British embassy in Ankara closed for security reasons — foreign office

ISTANBUL — The British government has shut its embassy in the Turkish capital Ankara on Friday for security reasons, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office said on its website, without giving further details.

"The British Embassy Ankara will be closed to the public on Friday 16 September for security reasons," the foreign office said late on Thursday. The embassy had been closed from Monday to Thursday for the Eid al-Adha holiday this week, one of the two most important festivals of the Islamic calendar.

Turkey has been repeatedly targeted in the past by militants, both Islamist and Kurdish. A suicide bomber at a wedding in the southeastern city of Gaziantep last month killed more than 54 people, including 22 children, the deadliest such bombing this year. —*Reuters*

Turkey detains four over suspected plot against British, German missions

ANKARA — Turkish authorities detained four people in an investigation into a potential threat against British and German diplomatic missions but found no links between the suspects and any terrorist groups, the state-run Anadolu Agency said on Friday.

The investigation was prompted by intelligence about a potential Islamic State threat against the missions, Anadolu said, in a report also published by broadcaster Haberturk.

Britain's foreign office said earlier that the embassy in Ankara had been shut on Friday for unspecified security reasons. The Germany embassy said on its website that its missions were only open for limited operations after a four-day public holiday this week. —*Reuters*

Swedish court upholds Assange arrest warrant

STOCKHOLM — A Swedish appeals court decided to uphold the arrest warrant for Wikileaks founder Julian Assange on Friday, prolonging the six year long legal stand off between prosecutors and the Wikileaks founder.

Assange, 45, is wanted by Swedish authorities for questioning over allegations, which he denies, that he committed rape in 2010.

"The Court of Appeal shares the assessment of the District Court that Julian Assange is still suspected on probable cause of rape," the court said. Assange avoided possible extradition to Sweden by taking refuge in Ecuador's London embassy in 2012. He says he fears further extradition to the United States, where a criminal investigation into the activities of Wikileaks is ongoing.—*Reuters*

Bulgaria seeks 160 million euros in EU aid to stem migrant flows

SOFIA — Bulgaria has asked for 160 million euros ($180 million) aid from the European Commission to help it protect its borders and stem the flow of migrants and refugees into the country, deputy prime minister Rumiana Bachvarova said on Friday.

Over a million people fleeing conflict and poverty in the Middle East and Africa arrived in Europe last year, many coming via Turkey, and Bulgaria says migrant flows through its territory have been on the rise again since June. The European Union's poorest country has built a fence and sent army officers to its border with Turkey but needs EU support to maintain proper frontier protection. Prime Minister Boiko Borisov is expected to raise the issue at the EU summit in Bratislava today.—*Reuters*

Schwendiman: More work to do before indictments are raised

THE HAGUE — David Schwendiman, lead prosecutor at the Kosovo Specialist Chambers — set up to try crimes committed by the "Kosovo Liberation Army" — held in The Hague on Thursday his first press conference since his appointment.

He declined to speculate on the number of future indictments and on when they will be raised.

"There is more to do, more to come, before everything is in place that will allow me to make formal charging decisions. I will do what the evidence and the law compel me to do, when we are ready — not a minute before, not a minute later." He also declined to speak about witnesses and witness protection methods, the N1 reported.—*Tanjug*

Aid for Syria stuck with rising violence undermining truce

BEIRUT/CILVEGOZU (Turkey) — Aid for the divided Syrian city of Aleppo was stuck on the Turkish border on the fifth day of a fragile ceasefire on Friday with rival factions arguing over how the supplies are to be delivered and violence increasingly undermining the truce.

The provision of aid to what was Syria's largest city before the war is a critical test of the ceasefire, brokered by the United States and Russia a week ago with the aim of reviving talks on ending the conflict.

Humanitarian access to Aleppo hinges on control of the main road into the besieged rebel-held part of the city, divided between the government and rebels who have been battling to topple President Bashar al-Assad for more than five years. The Castello Road has become a major frontline in the war.

Russia said the Syrian army had begun to withdraw from the road on Thursday, but insurgent groups in Aleppo said they had seen no such move and would not pull back from their own positions around the road until it did so.

"By today this morning nothing had happened on the Castello Road ... There is nothing new in Aleppo," Zakaria Malahifji, of the Aleppo-based rebel group Fastaqim, told Reuters by phone.

The Kremlin said it was using its influence to try to ensure the Syrian army fully implemented the ceasefire and that it hoped the United States would use its own influence with rebel groups too.

"In general, we can still state that the (ceasefire) process is moving forward, despite some setbacks," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on a conference call.

Hundreds of protesters from the Shi'ite Muslim villages of Nubul and al Zahra — which lie in government-held territory — were meanwhile heading towards the Castello Road with the aim of blocking it and obstructing the passage of aid trucks, an organisation that monitors the war said.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said they had come out to prevent aid entering rebel-held eastern Aleppo until there were guarantees that supplies would also be sent to the besieged Shi'ite villages of Kefraya and al-Foua which have been surrounded by insurgents since April 2015.

The United Nations, which says it asked the Syrian government for permission to reach all besieged areas, has voiced increasing frustration in recent days at the failure of the Syrian government to allow access.

"In order to actually initiate the actual movement of these convoys (to besieged areas) we need the facilitation letters. They have not come," Jens Laerke, spokesman for the UN Office of Humanitarian Affairs, told a briefing in Geneva.

"It's highly frustrating ... and of course we urge the authorities and everyone with influence over those authorities to push for these letters to materialise as soon as possible."

Two convoys of aid have been waiting since early on Tuesday in no-man's land at the Turkish border for permission to travel into Syria.

A UN spokesman said the first convoy of trucks was carrying flour for more than 150,000 people, while the second was carrying food rations for 35,000 people for a month.

About 300,000 people are thought to be living in eastern Aleppo, while more than one million live in the government-controlled western half of the city. —*Reuters*

Commercial Turkish trucks wait to cross to Syria near the Cilvegozu border gate, located opposite the Syrian commercial crossing point Bab al-Hawa in Reyhanli, Hatay Province, Turkey, on 16 September 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

ကနဦး တင်ဒါအောင်မြင်ခဲ့သော ကုမ္ပဏီများ၏ ဆန်ကာတင် (Short List) စာရင်း ကြေညာခြင်း

ရန်ကုန်တိုင်းဒေသကြီးအတွင်း လျှပ်စစ်ဓာတ်အား လိုအပ်ချက်ကို ဖြည့်ဆည်းရန် ၃၀၀ မဂ္ဂါဝပ်လျှပ်စစ်ဓာတ်အား ထုတ်လုပ်ပေးနိုင်မည့် ဓာတ်အားပေးစက်ရုံများ ငှားယူလိုကြောင်း ၄.၇.၂၀၁၆ ရက်ထုတ် နိုင်ငံပိုင်သတင်းစာများမှ ကြော်ငြာ ခေါ်ယူခဲ့ပါသည်။ ၁၈.၈.၂၀၁၆ ရက်တွင် ကုမ္ပဏီ ၆ ခုမှ တင်ဒါတင်သွင်းခဲ့ပါသည်။ တင်ဒါစည်းကမ်းချက်များနှင့်အညီ စီစစ်၍ ကနဦးတင်ဒါအောင်မြင်သည့် ကုမ္ပဏီ ၃ ခု စာရင်းကို ၆.၉.၂၀၁၆ ရက်တွင် နိုင်ငံပိုင်သတင်းစာများမှ ကြေညာခဲ့ပါသည်။ ၈.၉.၂၀၁၆ ရက်တွင် ဧရာနှန်းဖွင့်ဖောက်စစ်ဆေးချက်များအရ အောက်ပါ ကုမ္ပဏီ ၂ ခုအား ဆန်ကာတင် (Short List) စာရင်း ကြေညာအပ်ပါသည်။

(1) Consortium of National Infrastructure Holding Co., Ltd, MCM Pacific Pte. Ltd, APR Energy Plc. and Ace Resources Group Pte. Ltd

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တင်ဒါစီစစ်ရေးကော်မတီ

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MV BC MUMBAI VOY. NO ( )

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Colombia accepts role in 1980s killings of leftist politicians

BOGOTA — Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos on Thursday acknowledged the state's responsibility in the killing of thousands of members of a leftist political party three decades ago and pledged to prevent such assassinations again.

Santos' statement comes less than two weeks before he will sign a peace accord with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), whose members were killed following a previous peace agreement in the mid 1980s when they formed the Patriotic Union (UP) political party. Some 5,000 UP members and supporters were killed by right-wing paramilitary groups, often working with state backing.

"That tragedy should never have happened, and we must recognise that the government didn't take sufficient measures to impede and prevent the assassinations, attacks and other violations even though there was evidence the persecution was taking place," Santos said during an event where 200 survivors and family members of UP victims were present. As part of the latest peace agreement with the Marxist FARC rebels, the government promised to guarantee them safety once they hand in their arms. The group plans to launch a political party and stand for office.—*Reuters*

Poll shows most Europeans sympathise with Syrian refugees, 'have not lost their hearts'

LONDON — More than three quarters of Europeans sympathise with Syrian refugees coming to their countries, a poll found on Friday, challenging reports of growing anti-immigration sentiment across the continent.

Ireland topped the poll of European countries that are most supportive of Syrian refugees with 87 per cent of people interviewed there showing sympathy for them, while Slovakia ranked bottom.

The Ipsos MORI survey also showed that less than a third of the roughly 12,000 people polled across 12 EU countries believe refugees are a risk to national security despite a number of recent attacks involving migrants.

"These findings show that Europeans have not lost their hearts," said David Miliband, CEO of International Rescue Committee (IRC), an aid organisation which commissioned the poll.

The survey comes as Europe grapples with its worst migration crisis since World War II. More than one million people fleeing war and poverty in the Middle East, Africa and elsewhere reached Europe last year. Syrians made up 28 per cent of the 2015 arrivals, according to the UN refugee agency UNHCR.

Of the people polled, 30 per cent said one of their top three concerns was that refugees posed a security threat. The survey was published as anti-immigration parties make gains in several EU countries.

Earlier this month, German Chancellor Angela Merkel acknowledged that her liberal migrant policy contributed to a humiliating state election rout on 4 September, where her Christian Democrats (CDU) finished third behind the surging anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany (AfD) party.

Nationalist, anti-immigration parties are also leading opinion polls in France and the Netherlands ahead of general elections next year.

"At a time when toxic rhetoric has found its way into the political mainstream, there is a clear call here for governments to combine compassion with competence in responding to the refugee crisis," Miliband said in a statement.

"The refugee crisis is a human tragedy but it does not need to become a political disaster".—*Reuters*

Millennials lead private media opening in Communist-run Cuba

HAVANA — A handful of independent, web-based news outlets in Cuba are chipping away at the Communist-run island's half-century state media monopoly, challenging the official version of reality.

While low levels of internet access across the Caribbean island limits the outlets' domestic reach and they are not fully free to speak their mind, they are opening up the range of voices and sparking a debate about the role of the media in the one-party state.

"State media talks about things no one cares about and hides the truth," said Abraham Jimenez, 27, who co-launched the online, long-form magazine "El Estornudo" (The Sneeze) in March with a group of friends.

"The Sneeze was something of a reaction to this context. We want to tell the truth."

While the Cuban constitution forbids privately-owned mass media and there are no independent newspaper printing presses in the country, web-based outlets have so far been tolerated as long as they are not "counter-revolutionary", a nebulous term generally used against those the government accuses of trying to undermine it.

President Raul Castro's government blocks internet access to dissident media, such as the country's most famous blogger Yoani Sanchez, as well as stridently anti-Castro, Miami-based outlets.

The new outlets, mainly run by millennials, have distanced themselves from dissident groups. Although they are often are highly critical of government policy and describe in detail everyday hardships, they are not calling for an end to Cuba's socialist project.

Jimenez says his grandfather worked as a guard for revolutionary icon Ernesto "Che" Guevara. He does not consider himself a dissident and says his criticism is not to achieve political goals, but to present a realistic and balanced view of Cuba.

A woman buys a local magazine at a kiosk in Havana, Cuba, on 15 September 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

"If you never talk about a country's good things, that's also not journalism," he said.

The new openness is emblematic of a wider, albeit cautious, reform programme under Raul Castro, who has allowed Cubans to purchase cellphones and laptops, installed 200 Wi-Fi hotspots across the country and even fostered a small private sector.

For some, the mere fact a debate about the role of the media is taking place is a sea change.

"In the Cuba I grew up in, that debate would never have existed," said Hugo Cancio, founder of media platform OnCuba who says he moved to the United States 35 years ago after being expelled from school for making a joke about revolutionary leader Fidel Castro.—*Reuters*

German minister expects to win vote on EU-Canada trade deal

MONTREAL — Germany's economy minister said on Thursday he expected the country's Social Democrats, a junior partner in the ruling coalition, to vote in favour of a free-trade agreement between Canada and the European Union at a party meeting on 19 September.

"We will get a majority vote," German Vice Chancellor and Economic Affairs Minister Sigmar Gabriel told reporters in Montreal.

Canada and Europe have spent years negotiating the trade deal, called the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, or CETA. Canada Trade Minister Chrystia Freeland said on Monday the Canadian government hoped to sign the deal in October.

It faces opposition from anti-globalisation groups, as well as some members of Gabriel's SDP party. Freeland said she would attend the SDP conference in Wolfsburg, Germany, on Monday, where she will highlight the deal's progressive elements.

Gabriel said it would not be necessary to reopen negotiations for the agreement. He also said clarifications made in talks with Canada would help address the concerns of German trade unions.

"There is no renegotiation of CETA and Sigmar and I discussed that," Freeland said.

Separately, Freeland there were no plans to change the parts of the trade deal relating to the Canadian dairy industry.

The deal, reached by negotiators two years ago after five years of talks, could get the green light from EU member states next month before it is signed during Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's visit to Brussels on 27 October.—*Reuters*

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French police fire tear gas at labour reform protesters

PARIS — Riot police fired tear gas and water cannon at protesters marching on Thursday in France against labour reforms in what unions say will likely be the last demonstrations to try to overturn the law.

Scuffles broke out in cities including Paris, Nantes, Toulouse, Rennes, Grenoble and Montpellier, the Interior Ministry said in a statement.

Hooded youths hurled bottles, beer cans and on occasion makeshift fire bombs on the fringes of marches against the law that will make hiring and firing easier.

As turnout fades after six months of protests, the head of the Force Ouvriere union signalled that the focus of opposition would now shift to legal challenges against the application of the new law, and that street marches were at an end.

"We are lifting our foot off the pedal for now. We are not going to do this every week," Jean-Claude Mailly told reporters at a rally in Paris's Place de la Bastille square.

Seven months from a presidential election, Mailly said that the unions would not let Socialist President Francois Hollande and his government off the hook.

Demonstrators clash with French riot police during a march in Paris, France, to demonstrate against the new French labour law, on 15 September 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

"This law will be the chewing gum that sticks to the soles of the government's shoes," he told France 2 public television.

Mailly and Philippe Martinez, head of the CGT union, said they hoped legal challenges would force the withdrawal of the new law. They intend to challenge application decrees that will spell out exactly how the law applies on the ground.

The new law, forced through parliament in July, is designed to make France's protective labour laws more flexible, in part by allowing firms to tailor pay and work terms to their needs more easily.

Martinez said the law could be exploited by employers to trim overtime pay from a 25 per cent mark-up to 10 percent.

At their peak, the street protests brought close to 400,000 people into the streets last March but turnout has waned over time and was in the low thousands in most cities on Thursday according to early readouts from police.

Police said between 12,500 and 13,500 marched in Paris.

Some 62 people were arrested across the country, the Interior Ministry said. Fifteen gendarmes and police officers were injured, including two who were hospitalised.

The government hopes the law will help lower a jobless rate stuck close to 10 per cent.—*Reuters*

UN climate diplomat: EU needs say in talks despite slow ratification

PARIS — UN climate negotiators should let governments that have yet to ratify the Paris accord to curb global warming — including the EU nations — have a say in drafting the rules to implement it, the co-chair of the talks said on Thursday.

The European Union was a prime mover behind the success of last autumn's Paris climate talks but is now a laggard in ratifying the agreement it produced.

New Zealand diplomat Jo Tyndall's suggestion would allow the EU to join in thrashing out how the agreement will operate over coming next decades.

"A legal fix, a decision will need to be taken to ensure that countries are not penalised because their domestic processes might take a little longer," she told Reuters.

In an effort to incentivise nations to ratify the agreement, at present only those that have done so have a say in deciding how it will work.

In what European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker described as a blow to the EU credibility, the bloc could end up watching from the sidelines when the threshold of 55 nations responsible for 55 per cent of man-made emissions is reached for the pact to take effect.

The EU's reversal from being the key broker clinching the deal, Juncker said in his annual State of the Union speech on Wednesday: "makes us look ridiculous".

A man fetches water from a partially dried-up reservoir in Taizhou, Zhejiang province in 17 2013. PHOTO: REUTERS

Under current rules, the European Union as well as each of the nations it spoke for in Paris must deposit their ratification documents with the UN simultaneously, so the EU is only ever as fast as its slowest member.

So far only three states — France, Hungary and Austria — have ratified the agreement.

In Paris last December, nearly 200 countries agreed on a binding global compact to slash greenhouse gases and keep global temperature increases to "well below" 2 degrees Celsius.

"There is a strong desire to find a balance between inclusiveness, if we do have early entry into force," Tyndall said. "But at the same time keep the incentives there to get people to ratify and join the agreement."

With China and the United States, the world's two biggest emitters, formally ratifying it this month, some experts predict it could even come into force before the next round of climate talks in November in Marrakesh.—*Reuters*

Britain says EU mission should turn back migrant boats

FLORENCE, (Italy) — A European Union naval force deployed in the Mediterranean should turn back migrant boats after they leave Libya and prevent them from reaching Italy, Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said on Thursday.

Italy is on the frontline of Europe's migrant crisis, taking in more than 400,000 refugees over the past three years, many of them saved from rickety boats pushed out to sea by people smugglers based in north Africa.

The European Union launched Operation Sophia in 2015 in response to the crisis, with a mandate to disrupt the people trafficking networks and destroy smugglers' boats.

Johnson said part of the mission's work was to return boats back to shore after they had put to sea.

"I think personally (the boats) should be turned back as close to the shore as possible so they don't reach the Italian mainland and that there is more of a deterrent," Johnson said, speaking alongside his Italian counterpart Paolo Gentiloni.

"I think I am right in saying we have turned back about 200,000 migrants," Johnson said, before a nearby diplomat hastily corrected him. "Sorry, saved, saved. Thank you. We have saved 200,000 migrants and turned back 240 boats."

It is illegal to turn back migrant boats once they reach international waters and a UN-backed government in Libya has not invited European ships into its territorial waters, saying this would undermine its own state-building efforts.

It was not immediately clear in what context the boats mentioned by Johnson were turned back to land. There was no immediate comment from Operation Sophia officials in Rome.

Johnson was in Italy for talks about Britain's decision to abandon the European Union.—*Reuters*

A rescue boat of the Spanish NGO Proactiva approaches an overcrowded wooden vessel with migrants from Eritrea, off the Libyan coast in Mediterranean Sea, on 29 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Spanish wetlands and wildlife sanctuary under threat

MADRID — Donana National Park, part of southern Spanish wetland used by 6 million migratory birds, could dry out completely unless the Spanish government tackles the threat of dredging, mining and intensive farming, a report said on Thursday.

The World Wildlife Fund said Spain was failing to safeguard the 54,000 hectare (209 square mile) site, which stretches along the Guadalquivir River at its estuary on the Atlantic Ocean in Andalusia.

"The Donana wetland is at a crossroads. Poor management and over-extraction of water are causing Donana to dry out and the area now receives only 20 percent of its natural water input," WWF said in the report.—*Reuters*

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McCartney, Starr reunite on blue carpet for Beatles documentary

LONDON — Former Beatles Sir Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr reunited for a walk down memory lane on Thursday for the premiere of a documentary by Oscar winner Ron Howard about the Fab Four as they toured the world in the 1960s.

The singer-songwriter and drummer posed for photographs on a blue carpet in London's Leicester Square for the "The Beatles: Eight Days a Week — The Touring Years" premiere, which drew hundreds of cheering fans as well as celebrities such as Madonna, Eric Clapton, Bob Geldof and Liam Gallagher.

The documentary traces the band's touring years as McCartney, Starr along with the late John Lennon and George Harrison won legions of adoring fans across continents. It features footage of early performances at the Cavern Club in their native Liverpool, packed shows around the globe and their final tour concert in 1966 in San Francisco.

"We're all excited, it is the first time for us too," Starr told the crowd about seeing the documentary. The film makes use of a rich archive of old footage — pictures, videos and audio recordings — of the band at the height of Beatlemania, with screaming fans, snippets of the cheekiness of the then young men and the group at work in the studio. Celebrities recalling seeing them perform also add their voices.

"We started off as four mates in a great little band and we kept playing and playing and all this stuff happened," McCartney said.

Former Beatles Ringo Starr (L) and Paul McCartney attend the world premiere of 'The Beatles: Eight Days a Week - The Touring Years' in London, Britain, on 15 September 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Howard said that as well as receiving help from McCartney and Starr for the film, Lennon's and Harrison's widows, Yoko Ono and Olivia Harrison, who attended the premiere, had also contributed to the project.

The director, known for films such as "The Da Vinci Code", "A Beautiful Mind" and "Apollo 13", said directing the documentary had been "a great experience".

"It first began as just a fun, cool, creative adventure, then I became very intimidated by it when I realized how important it was to fans," he told reporters.

"Now it's just proved to be a very gratifying experience, and I'm already nostalgic for it ... After two years of working with it, I'm a little sad to let it go."

"The Beatles: Eight Days a Week - The Touring Years" hit cinemas worldwide on Thursday.—*Reuters*

Producers of Tom Cruise movie sued again for wrongful death

LOS ANGELES — Producers of Tom Cruise's "American Made", formerly known as "Mena", are hit with another lawsuit, a year after the deadly plane crash on the Colombia set of the film.

The family of Carlos Berl, a Colombian pilot killed in the September 2015 crash, filed on Wednesday, 14 September in Los Angeles Country Superior Court a wrongful death suit against Imagine Entertainment and other production companies, reported Entertainment Weekly.

The estate of the other decedent, Alan Purwin, alleged that the defendants were "so negligently, unlawfully and carelessly supervised, prepared, instructed, operated, entrusted, piloted, flew, controlled, and directed the Subject Aircraft so as to cause and/or allow it to collide with terrain, grievously injuring Plaintiff's decedent, Carlos Berl, who perished as a result of the injuries sustained in the crash," according to the lawsuit.

In a statement, Berl's attorney Daniel Hode claimed that producers were aware the pilot was unprepared. "Even prior to traveling to South America, Carlos repeatedly informed the production companies that he had insufficient flight experience in that particular aircraft and required flight instruction prior to flying. His requests were completely ignored," he said.

Tom Cruise. PHOTO: PTI

The family were seeking damages which include loss of inheritance, loss of earnings, property damage, prejudgment interest, loss of comfort, costs of the suit and such other remedies as may be permitted by law. —*PTI*

Boxing movies deliver a punch in 'The Bleeder,' 'Bleed for This'

TORONTO — Boxing movies are making a comeback lately, although they are often more about the struggles of fighters outside the ring than the punches they land on their opponents.

"Bleed for This," shown at the Toronto Film Festival this week, tells the true story of American middleweight Vinny Pazienza's successful return to the ring just 13 months after fracturing his neck in car crash in 1991.

Pazienza, played by "Whiplash" star Miles Teller, went on to become a five-time world champion despite being told by doctors he would never box again. He now goes by the name Vinnie Paz.

The movie, along with another Toronto festival film, "The Bleeder," follows last year's critically acclaimed "Creed," Jake Gyllenhaal's "Southpaw" and Robert De Niro's new movie "Hands of Stone," about legendary Panamanian boxer Roberto Duran. "To me it isn't a boxing movie," said Bruce Cohen, producer of "Bleed for This."

"It's about belief, it's about faith, it's about family, it's about all these themes that ran through Vinnie Pazienza's life that allowed him to make this extraordinary comeback," Cohen added.

Aaron Eckhart, who plays Pazienza's coach, Kevin Rooney, said it was not a traditional boxing movie.

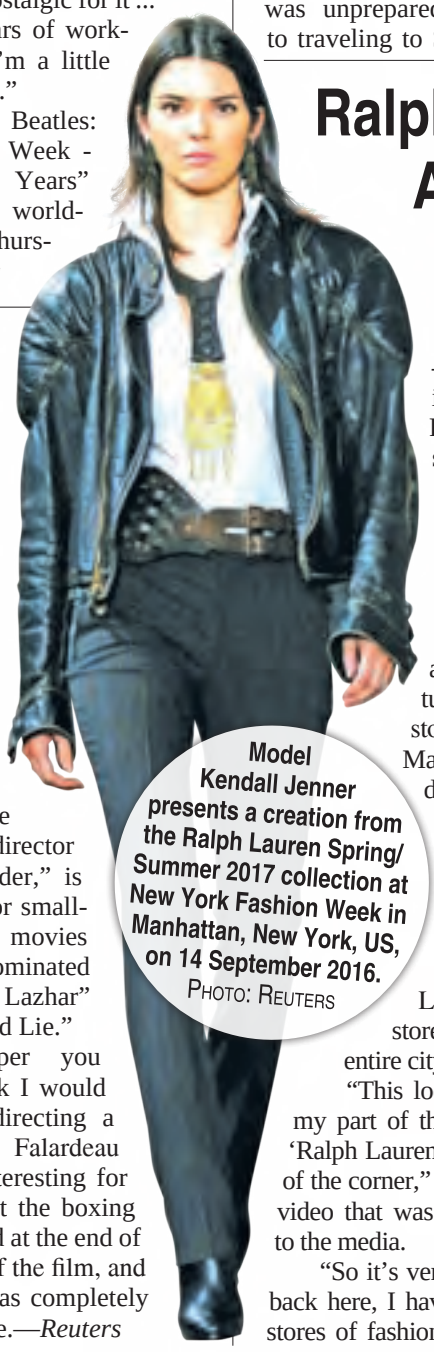
"Movies are about people," Eckhart said. "We like to watch people that have circumstances similar to our own, so you're going to see a family up there that loves each other and worries about each other and believes in each other."

"The Bleeder," charts the life of U.S. heavyweight Chuck Wepner, who is said to have inspired the "Rocky" films starring Sylvester Stallone. Wepner, played by Liev Schreiber, was plucked out of obscurity to fight Muhammad Ali in 1975 before his career fell part and he served 18 months in prison on a drug conviction.

Philippe Falardeau, the Canadian director of "The Bleeder," is best known for smaller, intimate movies like Oscar-nominated "Monsieur Lazhar" and "The Good Lie."

"On paper you wouldn't think I would be the one directing a boxing film," Falardeau said. "It is interesting for me to see that the boxing event occurred at the end of the first half of the film, and after that it was completely something else.—*Reuters*

Ralph Lauren, inspired by American West, stops traffic during show



Model Kendall Jenner presents a creation from the Ralph Lauren Spring/ Summer 2017 collection at New York Fashion Week in Manhattan, New York, US, on 14 September 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

NEW YORK — Veteran fashion designer Ralph Lauren staged his first runway-to-retail show promoting his September collection, an American West-influenced affair that turned heads and stopped traffic on Madison Avenue during New York Fashion Week on Wednesday night.

The runway was built between two of Lauren's flagship stores, spanning an entire city block.

"This location is sort of my part of the city that says 'Ralph Lauren' on all quarters of the corner," Lauren said in a video that was made available to the media.

"So it's very exciting to be back here, I have two beautiful stores of fashion. I have a children's store, and it's a great part of New York."

Vogue magazine editor Anna Wintour, actresses Julianne Moore and Jessica Alba and model Rosie Huntington-Whiteley sat near the glass runway in the front row.

The collection, Lauren said in a statement, was inspired by the "rugged beauty and romance of the American West," and made use of different shades of earth tones and black and white. Many of Lauren's models strutted down the runway wearing leather choker necklaces and cowboy hats.

"It's fun. I think it's energy that I like, a lot of fun things and a lot of beautiful, I think it's beautiful clothes," Lauren said. "And at the same time, it's got an energy that is universal."

Flowy, feminine dresses and sharp-cut pants were paired with classically Western elements including embroidery, Southwestern blanket and beacon patterns, distressed leather and fringed suede. The collection was immediately made available to consumers through Lauren's online and offline stores and retail partners.—*Reuters*

Long line formed as Pokemon Go Plus accessory goes on sale in Japan

OSAKA — The Pokemon Go Plus wearable accessory for the popular mobile augmented reality game hit stores in Japan on Friday, drawing crowds of game fans.

At the Daimaru Umeda department store housing the Pokemon Center Osaka in Osaka, western Japan, some 700 people waited outside in line hours before the store opening, and the store moved up its usual opening hour of 10:00 am to around 8:00 am.

Kana Sugiura, a 29-year-old temp worker, joined the waiting line at around 6:30am and was able to buy the device.

"(Using the peripheral gear), Pokemon hunting will speed up because I don't have to stare at the (smartphone) screen. I want to get them (Pokemon monsters) one after another," Sugiura said.

Pokemon Go Plus, a small device made by Nintendo Co. which users can wear on their wrists, will notify Pokemon Go players of the appearance of pokemons by flashing light and vibrations, freeing them from gazing at the game screen all the time.—*Kyodo News*

People hold up the Pokemon Go Plus wearable accessory (C) for the hit augmented reality smartphone game in the western Japan city of Osaka, on 16 September 2016, when sales started in Japan. The accessory vibrates and lights up when a "Pokemon Go" virtual creature is nearby, freeing players of the need to stare at their smartphone screens. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Italy to launch 500-euro arts bonus for 18-year-olds next month

ROME — Emerging from an underfunded school system into a bleak jobs market, Italians turning 18 this year at least have one birthday treat to look forward to — 500 euros (£425.5) from the state to spend on cultural items such as books, concerts and movies.

The 290-million-euro scheme is the brainchild of Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, who says he wants the new adults to feel part of the world's biggest cultural patrimony.

Critics, however, see it as a political stunt like other bonuses and handouts which they say Renzi has offered instead of a coherent policy to make Italy's chronically weak economy more competitive.

Renzi, who originally promised the bonus after Islamist attacks in Paris last November, said on Thursday the bonus would be available from October.

Beatrice Hirsch, from the northern city of Turin, was looking forward to seeing how the money can be spent. "We hardly ever go on school trips," she said. "I will try to go to the cinema or the theatre, or subscribe to magazines and newspapers."

Revellers climb a steep slope to leave the Circus Maximus after watching a concert by British band Genesis in downtown Rome in 2007. PHOTO: REUTERS

From Thursday, cultural institutions can start to sign up and those of the roughly 570,000 Italians and non-native residents born in 1998 who have already blown out 18 candles can request an online ID.

When Renzi announced the scheme, it was widely criticised as a means to woo new young voters.

"Young people don't sell themselves for a handout," Beppe Grillo, founder of the anti-establishment 5-Star Movement, wrote on his blog, slamming the "decrepit" state of schools in Italy.

According to Eurostat, Italy spent proportionately less on education than any other European Union country in 2014.

Alberto Bagnai, economic policy professor at the University of Chieti-Pescara, said Renzi could find better uses for the money, especially after an earthquake that killed almost 300 people last month in central Italy.—*Reuters*

Drained by a dictator, Romanian wetlands return to the wild

MAHMUDIA (Romania) — Birds and fish are slowly but surely returning to a part of Romania's picturesque Danube Delta that was drained by dictator Nicolae Ceausescu in the 1980s but has been returned by local communities to its natural wetland state.

With the help of the WWF environmental charity and funding from the European Union, some 900 hectares around Mahmudia, once drained to create farmland, have been reconnected to the region's network of channels and lakes.

Heavy earthmoving equipment was used to create new waterways — a boon not only for fishermen in one of Europe's poorest communities, but also for local tourist companies offering bird-watching trips.

"A lot of birds have migrated to the area and one doesn't need any more to travel long hours to go to other lakes and spot the birds," said Mahmudia deputy mayor Ion Meuta.

Some 300 bird species make their home in the 600,000-hectare Danube Delta, including pygmy cormorants, white-tailed eagles and glossy ibises. Egyptian white pelicans arrive every spring, and Arctic geese migrate here to escape the harsh winters of Northern Europe.

According to the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority, the area — a UNESCO heritage site — is the third most bio-diverse in the world after Australia's Great Barrier Reef and the Galapagos Islands.

A decade-long fishing ban has been imposed to protect the endangered wild sturgeon, a species more ancient than the dinosaur.

"The sturgeon is the Delta's emblem," said breeding farmer Marilena Maereanu. "Last year I released 15,000 starry sturgeons into the Danube. In six or seven years they will start reproducing."—*Reuters*

MRTV News Channel

(17-9-2016, Saturday)

6:00 am
- Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw

7:35 am
- Hyper Sport

8:35 am
- Myanmar Traditional Performing Arts Competitions

8:45 am
- Pan Pyo Khin

9:35 am
- Business News

10:35 am
- Poem for Children

11:15 am
- Health and Vegetables

11:35 am
- Game for Children

1:35 pm
- TV Drama Series

2:20 pm
- Human Right " What are Human Right? "

3:35 pm
- Weekly Entertainment News

4:15 pm
- Myanmar Traditional Performing Arts Competions

4:35 pm
- NHK Programme " Mathematics with Computers" (The Hippocratic Crescents)

5:20 pm
- KARAOKE World Champions (KWC) Myanmar 2016 (Level -1, Group-5)

6:35 pm
- Tasty Trip

7:15 pm
- Myanmar Series

8:00 pm
- News / International News / Weather Report

8:35 pm
- Documentary

9:00 pm
- News
- GitadagalenPhwintbaoohn

Note/Hourly News Bulletlns (Local + International)

mitv Myanmar International

(17-9-2016 07:00am ~ 18-9-2016 07:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Great Shwedagon- The Repository of Buddhist Scriptures And Archives
07:42	Am	A Tea Business: Pankwan (Part-1)
07:53	Am	Myanmar Traditional Art Bronze Casting
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Clay Toy Pots Festival
08:43	Am	Culture Shows: Theatrical Art
08:52	Am	Modifying Natural Thanakha Bark into Ready-Made Skin Care Product
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Discovering Tribes- Gaybar Kayin
09:48	Am	Myanmar Railways City Circular Train
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Next Generation "Skater"
10:35	Am	Crab Business (Part-I) Mud Crab
10:51	Am	A Precious gift from waste

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm)- Friday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) -Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	A Visit to Kyauk Kyi
07:43	Pm	Myanmar Traditional Bullock-Cart & Equestrian Racing
07:54	Pm	Today Myanmar: YCDC's Efforts for Granting Land Plots
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	The Stories Of The Great Souls (U Pyae Son)

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm)- Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Friday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) -Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

(For Detailed Schedule – www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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FIFA gives Guatemala soccer body October suspension deadline

MEXICO CITY — Soccer's global governing body, FIFA, on Thursday gave Guatemala's soccer federation until 1 October to avoid suspension by reinstating an oversight committee formed after the arrest of its president.

A court of the Sports Confederation of Guatemala, or CDAG, suspended the committee overseeing the Guatemalan national federation, Fedefut, after four local players said they had been wrongly accused of doping. CDAG is a sports governing body to which Fedefut belongs.

"FIFA's council decided to grant Fedefut until October 1 to revoke the decision, and if it does not, Fedefut will be suspended immediately," Fatma Samoura, FIFA's secretary general, said in a letter to the Guatemalan federation.

Fedefut could not immediately be reached for comment.

The FIFA committee was appointed following the arrest of former Fedefut President Brayan Jimenez, who pleaded guilty in July to charges in the United States related to the sale of soccer broadcast rights.—*Reuters*

Inter stunned by Beer-Sheva, United beaten by Feyenoord

Feyenoord's Tonny Vilhena scores their first goal against Manchester United during UEFA Europa League Group Stage, Group A at De Kuip Stadium, Rotterdam, Netherlands, on 15 September 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Three times European champions Inter Milan were stunned 2-0 at home by Israeli side Hapoel Beer-Sheva and Manchester United were floored by a late goal from Feyenoord as the Europa League group stage got underway on Thursday.

The Israeli champions scored twice through Miguel Vitor and Maor Buzaglo in the second half to silence a sparsely populated San Siro and inflict a painful defeat on Inter manager Frank de Boer in his first European game at the club.

Competition favourites United's trip to Rotterdam turned sour when Feyenoord's Tonny Trindade applied a slide-rule finish late in the second half to secure a 1-0 win in Group A following a poor display from Jose Mourinho's star-studded side. Zenit St Petersburg pulled off one of the most impressive fightbacks in European competition history when they came back from 3-0 down against Maccabi Tel Aviv to win 4-3 with all the Russian side's goals coming from the 77th minute onwards.

AS Roma were held to a 1-1 draw at Viktoria Plzen, while fellow Italians Sassuolo, who are making their European debut, enjoyed a superb 3-0 win over Athletic Bilbao.

Beer-Sheva, playing in the Europa League after falling into Europe's second-tier competition following a Champions League playoff defeat by Celtic last month, largely dominated a sluggish Inter side.

Inter are continental royalty and boss De Boer has European pedigree, as a player at least, having won the UEFA Cup and Champions League with Ajax Amsterdam in the 1990s, but his team were picked apart and fell behind nine minutes after the break.

Portuguese defender Vitor tapped in the opener from a cross by Lucio Maranhao and Buzaglo curled home a free kick after 69 minutes to wrap up the win, leaving their players celebrating a remarkable result with a small group of ecstatic fans.

For Manchester United it was a second defeat in six days after they lost to rivals Manchester City in the Premier League, and it ended Mourinho's honeymoon period after he began the season with four straight wins including the Community Shield.

United, playing in the Europa League group stage for the first time, never really looked like scoring even after striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic was introduced in the second half and they were picked off on the counter in the 79th minute.

Nicolai Jorgensen looked offside when he burst clear on the right flank but he crossed low for Trindade to slide the ball past David De Gea with a precise side-footed finish.

Thursday's action featured the quickest goal in the competition's history when Slovan Liberec's Jan Sykora scored after 10.69 seconds in a 2-2 draw with Qarabag but late goals were the order of the day as Zenit fought back in Israel.—*Reuters*

Drivers prepare for toughest test in Formula One

SINGAPORE — Since its inaugural race in 2008 the Singapore Grand Prix has gained a reputation for being the toughest challenge in Formula One, providing drivers with an extreme test of endurance in the trickiest conditions.

Raced under floodlights on a tight, 23-turn 5.065-km street circuit in downtown Singapore, the 61-lap trawl in tropical heat just north of the equator has been won by three men -- Fernando Alonso, Sebastian Vettel and Lewis Hamilton.

The exclusive triumvirate is made up of world champions, suggesting only the very best can master the Marina Bay circuit, but four-times winner Vettel believes luck can play as large a part as skill.

"It's a race I have enjoyed but it's always very long," said the German who triumphed last year.

"You can be lucky or unlucky with the safety cars, which is not what you hope for as a driver, you prefer it to be fair and square," added Vettel who also won the race from 2011-13.

"If it plays in your favour then you take it and if it works against you, it's quite annoying but that's the nature of a street circuit," he told reporters on Thursday.

Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo, who was second behind Vettel a year ago and is hoping to go one better on Sunday, said there was no escape from the stifling heat in the cockpit and drivers got little respite for the duration of the race.

"It's similar in heat and humidity to Malaysia but you're surrounded by just the city and a lot of concrete so it's the one race I feel where you open your visor to get some air and you're not getting any reward for that," the Australian said.

Mercedes Formula One driver Lewis Hamilton of Britain arrives at the paddock, Singapore Grand Prix at Marina Bay, Singapore, on 16 September 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

"It's just heat and stale air. In Malaysia there's a bit of circulation, even though it's hot you get a bit of a breeze but here, no. It's a track that you can't.

"If you come here unprepared then you can't luck into a good result. You've got to come ready to go."

Finn Valtteri Bottas said drivers needed maximum concentration to ensure they survived unscathed.

"Physically at least it is the toughest race. Mentally, I think it feels a bit like Monaco. It's very intense and needs to be zero mistakes," the Williams driver explained.—*Reuters*

Huang smashes 200m freestyle S3 record, wins fourth gold in Rio

RIO DE JANEIRO — China's Huang Wenpan shattered the world record to win gold in the men's 200m freestyle S3 at the Rio Paralympics on Thursday.

The 21-year-old touched the wall in three minutes and 9.04 seconds, 7.41 seconds faster than the previous record set by countryman Li Hanhua in 2010.

Despite his extraordinary time, Huang was pushed to the limit by Ukraine's Dmytro, who grabbed silver, just 0.73 seconds behind. Li took bronze in 3:23.10.

The victory gave Huang his fourth gold medal at the Games after his triumphs in the 50m breaststroke SB2, 50m freestyle S3 and the mixed 4x50m freestyle 20 points.

Huang was born with cerebral palsy and started swimming in 2010.—*Xinhua*

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