The Union Government is preparing to speed up reforms in the monetary sector after Myanmar experienced some instability with its currency.

President U Htin Kyaw made his remarks at the finance commission meeting held at the meeting hall of the President’s House yesterday to revise budget estimates submitted by regions and states for the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

“Myanmar experienced instability of foreign exchange rates in answer to the impact on all foreign currencies depending on the rising dollar value,” said President U Htin Kyaw. “Inflation is found to be caused by consecutive deficits and imbalanced demand and supply. The nation is preparing to accelerate reforms in monetary sector”.

He also disclosed that the government is planning to seek more subventions, or grants of money for the country’s small and medium industries and to build national industries, calling for frugally and systematically spending money in times of slow global economies.

When the new government took control earlier this year, budget estimates for the 2016-2017 financial year and the Law on Union Budget were amended at the 2nd Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, as the Union’s ministries were reformed.

Speaking at the meeting yesterday, the president urged the finance commission to submit laws on allotment of the revised budget to the 3rd regular session of 2nd Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. Due to the revised budget, respective ministries have to wait to spend their budget, which affects inland market to some extent, the president said.

He also disclosed that the IMF urged the government to make necessary reforms because of the slow growth of the global economy.

As a consequence, progress in the trade sector of Myanmar is slowing and, according to the estimate released by the IMF, Asian countries are continuing to stand at favourable levels in progress, he added.

“At the same time, we need to speed up reforms in the economic sector. As per the current situation of the State’s macroeconomy, the nation’s GDP may be lower than expected,” said the president.

That was attributed to a decline in produce in the agricultural sector due to natural disasters, reduced wood production in the forestry sector, a shortage of income in the oil and petroleum sector due to decreasing oil prices worldwide and a reduction in the mining of minerals to lessen the effects on the environment.

“Following the State Counsellor’s state visit to the United States, economic sanctions were lifted (and) co-incidentally at the time of promulgation of new investment law. To promote economic development, 12 economic principles were laid down and prioritised policies on investment were issued.

See page 3 >>
BFM’s warm clothing donations reach IDPs in northern Shan State

WARMS clothes donated by KBZ’s Brighter Future Myanmar Foundation have reached internally displaced persons in northern Myanmar in advance of the predicted extreme cold weather this winter.

Members of the philanthropic foundation delivered more than 250 articles of warm clothing to the IDPs from Keksi and Mongkai townships who are being sheltered at the IDP camp in Tonglaw Village, Mongkai Township. The BFM also donated K10 million to the camp.

As part of the effort to brace for La Nina in the upcoming winter, the BFM has imported clothing from China at the cost of more than US$2million to distribute to residents, including IDPs, in areas which are expected to experience extreme cold weather.

The move comes under the guidance of the foundation’s chairperson Daw Nang Lang Khaw after weather experts warned that extremely cold weather was coming to parts of Myanmar this year, said U Aung Kyaw Soe of the BFM.

The foundation delivered more than 3,500 pieces of imported warm clothing to ethnic people in Lahe, Naga Self-administered Zone in Sagaing Region in mid-August, more than 3,000 pieces of warm clothes and 10,080 packs of dried instant noodles to IDPs in Myaung Gyi Ngui and Maethaw in Kayin State in September, more than 7,650 articles of warm clothing to IDPs in Namtaw and more than 36,500 pieces of warm clothing to ethnic people including monks and nuns in the Mandalay Region. The delivery of warm clothes to areas which are expected to be hit by extreme cold weather will continue, the BFM said.

Similarly, BFM also provided Ks30 million and 300 articles of warm clothes to the victims and families of those who died in the Aung Soe Moe ferry capsizing accident in the Chindwin River last month and Ks71 million as second aid to the victims.

The foundation has carried out philanthropic works since the Cyclone Nargis hit the country in 2008. So far, the BFM has spent more than K109 billion on evacuation, relief and resettlement of peoples nationwide who are affected by disasters. The money is also spent on disaster preparedness, education, health, religion and sports in communities across the country.

—Thura Lwin (Eco)

Road reconstruction in Thanhlyin Tsp tops list of authorities’ priorities

RECONSTRUCTION of roads across Thanhlyin Township in Yangon tops the list of authorities’ priorities, according to Hluttaw representatives from Thanhlyin Constituency.

The Union government allotted Ks100 million budget for a construction, upgrading and expansion of road networks in Thanhlyin Township, a major port city of Myanmar, located across Bago River from the commercial city of Yangon.

The funds went mainly to construct road facilities in cooperation with residents. The regional authorities allotted Ks5 million each to villages or wards. Usually, a road will be built with two-thirds of funds provided by the government and the rest contributed by residents. Development works have been initiated since last month and it is estimated to finalise each road paving project before the end of this financial year.

Ko Naing Moe Wai, one of the residents from Thanhlyin Township, said the government is now replacing the broken roads with concrete ones in some villages.

Moreover, water supply projects, garbage management system, electricity and other sanitation activities have also been carried out by authorities in partnership with local people.

—Myitmakha News Agency

Middle-school teacher charged with bilking Ks9.3 million from job seekers

A MIDDLE-SCHOOL teacher in Bago Region has been charged with bilking Ks9.3 million from job seekers, who want to employ government’s education department, by police at the end of October.

The female teacher from a post-primary school in Kutaung Village in Bago Township, currently accused of committing fraud against two women by using illegal appointment letters.

After an investigation into the suspected teacher, the Bago Region police took further legal action against her on suspicion of bilking over nine million from other 19 job hunters within August, said Police Captain Soe Paing.

The school teacher is facing legal charges under Sections 420 and 468 of the Penal Code, the crime of cheating of people money illegally.—Myitmakha News Agency

Kachin State needs Tatmadaw’s assistance to eliminate illegal timber trading

SECURITY assistance provided by the Tatmadaw (Myanmar Armed Forces) plays a crucial role in eliminating illegal trading of forest products in Kachin State, said U Naing Naing Tun, assistant director of the state environmental conservation and forest department.

The majority of illegal timber trafficking cases occurred along border area between China and Myanmar through conflicts-hit Kachin State.

There is no sufficient number of staff at the Tatmadaw post.

The department can send only two staffers to inspect 100,000-acre of forest to prevent the timber smuggling in the state.

Forest police can arrest some cases occurred in the townships. However, the department needs the help of police and members of Myanmar Armed Forces to seize the illegal logging in conflict areas, said Col Thura Myo Tin, Kachin State Minister for Security and Border Affairs.

Currently, the local authorities are making inspection along Ayeyawady River to control illegal logging in the target area. At the same time, the department accelerates its efforts to uncover the staff involved in the illegal logging.

Action is being taken against an employee of forest department involved in the illegal timber trafficking this year under the existing laws.—Myitmakha News Agency

Crime NEWS

Man arrested for murder of his neighbour

A 25-YEAR-OLD man was arrested on Sunday afternoon on suspicion that he stabbed his neighbor to death, police reported yesterday.

According to the investigators, the suspect named Saw Lwel Hla Htoo said that he killed the 49-year-old man called U Gyi Nan (aka U Khin Htwe), a farmer who bothered the suspect’s wife before he was killed.

Police found the body of the victim with several knife injuries on his head and back of the body, in the creek near Hlinson Village in Pathein Township in Ayeyawady Region at around 5 p.m. on October 29. The suspect is now facing legal charges under Section 302 and Section 201 of the Penal Code for murdering and causing disappearance of evidence of offence.—Myitmakha News Agency

Yaba pills seized in Taunggyi and Kyaukse Townships

TAUNGGYI Myoma Police searched a motorbike driven by Maung Oo on Mongpyin-Taunggyi road in Kauk Ngu and Maethawaw in Kayin State, said the government is now replacing the broken roads with concrete ones in some villages.

Moreover, water supply projects, garbage management system, electricity and other sanitation activities have also been carried out by authorities in partnership with local people.

—Myitmakha News Agency

Police have filed charges against them under the Psychotropic Substances and Anti-Drugs Law.—Myanmar Police Force

Police have filed charges against them under the Psychotropic Substances and Anti-Drugs Law.—Myanmar Police Force

Photo: MPF

Middle-school teacher charged with bilking Ks9.3 million from job seekers. PHOTO: MPF

Ma Htway Htway Shein, Win Naung, Ohnlonie, and Aung Kyaw Hsang being seen together with the seized yaba pills. PHOTO: MPF

Yaba pills seized in Taunggyi and Kyaukse Townships
State Counsellor receives Industry and Trade Minister of Czech Republic

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received a Czech delegation led by Mr Jan Mlä’dek, Minister for Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic, yesterday at the Minister’s Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, they discussed matters pertaining to promoting the bilateral trade and economic cooperation between Myanmar and the Czech Republic including industrial and energy sectors and investments to promote the agricultural sector.— Myanmar News Agency

Suspects in violent armed attacks in Rakhine State arrested

BORDER guard police arrested two men yesterday who allegedly transported to Bangladesh some of the people involved in the 9 October attacks on police outposts in northern Rakhine State. The men allegedly received payment of Ks100,000 per person.

Kawri Mullah, son of Zawhi Ahmed of Thasi Village and Barbaks, son of Sorfa Tu-lah of Mingalarpyi Village in Mingalarpyi Village-tract in Maungtaw Township were arrested by police in their respective villages.

According to investigators, the two men also transported others involved in the armed violent attacks in Maungtaw Township to neighbouring countries.

Similarly, Nu Areloung, a suspect in the violent attacks, was arrested by police on 30 October near Butidaung Myoma Market. The detainees have been transferred to Pyinphyu Township Police Station and Maungtaw Township Police Station to be charged under the law.— Myawady

Suspicous fire broke out in Ngakhuya Village, Maungtaw

A SUSPICIOUS fire that began in a shop in Ngakhuya Village broke out at about 8.30 pm on Sunday. Border guard forces who helped extinguish the blaze.

As the fire spread to other buildings, the border guards had to ask local people from other villages and members of the security forces to assist them in bringing the fire under control. The fire engulfed six shops including a motorcycle repair shop, motorcycle parts shop, a furniture shop, a barber shop and two empty stores. Tatmadaw troops and border guards continue to provide security for local people. — Myawady

VP U Myint Swe receives Czech Industry and Trade Minister

Vice President U Myint Swe received Mr Jan Mlä’dek, Minister for Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic yesterday in the Diplomatic Hall of the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, they discussed matters on promoting cooperation for development of the industry, energy, trade and agri-cultural sectors in Myanmar.

Also present at the call were Minister of State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin and officials.— Myanmar News Agency

President addresses fiscal challenges ...

>> From page 1

Now the process for achieving political stability, national reconciliation and Union peace are on the right path. After the transfer of power from the old regime to the new government, we are now building new administrative machinery. This year, governmental departments need to frugally spend their budgets and to find more revenue. Draft law on revised budget estimates for the fiscal year 2016-2017 to be submitted by Union Minister for Finance, the secretary to the finance commission, is to be discussed and approved” the president said.

Afterwards, Vice President U Myint Swe said: “According to the budget management during the first 6-month period, some ministries and organisations got a revenue of Ks173,509 billion more than expected, with some spending Ks910,990 billion more than the originally expected amount. Out of Ks2121.779 billion demanded by Union level organisations as a refilled budget, Ks1354.614 billion was allotted. In terms of revenue, the revised estimate is Ks17152.500 billion, and the revised budget expenditure was Ks21177.614 billion, thus the revised estimate expenditure deficit is Ks4025.130 billion. Ratio of deficit and GDP is 4.97. Therefore draft law on revised budget estimate for the year 2016-2017 which has been assessed by the finance commission needs to be approved”.

Vice President U Henry Van Thio, Union Minister U Kyaw Win, Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council and region and state chief ministers also gave their opinions. In his closing address, President U Htin Kyaw urged the governmental organisations to undertake responsibility and accountability, as there is growing concern about the national economy. He also said the current situation requires the departments to systematically spend the country’s finance in accordance with rules and regulations set by internal audits and Union Auditor-General offices.—Myanmar News Agency

Traffic accidents on Yangon-Mandalay expressway claim 134 deaths

A TOTAL of 633 accidents on Yangon-Mandalay expressway from January to October of this year claimed 134 lives and injured 1,074 people, according to Expressway Police.

Police have been trying to take action against speeding vehicles on the expressway on three sections of the highway and cited over 1,700 drivers who were found to be speeding. Despite the increased effort, the number of traffic accidents on the highway has not yet decreased. — Myanmar News Agency

A suspicious fire destroying six shops in Ngakhuya Village.

PHOTO: MYAWADY

PHOTO: MNA

PHOTO: MNA

PHOTO: MNA
Mandalay No1 and 2 Industrial zones to be upgraded to meet international criteria

THE No. 1 and No. 2 industrial zones in Mandalay will be upgraded to meet international criteria to be able to manufacture agricultural machines and equipment, it is learnt.

There are 392 heavy enterprises, 304 middle-sized enterprises and 596 small-scale enterprises in the Mandalay industrial zone, with 13 categories of manufacturing businesses.

Upgrading of the industrial zone will deal primarily with technical problems. The machines used in production are also required to meet the prescribed criteria. Foreign investment in the zone is essential in order to bring down the prices of equipment and service charges, said U Khin Maung Oo, a businessman in Mandalay industrial zone.

There is virtually no manufacturing of equipment used in agri-business in the zone. If there were agricultural machine manufacturing factories in the zone, the machines would more easily reach the farmers in upper Myanmar. Foreign investment can only constitute a maximum of 49 percent of the agriculture sector, with the remaining 51 percent going to the state. However, investments of 51 percent can be a financial burden on the state. Therefore, this limitation needs to be relaxed, said U Soe Thar, an industrial entrepreneur.

To improve the industrial zone, the authorities concerned are making efforts to provide sufficient electrical supply and sanitation facilities, it is learnt. — 200

Management course to be offered in Tokyo for Myanmar executives

THE Overseas Human Resources and Industry Development Association (HIDA) will offer the Role of Executives for Better Industrial Relations in Global Era (ERGE) course to members of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) from 23rd January to 3rd February, 2017.

Those who meet the set qualifications are entitled to submit applications by 7th November, 2016, presenting the required documents, an autobiography, a membership certificate of UMFCCI or associated companies and a recommendation from their association. For further details, contact hrd.umfcci@gmail.com.

The course will offer practical management skills. Those selected to attend will be funded for accommodation, but applications need to be received before the deadline, said an official from Mandalay Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

HIDA is an organization for human resources development in developing countries to promote technical cooperation through training, experts dispatch and other programmes.

The course aims at sharing administrative strategies to be applied in industrial relations. They will also share culture, opinions and cooperation with the labour force in Japanese companies. — 200

Low market supply increases onion price

The low supply of onions has led to a price increase in recent days, it is learnt from the Bayintnaung commodity depot. Merchants are warned not to manipulate the price and efforts are being made to bring the price back to regular levels, said U Khin Han, the chairperson from the Myanmar Onion, Garlic and Culinary Crops Production and Exporting Association.

The price of onions has increased by Ks1,000 per viss at the Bayintnaung market due mostly to weather conditions that resulted in a lower yield, U Khin Han said.

On 20th October, the price of onions from Seikpyu, Monywa, Meikhtila, Myingyan and Minbu townships soared from Ks175 to Ks875 per viss. The current prevailing price of onions ranges from Ks500 to Ks1,600 per viss, it is learnt from the Agriculture and Market Information Agency (AMIA).

The volume of onion exports last year was 35,000 tonnes. About 30,000 tonnes of onions were exported to foreign countries so far this year. The export of onions fetched US$200-225 per tonne, it is learnt.

Myanmar exports onions to China and Thailand through border trade and to Indonesia, Malaysia and Viet Nam through normal trade. Currently, onion exports are suspended due to low supply, said U Khin Han.

During the previous year, the Ministry of Commerce gave permission to import onions from China and Thailand because of the exorbitant prices of domestic onions. Nearly 30 truckloads — about 200,000 vasses of onions entered the Bayintnaung depot, it is reported. — Phyo Lwin Aung (AMIA)

8,000 lots of jade to be on display at Gems and Jewellery emporium

NEARLY 8,000 jade lots will reportedly be exhibited at the Gems and Jewellery Emporium from 22nd to 29th November in Nay Pyi Taw, it is learnt from the Myanmar Gems and Jewellery Entrepreneurs Association.

The companies are currently submitting their jade lots to be on display at the emporium. The accurate number of jade lots, finished gem products and pearl lots are still unknown but an estimate of nearly 8,000 jade lots are likely, officials said.

The rough jade stones will be sold through an open tender system and competitive bidding, it is learnt.

The jade will be sold for between 4,000 to 200,000 euros per item, according to a reserve price in open tender, whereas it will be sold at 200,001 euros and above in competitive bidding.

Nearly 9,000 rough jade lots were exhibited at last year’s emporium, earning 900 million euros, whereas nearly 6,000 jade lots were displayed at the emporium held in June, fetching 520 million euros. — Ko Htet

Management course to be offered in Tokyo for Myanmar executives

THE Overseas Human Resources and Industry Development Association (HIDA) will offer the Role of Executives for Better Industrial Relations in Global Era (ERGE) course to members of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) from 23rd January to 3rd February, 2017.

Those who meet the set qualifications are entitled to submit applications by 7th November, 2016, presenting the required documents, an autobiography, a membership certificate of UMFCCI or associated companies and a recommendation from their association. For further details, contact hrd.umfcci@gmail.com.

The course will offer practical management skills. Those selected to attend will be funded for accommodation, but applications need to be received before the deadline, said an official from Mandalay Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

HIDA is an organization for human resources development in developing countries to promote technical cooperation through training, experts dispatch and other programmes.

The course aims at sharing administrative strategies to be applied in industrial relations. They will also share culture, opinions and cooperation with the labour force in Japanese companies. — 200

Low market supply increases onion price

The low supply of onions has led to a price increase in recent days, it is learnt from the Bayintnaung commodity depot. Merchants are warned not to manipulate the price and efforts are being made to bring the price back to regular levels, said U Khin Han, the chairperson from the Myanmar Onion, Garlic and Culinary Crops Production and Exporting Association.

The price of onions has increased by Ks1,000 per viss at the Bayintnaung market due mostly to weather conditions that resulted in a lower yield, U Khin Han said.

On 20th October, the price of onions from Seikpyu, Monywa, Meikhtila, Myingyan and Minbu townships soared from Ks175 to Ks875 per viss. The current prevailing price of onions ranges from Ks500 to Ks1,600 per viss, it is learnt from the Agriculture and Market Information Agency (AMIA).

The volume of onion exports last year was 35,000 tonnes. About 30,000 tonnes of onions were exported to foreign countries so far this year. The export of onions fetched US$200-225 per tonne, it is learnt.

Myanmar exports onions to China and Thailand through border trade and to Indonesia, Malaysia and Viet Nam through normal trade. Currently, onion exports are suspended due to low supply, said U Khin Han.

During the previous year, the Ministry of Commerce gave permission to import onions from China and Thailand because of the exorbitant prices of domestic onions. Nearly 30 truckloads — about 200,000 vasses of onions entered the Bayintnaung depot, it is reported. — Phyo Lwin Aung (AMIA)
ISLAMABAD — A Pakistani court on Monday granted opposition politician Imran Khan permission to hold anti-government protests in the capital this week, but warned that demonstrations should not disrupt life for citizens, media reported.

Khan had threatened to “shut down” the capital Islamabad on Wednesday as part of his push to unseat Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on grounds of alleged corruption linked to the “Panama Papers” leak.

But on Sunday, he backtracked, saying his rallying cry to stop the government function from working was not a direct threat, but rather a prediction of what would happen if his supporters flooded into the city.

The Islamabad High Court on Monday dismissed government challenges to Wednesday’s protests, but ordered that Khan hold the demonstration on a parade ground far from the city’s main government and commercial districts, Geo Television reported.

Justice Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui also ordered the government to ensure protection for the fundamental rights of residents of the capital to go about their daily lives, Geo reported.

Last week, the government enforced administrative orders outlawing gatherings of more than five people in Pakistan’s neighbour- ing and surrounding areas. Since then, dozens of activists belonging to Khan’s Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf have been arrested, the party says.

Khan, a former national cricketing hero, has vowed not to back down unless Sharif either resigns, or submits himself for investigations into the “Panama Papers” leaks.

Documents from the Panama-based Mossack Fonseca law firm in April appear to show that Sharif’s daughter and two sons owned offshore holding companies registered in the British Virgin Islands. Sharif’s family denies wrongdoings.

—Reuters

Pakistan court clears way for Imran Khan to hold anti-government protest

Pakistani opposition leader Imran Khan (C) talks to media outside his house in Islamabad, Pakistan, on 28 October 2016. Photo: Reuters

Ex-Nissan worker found guilty of illegally obtaining company’s secrets

TOKYO — A former employee of Nissan Motor Co. was found guilty Monday of illegally obtaining business secrets by accessing the company’s computer server.

The Yokohama District Court sentenced Kenichi Okamura, 39, to one year in prison, suspended for three years. Prosecutors had sought 18 months in prison.

The defendant had pleaded not guilty, saying the data he acquired from the company did not constitute business secrets.

But Presiding Judge Hiroko Kondo dismissed his claim, saying in the ruling that “access to the data was restricted and so the defendant was aware that they were business secrets.” She added it was reasonable to assume he intended to use the data at his new employer.

According to the ruling, Okamura copied the company’s data on new vehicle plans from his home in Atsugi, Kanagawa Prefecture, and a Nissan-related facility in July 2013.

The prosecutors had also indicted Okamura for allegedly photocopying part of a corporate textbook on vehicle manufacturing processes at the company’s training facility in Yokohama sometime between November 2010 and July 2013, and taking the material with him to another automaker where he found a new job.—Kyodo News

British banker’s defence cites sexual disorder in HK double murder trial

HONG KONG — British investment banker Rurik Jutting was a narcissistic sexual sadist trying to cover a “fragile” shell with schoolboy abuse, according to his defence case against charges of murdering two Indonesian women in his Hong Kong apartment.

Opening Jutting’s defence on Monday, lawyer Tim Owen called on Dr Richard Latham, a consulting forensic psychologist with Britain’s National Health Service who has worked on between 50 to 75 similar cases. Latham told the court, adding Jutting’s narcissistic tendencies of being boastful was a means to cover up. Owen said Jutting had been a victim of sexual assault during his teenage years at Winchester College, one of Britain’s oldest and most prestigious public schools, when he was forced to perform oral sex on another boy. The defence also detailed Jutting’s father attempted suicide.

The trial has attracted international scrutiny since it began last week with media flying in from Britain to cover the case and the court room has been perpetually full. Jutting captured hours of footage on his iPhone of him torturing Ningsih. He also filmed rambling monologues where he discussed the murders, brined on cocaine and explained his violent sexual fantasies.

“The thing I never had before in a case is the video recordings he made himself because they give you a direct view of what he was like around the time of these two killings,” Latham told the court.

Latham said that in 2011 Jutting developed a strong preference for sexual violence, torture, rape and slavery. He moved from using pornography to “acting out these things with people in a consensual way and then he gradually testing out things that were not really consensual.”—Reuters

TRADE MARK
CAUTION NOTICE
Alitcor Inc., a company ORGANIZED UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND HAVING ITS PRINCIPAL OFFICE AT 7755 FULTON STREET EAST, AUBURN HILLS, MICHIGAN 48326, U.S.A. IS THE OWNER AND SOLE PROPRIETOR OF THE FOLLOWING TRADEMARKS:

DOUBLE X
Reg. No. 4/12528/2013
Registered in respect of:
Dietary supplement of vitamins, minerals and other nutrients. (Int. Cl 5)

Any fraudulent imitation or unauthorized use of the said trademark or other infringers whatsoever will be dealt with according to law.

Aung Naing Moe (Advocate)
Ong Minn U (Advocate)
Myi Phyo Kin (H.G.P.)

Advertise with us Hotline 09-974424848

Myanmar International Convention Centre 2 ကြီးကြန်သော အခန်းကျင်များ
Main Sponsors

Myanmar Global Law Firm
Ph: 0997220023
DATED: 1 NOVEMBER 2016
Key figure in South Korea political crisis appears at prosecutors’ office

SEOUL — The woman at the centre of a South Korean political scandal appeared on Monday at the office of prosecutors investigating allegations she used her friendship with President Park Geun-hye to influence state affairs and benefit personally.

Choi Soon-sil, wearing a hat and scarf and covering her face with her hand, pushed her way through a crowd of journalists and people holding up signs demanding her arrest and Park’s resignation to enter the prosecution building in Seoul.

“Please forgive me,” said Choi, who lost a shoe in the scrum, according to pool reporters who followed her into the building’s entrance.

Choi returned to South Korea early on Sunday from Germany, where she had been staying, and was ready to answer prosecutors’ questions, her lawyer said earlier.

She had been under intense pressure to return as the political crisis engulfed Park over allegations that she allowed Choi to use her friendship to exert improper influence and reap benefits.

Thousands of South Koreans rallied on Saturday demanding Park’s resignation over the scandal.

Angry Koreans say Park betrayed public trust and mishandled the government, and has lost a mandate to lead.

Opposition parties have demanded a thorough investigation but have not raised the possibility of impeaching the president.

A public apology from Park last week for giving her friend access to draft speeches during the first months of her presidency did little to deflect demands that Park reveal the full nature of her ties with Choi and whether she enjoyed favours because of her friendship with the president.

Park, the daughter of a former president, Park Chung-hee, said she had consulted Choi with good intentions and Choi was someone “who gave me help when I was going through a difficult time”.

Choi, in her first comments after weeks of reports about her ties with Park, told a newspaper last week she did get drafts of Park’s speeches after Park’s election victory but denied she had access to other official material, or that she influenced state affairs or benefited financially.

Choi’s lawyer, Lee Kyung-jae, said outside the prosecutors’ office that Choi was in poor health and may be suffering from a heart condition, which he would discuss with prosecutors.

—Reuters

Australian PM defends proposal to permanently bar boat people

SYDNEY — Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull defended on Monday a proposal to ban asylum seekers who arrive illegally by boat from ever entering Australia again, rejecting criticism from rights lawyers who say it would breach the UN Refugee Convention.

Under Australia’s tough immigration laws, asylum seekers intercepted trying to reach the country by boat are sent for processing at detention camps on Papua New Guinea’s Manus island and the tiny South Pacific island nation of Nauru.

Some 1,200 people are currently held in the camps, and Turnbull’s proposal has sparked speculation that the government has reached some deal for them to be resettled in the United States.

The legality of forever barring people from entering Australia after they have been resettled in a third country, having been officially recognised as refugees, has been questioned by rights lawyers and refugee support groups.

They say it would contravene the UN Refugee Convention, which states that no country will impose penalties on refugees due to their illegal entry or presence.

Turnbull, however, defended the proposal he first made on Sunday, and the government is expected to introduce the amendment in parliament next week.

“We have taken legal advice and we are satisfied it is within power and consistent with our international obligations,” Turnbull told reporters in Yangon.

Australia’s policy of indefinite offshore detention has led to strong domestic and international criticism.

A resettlement deal could help Turnbull’s approval ratings, which this month fell to the lowest level since he assumed office in September 2015.

Pressure on Australia to find a country willing to take some of the 1,200 detainees grew after Papua New Guinea’s Supreme Court ordered the closure of the Manus Island detention centres earlier this year.

The United Nations and human rights groups have condemned alleged human rights abuses in the centres.

While refugee advocates welcomed moves to resettle detainees, they fear that more families would be divided if it was passed and, questioned its legality on constitutional grounds.

“The inherently discriminatory legislation is legally dubious and would likely face a constitutional challenge even if it did pass the parliament,” said the Refugee Action Coalition.

“Offshore detention has already divided husbands and wives and parents from children, brothers from sisters. Turnbull’s threat of a lifetime ban would mean more divided partners and families.”

—Reuters

Thailand offers $1bn loan to struggling jasmine rice farmers

BANGKOK — Thailand’s rice management committee said on Monday it will offer loans worth $1 billion to jasmine rice farmers struggling with falling prices, on a condition that they store the grain for six months to slow down market supply.

The new rice harvest season is currently underway in Thailand, the world’s second-biggest rice exporter, and the Southeast Asian nation expects output of the grain for the 2016/17 production year to come in at 25 million tonnes.

Prices for jasmine rice, Thailand’s highest quality rice, have tumbled to their lowest level in years, leaving the military government scrambling to appease the country’s farmers.

The 35.8 billion baht ($1.02 billion) loan scheme, which will be implemented by Thailand’s state-owned Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC), is aimed at curbing an oversupply of jasmine rice in the market and stabilising prices, said Commerce Minister Apiradee Tantraporn.

“If we can push up prices of jasmine rice, prices of other rice varieties will go up too,” Apiradee told reporters in a news conference in Bangkok on Monday.

The loans will be provided to 2 million farm households to hold on to their jasmine rice stocks for six months, said Supat Eawchai, the bank’s assistant manager.

The government will follow up with other measures to help improve rice prices, Apiradee said.

Prices for Thai 100 per cent jasmine rice were quoted at $725 per tonne, FOB Bangkok, on Friday.

It was the lowest since hitting $710 a tonne in January 2008, according to Reuters data.

Thai jasmine rice made up 25 per cent of Thailand’s total rice exports from January to August this year, according to data from the Thai Rice Exporters Association.

The commerce ministry said this month its rice export push for the last quarter of 2016 will help support Thai rice prices during the annual harvest period.

—Reuters
Regional 71 November 2016

Smog chokes Delhi as pollution hits hazardous levels

NEW DELHI — Residents of New Delhi woke up to a blanket of smog on Monday as air quality deteriorated sharply overnight in India’s capital, triggering warnings that even healthy people were at risk of respiratory problems.

New Delhi ranks among the world’s most polluted cities, with air quality usually worsening at this time of year, when smoke from firecrackers celebrating the Hindu festival of lights and crops burnt in nearby states envelopes the city of 16 million.

Drivers crawled through a thick fog as experts warned people to avoid outdoor exertion.

“Last night, levels hit the severe category, which is the worst. You could see and sense how the visibility had come down and there was a choking haze all around,” said Anumita Roychowdhury at the Centre for Science and Environment.

Levels of PM 2.5, tiny particulate matter that reaches deep into the lungs, were more than double within a few hours to 750 micrograms per cubic metre in the city’s worst affected parts, India’s Central Pollution Control Board said.

That is 30 times a mean guideline of 25 micrograms per cubic metre on average over a 24-hour period set by the World Health Organisation (WHO), which says outdoor air pollution killed 3.7 million people worldwide in 2012.

The US embassy in New Delhi said its air pollution index had late on Sunday breached the “hazardous” upper limit of 500, at which it stops measuring levels of PM 2.5. The index had rocketed to 1,126 by 2 am (2030 GMT).

Roychowdhury said data was not available to assess if Delhi’s air was worse on average than in prior years. Air quality is usually poorest in Delhi’s winter months of December and January.

Authorities have responded with measures such as a ban on old trucks entering the city and briefly trialling a scheme that limited private vehicle usage to alternate days, but experts say they have done little to reduce pollution.

Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, on 31 October.

Security personnel stand guard in front of the India Gate amidst the heavy smog in New Delhi, India, on 31 October, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Indonesian officials urge calm ahead of Jakarta election protest

JAKARTA — Top Indonesian officials on Monday called for calm ahead of a planned protest by hardline Muslim groups that has fuelled concern over religious and ethnic tension in the run-up to next year’s election of the capital’s governor.

Thousands of hardline Muslims are expected to take to the streets on Friday to protest against the incumbent, who is a Christian and the first ethnic Chinese in the job, after he made comments about the Islamic holy book, the Koran.

But political, securi-

ty, and religious fig-

ures in the world’s largest Muslim-majority nation have urged demonstrators to protest peacefully.

“I, along with religious and political figures, have been cooling sentiment...because rivalries exist...but after elections, we must stand together to build the nation,” President Joko Widodo told a joint news conference with top opposition official Prabowo Subianto.

Earlier on Monday, in response to a question about the planned protest, Widodo said, “Protesting is a democratic right and the government guarantees the right to express opinions, but also prioritises public order.”

Protest organisers the Islamic Defenders Front, a small hardline group, is known for violent protests and attacks against minorities since it was formed in 1999. It has also frequently protested against Jakarta governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, known locally as “Ahok”. The group made no immediate comment in response to the officials’ call for calm. The government will deploy thousands of police and military personnel to provide security on the day of the protest. The post of Jakarta governor is a prestigious role that is sometimes seen as a stepping stone to higher political office.

President Widodo served as Jakarta governor for 1-1/2 years before running for and winning, the presidency in 2014.

Purnama, who took over for Widodo, has gained a reputation as a tough reformer, but Muslim groups in several cities have marched against the Protestant governor, urging Jakarta residents not to re-elect him in February.

The governor has the backing of Widodo and his ruling party, however, and remains a frontrunner in opinion polls.—Reuters

Indonesia pays tributes to country’s first woman PM Indira Gandhi

NEW DELHI — India’s government paid rich tributes to the country’s first woman prime minister, Indira Gandhi, on her 32nd death anniversary.

Indian President Pranab Mukherjee, Vice President Hamid Ansari, main opposition Congress party’s chief Sonia Gandhi and her son Rahul paid floral tributes to Indira Gandhi at the former PM’s memorial in Delhi, in presence of senior party leaders and former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

Earlier this morning, Nehru-Gandhi scion Rahul Gandhi had led a rally from the Congress party’s headquar-

ters in Delhi to the former prime minister’s house where he was assassinated by her bodyguards on 31 October, 1984. However, no minister from the central government was present during the occasion, a senior Congress leader told the media. Indira Gandhi was the only child of India’s first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru. She served as prime minister from 1966 to 1977 and then again from 1980 until her assassination in 1984, making her the sec-

ond-longest-serving prime minister after her father.

She was assassinated in 1984 by her Sikh body-

guards a few months after she had ordered the storm-

ing of the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple, the hol-

est shrine of the Sikhs) in the northern Indian state of Punjab’s city of Amritsar to counter the Punjab insur-

gency.—Xinhua
A lie can travel half way around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes.

A lie tends to easily & promptly spread more than the truth. As per human nature, men are more interested in gory and compromising things than pleasing ones. They usually prefer idle gossips to true stories. World-famous persons such as Mark Twain, Winston Churchill and Thomas Jefferson quoted the above saying that depicts definite-ly human nature in their speeches. However, some lies and concocted stories are found to be conspiracies with subversive aims behind, putting on the wrong face of seem- ing common gossips.

Following the October 9 armed violent attack in Maungtaw District, northern border area of Rakhine State in which nine border guard policemen were killed and over 50 firearms were taken away, the area was designated as the military opera-tion zone and area clearance op-erations had to be launched. Gen-erally analyzing, timely conspired violent attacks with the aids of foreign-based terrorists and ter-rorist groups can be said to have achieved the success of their stra-te-gies to some extent. They waged violent attacks, target-geting at going astray in the gov-ernment’s activities to build a state of peace and stability in Ra-khine State and for local ethnicies to abandon their locations for fear. Concurrently, they spread rumours through website media linking with religious and racial extremists—claiming that females were raped, religious edifices were burnt down and their belongings were looted—worldwide without hesi-tation.

As regards the armed attacks in Rakhine State, the State Coun-sellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi empha-sized, “The government’s at-tempts to solve the problem in all fairness and calibre under rule of law need to be declared to the world. Myanmar government is trying its best in solving problems and claims on violation of human rights, and the meaning of human rights is broad, it is concerned with every country, hence the need for the global understanding and acknowledgement over the government’s efforts for stability and peace in the country,” in the press conference held on 12 Octo-ber with the Netherlands Foreign Minister.

In October 9 violent armed attacks, border guard policemen were killed, were as the Tatmadaw troops in area clearance opera-tions. Besides, local minoritys abandoned their dwelling places and farmlands to leave for safe loc-a-tions. Some locals fetching fire-wood and wood in the forest were shot down. To hide the actual situa-tions, social media are spreading false news and information in connection with terrorist groups via internet website, and interna-tional media also spread them, lacking the scrutiny as to whether news are confirmed or not.

As a matter of fact, affairs in northern Rakhine are not con-cerned with racial and religious conflicts. It is the sole affair which offends the sovereignty of Myan-mar and trespasses Myanmar ter-ritory. Simultaneously, Rakhine nationals are not the aggressive ones towards foreigners, but who pro-fess other religions. They have been living together with Islamists Kamans for years. The govern-ment is responsible for solving any problems of offending the country’s sovereignty, threatening its populace’s lives and property, violating rule of law and causing instability.

In other words, the thorn has to be removed as it pierces.
Chief of Defence Services holds talks with Chinese counterpart

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received a ceremonial welcome in Beijing, China, by Gen Fang Fenghui, the Chief of Joint Staff and a member of the Central Military Commission of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) of the People’s Republic of China.

At the ceremony, the two chiefs received a formal salute and then inspected the Honour Guard.

Afterwards, they held talks over exchange of goodwill visits by leaders of the two armed forces, coordination at a strategic level, peace and stability at border areas, cooperation in sports, culture and in the medical and training sectors.

After the meeting, General Fang Fenghui hosted a dinner in honour of the Myanmar military delegation.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and party visited Ling Guang St Temple in Beijing and paid homage to the Buddha’s Tooth Relic.

The delegation also visited the exhibition of the CETC company in Beijing.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Myanmar parliamentary delegation concludes visit to S Korea

A MYANMAR delegation led by U Win Myint, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw, arrived back Yangon yesterday after paying a visit to the Republic of Korea.

Before coming back Myanmar, the delegation visited Arisa Filtration Plant, in Seoul, South Korea, yesterday.

Afterwards, the delegation visited the Transport Control Centre in Seoul.

The Myanmar delegation left Seoul for Myanmar as they concluded the goodwill visit to South Korea. They were seen off at the Incheon Airport by MPs from Korean parliament and Myanmar Ambassador to the Republic of Korea Thura U Thet Oo Maung.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Proceeds from Carnival Walk to go to charity

WITH the aim of promoting healthy habits among families by changing lifestyle, Active Family Day Out 2016 “Carnival Walk” is set for Yangon in December, aiming to donate the proceeds from the event to aid organisations.

Scheduled to take place on 3 December at People’s Park in Yangon, the new event is open to all ages, inviting interested people to make registration to take part in the event between 11 and 28 November at marketplace by City Mart (Golden Valley branch), City Mart Supermarket (Thamine branch) and Ocean Supercenter (Shwegondine branch).

The registration fees is K3,000 per form, which includes up to three people to participate. 100 % of registration fees will go to philanthropic organizations including Yankin Children’s Hospital and a local body to eliminate trafficking in persons through City Love and Hope Foundation, said one of organisers. Several entertainment programmes such as family games and activities, special games for kids, a sale of traditional food for health and lucky draw programme will be included in the upcoming family fun day with the goal of promoting healthy lifestyle choices, said May Zin Soe Htet, marketing manager of City Mart Holding Co.

The first-ever event was held in 2014 and attracted 2,000 people at People’s Park, messaging about the importance of families staying active and the enjoyment of doing activities together as a family. Last year’s Active Family Day Out Event was celebrat ed by roughly 2,500 participants in Yangon.—*Myitmikha News Agency*

K 330 million development project to implement in Thaton

THATON Township Development Committee plans to spend K 330 million budget allotted for implementation of development project in the township this fiscal year, its spokesperson said.

The project will include construction of road and bridge facilities, water supply and sanitation plans across Thaton, a town in Mon State located on the south of Myanmar.

The authorities plan to spend Ks218.5 million on 22 road projects, Ks22.9 million on construction of bridges, Ks54.6 million on distribution of water and Ks38.2 million on cleaning and greening of the town. The committee invites popular participation in the development programmes, urging residents to report on the needs in their wards and streets to the committee.

A local expressed his view that locals see the positive changes of the committee, which raised funds for the township’s development scheme including garbage collection.

The Thaton Township Development Committee plans to expand the fulfillment of development facilities covering expansion of road networks and paving access road so as to provide better services for dwellers next financial year.—*Myitmikha News Agency*

POEM:

“The Poetess’s Philosophy”

* Everything on earth isn’t permanent.
  If changes, it never stands still.
  Whatever exists will eventually decay.
  All ends against our will.
* It is only the fools who blame others,
  The broad-minded blame themselves.
  The noblest blames neither himself nor the others.
  All in the world comes and goes only by themselves.
* Gold is found to be always yellow.
  But not every yellow is gold.
  Not all educated are wise,
  But the wise are always educated, it’s told.
* If Jack were better, Jill wouldn’t be so bad.
  I’m always against that saying.
  “Jack may either be good or bad, but Jill must be good.”
  What about my idea of changing that saying?

Daw Aye Aye Pyone
(Retired Teacher)
Iraqi forces resume offensive towards eastern Mosul

Baghdad — Iraqi troops resumed on Monday a co-ordinated offensive towards Mosul, the last major city held by Islamic State, targeting the eastern bank of the Tigris river that divides the city, military officials said.

The army’s counter-terrorism unit had paused its advance last week after it made ground quicker than forces on other fronts, to allow them to close the gap and get nearer to the city.

Iraqi security forces and Kurdish Peshmerga fighters started the offensive on 17 October, aiming to cut the route between Mosul and Raqqa, Islamic State’s main stronghold in Syria.

The battle for Mosul, still home to 1.5 million residents, is shaping up to be one of the toughest in a decade of turmoil following the US-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein in 2003.

“The operation to lib-erate the left bank of Mosul has started,” said a military statement, referring to the eastern bank of the river that flows from north to south. Another statement said five villages were taken north of Mosul, where Peshmerga fighters are also being deployed.

Islamic State militants has been fighting off the two-week offensive with suicide car bombs, snipers and mortar fire. They have also set oil wells on fire to cover their movements and displaced thousands of civilians from villages toward Mosul, using them as human shields, UN officials and villagers who spoke to Reuters have said.

Worst-case United Nations forecasts see up to 1 million people being uprooted by the fighting, which UN aid agencies said had so far forced about 17,500 people to flee — a figure that excludes those taken into Mosul by the treating militiants. — Reuters

Aleppo fighting spreads amid accusations of gas attack

Amman/Beirut — Syrian rebels opened a new front in Aleppo as fighting spread on the third day of a major insurgent counter-attack to break the govern-ment’s siege of the opposition-held part of the city, and each side accused the other of using poison gas.

The rebels, including both Free Syrian Army factions and jihadists, are seeking to end the siege by seizing government-held areas of Aleppo, in an effort to link the city’s rebel-held east with rebel-held rural areas to the west of the city.

Syrian state media said militiants had fired shells containing chlorine gas at a residential area of the govern-ment-held western part of the city, al-Hamdaniya. Rebels denied that, and said government forces had fired poison gas on another frontline.

State media cited an Aleppo hospital director saying three dozen people — civilians and soldiers — had suffered suffocation in the alleged rebel gas at-tack, but did not report any deaths.

The Syrian Observa-tory for Human Rights, a UK-based organisation that reports on the war, said it had confirmed reports of suffocation among govern-ment fighters in two front-line areas shelled by rebels, but it did not know if chlorine gas was the cause.

The rebels said the army had shelled rebel-held Rashideen district with chlorine and shared video purporting to show victims with respiratory problems. Aleppo, Syria’s biggest pre-war city, has become the main stage of conflict between President Bashar al-Assad, backed by Iran, Russia and Shi’ite militias, and Sunni rebels including some support-ed by Turkey, Gulf mon-archies and the United States. — Reuters

Claims Day Notice

Claims Day Notice

Claims Day Notice

Claims Day Notice

Claims Day Notice

Claims Day Notice

Claims Day Notice

Claims Day Notice
One in seven children suffer high air pollution: UNICEF

OSLO — Almost one in seven children worldwide live in areas with high levels of outdoor air pollution, mostly in South Asia, and their growing bodies are most vulnerable to damage, the UN children’s agency UNICEF said on Monday.

UNICEF called on almost 200 governments, which will meet in New York from 18-18 November for talks on global warming, to restrict use of fossil fuels to give twin benefits of improved health and slower climate change.

About 300 million children, or almost one in seven worldwide, lived in areas where outdoor pollution was highest, defined by UNICEF as at least six times international guidelines set by the World Health Organisation (WHO), it said.

Of the total, 220 million lived in South Asia. It identified the regions with satellite imagery developed by NASA.

UNICEF executive director Anthony Lake said air pollution was a “major contributing factor in the deaths of around 600,000 children under five every year,” causing illnesses such as pneumonia.

“Pollutants don’t only harm children’s developing lungs — they can actually cross the blood-brain barrier and permanently damage their developing brains — and, thus, their futures,” he said in a statement.

“Air pollution affects poor children the most,” Nicholas Rees, a UNICEF specialist on climate and economic analysis who wrote the report, told Reuters.

Worldwide, the WHO estimates that outdoor air pollution killed 3.7 million people in 2012, including 127,000 children aged under five.

Factories, power plants and vehicles using fossil fuels, dust and burning of waste were among sources. Indoor air pollution, often caused by coal- or wood-burning cooking stoves used in homes in developing nations, killed even more people, 4.3 million, of whom 531,000 were aged under five, it said.

UNICEF called on the UN-led meeting in Morocco to hasten a shift from fossil fuels to cleaner energies such as wind or solar power, to improve children’s access to health care, limit children’s exposure to pollution and to step up monitoring of the air.

—Reuters

Aussie research says Asia’s rare snake venom could create non-addictive painkillers

SYDNEY — An Australian research has found that the venom derived from one Southeast Asia’s rarest and most beautiful snake can be turned into non-addictive painkiller drug that could work better than opium.

University of Queensland School of Biological Sciences Faculty of Science Associate Professor Dr Bryan Fry said venom derived from Southeast Asia’s long-glanded blue coral snake could improve any kind of pain treatment for humans such as cancer pain, a torn muscle or even a migraine.

“This was a 15 year project in the making that has finally come true after we managed to study two of such snakes in Cambodia,” he said.

He said venom glands in the world, extend over a quarter the length of its body. At present, the long-glanded blue coral snake can be found in Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia and no where else in the world but mass deforestation is threatening the species to extinction.

“This particular animals are very rare... and their habitat the forest are being destroyed to make way for palm oil plantation,” Fry said.

“This is a great example why we need to conserve nature because you may have something so rare that could be potentially be so useful for human medicine but of course we can’t save lives if it the snake is extinct,” he said.

“It makes me wanna cry on how much (forest) is destroyed as there may be a plant there that can cure cancer that is completely chopped off before we can study it,” Fry added.

For this particular study, Fry said mass amounts of venom was milked out from the two snakes in Malaysia without harming them in anyway in 2007 and three years later in 2010.

Fry who has been working with snakes for the last 20 years said the discovery on the health benefits from the venom came by chance.

“We tested against everything and we found this by accident,” said Fry.

Moving forward, Fry said he and his team would be working on an artificial version of the toxin by improving on it before turning it into a medicinal drug meant for commercialisation.

Fry also added that they would be looking at other similar snakes in the same blood line to see if such animals produced similar benefits.

“Singapore has a very good population of snakes that are in the same blood line as the long-glanded blue coral snake. “And we are working with Raffles Museum to capture the other species that could also have the same time of venom that helps cure human pain,” he said.

“(The snake) It doesn’t have a common name and is even rarer but we have a good idea where to find one,” Fry said on his quest to find similar blood lines snakes in Singapore.

The findings of the research which was led by Fry involved scientists from Australia, China, Singapore and the US was been published in journal Toxins in October.

—Xinhua

New tool may help combat antibiotic resistance

LONDON — Scientists, including one of Indian origin, are developing a new device that can quickly identify bacterial infections, an advance that may help fight antibiotic resistance by reducing unnecessary prescription of drugs.

The tool, designed by the researchers at University of Sheffield in the UK, could help doctors make more informed prescriptions and reduce the number of patients with viral infections being prescribed antibiotics.

“The device could enable patients with flu-like symptoms to give a small blood sample and be promptly told whether they have a bacterial or non-bacterial infection and be treated accordingly,” said Fry.

“The main aim behind this project is to create more informed prescriptions to address the ever increasing resistance against antibiotics that we face today,” said Saylee Jangam, a student from the University of Sheffield.

“Antibiotic resistance is a huge problem and this is why we chose to base our project on it. We may not be able to reverse it, but with our device, we could potentially slow it down,” she said.

“What is even more interesting is that we are using genetically engineered bacteria to detect the presence of bacterial infections in blood — that is right — using bacteria to detect bacteria,” she added.——PIT

Viet Nam says its first microcephaly case likely caused by Zika

HANOI — The microcephaly of a baby from the central highlands region, the first case in Viet Nam, is “much likely to be caused by Zika virus,” a Vietnamese health agency said on Sunday.

The four-month-old girl from Dak Lak province has microcephaly, and this innate defect must have been related to Zika virus, said the Preventive Medicine Department under the Health Ministry.

Microcephaly is a birth defect where a baby’s head is smaller than expected when compared to babies of the same sex and age.

The baby’s microcephaly was first detected on 14 October, and specimens taken from her and her 23-year-old mother are being tested in Japan. The young woman had a fever and hives when she was pregnant.

To date, Viet Nam has spotted nine Zika patients, including five from Ho Chi Minh City, and one each from Phu Yen, Khanh Hoa, Binh Duong and Long An provinces.

Ho Chi Minh City and Binh Duong have declared Zika outbreaks at communal level.—Xinhua

People take photos near the Singapore Flyer observatory wheel shrouded by haze on 26 August 2016. Photo: REUTERS

UNICEF called on the UN-led meeting in Morocco to hasten a shift from fossil fuels to cleaner energies such as wind or solar power, to improve children’s access to health care, limit children’s exposure to pollution and to step up monitoring of the air.
Venezuela’s Maduro meets opposition at Vatican-led talks

CARACAS — Venezuela’s unpopular socialist leader Nicolas Maduro shook hands with opposition leaders at Vatican-convened talks on Sunday, but his wary foes threatened to boycott further meetings if some demands were not quickly met.

The irate opposition Democratic Unity coalition has escalated protests against Maduro after authorities scuttled a recall referendum that polls show he would have lost, triggering a presidential election.

Their top demand is to revive the plebiscite.

Opponents say 17 years of socialism have wrecked the OPEC nation’s economy and crushed democracy, while the government says a US-backed elite is seeking a violent coup.

Maduro, 53, who won election to succeed Hugo Chavez in 2013, arrived mid-evening for the meeting at a Caracas museum.

He cordially greeted the five opposition leaders, including coalition secretary-general Jesus Torrealba and opposition governor Henri Falcon.

Also attending were a Vatican envoy, representatives of the Unasur regional bloc, and three former heads of state or government from Spain, Panama and the Dominican Republic.

“The Pope is following the situation of this country very closely and hopes this process can continue peacefully,” said papal envoy Archbishop Claudio Maria Celli.

Venezuela’s opposition is also demanding freedom for political prisoners, humanitarian aid amid an unprecedented economic downturn, and respect for the opposition-led National Assembly.

The opposition delegation said they would demand an end to the repression and persecution of democrats and the people, and will walk away from the dialogue if the demands are not resolved in the short term,” the coalition said in a statement.

It termed the talks an “exploratory meeting” only.

Ten facts about fast urban growth on World Cities Day

LONDON — As the world sees the biggest wave of urban growth in history, with millions of people flocking to the fast-growing cities of the developing world, cities are coming under the spotlight as never before. How do cities cater for new residents, what makes a city unique, and what makes it liveable?

In 2014, the United Nations launched 13 October as World Cities Day to promote awareness of global urbanization and highlight the need for cooperation to meet the challenges of growth.

Here are 10 facts about cities:

1. Around 54 per cent of the world population currently live in urban areas, which is forecast to rise to 66 per cent by 2050
2. The urban population rose to 3.9 billion in 2014 from 746 million in 1950, according to the United Nations
3. Cities may be home to growing numbers of people, but cover less than 1 per cent of the world’s surface
4. There are now 28 mega-cities — with populations of 10 million plus — compared to just 10 mega-cities in 1990
5. Tokyo is the world’s largest city, with the greater Tokyo area housing about 38 million inhabitants
6. Asia is home to about 53 per cent of the world’s urban population while Europe is home to 14 per cent, and 13 per cent live in Latin America and the Caribbean
7. With a population of just 500, the Vatican is the world’s smallest independent state
8. China has its own version of a European city called “Thames Town”, Located 19 miles (30 kms) outside Shanghai, its architecture is based on a Chinese market town, with red telephone boxes, corner shops and cobblestone streets
9. The world’s most creative city is Al-Ahsa in Saudi Arabia, according to UNESCO’s Creative Cities’ Network
10. According to the Quality of Living Rankings by consultancy Mercer, in 2016 the city offering the best quality of life was Vienna, with Zurich coming second.— Reuters
WASHINGTON — Federal investigators have secured a warrant to examine newly discovered emails related to Hillary Clinton’s private server, a source familiar with the matter said on Sunday, as a prominent Democrat accused FBI Director James Comey of breaking the law by trying to influence the election.

The warrant will allow the Federal Bureau of Investigation to examine the emails to see if they are relevant to its probe of the private email server used for government work by Clinton, the Democratic presidential nominee, while she was secretary of state from 2009 to 2013.

Comey came under heavy pressure from Democrats on Sunday to quickly provide details of the emails to Clinton allies worried the prolonged controversy could extend beyond the 8 November election and cast a shadow over a Clinton presidency if she wins the White House.

Comey’s disclosure of the email recovery in a letter to Congress on Friday plunged the final days of the White House race between Clinton and Republican Donald Trump into turmoil. Clinton had opened a recent lead over Trump in national polls, but it had been narrowing even before the email controversy resurfaced.

The unexpected turn in the email controversy shook financial markets’ confidence in a Clinton victory in the election and the US dollar slipped against major currencies in early Asian trading on Monday.

US Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid sent a letter to Comey on Sunday suggesting he violated the Hatch Act, which bars the use of a federal government position to influence an election.

“Through your partisan actions, you may have broken the law,” Reid, a senator from Nevada, said in the letter to Comey.

Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta and campaign manager Robby Mook both said Comey’s decision to send a letter notifying Congress of the email review before he even knew whether they were significant or relevant was “long on innuendo, short on facts.” Podesta said on CNN’s “State of the Union” programme, and accused the FBI chief of breaking precedent by disclosing aspects of an investigation so close to the election.

“We have one ultimate check on Hillary’s corruption and that is the power of the vote,” Trump told a rally in Las Vegas on Sunday. “The only way to beat the corruption is the power of the vote.”

Comey, who announced in July that the FBI’s long investigation of Clinton’s emails was ending without any charges, said in his letter the agency would not try to stop the election rather than inform Congress, which was Comey’s stated aim, said Richman, who said he had advised Comey on law enforcement policy but not this issue.

An ABC News/Washington Post poll released on Sunday showed Clinton with a statistically insignificant 1-point national lead on Trump. About a third of likely voters in the poll said they would be less likely to back Clinton given Comey’s disclosure.

Clinton, who told a Florida rally on Saturday that Comey’s letter was “deeply troubling,” did not address the issue directly on Sunday but referred vaguely to voters overcoming a “distraction.”

“There’s a lot of noise and distraction but it really comes down to the kind of future we want and who can get us there,” she said.

Comey’s actions with the Office of Special Counsel, which investigates Hatch Act violations.

“We cannot allow FBI or Justice Department officials to unnecessarily publicize pending investigations concerning candidates of either party while an election is underway,” she said in a column in the New York Times.

But Daniel Richman, a former federal prosecutor who now teaches at Columbia Law School, called the allegations that Comey improperly tried to influence the election “inane.”

Comey’s critics cannot show his letter violated the Hatch Act unless they can prove that the FBI director was intending to influence the election rather than inform Congress, which was Comey’s stated aim, said Richman, who said he had advised Comey on law enforcement policy but not this issue.

An ABC News/Washington Post poll released on Sunday showed Clinton with a statistically insignificant 1-point national lead on Trump. About a third of likely voters in the poll said they would be less likely to back Clinton given Comey’s disclosure.

Comey’s actions with the Office of Special Counsel, which investigates Hatch Act violations

“Comey’s critics cannot show his letter violated the Hatch Act unless they can prove that the FBI director was intending to influence the election rather than inform Congress, which was Comey’s stated aim,” said Richman, who said he had advised Comey on law enforcement policy but not this issue.

An ABC News/Washington Post poll released on Sunday showed Clinton with a statistically insignificant 1-point national lead on Trump. About a third of likely voters in the poll said they would be less likely to back Clinton given Comey’s disclosure.

Comey’s actions with the Office of Special Counsel, which investigates Hatch Act violations

“Comey’s critics cannot show his letter violated the Hatch Act unless they can prove that the FBI director was intending to influence the election rather than inform Congress, which was Comey’s stated aim,” said Richman, who said he had advised Comey on law enforcement policy but not this issue.
**Entertainment**

**Global New Light of Myanmar**

**1 November 2016**

---

**Kim Kardashian unlikely to attend Angel Ball**

NEW YORK — Reality TV star Kim Kardashian West is unlikely to attend the Angel Ball next month, a black tie gala, which will honour her father Robert Kardashian.

The “Keeping Up With the Kardashians” star is still shaken after being robbed at gunpoint in Paris earlier this month and she has now cancelled her appearance at the Angel Ball, an annual cancer research fundraiser which is due to take place at Cipriani Wall Street in New York on 21 November, reported the New York Post.

Her mother Kris Jenner and sisters Kourtney and Khloe Kardashian are still expected to attend the black-tie gala, which will honour late lawyer Robert Kardashian, who died of cancer in 2003.

A publicist for the event said, “Kim is not expected to attend at this time.”

The 36-year-old beauty has been keeping a low profile since the robbery in her hotel suite, but made her first public appearance last week at her spouse’s concert in Los Angeles, and so could still change her mind about attending the glitzy event.—PTI

---

**‘Inferno’ Fizzles With $15 Million as ‘Madea’ Pulls Off Victory**

LOS ANGELES — This is how a franchise ends. “Inferno,” the latest big screen tour through Dan Brown’s historical conspiracy theories, flamed out at the weekend box office, earning a frosty $15 million. That’s a fraction of the $46.2 million that “Angels & Demons,” the previous film version of Brown’s novels, earned when it debuted in 2009, and it pales in relation to “The Da Vinci Code”’s $77.1 million opening way back in 2006.

“This was a serious meltdown,” said Jeff Bock, box office analyst with Exhibitor Relations. “It showed how fickle audiences can be. When studios release a sequel they don’t want, they just turn their shoulder.”

“Inferno” couldn’t muster a strong enough debut to capture the top spot on the domestic box office chart. Lionsgate’s “Boo! A Madea Halloween” nabbed first place for the second consecutive weekend, picking up $16.7 million to bring its stateside total to $52 million. The Tyler Perry comedy’s victory is an upset. Heading into the weekend, “Inferno” was expected to kick off to north of $20 million — a figure that easily would have secured it a first place finish.

“Inferno” finds Harvard cryptologist Robert Langdon (Tom Hanks) grappling with amnesia as he tries to piece together clues in order to prevent the release of a global pandemic. Reviewers vivisected the film, saddling it with a 20% “rotten” rating on critics aggregator Rotten Tomatoes.

In addition to the brutal reviews, “Inferno” ran smack up against a World Series battle between the Cubs and the Indians, two franchises that have gone decades without capturing a championship. Those games generated a lot of excitement among “Inferno”’s core audience of older men.

Strong foreign grosses could be enough to pull “Inferno” out of the red. The film has earned roughly $150 million overseas. Sony, the studio behind the film, also reined in “Inferno”’s production budget. The picture cost $75 million to make, half the budget of “Angels & Demons.”

Still, the results are disappointing, particularly for director Ron Howard, who could use a hit. Once a reliable purveyor of popcorn fare with a certain prestige sheen, such as “Apollo 13” and “A Beautiful Mind,” Howard’s commercial radar has been faulty of late. His recent efforts, such as “In the Heart of the Sea,” “The Dilemma,” and “Rush,” all lost money. “Angels & Demons” was his last major studio movie to turn a profit.—Reuters

---

**Katy Perry’s ’50s-themed birthday bash**

LONDON — Singer Katy Perry celebrated her 32nd birthday with a 1950s-themed party that included a “detention”-themed photo booth.

The “Roar” hitmaker, whose big day was on 25 October, sported a big blonde updo and a yellow pussy bow top for the bash, which featured Elvis Presley and Marilyn Monroe lookalikes and a giant game of Twister for guests including her boyfriend Orlando Bloom and friend Kate Hudson, reported Female First.

The sock hop bash, which was staged at ‘Hudson High’ in honour of Perry’s real surname Hudson, also featured a ‘detention’ photo booth, and her guests shared some pictures from inside on social media.

Perry shared a number of photos of the night on her social media accounts, including one of Bloom, 39, playing basketball in bright red shorts and a matching sweatshirt. On another image she wrote, “Thanks @COVERGIRL for keeping everyone clean-cut and QT at Hudson High. Home of the Poodles. Principal Hudson. #KatyxCOVxERGIRL (sic).”—PTI

---

**Adele, boyfriend planning engagement?**

LONDON — Singer Adele and longtime partner Simon Konecki are thinking about getting engaged and taking the next step together.

The 28-year-old singer and Konecki have been in a relationship for five years and share four-year-old son Angelo together, but it now seems they’re finally ready to take the next step and put a ring on the “Someone Like You” hitmaker’s finger, reported Daily Mirror.

A source said, “They’ve decided it’s the right time to think about making that step (to getting engaged).”

“They won’t make a big song and dance about it, that’s not the way either of them are, and you won’t see Adele walking around with a huge diamond on her finger flaunting it. But they’re ready to take the next step and both very excited about the prospect.”—PTI

---

**Kim Kardashian attends Harper’s Bazaar’s celebration of ‘ICONS By Carine Roitfeld’ at The Plaza Hotel during New York Fashion Week in Manhattan, New York, US, on 9 September 2016. Photo: Reuters**

---

**Katy Perry’s ’50s-themed birthday bash**

---

**Kim Kardashian unlikely to attend Angel Ball**

---

**‘Inferno’ Fizzles With $15 Million as ‘Madea’ Pulls Off Victory**

---

**Adele, boyfriend planning engagement?**
Foreign visitors to Japan this year have already hit record 20 million

TOKYO — The estimated number of foreign visitors to Japan this year has already surpassed last year’s record 19.74 million, topping 20 million in only 10 months, the Japan Tourism Agency said Monday.

The number of visitors in the first nine months of this year was up 24.1 percent from the same period the previous year to 17.98 million and the figure is estimated to have topped the 20 million line as of Sunday, the agency said.

The rate of increase for the first nine months, however, was half the 47 percent increase logged for the whole of 2015, reflecting the yen’s appreciation and the Chinese economy’s slowdown apparently eating into growth.

Major quakes in Kumamoto Prefecture and its vicinity in April caused a temporary drop in visitors from South Korea.

The agency attributed this year’s rise generally to increased port calls by cruise ships and airlines launching new routes. Continuous tourism promotion campaigns and eased visa restrictions led to gains particularly in tourists from Southeast Asian countries, it said.

The government’s top spokesman welcomed the figures Monday morning, but said the achievement is “just the halfway point.”

“We have set a goal of 40 million (foreign visitors annually) in 2020...so there are still many more things for us to do,” Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told a press conference.

“Just the halfway point.”

The agency attributed this year’s rise generally to increased port calls by cruise ships and airlines launching new routes. Continuous tourism promotion campaigns and eased visa restrictions led to gains particularly in tourists from Southeast Asian countries, it said.

The government’s top spokesman welcomed the figures Monday morning, but said the achievement is “just the halfway point.”

“We have set a goal of 40 million foreign visitors annually in 2020...so there are still many more things for us to do,” Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told a press conference.

“The era of buying sprees is over for sure, but tourist numbers continue to grow, so it’s also true that the total amount of spending will increase,” Suga said. —Kyodo News

Halloween-themed film tops North American weekend box office

LOS ANGELES — Tyler Perry’s Madea character beat Tom Cruise last weekend, and then beat Tom Hanks this weekend, to be the number one again at the box office in North America.

Lionsgate’s “Tyler Perry’s Boo! A Madea Halloween” was on track to sell $16.7 million dollars in tickets in the United States and Canada from Friday evening to Sunday.

That was good enough to gross 52 million dollars in sales over 10 days, according to studio estimates gathered by comScore.

The latest Robert Langdon thriller starring Tom Hanks “Inferno” opened in second place with $15 million dollars at 3,576 locations. Based on Dan Brown’s bestseller, the sequel to “The Da Vinci Code” or “Angels and Demons,” its two sequel predecessors.

Internationally, “Inferno” has a good result. In two weeks of overseas release, it has earned nearly $132.7 million dollars.

The Tom Cruise thriller “Jack Reacher: Never Go Back” was in third place at 9.6 million dollars this weekend and 39.7 million dollars over 10 days of release.

Rounding out the 10 most popular movies this weekend were “The Accountant” (8.5 million dollars), “Ouija: Origin Of Evil” (7 million), “The Girl On The Train” (4.3 million), “Miss Peregrine’s Home For Peculiar Children” (3.4 million), “Storks” (2.9 million) and “Alice In Wonderland” (2.1 million). —Kyodo News

To help reach that goal, the government will consider further relaxing visa rules, including for Chinese, Indian and Russian nationals, and work to address a shortage of accommodation facilities, Suga said.

“Inflation in the Myanmar: Economic & Politics” was on track to drop 17.98 million dollars in tickets in the United States and Canada from Friday evening to Sunday.

“The era of buying sprees is over for sure, but tourist numbers continue to grow, so it’s also true that the total amount of spending will increase,” Suga said. —Kyodo News
Cilic wins Basel title, edges nearer London

BASEL (Switzerland) — Marin Cilic beat Japan’s Kei Nishikori for the Basel Open title on Sunday to edge closer to securing his place in the ATP World Tour Finals in London next month.

The powerful Croatian won 6-1, 7-6(5) to claim a 16th ATP Tour title and consolidate ninth place in the Race standings.

Rafael Nadal’s decision to end his season early means Cilic is actually holding the last berth for the eight-man showdown at London’s 02 Arena.

Cilic is now 210 points above Czech Tomas Berdych with Belgium’s David Goffin a further 190 points adrift.

He needed only 25 minutes to take the opening set as he overpowered world number five Nishikori who is already assured of a third consecutive appearance at the season-ender.

Nishikori offered more resistance in the second set and had three set points at 5-4 but Cilic held firm and claimed the title by winning the tiebreak on a Nishikori double-fault.

Marin Cilic of Croatia celebrates with the trophy after defeating Kei Nishikori of Japan during Swiss Indoors ATP men’s final at Basel, Switzerland on 30 October 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Former US Open champion Cilic dropped only one of his 54 service games on the way to the title, his second of the year after also winning in Cincinnati.

Cilic will also lead Croatia in the Davis Cup final against Argentina next month.—Reuters

Manchester City cannot afford second defeat by Barca

LONDON — Manchester City cannot afford another defeat on Tuesday at home to Barcelona, who thumped them 4-0 two weeks ago, having taken just one point from their last two Champions League Group C matches.

That third successive win for the Catalan pass-masters means they need only a draw in the return game to ensure their annual qualification for the knockout stage.

City, however, are in danger of losing second place in the table to Borussia Moenchengladbach, who sit one point behind them going into a home tie with Celtic.

Although they beat Borussia 4-0 on matchday one, Pep Guardiola’s side still have to travel to Germany for a game that could decide which team qualifies with Barcelona.

Former Barca coach Guardiola was as chastened after the Nou Camp loss, when Lionel Messi scored a hat-trick and City goalkeeper Claudio Bravo was sent off, as he was on a previous return there, which resulted in a 3-0 loss for his Bayern Munich team in the 2015 semi-final.

At least Bayern recovered some self-respect by winning the second leg 3-2 on that occasion and a repeat would suit him perfectly.

“Every game is different...it will be tough. The game will be difficult,” he said.

Aguero is a special player, we need him a lot,” the manager said.

“Aguero is a special player, we need him a lot,” the manager said.

Aguero is a special player, we need him a lot,” the manager said.

Aguero is a special player, we need him a lot,” the manager said.