Muslim villagers refute claims of rape and murder by British newspaper

RESIDENTS of the village of Kyetoeppin in Maungtaw, the site of alleged rapes and killings of Muslim children as reported by the British newspaper The Guardian, said yesterday under questioning from the Rakhine State Investigation Commission that the claimed atrocities did not happen.

The commission, led by its chairman Vice President U Myint Swe, said earlier that villagers of the human rights abuses were discovered during their continuing tour of villages in the Maungtaw area in Rakhine State yesterday to conduct transparent investigations into the 9 October and 12-13 November attacks on border police outposts.

Commission members conducted field trips yesterday to meet village elders, women, Muslim youth and children. All were questioned in detail on whether the reports of alleged rapes and the killing of Muslim children in the village of Kyetoeppin in Maungtaw that had been reported in the UK newspaper The Guardian were true.

All who were questioned and told of the allegations in The Guardian newspaper said the report was not valid and the alleged cases had not taken place in their village, the commission said in a statement obtained by the Myanmar News Agency.

The names of the villagers were not released by the commission.

The denials by villagers about the alleged rapes and killings of Muslim children came about during questioning by teams of commission members led by members U Aung Kyi and Dr Daw Thet Thet Zin about the 12 October incident in which assailants attacked government troops outside their village. The incident resulted in the death of 10 attackers, an outbreak of fire in the village and the seizure of a single-barreled gun.

The teams made up of commission members spoke to Muslim villagers, women and children to ask if there had taken place any cases of rape and prosecution of children. The locals replied that they only heard of such cases in the form of rumours. They said they did not know or see anything of the events described, according to the commission.

In Saturday’s online and print editions of The Guardian, a Muslim woman named Noor Ayesho is profiled and quoted as saying mass atrocities occurred in mid-October in her village. Noor Ayesho claims a group of 20 soldiers came to her home in Kyetoeppin in mid-October, killed her husband and seven of her children, raped her and burned her home down. Noor Ayesho told The Guardian that two of her daughters were raped by soldiers before they were killed.

SEE PAGE 6 >>
PYI THU HLUTTAW 3rd Regular Session’s 15th Meeting Held

PYITHU HLUTTAW held on Monday approved the recording of the motion calling for the government to take action as regards reforestation under natural ways after re-confiscating land granted under section 45 of the law on management of virgin and vacant land, for not complying with the provisions of the law under section 57 of the above law.

Dr Aung Thu, Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock Breeding and Irrigation, replied to the question raised by U Tun Wai of Phaukpyin constituency, “Duty has been assigned to Nay Pyi Taw Council, Regions and States to confiscate uncultivated land after taking the lease of the land, under the prescribed law after careful scrutiny. And instruction has been given to promptly report on their performances back. At the same time, the process of re-confiscating was under way. The management of natural forests was chosen under the Myanmar system to carry out 30-year plan reforestation. Expansion of the forest is being implemented, hence it should be recorded.”

The motion was discussed by U Thaung Htay Lin of Pathein constituency, Dr Aung Khin of PyinooLwin constituency, U Myo Zaw of Oo Lein constituency, Daw San San Ei of Moehnyn constituency, U Sein Win of Maubin constituency and Daw Khin Nyo of Dedaye constituency, U Ne Htet Win of Hsinpaungwe constituency, Daw Khin Than Nu of Mindon constituency, U Thant Zaw of Dolkhina Thiri constituency, Mi Kun Chan of Paung constituency, U Mynint Tun of Daze constituency and U Maung Maung of Htaygyaw constituency.

Following the clarification made by the Union Minister, the motion presenter was interrogated of his attitudes, agreeing to put the motion on record.

And parliamentarians agreed to donate their one-day daily allowance amounting to K 8520000, to displaced people in Muse. Afterward, U T Khun Myat, Vice Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw declared that amount of money is still needed to add under the title of Hluttaw Speaker’s Donation Money.

Thura U Aung Ko, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture and replied to the question raised by U Aung Khin Win of Myawaddy constituency as to whether there was an arrangement to build a magnificent Martyrs’ Mausoleum on the ground of Azarnigone in time for 2017 Martyrs’ Day.

He added that the present mausoleum’s feature look gran- deur as it is. For reason of security, there is no arrangements yet to build weather-proof mausoleum, it is replied.

—Myanmar News Agency

Union Minister for information inspects libraries in Pyin Oo Lwin

UNION MINISTER for Information Dr Pe Myint inspected libraries and a relay-station of Myanmar Radio and Television in Pyin Oo Lwin District on Sunday.

The Union Minister and party inspected libraries in Ohnchaw and Anisakhan and the library of the Pyin Oo Lwin District Information and Public Relations Department (IPRD).

Then, the Union Minister visited the district IPRD office and the Lamin Tayar Dhamma Oo Yin Philanthropic Library on Club Street, where he expressed thanks to U Hla Min, founder of the library.

The Director-General, Regional Director and District Officers of the IPRD explained the tasks of the department to the Union Minister.

Later, the Union Minister and party visited a relay station of MRTV in Pyin Oo Lwin.

—Myanmar News Agency

Thura U Shwe Mann, Chairman of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Legal Affairs And Special Cases Assessment Committee Receives Indian Ambassador

THURA U SHWE MANN, chairman of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Legal Affairs And Special Cases Assessment Committee received H.E. Mr. Vikram Misri, Indian ambassador at the Hluttaw Affairs building No 1/1 on 1.30 pm on Monday.

In the meeting, matters on bilateral friendship, affairs on peace and development between the two countries and matters on promotion of relations between the two parliaments were discussed, it is learnt.

—Myanmar News Agency

A LARGE increase in visa fees imposed by the Malaysian government for the illegal building by India near Myanmar’s border in apparent violation of a demarcation agreement were two of the issues discussed yesterday at the 2nd Amyotha Hluttaw, 3rd Regular Session’s 15th Day meeting.

U Kyaw Tun, minister of state for foreign affairs, said the dramatically higher cost for a visa to visit Malaysia was the result of a change in the Malaysian government’s visa system.

“Raising visa fees is the policy laid down by the respective country; thus Myanmar has no right to intervene. It is impossible for us to assess and stop the process,” he said.

And parliamentarians agreed to donate their one-day daily allowance amounting to K 8520000, to displaced people in Muse. Afterward, U T Khun Myat, Vice Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw declared that amount of money is still needed to add under the title of Hluttaw Speaker’s Donation Money.

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—Myanmar News Agency

Senators are seen on their arrival at the parliament to attend the parli- amental meeting on 12 December, 2016. Photo: MNA

A SPECIAL case of demarcation between the two countries is to be erected at the meeting point of Myanmar and India.

Dr Myint Htwe also replied to the question raised by Daw Khin Swe Lwin of constituency 11, Shan State, with any special efforts to upgrade hospitals, “Detailed examinations and surveys are being made to upgrade the hospitals. According to the number of yearly patients, there are not any plans for upgrading the hospitals with medical doctors, nurses and drugs to be provided more than usual, as a special programme”, Dr Myint Htwe said.

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—Myanmar News Agency

A SPECIAL case of demarcation between the two countries is to be erected at the meeting point of Myanmar and India.
Development Assistance Coordination Unit holds first meeting with Cooperation Partners Group

THE Development Assistance Coordination Unit-DACU and the Cooperation Partners Group held a first meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, with opening remarks by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Chairperson of DACU.

Following is the opening remarks by the State Counsellor at the meeting of the Development Assistance Coordination Unit with the Cooperation Partners Group.

Objective and basic principles of DACU

Myanmar is committed to working with all Partners in Development to ensure that international development assistance brings maximum benefits to our people. The establishment of the Development Assistance Coordination Unit is in line with this commitment. DACU will seek to improve the coordination and effectiveness of future development assistance to Myanmar, for the benefit of both the people of Myanmar and our Partners in Development.

DACU’s work will be based on internationally-accepted principles of development assistance, namely: that Myanmar, as host country, should exercise ownership, leadership and guidance with regard to development coordination; that Partners in Development will align their assistance with Myanmar’s development priorities and policies, and act in a transparent fashion; and that both our government and Partners in Development will be accountable to the people of Myanmar and to donor taxpayers for achieving development results.

It is in all of our interests to ensure that ‘development assistance’ in Myanmar has a good name. In many other developing countries today, ‘development assistance’ is now viewed with scepticism, and seen as donor-driven and inefficient. Partners in Development have each done their own thing, leading to piecemeal projects, duplication and waste. But through improved coordination, and through DACU working closely with Partners in Development, I believe we can avoid a similar situation here in Myanmar.

Primary responsibilities of DACU

Among DACU’s primary responsibilities will be to identify priority projects and programmes for development assistance; draw up a national policy for development assistance; review and revise the existing Sector Working Group structures, so as to ensure better coordination at Sector-level; support the Economic Committee in reviewing potential loans and major grant and technical assistance projects; and identify and where possible to resolve ‘implementation constraints’ to the effective delivery of development assistance. I will briefly address each of these areas in my opening remarks, and other DACU members will cover these areas in more detail later.

Identification of Priorities for Development Assistance

Identification of priorities for development assistance requires, as a first step, the identification of overall national development priorities. Over the coming months, through a coordinated cross-ministry process, and based on the government’s twelve economic policies, we will be identifying priority projects and programmes for national development.

As part of this process, DACU will assist Ministries to develop criteria for determining whether a given priority project can be financed through Public-Private Partnerships, national budget, or development assistance. DACU will then proactively identify priority projects requiring development assistance, and link those projects with suitable potential donors.

In the meantime, our government has already identified some priority sectors for development assistance. These include basic infrastructure, job creation, and agriculture and rural development.

Drafting a National Policy on Development Assistance

Over the coming months, DACU will be drafting a national policy on development assistance, setting out what kinds of assistance our country would prefer to receive. The policy will also seek to streamline and clarify current procedures relating to development assistance. In drafting the policy, DACU will consult closely with Line Ministries and Partners in Development. The policy will draw on international best practice, but also be based on close consideration of Myanmar’s context. We aim to be innovative and creative, and to take account of the many non-traditional donors and major domestic philanthropists that we are fortunate to have in this country.

Vice President and Pyithu Hluttaw
Speaker visit injured service personnel, civilians in Lashio hospitals

VICE President U Henry Van Thio and Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint met with internally displaced persons, injured service personnel and civilians in Lashio yesterday. They first visited the 100-bed Defence Services Hospital No. 9 in Lashio and presented cash assistance to injured government troops and police wounded in the recent fighting with armed groups in north-eastern Shan State.

Afterwards, they visited the Kachin Baptist Church and delivered cash assistance and aid including food and household goods to IDPs being sheltered at the church.

At the meeting with the IDPs, the Vice President expressed his sympathy to the women who are suffering due to the armed conflict, calling on the armed groups and the people to work together for regional peace and stability.

Speaker U Win Myint reiterated that the parliament has been monitoring the community peace and stability in the region in order to provide mental and physical security and the rule of law to the people.

During the visit to the 500-bed Lashio People’s Hospital, the Vice President and the Speaker comforted the patients receiving medical care for injuries sustained during the fighting and presented cash assistance to them.

They also met with families of police officers killed and injured in the fighting between government troops and armed groups in north-eastern Shan State and pledged to give necessary support to them.

The Vice President also expressed pride for the fallen police officers and encouraged the families to overcome their obstacles with a strong spirit.

Speaker U Win Myint also expressed his regret over the loss of human resources at a time when the country is on the path to a democratic union, calling for active participation of the people in nation building.

At the meeting, the Vice President, the Speaker and Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe presented cash assistance and aid to the families of the fallen police.

In the afternoon, they provided Ks150 million to the fallen soldiers and the injured from the operations in the north-eastern Shan State through Commander of North-East Command Maj-Gen Phone Myat.

During the visit, the delegation led by the Vice President provided IDPs with more than Ks409 million contributed by the National Disaster Management Committee, the parliament, the Ministry of Border Affairs and Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.—Myanmar News Agency
Indonesia’s Dompet Dhuafa delivers aid to IDP camps in Sittway

AID from the Indonesian humanitarian organization Dompet Dhuafa reached the internally displaced persons (IDP) camps in Sittway, Rakhine State, on Saturday.

Together with local authorities, the Indonesian aid organization delivered 70 bags of rice to IDP Camp Aungmingalar Ward and 71 in bags of rice to Darpaing IDP camp and visited the IDP Camp in Mingan Ward.

The aid group also donated Ks3 million to the Khaymar Mandaing Parahita Monastery. — Myanmar News Agency

Former TNLA member detained with a bomb

ON a tip, security forces searched the house of Daw Ngwe Tin in Zayangyi Village in Namhsam Township on Sunday and detained her son Aung San Myint with a China-made bomb.

He was recruited by the TNLA in December, 2015 and underwent a military training near Hukin Village in Namhsam Township and deserted the armed groups due to hardships.

About one hundred people from 25 households abandoned Pankwan Village in Kyaukme due to recruitments of the TNLA on Sunday and they are taking shelter in a prayer hall in Ward-8. — Myanmar News Agency

Malikha Bridge in Kachin State

THE Malikha (Machanbaw) bridge over the Malikha River is now 77 per cent completed and the project is expected to be finished next March, according to project implementers. Engineers from the Bridge Department under the Ministry of Construction have made continuous efforts to be able to open the bridge no later than the set time frame, said its project manager.

After the work is finished, the bridge will help residents not only in Machanbaw but in Naungmon, Pannandin and Khaunglelphu townships by effectuating economic growth and saving the travel time.

The new Bailey suspension bridge will be 600 feet long. Thanks to the new facility, the flow of commodities will be smoother between Machanbaw and nearby regions.

Machanbaw, a town in Kachin State, is situated in northernmost Myanmar. The economy of the area is predominantly agriculture. Locals mostly grow rice, sugarcane and other marketable crops.

—Kimono

Crime NEWS

Methamphetamine pills worth K3 billion seized in Maungtaw

NAVY forces found 1 million Methamphetamine pills in the sea about six miles west of Indin Village, Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State, on 11 December, according to the police source.

The security forces discovered the drug in five bags in a boat and arrested five namely Aung Aung, Aye Maung, Maung Hla Chay, Nyein Chan and Than Win Chay found in the boat.

The security forces found 200,000 pills in five bags each which were threw away by the drug traffickers into the sea before they were intercepted by the navy water craft.

Similarly, the Navy forces intercepted a suspected boat which threw two bags in the sea.

The forces arrested six suspects in the boat. During the interrogation, they confessed that they were arrested while trying to transport about 450,000 Methamphetamine pills in two bags from Thacehaung Village to the neighbouring country.

Similarly, a combined team comprising member of the Anti-drug squad in Pinlaung and local police forces, stopped and searched a vehicle on the Pinlaung-Hmawbi Road on 10 December and found 86.98 kilos of raw opium worth more than K56 million. Action has been taken against Khun Aung Kyaw Oo, the driver of the vehicle, under the Anti-narcotic law.—Myanmar News Agency

Four killed in head-on crash on Pathein Road, Ayeyawady

FOUR people died on the spot yesterday morning in a crash between a motorbike and a passenger bus on Pathein Road in Ayeyawady Region, according to a police report.

Investigators say they found four people, including two women, whose age or race could not be determined, dead on the road between mile posts No. 21 and 23.

At about 8 am yesterday, a passenger transport bus from Yangon-Hinthada Bus Line collided head-on with the motorcycle with four people aboard.

Police are still investigating the case in an effort to arrest the driver of the bus, who fled at the scene, said U Tin Maung Shwe, the police inspector from the Maezali Police Station.

The reckless driver will face charges under the existing law, he added.—Myitmakha News Agency

The bus and the motorbike seen after the crash. PHOTO: MMK
**Local Business**

**Sale of maize from northern Shan State to resume next month**

The sale of maize produced in northern Shan State was suspended during the second week of December due to low demand from foreign countries, but will resume in mid-January, said maize merchants.

The merchants are waiting for the fresh maize to produce and then, they will clear out all the stocks together with the fresh maize newly harvested. Both the maize and the rice are harvested at the same time. Therefore, the merchants turn to rice to trade, said a maize merchant.

Maize is grown mostly in Namhsan, Namtu, Kyaukme, Hspaw and Lashio. Maize from Shan State is exported to Thailand through the Lashio depot and to China through the Muse 105th Mile border trade camp. Over 400,000 tonnes of maize are annually exported to foreign countries, it is learnt.

Currently, the maize produced in Kayah State enters the Muse trade camp. Over 800 tonnes of maize flowed into the Muse market from Kayah State in the previous week, and the trade volume dropped down over 140 tonnes during this week. The maize is offered from Ks280 to Ks300 per viss, depending on quality and moisture content.—200

**Publicity campaigns needed for moribund YSX**

As the Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) celebrated its first birthday on Friday, it still had not garnered significant popularity among local investors.

Awareness campaigns are needed to reach the public so that they realise the advantages of the stock market and begin to observe world stock market and Yangon stock market. Innovative ideas are required to attract attention of the public, experts said.

Of the three listed companies at YSX — First Myanmar Investment (FMI); Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings (MTSH); and Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB), MCB has not attracted much interest compared to other two listed companies. MCB hit zero trading volume for the fourth time on 12th December after similar events on 21st November and 6th and 8th December.

Like the share prices on 9th December, the stock prices remained unchanged on 12th December at Ks16,000 for FMI, Ks4,500 for MTSH and Ks9,400 for MCB.

Nevertheless, the total volume of stock trading dropped from 12,703 to 8,041 shares on 12th December, with zero trading volumes of MCB. On 12th December, FMI traded 1,506 shares whereas MTSH traded 6,535 shares.—Mon Mon

**10 tonnes of Myanmar green tea and tea leaf to be exported to Germany, Singapore**

The Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producers (MFVP) Association is gearing up to export about 10 tonnes of Myanmar’s green tea and tea leaf to Germany and Singapore next year, according to the association.

This year, Germany agreed to buy three tonnes of Myanmar’s green tea, said U Soe Than Min Din, the chair of MFVP.

“This was the first time that Germany had agreed to purchase Myanmar’s dried tea leaves. We have reached an agreement to export three tonnes of dried tea leaves this year”, U Soe Than Min Din said.

The fresh tea leaves produced from the Yangwangan area are planned to be placed onto the Singapore market in the coming year, said U Maung Nu, the chairman of the Yangwangan Tea Association.

“We, locals from Ywangan, jointly established two dried tea leaf plants and the green tea produced from these plants will be exported to Germany. Additionally, efforts are being made to improve more international market access”, said U Maung Nu.

The prevailing price of Myanmar’s dried tea leaves are about Ks15,000 per viss, it is learnt.—Phyo Lin Aung (AMIA)

**Price of kitchen crops careen up and down**

The price of kitchen crops went on a roller coaster ride in the market this week, especially Fair-average quality/Respective of color (FAQ/RC) mung bean and RC red pigeon peas, according to the market.

The price of FAQ/RC mung bean, which are mainly exported to foreign countries, remarkably decreased from Ks1.2 million to Ks104,700 per tonne. The price slumped by about Ks153,000 per tonne within a week. Mung bean fetched up to Ks1,642,000 per tonne in August.

Similarly, red pigeon peas (RC) slumped by about Ks9,000 per tonne within a week. Pigeon peas hit Ks1,500,000 per tonne in July. Meanwhile, the price of green grams did not have large changes, selling between Ks98,000 and Ks105,000 per 60 visses.

The price of rice is stable this week, ranging from Ks18,500 to Ks45,500 per bag depending on the quality of the rice. And the price of onions rose a bit during a week.

The commodity prices are on the rise in eight months, resulting in difficulties for low-income people. The farmers do not get any benefit in spite of the high price, it is learnt.—Myanma Alin

**Prawns from Taninthayi to be bought by Japan, China, Thailand**

JAPAN, China and Thailand have proposed to purchase saltwater white prawns farmed in Taninthayi Region, said U Kyaw Lin, a project manager of Katalu saltwater prawn farms.

The saltwater prawns are being farmed in Katalu village, Katan Island in Taninthayi Region with the use of modern technology. Thailand is the main buyer of these prawns. The shrimp species are imported from Thailand to farm. In prawn farming, a prawn lake can produce about 20 tonnes of prawn annually at a minimum, it is learnt.

A kilo of white prawns consisting of 40 prawns or more sells for 130 to 150 Bahts, whereas a kilo of white prawns consisting of 40 prawns or less is offered at 150 to 160 Bahts. Currently, there are 20 prawn-farming lakes, with plans to extend farms into 32 more lakes in the coming year, according to U Kyaw Lin.

The imported pedigreed prawn species continue to be farmed in Pahtaw Patheit Island to meet market criteria, it is learnt.—200

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**Visitors look at the screen displaying stock information at Yangon Stock Exchange in Yangon on 11 November.** PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

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**A Tea leaf field seen at Mong Mao in northeast Myanmar on 1 October 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS**
Aid flowing into villages in northern Rakhine State

THE Union Government, Rakhine State Government and UNHCR are working together in Rakhine State, sending aid to villages in conflict areas in northern Rakhine.

Aid from the government and UNHCR reached 2,797 households from six village-tracts: Ducheertan, Gwaung, Shwetho, Oohtaw, Alethanyaw and Shwebaho. Ducheertan and Shwebaho are about 12 noon on Sunday, government troops were confronted with the KIA armed group six miles west of Nam On village on the western part of Muse-Lashio road at approximately 12 noon on Sunday, forcing the armed group to retreat along the gorge of the south-west portion of the area. During the fighting, the government discovered a dead body and seized 3 land mines, conducting a clearance operation in pursuit of their attackers, it was learnt.—Myanmar News Agency

Muslim villagers refuse claims . . .

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Noor Ayesha is now in Bangladesh, The Guardian reports.

The Myanmar government has consistently denied the allegations.

A commission member said yesterday that media access to northern Rakhine has been restricted for security reasons but will be lifted in the future.

“Right now, only official statements can be released due to the current situation”, said Dr Aung Tun Thet. “After that, other media, including international media, will be allowed”.

Dr Aung Tun Thet said that, in the meantime, the public should be wary of social and online media.

“We can easily see how rumours can spread, how biased statements can be released due to the rule of law and effective delivery and distribution of humanitarian aid.”—GNLM

TNLA armed group conscripts 21 villagers from Pankum

TNLA armed group conscripted 21 villagers from Pankum village-tract in Kyaukme township in northern Shan State at 7 pm on Sunday, it is learnt.

The villagers forced to be taken away are said to be U Nyein aged 60, U Tun Yin aged 50, U Tun Tun aged 25, U Sai Thein Aung and U Sai San aged 45, U Aung Phyo aged 25, U Nyen aged 50, U San Lun aged 50, U Aik Soe aged 30, U San Win aged 40, U Aung San aged 40, U Sein Aung aged 45, U Kyin Myint (a) U Sit Win aged 60, U Tun Yi aged 50, U Maung Kyan aged 35, U Aung Pwint aged 25, U Aik On (a) Maung Khet aged 60, U Sae Lan aged 45, U Kyin Myint Htay aged 40, U Aik Lwe aged 30, U Aung Khan aged 50 and one unidentified (under investigation).—Myanmar News Agency

Villagers discover a revolver in Kyikanpyin Village-tract in Maungtaw Township

TWO villagers unearthed a gun while they were digging roots near Warpeik (Mul-dle) village in Kyikanpyin Village-tract, Maungtaw Township, on 10 December.

U Aung Zan, 41, an U Abu Maung, 33, from Aungtharyar Village, found a point 38 revolver with six bullets, and handed it over to the security forces.—Myanmar News Agency
Cyclone batters south India coast killing two

CHENNAI — A cyclone barreled into the south-east coast of India on Monday, killing at least two people and bringing down trees and power lines as authorities moved tens of thousands of people from low-lying areas.

Cyclone Vardah moved west over the Bay of Bengal before hitting Chennai, capital of the southern state of Tamil Nadu, as well as neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, the Indian Meteorological Department said, describing it as a “very severe storm”.

Strong winds of up to 140 kph (87 mph) battered the densely populated coast, uprooting trees and bringing down electricity pylons.

Flights at Chennai airport were cancelled, railway services in the area suspended and schools and colleges were closed.

Chennai is home to Indian operations of major auto firms such as Ford Motor Daimler Hyundai and Nissan.

Vardah is forecast to pass over Chennai over the next few hours, drenching the city in heavy rain before easing in intensity, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) said.

“Winds to pick up after current full period. Everyone to not venture out,” the NDMA said on Twitter, adding that two people had been killed and 24 homes damaged.

“Expect very heavy rainfall after few hours. To become better once system crosses completely.”

A “storm surge” will be about one metre (three feet) high.

More than 23,000 people in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh have been moved to re lief centres, with plans for tens of thousands more to be evacuated if needed, a senior state official, K. Satyagopal, told Reuters.

More than 10,000 people from two districts in Andhra Pradesh state had also been moved, its disaster management commissioner, M.V. Seagabri Babu, said.

The NDMA warned fishermen not to venture out to sea for the next 36 hours, and urged residents to stay in safe places.

Navy ships and aircraft, as well as 30 diving teams, were on standby to help move people and deliver aid if needed, a navy spokesman said.

India’s cyclone season usually runs from June to December, with storms often causing dozens of deaths, evacuations of tens of thousands of people and widespread damage to crops and property.

Wind speeds topped 300 km per hour (186 mph) in an Indian “super-cyclone” that killed 10,000 people in 1999, while a cyclone packing speeds of more than 200 kph (124 mph) lashed the east coast in 2013.

—Reuters

Japan protests over China’s complaint about fighter jets

TOKYO — Japan said on Monday it had protested to China over a Chinese complaint that Japanese fighter jets had engaged in “dangerous and unprofessional” behaviour when they scrambled at the weekend as Chinese aircraft flew near Japanese islands.

Chinese air craft on Saturday flew over the Miyako Strait and conducted “close range interference”, firing decoy flares and “jeopardizing the security of Chinese aircraft and pilots”, Yang said.

The fact that China’s military unilaterally announced something clearly different from the facts is extremely regrettable and harms the improvement of relations between Japan and China, and we have strictly protested to the Chinese side, he said.

Suga said Japan would watch the actions of the Chinese military, “which are expanding and increasing”, and make every effort towards “firmly protecting our country’s land, sea and air space and, in accordance with international and domestic law, take strict measures against any invasion of our airspace”.

In Beijing on Monday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang urged Japan to take steps to prevent “safety problems on the sea and in the air”.

He did not elaborate.—Reuters
Retracing the footsteps back to the Bronze Age

**Opinion**

**Tha Sein**

**Myanmar**

People are well aware of the prevailing situations relating to the Rakhine incident including the exercise of restraints by security forces in its area clearance operations and development of effective policies by the government for the long-term development of the country's northwest.

Regrettably, some internal and external organizations, turning a blind eye to the prevailing situations, accused security forces of committing rape, torture and murder at a time when the latter are acting in full compliance with the rule of law, taking great pains to manage to keep the situation under control and to calm it down.

There are still incendiary messages in the form of speeches disseminated by some internal and external elements, making good use of social media platforms like Facebook. Concentrating on the negative side of the situation, they misled those who could not distinguish what is fact and what is fiction. In the meantime, there emerged unsubstantiated allegations over the treatment of perpetrators who launched coordinated attacks on three border police outposts. The groundless accusations did not help but simply resulted in renewed international criticism.

In tackling deep-seated mistrust and divisions between the two communities, the government needs to give the process a sufficient time, as it will have to address the pressing issues step by step cautiously in order not to compromise the rights of the local people. As the advocacy of hatred based on nationality, race or religion has a long history in the country, we would really appreciate it if the international community would help us in building better relations between the two communities, realizing that all conflicts in the country have begun with hate speech of one kind or another. Only then, will our efforts to come up with long-term solutions to the deeply-entrenched problems be met with success.

**Khin Maung Myint**

In 1997, I had visited a Bronze Age archaeological site at the village of Ban Chiang in Thailand. It was first thought to be the oldest Bronze Age human settlement in the world but was proved to be wrong later. In those days I wasn’t very much interested in such matters as I’m today. So, how come I visited that place in the first place may be a bit strange. It was in fact a casual visit, or rather out of curiosity I dropped in, at that place while traveling by car from Udon Thani to the town of Ubon Ratchathani—both located in the north-eastern part of Thailand, commonly known as Isan.

Just outside Udon Thani, my attention was drawn to the roadside signs, written in Thai and English, giving directions to Ban Chiang, the site of a Bronze Age archaeological site at the village of Ban Chiang in Thailand. It was first thought to have been a residential area. In those days, I was intrigued by the artifacts that are displayed in the site. Upon a very important archaeological finding, one of the most interesting insights into the cultures and civilization of the Bronze Age people of that region.

However, I will not be describing everything I saw in detail as it would take much time and space, but I will describe briefly how that site was discovered and some interesting facts. In 1966 Steve Young, an anthropologist student at Harvard College was conducting interviews in the area around the village of Ban Chiang for his thesis papers. He spoke Thai language quite well and was staying in Ban Chiang at that time.

While he and his assistant, a Thai teacher from the village were walking along a path, Young tripped over a tree root they were walking along a path, and was staying in Ban Chiang at that time.

The visit provided me some interesting insights into the cultures and civilization of the Bronze Age people of that region.

Long before that discovery, the villagers had found old pots, jars, broken shards and some other artifacts in their cultivation fields, but had no idea that they were from an ancient human civilization. That archaeological site had been on the UNESCO International Heritage list since 1992. The site attracted tremendous publicity due to the attractive red painted pottery found there. Many artifacts had found their ways to museums across the world, including the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Germany. USA had confiscated some of them from their museums and returned them to Thailand as they were illegally smuggled into their country by unscrupulous persons.

Also the findings indicated that the Ban Chiang Bronze Age site wasn’t that old as thought to be after all. Whereas, our Bronze Age was thought to have existed from 3500 to 500 BCE. If we can prove the finds at Butalin and Yangon really date back to the early Bronze Age, we can safely assume our Bronze Age settlements and hence our civilization preceded those of some of our neighbours. This assumption is based on the fact that the Ban Chiang settlement existed only around 2100 BCE at the earliest. This date was arrived at by carbon dating the bones of people and rice grains found in earthen jars in the graves at that site. Also the findings indicated that bronze working there began around 2000 BCE only.
Development Assistance Coordination Unit holds first meeting with Cooperation Partners Group

One of the important issues that the development assistance policy will address is the role of consultants. ToRs developed while working in Myanmar have minimal country knowledge. Despite this, some — though certainly not all — try to impose pre-conceived ideas and templates onto the Myanmar context. And many government officials, for a variety of reasons, do not feel able to put across their own perspective when engaging with visiting consultants.

Consultants must of course have subject-matter expertise, but they also need to have a sensitivity and awareness to the country context, and a readiness to collaborate and transfer knowledge. Costs associated with consultants must also be scrutinised carefully, so as to ensure they are reasonable and proportionate. Line Ministries must also be accountable. We will expect Ministries to hire consultants only when there is a genuine need, give clear direction to consultants once hired, and monitor performance to ensure this expensive resource is utilised properly.

Ministries must also ensure that consultants’ ToRs are appropriately drafted. And if Ministries believe that the consultant is not fulfilling the terms of his or her contract, they should take appropriate action.

DACU will be supporting Line Ministries in this area through developing a standardised template for consultant ToRs, and in some cases will be reviewing proposed ToRs prior to approval. Our goal is to reduce waste for all concerned, while making the most of the valuable expertise that we are fortunate to have access to. We should also bear in mind that some consultants have offered pro-bono assistance.

DACU’s role will be support the Economic Committee in this process. I wish to emphasise that DACU will facilitate review processes, rather than cause additional delays or become a bottleneck.

Addressing implementation constraints

We are grateful to Partners in Development for already identifying some major implementation constraints that you face. Where possible we have already sought to act.

With regard to travel authorisations, Cabinet has now agreed that Partners in Development will now be able visit permitted areas as without needing prior permission. And for visits to restricted areas, we will be reducing the minimum notice period required for submission of travel authorisation requests. With regard to taxes, we agree that in normal circumstances it is unreasonable to impose taxes on grant aid, and I have asked DACU to ensure that this approach is consistently applied across government.

With regard to visas, with the introduction of new regulations earlier this month, all Partners in Development should now be able to renew visas inside the country. With regard to MoU approvals, DACU will seek to streamline existing bureaucratic procedures. Addressing implementation constraints must be a two-way street. On the government side, we will do what we can to facilitate the smooth delivery of assistance. But we also ask that DACU seeks to standardize and simplify your own processes, so as to minimize the burden on Ministries.

Implementation/monitoring

Related to the work of DACU is the need for improved monitoring of actual implementation of development projects, including those projects supported by donor assistance. Implementation and evaluation of projects is frequently weak. Reliable statistics are scarce, local project beneficiaries are reluctant to criticize donors or implementers, and evaluations are too often carried out by those with interests in the relevant project. The government therefore plans to establish an ‘implementation unit’, comprising partly of independent third-party experts. The unit’s scope will cover, though not be limited to, projects supported by development assistance. Further details on this will follow in the coming weeks.

DACU wider engagement

Although today’s meeting is only with bilateral, multilateral and UN Partners in Development, DACU intends to engage with all development partners, in the broadest sense of the term. The private sector will have critical role in the country’s development. Grants and loans alone cannot address our massive infrastructure requirements, or foster sustainable long-term job creation. Coordination between government, private sector, and Partners in Development will be key to bringing in the investment that we need. DACU also intends to further strengthen our government’s engagement with CSOs, INGOs, and major domestic and international philanthropists, to encourage greater coordination and alignment of their valuable work with our national priorities.

Conclusion

DACU seeks to be innovative, dynamic and creative, and we welcome your ideas and feedback on how to improve the unit’s effectiveness. Looking ahead, we plan to hold a larger development forum before Thingyan, at which we hope to be able to present concrete results on the various work streams I have briefly outlined today.

In conclusion, DACU will have one simple but challenging objective: to ensure that the generosity and support of our friends here in this room and across the world is translated most effectively into genuine improvements in the lives of our people in the years ahead.

HIGH PRICE of cauliflower helps farmers to earn a profit

5315 Ye Lin Tun.

The senior general noted the accomplishments of the elite graduates not only as medical doctors, but also as military officers.

“The DSMA is listed among the internationally recognised medical universities, in accord with the criterion laid down by the Board of International Medical Teaching Faculty. Nowadays, we are making attempts to sustainably compete with techniques of military weapons and technology to National Defence. It is not only as well as other techniques of respective sectors linked with defence. Thus, we need to keep up with international armies in the perfected medical treatment and protective knowledge,” Senior General Min Aung Hlaing said.

Present at the ceremony were U Phyo Min Thein, Chief Minister of Yangon Region; Cabinet, General Mya Tun Oo, Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy, Air) and wife, Commander-in-Chief (Naval) and wife, Commander-in-Chief (Air) and wife, high-ranking officials of the Tatmadaw and Commanders, Principal of DSMA and invited guests.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing met with outstanding cadets of 18th Intake of the DSMA and their parents, giving words of encouragement and infrastructure requirements. —Myanmar News Agency

FARMERS in the town of Thayetgyi village, Bago Region, are reaping a bountiful harvest of cauliflower, a cool-season crop that needs rich soil and a steady supply of water and nutrients. Cauliflower plantations are usually developed in early August. It takes about 75 days or so to mature after planting.

“The trade in cauliflower is in good conditions. But it is difficult to collect last week because of low production. Now the price continues to rise even though a large amount of cauliflower producers are entering the market,” said U Hla Win, owner of two cauliflower broker.

Cauliflower producers from KhinU mostly go to Monywa, Mandalay, and others transport cauliflowers to Tawngtaw and Lancy town. —Myitmarika News Agency
Trump says US not necessarily bound by ‘one China’ policy

WASHINGTON — US President-elect Donald Trump said the United States did not necessarily have to stick to its long-standing position that Taiwan is part of “one China,” questioning nearly four decades of policy in a move likely to antagonize Beijing.

Trump’s comments on “Fox News Sunday” came after he prompted a diplomatic protest from China over his decision to accept a telephone call from Taiwan’s president on 2 December.

“I fully understand the ‘one China’ policy, but I don’t know why we have to be bound by a ‘one China’ policy unless we make a deal with China having to do with other things, including trade,” Trump told Fox.

In a Wall Street Journal article last January, Bolton said the previous US administration had no reaction beyond its previously stated policy positions.

Following Trump’s latest comments, a White House aide said the Obama administration had no reaction beyond its previously stated policy positions.

In the Fox interview, Trump criticised China over its currency policies, its activities in the South China Sea and its stance toward North Korea. He said it was not up to Beijing to decide whether he should take a call from Taiwan’s leader. “I don’t want China dictating to me and this was a call put in to me,” Trump said.

“It was a very nice call. Short. And why should some other nation be able to say I can’t take a call?”

“I think it actually would’ve been very disrespectful, to be honest with you, not taking it,” Trump added.

Trump plans to nominate a long-time friend of Beijing, Iowa Governor Terry Branstad, as the next US ambassador to China. But Trump is considering John Bolton, a former Bush administration official who has urged a tougher line on Beijing.

In a Wall Street Journal article last January, Bolton said the next US president should take bolder steps to halt China’s military aggressiveness in the South and East China seas.

Bolton said Washington should consider using a “diplomatic ladder of escalation” that could start with receiving Taiwanese diplomats officially at the State Department and lead to restoring full diplomatic recognition.

Finance Minister English named as New Zealand prime minister

WELLINGTON — New Zealand Finance Minister Bill English was confirmed as the country’s new prime minister on Monday, as expected, a week after John Key announced his surprise resignation after eight years in the role.

English, who was the sole contender for the job, announced Social Housing Minister Paula Bennett as the deputy leader, following a special caucus meeting of the ruling centre-right National Party.

English, who will be sworn in later in the day, has already lined up senior cabinet minister Steven Joyce, the minister for economic development, to replace him in the finance ministry.

He is expected to announce further cabinet changes in the coming weeks and has also signalling a “stocktake” on policy.

“I am both excited and humbled by this opportunity,” English, who comes from a conservative, Catholic family in New Zealand’s south, told reporters after the meeting. English, who 13 years ago oversaw a disastrous election loss for the National Party to the centre-left Labour Party, takes the reins of a country in good economic shape compared to much of the developed world. On Monday, Moody’s said it expects New Zealand to remain among the fastest growing of triple-A rated economies. — Reuters

Turkey detains 235 people over PKK propaganda after bomb attacks

ISTANBUL — Turkish authorities have detained 235 people found to be “spreading terror group propaganda” and acting on behalf of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militant group, the interior ministry said on Monday.

It said in a written statement that the operation, which followed a twin bomb attack in Istanbul on Saturday which killed 44 people, covered 11 provinces across Turkey from the northwest to the southeast. — Xinhua

Lavrov arrives in Belgrade

BELGRADE — Russian FM Sergey Lavrov arrived in Belgrade Monday to meet with Serbian top officials and attend a meeting of the Ministerial Council of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) on Tuesday.

Lavrov was welcomed at Belgrade’s Nikola Tesla airport by Deputy PM and FM Ivica Dacic and received by PM Aleksandar Vucic in the Serbian government building, with a meeting with President Tomislav Nikolic to follow afterward.

Lavrov and Minister of Labour, Employment and Veteran and Social Affairs Aleksandar Vulin will then lay wreaths at the Cemetry of the Liberators of Belgrade.

Lavrov will meet with Dacic in the afternoon, with the two ministers also scheduled to speak to reporters. — Reuters

Italy’s Renzi says elections should be held as soon as possible

ROME — Outgoing Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi said on Monday that fresh elections should be held as quickly as possible, even as his successor held consultations with parties to put together a new government.

Renzi resigned last week after losing a referendum over his plans to reform the constitution, and on Sunday the head of state asked his foreign minister Paolo Gentiloni to take over and try to form a government. “We hope to go to the polls as soon as possible,” Renzi told a meeting of his Democratic Party (PD). Gentiloni has held consultations with most of the parties in parliament and said he would see President Sergio Mattarella later in the day, when he was widely expected to announce that he had the necessary parliamentary majority. — Reuters

Philippine militants free two Indonesian captives — military

MANILA — Islamic militants in the Philippines on Monday freed two Indonesians who were kidnapped six months ago, after the rebels came under pressure from the Philippine army, a military spokesman said.

The two were among seven Indonesian crewmen who rebels from the Abu Sayyaf militant group kidnapped from a tug sailing in waters off the southern Philippines in June, said Major Filermon Tan, spokesman of the military’s Western Mindanao Command.

Tan said the militants released the two “after being pressured by non-stop operations”, and with the help of members of a rival Muslim group, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

The two were released to an MNLF leader and later handed over to a government official on Sulu island. — Reuters

UK PM May sticks to Brexit timetable in spite of legal challenges — spokeswoman

LONDON — British Prime Minister Theresa May is sticking to her timetable of threatening formal divorce talks with the European Union by the end of March despite further legal challenges, her spokeswoman said on Monday.

The Sunday Times newspaper reported that campaigners were ready to take the government to the High Court to try to keep Britain in the EU’s single market, while a group of British and Irish lawyers are also seeking to try to establish if Brexit can be reversed once divorce talks have been triggered.

“The prime minister is focused on making sure that the government is doing all the work to prepare for the negotiations and triggering Article 50 by the end of March, and that was backed by MPs (lawmakers) last week,” the spokeswoman told reporters. “Now all we need to get on and work to that timetable.” — Reuters

UK PM May sticks to Brexit timetable in spite of legal challenges — spokeswoman

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ALEPPO, (Syria)/BEIRUT — The Syrian army and its allies are in the “final stages” of recapturing Aleppo after a sudden advance that has pushed rebels to the brink of collapse in a shrinking enclave, a Syrian general said on Monday.

A Reuters journalist in the government-held zone said the bombardment of rebel areas had continued non-stop overnight, and a civilian trapped there described the situation there as resembling Doomsday.

“The battle in eastern Aleppo should end quickly. They (rebels) don’t have much time. They either have to surrender or die,” Lieutenant General Zaid al-Saleh, head of the government’s Aleppo security committee, told reporters in the recaptured Sheikh Saeed district of the city.

Pro-government forces were clashing with insurgents in the Fardous district, which was at the heart of the besieged pocket only days ago, after taking Sheikh Saeed in the south and Saliheen in the east, a rebel official said.

“The situation is extremely difficult today,” said Zakaria Malahifji of the Fastaqim rebel group fighting in Aleppo.

The rebels’ sudden retreat represented a “big collapse in terrorist morale”, a Syrian military source said.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, backed by Russia, is now close to taking back full control of Aleppo, which was Syria’s most populous city before the war and would be his greatest prize so far after nearly six years of conflict.

The Russian Defence Ministry said that since the start of the Aleppo battle, more than 2,200 rebels had surrendered and 100,000 civilians had left areas of the city that were controlled by militants.

People run from one shelling to another to escape death and just to save their souls... It’s doomsday in Aleppo, yes doomsday in Aleppo,” said Abu Amer Iqab, a former government employee in the Sukkari district in the heart of the rebel enclave. While Aleppo’s fall would deal a stunning blow to rebels trying to remove Assad from power, he would still be far from restoring control across Syria. swathes of the country remain in rebel hands, and on Sunday Islamic State retook Palmira.

Tens of thousands of civilians remain in rebel-held areas, hemmed in by ever-changing front lines, pounded by air strikes and shelling, and without basic supplies, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a British-based monitoring group. Rebel groups in Aleppo received a US-Russian proposal on Sunday for a withdrawal of fighters and civilians from the city’s opposition areas, but Moscow said no agreement had been reached yet in talks in Geneva to end the crisis peacefully. The rebel official blamed Russia for the lack of progress in talks, saying it had no incentive to compromise while its ally Assad was gaining ground.

The Russians are being evasive. They are looking at the military situation. Now they are advancing,” he said. The Observatory said the Sheikh Saeed district had fallen to the army in fighting on Sunday night and early on Monday and troops were firing on the districts of Karam al-Daadaa and Fardous.

An advance into those districts would take the army into the heart of the area held by rebels as recently as Saturday, pushing them towards a last bastion of control on the west bank of Aleppo’s river and the area southwest of the citadel. The Syrian army is backed by Russian war planes and Shi’ite militias supported by Iran. The mostly Sunni rebels include groups backed by the United States, Turkey and Gulf monarchies as well as hardline jihadists who are not supported by the West.

A correspondent for Syria’s official SANA news agency said the army had taken control of Sheikh Saeed, and more than 3,500 people had left at dawn. A Syrian official told Reuters: “We managed to take full control of the Sheikh Saeed district. This area is very important because it facilitates access to al-Amariya and allows us to secure a greater part of the Aleppo-Ramousah road.”

The road is the main entry point to the city from the south.—Reuters
**Greek police find bomb planted outside labour ministry**

ATHENS — Greek police found and later detonated an explosive device that had been left outside the labour ministry in central Athens on Monday, police sources said, after a newspaper was tipped off that a bomb had been planted.

Police found the device in a rucksack propped up against the shutters of the ministry, on a central thoroughfare in Athens. It was one of three suspect packages that police examined on the scene and then destroyed in controlled blasts. Earlier, a telephone call to a Greek newspaper had warned that a blast outside the ministry was imminent. There was no claim of responsibility for the incident. Such attacks are not uncommon in Greece, which has a long history of political violence. Small-scale attacks have escalated in recent years.

**British-Algerian journalist dies after hunger strike in Algiers**

ALGIERS — A British-Algerian journalist had died six months after staging a hunger strike in Algiers over his detention for publishing articles seen as critical of Algerian authorities.

In London, was arrested in Algeria in June for posts he had shared on Facebook that were seen as critical of Algerian authorities.

Placed in pre-trial detention for “offending the president” and “defaming a public authority”, he was later given a two-year sentence for offences against a public official, according to Human Rights Watch.

“It is urgent that lawyers are allowed access to the journalist’s medical dossier,” Yasmine Kacha, North Africa director of Reporters Without Borders, said.

“A public apology should be presented to the journalist’s family and an investigation immediately opened,” she said in a statement.

Algeria’s prison service said the hospital had been treating Tamalt for his lung infection, and he had been receiving daily treatment since beginning his hunger strike in late June. —Reuters

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**Egypt mourns victims of church bombing, angry survivors say security lax**

CAIRO — Mourners packed an Egyptian church on Monday for the funeral of 24 people killed in a bomb attack at Cairo’s Coptic cathedral and angry survivors said police had failed to protect the Christian minority.

Tearful relatives gathered at the Virgin Mary and St Athanasius Church in Cairo where Coptic Pope Tawadros II prayed over the wooden coffins of victims of Sunday's bombing, one of the deadliest to target Christians in recent memory.

On the walls hung banners bearing the names of the dead, many of them women.

Speaking after the funeral service, during which he shed tears, Pope Tawadros called the dead martyrs and sought to heal any sectarian friction caused by the attack, saying it “is not just a disaster for the church but a disaster for the whole nation.”

He also condemned attacks against the security forces.

“Those who commit acts such as this do not belong to Egypt at all, even if they are on its land,” he said.

At least 24 people died and 49 were wounded when a bomb exploded in a chapel adjoining St Mark’s Cathedral, Cairo’s largest church and seat of the Coptic papacy, where security is normally tight.

The blast was caused by a bomb containing at least 12 kg (26 pounds) of TNT detonated on a side of the church used by women.

The chapel’s floor was covered in debris from shattered windows, its wooden pews blasted apart, its pillars blackened. Here and there lay abandoned shoes and patches of blood. Dazed church officials wondered around in their black robes.

Several hundred people gathered in the Madinat Nasr area furious at being denied entry to the funeral ceremony, where admittance was by invitation only. Security sources said police, concerned over mounting anger, detained at least 25 youths.

“They beat them up because they were chanting. Now they switched off their phones and we can’t find them,” said Atef Kamel, whose brother and cousin were taken away by police.

“They came to attend the funeral, so they got arrested... Isn’t it enough what has already happened to us?”

There was also anger at hospitals treating the wounded.

Five survivors at Dar al-Shefa hospital said police did not conduct the usual checks as the cathedral was particularly busy for Sunday’s mass, which took place on a public holiday marking the Prophet Mohammad’s birthday, just weeks before Christmas.

President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, who announced the new church would be built on the site of the bomb attack, said Mina Francis, who was at the mass with his mother, who was killed.

“Protecting our citizens requires the government’s continuous efforts,” he said.

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**

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

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA BASIL VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12.12.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim’s Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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

**Shipping Agency Department**

**Myanmar Port Authority**

**Agent for: M/S Advance Container Lines**

Phone No: 2301185
Midwest snow storm grounds hundreds of Chicago flights

CHICAGO — Hundreds of flights into and out of Chicago’s O’Hare and Midway airports were canceled on Sunday as a winter storm system dumped moderate to heavy snow on the Upper Midwest and Lower Great Lakes regions before heading toward the US Northeast.

A winter storm warning was in effect in the Chicago area on Sunday afternoon, with total accumulations of up to 10 inches (25 cm) expected by midnight CST, the National Weather Service said.

It warned of difficult driving conditions in and around the country’s third-biggest metropolitan area, where snow began falling on Saturday afternoon. As much as 13 inches of snow fell in parts of Michigan and up to 9 inches in parts of Minnesota by 8 a.m. CST on Sunday, according to the National Weather Service.

At O’Hare International Airport, the world’s fourth-busiest airport, United Air Lines and American Airlines have scratched most regional flights and some mainline service, while Southwest Air has canceled most flights out of Midway International on Sunday evening and Monday morning, the airports said.

Passengers took to Twitter to vent their frustrations over one of the first winter storms to snarl air traffic in the region this season.

“What all our fans in Vegas — we are stuck in Chicago from the snow storm, we are so sorry. Winter weather is (sic) wrecked our plans. This sucks,” wrote the rock band One Republic in a Twitter post. The group had a show scheduled on Sunday night at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada. All told, more than 1,200 flights into and out of O’Hare were canceled as of Sunday afternoon, according to the Flightaware tracking service, while nearly 200 Midway flights were scratched.

At Detroit’s Metropolitan Wayne County Airport, a Delta flight arriving from Buffalo, New York, skidded off the runway and came to a stop on a grassy verge around midday on Sunday, but there were no injuries, local media reported.

Representatives of the airport and the airline could not reach The Chicago Tribune immediately to confirm the reports. — Reuters

Santa in trouble? Reindeer shrink in Arctic as climate changes

OSLO — Reindeer are shrinking on an Arctic island near the North Pole in a side-effect of climate change that has curbed winter food for animals often depicted as pulling Father Christmas’ sleigh, scientists said on Monday.

The average weight of adult reindeer on Svalbard, a chain of islands north of Norway, has fallen to 48 kg (106 lb) from 55 kg (121 lb) in the 1990s as part of sweeping changes to Arctic life as temperatures rise, they said.

Warmer summers are great for reindeer but winters are getting increasingly tough,” Professor Steve Albon, an ecologist at the James Hutton Institute in Scotland who led the study with Norwegian researchers, told Reuters.

Less chilly winters mean that once-reliable snows fall more often as rain that can freeze into a sheet of ice, making it harder for the herbivores to reach plant food. Some reindeer starve and females often give birth to stunted young.

In summer, however, plants flourish in a food bonanza that ensures healthy females more likely to conceive in autumn — a pregnancy lasts about seven months.

The wild herd studied had expanded to about 1,400 animals from 800 since the 1990s.

“So far we have more but smaller reindeer,” Albon said of research on Svalbard, about 800 miles (1,300 km) from the North Pole. The rising population also means more competition for scarce food in winter.

He noted that one popular children’s book, “Father Christmas” by Raymond Briggs, showed Father Christmas’ sleigh, with two reindeer. If the animals are smaller and weaker, “will two reindeer be sufficient?” Albon asked.

Arctic temperatures are rising faster than the world average amid a build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Most studies of global warming around Svalbard have focused on polar bears that hunt seals at sea, rather than year-round land residents led by reindeer, Arctic foxes and Svalbard rock ptarmigan birds.

Arctic fox numbers have risen slightly because they thrive in severe ice winters by scavenging dead reindeer, said Eva Fuglei, a researcher at the Norwegian Polar Institute and the Fram Centre who was not involved in the reindeer study.

“All the weak reindeer die — the sick, the elderly and calves,” she told Reuters. But that means foxes struggle to feed the next winter because only the fittest adult reindeer have survived. — Reuters

Claims Day Notice

MV PACAO VOY. NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PACAO VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12.12.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T. where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm on Claim’s Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

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

Shipping Agency Department

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY

Agent for: M/S Yang Ming Line

Phone No: 2301185

Claims Day Notice

MVOMICRON PRIDE VOY. NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV OMICRON PRIDE VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 13.12.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.L.P.L. where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm on Claim’s Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

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

Shipping Agency Department

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY

Agent for: M/S COMET SHIPPING & CHARTERING LTD

Phone No: 2301928
Johnny Depp visits children’s hospital as Jack Sparrow

LONDON — Hollywood superstar Johnny Depp brightened the day of child patients of Great Ormond Street Children’s Hospital by dressing up in his “Pirates Of The Caribbean” character Captain Jack Sparrow. The actor chatted up with the young patients in his movie avatar, which is very popular with kids. Depp’s daughter Lily-Rose was successfully treated for renal failure at the same hospital in 2007. One patient captioned the image, saying, “This is actual Johnny Depp. Just came in to the hospital. I’m so confused.” — PTI

Tom Hanks has a huge influence on me: Ryan Reynolds

LOS ANGELES — Actor Ryan Reynolds says Oscar-winner Tom Hanks has a huge influence on him.

In his acceptance speech at the 22nd Critics’ Choice Awards the 40-year-old star, who won the best actor in a comedy for “Deadpool”, gave a shoutout to Hanks, reported Entertainment Weekly.

“I was not expecting this. I’ve prepared nothing. So, I’m just going to focus on Tom Hanks,” Reynolds joked during his acceptance speech.

“No really, though. You’re a huge influence on me. My two-year-old daughter, the first full sentence she ever said was, ‘There’s no crying in baseball.’ I’m not kidding,” he continued.

Reynolds went on to thank screenwriters, whom he called “the architects.”

“It’s a hugely undervalued asset in Hollywood. Oftentimes their job is very hard. They’re alone in rooms in their underwear, weeping softly, their tears working as lube on their old-fashioned typewriter machines,” he said. — PTI

Daniel Craig may return as James Bond

LOS ANGELES — Actor Daniel Craig might play popular fictional character James Bond again.

The “Spectre” actor could be convinced to sign up for another 007 movie by the producer of his latest theatre project, “Othello”, reported AccShowbiz. Barbara Broccoli, who brought in Craig in 2006 for the string of hits “Casino Royale”, “Quantum of Solace”, “Skyfall” and “Spectre” is serving as producer for the play and it is believed that she would “ask the actor to reprise his role for the upcoming ‘Bond 25’.” — PTI

‘La La Land’ wins big at Critics Choice Awards

LOS ANGELES — Damien Chazelle’s “La La Land” starring Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling, bagged eight trophies including best picture, best director and best original song at the 22nd Annual Critics’ Choice Awards.

Accepting the award on behalf of the production was Chazelle, who thanked the film’s entire cast and crew for having faith in him, reported Entertainment Weekly.

“I want to thank my producers... For trying to make this movie for six years, six years of what seemed like an impossible dream, an uphill climb, and you guys never lost faith. You always pushed me, I can’t thank you guys enough,” Chazelle said. Moving to film’s lead pair Stone and Gosling, Chazelle continued: Thank you for your starring role in “Jackie”, Pablo Larraín’s biopic of Jackie Kennedy Onassis, while Casey Affleck bagged Best Actor for “Manchester by the Sea”.

“Moonlight” took home best supporting actor for Mahershala Ali, as well as best acting ensemble. Eric Heisserer won best adapted screenplay for “Arrival”.

On the television front, Bob Odenkirk won best actor in a dramatic series for “Better Call Saul”, “The People Vs O J Simpson” won four times, including acting prizes for Sarah Paulson and Courtney B Vance and Donald Glover won for best actor in a comedy series. — PTI
Premature girl babies more likely to be short adults: New Zealand-Swedish study

WELLINGTON — Baby girls born very premature could be almost three times more likely to grow into short adults than those born at term, according to a study by New Zealand and Swedish researchers out Monday.

The study also found women born very premature — before 32 weeks — were 2.3 centimetres shorter on average as adults than their sisters born at term, or 37 to 41 weeks. “We were a little surprised by the results,” said lead author Dr Jose Derraik, of Auckland University’s Liggins Institute. “There is some evidence that babies who were born premature tend to be shorter in childhood, but they usually catch up with those born at term in late adolescence,” Derraik said in a statement.

“But our study shows that women who were born very preterm fail to reach the stature you’d expect based on their parents’ and siblings’ heights.”

The study with Uppsala University in Sweden was the latest collaboration to analyse data from more than 200,000 Swedish women collected from 1991 to 2008. Researchers were yet to establish why premature birth should lead to shorter adult stature. “It may be related to the fact that premature babies are often quite thin at birth,” said Derraik. A previous Liggins Institute study showed that small size at birth was associated with changes in the way growth hormone worked in the body, which could eventually reduce adult height.—Xinhua
Costa fires Chelsea back to the top, United beat Spurs

London — Chelsea striker Diego Costa’s class shone through as he fired them back to the top of the Premier League on Sunday with a 1-0 win over West Bromwich Albion as the previous day’s goal glut turned into a trickle.

The Spain international’s fine second-half strike at Stamford Bridge topped a defensive West Bromwich Albion side and restored the Blues’ three-point advantage over Arsenal as they chalked up their ninth league victory in a row.

The Gunners had taken provisional top spot with 34 points from 15 games on goals scored after recovering to beat Stoke 2-1 in the late kick-off.

“It was a tough game,” said Chelsea manager Antonio Conte. “We played with passion. West Brom is a tough team, a physical team who are difficult to break down. It was a good win and now we must continue.

“We have won nine in a row which is fantastic because this league is very tough. We are working very well. The home teams in action on Saturday scored at least three goals, with Jamie Vardy bagging a hat-trick as champions Leicester City returned to form with a 4-2 home win against Manchester City. Sunday’s opening three matches all ended 1-0, Chelsea’s early goal reflected later at Old Trafford and Everton with Manchester United and Southampton seeing off Tottenham Hotspur and Middlesbrough respectively.

Manchester United’s Henrikh Mkhitaryan celebrates scoring their first goal. Photo: Reuters

Arsenal get Bayern again, Barcelona meet PSG

ZURICH — Arsenal will have another chance to beat Bayern Munich in a Champions League knockout tie after the sides were paired yet again in the round of 16 following Monday’s draw.

The teams met at the same stage in 2005, 2013 and 2014 with the German champions winning on all three occasions - 3-2 on aggregate in 2005, 0-1 away goals after a 3-3 draw in 2013 and 3-1 in 2014.

Paris St Germain will also try to break a jinx when they face Spanish champions Barcelona, who knocked them out in the quarter-finals in 2013 and 2014.

holders Real Madrid, who like Bayern finished as runners-up in their group and will therefore play the first leg at home, were given a tricky clash with Serie A side Napoli in the talk of the town.

“The fans will think we need to break a jinx when they face Spanish champions Barcelona, who knocked them out in the quarter-finals in 2013 and 2014. Paris St Germain will also try to break a jinx when they face Spanish champions Barcelona, who knocked them out in the quarter-finals in 2013 and 2014.

Arsenal may feel this could be their best chance to beat Bayern, whose domestic and European form has not been as dominant as in recent seasons.

Kygrios thinks ban will help him push for top 10 in 2017

Sydney — Australian world number 13 Nick Kyrgios thinks his ATP-imposed suspension will stand him in good stead when he makes a push for the top 10 next season.

The ban was reduced to three weeks after he agreed to see a sports psychologist.

“Any time you look at it, getting more time off with the people you love and I’ve been training as well, so it’s set me up in good stead for next year.”

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“Any time you look at it, getting more time off with the people you love and I’ve been training as well, so it’s set me up in good stead for next year.”