Union spirit is the source of building a democratic federal union

On this auspicious occasion of the 70th Anniversary Union Day, I would like to extend affectionate and respectful greetings to all the national brethren and wish them fulfillment and contentment.

Throughout the history, ancient Myanmar kings built a strong union through national unity. Under the rule of kings who built national unity, national sovereignty was widely established. In late Konbaung era, the country fell under the colonial rule. As a consequence, national brethren became disunited due to lack of unity.

Having founded the Myanmar Tatmataw under the leadership of Bogyoke Aung San, the national people fought against the invaders with the help of the Japanese. However, all the national people suffered from the bitter treatment of fascism. When the Second World War broke out, we, in cooperation with the Allies, fought against the fascists. However, the British colonists who came back to our country again were hesitant to give independence to our country. The colonists intended to give independence only to the main land but not the hilly regions. Bogyoke Aung San and national leaders held the Pang-Long Conference on 12th February, 1947, and they agreed upon claiming, in union, for the independence of the whole nation and signed the Pang-Long agreement. The essence of the Pang-Long Conference was the equal independence for all ethnicities in the country at the same time. The day that proved and highlighted the unity of all national races was recognized as “The Union Day” of Myanmar and today is the 70th anniversary of our Union Day.

Honouring the 70th Anniversary Union Day.

The following is the message sent by President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Htin Kyaw on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary Union Day.—Ed

“...It is very important for all the nationalities to equally participate in promoting national unity and keeping the Union in perpetuity.

Esteeemed national brethren of the Union,

After gaining independence, the social standards of our national people declined due to armed conflicts and lack of peace and stability in the country. Such long lasting armed conflict only left our country’s development behind other countries in the region. Only when we are successful in bringing desired peace in the State, we are sure that Myanmar will occupy a proud position in the world. SEE PAGE 3 >>

NATIONAL
State Counsellor arrives Taunggyi to attend 70th Union Day Ceremony

NATIONAL
Investigation Commission launches probe into UN allegations of human rights violations in Maungtaw

PHOTO: SAW THEN WIN
A fire broke out in Thachaung Village in Sittway Township, Rakhine State, yesterday, destroying four homes and one shop.

The fire caused by negligence happened at the house owned by U Zar Ki Yusan at 5.30 pm and engulfed the properties causing loss of K179,000.

The fire was put under control by firemen and villagers 15 minutes after it started.

U Zar Ki Yusan managed to escape and a file is opened on him at the Myoma Police Station in Sittway.

—Myanmar News Agency

Fire destroys four homes, one shop in Sittway

Over 1,000 tonnes of illegal timbers were seized in Yangon during past three weeks

OVER 1,000 tonnes of illegal timbers were seized in Yangon during the past three weeks. The suspects have been charged, said a forestry department official.

Over 30 tonnes illegal teak were seized from inside the two containers at MIP yard, Yangon on 24 January. Connected information has led to the seizure of a total of over 1,000 tonnes of illegal timbers as of 8 February.

On 10 February, a combined team comprising officers and staff from the forestry department searched a house at the corner of Weatma Sut Wun Htau and Seinta Kyaw Thu U Aw streets, ward 144, South Dagon Myothit and seized Padauk square logs weighing over 100 tonnes, sawn teak weighing 15 tonnes, eight CCTV, three chain saws, one motorbike and 10 accessories which were covered by empty water bottles and card boxes.

On the same day, the combined team searched a house at No. 35, Pyin Si Minthagyi road, Aw streets, ward 144, South Dagon Myothit and found illegal Padought square logs weighing over 50 tonnes.

“Our combined team interrogated those suspected, and this has led us to seize other timbers in Mingladon, Shwepyitha, Hlaingthaya townships. The regional government also helps us. We seized the illegal timbers at South Dagon and East Dagon on 10 February when the public informed us,” said U Thein Toe, director.

Forestry department seized teak logs weighing over 60 tonnes, Padauk weighing over 954 tonnes, Tammanal weighing 25 tonnes, Kokko weighing over 5 tonnes, a total of 37 containers and six 10-wheel vehicles worth over Ks 3,000 million.

“We seized a big volume of illegal timbers in Yangon. It means there are many illegal timber extractions in other regions. Authorities should take deterrent action against those involved in illegal timber extraction so that we can prevent deforestation.

The forestry department is conducting more awareness courses concerning the forest depletion.—Tayar

Authorities inspect seized illegal timbers. PHOTO: TAYAR

70th anniversary Union Day ceremony and Panglong peace talk to be broadcast live today

THE 70th anniversary of Union Day Ceremony (Panglong) and the Panglong Peace Talk programme in which the State Counsellor and ethnic people will participate in Panglong, Shan State will be broadcast live on MRTV, Myanmar Radio MRTV Facebook Page, MNTV, MNTV, Up To Date and Indigenous races Channels and the Myanmar State Counsellor Office’s Facebook Page starting at 9.15am today.

The Panglong Peace Talk will take place under a banyan tree, the same place where General Aung San read a book while he was attending the original Panglong Conference. Family members of the leaders who signed the Panglong Agreement, including State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, will attend the 70th anniversary of Union Day Ceremony, according to the State Counsellor Office’s information committee.—Myanmar News Agency

State and Region Hluttaw staff expected to be separated from GA Department

STATE and Region Hluttaw staff who are under the legislative pillar are the staff of the General Administration Department under the Ministry of Home Affairs. So, State and Region Hluttaw staff should be separated from the General Administration Department as these of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw, said a Kachin state Hluttaw representative.

“Fourteen States and Regions Hluttaw staff including those from Kachin State are now under the form the General Administration Department. So, we are making effort to separate the Hluttaw staff from the General Administration Department in terms of organizational structure and budget. We have asked the all the Hluttaw staff if they want to work for Hluttaw or General Administration Department,” said an advocate general from Kachin State government.

This kind of effort has already been made during the tenure of the first Pyithu Hluttaw but the effort came to naught.

—Salai Mang Ngai

Five suspects arrested in Maungtaw

SECURITY forces arrested five men in Maungtaw Township on suspicion of involving in the violent attacks in northern Rakhine.

Arji Durahman of Kyikanpyin (Middle) Village, Pharol of Kyikanpyin (South) Village, Shaungshu Arlaung of Kyikanpyin (West) Village, Mamauk Elsad of Kyikanpyin (Middle) Village and Shunar Hnmyar of Wabeik Village were arrested while they were walking from Kyikanpyin Village in Maungtaw Township.

Measures are being taken to take action against them in accordance with the law.

—Myanmar News Agency

Five suspects are seen at the Police Station. PHOTO: MNA
Union spirit is the source of building a democratic federal union

>> FROM PAGE 1

For the development of our country, politics and economics go hand in hand and national reconciliation is one of the most important foundations in setting country’s economic policy. To shape the future federal democratic union, the 21st Century Pang-Long Conference is being held. The essence of the 21st Century Pang-Long Conference is the emergence of the united democratic federal union. Also the solution to end up the long-lasting armed conflicts and to get national reconciliation is building a democratic federal union.

Union spirit is the source of building a democratic federal union. Union spirit means the strong determination of all the national people to live in unity, having negotiation in building a union. We are sure that there will never be a democratic federal union without strong and genuine union spirit.

Myanmar is a union composed of national races, having different cultures, traditions and religions. The national races living in respective geographical areas have been living together practicing their traditions and cooperating affectionately. Therefore, all national races must conserve the cultural heritage and traditions of our nationalities.

Esteemed national brethren of the Union,
It is very important for all the nationalities to equally participate in promoting national unity and keeping the Union in perpetuity. Within the Federal System, it is essential to establish own legislation power that all ethnic groups have been craving for. Moreover to ensure national reconciliation, it is necessary not only to establish clear confidence between the nation and armed ethnic groups but also to create mutual trust among ethnic groups. As the essential need of peacekeeping process is trust, it is necessary to put strong effort in building clear confidence among national brethren. When we have gained national unity and national reconciliation, it is sure for us to be able to build a peaceful and prosperous Democratic Federal Union.

I would like to stress the cooperation and coordination among the government, Hluttaw, Tatmadaw, ethnic groups, armed groups, political parties, civil society organizations and every citizen in order to implement the National Reconciliation and State Peace process. On this auspicious occasion of the 70th Anniversary Union Day, I would like to urge each and every one to bring the successful implementation of the four objectives of the 70th Anniversary Union Day:
• to develop the Union Spirit;
• to strengthen the National Unity;
• to build a Federal Democratic State;
• to strive for the betterment of socio-economic development of the citizens.

Htin Kyaw
President

State Counsellor arrives Taunggyi to attend 70th Union Day Ceremony

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi arrived in Taunggyi in southern Shan State by air from Nay Pyi Taw to attend the 70th Anniversary of Union Day ceremony and peace talks programme.

The State Counsellor was welcomed at the Heho airport by Dr Lin Htut, Shan State Chief Minister, U Sai Long Hseng, Shan State Hluttaw Speaker, Shan State Ministers, Members of Parliament and officials.

The State Counsellor will attend the Union Day Ceremony in Panglong, Shan State, today together with Union Minister Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Lt-Gen Ye Aung, Dr Pe Myint, Dr Win Myat Aye, Chairman of the Peace Commission Dr Tin Myo Win, Lt-Gen Yar Pyae, State Chief Minister Dr Lin Htut and Deputy Ministers.—Myanmar News Agency

Investigation Commission launches probe into UN allegations of human rights violations in Maungtaw

MEMBERS of the Investigation Commission on Maungtaw began their fact-finding mission yesterday looking into United Nations allegations of human rights violations in northern Rakhine.

The mission including U Zaw Myint Pe, Secretary of the Commission and members U Thar Nyan, U Saw Thalay Saw, U Nyunt Swe, Dr Daw Thet Thet Zin, Daw Kyein Ngaik Man and U Aung Naing, was divided into groups and carried out probes door to door in villages into human rights violations including alleged rapes cases mentioned in a February-3 Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

The members of the independent mission visited Zinpayngnyar, Warbeik, Phaw-wutchaung, Kyeeinchaung and Sedipyin villages in Laungdon Village-tract in Maungtaw Township yesterday.—Myanmar News Agency

Ministry of Home Affairs issues press release


2. The Ministry of Home Affairs has instructed Myanmar Police Force to follow, in use of force, the international standards such as proportionality, legality, accountability, necessity and to carry out its mission in accordance with the law and procedures. Regarding measures taken to arrest, detain and search suspects and to seize evidences, the security forces have been instructed to carry out their duty in accordance with the provisions of the Criminal Codes and police manual.

3. Action is being taken in accordance with the Police Disciplinary Law against those members of the police who failed to follow the instructions/provisions while responsible personnel at different levels are overseeing the police forces to follow the instructions/provisions.

4. Hence, as part of efforts for investigation to find out whether the police forces have committed illegal actions including violations of human rights during their area clearance operations, the departmental enquiry will be conducted with the following persons.

   (1) Police Brig-Gen Win Tun Police Adjutant-General Chairman
   (2) Police Brig-Gen Nay Win Commander of Railway Police Member
   (3) Police Col Nay Tun Commander of Tourism Security Police Member
   (4) Police Lt-Col Maung Maung Lwin Sub-Commander of the Special Branch (Sittway) Member
   (5) Police Col Khin Maung Aye Deputy Commander of the Criminal Investigation Department Secretary

5. If the Departmental Enquiry Tribunal finds the police having violated human rights, deterrent action will be taken against those who are found guilty under the Police Disciplinary Law.—Ministry of Home Affairs

Rakhine traditional carriage pulling festival attracts people in Maungtaw

RAKHINE traditional carriage pulling festival in Maungtaw, Rakhine State, has attracted local people on Friday night.

At the festival, artists performed traditional group dances and songs.

Khet Zan

MANDALAY-MUSE Road linking Mandalay, the second capital city of Myanmar, and Muse located on Myanmar-China border is a pivotal role in border trade between the two countries. The road was once notorious for its poor condition and the frequent occurring of jins and insurgencies. But nowadays, the situation has changed a lot as the country is moving towards a new society. Tens of thousands of small and large vehicles are plying daily on the road carrying passengers and goods. As the trade route contributes to the country’s development, maintenance of the road, abiding by the traffic rules of drivers of various kinds of vehicles, supervision of local authorities as well as the participation of local people become important.

In the past the road saw lorries weighing 3 tons carrying just 3 tons of goods. Today, truck technology has increased unbelievably. A long truck can carry a large amount of weights on it. Moreover, its power is so great that it can easily destroy the surface of the road, but it cannot be said that damage on the road is the vehicle’s fault. Its duty is to carry goods from one place to another. The road itself must and can bear the loads on it. Here arises a question: Who will make the road good? To know the situation occurred on the road, we, news hunters, managed a trip from Mandalay to Muse.

The trip was quite interesting. We started our trip from Mandalay on one early morning of January this year, and when we reached the detour of Pyin Oo Lwin, it was dawn. The detour is twenty kilometers long and it is an asphalt road. A huge truck, with a heavy cargo can run on it smoothly and safely. We learnt that the Oriental Highway Company is responsible for maintenance and durability of the road. The road, when the road behind, moved towards and made a stopover at Naungkwin Toll Gate before reaching Gotetwin which is infamous for its tolls. Then, the road is located at the top of the Gotetwin valley and runs by the company. At the gate a huge LED billboard is erected. It gives information to drivers. It is written in Myanmar language which reads “In this moment, vehicles can pass through Gotetwin valley conveniently.” The information is invaluable for drivers because if someone goes down into the valley without knowing the situation in it and sees traffic jam, it is difficult for both up- and down-truck drivers to pass these curves. The driver is skilled but the condition of the vehicle is not up to the mark, it is sure that the car would break down on the road and the traffic would be blocked. If the condition of the car is good but the driver is not skilled it is sure that his car would plummet into a deep ravine.

But, it is very encouraging to see that heavy machines of the Oriental Highway Company are at work to expand the road. We also learnt from the staff of the company who said that they have a plan to lay asphalt on the road. Another encouraging scene was that a soldier from the security force helped drivers to move their cars properly. Besides his security duty, the young soldier, under the cold, windy night of Shan State holding his gun on his back ushered the vehicles to a convenient path. Through his ushering, the vehicle could move slowly but safely.

Drivers are also praiseworthy because they are too patient to wait their turn to move ahead. Without their efforts, the exported goods could not reach their destination and so do the imported goods.

When we reached Muse it was 9 p.m. Before reaching Muse, we saw a long queue of heavy trucks. They were waiting to enter the checkpoint for their cargoes to be checked before exporting to China. The night fell but the drivers cannot sleep as they are waiting for their turn to pass through the checkpoint. As for us we put up at Muse Motel and took a good rest.

When I saw the smooth road throughout the trip my mind went back around 1993 when I attended Korean Language Class at International Foreign Languages (now University of Foreign Languages) in Yangon. Our Korean Lecturer said, “When I was young our country (ROK) was under the reign of President Park Chung Hee. The government appointed strong men to build the country which arose from the ash of war. First, the government built a highway from Seoul to Busan stretching from the north to south. Then, it connected power lines across the country. Thanks to building of a highway from the north to south the areas from east and west parts along the highway saw development. And thanks to the power lines which are important for industrial development, the industrial sector has seen rapid development.

That is right. We should follow the example shown by our Korean friends. The more roads are built, the better for goods transportation. Government alone cannot fulfill the needs of the country. All traders eye to export their goods, such item as fruits, rice in China became high and the demand is high and most want to come to border with China. Some drivers who have never been to Pyin Oo Lwin try to reach the Union Border Trade Zone are trying their best to clear the goods. All the traffic and the demand of goods are met by the traders willing to work hard.

Khet Zan

The following is the opinions of some people we met in Muse: U Hay Lwin, leader of Agent trainees.

“The demand of sugar and rice in China became high and traders eye to export their goods is in need of a warehouse in the plain area of Myanmar. In addition to these goods, such item as fruits, maize and other goods are exported to China in this season. As a result the number of trucks plying on Mandalay-Muse road increased and traffic jams follow. To ease the traffic and to increase the income of the nation, all the staff at 105th Mile Border Trade Zone are trying their best to clear the goods. All the traffic and the demand and the income of the nation, all the staff at 105th Mile Border Trade Zone are trying their best to clear the goods.

U Ye Soe Aung, driver from Mandalay

“Sometimes we have to wait for at least two or more days to pass through the checkpoint. This time I’m lucky because I had to queue for just two days. Now is a open season and the demand is high and most want to come to border with China. Some drivers who have never been to Pyin Oo Lwin try to reach the Union Border Trade Zone are trying their best to clear the goods. Some drivers are trying to work hard.

Khet Zan

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Rumour of special goods tax for automobile market prompts car price rise

THE rumour of a special goods tax levied on imported cars is spreading around the automobile market, resulting in car price hikes of up to Ks1 million, said car dealers from the automobile market in Hlaing Township.

There is no official announcement concerning the special goods tax on imported cars yet, but the rumour nevertheless drove prices up.

The Cost, Insurance and Freight (CIF) values for imported automobiles with engines below 1350cc were set at US$5,000. However, those cars are needed to import with the slip, which could turn into an uneconomical deal for the importers, said a car broker.

The price of slip returned on deregistration of old cars was likely to decline. However, a widespread rumour in the automobile market predicts that a special goods tax will be levied on imported cars starting in April led the car price to surge, which made the slip price increase by Ks400,000 to 500,000. As a result of this, the car prices began an upward trend, it is learnt.— Ko Htet

Production of duck eggs decrease for lack of safe pasture

ONLY about 200,000 duck eggs are currently entering the local market daily, said Ko Hla Win, a duck breeder. The reason is that duck breeders in Ayeyawady Region stopped allowing ducks into the fields for feeding because the summer paddies being cultivated in the field use chemical fertilizer.

Currently, the egg depots receive 200,000 duck eggs, down from 500,000 in previous weeks. To fill the gap, Thailand exports about 300,000 duck eggs to Myanmar every day. In the Ayeyawady Region, the main source for eggs, the ducks are not bred on a commercial scale, only on a small, manageable scale.

“If we release the ducks into the fields, the ducks can eat natural food. But now we are worried about them feeding on the fertilizer and dying. Without natural food, the ducks do not produce as many eggs,” said Ko Hla Win.

The duck eggs are distributed to local markets in Bogalay, Pyapon, Mawgyun, Myaungmya, Kyakklatt and Dedaye townships.

A 17kg duck egg fetches Ks100 while a 19kg egg can get Ks110 or Ks120. The prices also vary depending on the township.— 200

The price of fish paste doubles in Bago

THE price of fish paste has doubled in Bago Region within three years because of the scarcity of small fish, according to fish paste brokers.

The small fish from lakes, rivers and creeks are becoming scarce because of the increase in the manufacture of dried, pickled fish and high demand from feed manufacturing factories. Therefore, the small fish used as raw material for making fish paste are becoming less plentiful and more expensive in the local market.

In 2014, the price of small fish paste was about Ks5 00 per viss and the big fish paste was Ks 1,000 per viss. Currently, the price of small fish paste has increased to Ks 1,000 per viss and big fish pastes fetches Ks 2,000 per viss.

“The small fish are becoming rare year by year. We have stored the raw materials for two years to manufacture the fish paste. Last year, we bought 2,000 viss of small fish. Now, we can buy only 500 viss. We cannot collect the raw materials to make fish paste as much as we want,” said U Myo Aye, a fish paste broker from Waw town.

There are many kinds of fish pastes. The fish pastes are made of striped dwarf catfish, a variety of gourami and fish larvae.—Myitmakha News Agency

Three-storey fruit & vegetable wholesale market to be built in Amarapura

A three-storey fruit and vegetable wholesale market will be built on a 14.59-acre plot of land as the second phase and 30-acre plot of land as the first phase and 30-acre plot of land as the second phase at Nge Toe village, Field No. 616, beside Sagaing-Man dalay road. The project will be completed in 2018, it is learnt.

The market will be joint ly constructed by Shwe Moe Group Company and Mandalay fruit and vegetable depots. The market will be built with the aim of developing the city of Mandalay and reducing traffic problems caused by the fruit and vegetable street vendors. Another aim is to control the prices in the fruit and vegetable market. Shwe Moe Company has been conducting soil tests and measuring the land since January. The market will have 100 apartments measuring 20 feet in length, 40 feet in diameter and nine feet in height. Estimated cost of the project is Ks45 billion.

The wholesale market will have a proper sewage system using advanced technology. Upon completion, the market will be a modern marketplace for consumers, local traders and exporters and will reduce transportation costs. The wholesale market does not allow customers and traders to stay overnight. —Myanmar Alin

Rubber testing laboratory in Hlegu expected to get global accreditation

A rubber-testing laboratory in Hlegu Township is expected to receive global accreditation, enabling it to issue recommendations on rubber based on international standards, ensuring quality assurance, it is learnt from the Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association.

Concerted efforts are being exerted for this laboratory to meet international criteria and get global accreditation with the assistance from Japan starting from 2015.

The local association hopes that International Rubber Association (IRA) will grant approval to the laboratory, showing that it meets international standards.

After the inspection by the IRA, the Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association is trying to fulfil the requirements pointed out by the IRA. Samples of rubber will also be sent to rubber-buying countries and to laboratories which have already approved by IRA to test the quality.

Rakhine chili to be exported to Sri Lanka

THE chili grown in Rakhine state will be exported to Sri Lanka beginning this year, according to the Rakhine branch of the Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producers and Exporters Association (MFVO).

An official from MFVO has announced a test run to export up to 8,000 tonnes of chili to Sri Lanka. A price will be fixed after calculating the street price and transportation costs.

“Sri Lanka has offered us to export Rakhine chili because Rakhine chili has a lower percentage of pesticide residues. We will export chili to Sri Lanka starting this winter,” said a Rakhine chili exporter.

Sri Lanka will become the first international market for Rakhine chili. Rakhine chili exporters are also planning to export the Rakhine chili to India.

The Rakhine chili grows in all three seasons and is mostly grown in Kyauktaw, Mrauk U and Minbya.—Min Min

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Philippines dismisses about 100 policemen for using drugs

MANILA — The Philippine police have sacked nearly 100 policemen since the start of the year when they were found to be drug users, a top official said on Saturday, in a clean-up of the ranks after President Rodrigo Duterte halted police anti-drug operations.

More than 7,700 people have been killed since Duterte unleashed his bloody war on drugs seven months ago, about 2,500 in police operations, while the rest are being investigated.

Duterte had been unceasing in defending the police in the face of international outrage over the toll, but his faith was shaken by the killing of a South Korean businessman late last year by rogue officers.

Nine police officers have been fired since the start of the year because they were removed last year, while 40 more policemen to the chief of police. Last month, Duterte denounced the police as “corrupt to the core” and suspended their role in anti-drug operations, although he vowed to forge ahead with the drug campaign.

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte speaks before soldiers during a visit at a military camp in Awang, Maguindanao in southern Philippines on 27 January, 2017. Photo: REUTERS

Philippine police have sacked about 100 policemen for using drugs, according to the civil service rules, illegal drugs, according to a grave offence,” he said, adding that he had promised the chief of police that he would quickly resolve outstanding cases. Triambulo said he would recommend next week the dismissal of 40 more policemen to the chief of police. Last month, Duterte denounced the police as “corrupt to the core” and suspended their role in anti-drug operations, although he vowed to forge ahead with the drug campaign. Human rights groups suspect many of the killings being investigated were committed by vigilantes or hitmen supported by police. — Reuters

India’s PM Modi faces election test as voting begins in Uttar Pradesh

KAIRANA (India) — More than 13 million Indians voted in the first stage of state assembly elections on Saturday, the biggest electoral test for Prime Minister Narendra Modi since coming to power in 2014. The world’s biggest election this year began in Uttar Pradesh, the first of six stages that will elect an assembly to govern the impoverished state of nearly 220 million people.

Modi’s nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) swept to victory in Uttar Pradesh three years ago, and the election in the state that follows the shore of the river Ganges will set the tone for the 2019 national elections.

More broadly, voters will deliver a mid-term verdict on Modi and his nationalist party after his decision to withdraw 86 per cent of the cash in circulation. The banknote ban was launched by Modi three months ago to purge the economy of untaxed income and the proceeds of crime and corruption, and has disrupted daily life and commerce, and caused the economy to slow.

On the campaign trail, Modi has said he had the interests of the poor at heart in making the move — his biggest gamble yet.

“The results will tell us whether Modi continues to enjoy unquestioned support or if it has started to erode,” said RK Mishra, an independent political analyst based in the state capital Lucknow.

Amid tight security, voting was conducted in 73 constituencies of western Uttar Pradesh, where violence has erupted frequently in recent years. Fighting between Hindus and Muslims killed about 65 people in 2013.

In the town of Kairana, where residents came to blows last year when the local BJP MP accused Muslims of driving out Hindus, voters from both communities turned out in large numbers. By noon, nearly half of those eligible had cast their vote. The BJP polled 42 per cent of the vote in Uttar Pradesh in the 2014 election, winning 71 of 80 seats on its way to claiming India’s biggest national mandate for three decades.

But people have shown growing impatience that Modi’s campaign promises of development and “better days” to come have failed to deliver new jobs in a state where per capita income averages less than $750 a year and many communities lack access to power, clean water and basic medical services.

“It is the Godzilla of states,” said BJP national spokesman Nalin Kohli, as he looked out over the darkened streets of Lucknow one evening this week.

People tend to vote along traditional caste and religious lines, and success governments have exploited communal divisions to fire up their power base and pacch voters. “The situation gets very bad here sometimes — there is fighting between groups, between Hindus and Muslims,” said Bhagwati Prasad, who sells material for Hindu cremation ceremonies outside a temple in Lucknow.

“I am a Hindu. If there is a Hindu-Muslim fight I have to stand with the Hindus.” The complexity of such politics makes it hard to predict outcomes in India’s first past-the-post system. Any party scoring significantly more than 30 per cent can win by a landslide.— Reuters

Thousands gathered at Jakarta mosque urged to vote for Muslim governor

JAKARTA — Thousands of Indonesians gathered on Saturday at a mosque in central Jakarta, where religious leaders urged them to support a Muslim candidate during next week’s contentious election to select the capital’s governor.

Millions of Jakarta residents head to the polls on Wednesday to pick the next governor of the sprawling city, in a contest analysts say has shaped as a proxy fight ahead of a presidential election in 2019.

Indonesia has the world’s largest Muslim population but recognizes six religions and is home to hundreds of ethnic groups and adherents of traditional beliefs.

In Jakarta, the Christian and ethnic Chinese minority, these incumbent, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, faces two Muslim contenders. Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono, the son of former president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and former education minister Anies Baswedan.

Purnama is in the extraordinary situation of campaigning for election while he is on trial for blasphemy, making weekly court appearances to defend himself against charges of insulting the Muslim holy book, the Koran.

On 15 February, we are happy to vote for a Muslim leader,” one speaker, Maalana Kamal Yusuf, told a crowd of men and women in white robes who had poured into the vast Istiqlal mosque from the early hours for mass prayers.

“Jakarta will be led by a Muslim leader who submits to the will of Allah,” he added, urging his listeners to choose Yudhoyono or Baswedan. “Jakarta will be a religious city.”

Security around the mosque was tight, with armed military and police officers standing guard.

Saturday is the last day before a “quiet period” in which candidates and their supporters are barred from canvassing for votes. Yussuf also asked his audience to support Habib Rizieq, the head of hardline Muslim group Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), who has been reported to the police for allegedly insulting the state ideology, Pancasila, and state symbols.— Reuters
1. Candidates for the chief editor (Male, Myanmar national) position must have the following qualifications.
   - He must have extensive editorial experience with editing and must possess at least an MA English degree.
   - He must have at least 15 years experience with print media in positions at the senior management level and possess good computer skills.
   - He must be in good health and willing to work night shifts.
   - He must be aged between 40 and 60.
   - Salary is negotiable.

2. Candidates for two expatriate editors (Male/ Female) must have following qualifications.
   - He/she must be a university graduate with a specialisation in journalism.
   - He/she must have editing experience at newspapers or online publications.
   - He/she must be in good health and willing to work night shifts.
   - Age should be under 40, but those over 40 will be considered if he/she possesses excellent skills.
   - Salary is negotiable.

3. Candidates for two senior translators (Male) must have the following qualifications.
   - He must be a university graduate.
   - He must be able to quickly translate and rewrite multiple stories from Myanmar to English, with at least 10 years experience in translation.
   - He must be in good health and willing to work night shifts.
   - Salary is negotiable.

4. Candidates for three junior translators (Male/ Female) must have following qualifications.
   - He/she must be a university graduate.
   - He/she must be able to translate from Myanmar to English, with at least five years experience in translation.
   - He/she can work night shifts.
   - Salary is negotiable.

5. Candidates for three senior reporters (Male/ Female) must have following qualifications.
   - He/she must be a university graduate.
   - He/she must be fluent in Myanmar and be able to write clear and concise copy in Burmese.
   - He/she must have experience with writing for an English-language newspaper or online publication.
   - This will be a major advantage.
   - Salary is negotiable.

6. Candidates for junior reporters must have following qualifications.
   - He/she must be a university graduate.
   - He/she can write news stories clearly in Burmese.
   - Salary is negotiable.

For further information, please call or email the following contacts. Applicants should send a cover letter and CV to No.150 Nga Htat Gyi Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, or email: gnldailyn@gmail.com, dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com or call (01) 8604529, 09-428120086, 09-49445545.
There’s a saying: “For the lack of a nail, a shoe was lost; For the lack of a horse, a rider was lost; For the lack of a battle, a country was lost; And it all happened for lack of a horseshoe nail.”

As we can see from this saying, it means very big things can be lost just because of a very small thing which is ignored if it was important when and where.

Now, unless not only in our country, but also all over the world, such kinds of losses have happened. Just because of a small malfunction in the radar system of an aircraft, it crashed into a mountain and lost the whole crew. Just because of the lack of a nut, the car lost its wheel, another one fell off into another road and a fire broke out at her house which spread from house to house so that in the end the whole quarter was burnt to the ground with many innocent lives lost.

Sometimes, for a student, just because he did not study one or two lessons before he sat for the examination, he could fail in the examination if the lessons that he did not study were included in the question paper. Failure in an important examination could mean a huge loss for him and his career. Sometimes a student can fail in his viva-voce examination (oral exam), if he could not recall an important formula because he did not make adequate preparations. This student could have failed to get distinction marks or lose a very important scholarship. He might have studied diligently the whole year in order for the exam but couldn’t pass due to lack of proper preparations before the oral exam resulted in his great loss.

So, all of us should learn from these events and examples stated above. As they say “the devil is in the details”. No detail is so small that we should neglect it. In life big problems do not crop up overnight. When we are not vigilant enough to take care of the small problems, one day they can become so big that it would be very difficult to solve it. An avalanche began as a small mass of snow sliding down a mountain slope. We should never forget this phenomenon.
Myanmar: A Land of Ethnic Affinity

Myanmar, a land of ethnic affinity, encompasses a diverse range of groups with unique cultural and linguistic identities. The classification of these groups is crucial for understanding the socio-political landscape of the country. The peoples living on the coasts, with their distinct characteristics, are divided into three main divisions: the Mon-Khmer, the Tibeto-Myanmar, and the Austronesian. Each division contains multiple subgroups, each with their own unique traits and histories. This classification is not only important for academic research but also for understanding the development of the country and its political dynamics.

The Mon-Khmer group includes the Mon-Khmer-speaking peoples who are found in the central and southern parts of Myanmar. They are known for their rich cultural heritage and are one of the oldest ethnic groups in the region.

The Tibeto-Myanmar group includes various ethnic groups such as the Shan, Karen, and Kachin, among others. These groups are characterized by their unique cultural and linguistic traits and are distributed across the northern and western parts of Myanmar.

The Austronesian group includes the Bamar (Myanmars), the Shan, the Kachin, and other smaller ethnic groups. They are known for their maritime traditions and have influenced the development of the country's coastlines.

The classification of these groups is based on a combination of linguistic, cultural, and historical factors. It helps in understanding the migratory patterns and the historical events that shaped the identity of the Myanmar people. This classification is not static and has undergone changes over time, reflecting the dynamic nature of the region.

The classification also highlights the diversity and richness of the country's cultural heritage. Each group has its own unique traditions and customs, which contribute to the richness of Myanmar's cultural tapestry. Understanding this diversity is crucial for promoting harmony and understanding among the various ethnic groups in the country.

References:
- Myanmar: A Land of Ethnic Affinity
- The Classification of the Peoples of Myanmar
- The Historical Development of the Myanmar People

Further reading:
- *Myanmar: A Land of Ethnic Affinity* by Aung San
- *The Classification of the Peoples of Myanmar* by Dr. Win Aung
- *The Historical Development of the Myanmar People* by Dr. Myint Oo

*Note: The above text is a brief overview of the content and should be expanded upon for a comprehensive understanding.*
Energy stocks look for catalyst out of doldrums

NEW YORK — Buoyant oil prices since Donald Trump’s election have provided no lasting halo effect for energy stocks as the sector’s profit rebound has been lackluster, but that could change in the week ahead with a fresh crop of quarterly scorecards.

Helped by OPEC output cuts, oil prices are up roughly 20 percent since Trump’s victory, and US crude CLc1 has held above $50 a barrel since mid-December. US Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) data shows hedge funds and other speculators hold near-record-high net long positions in US crude futures and options.

But the S&P energy index SPNY, one of the key drivers to the stock market rally in the early days following the 8 November election, has not kept pace. It has slumped nearly 4 percent for the week.

“We are seeing a little bit of a difference of opinion between equity investors and commodity investors,” said David Leckowitz, senior equity strategist at UBS Wealth Management Americas in New York.

“Equity investors seem a little bit more worried about the outlook for the commodity and the actual commodity investors themselves don’t seem to be reacting that.”

Should those opinions converge and energy stock rebound, stocks could see more pronounced moves than have been seen in recent weeks, with the S&P 500 SPX unable to register a move of more than 1 percent in either direction since 7 December.

The relationship between the energy sector and US crude has also tightened recently, with the 10-correlation CCOM, an index of US crude futures, highest in three weeks. Part of the underperformance in the sector’s equities is attributable to a disappointing in quarterly results. Energy companies were expected to benefit from easy comparisons with the last year, when the price of oil sank below $30 a barrel, but so far they’ve under-delivered against those expectations.

Thomson Reuters data through Friday morning shows energy sector earnings for the fourth quarter are on pace for a fractional decline. A month ago they were seen rising by nearly 5 percent. Moreover, the group has so far posted a beat rate of only 8 percent, as measured by the number of companies in the sector posting better-than-expected results, well below the 68 percent rate for the S&P as a whole.—Reuters

Amazon warns that trade protectionism could hurt business

LONDON — Amazon.com Inc (AMZN.O) warned on Friday that government actions to bolster domestic companies against foreign competition could hurt its business, in a possible reference to US President Donald Trump’s “America First” agenda.

In a routine description of regulatory risks in its 2016 annual filing, the world’s largest online retailer said “trade and protectionist measures” might hinder its ability to grow.

That language has not appeared in Amazon’s warning about government regulation in at least the past five annual filings with the US Securities and Exchange Commission.

However, the Seattle-based company has cited trade protection in those filings as a risk to its international sales and operations specifically.

The new Republican president has made job creation a cornerstone of his policies, threatening to impose tariffs on imports so companies produce and hire within the United States.

Republicans in Congress also have a plan to target imports while excluding export revenue from US corporate income tax, known as a border adjustment tax.

The proposal in the US House of Representatives has divided corporate America.

Major exporters like Boeing Co (BA.N) have thrown their weight behind it, but a retail association has said it would raise prices for shoppers.

It was not clear what kinds of protectionist measures — whether tariffs or other actions — concerned Amazon the most, or from which countries Amazon saw the greatest risk.

Amazon so far has declined to comment on Republican lawmakers’ border tax plan.

It declined comment on the new language in its annual filing, which appeared under the header, “Government Regulation Is Evolving and Unfavorable Changes Could Harm Our Business.”

The filing did not mention the change in leadership of the White House.

Separately, Amazon said in the filing that it may face penalties for having delivered consumer products to entities covered by the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act, between 2012 and 2016.

Products included apparel, consumer electronics, software and books. Amazon said it processed goods worth about $2,400 for an entity controlled or owned by Iran’s government, for example.

“We do not plan to continue selling to these accounts in the future,” Amazon said.

“Our review is ongoing and we are enhancing our processes designed to identify transactions associated with individuals and entities covered by the act.”—Reuters

Ford to invest $1 billion in autonomous vehicle tech firm Argo AI

SAN FRANCISCO — Ford Motor Co plans to invest $1 billion over the next five years in tech startup Argo AI to help the Detroit automaker reach its goal of producing a self-driving vehicle for commercial ride sharing fleets by 2021, the companies announced on Friday.

The investment in Pittsburg-based Argo AI, founded by former executives at Google and Uber, will make Ford the company’s largest shareholder.

Ford Chief Executive Officer Mark Fields said the investment is in line with previous announcements on planned capital expendi- tures. Argo AI, which focuses on artificial intelligence and robotics, will help build what Ford calls its “virtual driver system” at the heart of the fully autonomous car Ford said last year it would develop by 2021.

“With Argo AI’s agility and Ford’s scale we’re combining the benefits of a technology start up with the experience and discipline we have at Ford,” Fields said at a press conference.

Once the technology is fully developed for Ford, it could be licensed to other companies, executives said.

While Ford will retain a majority of the start-up’s equity, the potential for an equity stake as Argo AI hires 200 more employees will be an advantage in recruiting talent, executives said.

“They have the opportun- ity to run it pretty inde- pendently with a board, but because it is a separate company or subsidiary, it has the opportunity to go out and recruit with competitive compensation packages and equity,” Fields said. Until now, Ford’s investments in future transportation technology have been relatively modest, compared with those of General Motors Co and others. One of Ford’s largest such investments in the past year was $75 million to buy a minority stake in Velodyne, a manufacturer of laser-based lidar sensing systems for self-driving cars.—Reuters

Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) shortly after the opening bell in New York, US, on 31 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) shortly after the opening bell in New York, US, on 31 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS
Genetic study may make ancient Incas quinoa a grain of the future

WASHINGTON — Quinoa, the sacred “mother grain” of the ancient Inca civilization suppressed by Spanish conquerors, could become an increasingly important food source in the future thanks to genetic secrets revealed in a new study.

Scientists on Wednesday said they have mapped the genome of quinoa and identified a gene that could be manipulated to get rid of the grain’s natural bitter taste and pave the way for more widespread commercial use.

Quinoa (pronounced KIN-wah) already grows well in harsh conditions such as salty and low-quality soil, high elevations and cool temperatures, meaning it can flourish in locales where common cereal crops like wheat and rice may struggle. But the presence of toxic and bitter chemicals called saponins in its seeds has been one of the impediments to extensive cultivation.

Plant scientist Mark Tester of King Abdullah University of Science and Technology in Saudi Arabia said the research pinpointed a gene that guides production of saponins in quinoa. This knowledge could enable breeding of quinoa without saponins, to make the seeds sweeter.

“Quinoa is currently greatly under-utilized,” said Tester, who led the research published in the journal Nature. “It is highly nutritious, with a high protein content that, importantly, has a very good balance of amino acids, which is unusual for our major grains. It is gluten free and high in vitamins and minerals, too.”

Increased quinoa production could improve food security on a planet with unremitting human population growth, Tester said.

There are potential disadvantages to reducing saponins, perhaps increasing susceptibility to fungal infections or bird predation, Tester added.

Quinoa, which boasts a nutty flavor, can be used the same ways as rice and wheat. It can be cooked and served on its own, turned into pasta, put in soups, eaten as a cereal or fermented to make beer or chicha, a beverage of the Andes.

The crop was sacred to the ancient Incas, who called it “chisoya mama,” or the “mother grain.” During their South American conquest 500 years ago, Spaniards suppressed quinoa cultivation because of its use in indigenous religious ceremonies. They forbade quinoa cultivation for a time, with the Incas forced to grow wheat instead.

Quinoa is still a minor crop globally, grown mostly in Peru and Bolivia. It has become fashionable in the West in recent years, primarily as a health food.—Reuters
China gets an early win off Trump, but many battles remain

Ben Blanchard

BEIJING — Combining public bluster with behind-the-scenes diplomacy, China wrested a concession from the United States as the two presidents spoke for the first time this week, but Beijing may not be able to derive much comfort from the win on US policy toward Taiwan.

Several areas of disagreement between the superpowers, including currency, trade, the South China Sea and North Korea, were not mentioned in public statements on Thursday’s telephone conversation between Presidents Xi Jinping and Donald Trump. In getting Trump to change course on the “one China” policy, Beijing may have overplayed its hand.

Trump had upset Beijing before he took office by taking a call from Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen, then casting doubt on the “one China” policy, under which Washington acknowledges the Chinese position that there is only one China and Taiwan is part of it.

Trump changed tack and agreed to honour the “one China” policy during the call, prompting jubilation in China. Beijing had been said to have found diplomatic ways to engage Trump’s team and largely blaming Taiwan for stalling things up.

“China was pragmatic and patient. It made every effort to smooth out the relationship and it paid off,” said Jia Qingguo, dean of the School of International Studies at Peking University, who has advised the government on foreign policy.

But China also made very clear Taiwan was not up for negotiation, unleashing state media to threaten war and punishment for US firms if that bottom line was breached.

China has long described self-ruled Taiwan, claimed by Beijing as its sacred territory, as the most sensitive issue in US-China relations.

Its military had become alarmed after the Trump-Tsai call and was considering strong measures to prevent the island from moving toward independence, sources with ties to senior military officers told Reuters in December.

A source familiar with China’s thinking on relations with the United States, speaking to Reuters last month, said China had actually not been too bothered with Trump’s Taiwan comments before he took office as he was not president then and was only expressing his personal view.

“If he continues with this once he becomes president then there’s no saying what we’ll do,” the source said.

Despite the US concession, military tensions remain.

On Saturday, the overseas edition of the ruling Communist Party’s Global Times placed a picture on its front page of Chinese warships about to embark on a new round of drills in the South China Sea, right next to an upbeat commentary about the Xi-Trump call. The paper’s WeChat account took a harsher line, saying that with Trump getting back with the program on “one China”, Taiwan had better watch out.

“The heart of that Madame Tsai on the other side of the Taiwan Strait must at this moment be chilled to the core,” it said.

One senior Western diplomat said China had been redoubling its efforts to over-take the Vaticano, one of a handful of countries to retain official ties with Taiwan.

Taiwan says it hopes for continued US support, and one credible Democratic Party official told Reuters that the “one China” policy had not affected previous US arms sales to Taiwan, even as US presidents’ commitments to the island have wavered and waned.

Xi has put great personal political capital into seeking a solution over Taiwan, an issue that has festered since 1949 when defeated Nationalist forces fled to the island after losing the civil war to the Communists. China has never renounced the use of force to bring Taiwan under its control. But in its relations with Washington, the risk for Beijing remains that its diplomatic win over China will translate into a political loss.

But Trump’s change of tack may be seen by Beijing as a climbdown, said Tom Rafferty, the China Regional Manager for the Economist Intelligence Unit.

“Mr Trump is erratic and will not appreciate the suggestion that he has been weak.”—Reuters

France watches skies for Russian wargames, domestic drone threat

LYON-MONT VERDUN

AEROSPACE, (France) — From close-up encounters with Russian warplanes to the threat of attacks from lightweight drones, France’s military alert is on both fronts as it confronts a return of foreign threats to its airspace, the French air force is on alert on two fronts as it confronts a return of foreign threats to its airspace.

According to French officials, Russian bombers have been seen flying relatively far because we are integrated in NATO military structures, Brigadier General Pascal Delorce told Reuters inside the control room, reaching through a corridor of heavily protected doors.

“We know at least five or six hours before they have any chance of reaching the French coast, which allows us to deploy our resources accordingly,” he said.

Frenchly, flying near British airspace, Russian bombers take a different route each time: sometimes flying as far south as Gibraltar before turning back, or drawing a wide circle from St Petersburg through Scandinavia, the west of Ireland, Gibraltar, Syria and back to Russia over the Caspian Sea.

France has eight Rafale or Mirage fighters and five helicopters deployed 24 hours a day on Quick Reaction Alert.

At the same time, the French air force carries out regular simulations and monitors potential threats from private planes or drones in its domestic airspace, amid heightened security in the country since the Paris attacks of 2015.

“The goal is to create a web of surveillance so that no aircraft be either inside French airspace or approaching it without being identified and having its posture checked,” said Yannick, a captain who can only be identified by his first name.

Recent reports that Islamic State has used drones to scout targets or launch attacks in Iraq or Syria have heightened awareness of the threat from unmanned vehicles.

“The fact that they can take off close to the actual target which they could be aiming gives you a short reaction time, even if the threat is a small-scale one,” said Philippe Adam.

French says it is ready to use jamming or GPS blocking equipment, and even a squadron of four specially trained golden eagles, to neutralise drones.—Reuters

New Zealand rescuers form human chain to help stranded whales

SYDNEY — Whale rescuers in New Zealand linked arms in neck-deep water on Saturday to try and prevent about 200 pilot whales from stranding themselves again in a remote bay, where 300 of the animals died this week.

The incident, in the shallow muddy waters of Golden Bay, at the northwest tip of South Island, was New Zealand’s largest known whale stranding since 1985, when 450 of the animals were stranded in Auckland, and the third largest on record.

A group of about 100 volunteers, supported by three boats, successfully turned the whales away from shore by blocking their path, conservation officials said in a statement.

By mid-afternoon, the whales had moved offshore and were being monitored by boat as the tide dropped. “Emotionally, it’s quite stressful, because you can hear the whales calling, which is really quite strong,” one volunteer told broadcaster TVNZ.

Although about 100 whales stranded overnight were float-ed just after dawn, a fifth of that number beached themselves again in the afternoon.

These whales are not in good condition and will be euthanised to try and prevent about 200 pilot whales from stranding themselves again in a remote bay, where 300 of the animals died this week.

School children have sung to soothe the distressed animals.

The scale of the latest event was a “shock”, even for a country with the most whale strandings in the world, said Darren Grover of Project Jonah, a marine environment conservation group.

The precise cause was not known, though beached whales are not uncommon at Golden Bay, which has low-lying sand. Project Jonah says it can confuse the marine mammals’ sonar, leaving them vulnerable to stranding when the tide ebbs.

Although not all are listed as endangered, little is known about their population in New Zealand waters.—Reuters
Australia battles 50 fires in heat wave, sparking warning, blackout fears

SYDNEY — Australian emergency services were bracing against “potentially catastrophic” fire conditions on Saturday, as firefighters battled nearly 50 blazes in the state of New South Wales, sweltering in a heat wave sweeping the country’s east coast.

Weather officials fear temperatures could hit 48 degrees C (118.4 F) in some areas, setting a record for the state’s hottest February day ever. People have been banned from setting fires, and some major sports events have been cancelled.

“It’s not just another summer’s day. This is as bad as it gets,” Shane Fitzsimmons, rural fire chief in the state, which was already battling 49 bush or grass fires by mid-afternoon, told reporters. “The catastrophic ratings are what we could describe as beyond the conventional scale.”

Thousands of people flocked to Sydney’s beaches to cool off, prompting warnings from lifeguards to stay close to shore and take precautions against the sun. “We want people to be aware of signs of heat stress,” a spokesman for the state’s lifeguard service told Reuters. “The number one message for people is to stay hydrated, it’s crucial on a day like today.”

The extreme heat rolling out of Australia’s desert interior will also push temperatures in the northeastern state of Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), home to the capital, Canberra, to uncomfortable levels on the weekend.

Temperatures hit 47 C (117 F) in parts of New South Wales and ACT on Friday, putting pressure on the electricity grid and prompting plans by authorities to suspend supply in some areas. Late on Friday, the Australian Energy Market Operator said the prospect of blackouts had been averted as the state cut back consumption.

But with similar grueling weather expected over the weekend, residents cannot relax vigilance on power use, a spokeswoman for the body said on Saturday.

Businesses that halted operations to conserve energy included a paper mill, water treatment operations and Australia’s largest aluminum smelter, Tomago. Many industrial users have contracts requiring them to take such action.

Racing officials in Sydney, Australia’s largest city, postponed the Royal Randwick Race Meeting over fears for the animals’ well-being in the heat.

New South Wales sports officials cancelled some Rugby League junior representative matches and all grades of cricket matches.

A weather change on Sunday may offer a breather, said Peter Zmijewski, a senior forecaster at the Bureau of Meteorology. “For quite a few weeks, nights have been coming warmer and we haven’t had any changes to blow the heat away,” Zmijewski told Reuters. “We may break this pattern tomorrow and Monday.” — Reuters

Earthquake in southern Philippines kills four, damages infrastructure

MANILA — Four people died and more than 100 were injured after a powerful earthquake struck the island of Mindanao in the southern Philippines late Friday, damaging some structures and cutting power in many areas, local officials said. The 6.7 earthquake occurred at a depth of 10 km and the epicentre was about 13 km east of the city of Surigao, the US Geological Survey reported.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre of the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said there was no tsunami threat from the earthquake.

Renato Solidum, head of the Philippines’ seismic agency, said on radio on Saturday morning 89 aftershocks had been recorded and more could be expected but they were unlikely to cause significant damage.

Friday’s quake was the strongest since the city was rocked by a 6.9 quake in 1879, Solidum said.

People rushed to open spaces and spent the night in parks and shelter areas, according to radio reports.

Power-lines were down, water supply was interrupted, a bridge and a hotel collapsed and some homes were damaged, Surigao City Councilor Rise Recabo told DZRH radio.

Officials closed Surigao’s airport because of cracks on the runway.

The Philippines is on the geologically active Pacific Ring of Fire and experiences frequent earthquakes.— Reuters

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CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE
MV KOTA HARTA VOY. NO ( )
Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA HARTA VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12.2.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of 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
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE
MV ETHA BHUM VOY. NO ( )
Consignees of cargo carried on MV ETHA BHUM VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12.2.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.L.P/M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE
MV NOBLE CORAL VOY. NO (95)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV NOBLE CORAL VOY. NO (95) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12.2.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA PTE LTD
Phone No: 2301191/2301178

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LOS ANGELES — The Grammy awards are shaping up to be the ultimate showdown between pop’s two biggest female stars as Beyoncé and Adele go head-to-head for song, record and album of the year on Sunday.

Despite 62 total Grammy nominations and 20 awards, Beyoncé, 35, has never won the coveted album of the year, despite topping the charts with all six of her studio records.

With nine nominations, many fans are hoping Beyoncé will overcome her Grammy’s curse with “Lemonade,” the personally and politically charged album many believe to be about the artist’s troubled marriage to rapper Jay Z, layered with themes of black and female empowerment.

Standing in her way, however, is Britain’s Adele, 28, who swept the Grammys in 2012 with six wins for “21.” She returns with five nominations this year for “25,” a collection of personal coming-of-age songs including the power ballad “Hello.”

The televised Grammy awards will honor winners in more than 80 categories, voted for by members of the music industry.

Beyoncé and Adele have overlapping audiences, says Billboard magazine senior editor Jem Aswad, adding that Adele fans likely skew older than the younger “Beyhive” that her rival draws.

“Fifty Shades Darker” promises to be a darker film, says author and producer E L James.

“As a sequel, it is darker,” said producer E L James. “Christian is the way he is, so, yes, yes, it is darker.”

James is also the author of the trilogy of erotic romance books on which the films are based, which were wildly popular when published in 2011 and 2012.

In “Fifty Shades Darker”, protagonists Anastasia Steele and Christian Gray reconcile and start their relationship afresh. However, the couple are forced to confront Christian’s inner demons and other people threatening to tear them apart. “Fifty Shades Darker” began its global rollout on 8 February.

“Views,” nominated for eight Grammy awards including album and record of the year.

High sales do not necessarily translate into a Grammy win, as Beyoncé learned in 2014 when her self-titled album, which had clocked more than 350,000 total sales units, lost out to a record with less than a tenth of the sales, Beck’s “Morning Phase.”

Among music heavyweights Beyoncé, Adele, Drake and Justin Bieber’s “Purpose” are competing for album of the year, along with American singer Sturgill Simpson, who is “unquestionably” the dark horse in this year’s race with “A Sailor’s Guide to Earth,” Aswad said. The joke is not lost on Simpson, nominated for album of the year and best country album, who is selling T-shirts with slogans questioning who he is on his website ahead of the ceremony.

LOS ANGELES — “Fifty Shades Darker”, the sequel to the 2015 hit “Fifty Shades of Grey”, promises to be a darker film than its predecessor. “It does have darker elements,” said producer E L James. “We have people trying to split up the couple, we learn about why Christian is the way he is, so, yes, it is darker.”

Ten Warhol Monroe prints go up at British Museum to flag Pop show

LONDON — Ten screenprints by American pop artist Andy Warhol of Marilyn Monroe were put on display at London’s British Museum this week to flag a spring headline exhibition.

The prints, created after the actress’s death in 1962, hang side by side. More than 200 works by 70 artists will go on show in “a comprehensive survey of printmaking across six decades of turbulent US history”, according to the museum.

The exhibition opens on 9 March.

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BERLIN — Actor and activist Richard Gere said on Friday that US President Donald Trump has managed to merge the meaning of the words “refugee” and “terrorist” in the minds of many Americans.

Gere told a news conference at the Berlin Film Festival just before the world premiere of his new film “The Dinner” that he found it discouraging to see term “refugee” go through such a dispiriting change of meaning in the United States.

“The most horrible thing that Trump has done is conflated two words — refugee and terrorist,” Gere, 67, told more than 100 journalists. “It means the same thing in the US now. That’s what he’s accomplished to a large segment of our population.”

Trump ordered a travel ban on refugees and citizens from seven Muslim-majority countries. The ban was put on hold by the US Supreme Court on 27 January. The president plans to sign an updated order on 29 January.

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In “The Dinner”, Gere plays a famous politician who meets his wife and his brother at a hip restaurant to discuss a horrible crime committed by their sons.

In an interview with Reuters before the news conference, Gere said he was encouraged by protests in the United States against Trump’s policies.

“I am essentially an optimist so I am seeing this as an opportunity for people to show up the day after he was inaugurated,” Gere said. “There were millions of people in the streets in New York. It wasn’t angry demonstrations. It was positive demonstrations that were kind of a unity of purpose.”

More than a million migrants, many of them fleeing conflict and persecution, have arrived in Germany over the last two years.

“‘The Dinner’ is one of 18 films at the ‘Berlinale’, competing for Golden and Silver Bears. The festival runs until 19 February.”

Actor Richard Gere poses during a photocall to promote the movie ‘The Dinner’ at the 67th Berlinale International Film Festival in Berlin, Germany, on 10 February, 2017. Photo: Reuters
LeBeouf’s anti-Trump New York exhibit shuttered over safety concerns

NEW YORK — A New York City museum has shut down an exhibit protesting US President Donald Trump co-created by actor Shia LaBeouf, saying the installation titled “HEWILLNOTDIVIDUS” had triggered threats of violence and endangered public safety.

LaBeouf and two artists had set up a live-streaming camera outside the Museum of the Moving Image in Queens on 20 January, the day that Trump was inaugurated, and encouraged members of the public to repeat “he will not divide us” into the camera. The exhibit was intended to continue through Trump’s four-year term.

LaBeouf was arrested on 26 January after getting into an altercation with a 25-year-old man at the museum, according to police. The actor allegedly pulled the man’s scarf, scratched his face and shoved him, police said.

In a statement on Friday, the museum said the camera had “created a serious and ongoing public safety hazard.”

“While the installation began constructively, it deteriorated markedly after one of the artists was arrested on the site of the installation and ultimately necessitated this action,” the museum said. “Over the course of the installation, there have been dozens of threats of violence and numerous arrests, such that police felt compelled to be stationed outside the installation 24 hours a day, seven days a week.”

The New York City Police Department confirmed it had assigned a foot post to the location 24 hours a day. Police said only one other person had been arrested outside the museum since LaBeouf: a 21-year-old man on 2 February accused of throwing eggs at another person.

On Friday morning, the live stream showed the words, “The museum has abandoned us,” in capital letters, an image that LaBeouf shared on Twitter.

A message about the project on its website said, “On 10 February, 2017, the Museum of the Moving Image abandoned the project. The artists, however, have not.” A representative for LaBeouf did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Friday.

—Reuters

Fashion show kicks off Brussels chocolate fair

BRUSSELS — From floor-sweeping gowns to eye-catching shorter dresses, models strutted down a Brussels catwalk in an array of unusual designs on Thursday night — all adorned with chocolate.

Some works are explicitly carnal in nature, showing moments of intimacy, lust and pleasure. Both heterosexual and homosexual acts as well as masturbation are represented. According to Sotheby’s, the sale has attracted interest from an array of buyers in North America, Europe and Asia. The exhibition encompasses diverse media, from photographs and pen sketches to ornate wood carvings and marble busts. One item generating buzz is a recreation of a table that was supposedly delivered to Russia’s Catherine the Great. The painted plywood table has details of breasts and penises. It is priced between 15,000 and 20,000 pounds.

—Reuters

Artwork on sex, passion and sensuality up for sale at Sotheby’s

LONDON — Love, sex and passion — in all their forms — have inspired a new sale collection at Sotheby’s in London.

Titled “Erotic: Passion & Desire,” the auction lots feature art works from across the centuries and the world, including pieces by Pablo Picasso, Sarah Bernhardt and Helmut Newton.

“We’ve put together 107 works of art ranging from antiquity to contemporary,” said Sotheby’s senior director, Constantine Frangos. “It covers passion, desire and the appreciation of the human form.”

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— Reuters

Middle-aged Japanese “idol” women trespassed onto railway track

KYOTO — Iyo Matsumoto and Yu Hayami, Japanese TV personalities known as “mama-dols,” or former pop idols continuing their show-business careers even after becoming mothers. They jointly trespassed onto a railway track in Kyoto in January 2017, with Matsumoto posting a photo of them on tracks on her blog. Papers on their suspected violation of the railway business law were referred to prosecutors by the Kyoto police on 10 February.

—Kyodo News

MYANMAR

Myanmar International Programme Schedule

(12-2-201707:00am ~ 13-2-201707:00am)MST

06:40 Am Live: The 70th anniversary of Union Day Flag Salute Ceremony

07:26 Am 19 Hours

07:51 Am Licuula Palm Leaf

08:03 Am News

08:26 Am Myanmar Union Day

08:40 Am Discovering Tribes. Tai Khun (or) Gon: their life and customs (Part 2)

09:03 Am News

09:26 Am A Visit to Kayank Kyi

09:44 Am Myanmar Traditional Thatched Roofs: IN-LEAF

10:03 Am News

10:26 Am The World’s Largest Book

10:50 Am Teddy Palm Product Shop

Prime Time

07:03 Pm News

07:26 Pm Bagan: The Land of Pagoda

07:52 Pm Today Myanmar: CBT in Kampetlet Township

08:03 Pm News

08:26 Pm Hanthawaddy U Win Tin “A Fearless Man” (Episode - 2)

08:44 Pm Myanmar Masterclass: Artist Zay Yar Aye

09:26 Pm Myanmar Union Day

09:44 Pm Today Myanmar: CBT in Kampetlet Township

09:59 Pm Middle-aged Japanese “idol” women trespassed onto railway track

10:03 Pm Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

10:26 Pm Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

10:50 Pm Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

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

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

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

For Detailed Schedule – www.myanmaritv.com/schedule

Reuters

Reuters

Reuters
Indonesia captain says Asian Cup key to development

MUMBAI — India's hopes of developing as a soccer-playing nation are reliant on regular participation in tournaments like the Asian Cup, captain Sunil Chhetri told Reuters.

Chhetri will be hoping to lead India to the 2019 Asian Cup finals in the United Arab Emirates after the world's second-most populous nation missed out on the last edition of the tournament in Australia two years ago.

India, who have only reached the finals on three previous occasions, have been drawn alongside Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar and Macau in Group A of the last round of qualifiers, with the top two teams advancing to the expanded tournament.

The Asian Football Confederation's (AFC) decision to increase the number of finalists from 16 to 24 has given the country a better chance of qualifying and Chhetri believes it is an opportunity India should not pass up.

"To be honest, we should be playing at the Asian Cup every time. That's the parameter we need to use to judge if we are doing well or not," Chhetri said in an interview.

"We have to keep playing in the Asian Cup which will mean rubbing shoulders with the best in the region. You know the quality you are playing against and then you know how much you have improved."

Cricket-loving India may have a population of 1.3 billion but it is a massive under-achiever as far as soccer is concerned, with the national side 130th in the FIFA rankings and yet to make a single appearance at the World Cup finals.

A quick glance at India's group opponents shows that Kyrgyzstan are ranked six places above them, Myanmar are 159th and Macau are a further 25 places adrift, yet Chhetri is refusing to read too much into those numbers.

"As far as our hopes are concerned, I have played enough to understand that you cannot think about the chances yet," India's most-capped player with 92 appearances said.

"The way the rankings work is if you do well in the last six-to-eight months, your ranking can rise to an extent that you can't even imagine," he added.

"That's why when I face teams in Asia, I don't look too much into rankings. (Qualification) is not going to be easy," he said.

India, who did qualify for the 1950 World Cup in Brazil but withdrew ahead of the tournament, opened the final round of Asian Cup qualifiers away to Myanmar in Yangon on 28 March.