



Food is a sine qua non

President U Thein Sein of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar sent the message on the occasion of the Peasants' Day which falls on 2 March 2016.

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Good governance versus democratic governance

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Endangered Ayeyawady dolphin population increases

Aye Min Soe & Aung Thant Khaing

FOLLOWING a 14-day survey conservationists said yesterday that they have recorded 65 Ayeyawady dolphins during their trip, but estimated the number could be around 70.

"During the trip, we spotted 65 dolphins including a baby dolphin. But, in Bhamo, we could count only eight dolphins there because the river water rose up dramatically with wood and debris floating in the river hindering our work," said U Kyaw Hla Thein, the project manager of the dolphin conservation team of the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in Myanmar. The team recorded 58 in 2015.

The survey in February also found 58 dolphins between Mandalay and Bhamo, which is a drop from 72 in 2004.

The team spotted the baby dolphin while carrying out the conservation efforts in September last year. It became the first baby dolphin recorded in 2015. The team also found three baby dolphins in December 2014.

"The significant part of this trip is that we did not see any illegal battery-shock fishing though



A couple of Ayeyawady dolphins spotted in the Ayeyawady River during a survey in February. PHOTO: THET ZAW NAING (WCS)

we found during last year's survey," said Kyaw Hla Thein.

The conservationists from the Fisheries Department and Wildlife Conservation Society (Myanmar) also educated people during the trip at 10 villages, distributing pamphlets, giving educative talks and showing educative movies to

villagers.

"Ayeyawady dolphins are on the brink of extinction. All the people are obliged to participate in the conservation as a national duty," said U Khin Maung Aye, Deputy Minister from Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, at a press conference yesterday

held in Mandalay. The Ayeyawady dolphins are found near sea coasts and in estuaries and rivers around Southeast Asia, especially in Myanmar, Cambodia and Viet Nam.

WCS annual surveys have shown that the number of the dolphins has increased from 17 or 18

in 2005 to 24 in February 2014, 2 along a 72 kilometre stretch of the Ayeyawady River between Mandalay and Kyaukmyaung. Most of the dead dolphins were found near Bhamo and Katha and were caused by illegal fishing, according to the fisheries department.

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FILLING THE BIG CHAIR

Presidential nominations moved forward to 10 March

THE Pyidaungsu Hluttaw announced yesterday that it will hold the meetings of the three presidential electoral colleges on 10 March for making presidential nominations,

which was previously scheduled to be held on 17 March.

The original date was set only two weeks before the new government was scheduled to

take office on 1 April.

On 10 March, each of the two chambers will nominate its vice-presidential candidate, while the military MPs, who are guaran-

teed a quarter of the seats, nominate the third.

The president then picks the cabinet, which will take over from the incumbent government

on April 1.

It is unclear if the presidential vote will take place on the same day as the nominations are announced.—GNLM

President receives outgoing US ambassador to Myanmar

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Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker meets foreign guests

SPEAKER of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw Mahn Win Khaing Than received United States Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Derek Mitchell, Thai Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Pisanu Suvanajata and Mr. Vijay Nambiar, United Nations Secretary-General's special adviser on Myanmar, separately in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Also present at the calls were Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw U Aye Tha Aung, U Zon Hlyal Htan, chair of Amyotha Hluttaw International Relations, Inter-parliamentary Friendship and Cooperation Committee, and officials of Amyotha Hluttaw Office. —*Myanmar News Agency*



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than receives Thai Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Pisanu Suvanajata. PHOTO: MNA



Speaker U Win Myint welcomes Mr. Vijay Nambiar. PHOTO: MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker meets foreign guests

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint received Mr. Vijay Nambiar, United Nations Secretary-General's special adviser on Myanmar, Thai Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Pisanu Suvanajata and United States Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Derek Mitchell separately in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Also present at the calls were Deputy Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat, Daw Su Su Lwin, chair of Pyithu Hluttaw International Relations Committee, and officials of Pyithu Hluttaw Office. —*Myanmar News Agency*



Mr. Ahmad Al Muzaini, Charge d'Affaires a.i. welcomes His Excellency U Htin Aung, Deputy Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security and Madame on the Occasion of the 55th National Day & the 25th Anniversary of the Liberation Day of the State of Kuwait in Novotel Hotel, Yangon. PHOTO: GNLM

Construction of roads in Southern Shan launched



Deputy Minister U Tin Ngwe, Ambassador Mr. Weber-Lortsch officially launch construction of rural roads. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

U TIN NGWE, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, Mr. Weber-Lortsch, the German Ambassador to Myanmar as well Mr. Christian Richter, KfW Country Director to Myanmar, attended the Inauguration Ceremony for the "Rural Development Programme" (RDP) at Taunggyi-Taunglaylone Road in Taunggyi Township in the south-

ern Shan State on 24 February.

The German Government has committed 18 million EUR grant to support the development of rural areas by upgrading and constructing rural roads in the southern Shan State.

German Ambassador Mr. Weber-Lortsch, emphasized in his speech that regional mobility and access to school and markets are essential to improve living

conditions and income of rural households. The Department of Rural Development is doing an excellent job by improving and expanding the rural road network but the need is huge. Therefore, Germany - so far as the only Development Partner - is supporting Myanmar in this important area, he added.

The programme is implemented in the framework of German Financial Cooperation by DRD of the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development with support of KfW Development Bank. In its first phase three roads with 30 km will be rehabilitated in 2016. The total programme comprises rural roads of more than 150 km, which will benefit about 100,000 people living close to the roads.

Additionally, the DRD is trained in road maintenance, planning, procurement and supervision to deepen essential capacities for the successful handling of road construction projects. —*GNLM*

Mandalay chief minister meets scouts from regions, states



Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Ye Myint visits camps of scouts. PHOTO: KO LATT (MNA)

MANDALAY Region Chief Minister U Ye Myint met with scouts from basic education schools and universities and colleges across the country prior to their departure for the 4th scout camp at Mt. Popa at a school in Poba, NyaungU District of Mandalay Region yesterday.

The chief minister cordially greeted the scouts, and heard reports on arrangements being made for the camp by officials concerned. The 4th scout camp at Mt. Popa is set to last for five days till 5 March, featuring talks by senior scouts and scouting activities. —*Ko Latt (MNA)*

Food is a sine qua non

The following is unofficial translation of the message sent by President U Thein Sein of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the occasion of the Peasants' Day which falls on 2 March 2016.—Ed

To the esteemed peasantry,

Today is the auspicious Peasants' Day on which the historic occasion is marked to honour peasantry across the nation. On this auspicious occasion, I wish all the peasantry physical and mental wellbeing and great success in agricultural farming.

Our government, elected for the first time by the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar through the multiparty democratic system, will turn 5 years old in a few days. Now preparation works are underway to transfer the duties of the State to the government elected by the people during the second election.

As Myanmar is an agrarian based country which has to rely mainly on the agriculture sector, it is a must for us to focus on the progress of the agricultural sector to improve the socio-economic life of the peasantry which constitutes over 70 per cent of the population.

The duty to ensure the development of socio-economic life of the peasantry has been directly linked to the duty to cement the national strength.

During the five-year tenure of our government, better foundations — providing more agriculture capital, supplying hybrid seeds, disseminating advanced farming technologies to farmers enabling them to use the techniques in the place of conventional methods, transforming conventional farming into a mechanised one implementing river water pumping projects and dam projects — have been laid.

We will transfer the duty of ensuring development of the agricultural sector to be carried out throughout the nation to the next government in a systematic manner to meet more success.

As the development of paddy, which is staple food of the country, is related directly with food security which is daily consumption, the government was able to improve the hybrid paddy strains, thereby increasing per-acre yield significantly and doubling the income of farmers.

For the surplus of crops including rice from the domestic consumption to be able to compete in the international market, post harvest technology has been applied to manufacture the value added products.

The basic needs such as the wholesale markets have been opened in the private sector to enable the farmers to sell their products in the nation and export them through price competition.

It is essential for the farmers to have access to modern farming

technologies and with this end in view, the tasks of educating farmers are being carried out together with providing weather news and information about markets and prices in a timely manner. For the farmers' relaxation the entertainment programme namely "Song Competitions to Honour Farmers" has been introduced along with the education programme, "Farmers' Channel" through television.

Esteemed Peasantry,

No one can deny the fact that food is a sine qua non for human. As the world population has increased year after year, it is estimated that it will reach 9 billion by 2050 from the current number of 7 billion. To satisfy the needs of these populations, more food needs to be produced.

At such a time, attempts are to be made to make sure that world food production is not to be disrupted by natural disasters such as global warming, extreme weathers of heat waves, cold waves, torrential rains, snow storms, tropical storms, earthquakes and Tsunami, and man-made disaster, wars stemming from the greed of mankind.

Having an insight into these problems, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar should pay attention to contributing to the fulfillment of world food needs in addition to domestic food security for the sake of generations to come. To achieve this end, farmers are to be encouraged to accelerate their crop production, thereby penetrating foreign markets.

With favourable land and water resources plus weather condition combined with the strength of farmers, Myanmar is in a position to fulfill the needs of the world food security. Feeding the world is not only the noble act of pursuing the national interest but also committing good deeds.

Esteemed Peasantry,

The long term goal of Myanmar's national interest is to promote socio-economic gain and enhance the interests of farmers. We firmly believe that the next government will inherit the fine traditions and follow the good examples the current government has set in promoting the agricultural sector during its five-year tenure as these are the relentless efforts of the current government for the national interests.

Let me take this opportunity on this auspicious occasion of the Peasants' Day, to urge the entire peasantry to strive for the accomplishment of the goal of national interest and of their own hand in hand with the entire citizenship.

President U Thein Sein receives outgoing US ambassador to Myanmar



President U Thein Sein shakes hands with United States Ambassador Mr. Derek Mitchell. PHOTO: MNA

PRESIDENT of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein received a delegation led by United States Ambassador Mr. Derek Mitchell who has completed his tour of duty of Myanmar

in a hall at the Presidential Palace yesterday.

During the call, work progress in bilateral relations and further cooperation between the two countries were discussed.

Also present were Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Ministers U Soe Thane and U Ye Htut and officials.—Myanmar News Agency

Endangered Ayeyawady dolphin population increases

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Illegal electric-shock fishing is blamed for killing some dolphins, while some were caught in fishing nets. In Myanmar, Ayeyawady dolphins have been known to drive fish toward fishers using cast nets in return for some of the fishers' catch.

However, now that many fishers on the Ayeyawady river use illegal battery-shock fishing techniques, the dolphins often also fall

prey to electrocution.

Illegal battery-shock fishing is the greatest challenge for conservationists and local authorities are trying to save the endangered species, according to Myanmar's fisheries department. The Myanmar government has banned electrofishing nationwide, punishing violators with a three-year prison sentence and a K300,000 fine.

To prevent electro fishing in the river, government authorities

and conservationists held a workshop in Mandalay in September.

"The fishermen who use electrical devices for fishing do not intend to kill dolphins. Unfortunately, the dolphins follow the fish and die when they are shocked or captured," U Kyaw Hla Thein said. "We will step up our efforts to educate them." Local fishermen also spotted an Ayeyawady dolphin in the country's Ayeyawady delta in September last year.—GNLM

Mandalay promotes Myanmar martial arts among youth



Myanmar Thaing Bando Competition in progress. PHOTO: THIHA KO KO (MDY)

WITH the aim of promoting and conserving Myanmar martial arts techniques among younger generations, the Mandalay Region Sports and Physical Education Committee held the Myanmar Thaing Bando Competition of All Myanmar

Thaing Associations Chairman's Cup in Mandalay on 28 February.

Present at the opening ceremony were officials from the Mandalay Region Sports and Physical Education Department, members of the Regional Myanmar Thaing

Subcommittee, members of the Myanmar Thaing Clubs in Mandalay and contestants.

An official from the Mandalay Region Sports and Physical Education Department gave an opening speech, and the joint secretary of

Myanmar Thaing Subcommittee elaborated the contest rules. After the contest, officials presented awards to the winners. Sixty participants from the 12 central Myanmar Thaing clubs took part in the contest. The contest was held on 28 and 29 February.

Myanmar Thaing, or Myanmar traditional martial arts, originated more than two thousand years ago during the reign of King Okkalapa, who ruled Dagon, the old city of Yangon. Myanmar Thaing has been an official art of self-defence cherished and practised among warriors of the royal army through different eras and dynasties. It was one of the eighteen compulsory specialisations of royal princes in ancient times, and it was used in Myanmar's early nation building and defence, but it declined during the colonial era, after the country lost its independence.

After independence, Myanmar Thaing was revived by patriotic professionals, and the Myanmar Thaing Institute in Yangon was established in 1958 by the world-class weight lifter U Zaw Wait.

Several institutions are involved in conserving the practice today.—*Thiha Ko Ko (Mdy)*

Ox-cart race to be held at Sa-lin pagoda festival

THERE will be competitive bidding for theatrical show contracts at the Buddhajaniya festival of Kuthinayon (Shwepyaiye) pagoda in Sa-lin Township, Magway Region, which is a new venture this year, said U Aye Han Cho, chairman of pagoda board of trustees.

The Buddhajaniya festival of Kuthinayon (Shwepyiyaye) pagoda is held annually on the full moon of Kason, lasting for a month.

There will also be ox-cart racing and a fine build competition for the oxen.

The oxen of Sa-lin are famous for having a fine build. Most of the main contestants are from Sa-lin, it has been learned.—*Zin Lin Htet*

Crime NEWS

Car accident kills two, injures one



Officials investigating the site of incidence. PHOTO: TUN TUN HTWAY (HPA-AN)

A VEHICLE collided head on with a 12 wheel car on Hpa-An-Thaton road, Hpa-An township, Kayin State on 28 February, leaving two dead and one injured.

The driver of the first vehicle, Kyaw Myaing alias La Kho, 27, with Than Naing, 33, and Maung Paw Oo, 5, on board, crashed with the 12 wheel vehicle driven by one U Soe Lwin, 53, when the former lost control.

The accident killed Kyaw Myaing and Maung Paw Oo on the spot while Than Naing was injured seriously and is now receiving medical care at Hpa-An general hospital. Charges have been filed against the driver by police.—*Tun Tun Htway (Hpa-An)*

Yabba seized in Aung Pan

AN anti-drug squad seized 170 yabba pills from a motorbike being driven by one Kyout Yoe Chan on Pan Hone- Lashio road on 26 February.

Similarly, local authorities seized 1000 yabba pills at a house owned by one Pan

Sein in Aung Pan town, Hle Yoe ward on 28 February.

Ma Mi Yee was found together with the host.

The police have filed charges against them under the Anti-Narcotic Law.—*Ko Ye*



Kyout Yoe Chan and Ma Mi Yee. PHOTO: KO YE

Drunk mob assault students in Thaton

A GROUP of young drunk men attacked students on Shwesayan Pagoda Road in Thaton, Mon State, on Sunday, seriously injuring one student.

Four students who planned to sit for matriculation examinations in March were assaulted by a mob of eight young people wielding knives and sticks when they returned to their homes after spending the day studying at the Alinyaungnaythit Free Education Services Centre. A

student named Moe Pyae Sone sustained serious injuries and is currently being treated at a hospital in Yangon.

Saw Pyaw Phyto Paing, 20, a general staff member at the Thaton Township Hospital, and five others named Nyi Nyi Nyein Maung, 17, Zaw Myo Khaing, 18, Wai Yan Aung, 23, Sithu Soe, 18, and Thurain, 20, were arrested in connection with the case. All of the suspected attackers are facing

charges under the law at the Thaton Myoma Police Station.

In the wake of the attack, local residents called for the closing of illegal liquor stores in order to make the region safer.

One police officer said: "We called on security police to arrest illegal liquor store proprietors as part of their nightly duties, inviting public participation in the activities."—*The Oo*

Man charged for bike theft

POLICE have filed charges against a man on suspicion of motorcycle theft as he failed to produce documents proving that the bike he was found with belonged to him.

The police stopped Nyein Ko Ko, 21, at the corner of Bayaintnaung and Kyansitthar roads on 26 February. Police have filed charges against the driver.—*The mirror*

LOCAL Business

MIC cancels tender to turn old building into hotel in Yangon

THE Myanmar Investment Commission yesterday announced the cancellation of the winning tender for turning a four-storey building in Yangon into the Inle Lake View Resort as the tender winner failed to begin operations.

According to MIC, Sandar Hotel Co., Ltd and Cho Zaw Construction Company were selected as the tender winner on 22 October, 2014 to turn the

building which was the office of Myanmar Export & Import Enterprise previously at the corner of Merchant Road and Maha Bandoola Panchan Road in Kyauktada Township, Yangon, into a hotel of international standard. Although the commission asked the tender winners to begin the operation on 27 October, 2014, no operation has been seen till now, the commission added. —Myanmar News Agency

Myanmar imports hit all-time high for this fiscal year

Thein Ko Lwin

IMPORTS to Myanmar reached an all time high of US\$13.6 billion this January, up \$162 million from the previous year, according to an official from the Ministry of Commerce.

The import volumes for this fiscal year were valued at US\$13.6 billion according to figures received this year until the end of January, said Director U Win Myint of the ministry.

“There has been an annual increase in the import of iron and steel, vegetable oil, chemical products and household goods.”

Imports of iron and steel, vegetable oil and chemical products increased to \$75 million, \$18 million and 17 million respectively, said the director.

According to the MIC, the real estate sector has received the most foreign investment with a volume of \$230 million for this fiscal year while the mining sector receiving over \$2 million, the manufacturing sector \$700 million, energy sector \$50 million, Hotels and Tourism \$100 million and others 131 million in foreign investment.



A cargo ship carrying containers leaving Yangon. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE



Yangon's traffic lights would be upgraded with CCTV cameras. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

Myanmar Shwe Ying selected for Yangon traffic control system project

Ko Moe

THE Myanmar Shwe Ying Company has been selected to implement a project that includes the establishment of a control centre and the upgrading Yangon's traffic lights with CCTV cameras, said Saw Tun Mya Aung, Kayin ethnic affairs minister of Yangon Region government.

According to the regional minister, who is also the chair of the tender evaluation committee, Myanmar Shwe Ying Company was chosen from among four finalists for tender in accord with the decision of all the members of Yangon Region government.

“We made our final decision based on the project presentations of four finalists,” said the chair.

According to tender evaluation committee, the company will implement the project of fitting traffic lights with CCTV cameras and building a control tower in cooperation with China Railway Construction Company (CRCC).

The committee said that the tender winning company pledged to replace damaged street traffic items with new ones within three years and provide free service for five years.

The project is scheduled to be fully completed within six months and a late fine of K100,000 for each day is also set, added the committee.

According to sources, a budget of K20 billion is set to implement the project, and the company won the tender for implementation of the project with the budget of K18.9 billion.

The tender winning company began project operation following the signing of an agreement with the Yangon region government on 2 February.

According to the project, 154 of 192 traffic lights in Yangon will be fitted with CCTV cameras which are linked to the Centre set to be built in an area of People's Square in Yangon which is aimed at monitoring congested spots and the violation of traffic rules.

Trial phase of KNU hydropower dam to cost \$1 million

IT is anticipated that \$1 million will be used in the preliminary trial phase of a Karen National Union (KNU) construction of Baw Ka Hta hydropower dam project, located in Nyaunglebin district of Bago Region, says Saw Tar Doh Moo, the chair of the KNU central economic committee.

As well as working to have a positive impact on the economy and society, together with a reduction in damages to the environment, there will be engagement with the public during the preliminary phase of the project.

“This is going to be an international standard project but regardless of how much of a positive impact it will have, if the public want it stopped then we will act in the manner their desire dictates. This preliminary stage is to support the right of public participation and decision making, as local citizens were not allowed

such privileges in the past when it came to regional projects,” said Saw Tar Doh Moo.

An MoU was signed between the Ministry of Electric Power and KNU Thoolei company during a meeting between both parties on 18 February for the compilation of a two year report on the preliminary experimental phase of the hydropower project.

“Of course we'll know [the results of the preliminary phase of the project] once the report has been released. Since project implementation is yet to even get underway, we're not in a position whereby we can say whether the report will support the building of the [hydropower] dam or not. What I do know is that there is public concern. This report will evaluate the need for companies, who are looking to expand their business enterprises, to have a

harmonious relationship with local citizens so that the resources of the region don't disappear,” added Saw Tar Doh Moo.

There have been attempts by the State to carry out construction of the Baw Ka Hta hydropower dam three times over the last sixty two years - in 1954, 1964 and more recently 2001 - but they were not successful as the area was plagued by armed conflict.—Myitmakha News Agency

Major powers team up to tell China of concerns over new laws

BEIJING — The United States, Canada, Germany, Japan and the European Union have written to China to express concern over three new or planned laws, including one on counterterrorism, in a rare joint bid to pressure Beijing into taking their objections seriously.

The US, Canadian, German and Japanese ambassadors signed a letter dated 17 January addressed to State Councilor and Minister of Public Security Guo Shengkun, voicing unease about the new counterterrorism law, the draft cyber security law, and a draft law on management of foreign non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

In what sources said was a co-ordinated move, the ambassador of the European Union Delegation to China, Hans Dietmar Schweisgut, sent a letter expressing similar concerns, dated 28 January. Reuters reviewed copies of both letters. The cyber security and counterterrorism laws codify sweeping powers for the government to combat perceived threats, from widespread censorship to heightened control over certain technologies.

Critics of the counterterrorism legislation, for one, say that it could be interpreted in such a way that even non-violent dissidents could fall within its definition of terrorism. The four ambassadors said areas of the counterterrorism law, which the National People's Congress passed in December, were vague and could create a "climate



An Weixing, the head of the Public Security Ministry's counter-terrorism division, drinks a tea at a news conference after China's parliament passed a controversial new anti-terrorism law in Beijing, in this December 27, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

of uncertainty" among investors. They did not specify which areas.

The EU ambassador used the same phrase to describe the law's impact, and both letters expressed an interest in engaging with China as it worked out implementing regulations around the law, to try to mitigate those concerns.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei, asked about the letters, said all countries were enhancing their efforts to combat terrorism, and that he hoped other countries would respect China's sovereignty.

"The counterterrorism law will not affect relevant businesses' normal operations and it will not affect relevant personnel's legitimate interests," he told a daily

news briefing, without elaborating.

Guo could not be reached for comment. China's State Council Information Office and Ministry of Public Security did not respond to requests for comment.

While countries often give feedback on proposed legislation in China, the rare joint response by several major powers, and coordination with the EU, signals an increased readiness to lend weight of numbers to their argument.

It also points to growing frustration that the low-key, individual approach taken in the past may not be working.

"While we recognise the need for each country to address its security concerns, we believe the new legislative measures have the

potential to impede commerce, stifle innovation, and infringe on China's obligation to protect human rights in accordance with international law," said a strongly-worded letter co-signed by the four ambassadors.

China has defended the new and draft laws, saying such steps, including heightened censorship, were necessary to ensure stability in the country of over 1.3 billion people.

The diplomatic push comes as Beijing arguably needs cooperation from the signatories to the letters more than ever.

A slowing Chinese economy and fragile markets highlight the importance of foreign investors' confidence. Chinese companies are increasingly looking to get approvals from foreign governments for acquisitions, and the European Union is debating whether to give China "market economy" status.

On the draft cyber security law, all five ambassadors were particularly concerned by provisions requiring companies to store data locally and to provide encryption keys, which technology firms worried may impinge on privacy and mean they would have to pass on sensitive intellectual property to the government in the name of security.

Both letters said the draft NGO management law had the potential to hinder academic exchanges and commercial activities, calling them "crucial elements" of

their relationships with China.

Critics have said the draft legislation risked choking off NGOs' work by requiring them to get official sponsors and giving broad powers to police to regulate their activities.

In the letters, the ambassadors asked China to open both draft laws to another round of public consultations. The US and Canadian embassies in Beijing did not immediately respond to requests for comment for this article. A spokesman for the EU Delegation had no comment when reached by Reuters. The German embassy declined to comment on the letter.

The Japanese embassy said: "We pay attention to Chinese movement over relevant laws or drafts of laws."

The parties to the letters decided to express their concerns together after it became unclear to what degree China was taking their individual input on the laws on board, said a person with knowledge of the matter.

"We're trying to avoid the divide and conquer approach (by China). They like to do that on any possible occasion. We wanted to send a counter-signal that when we have shared interests, we cannot so easily be split," the person said, adding that there had been no clear response by China so far to the letters.

"We don't plan to establish a pen-pal relationship. We want something to happen."—Reuters

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South Korea's Park says door not shut on dialogue with North

SEOUL — Seoul will not shut the door to dialogue with North Korea, South Korean President Park Geun-hye said yesterday, but warned that Pyongyang, facing new UN sanctions, would be subject to even greater pressure as long as it stuck to its nuclear programme.

The UN Security Council is expected to vote soon on a resolution drafted by the United States and backed by China, the North's main ally, aimed at punishing Pyongyang for its recent nuclear test and long-range rocket launch.

"The government will not shut the door on dialogue, but as long as the North doesn't show the will to denuclearise and refuses to change, pressure from us and the international community will continue," Park said.

The anticipated adoption of new tough sanctions by the Security Council shows there is broad international support to stop the North's nuclear pro-

gramme, Park said.

Her comments came in a speech marking a movement in the 1900s to seek Korean independence from colonial ruler Japan.

Park did not make a proposal for fresh dialogue with the North, which last took place in August last year, when the two sides agreed to make efforts to improve ties.

In February, in a shift from her earlier focus on dialogue to engage the North, Park vowed tough action and suspended operations at a jointly run industrial park as punishment for the North's recent moves.

The North conducted its fourth nuclear test in January and launched a long-range rocket in February, which the Security Council condemned as a violation of existing resolutions that ban the isolated state from using ballistic missile technology.

The proposed new resolution would require UN member



South Korean President Park Geun-hye delivers a speech during a ceremony to mark the anniversary of the 1919 independence movement against Japanese rule over the Korean peninsula, in Seoul, on 1 March. PHOTO: REUTERS

states to inspect for illicit goods all cargo passing through their territory on its way to, or from, North Korea.

Earlier, countries only had to do this if they had reasonable

grounds to believe there was illicit cargo.

Russia, a permanent member of the Security Council, has sought more time to review the text of the resolution.—Reuters

Hong Kong bookseller denies kidnapped by China, says to renounce UK citizenship

HONG KONG — A Hong Kong bookseller and British passport holder who disappeared last year said he had not been kidnapped by Chinese authorities, as many suspect, but had sneaked into China illegally and that he would renounce his British citizenship.

Lee Bo, a dual British and Hong Kong citizen, and four associates went missing over the past half year, sparking fears that Chinese authorities had abducted some of the men and taken them back to China.

The disappearances provoked concern that China was using shadowy tactics to erode the “one country, two systems” formula under which Hong Kong has been governed since its return to China from British rule in 1997.

At least one of the men faces charges for selling and distributing books critical of China’s Communist Party leaders that are banned in China.

In a 20-minute interview with China’s Phoenix Television late on Monday, Lee gave the first detailed account of his disappearance from Hong Kong in December, saying he had returned to China voluntarily.

“I have always felt that I’m a Hong Kong citizen, a Chinese citizen, and because people have used my British nationality to sensationalize and make the situation more complicated, that’s why I’m deciding to give up my British nationality,” said Lee, who appeared calm in the interview.

“Why have I acted so mysteriously? It’s because I’ve had to assist with a mainland Chinese investigation and it required testifying against some people.”

Since he was afraid of reprisals from those he was testifying against, he said, “I used an illegal



A printout showing Lee Bo, specializing in publications critical of China, and four other colleagues who went missing, is displayed outside a bookstore at Causeway Bay shopping district in Hong Kong, China, on 6 January, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

means to sneak there and I didn’t use my (Chinese) home return permit.”

Lee didn’t give details on how he’d crossed the border into China, or who helped him or when he might return.

“This case is quite complicated ... so I need to be questioned for longer. I am very safe and free in China. My relations with law enforcement officers are very good. They treat me very well.”

Some politicians were sceptical and said Lee may have been pressured to try to erase perceptions of Chinese authorities carrying out illegal cross-border enforcement operations.

“I don’t know who helped him sneak over... Was he forced by Chinese police or state secu-

rity agents?” said James To, a lawmaker with the Democratic Party. “There is still a big question mark.”

Hong Kong Security Secretary Lai Tung-kwok said Hong Kong police would follow up to further clarify the circumstances of Lee’s case, including how he’d entered China.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei, asked about Lee’s appearance on television, noted that Lee and his wife had already made remarks on the case many times already.

“We should respect what they have said and respect the facts,” he told a daily news briefing without elaborating.

Lee’s wife has previously said he travelled to the mainland

voluntarily.

Britain said it would provide support to Lee, the BBC reported, following his latest comments. Britain has not yet been granted consular access to Lee, despite formal requests, a representative of the British consulate in Hong Kong said on Monday.

There was no immediate response from a British consulate representative in Hong Kong. Lee had been “involuntarily removed” to China, British Foreign Minister Philip Hammond said earlier.

Four of the other Hong Kong booksellers, including Gui Minhui, a Swedish national, confirmed on Chinese television on Sunday that they had been detained for “illegal book trading” in mainland China.—Reuters

Cambodians admit to raping French tourists in Thailand —foreign ministry

BANGKOK — Five Cambodian fisherman have confessed to raping and assaulting French tourists on an isolated Thai beach, Cambodia’s foreign ministry said in a statement yesterday.

Thai police said four French tourists were attacked late on Saturday on Koh Kood, a remote island near Thailand’s maritime border with Cambodia known for its untamed jungle and pristine beaches.

Thai police investigators said the attackers swam from their fishing boat to assault the group and raped two women at knife-point. They were caught while trying to escape.

Cambodia’s Foreign Affairs Ministry said in a statement that the five fishermen confessed to Eat Sophea, Cambodian Ambassador to Thailand, that they raped and assaulted the tourists.

“During the interview with the Cambodian ambassador the five fishermen confessed to have really been involved in the cases of rape and assault,” the ministry said in a statement.

“It happened while the five fishermen were in a drunk state.”

The five have been charged with rape and violent assault.

It is the latest high-profile case to hit the popular holiday destination, raising serious questions about tourist safety in the Southeast Asian country.—Reuters

Former comfort women protest Philippines-Japan military cooperation

MANILA — Six Filipino women who were forced to work in Japanese military brothels during World War II led a protest action yesterday in front of Japan’s embassy in the Philippine capital to oppose enhanced military cooperation between the two countries.

“The agreement of the Philippines-Japan military alliance has been made concrete. So our fear that our children, our grandchildren will fall victims again to another war and a repeat of the comfort women system is also now concrete,” Rechilda Extremadura, executive director of Lila Pilipina (League of Filipino Grandmothers), said at the rally attended also by more than 20 supporters.

“That’s why we say never again to another generation of

comfort women and never again to another generation of war victims,” she said, using a euphemism for Asian women who were forced to work in wartime Japanese military brothels.

On Monday, the Philippine defence department and the Japanese Embassy in Manila signed an agreement on Tokyo’s planned transfer of defence equipment and technology to the Southeast Asian country, substantiating the two countries’ strategic partnership.

Extremadura said her group, which seeks to secure justice for former comfort women, sees Japan’s more active military engagement in Asia as linked with the increasing presence of the US military in the region to counter China’s aggressiveness.

“We were treated like pigs. And yet our cries for justice for

more than two decades now just fell on deaf ears. Our government just even connived with the Japanese government,” Narcisa Claveria, 85, one of the comfort women who attended the rally, said in a speech.

“I don’t want my fellow Filipino women or my grandchildren to experience what I went through during the war. So while I’m still alive, I’ll carry on our struggle until we get justice. And my children and grandchildren will pursue this when I’m gone,” she added.

The women seek “official apology and just compensation” from the Japanese government, as well as inclusion of the comfort women issue in history textbooks.

Only around 100 Filipino former comfort women remain alive.—Kyodo News



Felicidad de los Reyes, 87, a former Filipino “comfort woman,” attends a rally on 1 March, 2016, in front of the Japanese Embassy in Manila against enhanced military cooperation between the Philippines and Japan, which signed a bilateral agreement the previous day to allow Japan to transfer defence equipment and technology to the Philippines. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

— OPINION —

Good governance versus democratic governance

Khin Maung Aye

As argued by the neoliberals, good governance depends on marketisation to promote efficiency and overcome corruption. The definition of good governance is extended by the neoliberals to incorporate the diversified democratic principles and practices. They often suggest that principles like freedom and choice are served better by market mechanisms than by voting. Such being the case, the first wave of reforms attempted to roll back the state by means of contracting out and pri-

vatization. Neoliberals, in general, contend that the new public management (NPM) is an example of good governance. In contrast, their critics highlight a tension between NPM and democratic ideas. In the view of the critics, when the state contact out, it lost the ability to administer and control public sector activities. The second wave also seems to have been driven fundamentally by ideas of promoting efficiency. Its advocates did not reject marketization but they really emphasise networks, partnership, and joined-up governance. Nevertheless, some critics argue that the reforms undermine democracy. In their opinion, the reforms are creating a system of governance that is too complicated for proper, meaningful accountability. Even policy actors whose main concern is efficiency are troubled by the thoughts that falling rates of participation and civic engagement point to a decline in legitimacy that ultimately will undermine the effectiveness of public policy.

It is worth nothing that, there is no unanimous agreement on how to reconcile represent-

ative democracy with the new governance. It has, therefore, become important to understand the concept of democratic governance, a condition under which the promise of justice, liberty and equality is realised in a democratic political framework, where the government is sensitive to the people's identities, aspirations and needs and where people feel secure and contended. In a nutshell, democratic governance can be understood as the capacity of a society to define and establish policies and solve their conflicts in a peaceful manner and within the framework of law.

Write for us

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

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

The Hellfire Pass

Khin Maung Myint

The Hellfire Pass must be the worst nightmare of their lives, for those who were involved in the construction of the notorious Death Railway, linking Thailand and Myanmar, during the Second World War (WWII). I had read many interesting, emotional and tragic stories of the hardships and the ordeals, the prisoners of war (PoWs) had to endure during its constructions. According to many accounts, the working conditions there were the harshest and most difficult along the whole section of the railway line that lied inside Thailand. Those memories of the hardships, the ordeals and the maltreatments they had suffered would never be forgotten and carried with them to their graves.

I was familiar with the Hellfire Pass since my younger days and had some ideas about the hardships, the ordeals and the maltreatments, which the PoWs and the civilian forced labourers had suffered. Those facts became more profound after my visit to the Hellfire Pass as I had an opportunity to observe, firsthand, the rugged and difficult terrain at the location. Also the museum, close to the site of the Hellfire Pass, provided vivid insights into the atrocities committed on the PoWs and the civilian labourers.

The location of that place is at the Sai Yok township in the Kanchanaburi Province, about 190 kilometers west of Bangkok. It is on a high mountain, which is part of the Tenessarim Range or the Tanintharyi Yoma, that straddled our two countries. The place is only reachable by motor vehi-

cles as there are no rail tracks beyond Nam Tok, a few kilometers away. That place might be remote in those days, but now it is at the rear of a military establishment, through which it could be easily accessed.

When we arrived at the museum close to the Hellfire Pass, dedicated to those who died and those who had suffered during its construction, there were a few tour buses and many private cars already parked. The museum was crowded with tourists, most were from Australia, America, UK, Europe, Japan and a few locals.

As the museum was too crowded, we decided to look at the notorious Hellfire Pass first. We descended the steep cliff behind the museum, to where the old rail track bed that runs through the pass is located. The height of the cliff is about 200 feet above the rail bed and its sheer face would be almost impossible to descend, if there weren't the timber boardwalks and stairways mounted on steel frames, zig-zagging down along the cliff face. It was learnt that the museum and the boardwalk stairways were donated by the Australian government. They facilitate safe and easy descent even for persons of my age. However, the ascent was very challenging for me.

At the bottom of the boardwalk stairways, we set foot directly on the old rail bed. After walking about a hundred meters or so along the trail, the Hellfire Pass came into view. At first glimpse, it gave me a novel mixed feeling—it was very awesome and at the same time looked very sinister.

Except a short length of rail track inside the pass there was no intact rail line. That short rail track was laid by the Australian survivors with the materials from the original rail tracks, to demonstrate how it was done in those days. The pass is a narrow gorge cut in the rocky mound obstructing the route, just wide enough to afford a passage for the trains to pass through.

Apart from the section inside the pass, the rail bed is only a few feet from the sheer drop in many places. I was unable to guess the height of that drop, due to a dense jungle of bamboos and large trees covering the slope and the bottom was out of view. However, I assume it must be quite high, judging from the sounds of motor cycles and cars down below in the valley, where there are some villages.

It was learnt from the information on a sign posted there, that the old rail bed had been cleared to about four and a half kilometres beyond the pass to provide a trekking trail. However, there is a warning sign about rockfalls that are frequent along the trail and advised the tourists to do the trekking at their own risk.

Some younger visitors took the risk, but for me, as my interest is to have a close look at the pass, I went as far as a monument erected by the Australian government, just beyond the pass, dedicated to those who died and those who suffered. Beyond that point a shallow gorge cuts across the trail. Those who want to continue further had to pass that gorge with some difficulty.

The Hellfire Pass resembles a narrow deep gorge with sheer

vertical rock cliffs on both sides. What I learned from the museum was, the cuttings were done with bare-hands using basic hand tools. The poor people had to toil 18 hours a day on meager rations of two meals a day that consisted of only rice and salted vegetables. Many died due to cholera, dysentery, malaria and from starvations and exhaustions. Some were beaten to death. After the visit there, I came to realize what those poor souls had been subjected to, were beyond human endurance and human dignity. It was surprising that anyone could have survived.

The cutting of the pass took 12 weeks and the casualties were immense. In some rare photographs, the PoWs were seen to be reduced to skin and bones and clad only in narrow pieces of loin cloth barely covering their dignity. Those emaciated prisoners and labourers clad only in loin cloths and toiling laboriously in the dark with flame torches must have resembled a scene from hell and thus it was dubbed the "Hellfire Pass".

Inside the narrow pass, there are brass plaques fixed on the rock surface, dedicated to some individuals and the members of certain military units. Just reading the inscriptions on those plaques made me understand their sufferings during those darkest days of their lives. At one place, I came upon an A4 size photo copy pinned to a tree. It displayed an old photograph of a young Australian soldier who died at the site in 1943, and below that photo was one of a lady who was the sister of the soldier, who passed away in 2006. The caption below read: "At last the brother and sister are together again". There are many more such mementos written on small wooden crosses and small flags

of Australia and Britain, which are stuck into the rock crevices.

While reading all those sentimental writings and dedications to those who died and those who suffered, I was greatly touched and overwhelmed with emotions. They also made me understand why that Hellfire Pass was so much dreaded by those who had been there during its construction.

After visiting the Wang Pho timber viaduct, the museum in Kachanaburi, the Hellfire Pass and its museum, I came to realize why the casualties were so high, as I had mentioned in my previous article, "A Train Ride on the Death Railway Line" (15-02-16 GNLM). Here, I would like to recall the number of deaths for those who haven't read the said article and also to get the records straight. There were 12,621 PoWs and about 90,000 civilian forced labourers, who died during the construction of the Death Railway. In the aforementioned article, I made a blunder by stating the number of PoW casualties to be 123621. My sincere apology to all those who had read that article.

The Hellfire Pass was one of the most difficult and deadly construction site along the Death Railway that linked Thanbyu-zayat and Bangkok in the past. There could be many such interesting places along the old rail track, which lied 111 kilometers or 69 miles inside our country. Such places should also be made accessible for those who are interested to visit for various reasons. Some who were involved in the construction of the said railway or their descendants, relatives, friends and countrymen or those with historical interests, like me, may want to visit those places. They would make interesting tourist attractions.

Expectations high for Ma-U bridge becoming a tourist destination



Ma-U Bridge. Photo: PHAY HTUN ZAW (YESAGYO)

THE Ma-U Bridge in Yesagyo Township, Mgway Region is expected to become a place of tourist interest, said locals. The wooden bridge joins Ma-U Nge village and Ma-U Ahlai village.

Mau Bridge is not as famous as U Pein Bridge in Amarapura Township, Mandalay Region, which attracts many tourists and is crowded with visitors during peak season although the bridge was built in the same period of U Pein Bridge, according to a memorial stone inscription, it has been learned.

The bridge was renovated for the first time on the 6th waxing of the second Waso in Myanmar Era 1310, according to the inscription. It was again renovated at a cost of K2 million in Prime Minister U Nu's period. Retired Colonel Thike Htun, Deputy Minister for Forestry contributed teak pillars with the aim of renovating the bridge for the third time, it has been learned.

Ma-U village is an ancient site said to have been owned by Queen Ma-U. There are four Ma-U villages: Ma-U Ahlai village, Ma-U Nge village (now called it Ma-U Outseik village), Ma-u Taung village and Ma-u Myauk village.—Phay Htun Zaw (Yesagyo)

Tractors in high demand in Ngathayauk

TRADITIONALLY, local farmers in Ngathayauk Township, Mandalay Region have earned their living through the use of traditional farming methods like the harrowing of farm land by cattle that are bred by the land owners. Recently, however, these farmers have turned to tractors, saving time and energy. Motorised tractors are in high demand at the moment among farmers in Ngath-

ayauk, it has been learned from locals.

"In the old days there was no one who used tractors on their farms. Now, farmers in the upcountry villages are promoting their agricultural business by purchasing tractors.

There are two or three tractors in each village of our town, and I think there is no village left which doesn't have a trac-

tor," said a farmer from upcountry.

"Tractors bring more productivity and benefits to our farmers than cattle because we find it hard to harrow the dry land with cattle in summer.

Farmers have now come to realise the advantages of mechanised agriculture," said a farmer from Myaynelgyi village, Ngathayauk Township. —Ye Win Naing (Nyaung-Oo)



A tractor seen driving ploughing the field.

C-in-C of Defence Services opens library, donates bell in Dawei



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visits e-library after the library is opened. PHOTO: MYAWADY

COMMANDER-in-Chief of Defense Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attended a ceremony to open a library and to hand over a garbage truck in Dawei, Taninthayi Region, yesterday.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General stressed the importance of reading to catch up with the modern age.

Knowledge, which is necessary for the rule of law, can be gained from reading, he said, that is why Shwe Wai Thiri Panna Beikman Library has been established to bring knowledge to the people in Dawei.

The democratic system in Myanmar shows that working hard within the framework of the law and in line with the constitution can contribute much to the development of a country, he added.

The library was established at the cost of more than K260 million.

In the morning, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla also attended a ceremony to donate a great bell to Shwetaungsar Pagoda in Dawei, marking the 250th anniversary of the construction of the pagoda.—Myawady

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

Thanks for the report, Taninthayi earning R1.8 billion from edible birds nest enterprise trend (GNLM, Feb 24). It is always important for any nation to make economic progress based on her natural resources and to find employment through that. However, a point of concern is how well this harvesting of bird's nest is monitored by local government agencies and related forest, environment and conservation departments. Unless the process is placed under proper monitoring and surveillance; the push for profit may have detrimental impacts on the population dynamics of the nesting species and could threaten their population base; which in turn may impact the cash flow and jeopardize local employment. Hence, it is very important that the entire process of harvesting bird nests is well recorded and monitored by government agencies for sustainability, viability and for long term protection of the bird species concerned as well as the local ecosystem.

Thanking you
Sincerely yours
Saikat Kumar Basu
Apt 6-409, 43 Street South,
Lethbridge AB Canada T1J 4B3

Germany says credibility of Minsk peace deal for eastern Ukraine at stake



Members of the Ukrainian armed forces gather on armoured vehicles on the roadside near the village of Vidrodzhennya outside Artemivsk, Donetsk region, Ukraine, in 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

WASHINGTON — The credibility of the Minsk peace deal for eastern Ukraine will come under threat unless both sides in the conflict make faster progress in implementing the agreement, Germany's foreign minister said on Monday.

Speaking at a news conference in Washington with US Secretary of State John Kerry, Frank-Walter Steinmeier conceded that the readiness of the government in Kiev and pro-Russian separatists to move forward with Minsk was "very limited".

"Implementation must continue. The credibility of the whole process rests on this," Steinmeier said.

Kerry said "both sides need

to perform", and that Russia must ensure that the separatists do their part.

Kiev's struggles to get an election law for eastern Ukraine through parliament and an increase in ceasefire violations in the region have raised fears that the deal, sealed one year ago in the Belarus capital, could collapse, sparking a new wave of fighting.

European countries have tied the removal of sanctions against Russia to the implementation of Minsk. Germany and its allies worry that if Ukraine does not implement its side of the agreement, pressure could rise to ease those sanctions when they expire in July.

Earlier on Monday, Hungar-

ian Prime Minister Viktor Orban warned the European Union against extending the sanctions automatically when they lapse, urging instead a "serious debate" on the matter.

Steinmeier said he hoped that a meeting of the foreign ministers of Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine scheduled to take place on Thursday in Paris would lead to progress on planned elections in eastern Ukraine.

"If elections take place, and everyone says this, then we need two things: first an election law and second security conditions which allow an election to be held," he said. "I hope that we make a small step forward on Thursday." — Reuters

US State Department releases final batch of Clinton emails

NEW YORK — The US State Department released the final batch of Hillary Clinton's emails on Monday from her time at the agency's helm, bringing the final tally of emails it says contain classified information to more than 2,000.

The department has been regularly releasing batches of her work emails in keeping with a judge's order. But Monday's release of the final 1,700 messages does not end the controversy and legal uncertainty dogging Clinton's Democratic presidential campaign since her use of a private email server came to light a year ago.

Republican rivals in the battle for the 8 November election have cited the email controversy in saying Clinton, the Democratic front-runner, is un-

fit for the presidency.

Clinton, secretary of state from 2009 to 2013, has said her email arrangement broke no rules and that she will be vindicated.

One of the newly released exchanges shows Clinton and Jake Sullivan, one of her closest aides, in a discussion now entirely censored as "secret," the second-highest level in the government's three-tier classification system.

The messages, sent on 7 June, 2012, bear the subject "Khar - where we are" — likely a reference to Hina Rabbani Khar, Pakistan's foreign minister. The previous day, Pakistan had renewed its insistence that the United States apologize for an air attack that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers.

All told, classified information appears in 2,093 of the 30,300 work emails and attachments Clinton's lawyers returned to the department in 2014, including 261 such emails released on Monday. That information is obscured with white boxes in the public copies.

The government forbids sending or storing classified information outside secure, government-controlled channels. The FBI has taken the server and is investigating with US Justice Department attorneys whether laws were broken through the unusual arrangement.

The State Department's inspector general and at least two Republican-led congressional committees are conducting similar inquiries. — Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

Portugal nominates ex-refugee chief for UN secretary-general

LISBON — Portugal's government has proposed Antonio Guterres, a former UN high commissioner for refugees, as a candidate for secretary-general of the United Nations, it said on Monday.

Guterres was Portugal's prime minister between 1995 and 2002 and served two terms as UN high commissioner from 2005 until last year.

"With this step, Portugal actively contributes to the selection process by presenting a candidate who is exceptionally well qualified to be the next Secretary-General of the United Nations," the prime minister's office said in a statement.

It said the prime minister wrote on Monday to the presidents of the UN General Assembly and Security Council to formally submit Guterres' candidacy. — Reuters

Oman bus crash kills 18 people

DUBAI — Eighteen people were killed and 14 injured when the bus they were travelling in crashed into a truck in central Oman yesterday morning, state news agency ONA reported.

The collision occurred on a roundabout connecting the districts of Ibri and Fuhud and the victims came from several countries, the statement said. — Reuters

Indonesian counter-terror squad arrest two suspects

JAKARTA — The Indonesian counter-terrorism squad Densus 88 yesterday reportedly arrested two suspected terrorists in the second largest city in East Java.

"We have detained them at our station," said Adjunct Senior Commissioner Yudo Nugroho, chief of the Malang City Police, quoted by Indonesian news portal Kompas.com.

Officers apprehended the two male suspects, identified by their initials KW and S, on Tuesday morning local time at a historical graveyard where they were believed to have hidden for about a week. The graveyard is located in a state-owned forest of Mount Semeru's hillside, and is far from residential areas.

According to Yudo, the two men are not originally from Malang, but believed to have connections with a local terrorist network led by Indonesia's notorious terrorist fugitive Santoso, which is said to have played a role in the attacks in the country's capital last month. Police also believed that the two men were connected to the five suspected terrorists who were arrested on 19 February also in Malang, according to Yudo. — Xinhua

Egypt's tourism revenues down \$1.3 billion since Russian plane crash

CAIRO — Egypt's tourism revenue has declined by roughly \$1.3 billion since a Russian plane crash in the Sinai last year, Prime Minister Sherif Ismail said in a televised interview on Monday.

Egypt's president said last week that a Russian plane that crashed in Sinai last October, killing all 224 people on board, had been downed by terrorists seeking to damage its tourism industry and ties with Russia, echoing a position already taken by Western countries and Moscow. "After the plane crash, over the past three or four months, we lost around \$1.2 billion or \$1.3 billion in revenues," Sherif said. — Reuters

No 2 US Senate Republican voices unease over Trump candidacy

WASHINGTON — The No 2 Republican in the US Senate said on Monday he was worried that Donald Trump could be an "albatross" for Republicans running in other races if he were to win the party's nomination for president, CNN reported.

"We can't have a nominee be an albatross around the down-ballot races," John Cornyn, the Senate majority whip, said when asked if he had concerns about the possibility Trump could win the nomination, according to CNN. "That's a concern of mine." "I think he certainly is a controversial figure," the Texas senator told CNN. "I think we need someone who can unify the party, as opposed to divide the party." — Reuters

Congratulations on the Myanmar Farmers' Day!

Dear farmers, members of farmers' group and association and all the staffs in the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MOAI);

As you know, the second of March is the Myanmar Farmers' Day. I would like to extend my warmest greetings to all of you, and to congratulate your recently accomplished performances in agricultural sector through your efforts and cooperation.

Agriculture is an important sector sharing great portion in Myanmar GDP, and large portion of the population is engaged in agriculture. It means that agriculture has a great role to develop the Myanmar.

During last few years, all of you have made a great effort to increase agricultural productivity actively. Although the sector is not yet satisfactory state, it has been grown remarkably in production and marketing activities.

Agricultural production is for self-sufficient, of course and for selling the products to the consumer through the marketing activities finally. Consumers' concerns on the quality and safety of the products increase year by year for their health. Thus, farmer should consider the ways to increase productivity as well as quality and safety of the products to give satisfaction to consumers in the market.

Therefore, the products should be delivered to consumer without the loss in quality and safety through appropriate handling, packaging and transportation after harvesting. Such the management skill after harvest, which is named as postharvest technology, is also very important to make products to be sold out in the market.

MOAI has been conducting the cooperative projects with Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) to reduce post-harvest losses in quantity and quality of agricultural products through introduction of postharvest technology to enable the delivery of high-quality and safe agricultural products to consumers since 2011.

As the first achievements of the cooperation between KOICA and MOAI the Postharvest Technology Training Centre had been established in Mandalay. This Centre is being operated for farmers, member of farmers' association and group, students of SAI and YAU and MOAI staffs from February 2015. The training Centre has a variety of programs to prevent postharvest losses and to

add value of agricultural products.

In addition, MOAI and KOICA is carrying out another cooperation project of 'Establishment of Postharvest Technology Institute' for sustainable operation and activation of the Centre through supplying appropriate technology for Myanmar situation from 2015. The project is expected to be completed in the end of 2017, and Myanmar researchers will develop technologies needed for Myanmar in the Institute by themselves.

Myanmar has vast farmland with the blessed climatic conditions suitable for cultivation of the various exotic fruits and vegetables. Fruits and vegetables have many advantages over other crops in terms of productivity and farm income.

The demand for fruits and vegetables of safe and good quality is growing steadily in domestic and in international markets. Therefore, the future of the horticultural sector in Myanmar is very bright.

To expand the market in domestic and abroad, the farmers are requested to put a lot of effort into production of high-quality and safe crops rather than quantity in the field. In addition, to get a good response from consumers, agricultural products cultivated with farmers' great effort have to be delivered to the market without losses in quantity and quality by applying appropriate postharvest handling and technology.

MOAI and KOICA postharvest technology cooperation program has been progressed for supporting the technology needed for horticultural product marketing of farmers to decrease postharvest losses and to increase income.

I would like to ask for your deep interest and active participation in the postharvest technology program.

Once again, I would like to send my sincere greetings from Korea to you to congratulate the Farmers' Day, and I wish all of you are more peaceful in your body and mind, and more successful in your agricultural activities.

Thank you for your attention.

Dr. Dongman Kim

Manager, Myanmar-KOICA Postharvest Technology Cooperation Project
Principal Researcher, Korea Food Research Institute

Brazil's Petrobras corruption investigation targets Lula

BRASILIA — Federal prosecutors who uncovered a huge corruption scheme at oil company Petrobras are looking into whether Brazil's former president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva received undue favours from engineering firms they are investigating.

In a letter to the Supreme Court made public on Monday, the head of the investigation, Deltan Dallagnol, argued for a federal probe because some of the alleged gifts were made while Lula was still in office. The prosecutors suspect favours were extended to Lula by executives of engineering firms Odebrecht and OAS that have been charged with corruption and money laundering in the massive bribery and political kickback scandal involving contracts with state-run Petroleo Brasileiro SA. If the Supreme Court authorizes the probe, it would be the first time federal prosecutors will be looking to link the once

wildly popular leftist president and Brazil's biggest ever corruption case.

Lula, who was president from 2003-2010, has already faced police questioning over the financial dealings of one of his sons and now faces questioning by Sao Paulo state prosecutors over his alleged ownership of a beach-front penthouse triplex and country estate. The triplex and country home were allegedly renovated by OAS and Odebrecht. Lula has said the properties don't belong to him. His lawyers appealed to the Supreme Court last week against the federal investigation, arguing that Dallagnol and his team had overstepped their jurisdiction by duplicating the inquiry by Sao Paulo state prosecutors.

Brazil has been rocked by the growing Petrobras scandal that has ensnared dozens of members of its business and political establishment and could now implicate Lula.—Reuters

Jamaican military on streets as election winner's margin narrows

KINGSTON — Jamaican reservist soldiers reinforced security at electoral offices on Monday after a final count of votes cast in last week's general election narrowed the winning party's majority to one seat in the heavily indebted Caribbean nation.

The opposition Jamaican Labour Party (JLP) was declared the victor of Thursday's closely fought election but after a second count authorities stripped it of one seat, reducing it to 32 of 63 seats. One more constituency remains to be recounted.

The tight election reflects division about Jamaica's economy, with the winners promising low taxes and job after years of austerity under an IMF programme. The ruling People's National Party was credited by many with restoring economic order.

The Electoral Commission said on Monday the earliest it could determine the winner was Wednesday.

JLP leader Andrew Holness had been due to be sworn in as prime minister on Tuesday, local media said.

The JLP spokeswoman said on Monday the party would call for a magisterial review of the results in the constituency of South East St. Mary, where its victory was overturned. The final count there showed the party losing by just nine votes, after 74 votes were rejected. Such a review would lead to more delays.

The country's military, the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF), called out to ensure security during the election, will now stay on the streets throughout this week, with additional help from its reservist force.

"The JDF is acutely aware of the current political situation. Like all law-abiding citizens, we want a speedy, safe, and peaceful resolution," said spokesman Major Basil Jarrett. A JLP win could signal a move away from the ruling party's wage freezes



Soldiers of the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) stand guard outside the Electoral Office of Jamaica in Kingston, on 29 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

and spending cuts. The JLP has instead promised jobs and sharply lower taxes.

On Monday, the party's spokeswoman said it had told the IMF of its reservations about the austerity programme, which includes a target of a 7 per cent of GDP primary surplus.

"The relationship is quite positive and one which we expect to continue," JLP spokeswoman Kamina Johnson-Smith

said, but added that the party had communicated its concerns to the IMF.

"We have always believed and do continue to believe that the primary surplus target is too high," she said. The elections have been largely free from the political violence of past decades and the Organization of American States lauded the process as a good example for the rest of the Caribbean.—Reuters

UK to send troops to Tunisia to help stop ISIS crossing Libyan border

LONDON — Britain is to send troops to Tunisia to help prevent Islamic State fighters from moving into the country from Libya, the British defence minister has said.

“A training team of some 20 troops from the 4th Infantry Brigade is now moving to Tunisia to help to counter illegal cross-border movement from Libya in support of the Tunisian authorities,” Michael Fallon told Parliament on Monday.

The move comes after growing Western concern that Islamic State (IS) is seeking to use Libya as a

base to plan and carry out attacks. Last June, 30 British holidaymakers were killed when an Islamist gunman attacked a beach at a hotel on Tunisia’s Mediterranean coast.

“I ... am extremely concerned about the proliferation of Daesh (IS) along the Libyan coastline, which is why we have been urgently assisting the formation of a new Libyan government,” Fallon said.

Jihadist groups have taken advantage of political chaos to expand their presence in Libya, and fighters loyal to Islamic State have

taken control of the coastal city of Sirte.

Western officials say they are discussing air strikes and special forces operations in Libya against the group that is seeking to set up a cross-border Islamic caliphate and has already seized large areas of Syria and neighbouring Iraq.

Fallon said Britain was not currently planning to deploy ground troops to Libya in a combat role.

“Before taking any military action in Libya, we would seek an invitation from the new Libyan Government,” he said.—Reuters



A security checkpoint is pictured at the Ras Jdir border, between Libya and Tunisia, 175 km west of Tripoli in December 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

Israeli troops kill Palestinian after soldiers attacked in West Bank

RAMALLAH, (West Bank) — Israeli forces shot dead a Palestinian in the occupied West Bank as troops fought to rescue two soldiers who the army said yesterday were attacked after straying into a refugee camp.

The Palestinian Red Crescent said a 22-year-old man died of gunshot wounds and six were wounded in the violence that began late on

Monday at Qalandia refugee camp. The Israeli military and police said five soldiers and five paramilitary border policemen were hurt.

The incident came during a period of heightened tensions in which Palestinian stabbings, shootings and car rammings have killed 28 Israelis and a US citizen since October. Israeli security forces have killed at

least 170 Palestinians, 112 of whom Israel says were assailants, while most others were shot dead during violent anti-Israeli protests.

A military spokeswoman said the soldiers’ vehicle inadvertently entered Qalandia where they and later their rescuers came under a hail of rocks and petrol bombs.

Defence Minister Moshe Yaalon said the two

soldiers got into trouble because they had relied on satellite navigation on their mobile phone.

“I have always said that if even if you use a navigation programme, you still need to know how to navigate with a map,” Yaalon said in a speech near Tel Aviv.

The Qalandia camp lies north of Jerusalem and

on the outskirts of Ramallah, the Palestinian seat of government. It is a point of frequent violence between Palestinian protesters and Israeli troops.

The past five months of bloodshed have been fuelled by various factors, including a dispute over Jerusalem’s al-Aqsa mosque compound and the failure of several rounds of peace talks to se-

cure the Palestinians an independent state in Israeli-occupied territory.

Palestinian leaders have said that with no breakthrough on the horizon, desperate youngsters see no future ahead. Israel says young Palestinians are being incited to violence by their leaders and by Islamist groups calling for Israel’s destruction.—Reuters



US Secretary of State John Kerry testifies before a House Appropriations subcommittee in Washington, on 24 February 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

US, Russia to set mechanism for Syria ceasefire violations

WASHINGTON — US Secretary of State John Kerry said on Monday he had agreed with his Russian counterpart not to discuss alleged violations of a cessation of hostilities plan in Syria and intensify work on a mechanism to ensure any strikes in Syria solely target Islamic State or al

Qaeda-linked Nusra Front.

Speaking at a news conference with German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Kerry said he had talked with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and agreed not to “litigate ... in a public fashion” the reports of violations on both

sides. Teams in Geneva and Amman will look into the reports, he said. “We are going to track down each alleged violation and work even more now to put in place a construct which will help us to guarantee that missions are indeed missions against Nusra or missions against Daesh,”

Kerry said, using an alternative name for Islamic State.

The two militant groups are not part of the cessation of hostilities deal led by the United States and Russia that has halted much of the fighting in Syria since Saturday.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV THAI BINH STAR-01 VOY NO (02/2016)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV THAI BINH STAR-01 VOY NO (02/2016) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.3.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-2 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 G-LINK EXPRESS PTE LTD.
Phone No: 2301186**

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA HASIL VOY NO (149)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA HASIL VOY NO (149) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 29.2.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV EVER APEX VOY NO (475N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV EVER APEX VOY NO (475N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.3.2016 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 EVERGREEN SHIPPING
LINE
Phone No: 2301185**

China navy launches first self-propelled floating dock

BEIJING — China's navy has launched its first self-propelled floating dock, giving it the ability to repair warships far from the coast, the official *People's Liberation Army Daily* said yesterday, Beijing's latest move to modernise its navy.

The newspaper said the dock, the Huachuan No. 1, would enable the navy to return damaged ships to fighting capability "in very rapid time" and was designed to be sent into combat zones.

"The ship's launch marks a further breakthrough in shifting repairs to our military's large war-

ships from set spots on the coast to mobility far out at sea," it added, showing a picture of a warship inside the floating dock.

The use of the dock means that ships with minor damage will not have to be taken out of service, while those with severe damage will not have to return to a shipyard, the paper said.

The dock can handle cruisers, destroyers and submarines, but not aircraft carriers, and cope with waves up to 2 metres (6.6 ft) high, it added.

Beijing has invested billions developing its homegrown weapons in-



A Chinese navy ship is seen docked after an exercise with Cambodian naval officers in Preah Sihanouk Province, Cambodia, on 26 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

dustry to support its growing maritime ambitions in the disputed South China Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Pacific.

China claims most of the South China Sea,

through which more than \$5 trillion in global trade passes every year. Viet Nam, Malaysia, Brunei, the Philippines and Taiwan have rival claims. Beijing has also cast an eye towards

foreign markets for its comparatively low-cost technology. Its total military budget in 2015 was 886.9 billion yuan (\$141.45 billion), up 10 per cent from a year earlier.—Reuters

Greek PM says lenders could return for bailout review in early March

ATHENS — International lenders could return to Greece within the first 10 days of March to complete a bailout review, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said yesterday, a move desperately needed by Athens to move on to debt relief talks.

"We should have a clearer picture of when they will return next Monday (7 March)," Tsipras said. "My assessment is that they will return in the first 10 days of March," he told a live interview on Greece's Star TV. Tsipras, who has a fragile parliamentary majority, wants to conclude the review swiftly to start talks on debt relief hoping to convince an angry public that their sacrifices are paying off after six years of austerity and lure back investors. Greece signed up to a new bailout agreement worth up to 86 billion euros (\$93.6 billion) last year, staving off the immediate threat of the country toppling out of the euro zone.

But differences among the lenders on an estimated fiscal shortfall by 2018, which may force the left-led government to cut pensions despite its pre-election promises, have delayed the EU/IMF mission chiefs return, casting a cloud on Tsipras' plans.

Athens puts the fiscal gap at 1 per cent of economic output while EU lenders estimate it will be around 3 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) sees a gap of at least 4.5 percent of GDP, according to sources.

"There must be agreement among lenders so that we can progress," Tsipras said calling on the IMF to "return to realism".

Pressed on whether the assessment would be concluded in March, Tsipras answered: "I think Easter will bring a resurrection of the economy." He did not specify if he meant Western Easter, celebrated on 27 March or the Eastern Orthodox Easter, marked on 1 May. The inspectors of all four institutions comprising the so-called "quartet" — European Commission, European Central Bank, European Stability Mechanism and IMF — will return after they reach a consensus on the projected fiscal shortfall and other fiscal targets, a source close to lenders said.—Reuters

INVITATION ON REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR THE FIXED BROADBAND NETWORK PROJECT

Yatanarpon Teleport Public Co., Ltd. (YTP) is a registered public company providing ISP services in Myanmar, located at Hlaing Universities' Campus, Yangon. Currently holding NFS (I) license, YTP provides broadband Internet, IP-VPN services and data center facilities and is now in progress to utilize FTTx technology as the main platform to offer high speed, comprehensive Internet services in near future. Anticipated the successful launch, YTP hereby invites eligible bidders for the supply of equipments, installation and associated services for the "Fixed Broadband Network Project" in Yangon and Mandalay Regions.

The schedule is:

Newspaper Announcement	1~3 March 2016
Availability of RFP	3~9 March 2016
Last date of written queries by interested companies	10 March 2016
Response to the queries	16 March 2016
Deadline of submission of proposal	24 March 2016
Evaluation of proposals	25 March ~ 28 April 2016
Announcement of winning bidders	29 April 2016

Interested companies can submit proposal for one or more lots as mentioned below:

- Lot1 . Supply and Installation of Metro IP Core Equipment and Services
- Lot2. Supply and Installation of DWDM System
- Lot3. Supply and Installation of OLT and ONT
- Lot4. Supply of Optical Cable
- Lot5. Supply of ODN Equipment
- Lot6. Supply of Accessories for Optical Cable
- Lot7. Supply and Installation of Mechanical and Electrical Equipment

Please be requested that to observe all instructions, terms and conditions and project requirements. Documents will only be available at Tender Committee Office, Yatanarpon Teleport Public Company Ltd. (YTP) and queries will be responded as mentioned in the schedule. Failure to furnish the correct and complete information will be void and incomplete submission of documents after the deadline is not exchangeable.

For queries and submission of documents, please contact "Tender Committee Office"

Tel:+951 4421190 Fax:+951 652300

Monday to Friday (10am to 3pm)

Yatanarpon Teleport Public Co., Ltd. (YTP)

No. 25, Universities' Hlaing Campus; Hlaing Township, Yangon Region, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, P.O Box 909.

Email: ytp-tender@teleport.net.mm

www.yatanarpon.net.mm/proposal-for-fixedbroadbandnetworkproject2016

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MOROTAI VOY NO (283)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MOROTAI VOY NO (283) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.3.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S CMA CGM LINE**

Phone No: 2301185

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 2.3.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
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AGENT FOR: M/S YANG MING LINE**

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Lady Gaga holds hands with survivors of sexual abuse after singing her Oscar-nominated song “Til It Happens to You” at the 88th Academy Awards in Hollywood, California, on 28 February. Vice President Joe Biden made a special appearance at the Oscars ceremony on Sunday to advocate for victims of sexual assault and introduced a powerful performance by Lady Gaga that featured survivors of sexual abuse. PHOTO: REUTERS

Lady Gaga, US Vice President Joe Biden call for end of rape culture at Oscars

LOS ANGELES — Singer Lady Gaga, herself a victim of sexual assault, used her Oscar performance as a medium to bring attention to rape culture.

The 29-year-old singer brought sexual assault survivors to Oscars stage for performance of anti-rape culture anthem from documentary “The Hunting Ground,” an expose of the institutional cover-ups and failings of colleges and police to investigate a spate of rapes on campuses in the US.

The performance by pop star, who recently opened up about being assaulted as a teenager, was introduced by US Vice President Joe Biden. He was promoting the White House’s ‘It’s On Us’ campaign to help stop sexual abuse.

“Despite significant progress over the last few years, too many women and men on and

off college campuses are victims of sexual abuse. “We must and we can change the culture so that no abused woman or man — like the survivors you see here tonight — ever feel like they have to ask themselves, ‘What did I do?’ They did not do anything wrong,” Biden said in his introduction piece.

The survivors made their way to the stage halfway through Gaga’s performance with messages like “survivor”, “it’s not your fault”, “we believe you” and “unbreakable,” scribbled on their wrists. The singer continued her act singing to a piano as the abuse survivors stood hand-in-hand on stage.

The performance of the song co-written by Gaga and Diane Warren, also a sexual assault survivor, scored a standing ovation from the audience.—PTI

Armani’s black velvet, Missoni’s knits wrap Milan fashion

MILAN — Giorgio Armani wrapped Milan Fashion Week on Monday with a fall collection for his main line dedicated to luxurious black velvet.

The 81-year-old Italian, whose designs were worn by Oscar winner Leonardo DiCaprio and nominee Cate Blanchett at Sunday’s Academy Awards, made the material the protagonist of his autumn/winter 2016/2017 line, using it in trousers, tops, coats and glittering evening wear.

Models stepped onto the catwalk in round collared black velvet jackets paired with wide leg trousers.

Show notes said Armani has “always loved this material for its subdued, intense splendour”.

Jacquard jackets with dabs of pale pink and blue added colour, as did a selection of floral designs — knit suits, silky trousers, tunic tops and chiffon dresses — later sequined with sparkles for the evening.

Armani also mixed other textures to all black outfits, including satin, fringes and ruffles on jackets worn with velvet trousers.

Black lacquer collars were added to velvet evening jackets while strapless gowns fit for the red carpet mixed black velvet with lace and sparkling black embroidery. Among footwear, there were nude fishnet ankle boots with black toe caps.

For the finale, Armani, who also used black as the basis col-

our for his Emporio Armani line unveiled on Friday, presented a black halter neck top, slit at the waist with black trousers under a black tulle cape.

At Missoni’s show on Sunday night, designer Angela Missoni presented plenty of colourful knits that were layered together — jumpers, short dresses, floor-length scarves and hats in the brand’s well-known bold stripes and zigzag patterns.

In a collection described as “lean, long and leggy”, there were chunky cardigans in plaids and colourful stripes over similarly kaleidoscopic short dresses and leggings. There were also similar outfits in black and white.—Reuters



Italian designer Giorgio Armani poses with models at the end of his Autumn/Winter 2016 woman collection show during Milan Fashion Week, Italy, on 29 February. PHOTO: REUTERS



Adele performs at the BRIT Awards at the O2 arena in London, on 24 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

Adele’s ‘25’ continues reign atop Billboard 200 chart

LOS ANGELES — British singer Adele once again kept her reign at the top of the weekly US Billboard 200 album chart on Monday, holding off albums by Rihanna and Justin Bieber.

Adele’s “25, the top-selling album of 2015, notched another 100,000 units last week in album and song sales and streaming activity, according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan.

Her album has sold more than 8.3 million copies in the United States since its November release and has spent ten non-consecutive weeks at the top of the Billboard 200 chart.

The singer last week also

swept the BRIT Awards, the top music honors in Britain, with four wins including album of the year.

R&B singer Rihanna’s latest album “Anti” climbed one spot to No 2 with 80,000 units sold, while Canadian pop star Bieber’s “Purpose” dropped one spot to No 3 with 63,000 units sold.

Rapper Yo Gotti’s “Art of Hustle” at No 4 was the only new entry to debut in the top ten of the Billboard 200 chart this week.

On the Digital Songs chart, which measures online sales, Rihanna’s steamy duet with Drake on “Work” climbed one spot to No 1 with 169,000 copies sold.—Reuters

US sportscaster Erin Andrews tells of shock after nude video posted



Show co-host Erin Andrews arrives at the 2015 CMT Awards in Nashville, Tennessee in 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

NASHVILLE, (Tenn) — Sports broadcaster Erin Andrews tearfully told a Tennessee jury on Monday of her shock and humiliation after learning that a nude video of her taken by a stalker was posted on the Internet.

Andrews, a former ESPN sportscaster who has since moved to Fox Sports, has sued the Marriott Nashville at Vanderbilt University for \$75 million over the 2008 incident, in which a man in a neighbouring room, Michael David Barrett, rigged a peep hole and shot the video of Andrews changing.

Andrews, who also has appeared on the "Dancing With the Stars" television show, was staying at the hotel while covering a Vanderbilt football game. She testified that she has experienced depression, spells of crying and sleeplessness since the video went viral in 2009. She said that before authorities were able to determine how the video was taken, news outlets had speculated that she had posted it herself to get publicity. Andrews has blamed former hotel employees for giving out Andrews' room number, which led to Barrett booking the room next door.

"I'm so angry. This could have been stopped," Andrews

said. She said if the Marriott had told her that a man had requested the room next to hers, she would have called the police. Marc Dedman, an attorney for the hotel, said the blame rests solely with Barrett, who pleaded guilty in 2009 to stalking Andrews and shooting the video and was sentenced to 30 months in prison. Andrews told the jury how she was a lifelong sports fan who worked hard to learn about the games she covered and overcome prejudice that she was hired because she was tall and blonde.

She said she still hears about the video on a daily basis including from fans at games. Her legal team initially tried to get the video off the Internet, but now she realizes it will be there "until I die," she said.

"It's so embarrassing," Andrews said. "It was my private time." In a video deposition played in court, Barrett said he timed a business trip to Nashville for when he knew Andrews would be in town to cover the Vanderbilt football game, and that he made the video to try to make money. Barrett said he asked to get the room next to Andrews. Andrews' testimony resumes on Tuesday morning.—Reuters

Nepal extends unused 2015 climbing permits for mountaineers by 2 yrs

KATHMANDU — Mountaineers who were unable to climb Nepal's mountains last spring can use their climbing permits this year or next spring, government officials said Tuesday, the beginning of this year's spring climbing season.

Last year, the spring climbing season through May was interrupted by massive earthquakes -- the biggest to hit Nepal since 1934 and which caused an avalanche on Mt. Everest, killing 18 people there. The quakes left close to 9,000 people dead across the country.

"The government has taken a decision to allow mountaineers to use permits they acquired for last year's spring season until the spring of 2017," Tourism Secretary Prem Kumar Rai told Kyodo News.

The decision allows about 800 climbers of over 100 canceled expeditions, who hold unused permits to climb various mountains including Mt. Everest, to use the permits until the end of the 2017 spring season. But they can climb the mountain for which they have permits just once during this period.

Officials are skeptical, though, that the 2016 spring season would attract many climbers.

"The climbers may not have enough time to get funding and to manage logistics to climb mountains this spring," Govinda Karki, director general of the ministry's Tourism Department, told Kyodo News.

The spring season of 2014 was also rattled by an avalanche that hit Mt. Everest, leading to cancella-

tions of expeditions on the mountain with Sherpas, or Nepali guides who accompany foreign climbers to the top, walking away. The avalanche cost the lives of 16 experienced Sherpas.

Karki, however, said the disasters of 2014 and 2015 have little to do with his prediction of low climber turnout this season.

"Mountaineers are risk-takers. They are not deterred by disasters. The only reason I think this spring will see less climbers is the time factor," he said, adding, "I am confident that by autumn season this year, Nepal's mountaineering industry will fully bounce back."

Spring is the popular climbing season for Mt. Everest and other mountains higher than 8,000 meters because of favora-

ble weather conditions.

Mountains less than 8,000 meters in height are climbed in autumn too, which is the peak trekking season.

Nepal is home to eight of 14 mountains in the world that are over 8,000 meters high.

Nepal witnessed a 32 percent drop in tourist arrivals in 2015, according to Rajendra Sigdel, spokesman of the tourism ministry. About 800,000 tourists visited Nepal in 2014.

The steep drop in 2015 was mainly because of the quakes in April and May and a political crisis precipitated by a new Constitution adopted in September. The political crisis also led to a humanitarian crisis due to a fuel blockade by India from late September to February.—Kyodo News

Gaza audiences enjoy first night out at the movies in 20 years

GAZA — Palestinians in the Gaza Strip are enjoying their first night out at the movies since political tensions led to the torching of cinemas in the enclave 20 years ago.

Hollywood blockbusters have yet to return and Hamas Islamists, who now rule Gaza, are looking out for anything they consider immodest.

Nevertheless, the projectors are rolling again, in a newly-opened cinema whose shows have been limited so far to films about the Palestinian struggle for statehood.

About 150 people took their seats last week in the Red Crescent Society hall, usually a venue for celebrations or tradi-

tional performances, to watch "Oversized Coat". The 2013 film by Jordan-based Palestinian director Nawras Abu Saleh examines Palestinian life between 1987 and 2011, a period of failed peace efforts and two anti-Israeli uprisings.

Tickets cost 10 shekels (\$2.50) each.

In the audience, Alaa Abu Qassem, a Gaza student who had never been to the movies before, revelled in the new experience.

"I am very happy," said Qassem, just a toddler when the last of Gaza's cinemas were burned to the ground during fighting between rival Palestinian factions. "But where is the pop corn?"

Cinema once flourished in Gaza. Back in the 1950s, when Egypt ran the enclave, residents used to frequent movie houses to watch Arab, Western and Asian films. Those cinemas were set on fire in 1987 when the first Palestinian uprising erupted. All were repaired, but were torched again during internal violence in 1996.

Faded movie posters, some in Hebrew and dating back two decades when Gaza was under Israeli occupation, still hang on the charred walls of what had been one of the territory's biggest cinemas.

Its windows were smashed long ago and graffiti either glorifying

the fight against Israel or advertising local businesses have been scrawled on the building.

The picture was dramatically different at last Thursday's screening in the Red Crescent Society hall.

Families came for a night out and once the lights dimmed, some in the audience used their cellphone cameras to make a movie of their own of the event.

"Gaza is hungry for a cinema ... depriving people of cinemas and theatres in Gaza is a violation of their humanity," said Basel Al-Attawna, a Gaza theatre director who had in the past watched movies at the old movie houses.—Reuters

mitv Myanmar International

(2-3-2016 07:00am ~ 3-3-2016 7:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Wet Markets of Yangon: Thirimingalar Market
07:34	Am	The World's Largest Book
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Myanmar Classic Cars Rally 2015 (Ep-I)
08:38	Am	ASEAN Head of Mission Special Meeting in Indonesia
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Up Against The Tide
09:42	Am	Strolling Along A Memory Link - U Pein Bridge
10:03	Am	News

10:26	Am	Orchid Lover
10:34	Am	Myanmar Traditional Bullock - Cart & Equestrian Racing
10:44	Am	Kyauk Gu Umin Cave Gu Pha Ya

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

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	Dawei - Tavoy, Travel To The Southern Part of Myanmar
07:44	Pm	A Way of Life: Karate-do
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Tapestry- A Unique Combination Of Painting and Craftsmanship
08:44	Pm	Chef Life "Thit Htoo"

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Tuesday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(For Detailed Schedule - www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(2-3-2016, Wednesday)

6:00 pm	9:00 pm
• Music Programme	• Music Programme
6:30 pm	9:35 pm
• Pyi Thu Ni Ti	• Myanmar
7:00 pm	Traditional Instruments (MYANMAR DRUM)
• Korea TV Drama Series	9:55 pm
7:45 pm	• Ramayana Play (Archery Session)
• Korea TV Drama Series	10:20 pm
8:35 pm	• Myanmar Video
• Cartoon Programme	

From 2.3.2016 (Wednesday) 06:00 Pm
To 3.3.2016 (Thursday) 06:00 Pm

This schedule will be repeated four times in 24 hours.

Alonso is hero and villain as Fiorentina hold Napoli



Football Soccer - Fiorentina v Napoli- Italian Serie A - Artemio Franchi stadium, Florence, Italy 29/02/16 Fiorentina's Marcos Alonso celebrates after scoring against Napoli. PHOTO: REUTERS

FLORENCE — Marcos Alonso scored for Fiorentina and then almost immediately gifted Gonzalo Higuain the equaliser for Napoli in a pulsating, end-to-end

1-1 Serie A draw on Monday.

Fourth-placed Fiorentina twice hit the crossbar before halftime while Napoli, who are second, were denied by a stun-

ning double save from Ciprian Tatarusanu after the break as both sides lost ground on leaders Juventus.

Juventus, chasing a fifth

successive title, have 61 points from 27 matches followed by Napoli on 58. AS Roma and Fiorentina, who meet on Friday, have 53.

The home team went ahead after six minutes when Alonso outjumped the visiting defence to head in a corner.

Napoli's attack from the kickoff broke down but Alonso's clearance went straight to Higuain and the Argentine sent a first-time shot into the net from 25 metres, his 25th league goal of the season.

Nikola Kalinic was given a free run on goal and fired against the crossbar with only keeper Pepe Reina to beat and Cristiano Tello also curled a shot against the woodwork in another Fiorentina attack.

Tatarusanu twice thwarted Napoli in the 58th minute, parrying Jose Callejon's powerful drive after the Spaniard broke clear on the right and then brilliantly stopping Higuain's follow-up. The Romanian also foiled Lorenzo Insigne in stoppage time, just after Higuain had a goal disallowed for offside.—Reuters

Chris Froome of Britain. PHOTO: REUTERS



Froome prepared to help Thomas win gold in Rio

LONDON — Chris Froome says he would work for British team mate Geraint Thomas at this year's Olympic Games if his own gold medal ambitions falter in Rio.

Froome is targeting a third Tour de France before setting his sights on an unprecedented two Olympic golds on the twisty streets of Rio de Janeiro in the road race and time trial — a formidable undertaking even for a rider of his all-round ability.

Welshman Thomas, 29, has started the season in style by retaining the Tour of the Algarve title and will be among the leading contenders for the road race in Rio where they will ride in British colours rather than those of Team Sky.

Thomas usually works tirelessly as one of Froome's most trusted support riders, as he did so impressively at last year's Tour de France, but the roles could be reversed in August.

"If G is flying and I'm struggling, then definitely (I'd support him), absolutely," Froome, 30, said at Team Sky's training camp in Mallorca this year.

"I'd be happy playing a role if it meant we could have an Olympic champion."

Froome, who won a bronze medal in the London 2012 time trial under the flag of his native Kenya, said his close bond with Thomas would help when the pressure builds up during an Olympic road race and personal ambition rises to the surface.

"The key to all of this is communication. Especially with G. We've been riding together now for coming up to 10 years," he said. "At the Olympics it will be a very honest, open discussion between us out on the road. 'Who's feeling good? Can we get the job done today? Will you pull? Will you not pull? It's that team dynamic.'"—Reuters

Infantino begins search for non-European chief exec

MIAMI — The victory celebration over, new FIFA president Gianni Infantino's first major decision in charge of the troubled world football organisation will be to appoint a secretary general, effectively a chief executive, to run day-to-day operations.

Since FIFA was founded in 1904, it has had 10 secretaries general, all from Europe, the game's strongest continent.

At an event in London during his campaign for Friday's presidential election, Infantino said: "I am convinced the general secretary of FIFA should not be a European. Why not an African?"

A source close to Infantino said on Monday that this "did not necessarily mean that an African would be chosen, more than he had not ruled out an African".

That said, there would be a strong African contender in the shape of the Moroccan Hicham El Amrani.

The Paris-educated 36-year-old became general secretary of the African confederation (CAF) on an interim basis in 2010 and was confirmed in the role in September 2011.

He had previously been deputy general secretary at CAF and worked for the Asian Football Confederation in competitions marketing. He graduated in 2004 from the FIFA Masters course, which was created to train future football administrators from around the world.

El Amrani won the Young Leader of the Year award in 2015 from the 'Leaders in Sports' organisation partly in recognition of the way he handled the switch of the African Nations Cup to Equatorial Guinea after Morocco withdrew two months before the tournament because of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

"He is very, very capable," said Swiss-based sports business consultant Joao Frigerio, who knows El Amrani from the FIFA Masters alumni association. "There is no doubt in my mind that he can be a great general secretary."

El Amrani could not immediately be reached for comment.

Infantino said on Sunday that he would not rush into a decision about the secretary general, whose role takes on added importance in FIFA's new, reformed structure.

Although some of FIFA's reform documents refer to a "CEO", a source within FIFA indicated that for "tradition reasons" the title of secretary general is likely to continue to be used. Infantino might also look to North America, whose administrators played a key role in swinging votes to the Swiss at Friday's FIFA Congress in Zurich.

US Soccer president Sunil Gulati is an economics professor at Columbia University and well connected politically in the United States.



New FIFA President Gianni Infantino leaves the pitch after a friendly football match at FIFA headquarters in Zurich, Switzerland, on 29 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

This could be attractive to FIFA as it tries to improve relations with the US Department of Justice, which has charged dozens of football officials in the Americas with corruption, and is investigating allegations of bribery and corruption at FIFA itself.

A tweet from sports marketing executive Ricardo Fort suggesting Gulati would be a good choice sparked speculation in Zurich over the weekend.

Fort was until recently a senior vice-president for sponsorship marketing with Visa Inc, one of FIFA's global sponsors. Fort said his tweet reflected only his personal view, and Gulati

was also not reachable for comment.

Although there is no obvious candidate for the role from Asian football, an Asian candidate might also appeal to Infantino as he seeks to build bridges with other confederations, especially after he beat Asian confederation president Sheikh Salman Bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa to the FIFA presidency.

The earliest Infantino could present a nomination would be an Executive Committee meeting in Zurich on March 17, but he may decide to wait until closer to May's FIFA Congress in Mexico City.—Reuters