

Government to make efforts to undertake development measures in Chin State

NAY PYI TAW, 20 Feb—*The following is an unofficial translation of the speech delivered by President Agga Maha Thayay Sithu, Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma U Thein Sein on the occasion of the 67th Anniversary of Chin National Day.*

It is my great honour and privilege to send the message to the national people of Chin State on the 67th anniversary of Chin National Day on 20 February.

A shift from chieftain rule to democratic rule was approved at the People's Referendum held in Falam, Chin State, on 20 February, 1948, soon after independence. On 9 October 1950, the Chin Affairs Council at its seventh conference held in Yangon decided to honour 20 February as Chin National Day by common consent. The day has been celebrated for 67 years since 1948.

Chin State is a topographically distinct region, endowed with the West mountain ranges stretching from north to south, the Kalatan River flowing to the Bay of Bengal, Mount Natma, which is home to rare species of

flora and fauna, the Kennedy plateau well-known during the Second World War, a picturesque lake called Reed, Manipura and Bwenu rivers, the Bontala Waterfalls, and a great deposit of overground and underground natural resources.

The government has opened schools and other educational institutions and employed teachers for human resources to multiply, as well as building health facilities and sending medical staff to provide health care services.

In addition, the government is doing its best to connect every part of the region to the national electricity grid, as desired by all residents in Chin State. Regarding the improvement of transportation infrastructure, construction and extension of internal roads and highways linking the region with the mainland are underway,

alongside the developing of the Kalatan River basin and the construction of a harbour in Palatwa to ensure a navigational channel to other countries. These projects will provide a solid foundation for the promising socio-economic status of the national people in Chin State.

Despite difficult accessibility and geographical challenges, the government will make relentless efforts to undertake development measures, which is why the local people should join with the government and the local government.

The participation and contribution of all national races are the essence of building Myanmar as a modern, developed democracy. With this end in view, all the national people in Chin State are required to play their part in the process.

Special refresher course for high-ranking officers concludes



President U Thein Sein poses for documentary photo with trainees and trainers at the graduation ceremony of special refresher course for high-ranking officers.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Feb—President U Thein Sein attended the graduation ceremony of a special refresher course for

high-ranking officers, organized at his palace here on Thursday, officials said.

Speaking at the ceremony, Union Minister at

the President Office U Tin Naing Thein urged trainee officers to play their leading role of key drivers in the implementation of the

visions, strategies and tactics of the country in accordance with the law.

“The course is designed to hone manage-

ment skills in line with democratic norms,” he said. The government has set its hope on the creation of a democracy practising

the multiparty democratic system, as part of satisfying the desires of the people, he stated.

(See page 3)

India launches ‘Pharma and Healthcare Expo’ in Yangon

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 19 Feb—Organized by the Myanmar India Business Chamber (MIBC) and the Pharmaceutical Export Promotion Council of India (Pharmexcil), India Pharma and Healthcare Expo-BSM was launched on Thursday in Yangon with the aim of creating more business links between Myanmar and India.

The third exhibition, from 19 to 21 February, is

also aimed at sharing the latest trends in the medical and pharmaceutical fields as well as exchanging valuable information and innovative ideas among people in the pharmaceutical industry, Dr P.V. Appaji, director general of Pharmexcil, said.

In addition to the exhibition of products, buyer-seller meetings, technical seminars, corporate

(See page 2)

Hot air balloons to fill skies over new destinations in Myanmar

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 19 Feb — With the sharp rise in tourist arrivals, which crossed the 3 million mark last year, Myanmar's Ministry of Hotels and Tourism is planning to boost the country's hot air balloon ride business.

It will conduct a feasibility study for the expansion of hot air balloon flights in the areas of Inlay, Mandalay, Sagaing and Monywa that are major tourist attraction sites in the country, the ministry said on Tuesday.

Standing second in the list of the most beautiful

hot air balloon rides in the world, Bagan in Myanmar offers one of life's great

thrills to visitors to explore the country by a hot-air balloon.

With the country's booming tourism sector,

(See page 3)



Golden Express Tours launched a hot air balloon operation named Golden Eagle Ballooning in Myanmar's ancient city Bagan last November.

PHOTO CREDIT TO MYMAGICALMYANMAR.COM

Pyithu Hluttaw

Pyithu Hluttaw goes on for 19th day

**Deputy Minister
Brig-Gen Kyaw Kyaw
Tun.**—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Feb — The Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) continued its 19th day session on Thursday, with questions and answers regarding farming disputes and standards and measures for sale of alcohol and a submission of motion.

In his answer to the question on promulgation of anti-bullying laws, rules and regulations for farmers who won the farming dis-



**U Myint Soe
of Pyawbwe
Constituency.**—MNA

pute cases, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Kyaw Kyaw Tun said that new legislation is not needed as existing farmland law and rules and regulations, the penal code and general and specials laws have provided adequate protection for farmers to do their businesses peacefully.

The deputy minister also responded to a question on matters related to

sale of alcohol that licenses have been issued in accord with a chain of approvals by local authorities; that regulators from the Ministry of Home Affairs or the Ministry of Health have released recommendations to ensure safe alcohol sale; and that actions are being taken against production and distribution of unqualified alcohol and illegal alcohol sellers in accord with the law. During the today's session, U Myint Soe of Pyawbwe Constituency submitted a proposal urging the Union government to give exemption to those who resides on both sides of the highway from lawsuits against them as the new Highway Law requires houses to be built 230 feet apart from the highway, whereas the previous law only requires 100 feet.

MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw

Ministers' Office to be opened as museum for public observation



**Deputy Minister Daw
Win Maw Tun.**
MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Feb — At the 19th day session of Amyotha Hluttaw on Thursday, Dr Myat Nyana Soe of Yangon Region Constituency No 4 asked whether there is a plan to build social security housings under the 2012 Social Security Law. Deputy Minister for Labour, Em-



**Dr Myat Nyana Soe
of Yangon Region
Constituency No 4.**—MNA

ployment and Social Security Daw Win Maw Tun replied that depending on economic development of the State and financial situation, the housing project will be submitted to the union government in coming fiscal years. Those workers wishing to buy the housing must pay the whole cost or 25 percent of their income to the project monthly during 180 months period under the 1954 Social Security Act and 2012 Social Security Law.

U Saw Maw Tun of Bago Region Constituency No 1 asked whether there is a plan to arrange public observation of historic parliament building in the compound of Secretariat in Yangon. Deputy Minister for Construction U



**Deputy Minister
U Soe Tint.**
MNA

Soe Tint replied that Myanmar Investment Commission invited tender for renovation of the Ministers' Office (Secretariat) in Botahtaung Township, Yangon, and allowed Anawmar Fine Arts Co Ltd to renovate the building. The company will open historic rooms where martyrs were assassinated, office of General Aung San and parliament building for public observation.

U Myo Myint of Mandalay Region Constituency No 6 submitted a proposal calling for successful implementation of projects in development of Myanmar's future electric power sector. Three MP seconded the motion, and Hluttaw approved the proposal.

MNA

MRTV invites logo designs for Radio Song Festival 2015

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Feb — Myanmar Radio and Television cooperates with Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union will host the Radio Song Festival 2015 in May 2015.

Designers may take part in the logo contest, and K500,000 will be awarded to a winner for the best logo in second week

of May 2015.

The entries are to be sent to Staff Officer (Editor) Daw Soe Yin Pyone of MRTV on Pyay Road, Yangon, Tel: 01-527122, Ext: 115; 09-448542595, email-irmrtv@gmail.com, from 20 February to 10 March. Winner will be announced on 15 March.

Each contestant or

in group may submit two entries in maximum. The logo must be own creation and it has not been used before. Colour must be based on purple. Contestant must send an application on name, occupation, address and licence sized photo, hard copy and soft copy of the logo.

For further informa-

tion, may dial 067-79374 and 09-5188504 of MRTV (Nat Pyi Taw-Tatkon), email-irmrtv@gmail.com.

Those wishing to do main sponsor and co-sponsors may contact MRTV, Nay Pyi Taw-Tatkon, Tel: 067-79212, 067-79374, fax: 067-79205 and email-irmrtv@gmail.com.—MNA

India launches 'Pharma ...

(from page 1)

presentations and health-related workshops are scheduled to be held as highlights of the event.

India is now among the top five pharmaceutical emerging markets of the world. It ranks fourth in terms of total pharma market share in the Asia Pacific. The country accounts for 10 per cent of global production and 2 per cent of world pharmaceuticals markets.

India produces 40 to 70 per cent of the WHO demand for DPT and BCG, and 90 per cent of measles vaccines. Approximately 70 per cent of the patients in developing countries receive Indian medicines through NGOs, the organizer said.

"The Myanmar phar-

maceutical market is currently estimated over \$700 million, in which medicines from India have a market share of more than 45 per

cent," said Dr Win Si Thu, chairman of the Myanmar Pharmaceutical and Medical Equipment Entrepreneurs Association.

He went on to say that although there are six phar-

maceutical factories in the country, most pharmaceutical requirements are filled by imports from overseas, especially from India, Thailand and China.

GNLM



Appointment of Ambassador agreed on

NAY PYI TAW, 20 Feb — The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of H.E. Mr. Javier Andres BECKER-MARSHALL as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Chile to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Mr. Javier Andres BECKER-MARSHALL joined the Chilean Foreign Ministry in 1979 and has served in various positions at the Chilean Embassies and Missions in Kenya, Austria, Colombia, Norway, the United States and Switzerland. From 2008 to 2011, he served as Minister Counsellor/Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Chile in Canada. Since 2011 to date, he has been serving as Chilean Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand.

H.E. Mr. Javier Andres BECKER-MARSHALL will serve as concurrent Ambassador of the Republic of Chile to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar with residence in Bangkok.

MNA

Products from Indian pharmaceutical industry are being displayed at the 3rd India Pharma and Healthcare Expo in Yangon.

PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN

NATIONAL

Special refresher course for high-ranking officers...

(from page 1)

As part of its mission, the government will con-

tinue trying to build lasting peace, get the country out of the category of least

developed countries, and help it reach the status of a middle-income country, he quoted the president as saying.

He called on gradu-

ating officers to hold reform-minded attitude and determination in making their respective ministries more effective so as to speed up the country's

third wave of reform.

President U Thein Sein presented certificates to three representatives on behalf of trainee officers.

A total of 66 trainees

at the rank of director-general and managing director attended the course, which lasted from 19 January to 19 February.

MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker meets Chancellor of Torrens University Australia, French delegates

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Feb—Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann Thursday met Dr Michael Mann, Chancellor of Tor-

rens University Australia at the Hluttaw building here this morning.

In the evening, Thura U Shwe Mann also met a French delegation led

by Mrs. Michèle Bonneton, President of the France-Myanmar Friendship Group, the National Assembly of France, at the same venue.—GNLM



Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann holds talks with Dr Michael Mann, Chancellor of Torrens University Australia.—MNA

Hot air balloons to fill skies over new destinations...

(from page 1)

ballooning over Bagan, which started in 1999, has become popular amongst globetrotters. Three companies, Balloons Over Bagan, Myanmar Ballooning Co., Ltd and Golden Express Tours Co., Ltd, are now operating balloon services in Bagan with a total 21 balloons, according to the ministry.

Balloon rides in Bagan are available twice a day, in the morning and evening. A 45-minute hot air balloon flight above Bagan's pagoda-studded landscape is priced in the range of \$250 to \$380 per person.

"The price is reasonable here. The prices for riding a hot-air balloon were just a bit cheaper here than other places, where it is priced at at least \$400 for a flight," U Tint Naung, managing director of Golden Express Tours, told The Global New Light of Myanmar on Thursday. "Bagan is the best place to ensure the safe operation of a hot-air balloon."

Although tourists

from Europe and the US are major customers for balloon rides in Bagan, those from Japan, South Korea and China have gradually become balloon-ride passengers as well.

Despite being suspended from April to September each year, business for hot-air ballooning is particularly brisk during Christmas and Chinese Lunar New Year, added U Tint Naung who operates a balloon flight business with three Swiss pilots, one Spanish pilot and 40 ground crew. Balloon-ride passengers reached 17,802 in 2014, up from 11,362 in 2013 and revenues from the business jumped to \$4.23 million in 2014 from \$3.10 million in 2013, the ministry said. With significant progress in tourism since 2012, Myanmar's tourism boom is on track along with the hot air balloon business growth, expecting to welcome more hordes of travelers from around the world, possibly 7.5 million by 2020.

GNLM

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham receives French guests

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Feb—Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham Thursday met a French delegation led by Mrs Michèle Bonneton, President of France-Myanmar Friendship Group, the National Assembly of France, at the Presidential Palace here to discuss progress of Myanmar's reforms.

They also discussed education, national reconciliation and investment opportunities in Myanmar.

Also present at the call were Deputy Ministers U Thant Kyaw and Dr Zaw Min Aung and officials. Mrs Michèle Bonneton was accompanied by the French Ambassador to Myanmar.—MNA



Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham cordially greets Mrs Michèle Bonneton, President of France-Myanmar Friendship Group, the National Assembly of France.—MNA

Government troops take offensive to secure main routes to Laukkai

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Feb—Government troops securing Laukkai were engaged in fighting with Kokang renegade groups, who had cut off major routes in an attempt to take control of the town, officials said.

The army columns were in hot pursuit of Kokang insurgents into retreat, following engagements in the vicinity of the Chinshwehaw-Laukkai route and the Kongyan-Laukkai route on Thursday morning.

Three clashes broke out in Laukkai on Wednesday night till Thursday morning, leaving one army member dead and seven wounded. The government troops captured two bodies, seven small arms and ammunition from the Kokang insurgents.

Myawady

A map shows clashes between Tatmadaw and Kokang insurgents in Laukkai region.

MYAWADY



Mohnyin Township to get upgraded roads in 2015

MOHNYIN, 19 Feb — Upon completion of motor roads this year, local people will enjoy fruits of smooth transport in Mohnyin Township, Kachin State.

The union government and Kachin State government allotted funds for placing asphalt on a section of Shwebo-Myitkyina Road passing Mohnyin, a 20-mile-long Mohnyin-Nanma-Hopin asphalt road in parallel with the railroad, a 13-mile-long Mohnyin-Nanmun earthen road, a 40-mile-long Hopin-Nanmun-Lonton-Nyaungbin asphalt road and an eight-mile-long Mohnyin detour.



“We thank the government for upgrading the roads. But, we are

worried about damages of the roads within one year. Several repairing of roads

causes waste of the government’s fund,” said a local.—GNLM-001

IPRD staff give mobile library service to rural people

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Feb — Information and public Relations Department gives services of mobile library to the rural people.

On 18 February, Daw Phyu Thwe Tun of Dekkhina District IPRD and staff made a trip to Zibyukon Village in Dekkhinathiri Township for lending

books and publications to the rural people.

The mobile library which brought over 300 books and periodicals lent 68 books to the people. One week after, the staff will change new books to the people.

*Tun Tun Win
(Pyinmana)*



Farmers regain over 1,900 acres of confiscated farmlands in Taungtha Tsp



TAUNGTHA, 19 Feb — A ceremony to hand over confiscated farmlands to original owners was held at the hall of Taungtha Township General Administration Department in Mandalay Region on 16 February, with an address by Chairman of District Land Utilization Management Committee U Myint Thin Aung.

Chairman of the township committee U Aung Kyaw Nyunt explained the purpose of giving back the

confiscated farmlands to the owners and handed over documents related to 1,938 acres of land to 22 farmers from Kywezin Village.

It was reported that farming rights certificates will be issued to the farmers as soon as possible.

The ceremony was attended by members of Township Development Supporting Committee and officials.

*Zaw Min Naing
(Myingyan)*

Mandalay General Hospital to open nine-storey building

MANDALAY, 19 Feb — A nine-storey medical ward built in the compound of Mandalay General Hospital will be opened in the last week of February.

Under the arrangements of Mandalay Region Government, wellwishers donated over K3 billion for construction of a 192 feet long, 64 feet wide and

88 feet high medical ward. Construction started on 14 February January 2013 and it was completed in January 2015. As a result, Mandalay General Hospital will give more health care services to the people from Upper Myanmar, medical superintendent Dr U Win told media.

“We admit patients as

of first week of February as the construction tasks were completed. The opening ceremony will be held in the near future. Wellwishers across the nation donated cash to the fund for construction of 12 medical departments of 38 from the hospital. So, the new medical ward was named “Mann Taung Yeik”,” he said.

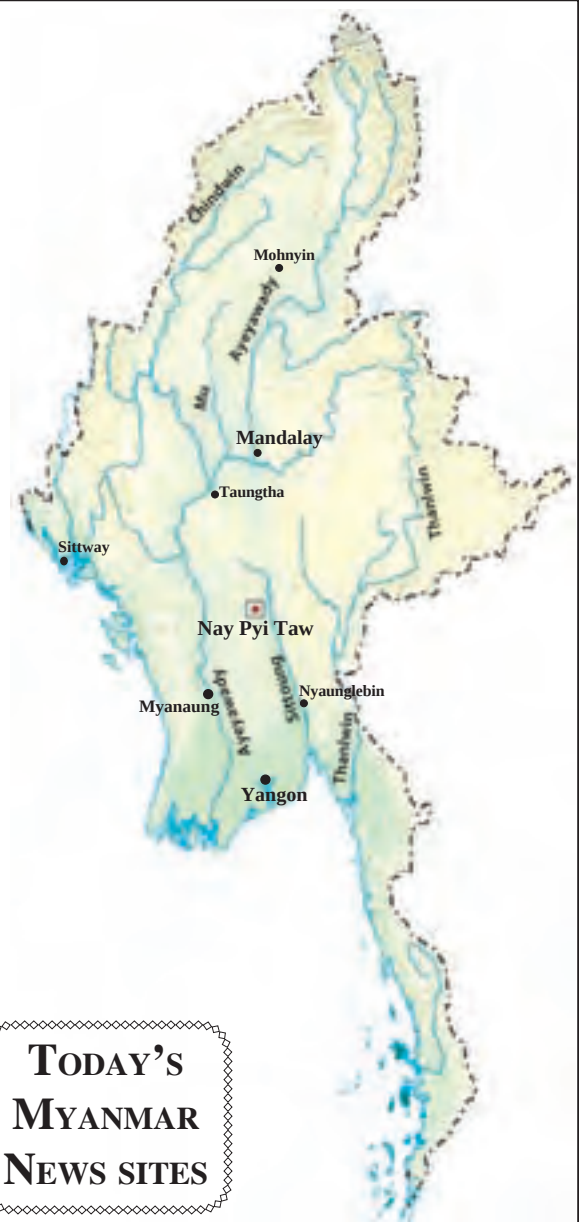
The new building comprises patient awards, intensive care units, medical departments and practical hall of medical students.

Mandalay General Hospital is a 1000-bed hospital. As the nine-storey building has been completed, the authorities of the hospital submitted a proposal to the government to be able to upgrade the hospital to a 1500-bed general hospital.

Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)



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LOCAL NEWS

People share merits for military servicemen who killed in action in N-E Command



NAY PYI TAW, 19 Feb — A ceremony to share merits gained for donations in memory of military servicemen, who killed in action for the country and the people in the battles in the area of North-East Command, northern Shan State, was held at the cave of Uppatasanti Pagoda in

Nay Pyi Taw at 7 am on Thursday.

Members of the Sangha led by State Ovadaçariya Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Bhaddanta Kavisara of Maha Withutayama Zaygon Monastery in Pinyinmana were in attendance.

U Thwin Sit Man

Aung and officials of Unity and Peace Philanthropic Group offered provisions to Buddhist monks and shared merits gained for donations.

People holding Eugenia sprigs went round the pagoda and prayed for ensuring peace and tranquility in Kokang region. They dispersed Metta at

the northwest corner on the platform.

The ceremony was also attended by members of the Sangha, nuns, U Thwin Sit Man Aung and members of the group, members of social organizations and local people totalling about 500.

Tun Tun Win (Pinyinmana)

Medical graduates join interviews for vacancies in Mandalay Region

MANDALAY, 19 Feb — Mandalay Region government plans to recruit assistant surgeons and dentists in vacancies of health care centres in the region.

Mandalay Region government, Union Civil Services Board and Health Department under the Ministry of Health jointly conducted the interviews with medical graduates at the office of Mandalay Region Health Department at the corner of 70th and 27th streets in Chanayethazan

Township on 14 February.

The graduates joined the interviews for 56 assistant surgeon posts and six dentist posts.

The winners in the interviews must attend the officer course No 16 at Central Institute of Civil Service (Upper Myanmar) in PyinOoLwin Township from 12 May to 13 August 2015. Upon completion, they will be assigned duties to the respective posts.

Maung Pyi Thu (Mandalay)



Candidates waiting for interviews of appointments for assistant surgeons and dentists.

Nyaunglebin's Karuna blood donors association honours its members

NYAUNGLEBIN, 19 Feb — Karuna blood donors association in Nyaunglebin held a ceremony to honour blood donors for third time at Chinese temple on Bogyoke Street in Nyaunglebin Township, Bago Region, on 17 February.

Head of Township Health Department Dr Khin Zaw explained cooperation between Karuna blood donors association and township Health Department and Chairman of Township Writers Association Dr Myint Than (Nyaunglebin), emergence of blood donors day and advantages of blood donors.

Officials accepted cash donations from wellwishers and presented certificates of honour to them.

The association donated 372 bottles of blood from January to December 2014. Those who need blood may contact Aryuthukha Hospital (Jivitadana Sangha Hospital), Nyaunglebin, Tel: 052-50085 and Dr Myint Thein, Bogyoke Street, 052-50092.

Nay Lin (Nyaunglebin)

Mandalarians donate cash and kind for military servicemen, families, service personnel in Laukkai

MANDALAY, 19 Feb — Cash and kind donations were made for military servicemen discharging defence duty in Laukkai of Kokang Self-Administered Zone, their families and service personnel at the office of Mandalay Region Government in Mandalay on 18 February, attended by Mandalay Region Chief

Minister U Ye Myint and Speaker of the region Hluttaw U Win Maung.

Businessmen from Mandalay Region and 34 members of various associations donated K180.54 million and foodstuffs to officials.

Officials accepted donations and returned certificates of honour to the

wellwishers.

The chief minister, the commander of Central Command and officials viewed loading of bags of rice, bottles of purified drinking water, clothes, traditional snacks and goods, instant noodle packets, cheroots, cigarette, foodstuff and medicines on board vehicles.

Donated cash were spent on purchase of necessary foods for military servicemen, families and government service personnel in Laukkai region in Kokang Self-Administered Zone. Yesterday, 5,040 packages of instant noodles were sent to Laukkai.

The Mandalay Re-

gion minister for transport and social organizations arrange transport of the people coming back from Kokang Self-Administered Zone for home. Up to 18 February, 4,459 people were transported to their homes with the use of 179 vehicles.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)



Australian PM plays down bullying allegations in spat with Indonesia



Australia's Prime Minister Tony Abbott

SYDNEY, 19 Feb — Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott attempted on Thursday to play down allegations of bullying Indonesia as a diplomatic rift deepens between the uneasy neighbours over Jakarta's planned executions of two Australian drug smugglers. Australia has been pursuing an eleventh-hour campaign to save Myuran Sukumaran, 33, and Andrew Chan, 31, convicted in 2005 as the ringleaders of the "Bali Nine" plot to smuggle heroin out of Indonesia. Abbott drew strong criticism from Jakarta on Wednesday for linking his pleas for clemency for the pair to Australia's aid to Indonesia after the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.

In a harsh rebuke, Indonesian Foreign ministry spokesman Armanatha Nasir warned that "threats are not part of diplomatic language and no one responds well to threats".

Abbott, under pressure after a recent internal party challenge, said on Thursday he was referring to "the ob-

vious strength of the relationship" between the two countries.

"I was pointing out the depth of the friendship between Australia and Indonesia and the fact that Australia has been there for Indonesia when Indonesia has been in difficulty," Abbott told reporters in Tasmania state.

Asked if his earlier comments were intended as a threat, Abbott said they were intended as a reminder of that friendship.

On Wednesday, Abbott said Australia would feel "grievously let down" if the executions proceeded despite the roughly A\$1 billion in assistance it gave after the 2004 disaster, which killed hundreds of thousands of people in Indonesia's Aceh province. Indonesia postponed on Tuesday the transfer of Sukumaran and Chan, and three other death-row inmates, to another prison for execution because of what authorities said were medical concerns and families' requests for more time with the prisoners. —Reuters

Bangladesh's war crimes tribunal issues death warrant for opposition leader

DHAKA, 19 Feb — Bangladesh's war crimes tribunal has issued a warrant of execution for Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami party leader Muhammad Kamaruzzaman condemned to death for crimes against humanity during the country's Liberation War. The International Crimes Tribunal (ICT)-2 issued the warrant on Thursday afternoon after receiving the full text of the Supreme Court (SC) verdict that upheld the death penalty of Muhammad Kamaruzzaman, assistant secretary general of Bangladesh Jamaat, for his crimes against humanity in 1971.

The apex court on

Wednesday released the full verdict on Kamaruzzaman's appeal after all the four judges, who had delivered the verdict on 3 November last year by a majority decision, signed the 577-page judgment.

Kamaruzzaman will have 15 days to file a review petition with the Supreme Court to know the final say on its verdict that upheld his death penalty for war crimes, Attorney General Mahbubey Alam told journalists on Wednesday. Kamaruzzaman was indicted in June 2012 with seven charges of crimes against humanity including looting, mass killings, arson, rape and forcefully convert-

ing people into Muslims during the war.

The ICT-2 found the Jamaat leader guilty of collaborating with Pakistani forces and committing war crimes including mass killings. Bangladesh on 12 December, 2013 executed Jamaat leader Abdul Quader Molla, convicted of war crimes.

The death sentence of the war crimes accused Molla, assistant secretary general of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami Party, was executed hours after the Appellate Division dismissed his plea to review the SC verdict that confirmed the capital punishment on 17 September in 2013. —Xinhua

Thailand's ex-premier Yingluck indicted over rice-pledging scheme

BANGKOK, 19 Feb — Thai public prosecutors on Thursday indicted former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra over a controversial rice-pledging scheme that her government had introduced.

The move by the Office of the Attorney-General, which could see Yingluck jailed for a maximum of 10 years if she is found guilty of negligence, comes after the junta-installed parliament voted on 23 January to impeach her — even though she had already been unseated as premier by a Constitutional Court ruling in May last year — while banning her from politics for five years. Yingluck has denied

mismanaging the rice policy, under which farmers could pledge their rice crops in return for payment.

Critics say the plan was riddled with corruption and was offering farmers payments in excess of international market prices for rice, which caused the government to run up huge bills.

They say the Yingluck government neglected taking action despite acknowledging the losses and allowed the rice-subsidy programme to continue, causing Thailand's financial situation to deteriorate.

There has been speculation that moves against Yingluck could force her

Photo taken on 9 Jan, 2015, shows former Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra. Yingluck was indicted on 19 Feb, 2015 over a controversial rice-pledging scheme introduced by her government. Yingluck could be jailed for up to 10 years if she is found guilty.

KYODO NEWS

to go into exile abroad as did her brother, former Prime Minister Thaksin

Shinawatra, who was ousted by a military coup in 2006. —Kyodo News



Visitors walk past a passage of red lanterns during the annual temple fair at Badachu Park in Beijing, capital of China, on 19 Feb, 2015. The temple fair kicked off on Thursday, the first day of the Chinese Lunar New Year. — XINHUA

Fewer Australians booking Bali holidays: tourist operators

CANBERRA, 19 Feb — Australians are shying away from Indonesia's Bali as their holiday destination of choice, due to the "boycott Bali" campaign gaining momentum on social media.

Tourist operators and travel agencies said on Thursday that the number of Australians booking Bali holidays had already dropped off noticeably in the wake of the Indonesian government's decision to proceed with the execution of two Australians charged with drug-smuggling offenses. Andrew Chan and Myuran Sukumaran are on death row in Bali for their role, with seven other peo-

ple, in a drug-smuggling operation that occurred in 2005. A spokeswoman for travel aggregator, Cheapflights, told News Ltd on Thursday that the number of searches for Bali holidays had already drastically reduced after Foreign Minister Julie Bishop condemned Indonesian officials for not granting clemency to Chan and Sukumaran. Bishop said last week Australian travellers would "register their deep disapproval (of the executions) including by making decisions about where they wished to holiday".

The social media campaign has also condemned low-cost airline Jetstar for

promoting cheap fares to Bali, and Twitter users have asked others to boycott the airline. Senior lecturer in internet studies at Perth's Curtin University, Tama Leaver, told News.com.au that the strong and sudden nature of the campaign would certainly affect short-term holiday numbers for the Indonesian island, but whether it will last rests on the executions going ahead. "The social media backlash certainly has the ability to be in people's faces when they're thinking about where they go next, particularly when you consider how many travel bookings are made online," he said. —Xinhua

WORLD

Iran, US to hold talks in Geneva to narrow nuclear gaps — IRNA



US Secretary of State John Kerry shakes hands with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif before a meeting in Geneva on 24 Jan, 2015

REUTERS

ANKARA, 19 Feb — Iran and US negotiators will hold talks over Tehran's disputed nuclear programme in Geneva on Friday to narrow remaining gaps aimed at ending a 12-year standoff with six major powers, Iran's state news agency IRNA reported on Thursday.

"The talks between Iran and U.S. deputy foreign ministers will be on Friday and Saturday. Iran's Foreign Minister (Mohammad Javad Zarif) and (US Secretary of State) John Kerry will join the negotiators on Sunday and Monday," said Iranian senior nuclear negotiator Abbas Araqchi.

Negotiators from Iran

and six major powers failed to meet a self-imposed deadline in November to clinch an agreement that would curb Iran's nuclear programme in exchange for relief from economic sanctions.

The State Department said on Wednesday that US negotiator Wendy Sherman would lead the US delegation in Geneva, saying the bilateral consultations were taking place in the context of the broader negotiations with Iran.

The United States and its allies fear that Iran's nuclear programme could be used to develop a nuclear bomb. Iran denies having any nuclear weapons ambitions.—Reuters

DPRK says to launch anti-graft campaign within ruling party

PYONGYANG, 19 Feb — The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) said it will roll out an anti-graft campaign within the ruling Workers' Party of Korea (WPK), the state media reported on Thursday.

A resolution adopted at an enlarged meeting of the political bureau of the central committee of the WPK on Wednesday underscored the need to stick to and carry out the behests of late leader Kim Jong Il.

The resolution also called for efforts to be channeled into implementation to "thoroughly establish the monolithic leadership system of Kim Jong Un," according to the official KCNA news agency.

"The resolution stressed the need to wage

an all-party intensive campaign against abuse of power, bureaucratism, irregularities and corruption," the KCNA said.

It also asked the officials to "devote their blood and sweat to solving knotty problems in people's living and difficult problems of people." The DPRK's top leader Kim Jong Un made a concluding speech at the meeting, in which he emphasized that "President Kim Il Sung's and Kim Jong Il's behests concerning the problems of food and clothing essential should be carried out before any other behests."

Kim also urged officials to work and live "simple-mindedly, uprightly and honestly with conscience."—Xinhua

Japan to launch panel on war anniversary statement next week

TOKYO, 19 Feb — A panel of experts on a war anniversary statement to be issued this summer by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will hold its first meeting next week, government sources said on Thursday.

After listening to panel members' discussions, Abe is expected to decide what to say in the statement on the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II — a topic likely to draw close attention especially from neighbouring countries.

The government is arranging to name Japan Post Holdings Co President Taizo Nishimuro, 79, as head of the panel and Shinichi Kitaoka, 66, president of the International University of Japan, as

acting chief.

Abe is expected to attend the first meeting.

The government is in the final stages of the selection process for panel members, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said at a Press conference.

"We will have people from a wide range of fields, including scholars with profound expertise in history and politics as well as those from the fourth estate and businesses," Suga said. "We expect them to discuss the way the world is shaped in the 21st century and Japan's role as much as they can."

Nishimuro also serves as the Japanese co-chair of the New Japan-China Friendship Committee for

the 21st Century, which advises government leaders of the two countries on ways to promote bilateral relations.

Born in 1935, Nishimuro, a former president of Toshiba Corp., is deemed "qualified" in discussing the path Japan has taken over the 70 years since the war ended, according to a source close to the prime minister.

Asian countries as well as the United States are closely watching whether the new discourse will stick to a statement issued 20 years ago by then Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama, who offered apologies for Japan's wartime aggression in Asia.

Kyodo News



Photo taken on 24 Jan, 2014, shows Taizo Nishimuro, president and CEO of Japan Post Holdings Co. The Japanese government is arranging to name Nishimuro as head of a panel of experts on a war anniversary statement to be issued in summer 2015 by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, a source familiar with the matter said on 18 Feb, 2015.

KYODO NEWS

Japan officials pitch new bullet train service at NY tourism event



Visitors to the Japan Week event at New York's Grand Central Station take souvenir photos on 18 Feb, 2015, with a model of the latest bullet train to be used for the country's newest shinkansen train service linking Tokyo with the popular destination of Kanazawa beginning in the following month.

KYODO NEWS

Cuban FM meets US lawmakers on normalization of ties

HAVANA, 19 Feb — Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez on Wednesday met with Nancy Pelosi, Democratic leader of the US House of Representatives, and other legislators visiting the island as part of bilateral efforts to normalize ties.

According to Cuba's Foreign Ministry, the two sides "discussed issues related to the current context of ties between the two countries, including restoring diplomatic relations, opening embassies and the debate in Congress on lifting the blockade against Cuba."

Cuba usually refers to the US-led trade embargo as a "blockade," arguing its reach goes beyond the United States to block other countries from trading with Cuba.

Josefina Vidal, director general for US affairs at Cuba's Foreign Ministry was also present at the meeting.

Vidal headed the Cu-

ban delegation to the first round of talks held in January and will again head the island's representatives to the second round, scheduled for 27 February in Washington.

A statement released on Tuesday by Pelosi's office said the delegation would "work to advance the relationship between the United States and Cuba," based on many ef-

forts of other colleagues in Congress, "especially in the areas of agriculture and trade."

The US lawmakers are set to meet with senior Cuban government officials, local leaders and Cardinal Jaime Ortega.

The lawmakers met with members of the US Interests Section in Havana upon arrival on Tuesday.

This is the second US

congressional delegation to the island in less than a week. On Saturday, three Democratic senators visited Cuba before the arrival of Pelosi and her commission.

Senators Claire McCaskill, from Missouri, Amy Klobuchar (Minnesota) and Mark Warner (Virginia), expressed their support for lifting the trade embargo, and highlighted business opportunities offered by Cuba, especially in agriculture and tourism.

Washington severed ties with Cuba in January 1961, and imposed punitive economic sanctions in an effort to topple the revolutionary government of former Cuban leader Fidel Castro, who retired in 2006 for health reasons.

In a historic joint announcement on 17 December, his younger brother and successor Raul Castro and US President Barack Obama said they had agreed to restore ties.

Xinhua



Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez (R) meets with the Minority Democratic Leader of US House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi at the headquarters of Cuban Foreign Ministry in Havana, capital of Cuba, on 18 Feb, 2015.—XINHUA

PERSPECTIVES

Friday, 20 February, 2015

Unity and so-called unity

By Myint Win Thein

IN politics, unity is the most common word of all. Every politician or political group appeals for it and works for it. However, some societies succeed in building unity while others collapse in the middle of their appeals for unity.

Unity means the state of being in agreement and working together. For every group of a society to agree with one another and to work together, it is important to have a common goal

since different goals distract the societal groups from unity.

The common goal does not mean the goal of the most powerful groups of the society or the majority of groups in the society. It must be a goal set up through consensus-building among every group of the society and it must reflect the interests of all the societal groups.

Otherwise, the common goal will just be a so-called common goal which may have been set up through the pressure of the most powerful groups of the society. As a result, some societal groups will not agree with it and will not work together for it when they are strong enough to counter the pressure.

The main cause of the collapse of unity in a society is the so-called unity to work towards the

so-called common goal. Societies collapse due to the so-called unity that only reflects the interests of the most powerful groups. Such societies always have to build unity repeatedly along their histories and when the most powerful is not strong enough to be the most powerful, the societies collapse into pieces in a chaotic manner.

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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.

Japan, Mekong states eye new development strategy beyond 2015

By Ko Hirano

Tokyo, 19 Feb—The leaders of Japan and five Southeast Asian countries along the Mekong River plan to craft a new strategy in July for Tokyo to contribute to sustainable development of the Mekong region beyond 2015, a senior Japanese official said Thursday.

"The leaders of Japan and the Mekong states will assemble to draw up a new strategy that would succeed the 'Tokyo Strategy 2012 for Mekong-Japan Cooperation' for further development of Japan and the Mekong region as they are about to enter a new stage of cooperation," Minoru Kiuchi, senior vice foreign minister, told a forum in Tokyo.

Kiuchi was referring to the strategy the leaders are expected to adopt during a Japan-Mekong summit slated for July 4 in Tokyo ahead of the planned launch of a more integrated ASEAN Economic Community at the end of the year.

Thursday's event, the fifth session of the Forum for the Promotion of Public-Private Cooperation in the Mekong Region, brought together government officials, businesspeople and experts from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam and Japan.

Of 600 billion yen, or \$5 billion, in assistance that Japan pledged in the 2012 strategy, more than 500 billion yen has been implemented for infrastructure and other development projects.

"Our country will

continue to pursue the building of infrastructure of high quality for sustainable growth of the Mekong region," Kiuchi said, vowing to "develop together" with the region based on a "win-win" relationship.

Japan's drive to create the new development strategy comes as China has increased its clout in the region through its economic might.

The five Mekong states form the Association of Southeast Asian Nations with Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore.

A Thai delegate said ASEAN hopes the strategy will include work plans for lower development gaps among Mekong states, a prerequisite for greater ASEAN integration, and for a more environment-friendly and higher quality of life.

Chutintorn Gongsakdi, director general of the International Economic Affairs Department at the Thai Foreign Ministry, also voiced expectations of Japanese support in a joint Thai-Myanmar project to develop the Dawei Special Economic Zone in southern Myanmar on the Indian Ocean coast.

"Southeast Asia is a backyard of Japan. We are not strangers to each other," Chutintorn told Kyodo News. "So it's only logical that Japan plays an active role in projects like Dawei, but also others, in making a single production base in ASEAN, especially in the Mekong Subregion."

"In Thailand, we call the Mekong Subregion the 'Golden Land' because of the opportunities that are there," he said.



Delegates from Japan and five Southeast Asian countries along the Mekong River pose for a group photo at a meeting in Tokyo of the Japan-Mekong economic cooperation forum on Feb. 19. (Kyodo)

As if to underline Chutintorn's remarks, Yoichi Kobayashi, chairman of the Japan-Mekong Business Cooperation Committee at the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that many Japanese companies, especially small and mid-size ones, have "strong interest" in doing business in Mekong states.

Citing the doubling to tripling of the number of Japanese companies operating in Cambodia and Laos over the last few years, Kobayashi said economic ties have been growing steadily between Japan and so-called "Plus-One" locations to avert the risks of excessively concentrating Japanese business operations in neighboring Thailand.

In January, Japan signed bilateral aviation agreements with Cambodia and Laos to allow airlines to operate regular direct flights between Japan and the two countries, a move that equips Tokyo with such accords with all ASEAN member states.

"I believe such moves involving 'Plus-One' countries will contribute to economic development not only in Cambodia and Laos, but Japan and the whole Mekong region" through enhanced intra-region connectivity, said Kobayashi, executive vice president of Itochu Corp., a major trading house.

The Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry will send a mission to Myanmar in late February to explore business coopera-

tion involving small and midsize companies from the two countries. The chamber also plans to send a mission to Thailand in the near future.

Sar Kheng, deputy prime minister and interior minister of Cambodia, called for greater Japanese investment in his country, saying, "Cambodia is open for business."

"Taking this opportunity from this forum, may I invite and encourage more investments from Japan mainly in the transport, electricity, information technology and telecommunications, and agricultural sectors in the form of public-private partnerships in the future," Sar Kheng said.

Kyodo

Rural people enjoy electrification in Kyangin Tsp

KYANGIN, 19 Feb—Myanmar Solar Power Company carried out electrification in rural areas in Kyangin Township, Ayeyawady Region, spending the fund allotted by Department of Rural Development in 2014-15 fiscal year.

A ceremony to launch

solar power supply was held in Thayetpinkwin Village on 12 February, attended by the township administrator and departmental officials.

At present, over 80 houses are enjoying electricity in the village.

Win Bo (IPRD)

Htoo Foundation donates K100 million for offspring of servicemen who scarified life for the State

LASHIO, 19 Feb — Officials of Htoo Foundation donated K100 million for offspring of military servicemen who scarified life for the State in discharging de-

fence duty in North-East Command area, on 17 February. At the hall of the command headquarters in Lashio, Commander of North-East Command Maj-Gen Aung Soe

accepted cash donation presented by the Patron of Htoo Foundation and returned a certificate of honour. The commander spoke words of thanks.

MNA



Commander of North-East Command Maj-Gen Aung Soe accepts cash donation from responsible person of Htoo Foundation.—MNA

Solar Impulse-2 to fly over Bagan

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Feb — Solar Impulse-2 will arrive in Mandalay on 8 March.

On 9 and 10 February,

the solar Impulse-2 will demonstrate use of solar energy and share its technology to locals and students.

During the trip, it will

fly over Bagan, the ancient cultural region.

On 24 February, a press conference on the journey of Solar Impulse-2 will be

held in Yangon. One more press conference will be held at Mandalay International Airport on its arrival.

MNA



Myanmar seafarers need to improve their English skills: senior marine officials say



By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 19 Feb — The majority of Myanmar seafarers are losing job opportunities to work on international ships due to their poor English-language skills, Capt Paing Soe Aung, vice president of Myanmar Excellence Stars maritime training centre, said at a workshop.

He added, "English is

a major challenge for local seafarers. So, effective English-language proficiency courses should be added to the syllabus."

But, an official from a shipping agency said, "Some sailors do not want to attend the English proficiency courses even when the agency provided the training op-

portunities to them as they regard (the skill) as an unnecessary one."

Local seamen are not in a position to compare with the English proficiency skills of Filipino sailors and the English skills of Chinese sailors have also improved a lot, according to those in the shipping industry.

One captain said that person-to-person learning among sailors plays a vital role in improving English skills to get the most from the courses.

Currently, there are

ed in a failure and they had to withdraw. However, taking advantage of the chaotic situation, the insurgent groups left some of them in civilian clothes led by Kaw Sit Chi at the rank of battalion commander in town. The group in civilian clothes attacked Tatmadaw columns and camps from near and afar, broke into shops and abandoned homes of wealthy locals and robbed the homes of and killed wealthy locals.

In addition, the Kokang insurgent groups forcefully taken workers from different towns in sugarcane plantations and locals, and recruited them forcefully by shooting dead at those who refused to go along with them. The Kokang insurgent groups gave a packet of Yama tablets and 500 Yuan to each of the forced recruit and make them attack Tatmadaw camps in Laukkai at night, according to the locals and those who were arrested during the fighting.

Following on a tip of locals, Tatmadaw person-

nel combed the building in which Kokang renegade groups were hiding and during the fighting ensued, Tatmadaw personnel captured 26 insurgents including Kaw Sit Chi dead and seized over one hundred weapons of various kinds, 8,479 rounds of various bullets, 108 grenades, 8 landmines, other explosives, various kinds of narcotic drugs, jades and accessories.

On 17 February, the insurgent intentionally ambushed a convoy flying the Red Cross flag which helped transport the civilians who were trying to escape from the war zone and who were returning to their homes in other towns, injuring two members of the Red Cross Society.

The Tatmadaw is working in cooperation with local people for the stability of the entire Laukkai area while transporting innocent locals to safe places, providing medical care to those who are injured, and taking proper security measures.

Myawady

30,000 local seafarers on board. Many Myanmar seafarers have good reputations in the international market, but many others are facing difficulties.

Due to low demand, junior officers have fewer employment opportunities as shipping companies want to appoint more experienced men.

The country sees more maritime training centers than before, but those schools are still in need of modern simulators and teaching aids, a training officer said.—GNLM

Kokang insurgents commit unlawful acts in Laukkai



Photo shows pieces of jade and arms seized in clashes between Tatmadaw and Kokang insurgents.—MYAWADY

Germany says peace plan for Ukraine “damaged” not dead

BERLIN, 19 Feb — Germany condemned the seizure of a strategic east Ukrainian town by pro-Russian rebels on Wednesday as a “massive violation” of a ceasefire, but said it was too early to call the broader Minsk peace plan dead or ratchet up sanctions against Moscow.

The withdrawal of Ukrainian troops from the encircled town of Debaltseve on Wednesday was a blow to German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s efforts to clinch a negotiated solution to the year-long conflict that has claimed thousands of lives. But Berlin appears to be hoping that Russian President Vladimir Putin, who the West accuses of actively supporting the rebels, will respect other aspects of a peace plan agreed last

year in the Belarus capital, now that the rebels have achieved their goal of capturing Debaltseve.

Merkel’s spokesman Steffen Seibert pointed to a resolution by the United Nations Security Council on Tuesday as a positive signal. Backed by Russia, the resolution called on all parties in eastern Ukraine to stop fighting and to implement the Minsk peace deal. “The German government resolutely condemns the military actions by the separatists in Debaltseve. It is a massive violation of the ceasefire that went into effect on Sunday,” Seibert said. “We believe the Minsk process is under strain, it has perhaps been damaged, but we still believe it makes sense to continue working. The UN resolution appears

to send a signal in the right direction.”

Merkel, speaking later at a gathering of her conservative party in eastern Germany, did not mention the developments in Debaltseve, but said she wanted to work with Russia, not against it, to restore peace in Europe.

Some German politicians, including Juergen Hardt, a defence expert in her Christian Democratic Union (CDU), said the siege of the town was reason to consider tough new sanctions against Moscow.

But Merkel’s spokesman was more cautious, saying more punitive measures hinged on developments on the ground in eastern Ukraine. “If the fighting doesn’t stop after the fall of Debaltseve, new sanc-



A tank crew member of the separatist self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic Army walks on top of a tank at a checkpoint on the road from the town of Vuhlehirsk to Debaltseve on 18 Feb, 2015. —REUTERS

tions are likely,” said Ulrich Speck of the Carnegie Europe think tank. “I don’t think yet that the ‘nuclear economic option’, cutting off Russia from SWIFT, is going to happen,” he added, referring to the international bank transaction system.

Although Merkel’s pursuit of dialogue with Pu-

tin is popular at home, the rebel advance has left her vulnerable to critics abroad, among them hawks in the US Congress, who have accused her of naively persisting with diplomacy in the face of repeated broken promises by Putin.

In a statement on Tuesday, Republican Senators

John McCain and Lindsey Graham accused Merkel and French President Francois Hollande, who negotiated the ceasefire last week with Putin and Ukraine’s President Petro Poroshenko, of “legitimizing the dismemberment of a sovereign nation in Europe”.

Reuters

Obama reiterates resolve to defeat Islamic State militants

WASHINGTON, 19 Feb — US President Barack Obama reiterated his resolve on Wednesday to defeat extremists including Islamic State militants ahead of a ministerial meeting on Thursday on eradication of violent extremism and terrorism.

“We will ultimately prevail,” Obama told a gathering held in Washington as part of the three-day Summit to Counter Violent Extremism from Tuesday.

Obama criticized groups such as Islamic State, known also as ISIS and ISIL, for seeking legitimacy as religious leaders and spreading the idea that the United States and the West are at war with Islam.

“We must never accept the premise that they put forward, because it is



US President Barack Obama

a lie. Nor should we grant these terrorists the religious legitimacy that they seek,” Obama said.

“They are not religious leaders, they’re terrorists. And we are not at war with Islam. We are at war with people who have perverted Islam,” he added.

Obama urged Muslim leaders and others to express their opposition to attacking innocent peo-

ple through violence, saying that “no matter what the grievances, violence against innocents doesn’t defend Islam or Muslims, it damages Islam and Muslims.”

The Obama administration said it has appointed former government official Rashad Hussain as special envoy and coordinator for strategic counterterrorism communications, a new

post created to prevent the spread of extreme ideologies.

The White House decided to host the three-day event in the wake of recent violent incidents, such as fatal attacks on a cafe in Australia and the offices of a French satirical weekly as well as a series of hostage murders by Islamic State militants.

The US State Department said ministerial-level officials from nearly 70 countries will take part in Thursday’s event at the department.

Obama and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon will address Thursday’s session and participating countries will release a joint statement at the end of the event, according to the department.

A Japanese official will also attend the ministerial meeting following the hostage crisis in which two Japanese men are believed to have been killed by Islamic State militants.

The official, senior vice foreign minister Yasuhide Nakayama, will pledge a \$15.5 million package aimed at helping build counterterrorism capacity in the Middle East and Africa.

“I will properly promote the position of the Japanese government” during Thursday’s meeting, Nakayama said as he arrived at a Washington-area airport.

Nakayama was in Jordan as head of the Japanese task force during the hostage crisis.

Kyodo News

Teenagers arrested for damaging Jewish tombs in France

PARIS, 19 Feb — A French prosecutor recommended on Wednesday that five teenagers be put under judicial investigation for desecrating about 250 tombs in a Jewish cemetery in eastern France for clearly anti-Semitic reasons.

Prosecutor Philippe Vanier said the youths, who were arrested after one turned himself in on Monday and implicated the others, had admitted to spitting on the Star of David on the tombs and giving straight-arm Nazi salutes.

They denied anti-Semitic motives but Vanier disputed that, saying: “In spite of their denials, the anti-Semitic connotation and motivation of their behaviour appear clearly.”

Under French law, suspects put under judicial investigation by a magistrate on the advice of a prosecutor are likely to go to trial. A prosecutor’s finding of anti-Semitic motives would add weight to the accusations against them. Vanier said the youths, aged 15 to 17, had desecrated the tombs at the Jewish cemetery of Sarre-Union near the German border and damaged a monument erected in memory of victims of the Holocaust.—Reuters

US identifies 1,200 potential fighters for Syria training

WASHINGTON, 19 Feb — The United States has so far identified about 1,200 Syrian opposition fighters for potential participation in a US military-led programme to help train and equip them to battle the Islamic State, the Pentagon said on Wednesday.

The fighters will undergo vetting for the program, which is expected to begin in March at multiple sites outside of Syria and train more than 5,000 Syrian fighters a year. Some 3,000 could be trained by the end of 2015, a US official said.

The programme is expected to vet fighters using both US government databases as well as intelligence from regional partners.

Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar have publicly offered to host the training and Jordan has privately offered to do so. One US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said training is likely to start in Jordan.

At the Pentagon, spokesman Rear Admiral John Kirby declined to specify which sites might host the potential Syrian recruits identified so far.

“There’s about 1,200 individuals who have been identified for participation — potential participation — in this process and in this programme,” Kirby told a news conference. “Where they will be trained, I don’t have that information right now.”

On Tuesday, the United States and Turkey said they expected to soon sign an agreement on training and equipping moderate Syrian opposition fighters. Turkey hopes the programme will also bolster the broader opposition in its fight against Syrian

President Bashar al-Assad.

US officials have made clear the objective of the military’s training program, however, is battling the Islamic State.

Several US officials have told Reuters the Syrian fighters would be equipped with items including pickup trucks with mounted machine guns, radios and global positioning system trackers.

The Wall Street Journal reported on Tuesday that the radios and GPS equipment would enable the fighters to call in airstrikes. But Kirby stressed

that the training mission was not meant to create “Syrian forward air controllers,” although he acknowledged their potential assistance in identifying targets.

The Pentagon has previously estimated that more than 400 US troops, including special operations forces, will train Syrian fighters.

Hundreds more US forces will be sent to support them. Kirby estimated that the total force involved in the training mission could reach about 1,000 troops.—Reuters

WORLD

Libya, Egypt ask UN to lift arms embargo to fight Islamic State

UNITED NATIONS, 19 Feb — Libya and Egypt asked the United Nations Security Council on Wednesday to lift an arms embargo on Libya, impose a naval blockade on areas not under government control and help build the country's army to tackle Islamic State and other militants.

Libya has descended into factional fighting, leaving the country almost lawless nearly four years after the fall of Muammar Gaddafi. Two competing governments backed by militia brigades are scrambling for control of the oil-producing country and the chaos has created havens for Islamist militants.

The Security Council met to discuss Libya after Islamic State released a video showing the beheading of 21 Egyptian Christians. Egypt responded to the killings with air



Libyan Foreign Minister Mohamed Dayri speaks during a United Nations Security Council meeting about the situation in Libya in the Manhattan borough of New York on 18 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

strikes on Monday on militant camps, training sites and arms storage areas in Libya. Jordan told council members during closed door consultations after the meeting that it planned to circulate a draft resolution later on Wednesday, diplomats said. Jordan said the text would propose lifting the arms embargo on the Libyan government, con-

demn attempts to provide weapons to other parties and support Libyan efforts to combat terrorism.

"Libya needs a decisive stance from the international community to help us build or national army's capacity and this would come through a lifting of the embargo on weapons ... so as to deal with this rampant terrorism," Liby-

an Foreign Minister Mohamed Dayri told the Security Council.

The Libyan government is already allowed to import weapons and related materiel with the approval of a Security Council committee overseeing the embargo imposed in 2011 when Gaddafi forces cracked down on pro-democracy protesters.

The Security Council committee has long urged Libya to improve monitoring of its weapons over concerns that some government arms were being diverted to militant groups.

Egypt's Foreign Minister Sameh Shukri backed the call for the arms embargo to be lifted and also said a naval blockade should be put in place in areas not under government control to stop weapons reaching militants. He also said states wanting to help Libya confront terrorism should be



Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry speaks during a United Nations Security Council meeting about the situation in Libya in the Manhattan borough of New York on 18 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

allowed to do so as long as it is with the approval and coordination of the "legitimate Libyan government."

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi had on Tuesday called for a UN resolution to mandate an international coalition to intervene in Libya. UN special envoy to Libya, Bernardino Leon,

said that Islamic State and other militants can only be defeated with a united Libyan government in place that has strong international support.

The United Nations is mediating between the rival factions to get them to forge a unity government and end hostilities.

Reuters

Pakistan officials say Afghan Taleban signal readiness for peace talks



Afghan security forces arrive at the site of burning NATO supply trucks, after a Taleban attack at Behsud District of Nangarhar Province on 9 June, 2014.

REUTERS

ISLAMABAD/PESHAWAR, (Pakistan) 19 Feb — Senior Pakistani army and diplomatic officials said on Thursday the leadership of the Afghan Taleban has signaled through the Pakistani military that they are willing to open peace talks, which could be held later in the day.

Sources within the Afghan Taleban said their negotiators would hold the first round of peace talks with US officials in Qatar later on Thursday, although no comment was immediately available from US or Qatari officials.

Previous efforts to negotiate an end to a war that began in late 2001 have proved fruitless, but the latest signals raised hopes of a much-needed boost

for new Afghan President Ashraf Ghani.

"The first session will take place today in Qatar and then there would be another session on Friday. Let us see what happens as talks before did not yield any results," a senior member of the Afghan Taleban said by telephone from Qatar.

Earlier on Thursday, a senior Pakistani military official said Pakistan's army chief of staff, Raheel Sharif, told Ghani during a visit this week that the Taleban were willing to begin negotiations as early as March.

"They have expressed their willingness [to meet] and there will be progress in March. But these things are not so quick and easy,"

the official, who is close to Pakistan's powerful army chief, told Reuters on condition of anonymity.

"But there are very clear signals ... and we have communicated it to the Afghans. Now many things are with the Afghans and they are serious," the official said.

Three senior diplomats in the region confirmed the account based on briefings from people who were at the meeting between Ghani and Sharif on Tuesday.

"The venue is still to be decided. Preferably Islamabad, Kabul, Beijing or Dubai," said one diplomat briefed in Kabul. He and other diplomats spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue.—Reuters

Qatar says recalls ambassador to Egypt amid dispute over air strikes in Libya

DUBAI, 19 Feb — Qatar has recalled its ambassador in Cairo "for consultations", state news agency QNA said late on Wednesday, amid disputes over Egyptian air strikes in Libya.

The agency said the ambassador's recall came after remarks by the Egyptian envoy to the Arab League.

Egyptian media had quoted the ambassador, Tareq Adel, as criticizing Qatar for expressing reservations over the Egyptian

air strikes in Libya and accusing Doha of supporting terrorism and deviating from Arab consensus.

The diplomatic row could revive a rift within the Western-allied and oil-rich Gulf Cooperation Council that had prompted Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain to withdraw their ambassadors from Doha last year over its perceived support for Islamists.

Egyptian jets bombed Islamic State targets in Libya on Monday, a day after

the group there released a video apparently showing the beheading of 21 Egyptian Christians, drawing Cairo directly into the conflict across its border.

QNA quoted the director of the Arab affairs department at the Qatari foreign ministry as saying that Doha had expressed reservation at an Arab League meeting in Cairo over Egypt's unilateral decision to carry out air raids in Libya without consultations with other Arab states.

Reuters

Islamic State lays claim to North African outpost

ALGIERS/ CAIRO, 19 Feb — The images match the worst of Islamic State's atrocities: black-clad fighters and an English-speaking jihadist taunt the West before slaughtering their victims in orange jumpsuits on a Libyan beach.

Their masked leader turns to the Mediterranean and points a bloodied knife towards Europe, declaring, "We will conquer Rome, God willing."

The execution of 21 Egyptian Christians by militants in Libya proclaiming allegiance to Islamic State was an announcement that the group, also known as ISIS or ISIL, has spread from Syria and Iraq to Lib-

ya. Militants have profited from chaos to claim a North African outpost a boat ride away from Italy's coast.

International reaction came swiftly. Egyptian jets pounded suspected militant sites in Libya, and Paris joined Cairo in calling for UN action to halt the militants' spread.

Libya appears to be Islamic State's most successful move yet beyond its Middle East heartland, likely attracting more recruits and increasing Western fears of a new North African base for jihadist fighters.

Yet even as they thrive in Libya's unrest, Islamic

State sympathizers must contend with rivalries and factional infighting that make securing the sort of territorial gains that IS has made in Iraq and Syria more complicated.

"The statement in Libya is more a statement of defiance," said Hassan Hassan, co-author of a book on IS. "By killing Christian civilians, they were delivering a message that they're expanding."

The rise of IS comes as no surprise. Libya has descended into factional fighting, leaving the country almost lawless nearly four years after Muammar Gaddafi's fall.

Reuters

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Consignees of cargo carried on MV PACIFIC TRADER VOY NO (047W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20.2.2015 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 Claims 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.

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV HOANG ANH 25 VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV HOANG ANH 25 VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20.2.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T (3) 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 Claims 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 RK SHIPPING &
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Australia opens tender for next-generation ground combat vehicle

SYDNEY, 19 Feb — Australia will hold an open tender for a multi-billion dollar project to replace the army's current light armored vehicles with a next-generation ground combat system, Defence Minister Kevin Andrews said on Thursday.

The proposed LAND 400 project to replace a fleet of light fighting vehicles could be worth as much as A\$10 billion, media has reported. The government called it a "multi-billion dollar" project in a statement.

Britain's BAE Systems, which earlier this month won a contract to do heavy maintenance in Australia on Lockheed Martin Corp's F-35 stealth fighters, has been mentioned as a possible contender for the contract.

US defence giant General Dynamics Corp has also been mentioned in Australian media, as well as France's Thales and German technology group Rheinmetall AG.

The contracts will be seen as a boon for Australia's struggling manufacturing industry, which has been battered in recent years by thousands of job losses and the departure of its automotive industry.

At the same time, Industry Minister Ian MacFarlane issued an opaque warning not to view the tender as simply a jobs package and warned that Australian firms that did bid would be held to the highest standards.

"The government's broader policy settings ... are focused on building on our strengths and maximizing opportunities for investment and job creation," MacFarlane said in a statement.

Reuters

BELGRADE, 19 Feb — A new draft law on weapons and ammunition will make the control of possession and transportation of weapons more efficient, which should in turn diminish weapons abuse of and increase the security of the Serbian citizens, Serbian Interior Minister Nebojsa Stefanovic said on Wednesday.

Presenting the draft law at an extraordinary parliamentary session, Stefanovic said that legal weapon owners would be permitted to possess weapons and use them for lawful purposes - for hunting, sport, self-defence and collections.

Stefanovic told the MPs that the new legislation, which will be aligned with EU directives, would tighten the requirements weapon owners had to meet.

In addition to the exist-

Stefanovic presents new weapon possession requirements

ing requirements, the new legislation proposal is introducing two new ones - a health requirement and a legitimate reason to possess a weapon, he said.

Stefanovic said that evidence of meeting the health criteria would have to be provided when submitting requests for procurement of weapons, and would also be required once every five years.

According to Stefanovic, the police is allowed to prohibit the possession of weapons whenever it may establish that there is a risk of misuse.

Stefanovic added that there was no clear record of



illegally possessed weapons in Serbia, but the number was estimated to be somewhere between 200,000 and even 900,000.

"This difference in assessment alone is enough to show that a lot has to be

done in the future to solve the problem," the minister said in the parliament.

Also on the agenda of the extraordinary parliamentary session are amendments to the Law on Fire Protection.—*Tanjug*

Baltimore time capsule from 1815 opened, newspapers and bottles found

BALTIMORE, 19 Feb — A 200-year-old hollowed-out cornerstone to Baltimore's Washington Monument was opened on Wednesday by officials who found bottles, newspapers and a dedication plaque.

The 1815 cornerstone, a 1,100-pound (500-kg) block of granite with a marble lid, was discovered last week by contractors restoring

the 180-foot-high (55-meter-high) marble-columned monument, a Baltimore landmark.

The items were sealed in a dedication ceremony on 4 July, 1815, and placed inside the memorial to Washington, the first US president.

"One of the things they're trying to show us was what was going on in

their world and what was going on in the country at that time," said Lance Humphries, chairman of the restoration committee for Mount Vernon Place Conservancy.

The opening revealed three sealed, hand-blown glass bottles of various sizes and newspapers. The papers were the Niles Weekly Register of 1 July, 1815; the American & Commercial Daily Advertiser; the Federal Gazette & Baltimore Daily Advertiser dated 3 July, 1815; and an unknown fourth newspaper.

A copper plate or box was visible beneath the bottles and newspapers.

Restorers discovered a dedication plaque engraved with the names of the stone cutters, Thomas Towson and William Steuart, and stone mason Sater Stevenson.

The find was unveiled during a media event at the

base of the monument, in a tent to protect the stone's contents.

A historical record of the 1815 cornerstone ceremony said that the chamber had included a bottle with a "likeness" of Washington, and a copy of his farewell address written at the end of his second term.

Paper conservator Elissa O'Loughlin of the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, which is assisting in the project, said most of the newspapers were in remarkably good shape.

The contents will be taken to the museum for safekeeping and conservation analysis.

The monument has been closed to the public since 2010 after structural issues raised safety concerns. The conservation project is scheduled to be completed this spring.—*Reuters*



Lance Humphries (L) discusses the cornerstone.

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(3 / 2015)

Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars and Myanmar Kyats.

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-147(14-15)	Cement Additives (5) Items	US\$
(2)	IFB-148(14-15)	Mud Chemicals (4) Items	US\$
(3)	IFB-149(14-15)	Class "G" Cement (500) Ton	US\$
(4)	IFB-150(14-15)	30 Ton Mobile Hydraulic Crane (Wheel Type) (1) Unit	US\$
(5)	IFB-151(14-15)	2900 Series Well Head Equipments & Spares (7) Sets	US\$
(6)	IFB-152(14-15)	900 Series Well Head Equipments & Spares (2) Sets	US\$
(7)	IFB-153(14-15)	Truck Mounted Double Drum Well Servicing Unit (1) Unit	US\$
(8)	IFB-154(14-15)	30 Ton NGV Tractor (1) Unit & 30 Ton Cascade(2) Units	US\$
(9)	IFB-155(14-15)	GM 6V 71 Engine Assy (1) Unit	US\$
(10)	IFB-156(14-15)	Fire fighting Truck (1) Unit	US\$
(11)	IFB-157(14-15)	Welding Electrode (E6011)(50) Ton	US\$
(12)	IFB-158(14-15)	Heat Shrinkable Sleeves & Closure Patches (2)Items	US\$
(13)	IFB-159(14-15)	Mobile Welding Machine with Accessories (3)Sets	US\$
(14)	IFB-160(14-15)	Portable Welding Machine with Accessories (4)Sets	US\$
(15)	IFB-161(14-15)	Pressure Gauge (6) Sets	US\$
(16)	IFB-162(14-15)	Assorted Sizes of Steel Line Pipes (3) Items	US\$
(17)	IFB-163(14-15)	Assorted Sizes of Steel Ball Valves (2) Items	US\$
(18)	IFB-164(14-15)	Assorted Sizes of Pipe Fittings (1) Lot	US\$
(19)	IFB-165(14-15)	13 5/8" 5K Double Ram Blow Out Preventers (2) Nos	US\$
(20)	DMP/L-035(14-15)	MUD Testing Equipment (10) Items	Ks
(21)	DMP/L-036(14-15)	Telephone Cable (4) Items	Ks
(22)	DMP/L-037(14-15)	Electronics Private Branch Exchange 128 Lines Capacity, 8 CO Trunk Line with Phone (3) Sets	Ks
(23)	DMP/L-038(14-15)	50 HP Electric Motor (400 V, 3 Phase, 50 Hz, 1500 RPM) (2) Sets	Ks
(24)	DMP/L-039(14-15)	Transformer Welding Set with Accessories (Dry Type) (5) Lots	Ks
(25)	DMP/L-040(14-15)	Centrifugal Pump with Motor (5 HP) (1) Lot	Ks
(26)	DMP/L-041(14-15)	315 KVA and 500 KVA Transformer (2) Items	Ks
(27)	Container(1/2015)	ရန်ကုန်ဆိပ်ကမ်းများမှ သာကေတကမ်းလွန်ရန်အခြေစိုက် စခန်းသို့. Container သယ်ယူပို့ဆောင်ခြင်းလုပ်ငန်း (၁-၄-၂၀၁၅ မှ ၃၀-၉-၂၀၁၅ ထိ)	Ks

Tender Closing Date & Time - 16-3-2015, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 16th February, 2015 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph . +95 67 - 411097 / 411206

Invitation of Expression of Interest (EOI) for Pharmaceutical Plants for No (1) Pharmaceutical Factory (Yangon), Pharmaceutical and Foodstuff Industries, Ministry of Industry

No (1) Pharmaceutical Factory (Yangon) under the Pharmaceutical and Foodstuff Industries, the Ministry of Industry intend to cooperate for Pharmaceutical Plants with Local and Foreign Entrepreneurs Companies.

As a first step, Companies who interest in those cooperation are required to submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) not later than 4 PM (Myanmar Standard Time), on March 3rd 2015 to Planning Department, Pharmaceutical and Foodstuff Industries, Ministry of Industry, Office No (37), Nay Pyi Taw, The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Interested entities can take over the (EOI) Form and other indications at above office commencing from (23-2-2015) by presenting complete documents of company profile. Document of Company Profile

- Valid Certificate of Incorporation
- Records and Regulation of Company
- Name of Foreign's Technical Cooperator

(For more information : Phone no : +95 +67 408140, 408275
Fax no : +95 +67 408195)

Consultations on the Reform of the Myanmar Companies Act 1914

In order to modernise the Myanmar Companies Act 1914, the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) is currently preparing a new Companies Law with the assistance of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The draft chapters of the Companies Law in English language (including Part 3 and Part 4) have now been published on DICA's website (www.dica.gov.mm). The draft chapters of the Companies Law in Myanmar language (including Part 2 and Part 8) are also being published on the DICA website as they become available.

Interested parties are invited to provide any comments and feedback on the draft law by email at lawreform.dica.mm@gmail.com, by post or fax at the details set out below.

Yangon Office: No. 1, Thitsar Road, Yankin Township, Yangon
Fax No.: 01-658135

Nay Pyi Taw Office: Office No. 32, Nay Pyi Taw
Fax No.: 067-406306

Mandalay Office: Corner of 26th and 84th Street, East ZayCho Market, 2nd floor, Chan Aye Thar Zan Township, Mandalay, Mandalay Region

Shan State Office: No. 139, Sat San Tun Road, Zay Pine Yut, Taunggyi, Shan State
Mon State Office: No.401, Toe Chae Kan Nar Road, Mayangone Quarter, Mawlamyine Township, Mon State

Directorate of Investment and Company Administration



Residents clean the debris after a flood in a village of Cordoba, Argentina, on 18 Feb, 2015. The flood in Cordoba caused by the heavy rains have left seven dead and more than 1,500 houses damaged in the villages of the Sierras Chicas, and more than 300 people remain evacuated, according to local press.—XINHUA

Delta official says no plan to back Skymark Airlines for now

NEW YORK, 19 Feb — Delta Air Lines Inc has no plan to join in the initiative to rehabilitate Japan's bankrupt Skymark Airlines Inc for now, an executive told reporters on Wednesday.

"At this point, we have no plans to do so," Gail Grimmer, Delta senior vice president of the New York region, said in response to

whether the carrier is interested in becoming a sponsor for Skymark, which received court authorization to start rehabilitation on 4 February.

The major US carrier has been floated as a potential backer for Skymark's restructuring efforts because of its keen interest in acquiring coveted flight slots at Tokyo's Haneda airport. The

SkyTeam alliance it belongs to lacks partner airlines in Japan.

Grimmett reiterated interest in gaining take-off and landing rights at Haneda, saying they "would like the opportunity to compete fairly." But she added that "we are very happy with our service right now to Japan."

Kyodo News

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WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 20th February, 2015: Light rain are likely to be isolated in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin and Mon States, weather will be partly cloudy in Lower Sagaing, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions, Northern Shan, Chin and Kayin States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated light rain in the Southern Myanmar areas.

One-third of Americans say Hollywood has problem with minorities



Audience members line up for a screening of the movie "Selma" at the Selma Walton Theatre in Selma, Alabama, on 9 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS

LOS ANGELES, 19 Feb — In a year when a lack of diversity among Academy Awards nominees prompted the Twitter hashtag #OscarsSoWhite, one-third of Americans believe Hollywood does not pay proper attention to minorities and women, according to the

annual Reuters/Ipsos Oscars poll.

Thirty-four percent of the nearly 2,000 people polled online said they believed Hollywood has a general problem with minorities and 32 percent said the film industry's capital shies away from making

Oscar-caliber movies that appeal to minorities.

Nearly two-thirds of black respondents, or 62 percent, said Hollywood had a problem with minorities, compared to 48 percent from all minority groups.

How women are treated fared only slightly better overall, with 32 percent of respondents saying Hollywood has a problem with women and 29 percent believing it fell short in making Oscar-caliber movies for the female audience.

But women were only slightly more negative than men when asked about women's standing in the film industry. Twenty-eight percent of men and 30 percent of women thought Hollywood underdelivered on Oscar-quality movies for women.

The findings come a

month after nominations revealed no actors of colour in the four acting races and no women in the best director and screenwriter categories for Sunday's Academy Awards — in what was deemed by experts "the whitest Oscars" in years.

The most controversial exclusions centred around "Selma," the Martin Luther King Jr biopic that secured best picture and best song nominations but failed to earn nods for its female African American director Ava DuVernay and lead actor David Oyelowo.

Gregory Sampson, a 51-year-old African American respondent from Maryland, said he thought Hollywood had a lot of work to do to be more inclusive of minorities and women and blamed it on a "good old boy network."—Reuters

Grateful Dead duo, Cyndi Lauper lead Songwriters Hall inductees

LOS ANGELES, 19 Feb — Grateful Dead songwriting duo Jerry Garcia and Robert Hunter, country music star Toby Keith and "Time After Time" singer Cyndi Lauper will be inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame later this year, the organization said on Wednesday.

They will be joined by "Hoochie Coochie Man" blues songwriter Willie Dixon and Bobby Braddock, a co-writer of George Jones' country classic "He Stopped Loving Her Today."

Linda Perry, who transitioned from off-beat rock 'n' roll singer with early 1990s band 4 Non

Blondes to penning pop hits for Christina Aguilera and Pink, will also be inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame at a 18 June ceremony in New York.

Dixon and Garcia will be inducted posthumously and both are in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, as is Hunter.—Reuters



Musician Cyndi Lauper arrives at the 56th annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles, California in this file photo taken on 26 Jan, 2014.—REUTERS

Marigold Hotel's Dench still driven by lure of the new

LONDON, 19 Feb — After a career spanning seven decades, Oscar-winning actress Judi Dench rails against the notion of enforced retirement every bit as much as the character she plays in her latest film.

The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel renews our acquaintance with a guest list of fading Brit retirees whose lust for life is reinvigorated by the fresh and unpredictable environment they find themselves cast into.

Holder of the unofficial title of Britain's favourite actress since well before she turned 80 in December, Dench plays Evelyn, a widow who ends up running a business in her new home.

The film offers a mix of Indian and British themes,



Actress Judi Dench

laced with hints of British comedy classics like Fawlty Towers and One Foot in the Grave and dominated by the rough-edged characters played by Dench and fellow octogenarian Oscar winner Maggie Smith.

Their experiences are worlds away from the grim, one-dimensional fate Dench says awaits many Britons as care home residents.

"I always think that our system over here is the wrong one," she told Reuters. "When you go in and you see people just sitting, you think there is no stimulus."

"It is interaction with people that stimulates us. To put all these people in a room, where maybe the television might be on but half of them may not even be able to see it. That's wrong."

She has ridden out problems with deteriorating eyesight and says she has much more work in her yet. "I'm fine, once I know where everything is," she said. "At home I know where all the steps are. I wouldn't be good going into a darkened room, like in a cinema where I can't see where the steps are, so

I get someone to be with me." Dench made her professional stage debut in the 1950s, and for much of her career as a leading light of Shakespearean theatre, she and husband Michael Williams ran a household that included her daughter and three of their four parents.

"Sometimes it wasn't easy but it is worth it. Even the thing of one complaining about the other, it's something, it's a life, it's something to get heated up about and not just sit in a chair." She sees threads of such multi-generational living running through the Indian backdrop to the new film and says Britain has something to learn from communities "where the family is all kept together, where there is a family unit".—Reuters

Pussy Riot's first English song is a tribute to Eric Garner



Nadezhda Tolokonnikova (L) and Maria Alyokhina of the band Pussy Riot address the "Cinema for Peace".—REUTERS

NEW YORK, 19 Feb — Russian punk rock group Pussy Riot released their first song in English on Wednesday, a musical tribute to Eric Garner, the unarmed black man whose death in a police chokehold last summer sparked wide protests against police violence.

Nadya Tolokonnikova and Maria Alyokhina recorded the song, "I Can't Breathe," in New York last December after a grand jury decided not to indict a white New York City police officer in Garner's death.

The pair said they dedicated their first song in English to Garner and titled it, "I can't breathe," which were the words he repeated before his death.

"This song is for Eric and all those from Russia to America and around the globe who suffer from state

terror - killed, choked, perished because of war and state sponsored violence of all kinds," they said in a statement.

In the video released on YouTube the singers, shown wearing Russian riot police uniforms, are slowly buried alive as soil is shovelled on them.

The song begins with the lyrics, "He's become his death/The spark of the riots/ That's the way he's blessed/To stay alive," and ends with punk pioneer Richard Hell reading Garner's final words. Alyokhina and Tolokonnikova spent nearly two years in prison after being convicted of hooliganism motivated by religion following a "punk prayer" protest in 2012 against Russian President Vladimir Putin in a Moscow cathedral.

Reuters

Sam Smith, Katie Price nominated for British LGBT Awards

LONDON, 19 Feb — Katie Price, Mel C and Olly Murs have been recognized as straight allies in various categories ahead of the ceremony, which takes place at London's Landmark Hotel on 24 April. Daley has been nominated for two prizes, including Sports Personality of the Year and the prestigious Global Gay Icon Award. The Icon Award will also be contested by Kylie Minogue, Hillary Clinton and Joan Collins.

Paul O'Grady, Graham

Norton, Stephen Fry, Nick Grimshaw and Clare Balding have been shortlisted for Broadcaster of the Year, while Smith, Murs, Lady Gaga and Boy George are up for Music Icon.

Meanwhile, Danny Dyer, Lorraine Kelly, Mel C, Russell Brand, Nigella Lawson and Price have been nominated for the Straight Ally of the Year prize, which recognizes straight stars who have been supportive of the LGBT community.—PTI



Grammy-winning singer Sam Smith and diver Tom Daley are among those nominated at this year's British LGBT Awards.—PTI

GENERAL

YouTube to launch paid music service in a few months



A picture illustration shows a YouTube logo reflected in a person's eye, in central Bosnian town of Zenica, early on 18 June, 2014. —REUTERS

SAN FRANCISCO, 19 Feb — Google Inc's (GOOG-L.O) YouTube is set to launch its long-awaited paid monthly subscription service called YouTube Music Key in a few months, said Robert Kyncl, the on-line video service's head of content and business operations, at the Code/Media conference.

The beta version of the service is currently being tested and is available by invitation, Kyncl said at the conference in California, according to a company spokeswoman.

"There is a subset of audience who wants more things so they are used to paying for those. We don't think it changes anything for existing users," Kyncl said.

Google said in November the subscription for the ad-free service will start at \$7.99 per month and will allow users to watch videos offline and listen to music while other apps are working. The plan would represent a significant change for the world's No 1 online video, whose free videos, often accompanied by short commercials, attract more than 1 billion users a month.—Reuters

Divers discover huge hoard of gold coins off Israeli coast

CAESAREA, (Israel) 19 Feb — Scuba divers have discovered a rare haul of gleaming 1,000-year-old gold coins inscribed in Arabic on the sea bed off Israel, a find archaeologists say may shed light on Muslim rule in that age.

Some 2,000 coins dated to the 11th century, a period when the Fatimid Islamic dynasty dominated the Middle East, have so far been raised from the depths.

The treasure, which was probably exposed during recent winter storms, is thought to have sunk in a shipwreck near the ancient Roman port of Caesarea in

NEC, Fujitsu appointed "gold" sponsors of 2020 Tokyo Olympics

TOKYO, 19 Feb— The organizing committee for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics said on Thursday it has appointed NEC Corp. and Fujitsu Ltd as official "Gold Partner" sponsors — the highest of a three-tier local sponsor status.

NEC and Fujitsu are the fourth and fifth gold sponsor companies given the right to use Olympic and Paralympic designations and imagery including em-

blems and slogans.

The three other gold sponsors are Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp, Asahi Breweries Ltd and Canon Inc.

NEC will introduce security technology for face and fingerprint authentication and network-related products, while Fujitsu will provide servers for data to operate the games.

At a Press conference held in Tokyo with NEC, Yoshiro Mori, president of

the organizing committee, said he hopes the sponsor will support the sports events with its cutting-edge security technology.

The organizing committee, in cooperation with the Japanese Olympic Committee and the Japanese Paralympic Committee, is seeking local sponsor companies in the three categories of Gold Partner, Official Partner and Official Supporter.

Kyodo News



An exhibitor displays a wine rack made of natural stone at the 42nd Home and Garden Show in Vancouver, Canada, on 18 Feb, 2015. About 425 exhibitors across the province of British Columbia showcased their newest home design inspirations and gardening ideas during the 5-days event, which can draw around 60 thousand spectators. —XINHUA

Quarter of Aussie teens suffering from obesity

CANBERRA, 19 Feb — A new health survey released on Thursday revealed that one quarter of Australia's adolescents are either overweight or obese.

The report, tabled by Australia's Cancer Council and National Heart Foundation, found that more than a quarter of Australia's teenage boys and a fifth of all female students were classified as overweight across the country.

According to the chair of the Cancer Council's Public Health Committee, Craig Sinclair, a lack of encouragement for physical exercise throughout schools is one of the main reasons for the increase in weight issues.

The dramatic rise in computer games was also identified as a possible reason, with 58 percent of students having at least three televisions inside their

house, while 40 percent have video game consoles in their rooms.

"The vast majority of adolescents, 82 percent, are not engaging in more than 60 minutes of physical activity per day as is what is recommended," Sinclair told The ABC.

"As a parent myself, I know the challenges of managing electronic devices in the home and it's not easy."—Xinhua

weighed in at between five and a half to six kilograms (12-13 lbs) of gold. The bullion value in current terms is around \$240,000.

Such coins have been found before in the region, but this batch was the largest hoard ever found in Israel, Sharvit said.—Reuters



Ancient gold coins are displayed in Caesarea, north of Tel Aviv along the Mediterranean coast on 18 Feb, 2015.— REUTERS

mitv Myanmar International

(20-2-2015 07:00 am~ 21-2-2015 07:00 am) MST

- | | |
|---|--|
| * News | (Seafood Export) |
| * A Journey to Southern Shan State (Ep-3) | * News |
| * Jeyyanandi (A Day in the Life of a Nun) | * A stir about of Rainbows |
| * News | * Entrepreneur "Soe Nyi Nyi" |
| * The Legend Of An ambulatory Surgeon (Episode-2) | * News |
| * News | *Changes |
| * Kachin Traditional Wedding Ceremony | * The Caves |
| * Myanmar Sculpture-Work of Art | * News |
| * News | * The Legend of an ambulatory Surgeon (Episode-1) |
| * The Art of Making Glaze Ware | * News |
| * YUFL | * Exquisite Myanmar Silk |
| * News | * "Moe Huyin Than Buddha", The Unique Pagoda In Monywa |
| * Yatthe Taung Township In a Nut-Shell | * News |
| * Today Myanmar | * Halin, A Treasure Trove of The Ancient Pyu City |

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(20-2-2015, Friday)

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 6:00 am | 8:40 am |
| • Wut Hmone Music Troupe | • TV Drama Series |
| 6:20 am | 9:20 am |
| • TV Drama Series | • Musical Programme |
| 6:45 am | 9:35 am |
| • TV Drama Series | • 40 th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation |
| 7:10 am | 9:45 am |
| • Documentary | • ASEAN Cultural Fair 2014 |
| 7:25 am | 10:05 am |
| • Myanmar Series | • Myanmar Video |
| 8:00 am | |
| • TV Drama Series | |

Blatter 'shocked' by Sacchi's comments

ZURICH, 19 Feb — FIFA president Sepp Blatter said he was shocked at comments from former AC Milan and Italy coach Arrigo Sacchi who reportedly complained about the number of coloured players in Italian youth football.

"Pride and dignity is not a question of skin colour. Shocked by Arrigo Sacchi's comments. Stop it," Blatter said on Twitter on Tuesday.

Sacchi, who led Milan to successive European Cup titles in 1989 and 1990 and took Italy to the 1994 World Cup final, reportedly made the comments during an event on Monday night.

"Italy has no dignity or pride, it can't be right to see



FIFA President Sepp Blatter

teams with 15 foreigners," Italian media quoted him as saying. "I'm certainly not racist and my coaching history shows that... but watching the Viareggio (youth) tournament brings me to say that there are too many coloured players, also in the youth teams," he said.

Reuters



Medal tally in 4th National Sports Festival 2015 on 19-2-2015



State/Region	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
Yangon	63	37	26	126
Mandalay	24	27	37	88
Bago	12	13	14	39
Rakhine	9	9	15	33
Ayeyawady	4	8	20	32
Nay Pyi Taw	4	6	10	20
Kachin	4	5	3	12
Mon	3	8	5	16
Magway	3	5	6	14
Sagaing	3	4	3	10
Shan	2	6	14	22
Kayah	2	1	7	10
Chin	2	-	-	2
Taninthayi	1	7	11	19
Kayin	1	1	5	7

National Sports Festival continues for 7th day

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Feb — Chairman of Leading Committee for Organizing the National Sports Festival Union Minister for Sports U Tint Hsan and Deputy Minister U Thauung Htaik watched participations of athletes in the sports events with disabilities, cricket, Judo,

Taekwondo and Futsal events at stadiums and gymnasiums in Nay Pyi Taw on Thursday.

In the 7th day of the National Sports Festival, the Union minister, the deputy minister, Head of Office U Kyaw Oo and officials of sports federations presented prizes to the winners.—MNA

Fourth National Sports Festival 2015

Futsal Tournament was kicked off at Wunna Theikdi Futsal Indoor Stadium in Nay Pyi Taw on 19 February. Mandalay Region played against Yangon Region in the debut.
MNA



Athletes with disabilities taking part in men's 100-m wheelchair race at sports ground No 1 of Wunna Theikdi Stadium.—MNA

Myanmar, Fiji Friendship Football Match

Myanmar U 22 0 - 0 Fiji U 20

Ronaldo on target as Real ease past Schalke 2-0

GELSENKIRCHEN, (Germany), 19 Feb — Cristiano Ronaldo ended a three-game goal drought as holders Real Madrid won 2-0 at Schalke 04 on Wednesday to take a big step towards the Champions League quarter-finals and equal the competition record with a 10th straight win.

The world player of the year headed in after 26 minutes for his 73rd Champions League goal with Real's first chance and he set up Marcelo to make it seven wins for the Spanish side in seven Champions League games this season and 10 in a row.

Real's victory was nowhere near as emphatic as last season's 6-1 romp at Schalke at the same

stage of the competition but it was a much-needed confidence boost for Carlo Ancelotti's team after a lacklustre start to the year in Spain.

"Anything can happen in the Champions League. We are humble and we know that to get through we have to work hard like we did today," Marcelo told Spanish television. "We have a two-goal advantage but the tie is not over.

"Cristiano is not obsessed with scoring. Goals come when the team works together," he said of his team mate.

Looking to become the first team to retain the Champions League title, Real, eliminated from the

King's Cup this month and crushed 4-0 by Atletico Madrid in La Liga, host Schalke in the second leg on 10 March.

The Germans fielded five defenders and were on the back foot from the start but coach Robert Di Matteo's disciplined 5-3-2 system proved effective.

Schalke gradually grew in confidence and created good chances for Dennis Aogo and Klaas-Jan Huntelaar.

But Ronaldo put Real ahead, ending his mini lean spell with a glancing header from Daniel Carvajal's cross to take his competition tally to 73, two short of the record held by Barcelona's Lionel Messi.

Schalke keeper Timon

Wellenreuther, making his competition debut, did well to deny Karim Benzema and Ronaldo, parrying a curling free kick in the 34th.

Schalke's game plan collapsed when Huntelaar, back in action despite serving a suspension in the Bundesliga for a red card, limped off with a leg injury.

Real were almost punished by 19-year-old Felix Platte who replaced Huntelaar and struck a shot against the crossbar 15 minutes from time.

"The quality made the difference," Schalke coach Di Matteo said.

"They have superb players and that is why they are the title holders. They had one chance and

scored two goals."

Brazilian Marcelo ended any lingering German hopes with a powerful shot 11 minutes from the end after good work

from Ronaldo to keep Real firmly on course for a record-extending 11th triumph in Europe's premier club competition.

Reuters



Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo controls the ball during their Champions League Round of 16 first leg soccer match against Schalke 04 in Gelsenkirchen on 18 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS