

President U Thein Sein leads Myanmar delegation on Malaysia state visit



President U Thein Sein and Sultan His Majesty Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah of Malaysia take salute of the Guard of Honour at Parliament Square in Kuala Lumpur.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 12 March — President U Thein Sein began a two-day state visit to Malaysia on Thursday, bringing a Myanmar delegation including cabinet ministers and senior officials.

Sultan His Majesty Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah and Her Majesty the Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Hajah Hamidah welcomed President

U Thein Sein and wife Daw Khin Khin Win at Kuala Lumpur's Parliament Square in the evening. After taking salute, the president and sultan inspected the Guard of Honour.

In the morning, President U Thein Sein and Daw Khin Khin Win were seen off at Nay Pyi Taw Airport by Vice Presidents Dr Sai Mauk Kham, and U Nyan Tun and wife,

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, union ministers and wives, the head of Nay Pyi Taw Command and officials.

The Myanmar delegation includes union ministers U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Tin Naing Thein, U Zeyar Aung, U Aye Myint, U Htay Aung and U Ye Htut and officials.

(See page 3)

UNICEF to train social workers on assisting children

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 12 March—UNICEF Myanmar will provide training on assisting children to social work case managers from the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, the United Nations agency said Tuesday.

UNICEF Representative to Myanmar, Mr Bertrand Bainvel, said the programme starting this year is aimed at providing better case management services to child victims, mostly from Rakhine, Kachin and Shan states.

More than 80 case managers in 27 townships

across the country will attend the courses covering topics including child labour and trafficking.

The programme is funded by the Australian government, which on Tuesday signed a AUD2.5 million agreement with UNICEF Myanmar to support its childcare and protection works.

The UN official said, "The funds will be distributed across three key areas of work—childcare and protection, justice for children and protection of children in emergencies and armed conflicts."

(See page 2)

Health Ministry to increase spending on H5N1 prevention

By Aye Min Soe

NAY PYI TAW, 12 March — In an effort to prevent the spread of avian influenza, including the H5N1 strain which can be deadly to humans, the Ministry of Health said Thursday it will increase spending on infection control and monitoring.

The Ministry of Health will increase funding to fight bird flu as much as necessary in order to prevent a pandemic, Dr Soe Lwin Nyein, the Deputy Director-General of the Communicable Diseases Control Department said, quoting the Union minister.

At a recent meeting in Nay Pyi Taw, Union Minister for Health Dr Than Aung gave a green light to increase the funding to fight the infectious disease,

urging departments concerned to work more closely with the Health Ministry to monitor and control the

H5N1 virus.

The increased expenditure will focus on stockpiling medicines and personal

protective equipment, upgrading the national laboratory in Yangon, reinforcing

(See page 2)



Ministry of Health and Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development are working closely together to prevent H5N1, urging people to follow their instructions on preventing a pandemic.—PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

INSIDE

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham meets former Philippine President, UN officials

PAGE-3

Pyithu Hluttaw speaker meets two foreign delegations

PAGE-3

Parliamentary teaching centre opened

PAGE-2

Remove language barrier to help national race children

PAGE-8

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

NAY PYI TAW, 12 March — The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on Thursday discussed the Union budgets bill of 2015, with members of parliament expressing their viewpoints on accounting procedures.

The Joint Public Accounts Committee suggested that annual budgets should not include foreign loans in accounts of budget deficits rather than revenues.

According to the IMF's debt assessment in September 2014, it needs to tax exemption and decrease

of loan disbursement. In line with the Union budget law, salary of government service personnel has risen to 30 percent than the last year.

An MP from a constituency in Mandalay Region stressed the need to balance macroeconomy in shaping the economy of the country and adopt a tax system suitable for the country.

Another MP from the constituency of Dagon Myothit (North) mentioned a huge budget deficit, citing K8,639,128 million in income and K 12,078,689

Union budgets bill come under discussion at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

million in expenditure. The MP urged the Myanmar Investment Commission to see to the matter, stressing that unsuccessful state-owned industries are thwarting the country's economic growth.—MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw representatives debate Union budget bill at Thursday's session.

MNA



Pyithu Hluttaw

Union Supreme Court responds to legal action against unjust verdicts by judges

NAY PYI TAW, 12 March — The Pyithu Hluttaw on Thursday was asked of a query of the way legal action is taken against judges for unjust verdicts and how many of them have been punished, with the Supreme Court of the Union responding that unjust decisions are likely to result from the wrong interpretation of legal stipu-

lations and that judges imposing unlawful decisions are punished regarding the severity of their wrongful verdicts.

An MP tabled a motion at the parliament, demanding seismic surveys for hydropower projects planned to implement in the Thanlwin river. The Ministry of Electric Power responded arrangements are underway

to study possible impacts the projects might have on the environment and that the public will be informed of safety measures.

The parliament approved another motion urging the government to place the marketplace of the country's products in border trade under the management of citizens.

MNA

Parliamentary teaching centre opened

NAY PYI TAW, 12 March — A world-level parliamentary teaching centre was established for improving capacity of MPs and staff, deputy speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa told the

opening ceremony of the centre at Zabuthiri Hall of the Hluttaw Complex, here, on Thursday.

UNDP Administrator Ms Helen Clark explained cooperation between UNDP and Myanmar's

Hluttaw and expressed her pledge to provide more assistance to Myanmar.

The deputy speaker, Chairman of Hluttaw Development Coordination Joint Committee U Hla Myint Oo and Ms Helen Clark visited the centre after opening it.

MNA

UNICEF to . . .

(from page 1)

Under the agreement, the UN agency will also offer refresher training on child rights to around 150

judges this year, as well as psychosocial support for children.

Australia has been a major UNICEF partner since 2005.

GNLM



Mr Nicholas Coppel, Australian Ambassador to Myanmar, (left), and Mr Bertrand Bainvel, UNICEF Representative to Myanmar, exchange notes of agreement on child protection programmes.—By KHAING THANDA LWIN

Amyotha Hluttaw

Myanmar's airlines urged to merge for giving better flight services



Deputy Minister U Zin Yaw.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 12 March — The Ministry of Transport and Department of Civil Aviation have urged Myanmar's airlines to merge with among them or international airlines so as to give better flight services to the passengers, Deputy Minister for Transport U Zin Yaw replied to a question raised by U Nyunt Tin of Yangon Region Constituency No 2



U Nyunt Tin of Yangon Region Constituency No 2.—MNA

at Thursday's session of Amyotha Hluttaw. With regard to the ASEAN Open Sky Policy included in the question of U Nyunt Tin, the deputy minister said that Department of Civil Aviation will clarify the drafting Myanmar Aviation Policy to all stakeholders for seeking advices from them. The ministry allows establishment of joint venture airlines with 49 per-

cent of foreign investment.

The MP asked one related question on plans of the departments concerned to urge airlines not to recruit staff with incentives of high salaries and emoluments in competitiveness with opponent airlines. The deputy minister replied that the Ministry of Transport has responsibility to supervise safely operating the airlines in line with the International Civil Aviation Organization and economic policies, laws and regulations of the government. Recruitment of staff is under management of respective organizations.

A video clip on hearing the bill amending the national education law was presented to MPs at the 12th session of Amyotha Hluttaw.

MNA

Health Ministry to increase...

(from page 1)

ICU (Intensive Care Units) facilities and monitoring infectious diseases at entrances into Myanmar including border areas, according to the Ministry of Health.

"We totally contained the recent outbreak of bird flu (H5N1), but one of our neighbouring countries, India, is facing an outbreak of swine flu (H1N1)," Dr Soe Lwin Nyein said.

"The combination of these two viruses can cause a pandemic disease. They can combine only in pigs. So, we looked into recent cases of bird flu to know whether there were piggeries near the chicken farms

where bird flu happened."

The ministry is currently monitoring both Ebola and H1N1 viruses at the same time, he added.

The Ministry of Health has raised the alert levels to prevent the spread of the bird flu virus in the country since the recent outbreak in Monywa, culling more than 1,500 chickens and over 20,000 quails in the area.

Meanwhile, the health ministry is cooperating with the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development to emphasize the importance of keeping adequate distance between pigs and chickens being farmed.

The Ministry of Health announced that four workers with fever symptoms from the chicken farms in Monywa were tested after the outbreak, but none were infected with bird flu virus.

The country has seen seven outbreaks of bird flu from 2003 to 2014. Since its first outbreak in 2003, Myanmar has implemented the National Strategic Plan for Prevention and Control of Avian Influenza and Human Influenza Pandemic.

In an outbreak in 2006, a seven-year old girl was infected with H5N1 virus, but human infection was brought under control.

The last outbreak in Myanmar was in 2011 in western Rakhine State.

The World Health Organization is working closely with the Ministry of Health, providing information and technical assistance to control infectious diseases in Myanmar. The ministry has stressed the importance of early reporting of suspected cases of bird flu and human infection.

The WHO says the world must pay attention to the variety and spread of viruses related to avian influenza, from H5N1 to its variants that have emerged in recent years. The disease can affect domestic and farm animals, as well as wild species, raising the possibility of further new strains developing.

GNLM

NATIONAL

President U Thein Sein leads Myanmar delegation on...

(from page 1)

The delegation arrived at Kuala Lumpur International Airport in the afternoon, and was welcomed by the Malaysian Minister of Foreign Affairs and wife, the minister at the Prime Minister Office and officials, Myanmar Ambassador U Zaw Myint and wife, the military attaché and officials.

The President and

wife posed for documentary photo with the Sultan and wife of Malaysia at the Presidential Palace in Kuala Lumpur at 8 p.m.

At Banquet Hall, the Malaysian Sultan and wife hosted a dinner to the President and wife. It was also attended by union ministers, the Myanmar Ambassador to Malaysia together with senior officers of Malaysia.

MNA

President U Thein Sein and wife Daw Khin Khin Win attend a dinner hosted by Malaysian Sultan and wife.—MNA



Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham meets former Philippine President, UN officials



Vice President Dr. Sai Mauk Kham cordially greets former president of the Philippines Mr. Fidel V Ramos.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 12 March — Vice President Dr. Sai Mauk Kham received a delegation led by former president of the Philippines Mr. Fidel V

Ramos at the Presidential Palace, here, on Thursday to hold talks on water resources management.

They also focused on basic health care service and cooperation in supply of electricity.

The Philippine guests were accompanied by Ambassador of the Philippines Alex G Chua.

The vice president also held talks with Ms. Helen Clerk, Administrator of the United Nations Development Fund and World Food Programme-WFP Executive Director Ms. Ertharin Cousin and party at the same venue.

They discussed cooperation between Myanmar and UNDP and WFP, political, economic and social progress of Myanmar, and development of social economy to solve problems between two communities in Rakhine State.

Also present at the meeting were union ministers Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win and U Khin Yi together with deputy ministers.

MNA

Vietnamese Vice President meets Yangon Region government, pays homage to Shwedagon Pagoda

YANGON, 12 March — Vice President Madam Nguyen Thi Doan of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and party held talks with Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe and region ministers at the Yan-

gon Region government office on Thursday morning.

In the afternoon, they visited the project being implemented by Vietnam's HAGL Company at the corner of Kaba Aye Pagoda Road and Sethmu-1 Street.

In the evening, they offered flowers, water and lights to Shwedagon Pagoda and paid homage.

At night, they left Yangon International Airport for Vietnam.

MNA



President U Thein Sein and wife Daw Khin Khin Win being welcomed by a Myanmar girl at Kuala Lumpur International Airport.—MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw speaker meets two foreign delegations

NAY PYI TAW, 12 March — Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann met a delegation led by Mr Fidel V Ramos, a former Filipino president, at the Parliament Building here on Thursday, officials said.

The speaker praised the former Filipino president for his efforts to boost economy, restore national reconciliation and win in-

ternational trust while he took office from 1992 to 1998, speaking of challenges that have arisen in the path to Myanmar's democratic transition and reform.

The former president of the Philippines pointed out the need of ASEAN countries to build greater unity and cooperation at a time when the world is facing rapid revolutionization in political and

economic settings.

In the afternoon, Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann received a United Nations delegation at the same venue.

The UN delegation was led by Helen Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, and Ertharin Cousin, Executive Director of the UN World Food Programme.—MNA



Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann meets Helen Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme.—MNA

Matriculation exam runs without hitch in Zabuthiri Tsp

NAY PYI TAW, 12 March — The 2015 matriculation examination began across the nation on 11 March, with 1,969 students sitting the test in Zabuthiri Township.

Director-General U Tin Myo Kyi of No 2 Department of Basic Education instructed township education officers and exam supervisors to abide by prescribed rules and regulations and provide assistance to ensure the smooth running of the exams at No 6 Basic Education High School in Zabuthiri Township on 11 March.

In conversing with parents and relatives of



candidate students, the director-general explained arrangements for the convenience of students as

well as security measures.

Thant Maung (IPRD)

Farmers learn about use of wasps to control insect pests



NAY PYI TAW, 12 March — Local farmers learned about using wasps to control crop-damaging pests at a seminar led by Deputy Director Dr Kyin

Kyin Win of Agriculture Department (Head Office) in Khuntaunggyi Village, Shwebo Township, on 7 March.

Agriculturists demon-

strated the use of Trichogramma wasp species to control pests at monsoon and summer paddy fields to more than 300 farmers.

Ko Pauk (Okkar Myay)

Expo set to showcase Vietnamese exports

NAY PYI TAW, 12 March — Some 80 Vietnamese firms will showcase their technologies, services and products at a services and tourism expo in Yangon from 20 to 24 May, with the aim of boosting exports to fellow ASEAN economies, the VietNam News Daily reported Thursday.

The HCM City Expo 2015, organised by HCM City Investment and Trade Promotion Centre, will feature more than 100 trade booths. The expo will be the fourth trade and investment exhibition organised by ITPC in Myanmar.

Kyaw Htike Soe

Building boom fuels demand for bricks in Myanaung Tsp



MYANAUNG, 12 March — Brick production is booming in open season amid a surge in construction projects in major urban

areas. Due to the rapidly increasing number of construction sites, brick producers cannot keep up with demand this year, a brick

factory owner said.

Some buyers are paying deposits to make sure they can obtain enough bricks, which sell for K70

each, while others have signed agreements to purchase the entire output of factories for the production season.

The high demand for bricks has caused impact to deforestation, as factory owners seek wood to fire their kilns. One brick factory owner explained that most plants use firewood for fuel, while those in rural areas use paddy husks to lower production costs.

In Myanaung Township, Ayeyawady Region, local factories produce both sandy and clay bricks, with masons and civil engineers generally preferring the lat-



Dredging of North Meiktila Lake set to increase water supply



MEIKTILA, 12 March — Work is under way to dredge silt from North Meiktila Lake to increase its storage capacity as a source of water for local residents in Meiktila, Mandalay Region.

The region government has a plan to construct 19 dams to stop silt and sand flowing into North Meiktila Lake, and it has demanded a budget for the project to Mandalay Region government

in the 2015-16 fiscal year, Mandalay Region Minister U Myint Than told media.

Although governments in successive eras have maintained the seven-mile-long and half-mile-wide lake, gradually silting has been reducing its capacity year by year.

At present, local people rely on the lake as a source of water for drinking and cultivation.

GNLM-018

ter type, as sandy bricks are more easily damaged.

All brick factories in Myanaung Township have reportedly sold their products under agreements

signed with buyers, with the high demand likely to fuel price rises likely in the next production season.

Nay Win Zaw (Myanaung)

LOCAL NEWS

Tatkon Township sets plan for Buddhist treatise examinations

TATKON, 12 March — Monks and novices are preparing to sit Buddhist treatise examinations which will be held across the country in the first week of April.

Officials from the Department of Religious Affairs, under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, met on Wednesday at the office of the Township Sangha Nayaka Committee in Tatkon Township to prepare for the staging of the exam.

The examination will be held at different levels including the basic, primary, junior and senior levels for monks and novices.

Tin Soe Lwin (IPRD)



JAPAN grants US\$316,605 for three rural health centres in Taungup, Thandwe and Gwa townships

YANGON, 12 March —The Japanese Government, under its Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Human Security Projects (GGP) Scheme, has extended assistance of US\$316,605 for three humanitarian assistance programs: US\$ 103,710 for construction of rural health center in Ashay Bet Village, Taungup Township, Rakhine State, US\$ 106,910 for rural health center in Zalun Village, Thandwe Township, Rakhine State and US\$ 105,985 for rural health center in Taungpauk Village, Gwa Township, Rakhine State.

The handover and opening ceremonies of the three projects took place in Taungup, Thandwe and Gwa Townships on 26 and 27 February, 2015 respectively. Ms. Satomi KIKUCHI, Second Secretary of the Embassy of Japan, U Myint Hlaing, Amyotha Hluttaw Representative, Dr. Aung Kyaw Min, Rakhine State Social Affairs Minister, Township Medical Officers,

Township Administrators, local authorities from government departments and local residents were in attendance.

The Japanese Government supported construction of the centers including staff quarters, medical equipment and furniture. The projects will benefit 27,280 people from 39 villages in Taungup Township, 7,969 people from 45 villages in Thandwe Township and 10,537 people from 26 villages in Gwa Township.

The Government of Japan has assisted 714 various grass-roots projects in Myanmar under the GGP scheme since 1993, the number consisting of 327 education projects, 182 healthcare projects, 137 public welfare and environment projects, 33 infrastructure projects and 35 other projects. The Government of Japan hopes that these assistances will further strengthen the existing friendly relations between Myanmar and Japan.

GGP/GNLM

Bird flu fear drives demand for fish products

NATOGYI, 12 March — With reports of avian influenza raising fears about poultry products, demand for dried fish and fish paste is on the rise in central Myanmar, especially in Natogyi Township, a dry zone area of Mandalay Region.

Dried fish is sold at K15,000 to K20,000 per viss (1.6 kilos) in the market while pork and chicken are sold at K6,000 per viss.

Avian influenza was recently reported at some poultry farms in Sagaing Region.—*Htay Myint Maung*



Dried fish on sales at market in Natogyi Township.



Headmistress Daw Khin Mar Swe presents completion certificate to Maung Nyi Phone Kyaw of Grade-5 at the hall of Basic Education Middle School Branch in Aungmye Shwebon in Myawady Township on 11 March.
TUN TUN OO (MYAWADY TOWN)

Work under way at Muse Central Economic Zone

MUSE, 12 March — Work is under way to build housing, shops and offices as part of a new trade centre in Muse town on the Chinese border.

Implementation of

the Muse economic zone project is aimed at developing Muse town and increasing the number of tourist arrivals.

Under the permission of Myanmar Investment

Commission, Muse New Star Construction Company Ltd. started construction of a shopping mall, apartments and public service buildings, as well as recreational zones on 288.16

acres. The Muse district formed with Muse, Namkham, Kutkai, Kyukok, Pangsay, Monekoe and Manheero shares a border with Ruili of the People's Republic of China.

The construction company compensated farmers at K24 million per acre of lost farmland, K12 million per acre of alluvial land, K15 million per acre of horticultural farm and

K12 million per acre of cropland.

The company is striving for soonest completion of the project with the use of heavy machinery to reclaim 188.539 acres of land as of 10 October 2012.

GNLM-018



Modern Myanmar-style shopping area.



Scale model of villa area included in project of Muse Central Economic Zone.

Top diplomats set to meet to discuss China, South Korea, Japan summit

SEOUL, 12 March — The foreign ministers of South Korea, Japan and China are preparing to meet this month for their first talks in nearly three years in a bid to resolve tensions over Japan's war-time past and discuss a trilateral summit.

Japanese media reported that the foreign ministers would likely meet in Seoul on 21 and 22 March. South Korea said a ministers' meeting is planned for this month, without confirming the dates.

"If the trilateral foreign ministers' meeting is held soon, it will undoubtedly give us the opportunity to re-establish the groundwork for trust-building and common prosperity," South Korea's deputy foreign minister Lee Kyung-soo said.



South Korea's Deputy Minister for Political Affairs Lee Kyung-soo (C) leads Japan's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Shinsuke Sugiyama (L) and China's Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Liu Zhenmin during the tenth Republic of Korea-Japan-China Trilateral Senior Foreign Officials' Consultation at a hotel in central Seoul on 11 March, 2015. —REUTERS

Lee hosted a meeting of his counterparts in Seoul on Wednesday, saying their

goal was to make "preparations for a successful foreign ministers' meeting,

upon which we may pave ways for the next step of trilateral cooperation".

The last three-way summit took place in May 2012 in Beijing.

Japan's ties with China remain frosty despite Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe meeting Chinese President Xi Jinping for the first time last November on the sidelines of an Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum.

Abe has yet to have a formal two-way summit with South Korean President Park Geun-hye, although they sat down with US President Barack Obama a year ago on the sidelines of a nuclear summit to discuss responses to North Korea's military threats.

South Korea has accused Japan of trying to "undermine" an apology issued in 1993 to Asian women it forced to work as wartime sex slaves in

Japanese brothels, known as "comfort women", by conducting a review of it last year.

Both South Korea and China have been angered by visits by Japanese government ministers, including Abe, to the Yasukuni Shrine, which they see as a symbol of Japan's past militarism.

Ties have also been strained by territorial rows.

China and Japan claim ownership of a tiny group of uninhabited islets in the East China Sea, called the Senkaku by Japan and the Diaoyu by China.

South Korea and Japan also have a separate dispute over islands that lie between their mainlands, called Dokdo in Korean and Takeshima in Japanese.

Reuters

Indonesia signals will not execute foreigners for at least 16 days

JAKARTA, 12 March — Indonesia signalled on Thursday that it would not execute foreigners on death row for at least the next 16 days after the attorney general's office said that all the prisoners would be executed together.

Ten foreigners convicted of drugs offences have mostly been transferred to the prison island of Nusakambangan for execution by firing squad. They include citizens of Australia, France, Brazil, the Philippines, Ghana and Nigeria.

On Thursday, an appeal by two Australians

against the rejection of a clemency request by the president was postponed until 19 March. A decision on a separate court appeal by a French convict was postponed on Wednesday until 25 March.

"There has been no change of plans from the AGO that all executions will be all at once," the attorney general's spokesman Tony Spontana told reporters, adding that sentences would not be carried out until "everything is clear".

If the appeals are rejected, the government will still have to give 72 hours notice before it carries out

the executions.

Australia has been pursuing an eleventh-hour campaign to save the lives of its citizens Myuran Sukumaran, 33, and Andrew Chan, 31, convicted in 2005 as the ringleaders of a plot to smuggle heroin out of Indonesia. Australia's campaign and repeated pleas for mercy have helped ramp up diplomatic tensions with Indonesia.

Indonesia has harsh penalties for drug trafficking and resumed executions in 2013 after a five-year gap. Five foreigners were among six people executed last month, the first executions since President Joko Widodo took office in October.

Among those on death row, a Filipina convict has appealed to the Supreme Court and a decision could come as early as this week, local media reported.

Brazilian national Rodrigo Gualarte's family has pleaded for clemency on the grounds of mental illness.

The attorney general told reporters in Jakarta last week the prisoner was

being examined by medical professionals. Officials were still waiting for the results.

Australia's offer to pay for the costs of imprisoning its citizens for life as an alternative to execution was rejected by the Indonesian foreign office on Thursday.

"We emphasise that this is not an issue of negotiation," spokesman Armanatha Nasir told reporters. "This is upholding the law. If a country starts to negotiate law, that is a form of violation. So I emphasise that there is no negotiation."

Australian Foreign Minister Julia Bishop said she had not heard of any rejection after talks with her Indonesian counterpart Retno Marsudi.

"These were preliminary discussions. I'm yet to have a response on that specific issue," Bishop told reporters in Perth.

Bishop however said Marusdi rejected an offer of a prisoner swap, with the Australians being exchanged for three Indonesians being held in Australia.—Reuters

India's Sonia Gandhi marches to support ex-PM Singh in court summons



India's ruling Congress party president Sonia Gandhi watched by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (L) fills nomination papers seeking to retain her post as the party chief at her residence in New Delhi on 2 Sept, 2010. —REUTERS

NEW DELHI, 12 March — The top leadership of India's Congress party including its enigmatic president Sonia Gandhi walked to former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's home on Thursday in a unusual display of support after he was summoned to court in a corruption case.

The most recognizable of the ministers who served under Singh strode through the leafy streets of central Delhi to his colonial-era bungalow where he stood outside smiling, his wife by his side. Gandhi, 68, who rarely speaks in public off the campaign trail, rallied to Singh's cause in apparent recognition of his loyalty to her family, which last year was replaced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as India's top political force.

"We are fully behind him, we will fight this legally and with all the means

at our command, we are sure that he will be fully vindicated," Gandhi said, flanked by the former defense and finance ministers who dominated government for a decade. Elsewhere, in the heartland state of Uttar Pradesh, hundreds of Congress workers briefly stopped trains in sit-in protests on railway tracks.

A judge on Wednesday ordered Singh to appear on 8 April to explain his role in the illegal award of a coal field to a billionaire, a new blow for the Gandhi-led party that was engulfed by graft scandals towards the end of its rule.

The show of unity contrasted with the treatment of late Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao, who was kicked out of the Congress party after a 1996 election defeat and left to fight a corruption trial and other legal cases on his own.—Reuters



Death row inmate Serge Atlaoui of France (L) sits in a Tangerang District Court while filing a request for a judicial review near Jakarta on 11 March, 2015.

REUTERS

Singapore's Changi Airport awarded best for 3rd year

SINGAPORE, 12 March — Singapore's Changi Airport has been ranked as the world's best airport for the third consecutive year, the airport said on Thursday. It is the 5th time that Changi Airport has been given the title at the World Airport Awards. The award polled 13.02 mil-

lion air travellers from 112 countries and regions, and covers a total of 550 airports. The survey is based on 39 performance indicators including check-in, arrivals, transfers, shopping, security and immigration, through to departure at the gate, it said.

"We are excited about

Changi Airport's future as we expand to serve an increasing number of passengers. However, we will not forget to continue to delight our passengers through our focus on service excellence and spirit of innovation," said Lee Seow Hiang, Chief Executive Officer of Changi Air-

port Group.

South Korea's Incheon International Airport ranks the second, followed by Germany's Munich Airport and Hong Kong International Airport. Beijing Capital International Airport takes the 10th place in this year's award.

Xinhua

WORLD

Gov't resumes base relocation site survey drilling in Okinawa

NAHA, (Japan), 12 March — The Defence Ministry on Thursday resumed an offshore boring survey in Okinawa Prefecture for the construction of a US base replacement airfield, angering local people who have shown opposition to the plan in recent elections.

"This is utterly deplorable," said Okinawa Gov Takeshi Onaga, who became governor in December with a pledge to block the construction to relocate the US Marine Corps Futenma Air Station within the southern Japanese prefecture.

"I will take every possible means to realize my campaign pledge of not allowing a base in Henoko," the governor told reporters in Tokyo, referring to the

affected coastal district, while about 40 local citizens held a protest rally there criticizing the government for "bulldozing" through the plan.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told a regular press conference, "We will carry on without making a fuss, while making sure the environment (there) will be preserved."

The ministry's Okinawa Defence Bureau, which initially began the boring in August, suspended the work about a month later due to bad weather and also in apparent consideration of the gubernatorial election held in November.

In Okinawa, which hosts the bulk of US military installations in Japan, opponents of the plan to build a base on reclaimed



A Japan Coast Guard vessel (L) confronts a boat carrying opponents of the resumption of a seabed-boring survey by the Okinawa Defence Bureau off the Henoko district of Nago in the southernmost prefecture of Okinawa on 12 March, 2015. — KYODO NEWS

land in waters off Henoko won in both the gubernatorial and the four local

contests in the country's general election in December — the prefecture's four

single-seat constituencies.

In a sign of the deepening rift between the

central and local governments, Onaga indicated in February the possibility of withdrawing the local permission for rock drilling, which the bureau needs to carry on with the boring survey to reclaim the coastal area.

Onaga is also eyeing the possibility of rescinding approval for the landfill work his predecessor Hirokazu Nakaima issued in late 2013.

The Okinawa Defence Bureau plans to check the geological conditions in the survey. It is considering pushing back the survey's end scheduled for 31 March, but Defence Minister Gen Nakatani has said the government wants to start reclamation work around the summer as planned.—Kyodo News

Murgasova: Energy price rise part of IMF-Serbia agreement

VIENNA, 12 March — The electricity price increase of 15 percent is part of the agreement with Serbia, as stated in the memorandum which the country submitted prior to the closing of the arrangement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Head of IMF Mission in Serbia Zuzana Murgasova said.

Replying to *Tanjug's* question as to how she sees the fact that officials in Serbia are announcing an electricity price increase after 1 April, Murgasova said that this matter would be a topic of the next agreement review some time in mid-May. Potential delays in the search for a solution to

the problem of Petrohemija petrochemical complex, Azotara fertilizer plant and chemical manufacturer and distributor MSK will also be a topic of the talks in the review, she said and expressed the hope that the government would find a solution to the companies by that time.

Murgasova expressed the belief that the stand-by arrangement closed with Serbia is a high quality one.

We are satisfied with the fact that the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development would be included in the realisation of the arrangement, she said.—*Tanjug*

No bans on NZ dairy products after poison threat

WELLINGTON, 12 March — New Zealand has received no indications that any foreign countries would stop buying its dairy products following a threat to poison infant formula with a toxic pesticide, the agriculture ministry said on Thursday.

Countries including China, the biggest buyer of New Zealand dairy products, were not closing the door on shipments, a top official from the ministry told *Reuters*, as police track down the sender of letters to dairy giant Fonterra and the national farmers' group which were accompanied by infant formula laced with the pesticide 1080.

"Last night we had been speaking to our counterparts in overseas markets, and as of this morning, none of them indicated

that any product was going to be stopped," said Scott Gallacher, deputy director-general of the Ministry of Primary Industries.

Following the announcement of the police investigation earlier this week, China has said it would increase scrutiny of milk powder imports from New Zealand, the world's largest dairy exporter, which depends on the commodity for around a quarter of its export earnings.

While China has stopped short of placing restrictions on imports, some smaller New Zealand infant formula marketing companies said they had seen a fall in orders for the product commonly prized among China's growing middle class since the threat was publicised.

A few domestic milk

powder and infant formula processors said they had not seen a fall in demand for their products so far, while adding that ramped-up Chinese scrutiny may delay exports by around two to four weeks.

"The feedback from the market has been very quiet. We've only had one direct contact from one customer in China who has requested that we test for 1080 and make sure the results are on (shipping certificates)," said Richard Wyeth, CEO of Miraka, which processes milk powder and UHT milk products. But he added: "We only make commodity powder, so we're not seeing the full impact that others would be."

Infant formula processors have said they anticipate stable demand from

overseas buyers, while Fonterra which processes nearly 90 percent of the country's milk collection, will not comment on off-shore demand for its products.

MPI's Gallacher said dairy processors were informed of the investigation last month, the same time that overseas government agencies and big infant formula brands including Nestle, Abbott Laboratories and Mead Johnson were told.

Larger companies were informed before smaller ones, which were told by their suppliers after the threat was publicised, as dairy processors and the government believed the impact to their supply chains warranted an early heads up, he added.

Reuters

Women's group bids to walk across Korea demilitarized zone for peace

NEW YORK, 12 March — A group of 30 women from countries including the United States, South Korea and Japan is planning in May to march across the demilitarized zone that has separated North and South Korea for decades, organizers said on Wednesday at the United Nations.

"We are walking to invite all concerned to imagine a new chapter in Korean history, marked by dialogue, understanding and — ultimately — forgiveness," said Christine Ahn, the international coordinator of Women Demilitarize the Zone and co-coordinator of the march. "We are

walking to end the Korean War by replacing the 1953 armistice with a permanent peace treaty."

Gloria Steinem, the American author, journalist and activist who also serves as honorary co-chair of the group, has thrown her weight behind the project. "It's hard to imagine any more physical symbol of the insanity of dividing human beings than this zone," she said during the panel discussion, recalling her past visit there.

The group tentatively plans to meet North Korean women in Pyongyang for an international peace symposium and then to walk with

them to the northern side of the DMZ.

They are looking at crossing on 24 May, the International Women's Day for Disarmament.

On the other side of the border, the participants plan to meet with South Korean women for another symposium. In order to carry out the plan, the organizers must be granted permission from both Koreas and the UN Command.

Ahn said she received a "letter of intent" from Pyongyang last year that supported the event "if conditions are ripe."

"That issue is under discussion in the capital as

far as I know," North Korean diplomat Kim Song told *Kyodo News* in a phone interview.

An official at the South Korean mission confirmed to *Kyodo* that "Seoul is reviewing the project."

Ahn said that the group's advisor, Bill Richardson, a former US ambassador to the United Nations, was informed by the UN Command that they would grant the group permission to cross if the South Koreans agree to it.

Suzuyo Takazato from Japan's Okinawa Prefecture was among the eight panelists who spoke during the discussion, stressing

the necessity of securing a peace treaty. "Without a peace treaty ending the Korean War, the Asia-Pacific region is plagued by insecurity, which underlies this military build-up," she said. "I am walking for peace in my home, Okinawa and for peace in the region."

The 74-year-old recalled a Korean "comfort woman" she once befriended and whom she said she would be thinking about during the planned walk. Having been brought to Okinawa during World War II to work in a Japanese military brothel, the woman was never able to go home, Takazato said.

"Thinking of her (comfort woman's) whole life I really hope that Korea will really be in peace," she said. The delegation also includes two Nobel peace laureates, Mairead Maguire from Northern Ireland and Leymah Gbowee from Liberia. In total, women from over a dozen countries will participate.

Ahn acknowledges the challenges ahead but said she is undaunted.

"It is a political landmine and that is why we are trying to break this impasse, we really believe women can and should end this war," Ahn added.

Kyodo News

PERSPECTIVES

Friday, 13 March, 2015

Remove language barrier to help national race children

By Myint Win Thein

Most Myanmar students who study abroad face the common difficulty of having to learn their disciplines through the medium of English. In order to meet the requirements of their courses, most under-

take additional English language classes.

Children beginning primary school with lessons taught in a second language, however, do not have the same opportunity. This is the situation faced by children of national races in border and rural areas, where most of them know only their mother tongue, but where all school subjects are taught in the Myanmar language. For a child, trying to learn a subject taught in an unfamiliar language poses unnecessary difficulties and is likely to result in failure.

It also wastes taxpayers' money, as well as teachers' and pupils' time and effort. Under this system, members of national races in border areas are considerably less successful in education and have little option other than their traditional ways of life. Their areas lag behind others in development. It is also ridiculous for a child to need

language courses before he or she starts school.

The simplest solution to the problem is to teach them in their mother tongues. Primary school children have a better long-term chance of academic success if they can learn subjects in the languages they already know.

Write for us

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

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

Life and Value

Kyi Mun

Life means: (1) Conditions that distinguishes animals and plants from earth, rock, etc; *How did life begin? Where did life come from?* (2) Living things collectively, in general; plants, animals, people: *Is there any life on the planet Mars? A naturalist studies animal and plant life.* (3) State of existence as a human being: *Life is sweet: It was a matter of life and death:* Something on which the continued existence of somebody depended. *The battle was won, but only at great sacrifices of life. (i.e. many were killed). They ran for dear life (for very life), in order, or as if, to save themselves from death. I can't for the life of me (i.e. even if my life depended upon it) remember what happened.* (4) State of existence, as an individual living being. *How many lives were lost in the disaster?* (5) Period between birth and death, or between birth and the present, or between the present and death. (6) Human relations; the business, pleasures, social activities, etc. of the world. (7) Living, career: *Some people have easy lives:* (8) Written account of somebody's life. Biography: Do you enjoy reading the lives of great men? (9) Activity, Liveliness, interest: *The children are full of life, are active and cheerful;* Put more life into your work; *he was the life and soul of the party.* (10) Living form or model: *A portrait taken from (the) life.* (11) Fresh start or opportunity after a narrow escape from death, disaster, etc. (12) Period during which something is active or useful, *the life of a ship.*

Value means: Quality of being useful or desirable; *the value of walking as an exercise;* Worth of something when compared with something else; (3) Worth of something in terms of money or other goods for which it can be exchanged. (4) What something is considered to be worth (contrasted with the price obtainable) Now, let's explore the wider meanings of Life and Value in the following ways:

L for Living, moving and having our being
I for Integrity and Insight
F for FIRE □ Fortitude, Iron Mind, Resilience & Endurance
E for Equanimity
&
V for Vision
A for Achievement
L for Love & Live
U for Uniqueness
E for Enjoy Life
LIVING AND MOVING AND HAVING OUR BEING

We should live and move and have our being in love, laughter and learning. Life is a very rare chance

and we should adore it as much as we can. First, we should replace ignorance with knowledge and wisdom. Secondly, we should handle our passions and desires with insight, restraints and control. Passions and desires must be channelled in the right ways and directions. Thirdly, we should live and move and have our being in service, selflessness, and serenity.

INTERRITY & INSIGHT

We should all be glad just to be alive. As we are human beings with common sense, we had better live our lives with honour, honesty and harmony. We should also guide our lives with seeing through the big picture and far into the future. Our future should be planned and shaped in the right way to be fulfilled with health, happiness and helpfulness.

FIRE

Our lives should be nurtured and cultivated to be blessed with FORTITUDE, IRON MIND, RESILIENCE, AND ENDURANCE. Life is not always like a picnic party. Life is a long and hard journey. We should live our lives with strengths, stamina, staying power and serenity. We have got to live our lives on our terms: Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration.

EQUANIMITY

Life must be lived in balance, in proportions, and in harmony. Life is full of vicissitudes or changes. Life is destined to be confronted with the eight winds of:

- Gain and Loss
- Praise and Blame
- Popularity and Isolation
- Happiness and Wretchedness

Superior people try to live their lives above and beyond all the afflictions of life. They try to live hardy, harmonious and happy lives.

VISION

Vision means SEEING A BETTER LIFE IN THE FUTURE. Vision means DASSANA in Pali which is SEEING WITH THE MIND'S EYES. People with vision see their lives in terms of Greater, Better, Faster, Smarter, More Efficient, More Effective and More Sustainable Perspectives. A superior condition of life in the future is created by the vision of the inspired minds of the motivated people. The quality of a vision is decided by:

- Being Active instead of being Passive
- Being Dynamic instead of being Static
- Being Proactive instead of being Reactive
- Being Progressive instead of being Regressive
- Being Revolutionary instead of being Reactionary
- Being Against the Status quo instead of being for the Status quo

ACHIEVEMENT

Human life should be a strong and steady curve of progress. We human beings are endowed with

- Physical Power of Health & Strength
- Mental Power of Vision & Strategy
- Emotional Power of Passions & Values
- Spiritual Power of Selflessness & Service
- Creative Power of Character & Competence

So, we human beings have nothing to lose in mightily endeavoring to CONCEIVE, BELIEVE AND ACHIEVE. People must have the tremendous purpose: To Strive, To Seek, To Find and Not To Yield.

LOVE AND LIVE

Life is to be lived □ to the hilt. For a person of love, life is beauty, breeze and blessedness.

With love, people can live their lives more dearly; they can see their future more clearly; and they can attain success and happiness more nearly.

But, love is ... to be able to console than to be consoled;

Love is ... to be able to understand than to be understood;

Love is ... to be able to love than to be loved; and Love is ... to be able to give than to receive.

UNIQUENESS

Everyone is unique and every life is unique. People can be unique in their:

- Health and Strength
- Vision and Strategy
- Passions and Values
- Selflessness and Service
- Character and Competence

To be unique, people have got to differentiate themselves. They might be naturally different, but they should outshine the natural uniqueness by thinking creative ideas and doing innovative work. The purpose of being unique is not to be self-serving but to serve all and to love all.

ENJOY LIFE

If we can't enjoy our lives, our lives have no value. If we don't love our lives, we won't be able to enjoy our lives. And if we do not have deep, core values in our lives, it would be difficult for us to love our lives. So, we must have real, noble beliefs and values in our lives such as:

- Being Honest
- Being Awake
- Being Alert
- Being Useful
- Being Productive
- Being Constructive
- Being Reliable
- Being Authentic

CONCLUSION

Life itself is of priceless value. Cherish it, value it and enjoy it!

U Kyi Mun residing in Yangon is a consultant of NAING Group Capital Co.,Ltd.

Social organisations condemn police crackdown on student protests



A press conference on handling of student protests by police in progress.—MIN THIT

YANGON, 12 March — Civic groups including the Free Funeral Service Society (Yangon) have held a vigil in response to the recent police crackdown on student

protests in parts of the country calling for amendment to the National Education Law.

According to officials, the assembly took place at the building of the Free Funeral Service Society (Yangon) in the township of Dagon Myothit (North), Yangon Region, on Thursday. The 200-strong gathering condemned the handling of the student protests, including the dispersal of protesters by force, demanding the release of detained students.—Min Thit

A map shows armed clashes in Laukkai region



Nearly K 5.9 billion worth stimulant tablets seized in Laukkai area

NAY PYI TAW, 12 March — Some Kokang insurgents attacked the convoy of supplies from Lashio to Laukkai near Malishuwa on Wednesday afternoon and fighting broke out between Tatmadaw forces and the insurgents.

After artillery fires of the Tatmadaw, Kokang insurgents withdrew from

the area and Tatmadaw columns were in pursuit of them.

The Tatmadaw column taking security duty of the route near Parsinkyaw Village found a suspicious person near hills and ordered him to stop. The suspicious person ran into a ravine and Tatmadaw troops chased him but the man managed to escape. How-

ever, Tatmadaw troops found and seized weapons and ammunition and narcotic drugs in the ravine.

In the same evening, Kokang insurgent ambushed a Tatmadaw column near hills to the west of Mawhtaik and Tatmadaw troops fought against them.

During the fighting, Tatmadaw columns seized

Student protestors handed over to parents

NAY PYI TAW, 12 March — Out of students who were being interrogated for involvement in protests against the National Education Law and committing unlawful acts, a total of 17 students were handed over to their parents

on Thursday so that they can continue their studies, according to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The ministry also said that authorities empathizes with the parents and is lenient with the students. Arrangements are underway

to release more students after interrogation, according to the ministry.

The 17 released students include 12 male students and 5 female students from Sagaing, Bago, Mandalay, Mon and Yangon.

MNA



Parents and relatives take 17 student protestors handed over by officials.—MNA

Seminar casts light on ethnic literature

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 12 March— Myanmar's ethnic literature will be in the spotlight at a seminar later this week, including poetry and journals published in regional languages, the British Council, one of the event's organisers, said Monday.

Organised in conjunction with PEN Myanmar, a non-profit promoting literacy and freedom of expression, the 13 and 14 March seminar in Yangon

will also include a "conversation with the famous British poet James Byrne."

"The main objective of the seminar is to promote the role of ethnic literature in Myanmar," British Council Myanmar's digital and communications manager Myo Ko Ko Oo said, adding that the discussion can help amplify the voices of ethnic minorities.

The first day of the seminar at the British Council will be dedicated to networking among ethnic literary figures, with the organiser inviting members of the public to attend the second day at Yangon Art

Gallery on Pyay Road.

"Holding of such discussion helps observers to dig into hidden voices of ethnic minorities," Director Mr Kevin Mackenzie of BC said.

According to Writer Ma Thida of PEN Myanmar, literacy plays a crucial role in exploring culture and tradition.

Over 20 ethnic writers, publishers and chairmen of national races literature and culture associations will participate in the two-day discussions.

Myanmar has eight major national ethnic races—the Kachin, the Kayah, the Kayin, the Chin, the Mon, the Myanmar and the Shan.

GNLM

Students sit English test on second day of matriculation examination

NAY PYI TAW, 12 March — A total of 597,069 students sat the English test of the matriculation examination 2015 that began

across the nation on Wednesday.

Number of Thursday's student was 701 less than those of Wednesday.—MNA

Myawady

France wins battle of Waterloo, as coin is tossed

BRUSSELS, 12 March — Two hundred years after Napoleon's ambitions to rule Europe died at Waterloo, France won a small battle on Wednesday to prevent the minting of a euro coin commemorating an event that shaped today's continent.

Belgium withdrew a proposal to strike a special 2-euro piece in honour of the Anglo-Dutch-German victory outside Brussels on 18 June, 1815, an EU official said, averting an EU ministerial vote after Paris objected on the grounds that glorifying a time of conflict ran counter to efforts to foster European unity.

There was no immediate comment from France, which last year struck a commemorative 2-euro coin marking the 70th anniversary of the Normandy landings that helped end Nazi German hegemony.

London newspapers, recalling Britain's role in thwarting French domination of Europe after the revolution, reported gleefully on discomfiture in Paris at the Waterloo anniversary in three months time — underlining how remembering history may stir deep-seated tensions among neighbours, just as the Western powers and Russia are at odds on marking their victory in 1945.

Belgium, which as a state emerged from Dutch rule a decade after Napoleon's death, is preparing to celebrate Waterloo with a weekend of festivities and re-enactments of one of history's decisive combats and expects many more visitors to the battlefield near Brussels, where facilities are being renovated.

The 19 countries using the euro, a common currency intended to cement cohesion after centuries of conflict in Europe, use their own national design on one side of the coins. They may also mint special editions of the largest, the 2-euro (\$2) — but these designs must be approved by a council of EU ministers.

Those this year include a German coin marking 25 years of reunification, a French commemoration of 70 years of peace since World War Two and Finland's memorial to composer Jean Sibelius, born in 1865. Euro notes allow no national distinction and show bridges, windows and doorways to symbolize openness and unity.

But collectors looking for Waterloo souvenirs need look no further than Britain, outside the euro zone. The Royal Mint is offering a 5-pound coin featuring the architects of Napoleon's downfall, the Duke of Wellington and Prussia's Marshal Bluecher.—Reuters

Two officers shot outside Ferguson police HQ after chief quits



Police stand guard moments after gun shots were fired outside the City of Ferguson Police Department and Municipal Court in Ferguson, Missouri early on 12 March, 2015.—REUTERS

FERGUSON, 12 March — Two police officers were shot during a protest outside the Ferguson, Missouri police headquarters early on Thursday, police said, just hours after the city's police chief quit following a damning justice report into his department.

"Two @SaintLouCo police officers were shot outside the #Ferguson PD shortly after midnight. Gathering more info. Conditions not known," the St Louis County Police Department said in a tweet.

The St Louis Post-Dispatch

newspaper earlier reported that Ferguson Lt Col Al Eickhoff said he did not believe either of the officers were part of his department. He could not provide details on their injuries to the *Post-Dispatch*.

A few dozen demonstrators fled following the sound of gunfire around midnight with some screaming, "They hit a cop," according to a *Reuters* photographer at the scene.

Several dozen protesters had gathered in front of the Ferguson police depart-

ment earlier on Wednesday night, just hours after the city's police chief, Thomas Jackson, announced his resignation.

Prominent activist Deray McKesson said on Twitter that he was at the scene, adding that the gunfire did not appear to come from the group of demonstrators.

"The shooter was not with the protesters. The shooter was atop the hill. We can live in a world without guns," McKesson said.

Protesters had called

for Jackson's removal since the fatal shooting of unarmed black 18-year-old Michael Brown by white Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson on 9 August, 2014. The killing triggered nationwide protests and drew scrutiny to police use of deadly force, especially against black men.

Neither a grand jury nor the federal probe led to charges against Wilson.

Jackson's departure was the latest in a string of officials who stepped down following a scathing report from the US Justice Department that found widespread racially biased abuses in the city's police department and municipal court.

Wednesday's demonstration had been tense but peaceful throughout the night. Several dozen people attended, and at one point demonstrators hung a flag with the words "Racism Lives Here" over a silhouette of the St Louis skyline and drew chalk outlines in the parking lot of the department.

Later, some two dozen officers clad in riot gear faced off against the demonstrators, who had relocated to the street. At least two people were taken into custody.

Reuters

Mafia thrives on Italy's legalized gambling addiction



Italian Finance Policemen inspect a slot machine with their computer in a local coffee bar in Rome on 5 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

ROME, 12 March — Legalizing gambling in Italy was supposed to help curb the mafia. Unfortunately, prosecutors say, it has only created new opportunities for the mob.

Cash-strapped Italian governments desperate for revenue have relaxed the rules on betting over the past two decades, to the point

that Italians now wager \$80 billion euros (\$86 billion) a year — nearly equal to 5 percent of gross domestic product.

About half of that is poured into 400,000 video slot machines, twice as many as in US gambling capital Nevada, which have become ubiquitous in the espresso bars where Ital-

ians stop several times a day for coffee, sandwiches and cocktails.

One of the arguments in favour of legalization was that it would help fight organized crime by bringing a mafia-run underground industry into the open. But crime fighters say it has instead provided the perfect cash-only business for mobsters, always on the lookout for legal ways to earn and launder money.

"Criminal clans earn a robust profit" from their "very diffuse" investments in legal gambling, says Diana De Martino, a magistrate at the national anti-mafia prosecutors' office.

Prosecutors say crime groups that used to invest and hide their drug or racketeering profits in agriculture or trucking are now turning to more profitable legalized gambling. The national reach of slot machines also helps the mafia spread from

traditional strongholds in Italy's poor south to the richer north, causing wider damage to an economy that has been stagnant for 15 years and is now in recession.

In one high-profile case in Milan, Italy's northern financial capital, a court convicted 13 people of extortion, loansharking, money laundering and being members of a mafia clan. Family patriarch Francesco Valle, who had relocated to Milan from Calabria in the south, and his son Fortunato were given the longest sentences of 24 years.

The court found that the Valles had run a traditional loansharking ring, threatening and beating businessmen who had borrowed money and fallen behind on payments, often taking over their debtors' real estate holdings and businesses.

Among the millions of euros in assets the group had accumulated in Milan was

a legal gambling business, which included more than 1,000 slot machines.

"They started out with a few (slot) machines in three or four bars. In the space of three or four years they had created an empire," De Martino said.

The defendants have admitted some of the crimes, including usury, although they deny being members of an organized crime ring and are appealing the conviction.

"The defence argument has always been that we are not a mafia association," Amedeo Rizza, lawyer for Francesco Valle, told *Reuters*.

Proponents of the industry say that even if the mob has infiltrated it, keeping gambling legal still reduces opportunities for criminals.

"Prohibition creates a bigger criminal market, not a smaller one," said Massimo Passamonti, president of Italy's main gambling lobby.

Legalization has also created jobs: some 25,000 people are directly employed in gambling, with another 100,000 in related activities, Passamonti said. Nevertheless, he acknowledged that rapid growth had made the industry harder to defend.

"We realized the excessive supply (of slot machines) was having a negative impact on society and could turn everyone against us," Passamonti said.

The swift proliferation of slot machines has brought a backlash from opponents, who argue that betting inflicts social costs, mainly on the poor.

Simone Feder, a psychologist, helped found an anti-gambling movement called the "No Slot Movement". He says that of Italy's 15 million regular gamblers, 800,000 are addicts. Many have lost their life savings, homes and families.

Reuters

Eighty percent of all Syria's lights have gone out due to war

BEIRUT, 12 March — Eighty-three percent of all the lights in Syria have gone out since the start of the conflict four years ago, a research report based on satellite images said on Thursday.

More than 200,000 people have been killed and nearly four million have fled the country according to the United Nations. The uprising started in 2011 with a pro-democracy movement and a government crackdown and has since spiralled into a civil war.

A coalition of 130 humanitarian and human rights organizations, calling themselves WithSyria, in coordination with scientists based at Wuhan University in China, found that the worst hit area was Aleppo province.

Much of Aleppo city has been destroyed by Syrian air force helicopters dropping barrel bombs,

crudely-made explosives that can flatten whole neighbourhoods. The research showed a 97 percent decline in light in Aleppo province.

Raqqa Province, where the hard-line Islamic State insurgent group has taken control, saw a decline in light by 96 percent, it said.

The southern province of Damascus, mostly held by the government, saw the smallest decline in light, by 33 percent, the research showed. Dr Xi Li, lead researcher on the project, said that there was a correlation between a decline in night-time lighting with the number of displaced people from different provinces.

"Eleven million people have fled their homes in terror and millions of buildings have been destroyed," he said.

"The electricity infrastructure itself is in need of wholesale re-building and repair after incessant



Residents manage an electric box for electricity distributed by generators in eastern al-Ghouta, near Damascus on 19 Nov, 2014.—REUTERS

and targeted attacks by all parties to the conflict, especially in areas under opposition control."

The research compared monthly average light captured by satellite images on nights with little cloud cover from March 2011 to March 2015.

"Taken from 500 miles above the earth, these images help us understand the suffering and fear expe-

rienced by ordinary Syrians every day, as their country is destroyed around them," said Dr Xi Li.

The WithSyria coalition is a movement including Save the Children, International Rescue Committee, and the International Federation for Human Rights which says it stands in solidarity with those caught in the conflict.

Reuters

Islamic State says Australian teenager carries out suicide attack in Iraq

SYDNEY, 12 March — Australia is seeking to confirm Islamic State's claim that an Australian teenage recruit died after blowing himself up in Iraq, Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said on Thursday.

Islamic State released an image on Wednesday claiming to show Abu Abdullah al-Australi before he carried out a suicide attack on the Iraqi city of Ramadi. Australian media recently named Abu Abdullah al-Australi as a pseudonym of 18-year-old Australian Jake Bilardi.

Images of what appeared to be an explosion were also published by the Islamic State group.

"I can confirm that the Australian government is currently seeking to independently verify reports that 18-year-old Melbourne teenager Jake Bilardi has been killed in a suicide bombing attack in the Middle East," Bishop told reporters in Perth.

Iraqi officials said 13 vehicles attacked army positions in Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province. No details on casualties were given.

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation report-

ed on Thursday that Bilardi had left improvised explosive devices at his house before going to Syria. Bishop declined comment on the report.

Bishop said Australian security forces believe 90 citizens are fighting alongside Islamic State, and 20 Australians are understood to have died.

Two teenage brothers were stopped at Sydney Airport last week as they attempted to leave Australia to join Islamic State.

"It shows the lure, the lure of this death cult to impressionable youngsters and it's very, very important that we do everything we can to try to safeguard our young people against the lure of this shocking, alien and extreme ideology," Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott said.

Australia is on high alert for attacks by radicalised Muslims or home-grown militants returning from fighting in the Middle East. In December, two hostages and a radical self-styled sheikh who had sought to align himself with Islamic State were killed in a Sydney hostage siege.

Reuters

Blast at police station in Libyan capital causes damage

TRIPOLI, 12 March — A blast went off in front of a police station in the centre of Libya's capital, Tripoli, on Thursday causing some damage, a witness and media said.

The building is close to the foreign ministry. The explosion also damaged several cars, a *Reuters* reporter at the scene said.

The cause was not immediately clear but Libyan news websites said the blast could have been caused by a car bomb. Officials were not immediately available for comment.

Tripoli is under the control of a self-declared government set up after an armed group called Libya Dawn seized the city in

August. The internationally recognized government has been operating out of the east of the oil-producing country which has been in turmoil since an uprising began against former leader Muammar Gaddafi, who was ousted in 2011.

Several foreign missions have been attacked with bombs in Tripoli in

recent months.

Militants loyal to Islamic State have claimed some attacks though Tripoli officials have blamed Gaddafi loyalists.

Most Western and Arab countries have evacuated their Tripoli embassies after heavy fighting between rival factions.

Reuters

Aid groups say UN Security Council failed Syria, 2014 worst year yet

BEIRUT, 12 March — Aid agencies said on Thursday that 2014 was the worst year of the Syrian conflict so far and that three United Nations Security Council resolutions aimed at alleviating the suffering had failed.

Syria's crisis started in March 2011 with protests against the government and descended into a civil war that has killed more than 200,000 people.

The UN resolutions passed last year demanded an end to arbitrary killing and torture, and the removal of barriers to aid access imposed by the Syrian government and insurgents.

"There have been more killings, more bombings, a massive increase in displacement and a huge increase in the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance," said

Daniel Gorevan, a Syria policy advisor at British charity Oxfam.

"The Security Council resolutions have essentially failed," he said in an interview in Beirut. Oxfam is one of 21 humanitarian and human rights organizations that wrote the report.

Gorevan said Security Council members, which include Russia and the United States, had not implemented their own resolutions by failing to pressure warring parties to stop indiscriminate killing and increase aid access.

In 2014, the United Nations said the Syrian government had approved less than half of its convoys to besieged or "hard-to-reach" areas of Syria. The UN is also not working in large areas of Syria run by the hardline Islamic State group.

The report also said humanitarian funding had decreased. In 2013, 71 percent of the funds need-

ed to support civilians inside Syria and refugees in neighbouring countries were provided. In 2014,

this had declined to 57 percent.

A resolution adopted in July authorised the UN

to undertake cross-border aid operations without consent from Damascus, but the report said these had been hampered by restrictions from neighbouring countries, which include Turkey and Jordan.

A separate report released this week by two UN agencies working in Syria painted a dire picture of life four years into the conflict.

The population has shrunk by 15 percent and life expectancy has dropped 24 years, from an average of 79 to 55, it said. The country's GDP has dropped by nearly \$120 billion and four out of every five Syrians live below the national poverty line.

Half of all school children have not attended school for the past three years, the report said.

Reuters



A boy runs over rubble at a site hit on Tuesday by what activists said were airstrikes by forces loyal to Syria's President Bashar al-Assad in the rebel-controlled area of Deir al-Asafir town, near Damascus on 11 March, 2015.—REUTERS

UN chief Ban calls for ambitious plans at Japan antidisaster confab



UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon

NEW YORK, 12 March — UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on Wednesday expressed hope that an upcoming multilateral conference in Japan will produce a “strong and ambitious” framework to curb disaster risks, calling it essential for achieving the global organization’s sustainable development goals.

Ahead of the five-day Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction starting on Saturday in the northeastern city of Sendai, Ban said, “We

hope that this Sendai conference will adopt a very strong and ambitious disaster risk reduction framework.”

He was speaking to a group of Japanese reporters at the UN headquarters ahead of his trip to Japan to take part in the meeting.

Ban touched on the previous major international conference on disaster risk management held in Japan in 2005 and noted the importance of efforts to minimize disaster risks in the context of economic development and climate change.

“Since 2005, during the last 10 years, global warming has been accelerating, and the number of weather patterns has been quite extreme,” he said. “Disaster risk reduction is a front-line defence against climate change and it is essential for sustainable development.”

Referring to a series of UN conferences planned for this year such as the Paris climate change meeting in December, he said, “2015 is a seminal year, a most important year for the UN and the international

community.”

He added, “Success in Sendai will be the best possible start for this historic year.”

Ban took note of what he called the “great courage and resilience” of the Japanese people who have experienced many calamities such as earthquakes in one of the world’s most disaster-prone countries.

He said he is “confident” that their resilience “will inspire participants” to reach agreements on disaster risk reduction at the Sendai meeting.

The top UN official also commented on a statement Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is planning to issue this summer to mark the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, pinning hope on a positive message to neighbouring countries.

“As the secretary general of the United Nations, I would expect that the Japanese government will make a forward-looking, future-oriented vision for greater peace and harmony and a harmonious relationship in the region, particularly in Asia and the Pacific,” he said.

ic,” he said.

This year also marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, and Japan and several other countries are calling for reform of the Security Council — the UN’s powerful decision-making body — so that they can play greater roles as permanent members of the council.

“As we are observing the 70th anniversary, I believe that it is high time for member states to more seriously discuss this matter,” Ban said of the UN reform proposal.

“There are many crises, many crucial issues, for which the Security Council is responsible,” he said.

On Japan’s role in the UN system, Ban noted that Tokyo has served 10 times on the Security Council as a nonpermanent member and is also “a major partner for development in Africa and across the developing world.”

He expressed confidence that “Japan will continue to show great leadership on the global stage.”

Kyodo News

Islamic State ransacks Assyrian capital as Iraq appeals for help



A man walks past human-headed winged bull statues from Khorsabad, at the Iraqi National Museum in Baghdad on 8 March, 2015. —REUTERS

BAGHDAD, 12 March — Islamic State militants have desecrated another ancient Iraqi capital, the government said on Wednesday, razing parts of the 2,700-year-old city of Khorsabad famed for its colossal statues of human-headed winged bulls.

Officials have said for several days they were checking reports of damage at Khorsabad following attacks on the cities of Nineveh, Nimrud and Hatra by the Islamist radicals who control much of northern Iraq.

On Wednesday the head of Iraq’s antiquities board and the country’s antiquities minister both confirmed that damage had been inflicted in recent days at Khorsabad, although neither was able to give details.

“The city walls were razed, and some elements of the temples, but we don’t know the exact extent (of the damage),” antiquities director Qais Rasheed told *Reuters*. “Looting took place, and then the razing”.

Islamic State rules a self-declared caliphate in parts of Iraq and Syria which contain some of the richest archaeological treasures on earth, where ancient Assyrian empires built their capitals, Graeco-Roman civilization flourished and Muslim and Christian sects co-existed for centuries.

The group, which rejects all but its own narrow interpretation of early Sunni Muslim theology as heresy, has systematically destroyed historic temples, shrines, manuscripts statues and carvings. Officials say it has also looted widely, selling artifacts to help fund its rule.

The United Nations has condemned Islamic

State’s actions as a war crime and an attack on humanity’s common heritage, but the global outrage has not slowed the destruction.

Iraq has asked a US-led coalition which is supporting Baghdad’s fight-back against Islamic State with air strikes to deploy its aerial power to defend the country’s heritage.

US General Martin Dempsey, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, said in Baghdad on Monday the military priority was focused on populated areas ruled by Islamic State, as opposed to some of the remote antiquities sites.

Rasheed said Iraq had asked for, but not received, satellite imagery from Hatra and Khorsabad so it could assess the scale of the damage. “They say they are working on getting pictures. How? Is it hard for the Americans to get satellite photos?”

Huge stone carvings of winged bulls with bearded human faces were shipped from Khorsabad and other Assyrian cities in Iraq to France, Germany, Britain and the United States in the 19th century. But Rasheed said those huge statues, each weighing several tonnes, were just a fraction of the Khorsabad treasures.

“The French and English excavated at Khorsabad and the excavations only got 10 percent of the city — it’s a big city, a capital,” he said of the three square km site.

He was speaking on the sidelines of a meeting with foreign ambassadors and the United Nations to set out the scale of the damaged wrecked by Islamic State and press for a stronger international response.

Reuters

US probing report Secret Service agents drove car into White House barrier

WASHINGTON, 12 March — The US Secret Service said on Wednesday that two agents were under investigation after an incident last week in which they were reported to have driven a government car into White House barricades after drinking at a late-night party.

The Washington Post reported on Wednesday that one of the agents involved in the alleged on 4 March incident was a top member of President Barack Obama’s protective detail.

The Post quoted current and former government officials familiar with the incident as saying officers on duty wanted to arrest the agents and give them sobriety tests. But a supervisor ordered the agents be sent home, the officials told the paper.

A Secret Service spokeswoman said in a statement the agency was aware of the allegations against the two agents and

that “if misconduct is identified, appropriate action will be taken based on established rules and regulations.”

The Secret Service statement added that its director, Joseph Clancy, had been briefed on the allegations and that the investigation had been turned over to the Department of Homeland Security Office of the Inspector General.

Clancy was chosen to head the agency by Obama after a series of high-profile security lapses led to a shake-up in the leadership of the agency charged with protecting the president.

Former Director Julia Pierson stepped down in October after an embarrassing 19 September White House breach in which a man carrying a knife jumped the fence and



The South Lawn of the White House is pictured in Washington on 26 Jan, 2015. —REUTERS

ran into the executive mansion.

The service’s credibility was also damaged in 2012 when it was revealed that members had hired prostitutes while in Cartagena, Colombia, in advance of an Obama trip.

Two senior officials on the House of Representatives Oversight Committee said that despite the changes in leadership, “this inci-

dent begs the question of whether that is enough.”

“The fact that this event involved senior-level agents is not only embarrassing but exhibits a clear lack of judgment in a potentially dangerous situation,” said the statement by the committee’s Republican chairman, Jason Chaffetz, and ranking Democrat Elijah Cummings.

Reuters

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV OCEAN EXPORTER VOY NO (-)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV OCEAN EXPORTER VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 13.3.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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: SK SHIPPING CO., LTD
(S KOREA)**

Phone No: 2301191/2301178

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV VEGA FYNEN VOY NO (1509)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV VEGA FYNEN VOY NO (1509) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 13.3.2015 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.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT
(S'PORE) PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO (119W)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO (119W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 13.3.2015 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.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ORINET OVERSEAS
CONTAINER LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

**Invitation to "The Future Prospect of Yangon
Stock Exchange Seminar"**

Securities and Exchange Commission of Myanmar (SECM) and Myanmar Information and Communication Technology Development Corporation Ltd. (MICTDC) invite you to join us for a seminar about the Future Prospect of Yangon Stock Exchange. The main speaker will be Dr.Maung Maung Thein, Deputy Minister of Finance and Chairman of SECM.

Date: Sunday, 15th March 2015

Time: 01:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Venue: Conference Hall, MICT Park, Hlaing Township

Agenda:

12:30 – 13:00 Registration and Refreshments

13:00 – 14:30 Presentation

14:30 – 15:00 Q & A

RSVP {01-652272~74, 01-652278~79}

**Kansai Electric to build coal
power plant in Akita**

OSAKA, 12 March — Kansai Electric Power Co-plans to build a large coal power plant in the north-eastern Japan city of Akita for launch in the mid-2020s to enhance electricity sales in the Tokyo metropolitan region, industry sources said on Thursday.

The power utility for Osaka and its vicinity is planning to develop power plants in other regions than

its service territory as Japan is set to fully liberalize retail sales of electricity in April 2016.

Kanden Energy Solution Co, Kansai Electric's subsidiary for electricity sales to corporate customers in the Tokyo region, plans to cooperate with trading house Marubeni Corp. to construct the 1.3 million-kilowatt power plant near Akita port, the

sources said.

Kansai Electric is also considering constructing coal power plants in Miyagi and Chiba prefectures for electricity sales in the Tokyo region.

Other regional power utilities, Osaka Gas Co and oil companies as well are planning to penetrate the lucrative Tokyo metropolitan power market.

Kyodo News

**Japan's longest-travelling passenger
train ends over 25-year service**

OSAKA, 12 March — A luxurious overnight express that has clocked up the longest total distance travelled of any passenger train in Japan left on its last journey on Thursday, ending more than 25 years of service due to its aging rolling stock.

The Twilight Express, jointly operated by three railway firms and taking almost a day to travel about 1,500 kilometres between Osaka and Sapporo, has been used by some 1.16 million passengers and run a distance equivalent to circumnavigating

Earth 470 times since it went into operation in July 1989.

About 3,500 train enthusiasts and spectators gathered on the platforms of JR Osaka Station to see the express train leave the western Japan city. Hours later, meanwhile, another Twilight Express train left another terminal in Hokkaido.

In Osaka, Kazuko Kato, 68, from Yokohama, boarded the express with her daughter Kazumi, 32, treasuring the train tickets

and putting them into an ID card case. "I'm looking forward to seeing the Sea of Japan from the windows," Kato said.

Hisashi Nozaki, 47, from Aichi Prefecture, who failed to get a ticket for the trip, visited the station with his 5-year-old son Taiyo as the boy insisted on seeing the train's last run. "We had hoped to ride the train," the father said.

Tickets for the last trip sold out immediately after they went on sale in February.

The sleeper train has long been popular with travelers as it is equipped with luxurious suites as well as saloon and dining cars where French cuisine is served.

The Twilight Express is jointly operated by West Japan Railway Co, East Japan Railway Co and Hokkaido Railway Co.

West Japan Railway said it is considering still using the train cars for a group of passengers making special reservations after their retirement.

Kyodo News



Fans watch the Twilight Express luxury sleeper train in Shimamoto, Osaka Prefecture on 12 March, 2015, its final day of service after running for 26 years between Osaka and Sapporo. —KYODO NEWS



A bridge is damaged by the flooding of the Lules river, in Tucuman Province, Argentina on 11 March, 2015. The heavy rains caused the damage of nine bridges and roads in Tucuman, leaving several villages being cut off.—XINHUA

WEATHER REPORT

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 13th March, 2015: Weather will be partly cloudy in Taninthayi Region, Kachin, Kayin and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Generally fair weather in the whole country.

**Advertise
with us!**

For inquiries
to place an
advertisement in
the GNLM,

Please email
wallace.tun@gmail.com

AKB48's latest single becomes 26th consecutive chart-topper

TOKYO, 12 March — The latest single by the Japanese all-girl pop group AKB48 has topped the singles chart, becoming their 26th consecutive chart-topper and breaking a record for female recording artists, according to music in-

formation provider Oricon Inc.

"Green Flash," the 39th single by the group formed 10 years ago, was released 4 March and topped the chart through Sunday.

On hearing the news,

Yuki Kashiwagi, one of the group's singers, released a comment offering her "deepest gratitude to fans who made it possible."

Ayumi Hamasaki previously held the record for a female artist with 25 consecutive No. 1 songs be-

tween 2002 and 2010.

Among male artists, the rock group B'z holds the record for the largest number of consecutive chart-toppers with 47, according to the music information company.

Kyodo News

Kelly Clarkson's 'Piece By Piece' debuts atop Billboard 200

LOS ANGELES, 12 March — Pop singer Kelly Clarkson racked up the third No. 1 album of her career as "Piece By Piece" debuted in the top slot of the weekly US Billboard 200 album chart on Wednesday.

The first "American Idol" winner ties fellow champion Carrie Underwood in No 1 albums among contestants of the long-running Fox TV reality show, Billboard said.

"Piece By Piece" tallied 97,000 units, including 83,000 albums sold, in the week ended 8 March, according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan.

Close behind at No 2 was the soundtrack to



Miranda Lambert (L) and Kelly Clarkson perform during the American Country Countdown Awards in Nashville, Tennessee on 15 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

Universal Pictures' hit film "Fifty Shades of Grey," with 96,000 units sold.

"1989" from Taylor Swift, the top-selling album of 2014, found its

way back up to No 3 with 77,000 units sold and has maintained a place in the top five since its release 19 weeks ago, Billboard said.

The only other new

entry in the top 10 of the Billboard 200 chart, which tallies album sales, song sales (10 songs equal one album) and streaming activity (1,500 streams equal one album), was singer/songwriter Brandi Carlile's "The Firewatcher's Daughter" at No 9, selling 43,000 units.

Last week's chart-topper, rapper Big Sean's "Dark Sky Paradise," dropped to No 6.

On the Digital Songs chart, which measures online song sales, Mark Ronson and Bruno Mars' upbeat "Uptown Funk!" remained at No 1 with 210,000 downloads in the past week.

Reuters

Theo James drops out of 'Underworld' sequel



Theo James, 30, who reprises his role as Four in this month's 'Insurgent', said that he is now unlikely to return for the sequel.—PTI

LONDON, 12 March — Actor Theo James will not star in 'Underworld: Next Generation'. It was reported last year that the fifth 'Underworld' movie would focus on James's vampire character David, who was introduced in 2012's 'Underworld: Awakening'.

But James, 30, who reprises his role as Four in this month's 'Insurgent', said that he is now unlikely to return for the sequel.

"No, they have something in the works, but my involvement in it is... I think it's going to be very difficult to do that with these 'Divergent' movies, and my other commitments," James said.

Kate Beckinsale, who has played Selena in all four of the 'Underworld' movies to date, is also expected to be absent from the fifth installment, although writer-producer Len Wiseman recently hinted otherwise.—PTI

I'm glad that people recognize me after Oscar win: Rapper Common



Rapper-actor Common has been on cloud nine since his Oscar win as it has finally made him a household name, after being in the showbiz industry for more than 20 years.—PTI

LOS ANGELES, 12 March — Rapper-actor Common has been on cloud nine since his Oscar win as it has finally made him a household name, after being in the showbiz industry for more than 20 years.

Common, 42, has been a hip-hop star since the '90s and acted in a dozen of films but the fame he has got by starring in 'Selma' and recording its Oscar-winning original song 'Glory' with

John Legend, is unparalleled, reported *People* magazine.

"A lot more people know who I am. It's rewarding because they come to me with love," Common said of his fans.

"They appreciate what I've done and the Oscar performance and the message I delivered with Selma, so I'm being known for the thing I want to be known for. That's a great thing," he said.

PTI

Tim Burton to direct Disney's live-action film 'Dumbo'

LOS ANGELES, 12 March — "Big Eyes" helmer Tim Burton has been tapped to direct Disney's upcoming live-action film "Dumbo".

It is based on Disney's 1941 animated film

of the same name, which was about the tale of a baby circus elephant, who is made fun of for his large ears and nicknamed Dumbo, said *The Hollywood Reporter*.

"Transformers" fran-

chise writer has Ehren Kruger penned the script. The film will use a mix of CGI and live action to bring the classic elephant story to life and will add a unique family story that parallels Dumbo's journey.

Justin Springer, who worked on "Tron: Legacy" as well as "Oblivion", is producing with Kruger.

The studio has had strong success with its live-action versions of classic tales, including Burton's re-imagined "Alice in Wonderland", which reportedly grossed USD 1.02 billion.—PTI

Disney's 'Cinderella' taps grown women and their purchasing power



Cast member Lily James poses at the premiere of "Cinderella" at El Capitan theatre in Hollywood, California on 1 March, 2015.—REUTERS

LOS ANGELES, 12 March — Fairy tales and frothy princess gowns might be the perfect draw

for kids, but with Walt Disney Co's retelling of the "Cinderella" story, the grown-ups might find

themselves doing the fantasising.

British director Kenneth Branagh has taken the fairy tale that Disney's 1950 animated film made famous and turned it into a live-action spectacle. Stars include Lily James as Cinderella, Richard Madden as her Prince Charming and Oscar winner Cate Blanchett as the glamorous, wicked stepmother.

Opening Friday, the film could top the US and Canadian box office in its opening weekend with \$64 million, according to Box-office.com. But Disney will also spin revenue from

adult-focused merchandise, including high heels inspired by the glass slipper.

Branagh said he wanted to bring Cinderella into the 21st century with woman power.

"She's not a victim; she's not passive," he told *Reuters*. "She's a strong woman, but her generosity of spirit is an inspiring thing." At a recent screening, Cinderella's sojourn elicited sighs and tears from the predominantly female audience, something that Branagh said reflects demand for more movies that appeal to women.

Reuters

GENERAL

Mayweather-Pacquiao come face-to-face to hype megafight

LOS ANGELES, 12 March — After five years of bickering, posturing, and false alarms, Floyd Mayweather Jr and Manny Pacquiao stood face-to-face on Wednesday to mark the official countdown to one of boxing's most anticipated fights.

Pacquiao, wearing a dark suit and tie, arrived on stage for the news conference as AC/DC's "Thunderstruck" blared through the speakers. He was followed by Mayweather, who was in a light suit with no tie and walked in to Queen's "We Will Rock You."

The two men then stood face-to-face and side-to-side, as a roar of camera

shutters tracked their every move, before sitting with their respective camps in the only news conference they will hold to hype their 2 May fight.



Eleven-time, five-division world boxing champion Floyd 'Money' Mayweather (L) and eight-division world champion Manny 'Pac-Man' Pacquiao pose at a news conference ahead of their upcoming bout, in Los Angeles, California on 11 March, 2015. — REUTERS

And while neither boxer took questions from the media packed inside the Nokia Theater in downtown Los Angeles, each exuded confidence. "This is a fight

that the world can't miss," Mayweather said from his podium. "I'm in the gym working right now, ... pushing myself to the limit because I never wanted to win a fight so bad in my life."

The fight at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas between Mayweather and Filipino southpaw Pacquiao is expected to be the highest grossing bout in history.

"This is what you are waiting for since five years ago," said Pacquiao, who has held world titles in eight different weight divisions. "The fight is on and we're very excited ... we will do our best on 2 May to make you happy." —Reuters

mitv Myanmar International

(13-3-2015 07:00 am~ 14-3-2015 07:00 am) MST

- | | |
|---|--|
| * News | * Next Weekend |
| * Lisu: Their Life and Customs (Part- II) | * News |
| * The Iron Rider | * Sons of the lake |
| * News | * Chinlone & The Dreams of the players |
| * Size Does Matter (Ep-5) Human-Elephant Conflict, "Habitat Loss" | * News |
| * MONASTERY (Bargayar Kyaung) [Doctor] [Painter] | * A Way of Life: Karate-do |
| * News | * Kyauk Gu Umin Cave Gu Pha Ya |
| * Mon Traditional Wedding | * Kid's Home |
| * Enchanting Rakhine Land | * News |
| * Fortune Teller: "Yan Moe Aung" | * Size Does Matter "Preventing Wild Elephants Intrusion" |
| * News | * A Tourist Destination of Shan State |
| * A visit to Htam Hsan Cave A Miraculous Place | * News |
| * Indian Footsteps | * Myanmar Mega Factory (EP-2) |
| * News | * Cosplayer |
| * Visiting A Serene Village in The Northwest of Myanmar | * News |
| * Today Myanmar "E-Bike Rental Business" | * Five Treasures in the Ancient City of MraukU |
| | * Shop Shop Shop — Bogyoke Market |
| | * Art Students: Sculpture |

Global fans demand BBC reinstate 'Top Gear' host Clarkson

LONDON, 12 March — Nearly 450,000 fans from around the world have backed a petition calling for British presenter Jeremy Clarkson to be reinstated to his job hosting the "Top Gear" motoring show after the BBC suspended him following a "fracas" with a producer.

Clarkson, renowned for his outspoken remarks and acerbic attitude towards "political correctness", was suspended by the BBC on Tuesday, with media reporting that he had thrown a punch at a producer follow-

ing a row about food.

"I'm off the to the job centre," the 54-year-old presenter told reporters on Wednesday before getting into a car outside his home in west London.

Clarkson, a friend of Prime Minister David Cameron, was already on a final warning over accusations last year that he had used racist language while filming the show, the latest in a long line of incidents which had courted criticism.

"He's been involved in a bit of a dust-up but I don't think it's that serious,"

co-presenter James May told BBC TV. "Top Gear", aired in more than 200 countries and estimated to have a global audience of some 350 million, has become one of the BBC's most successful and lucrative programmes.

In an official statement, the BBC said the show would not be aired this Sunday and the corporation's news website said it was unlikely the other two remaining episodes would be transmitted. The Guardian newspaper said that could leave the BBC's commercial arm, BBC Worldwide, fac-

ing a multi-million pound bill from foreign broadcasters for failing to deliver the episodes on time.

Meanwhile an online petition demanding the BBC reinstate Clarkson had attracted 442,610 supporters from all around the globe by Wednesday afternoon.

"The BBC will become irrelevant very quickly in the USA without Top Gear; be careful," wrote one signatory Fred Bertsch from Denver, Colorado. "Jeremy Clarkson ist Top Gear!!!!" said Austrian Karl-Johann Reitmaier. —Reuters

KFC faces pressure after McDonald's says no antibiotics in chicken

LOS ANGELES/CHICAGO, 12 March — KFC, the world's largest chain of fried chicken restaurants, may face pressure from consumer and environmental groups to change how its poultry are raised after McDonald's Corp (MCD.N) said it would switch to chicken raised without human antibiotics.

McDonald's will phase out chicken raised with antibiotics that are important to human health over two years to allay concern that use of the drugs in meat production has exacerbated the rise of deadly "super-bugs" that resist treatment, Reuters reported last week. Within days, retailer Costco Wholesale Corp (COST.O) told Reuters it aims to eliminate the sale of chicken and meat raised with human antibiotics.

KFC is owned by Louisville, Kentucky-based Yum Brands Inc (YUM.N), which has no publicly stated policy on antibiotic use in the

production of meat it buys. Chick-fil-A, another chicken restaurant chain that competes with KFC, says about 20 percent of the chicken it serves is raised without any antibiotics, and that its entire supply chain will be converted by 2019.

Both McDonald's and Yum are stepping up efforts to win back younger and wealthier diners lured away by chains such as such as Chipotle Mexican Grill Inc (CMG.N) and Panera Bread Co (PNRA.O), which boast antibiotic-free meats and other high-quality ingredients. Yum's KFC restaurants in China two years ago suffered a massive sales hit following local media reports that a few poultry farmers supplying KFC fed excessive levels of antibiotics to their chickens.

"The train has left the station," Bob Goldin, a food services company consultant at Technomic in Chicago, said of McDonald's influ-



A Kentucky Fried Chicken sign shows the direction to its restaurant in Fairfax, Virginia on 5 Oct, 2010.

REUTERS

ence on US chicken production standards. Yum, which also owns the Taco Bell and Pizza Hut chains, declined to discuss its standards for antibiotic use in meat production. "The chicken served in our US restaurants is USDA high quality, and free of antibiotics," the company said in an emailed response to Reuters queries.

The antibiotic-free statement refers to a lack of residue in the meat served at its restaurants and not the practice of delivering antibiotics to chickens before

they are slaughtered, said Steven Roach, food safety programme director at Food Animal Concerns Trust in Chicago. The US Department of Agriculture has three classifications for poultry, A, B, and C, and doesn't have a "high quality" designation for chicken. Poultry rated A is what's typically found at retail, while poultry rated B or C is usually used in further-processed products where the meat is cut up, chopped, or ground, according to a USDA website.

Reuters

MRTV News Channel in Brief

(13-3-2015, Friday)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 6:00 am | 1:20 pm |
| • Paritta by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw | • Talk on Old Film (Part-1) |
| 6:30 am | 1:50 pm |
| • Physical Exercise | • Myoemanyein Music Troupe (Part-7) |
| 7:00 am | 3:30 pm |
| • News/ Weather Report | • Head Line News |
| 7:35 am | 4:00 pm |
| • People's Talks | • News / Weather Report |
| 8:00 am | 4:45 pm |
| • News / International News | • FIFA Women's Olympic Football Tournament (ASEAN Qualifiers) (LIVE) (Sri-Lanka Vs India) |
| 8:35 am | 7:00 pm |
| • Current Affairs | • News |
| 9:35 am | 7:35 pm |
| • Weekly Entertainment | • Documentary |
| 10:35 am | 8:00 pm |
| • MRTV's Youth Programme | • News / International News / Weather Report |
| 11:35 am | 9:00 pm |
| • Science and Technology Programme | • News |
| 12:00 noon | • Hluttaw Image |
| • News / International News / Weather Report | • Amazing World |
| 12:35 pm | • Teleplay |
| • Hluttaw Image | |

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(13-3-2015, Friday)

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 6:00 am | 8:35 am |
| • Mono Classical Songs | • TV Drama Series |
| 6:25 am | 9:25 am |
| • TV Drama Series | • TV Drama Series |
| 6:50 am | 10:15 am |
| • TV Drama Series | • Myanmar Video |
| 7:15 am | 4:45 pm |
| • Cultural Show for Soldiers | • FIFA Women's Olympic Football Tournament (ASEAN Qualifiers) (LIVE) (Sri-Lanka Vs India) |
| 7:45 am | |
| • Myanmar Series | |
| 8:15 am | |
| • Song Programme | |

Thiago Silva goes from villain to hero as PSG oust Chelsea

LONDON, 12 March — Thiago Silva's extra-time header sent Paris St Germain into the Champions League quarter-finals on away goals after they overcame the early sending-off of talisman Zlatan Ibrahimovic to secure a brave 2-2 draw with Chelsea on Wednesday.

PSG, who had striker Ibrahimovic dismissed after 31 minutes, went through after the two sides battled to a 3-3 draw over the two legs of their last-16 tie. The deciding goal was headed home in the 114th minute by Silva, who redeemed himself after he had given away the penalty nine minutes earlier that put Chelsea 2-1 ahead by handling a high cross.

Eden Hazard coolly converted that spot kick in the 95th minute which looked like settling a fiery tie that threatened to boil over several times, but also had plenty of good football.

The pendulum seemed to swing Chelsea's way when Ibrahimovic saw red for a clumsy challenge on Chelsea midfielder Oscar, but the visitors never gave up the fight against the side that knocked them out at the quarter-final stage last year.



Chelsea's Diego Costa in action during UEFA Champions League Second Round Second Leg at Stamford Bridge, London, England on 11 March, 2015.—REUTERS

They came storming back after Gary Cahill gave Chelsea the lead when he lashed home after 81 minutes and their never-say-die attitude was rewarded with four minutes of normal time to go.

Former Chelsea defender David Luiz scored with a powerful header from a corner that flew in off the underside of the bar to make it 1-1 on the night and force extra time.

The French side should have taken the lead after 58 minutes when Edinson Cavani rounded

goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois, but he hit the inside of the near post with his shot.

Despite an electrifying start to the match that included an attempt from Cavani after two minutes, and end-to-end play, neither team actually had an effort on target in the first half.

Yet the football both were producing was ruggedly entertaining with Chelsea's Hazard creating opportunities for his front men which they could not capitalize on.

PSG were faster to al-

most every ball and dominated possession but Chelsea were never seriously troubled and Ibrahimovic had a forgettable 30 minutes before departing.

Costa was unlucky not to win a first-half penalty after a mazy run through the Chelsea defence ended when he appeared to be tripped by Cavani.

At the end, it was PSG's fans left celebrating a famous success as Chelsea lost to a French side for the first time in a Champions League encounter.

Reuters

United cannot afford Spurs slip in top-four race

LONDON, 12 March — Out of the FA Cup and with Champions League qualification hanging in the balance, Manchester United's season reaches a pivotal stage in the Premier League on Sunday at home to Tottenham Hotspur.

United were knocked out of the Cup by Arsenal in the quarter-finals on Monday, a result which effectively ended their hopes of major silverware for the second season in a row.

Finishing in the top four and qualifying for Europe's top tier competition is now considered essential but United's 10-game run-in to the end of the season also includes matches against Liverpool, Manchester City, Chelsea and Arsenal.

Fourth-placed United, who have 53 points from 28 matches, hold a slender two-point advantage over resurgent Liverpool, while Spurs are a further point back in sixth.

Tottenham have won at Old Trafford in the last two seasons having not previously tasted victory there since 1989 and they are unbeaten against United in their last five meetings.

The Manchester side can ill-afford another loss to Mauricio Pochettino's team but, after defeat by Arsenal exposed their much-discussed flaws, manager Louis van Gaal knows his side must recover quickly with a top-four finish at stake.

"All the players are very disappointed and that's logical," the Dutchman said after the Arsenal defeat. "We have to see how we recover from that."

"I can't say the motivation of the team was bad — it's always good. We showed fantastic fighting spirit again."

"This is a big blow for us but we are sportsmen, so we have to recover."

Champions Manchester City travel to relegation-threatened Burnley in Saturday's late kick-off knowing they must not allow leaders Chelsea to extend their five-point lead at the top.

Jose Mourinho's Chelsea side host Southampton on the back of their surprise Champions League defeat on away goals by Paris St Germain at Stamford Bridge on Wednesday.

Reuters

Bayern humiliate 10-man Shakhtar 7-0 to equal record

MUNICH, 12 March — Rampant Bayern Munich humbled 10-man Shakhtar Donetsk 7-0 on Wednesday to ease into the Champions League quarter-finals and equal the biggest win in the competition's knockout stages.

After a goalless first leg it was expected to be a close game but it turned into a stroll for the five-times European champions thanks to the early dismissal of Oleksandr Kucher.

Bayern have now won all four home games in Europe this season, scoring 13 goals and conceding none as they set their sights on a sixth European crown.

"I always had faith with my players and I am very happy with their game tonight," Bayern coach Pep Guardiola, whose team equalled

their 7-0 win over Basel in 2012, told reporters.

"People said it may be a tricky game but my players are there for the big moments. "Obviously the red card changed things but my players perfectly executed our game plan. Sometimes it is not that easy against 10." Bayern needed only four minutes to open their account after Mario Goetze was brought down by Kucher and Thomas Mueller converted the spot-kick.

It was the fastest red card in Champions League history from the start of a game and Mueller's fourth goal this season, all from penalties.

The setback forced a complete change of plan for Shakhtar coach Mircea Lucescu but Bayern were relentless with Arjen Robben missing a huge chance after narrowly failing to connect with a Robert Lewandowski cutback in

front of an empty goal.

The Dutchman's thundering drive then sailed over the bar before he went off with a thigh injury after 19 minutes with a thigh injury.

The substitution did nothing to take the pace out of the Germans' attacks, with the hosts hitting the post from a Robert Lewandowski header.

Jerome Boateng did better in the 34th, tapping in on the rebound after a Lewandowski shot was temporarily cleared with Shakhtar's defence in complete disarray.

The Bavarians picked up after the break where they left off with two quick goals from Franck Ribery, who also went off injured, and Mueller.

The Germany international joined Mario Gomez on 26 goals as the top all-time German scorers in the competition.



Bayern Munich's Robert Lewandowski (L) vies for the ball during the UEFA Champions League Round of 16 second leg match against Shakhtar Donetsk in Munich, Germany, on 11 March, 2015. Bayern Munich won 7-0. —XINHUA

Badstuber scored his first goal since coming back from injuries that ruled him out for two years

before Poland striker Lewandowski also got on to the scoresheet.

Goetze made sure of

a mention in the record books with the seventh goal of the evening.

Reuters