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President visits hospital, school in Prusho, meets religious leaders in Loikaw

NAY PYI TAW, 17 July—President U Thein Sein arrived Friday in Kayah State, where he was welcomed by Chief Minister U Khin Maung Oo, Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Aye Win and officials at Loikaw Airport.

The president and party proceeded to Pruhso by helicopter.

At Prusho Township People's Hospital, the president comforted patients and presented aid.

The president, after inspecting the medical store, instructed officials to make preparations for common diseases in the rainy season and provide medicines to the hospital.

He later met with local residents and students at the basic education high school in Prusho.

The president paid homage to Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Pannasami of Shwetaung Pariyatti Monastery in Loikaw and donated provisions.

At Loikaw Catholic Church, the president cordially met with Bishop Stephen Tjephe and religious leaders. Father Celso Ba Shwe opened the ceremony and the Bishop extended greetings.

The president presented 150 bags of rice and containers of cooking oil to the bishop.

In the evening, the Chief Minister of Kayah State hosted a dinner to the president and party at the city hall.—*MNA*

***President U Thein Sein visits Loikaw Catholic Church.*—IPRD**

Health Ministry calls for public to help prevent spread of dengue fever

By *Aye Min Soe*

YANGON, 17 July—The Health Ministry warned of a rise in dengue fever cases Friday, urging the public to help prevent the spread of the mosquito-borne disease.

A total of 506 dengue fever cases were reported countrywide Thursday, including four fatalities, the ministry said.

It also urged parents not to delay sending children suspected of being infected to hospital.

From 1 January to the first week of July, more than 16,400 dengue fever cases were reported, more than 60 of them fatal, according to an official of the ministry.

Ayeyawady Region had the highest number of reported infections at 3,397, but its 11 deaths were second to Yangon Region, which recorded 13 deaths from 1,935 reported cases. Mon State had the second highest number of cases at 2,887, including three deaths.

Infection rates usually spike in the rainy season, especially in July and August.

However, infections are found year-round in Myanmar, necessitating year-round monitoring, said Dr Soe Lwin Nyein, Director-General of the Public Health Department.

Community participation is crucial to controlling mosquito larvae breeding, said Dr Ngwe San, Head of the Health Department of Yangon City Development Committee.

Food containers and bottles improperly thrown away can fill with rain water and provide breeding grounds for mosquitoes, he said. The number of infections is higher but the death rate is lower than a decade ago, he added.

As part of the Health Ministry's campaign, the YCDC has also conducted community-based programmes in 33 townships in Yangon's municipal area, fumigating schools and treating tanks, drains and mosquito nets with insecticides.— *GNLM*

A health staff fumigates a class room in South Okkalapa Township on 15 July, 2015.
PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

Myanmar attracts $2.4 billion of FDI in 1st quarter of fiscal year

YANGON, 17 July — Myanmar has attracted $2.4 billion in foreign direct investment in the first three months of the fiscal year starting 1 April, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration.

The country has exceeded its FDI targets in the past three years, and has set this year's target at $6 billion. Some observers, however, believe a potential lull in investment activity in the period surrounding the 8 November general election could make it difficult to reach the target.

During the first quarter of the fiscal year, the Myanmar Investment Commission approved projects involving 46 domestic and overseas firms in sectors including manufacturing, construction, real estate and hospitality.

GNLM

Myanmar plans to meet nationwide power demand by 2030

Outstanding youths and scout youths formally launch Loikaw Main Power Station.—IPRD

Loikaw, 17 July — Myanmar has increased its nationwide power supply by 1,400 megawatts to a total of 4,800 megawatts, up from 3,413 megawatts five years ago, Union Minister for Electric Power U Khin Maung Soe told the ceremony to mark launching of electricity supply from Loikaw Main Power Station Friday.

The union minister said Loikaw was the only area in Kayah State with access to electricity in 1960, when the No. 2 Belu Creek Hydropower Station was completed. Until 2011, the power station provided electricity to four more towns.

The 132/33/11KV main substation in Loikaw, completed in April 2015 at a cost of U.S. $6.406 million, plus nearly K8 billion, can now distribute electricity to most parts of the region, including nearby villages.

Arrangements are under way to construct more power grids and substations to ensure that over 90 percent of the households in Kayah State will enjoy access to electricity by the end of this fiscal year.

According to the World Bank Vision, Myanmar will strive to make electricity available in every part of the country by 2030.

Under a joint project with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Myanmar will produce 4,531 MW in 2020-2021, 8,021 MW in 2025-2026 and 14,542 MW in 2030-2031.—*MNA*

Appointment of ambassador agreed on

Nay Pyi Taw, 17 July — The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of H.E. Mr. Hong Liang as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Mr. Hong Liang was born in September 1969. He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in 1993. He served in various capacities at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China and at the Embassies of the People's Republic of China in Malaysia and Australia. Since 2011, he has been serving as Deputy Director-General of the Department of Asian Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mr. Hong Liang is married with a son.—*MNA*

Local channels to broadcast 68th Martyrs' Day commemoration live

Nay Pyi Taw, 17 July — On behalf of President U Thein Sein, Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham, Patron of the Central Committee for Organizing the 68th Anniversary of Martyrs' Day, will lay a wreath at the Martyrs' Mausoleum at the ceremony to mark the 68th Anniversary of Martyrs' Day on 19 July.

MRTV News Channel, Entertainment Channel and Myanmar Radio will broadcast the 68th Martyrs' Day celebration live. The saluting programme to General Aung San and leaders and the song entitled "We salute fallen heroes" sung by May Hla Myaing will be broadcast starting from 10.36 a.m.—*MNA*

Maritime university touts student employment record

By *Ko Moe*

Yangon, 17 July — Hundreds of Myanmar Maritime University students have landed jobs with shipping companies, the university said Friday.

According to a faculty member, 914 students have joined 25 companies affiliated with the university since its founding in 2002, with 60 others employed at foreign companies.

STX Marine Services Co Ltd entered a memorandum of agreement on a scholarship program with the university in February 2008. It has so far awarded scholarships to 46 students specializing in Nautical Science and 41 students of Marine Engineering.

Last January, the company awarded scholarships to 24 students.—*GNLM*

Japan pledges support for road building in Kachin, Chin states

By *Khaing Thanda Lwin*

Yangon, 17 July — The Japan International Cooperation Agency will donate heavy equipment for road construction in remote areas of Kachin and Chin states, JICA official Mr Yoshihiro Kawasaki said Friday.

Work can start soon after the arrival of equipment, estimated to be in early 2017, Mr Kawasaki, from JICA's Planning and Coordination Division, said at a safety management seminar in Yangon.

Daw Mya Win, Director of the Department of Highways under the Ministry of Construction, said the Japanese agency is also providing similar assistance for road projects in Rakhine and Kayin states.

"The project in Kayin started last fiscal year, and equipment for projects in Rakhine State will arrive in Myanmar this September," Daw Mya Win said.

JICA's technical and equipment assistance programmes have targeted regions where transportation infrastructure is underdeveloped.

At the seminar Friday, Japanese experts shared their experience and knowledge on safety management in construction with over 100 government staff including engineers, foremen and machine operators.

JICA offiacl Mr. Yoshihiro Kawasaki addresses Safety Management Seminar.
PHOTO KHAING THANDA LWIN

JICA plans to offer more seminars for both private and public sectors, Mr Kawasaki said.

The Japanese agency has recently held such seminars in the capital Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay, with the aim of introducing safety management systems and equipment used in Japan, as well as encouraging safety consciousness on construction sites in Myanmar.—*GNLM*

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham visits flood-hit areas in Rakhine State

NAY PYI TAW, 17 July — Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham provided relief aid Friday to flood victims in An Township, Rakhine State, before traveling to Yangon for a meeting with hospital officials.

While meeting flood victims and officials in An Township, the vice president said work is under way to rebuild roads, bridges and schools damaged in torrential rains as soon as possible with the use of the president's special fund.

The vice president then heard reports presented by Rakhine State Chief Minister U Maung Maung Ohn before providing aid and solar lamps to flood victims in 35 villages of the township.

On his arrival at Lone village in the township, the Vice President met with flood victims and provided them with relief aid and solar lamps.

The Vice President then flew to Yangon and attended a meeting of the Yangon People's Hospital renovation and working committees.

After hearing reports on work progress by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe and officials, the vice president called for timely completion of renovation works.

He then inspected the main hospital building and five-storey extended building and met with patients and nurses. — *MNA*

***Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham presents relief supplies to a local at the hall in An Township.*—IPRD**

***Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann meets local residents in Htantabin Township.*—MNA**

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker urges participation in general election

PYU, 17 July — Despite achieving political reforms in the four-plus years of transition to democracy, Myanmar still needs to make progress in social, economic and management sectors, Lower House Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann said Friday.

At a meeting with local people in Htantabin Township, the Speaker of the Pyithu Hluttaw called for cooperation with the government in the ongoing process of democratization.

The country has experienced many challenges and overcome them, he said, urging the people to continue on the path.

The speaker stressed the importance of the role of the people, as well as political parties and civil society bodies, in successfully holding the 8 November general election.

To achieve the country's goal of democracy and a market-oriented economic system, all of the people must participate in the general election, Thura U Shwe Mann said.

GNLM

New bridge crossing Thanlwin River in Kayah State opens to traffic

LOIKAW, 17 July —A new bridge across the Thanlwin River was inaugurated Friday in Pasawng, in southeast Myanmar's Kayah State.

The opening of the Thanlwin Bridge (Pasawng), the eighth across the river, was attended by Union Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development U Ohn Myint, on behalf of Chairman of the Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation Central Committee President U Thein Sein, governmental officials and local residents.

The 1,260-foot long bridge, located on Pasawng-Meisei-Nantman Road, accommodates a 24-foot-wide motorway.

In his address, the minister said the Union and state governments are committed to improving infrastructure in Kayah, one of the least-developed states.

The new bridge will allow local people to travel from Pasawng to Loikaw within three or four hours, he added.

Kayah state will be able to turn the Meisei-Pasawng-Bawlakhe-Loikaw Road into a major trade route given its connection to the soon-to-open Myanmar-Thailand border trade in Meisei Township, the minister said.

MNA

***Photo shows newly-inaugurated Thanlwin Bridge (Pasaung) on Pasawng-Meisei-Nantman Road in Kayah State.* IPRD**

Construction of new Chinlone hall under way

NAY PYI TAW, 17 July — A ceremony to lay cornerstones of a new Chinlone hall was held in Wanna Theikdi Ward, Zabuthiri Township, recently.

The 50-foot-long, 25-foot-wide hall is being built at the corner of Hlaphyupya Road and 1st Hlaphyupya Street.

Coach U Khin Maung Win and Aung Zaw Lin, gold medalist at the 27th SEA Games, will train local youths at the hall on every Saturday and Sunday it is completed.

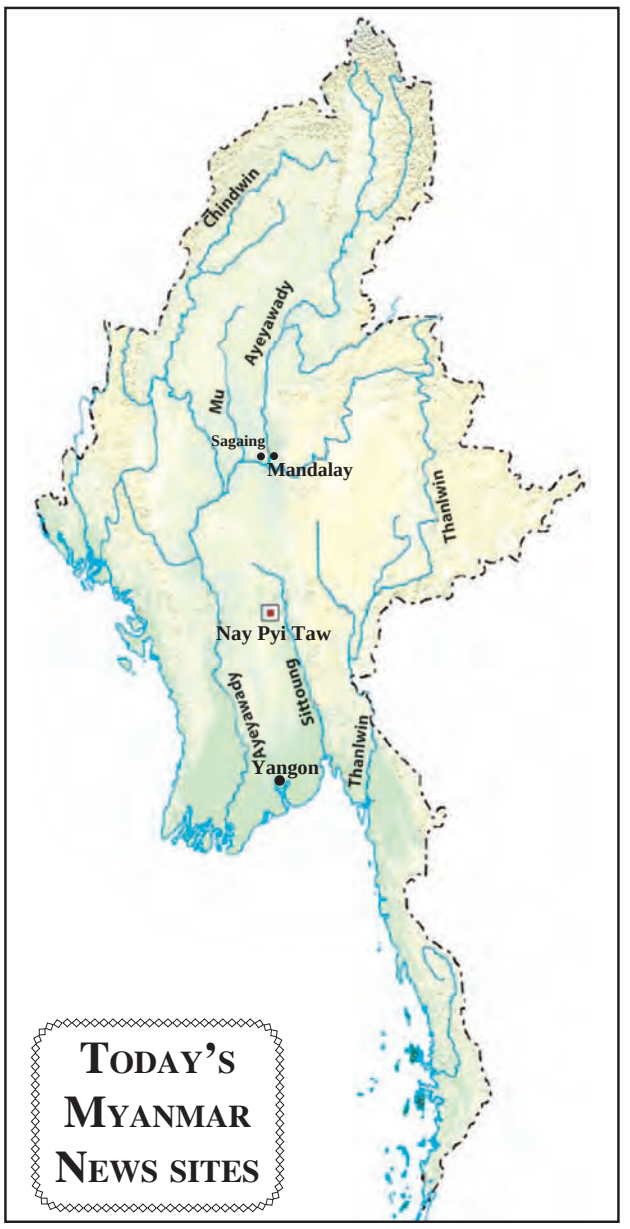
Ko Pauk (Okkar Myay)

Damaged road under repair in Hlinethaya Tsp

YANGON, 17 July — Work crews have begun repaving the damaged Aungdagun Road in front of No 37 basic education primary school in Ward 19, Hlinethaya Township.

The poor state of the road had hindered the travel of students and local residents in the rainy season.

With the assistance of Engineering Department (Road and Bridge) of Yangon West District, engineers and local authorities are repaving the 1,630-foot-long road with concrete.—*Min Htet Paing (Hlinethaya)*



Housing project under construction in Nyaungdon Tsp

NYAUNGDON, 17 July — A new residential and commercial project is under construction near Takway village in Nyaungdon Township.

Kay Khaing Oo Construction Company is building the Bo Myat Tun Housing project, comprising six two-storey, 10-apartment buildings beside Yangon-Pathein Highway. Managing Director U Myint Lwin of the company expects to complete construction by December 2015.

Nay Lin (Nyaungdon)

Sports ground under repair for Sagaing 700th anniversary

SAGAING, 17 July — Sagaing Region Sports Ground in Sagaing city's Parami Ward is undergoing repairs in preparation to host the city's 700th anniversary celebrations.

The sports ground had not hosted any sports events since 2001, and had fallen into disrepair.

President of Myanmar Chinlone Federation U Soe Naing, who owns Aye Aye Khaing Gems Company in Sagaing, contributed to the repair of the damaged sports ground. The region government built a weightlifting hall and a grandstand in the sports ground in the 2014-15 fiscal year.

This year, a 400-m track, stands and water supply will be built at the sports ground, said Assistant Director U Than Htay Ko of the District Sports and Physical Education Department.—*Htwe Myint Naing (Sagaing)*

Photo shows progress of grand stand at Sagaing District Sports Ground.

Singapore Green Building Week invites Myanmar developers

YANGON, 17 July — More than 30,000 participants from 55 countries, including Myanmar, are set to attend the 7th Singapore Green Building Week in Singapore from 31 August to 6 September, according to organizers.

Ms Michelle Goh, assistant project manager of BEX Asia and MCE Asia 2015, said, "We would like to invite construction entrepreneurs from Myanmar."

Manager Ms Ho-Chan Vun Ching of the Singapore Building and Construction Authority said, "Those from Myanmar may observe designs of buildings in Singapore."—*Soe Win (SP)*

Two Koreas end talks on joint industrial zone without results

Seoul, 17 July — North and South Korea on Thursday finished talks on issues regarding the operation of their joint industrial park in the North's border city of Kaesong without producing any results.

The joint committee that met in Kaesong, with five members from each side taking part, had not held talks in about a year. The two parties did not set a next meeting, according to South Korea's Ministry of Unification.

Among major topics on the agenda was a dispute over a wage increase for North Korean employees hired by South Korean firms at the industrial park.

South Korean delegation for talks with North Korea over the Kaesong industrial complex operations meets with reporters on 16 July, 2015, in Seoul, prior to its departure to the North Korean border town of Kaesong. The meeting is the first since on 26 June, 2014, with the two sides having clashed over North Korea workers' wages.—Kyodo News

In February, North Korea unilaterally gave notification on raising the minimum wage for its workers by 5.18 percent to $74 per month, but South Korea rejected the move, saying that an earlier bilateral agreement calls for the two sides to set wages through consultations.

In May, North Korea accepted South Korea's tentative offer to pay wages at the current level of $70.35 for the time being while the two sides discuss the matter.

About 120 South Korean companies employ about 55,000 North Korean workers in the industrial zone.

The industrial zone, opened in 2004, combines South Korea's capital and technology with North Korea's low-cost labour.

Kyodo News

Japan PM Abe's top aide to meet Chinese premier

Beijing, 17 July — A key foreign-policy adviser to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will meet with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang later Friday as the two countries explore the possibility of another meeting between their top leaders, despite persistent differences over wartime and security issues.

China's Defence Minister Chang Wanquan disclosed the schedule at the outset of his meeting in Beijing with Shotaro Yachi, the first secretariat head of Japan's National Security Council. Yachi's three-day visit to China through Saturday comes as the two Asian powers are trying to accelerate the pace of thawing relations that had long been chilled by disputes over territory and wartime history. Abe is considering visiting Beijing in September for what could be his third meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

"I believe this visit will play an active role in achieving the sustainable improvement and development of China-Japan relations," Chang said, although Tokyo's new national security legislation has created a new source of tension.

The meeting between Yachi and Chang took place a day after the lower house of Japan's parliament approved a set of controversial security bills that would allow its military to fight overseas for the first time since World War II, under certain circumstances.

Yachi explained the bills to Chang as he did during a meeting with State Councilor Yang Jiechi, China's top diplomat, on Thursday, according to Japanese officials.

While China has voiced a strong concern over the growing likelihood of Japan's Self-Defence Forces playing a greater role overseas, Yachi explained to Yang on Thursday that the bills are "not targeting a specific country." Should the bills later become law, Japan's armed forces will be able to defend the United States and other allies that come under attack, which previous governments have regarded as not allowed under its post-war pacifist Constitution.

It is very rare for the Chinese defence minister to hold talks with senior Japanese officials. Since Abe took office in late 2012, there have been no official talks between the two countries' defence ministers.

Kyodo News

S Korea invites DPRK to Seoul-hosted regional security forum

Seoul, 17 July — South Korea's Defence Ministry said on Friday that it has invited the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to a Seoul-hosted regional security forum scheduled for September.

The ministry sent the invitation under the name of Vice Defence Minister Baek Seung-joo to his DPRK counterpart at about 10:25 am (0125 GMT) through the western military hotline, a ministry official said by phone.

It marked the first time that South Korea has asked the DPRK to participate in the Seoul Defence Dialogue (SDD), a vice ministerial-level regional security forum launched in 2012 by Seoul to discuss ways of building military trust in the Asia- Pacific region.

During this year's forum, the participants will discuss various issues on security and peace in the region and the world, according to the invitation.

This year's forum, the fourth of this kind, is scheduled to be held in the capital Seoul for three days from 9 September. The third round was held in Seoul last October.

About 250 military officials from 32 countries and four international agencies are expected to join the forum this year, according to the ministry.

Xinhua

India's Modi senses defeat, shifts tactics on major land reform

New Delhi, 17 July — In the first direct blow to his ambitious economic reform agenda, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has had to row back on a business-friendly land bill amid fierce parliamentary opposition.

The government has not given up on making it easier to acquire land needed to kick-start hundreds of billions of dollars in stalled projects, but after failing to win support in parliament may ask states to pass their own laws.

"We realise that currently we don't have the numbers to pass it," a leader in Modi's ruling party told *Reuters.* "By reducing the heat on this we will be able to get other things passed."After sweeping to power last year on expectations he would accelerate an economic transformation that began in the 1990s, Modi is struggling to build support in parliament, where his party is in the minority in the upper house.

Having staked so much capital on an unpopular issue, Modi risks losing the initiative to the opposition and fuelling perceptions that his reform plans are not necessarily going to improve the lot of India's 1.27 billion people.

"This is a huge setback for Modi," said Sanjay Kumar, an analyst at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies. "This is an indication that if bills are controversial, this government is going to find it very difficult to pass them."

In the next sitting of parliament due to start on Tuesday, the government wants to ease the passage of the biggest overhaul of taxes since independence in 1947, and may also introduce the first major labour reforms in decades.

Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will have to fend off opposition attacks in the rowdy houses over allegations of corruption, and does not want to rile opponents further over the land law. Land reform is critical for Modi's drive to build new roads, homes and factories and, if stalled would blight his vision of 100 new 'smart' cities across India linked by industrial corridors and high-speed rail routes criss-crossing the country.

In the last seven months, Modi has had to issue temporary executive orders that allow the government to forcibly purchase farmland for industrial development, but has failed to secure the votes in parliament to make the changes permanent.

Senior BJP leader Shrikant Sharma told *Reuters* the government would continue to work with opposition parties to pass the law, but if that failed, it would work with individual states to implement their own versions of the legislation." The opposition can't stop our agenda, it can only delay it," he said, in comments echoed by a senior cabinet minister. Eight states where the BJP is the largest party could press ahead with passing their own laws, but that would risk creating a patchwork of regulations that could further hold up stalled infrastructure projects worth $300 billion.

Opposition parties have joined forces to portray the proposed changes to the land act, including exemption from getting consent of 80 percent of landowners for some projects, as anti-farmer, a damaging charge in a mostly rural country.

On Wednesday, opposition leaders boycotted Modi's latest attempt to build consensus around the issue. "I certainly hope that the reality dawns on them. The whole country is against this bill," said Jyotiraditya Scindia, a leader in the Congress party that has spearheaded opposition to the reform. In a sign the government is delaying a push on the bill, four senior government officials on Thursday failed to appear before a joint parliamentary committee examining the proposed changes to the law, and their report will now be delayed by two weeks, according to a member of the panel.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi greets welcomers upon his arrival before attending the BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summits in Ufa, Russia, on 8 July, 2015. —Reuters

That would effectively rule out progress on land during the three-week 'monsoon' session of parliament. "It is now almost clear that there would be no consensus on the amendments," the person said, asking not to be named. "Members have taken a line almost identical to their party stands. There is no scope for reaching a common ground."

Reuters

Iran: Nuclear deal is new chance for regional cooperation

DUBAI, 17 July — Iran, embarking on a diplomatic offensive in the wake of its nuclear deal with world powers, told fellow Muslim countries on Friday it hoped the historic accord could pave the way for more cooperation in the Middle East and internationally.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif made the comment in a message to Islamic and Arab countries on the occasion of the Eid al-Fitr holiday at the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, the ministry's website said.

"By solving the artificial crisis about its nuclear programme diplomatically, a new opportunity for regional and international cooperation has emerged," Zarif said.

Zarif would travel to Gulf countries at some point after the Eid holiday, Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Marzieh Afkham told state news agency *IRNA* late on Thursday.

She said Iran was seriously determined to further expand ties with regional states and its neighbours, some of which include Sunni Muslim Gulf Arab states who accuse Shi'ite power Teheran of intefering in the Arab world.

Iran and six major world powers reached a nuclear deal on Tuesday, capping more than a decade of negotiations with an agreement that could transform the Middle East.

The country's pragmatist President Hassan Rouhani is seeking to end Iran's long international isolation by settling its nuclear dispute and bringing about a lifting of sanctions.

In a telephone conversation with British Prime Minister David Cameron on Thursday evening, Rouhani said he would like to have bilateral relations based on mutual respect. Rouhani said the two sides also discussed the reopening of their embassies, the official *IRNA* news agency reported. Britain closed its embassy in Teheran after hundreds of Iranian demonstrators stormed the building in November 2011.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, German Foreign Minister Frank Walter Steinmeier, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond and US Secretary of State John Kerry (L-R) pose for a family picture after the last plenary session at the United Nations building in Vienna, Austria on 14 July, 2015.—REUTERS

Cameron pointed to the fight against militancy, especially the rise of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, *IRNA* reported. It quoted him as saying: "We know that this is very dangerous for the entire region and this should be confronted."

In London, Cameron's spokesman said Cameron told Rouhani that the nuclear deal marked a fresh start in relations and that he was committed to re-opening the British embassy in Teheran.

Rouhani also had a telephone conversation with his Turkish counterpart Tayyip Erdogan and underlined that importance of the Vienna agreement for Teheran-Ankara relations.

Under the nuclear deal, sanctions will be gradually removed in return for Iran accepting long-term curbs on a nuclear programme that the West has suspected was aimed at creating a nuclear bomb. Iran says its nuclear work is for civilian purposes.—*Reuters*

Japan top SDF officer says bills not meant to expand military power

Katsutoshi Kawano (R), the chief of the Japanese Self-Defence Forces' Joint Staff, attends a ceremony with Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, in Washington on 16 July, 2015. During their meeting, the top uniformed defence officials agreed to enhance bilateral military cooperation.—KYODO NEWS

WASHINGTON, 17 July — The visiting top officer of the Japanese Self-Defence Forces disagreed with China's portrayal of Japan's legislative move on Thursday, saying the controversial security bills that just passed the nation's lower house are not aimed at expanding its military power.

Adm Katsutoshi Kawano, chief of the SDF's Joint Staff, told the audience at an event organized by a Washington think tank that the bills "are not meant to liberate Japan militarily but strengthen the Japan-US alliance."

Earlier Thursday, the governing coalition led by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe railroaded bills through the House of Representatives that would allow Japan to come to the aid of the United States or other friendly nations under armed attack even if Japan itself were not.

During a meeting with a Japanese official in Beijing earlier Thursday, China's top diplomat, State Councilor Yang Jiechi, expressed "serious concern" over the parliamentary move and said, "The international community cannot help but doubt whether Japan has abandoned its exclusively defence-oriented policy," according to the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

Regarding China's rapid advance into nearby seas to lay territorial claims, Kawano said Japan has "big concerns" because the South China Sea, where China has conducted massive reclamation work, is "our important sea lane."

The admiral said patrol activities by the SDF in the area are "an issue to be considered in the future."

Speaking with Japanese media last month, Adm. Harry Harris, the commander of the US Pacific Command, said he would "welcome" SDF patrols in the South China Sea, which he said the United States see as "international water, not territorial water of any country."

Also Thursday, Kawano met with Gen Martin Dempsey, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, and agreed to accelerate cooperation between the SDF and the US military to strengthen the deterrence provided by the alliance, a joint statement said.

The admiral met with Vice President Joe Biden at the White House on Wednesday in the first such meeting between the chief of the SDF's Joint Staff and the US vice president.

Kyodo News

S Korea hands over stolen Buddhist statue to Japan

DAEJEON, (South Korea), 17 July — South Korea on Friday handed over to Japan one of two ancient Buddhist statues that were stolen in 2012 by South Korean thieves from religious facilities in southwestern Japan, informed sources said.

A bronze standing figure of Tathagata Buddha that was taken from Kaijin Shrine in Tsushima, Nagasaki Prefecture, was handed over to Japanese representatives at the National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage in Daejeon, central South Korea, the sources said.

The handover was held behind closed doors, placing priority on the safe transportation of the statue. The Japanese government is planning to announce the item's return after it arrives in Japan, according to the sources.

The statue, designated by the Japanese government as an important cultural property, had been kept at the institute along with a seated statue of the Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, designated by the Nagasaki prefectural government as a tangible cultural property, that was stolen from Kannonji, a Buddhist temple in Tsushima.

The Japanese government has demanded that South Korea swiftly return the two statues after a South Korean court prevented their repatriation on the grounds that they might have been stolen from Korea centuries ago by Japanese pirates.

The topic is one of the major outstanding issues the two neighbouring countries face in addition to disputes over wartime history and territory.

Japanese representatives leave the National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage in Daejeon, central South Korea, on 17 July, 2015. South Korea handed over to Japan at the institute the same day one of two ancient Buddhist statues that were stolen in 2012 by South Korean thieves from religious facilities in southwestern Japan, informed sources said.—KYODO NEWS

The South Korean Supreme Prosecutor's Office said on Wednesday that it has decided to return one of the statues after determining who its "rightful claimant" was.

Concerning the other statue, a temporary injunction preventing its return to Japan has been issued based on a demand by a South Korean temple that claims original ownership, and the prosecutor's office has said it will not decide at this point whether or not to return it.

Of the seven people indicted over theft and smuggling of the two statues to South Korea, six were convicted and one was acquitted. The statues were stolen in October 2012 and brought to South Korea through the Port of Busan.—*Kyodo News*

German parliament set to back talks on new Greek bailout

BERLIN, 17 July — German lawmakers are expected to give the government their clear backing on Friday to start negotiations on a third bailout programme for Greece, despite Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble questioning whether it will succeed.

Lawmakers from Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives and her junior coalition partners, the Social Democrats, already voted overwhelmingly in favour of the euro zone opening talks with Athens in test ballots held on Thursday.

These results indicate that Merkel is likely to get the mandate she needs from the Bundestag lower house of parliament, with some opposition parties also expected to vote 'Yes' at the end of the debate, which began shortly after 10 am. (0800 GMT).

The positive soundings from lawmakers came despite popular misgivings in Germany about funnelling more aid to Athens - reservations deepened by Schaeuble suggesting the better option for Greece may be to take a "time-out" from the euro zone.

"Seven reasons why the Bundestag should vote 'No' today," ran a headline in the mass-selling Bild daily, listing 'Grexit is the better solution' and 'our grandchildren will pay' among its reasons.

The Greek parliament approved the new bailout offer in the early hours of Thursday and later in the day the European Central

German Chancellor Angela Merkel holds the weekly cabinet meeting at the Chancellery in Berlin, Germany, on 15 July, 2015. —REUTERS

Bank increased emergency funding to keep the country's banks from collapse.

European Union finance ministers also approved 7 billion euros in bridge loans to Greece, allowing it to avoid defaulting on a bond payment to the ECB next Monday and clear its arrears with the IMF. These moves have lowered the risk of "Grexit" — a Greek exit from the euro — at least for the time being. With Merkel under domestic pressure from lawmakers who have lost trust in Greece, the country's creditors agreed a tough deal at the weekend demanding that Athens cut pensions, raise value-added tax, and set aside 50 billion euros ($54 billion) of state assets to sell off.

Germany, the euro zone country which has contributed most to Greece's two bailouts since 2010, secured the terms it had pressed for. Nevertheless, Schaeuble repeated on Thursday the suggestion he made in the weekend negotiations that Greece might be better off temporarily leaving the euro zone - a view that resonates with some of his fellow conservatives.

Conservative lawmaker Mark Helfrich told Deutschlandfunk radio he would vote 'No', adding: "This is about ruined trust."

In a sign of frustration with Athens, 48 conservatives in Thursday's test vote opposed new negotiations, according to participants.

During a five-hour debate, many critics expressed doubt about the Greek government's willingness to implement reforms. In February, 29 conservatives voted against an extension of Greece's second bailout.

Both Merkel and Schaeuble urged conservatives to back the deal that was reached in Brussels, a source said, with the chancellor stressing that Germany had left its mark on the agreement and it included strict reform conditions and supervision of how Greece runs its economy.

Anton Hofreiter, a leader of the opposition Greens, said he expected a majority of his party to abstain. "I won't vote 'no' because I think Greece definitely needs a bailout and we need to keep Greece in the euro zone," he said.

"But I, and a large majority of the fraction, do not have confidence in the German government to act in a way that will prevent a Grexit," he added.

Reuters

First Iranian ship storing oil sails for Asia after nuclear deal

LONDON, 17 July — An Iranian supertanker with two million barrels of oil is heading to Asia after sitting in Iranian waters for months, the first vessel storing crude offshore to sail after a nuclear deal this week, data showed on Thursday.

Iran and six major world powers reached a landmark nuclear deal on Tuesday, clearing the way for an easing of international sanctions on Teheran and higher oil exports.

While oil analysts do not expect Iran to make a major return to the market until next year, it has been parking millions of barrels of oil on tankers for months.

The fully laden Starla, operated by Iran's top tanker group NITC, had been used for floating storage since 12 December, a tanker tracking source said.

"This is the first tanker to come off floating storage," the source said. "One of the scenarios is it could do an STS operation, although nothing is known at the moment," the source said, referring to ship-to-ship transfers of oil between two vessels, usually at sea.

ThomsonReuters Eikon shipping data showed the vessel sailing through the Gulf of Oman with a Singapore destination. Earlier this week the Starla was idling offshore the United Arab Emirates in an area known as Khor Fakkan, often used for STS.

It is unclear whether the estimated 2 million-barrel cargo had been sold, or if so whether the deal occurred after this week's agreement. But it is a milestone following a months-long build-up of idling crude tankers holding up to 50 million barrels of oil, equal to over a month's worth of Iran's exports. Iran is "likely assuming that either a small increase in exports will not undermine the historic accord reached, or, that no one would notice," analysts at Macquarie wrote in a research note. However, if an increase in exports is sustained it will "weigh on near term balances." Iran's Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh said last month the country was aiming to add 500,000 barrels per day (bpd) to production within two months of Western sanctions being eased, and as much as 1 million bpd in six to seven months.

The sanctions have halved Iran's shipments to as little as 1 million bpd.

Years of under investment mean Iran may struggle to get its oil industry anywhere near full potential, analysts say. It will also take time to raise output while nuclear inspectors verify Iran's compliance with the terms of the deal, and sanctions are slowly removed.

Reuters

Mexico probing delivery of prison plans for drug lord escape

MEXICO CITY, 17 July — Mexico is investigating who could have given plans of a maximum security prison to accomplices of kingpin Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman in his second jail break, a senior government minister said on Thursday.

Guzman sparked a massive manhunt after escaping from a prison on Saturday night in a mile-long tunnel that led from his cell into a deserted building, dealing a bitter blow to President Enrique Pena Nieto.

"Regarding the plans, it's part of the investigation that we're doing ... who participated, who handed them over, when they got them," Interior Minister Miguel Angel Osorio Chong said at a news conference. Guzman's escape tunnel ran

A police vehicle is seen a poster with a photo of drug lord Joaquin "El Chapo'' Guzman offering a reward of 60 million Mexican pesos for information along a street in Mexico City on 16 July, 2015.—REUTERS

from a seemingly abandoned property near the town outside Altiplano prison in the State of Mexico to right underneath the shower in his cell. The government has already fired the prison director. In video footage released by the government, he is seen minutes before his getaway pacing the cell, changing his shoes and then disappearing behind a wall partly covering the shower fitting. Behind it was a 50-cm (20 inch) by 50-cm escape hatch.

"They weren't off by a millimetre. It was incredibly exact," a government official close to the investigation said under condition of anonymity.

Guzman's departure was his second from a high security lockup in less than 15 years. In 2001, Guzman bribed guards to help him escape from a prison near the city of Guadalajara after a previous arrest in 1993. He was recaptured in northwestern Mexico in February 2014.

"Our objectives are clear, recapture this criminal and punish each of his accomplices," Osorio Chong said. "It won't be easy."—*Reuters*

Investigators seek motive behind Tennessee shooting rampage

A man prays over a sobbing citizen next to a US flag at the site of a shooting attack on a Naval recruiting center in Chattanooga, Tennesse on 16 July, 2015.—REUTERS

CHATTANOOGA, (Tenn), 17 July — Investigators on Friday sought to determine what led a 24-year-old gunman to open fire at two military offices in Chattanooga, Tennessee, killing four Marines in an attack officials said could be an act of domestic terrorism.

Mohammod Youssuf Abdulazeez, identified as the shooter by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, was shot to death in the rampage that also injured three people, including a sailor who was critically wounded.

The attack comes at a time when US military and law enforcement authorities are increasingly concerned about the threat "lone wolves" pose to domestic targets. The suspect, seen driving an open-top Ford Mustang, first went to a joint military recruiting centre in a strip mall and sprayed it with gunfire, riddling the glass facade with bullet holes. "Everybody was at a standstill and as soon as he pulled away everyone scrambled, trying to make sure everyone was OK," said Erica Wright, who works two doors down from the centre.

The gunman then drove off to a Naval Reserve Centre about 6 miles (10 km) away, fatally shooting the four Marines before being shot and killed in a firefight with police. Three others were wounded in the attacks, including a police officer reported to be in stable condition and a Marine.

The shootings began around 10:45 am (1445 GMT) and ended about 30 minutes later. NBC News reported that Abdulazeez was a naturalized American who was born in Kuwait. US law enforcement officials said they were investigating whether he was inspired by Islamic State or a similar group.

Islamic State had threatened to step up violence in the holy fasting month of Ramadan, which ends on Friday evening. —*Reuters*

PERSPECTIVES

Saturday, 18 July, 2015

Beyond the three traditional basic needs

By *Kyaw Thura*

Traditionally, the three basic needs are considered to be food, clothing and shelter. The hustle and bustle of a world witnessing rapid growth may have prompted us to ask for more.

In this age, people tend to dream of having the right to a standard of living that can guarantee the health and wellbeing of themselves and their families. In addition to the three traditional immediate basic needs, we have all noticed the importance of medical care and sustainable employment.

It is therefore essential for people from different social strata to become actively involved in promoting and protecting good health across the country.

Health institutions should give communities technical support and disburse knowledge on prevention and treatment of common diseases. In this respect, local authorities should coordinate and support those efforts and frame policies that can meet the specific needs of their regions.

Fresh encouragement should be given to humanitarian agencies to identify disease outbreaks and prevent them from further spreading. Special attention should also be paid to prevention of chronic diseases.

There is a general misunderstanding that the entire work of health care services should rest with the central government. In fact, all able people are required to play their part in this critical task.

Contrary to our expectations, a majority of people are now starting to feel "no money, no health."

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.

Yaza Kumar Stone Inscription which the credit of World Cultural Heritage is long overdue (Part I)

Maha Saddhamma Jotika dhaja Sithu, Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt

The first Myanmar entry into the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage List, memory of the world, was the world largest marble book of 729 marble stone slabs, each measuring 5 feet 6 inches high, 3 feet 6 inches wide, and 6 inches thick with two faces of inscriptions. Tipitakas [Buddha's Teachings] are of three categories (1) 3 Treatises of Suttas [Discourses] (2) 5 Treatises of Vinaya [Monks' Disciplines] and (3) 7 Treatises of Abhidhamma [Buddhist Philosophy]. 410 slabs record Suttas, 111 slabs record Vinaya and 208 slabs record Abhidhamma. Bind 729 inscribed marble slabs into a book form, you will get a marble book of 364 feet and 6 inches thickness, with 1485 pages, weighing 520 tons [each marble slab weighs 13.9 hundredweight.], a colossal book of a skyscraper's height in thickness.

These 729 inscribed marble slabs are arranged like a book, set up in serial and pagination order in the spacious precincts of Maha Loka Marazein Pagoda which king Mindon built in 1857 A.D. to the north-east of his palace city. The precinct is apportioned into three square courtyards. In the innermost courtyard are 42 inscribed stone slabs, the middle square has 168 and the outermost 519. Each inscribed marble slab is housed in a brick structure designed on the reliquary of

26 lines of stone inscription in Pyu.

the Sacred Tooth Relic of the Buddha at Kandy in Sri Lanka. Buddhists, clergy and laity alike from far and near, at home and abroad come to this marble book for reference whenever they have points of differences and controversies.

Among many "memories of the world" across the country, Myanmar, either in stone inscriptions, ink writings on ceilings and walls, on folding papers, or inscriptions on palm leaf or any metal plates, Yaza Kumara Stone Inscription at ancient Bagan deserves priority for many reasons – archaeological, historical, epigraphical, philological, religious and socio-cultural.

The inscription is known by three names. First it is called Yaza Kumar Stone Inscription because it was Prince Yaza Kumar who inscribed and set it up. Second, it is also called Mya Zedi Stone Inscription because it was first discovered in the precinct of Mya Zedi pagoda. Thirdly it is also known as Gu Byauk

33 lines of stone inscription in Mon.

Kyi Stone Inscription because an identical contemporary copy of it was also found in the Temple of Gu Byauk Kyi at Myinkaba, Bagan. The Gu Byauk Kyi inscribed stone pillar was found broken in 3 pieces which were joined and set up in the precinct of Mya Zedi pagoda. The perfect one originally found near Mya Zedi pagoda is now on display at the Archaeological Site Museum, Bagan.

Dr. E. Forchammer, a German medical doctor and scholar, the first Superintendant of the Epigraphic Office, Burma Branch, Archaeological Survey of India in the early days of the British colonial rule discovered both pillars in 1886-1887 A.D. The two pillars are of sand stone, each measures 5 feet 11 inches high, 1 foot 2 inches wide with the inscribed area of 3 feet 6 inches. The one now on the platform of Mya Zedi Pagoda has the two sides

39 lines of stone inscription in Myanmar.

wider than the other two sides.

Both pillars are quadrangle, each side bears an inscription in a different language. So there are four languages in total – (1) Pali (2) Pyu (3) Mon and (4) Myanmar. The date of the inscription was 1112 A.D. [Myanmar Era 474]. Today in 2015 A.D. [Myanmar Era 1377] the inscription is nine hundred and three years [903] old. It is one of the early stone inscriptions so far discovered in Myanmar. Hence its archaeological value is universal.

Its background history reveals the events of the important period of old Bagan in its heydays, which had far-reaching impact on later Myanmar history.

Commander Kyanzittha was one of the five outstanding knights errant, commanding the armed forces of King Anawrahta – (1) the Elephantry (2) the Cavalry (Horses) (3) the Chariotry and (4) the Infantry. His peers were (1) Nga Htwe Yu (2) Nga Lone Let Phe (3) Nyaung U Hpe and

41 lines of stone inscription in Pali.

(4) Byatta. Kyanzittha fell under royal anger, as he was suspected of a secret love affair with a princess who was presented as a tribute to King Anawrahta. So Kyanzittha had to run for his life, changing his hidings. At one monastery where he was hiding for some times, he fell in love with the niece of the Abbot. She was Thumbula. When he was to move to another hiding place, he left his ruby ring with his pregnant wife Thumbula telling her that if a son was born, she should come to him with that ring as proof, as he was sure to become king. If a daughter was born, she should sell the ruby ring to buy land, slaves and cattle to live a comfortable life.

Prince Saw Lu succeeded his father Anawrahta, but he being a bad king was slain by his rival Nga Mankan who was also put to death. The court gave the throne to Kyanzittha. Kyanzittha was crowned with chief queens in accordance with the tradition and rites of coronation. None of the chief queens bore male child. But one of their daughters got a son, who became the only male issue in Kyanzittha's family. Kyanzittha was so overjoyed that he issued royal order appointing his only grandson [who later became King Alaungsithu] a regent king to succeed him.

Many years later, Thumbula and her grownup son arrived at the court with the ruby ring. King Kyanzittha was overjoyed but very repented for having chosen

(See page 9)

Residents consume potable water from creek in Taninthayi

Taninthayi, 17 July — A K22-million project is under way to supply residents of Chaunggyi and Chaungnge wards in Taninthayi Township with fresh water from Dathway Creek.

Residents of the wards have limited access to potable water, as nearby underground water is unsuitable for drinking.

More than 1,000 households submitted a report to Taninthayi Region government seeking potable water from the waterfall of Dathway Creek.

The region government is installing 50,000-gallon and 10,000-gallon water tanks to store water from Dathway Creek, and laying more than 30,000 feet of pipes to carry it to residents.

Nanthayi-Htein Win

Agro-forestry programme aims to boost farmer incomes

Magway, 17 July — Farmers are learning techniques for growing Seintalone mango and white jutes in forests under an agro-forestry programme being implemented in Magway Region.

The region Agriculture Department will cooperate with local farmers in a demonstration of the system, department head U Khin Maung Win said.

"Even if weather is not favourable for cultivation, local farmers can still earn income from Seintalone mango, white jute and plum plants," he said.

Farmers can also grow paddy, pigeon pea and maize in the vacant areas of teak and other hardwood forests. The programme is being carried out in Magway, Natmauk, Myothit, Yenangyoung, Salin, Ngaphe and Sedoktara townships.—*Zeyatu (Magway)*

NGO scholarship set to bring int'l youth to 8th Asia Pacific Conference on Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights

By *Khaing Thanda Lwin*

Yangon, 17 July — The Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, a non-government organization, will offer 25 scholarships to young people from overseas to attend an international health conference in Nay Pyi Daw next year, its spokesperson said.

The youth conference is part of the 8th Asia Pacific Conference on Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights, which will run from 23 to 26 February at the Myanmar International Convention Centre II in the capital.

The association plans to provide the awards to 25 people aged between 15 and 24 from the Asia-Pacific region, as well as an equal number from the host country, with the aim of fostering youth leadership in line with the principles of the conference, Dr Daw May Malar, Programme Manager of 8th APCRSHR Secretariat said.

"The MMCWA has a plan to extend its scholarship programme when the host organization receives more funds," Dr Daw May Malar said.

The scholarship will cover travel, lodging, board and other related expenses.

Candidates for the scholarship programme should have made a significant contribution to youth programmes or relevant RSHR activities in their respective countries.

According to a website hosted by the MMCWA, candidates must write an essay describing the importance of APCRSHR to young people and how they will use lessons obtained from the conference for youth RSHR in their respective countries.

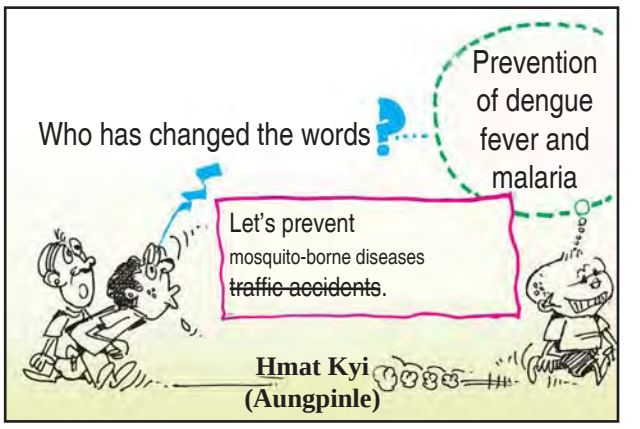
Applicants must send the form and essay to the 8th APCRSHR Secretariat at 8apcrshrmyanmar@gmail.com by no later than 31 August 2015.

Further information is available online at www.mm8apcrshr.org.—*GNLM*

Correction

Please read K325,000 instead of K32,000 in the first line of first paragraph in second column in the news under the headline "MPT slashes landline installation cost" on page 9 in this daily issued on 17-7-2015.

GNLM



Yaza Kumar Stone Inscription...

(from page 8)

his grandson his successor. But he made good arrangements. He raised Thumbula to his queen titled "U Sauk Pan", and his son raised "Prince Yaza Kumar" and Lord of Seven Districts of Dannyawady hill regions, and three villages of farm slaves, feudal lands and farm cattle were given to him. Thumbula and Prince Yaza Kumar accepted Kyanzittha's arrangement without complaint and grudge against him. They lived happily at the court.

When King Kyanzittha grew very old and was about to die of wipe age, Prince Yaza Kumar made a gold Buddha Image in honour of his royal father. It was enshrined in the pagoda with three villages of slaves [farm workers] his father gave him, dedicated to that pagoda.

These stone inscription bear (1) archaeological (2) historical (3) religious (4) epigraphical (5) philological and (6) socio-cultural values of world standard. First, their archaeological value lies in the fact that they are today 2015, 903 years old [nine hundred and three years]. They belong to Myanmar's earliest stone inscriptions so far discovered on ground across the country.

Their historical value lies in the contents of the four-language inscriptions. They described the important events of the period of ancient Bagan in its heyday. Anawrahta, Saw Lu, Kyanzittha, Yaza Kumar and Alaungsithu. As the dates of their successions, the duration of their reigns, and the date of their deaths were given in the inscriptions, historians can refer to and counter-check with these dates in the inscriptions, in their research. Dr E Forchammer said he was able to decipher some words in Pyu inscription with the help of those counterparts in Pali, Mon and Myanmar inscriptions. [Epigraphia Birmannica, 6 volumes, Indian Archaeological Survey, Epigraphic Office, Burma Branch]. Hence, the historical value of these inscriptions is beyond measure.

As to its epigraphical value, scholars can comparatively study alphabets, script writings, grammar, composition and punctuation of four languages on the pillars. They differ in alphabets, writing and grammar and composition. But they are short sentences, direct in meaning, no simile, metaphor or idioms were used. In the National Museum, on Pyay Road, Yangon, on the ground floor, there is a room in which history of epigraphs of Myanmar is displayed. There you can study a replica of Yaza Kumar Stone Inscription and other epigraphs.

Pali was the sacred language of Buddhism and it was the lingua franca of Bagan of those days, all literate people understood Pali. That implied that Theravada Buddhism was well established and widespread. Pyus, Mons, Myanmars and all other literate ethnic groups professed Buddhism. Pariyatti, monastic schools taught three Rs education and moral and religious instructions to young generations of all ethnic groups, regardless of race, religion and status with free tuition, messing and lodging by monk teachers. Therefore, Pali was understood by literate people of Bagan, judging by the Pali inscription of Yaza Kumar stone pillar.

Besides, going back to the text of the inscription we learn why Prince Yaza Kumar made that gold Buddha Image and how the ceremony of that religious merit was conducted. The inscriptions mentioned in detail of the dedication of the gold Buddha Image brought in and placed in front of the aging father Kyanzittha, around whom were the whole court and the assembly of Maha Thera monks, including Primate Shin Arahan. Yaza Kumar told the audience that he did that dedication as a token of his thanks to his royal father Kyanzittha who he owed infinite gratitude. When the merit sharing ceremony was conducted by the Maha Thera monks, and great religious merit was shared out, Kyanzittha joyfully uttered "Sadu" [well done] three times and the audience repeated after him.

This recorded event reveals the profound impact of the teachings of the Buddha on the Bagan society from royal family down to that of the grassroots. Prince Yaza Kumar proved a faithful son to his royal father by performing his filial duties in the true tenets of Buddhism. Buddhism is not only for the improvement of your life hereafter but also for the betterment of your present mundane life. As such Buddhism prescribes rights and duties between the ruler and the ruled, the master and the subordinates, the teacher and the pupil, the parents and the children, the husband and the wife, between siblings and relatives and friends. To perform religious works dedicated to parents and share the good merit of that work with the parents is one of the filial duties of the children to the parents, which the Buddha had prescribed.

Caring for one's mother and father

Supporting one's spouse and children

And one's relatives are the highest blessings [Mangala Sutta of the Buddha]

Thus from these inscriptions we can vividly sketch the picture of the socio-cultural conditions of the Bagan community of those days when Bagan was at the height of its glory.

(To be continued)

As Syrian Kurds advance against Islamic State, other ethnic groups flee

AKCAKALE, (Turkey), 17 July — Cemal Dede fled his home in a remote Turkmen village in Syria after warplanes from the US-led coalition against Islamic State bombed the house next door. He had no idea he wouldn't be coming back.

Dede says the Kurdish YPG militia did not let his family of seven return to Dedeler near the Turkish border, telling him it was now Kurdish territory and Turkmens like him had no place there.

"When Islamic State was there, they persecuted people. Now there is YPG and they are no different," the 43-year old told *Reuters* in an impromptu settlement of refugee tents at a disused truck depot near Turkey's Akcakale border gate.

"We don't support any group, but still we are stripped of our right to live in our own land."

The Kurds, who have emerged as the US-led coalition's most capable partner in Syria against Islamic State on the ground, strongly deny having forced people of other ethnic groups out of territory they have seized. They say those who left did so to escape fighting and are welcome to return with guarantees of their safety.

"When you come inside Tel Abyad, you'll see that the Arabs, Muslims, Turkmens, the Armenian people, all of them — they are living together," said Idris Nassan, an official in the Kurdish administration for the Kobani canton, which includes Tel Abyad.

"It is multi-cultural, multi-national, multi-sectarian.

The protectors of this administration are the YPG, the People's Protection Units. That refers to all people. We are not just for the Kurdish people," he told *Reuters* by telephone.

*A Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) fighter looks at makeshift tents between the Syrian and Turkish borders of residents who fled Maskana town in the Aleppo countryside, as he stands in Tel Abyad town, Raqqa governorate, Syria, on 23 June, 2015.—*REUTERS

But accusations that non-Kurds have been forced to flee, described as "ethnic cleansing" by neighbouring Turkey, have tarnished the Kurds' reputation even as their success against Islamic State on the ground has raised their stature.

Backed by US air strikes, the YPG and smaller Syrian rebel groups captured the border town of Tel Abyad from Islamic State on 15 June, prompting more than 26,000 people to flee to Turkey.

With nearly half the length of Syria's border with Turkey now in Kurdish hands, Ankara fears the creation of an autonomous Kurdish region in northern Syria which could inflame separatist sentiment among its own Kurdish population. It accuses Kurdish fighters in Syria of links to the PKK militant group, which has waged an insurgency against the Turkish state for three decades.

Some Kurds say fear among refugees is being whipped up by Turks to discredit them.

"This is a psychological war waged against Kurds," said Dengir Mir Mehmet Firat, a member of the Turkish parliament from the pro-Kurdish opposition HDP.

"The (Turkish) government said that it doesn't want the (Kurdish) cantons to be united, and when it happened they are now trying to create negative public opinion because they are angry. They're playing a dangerous game by igniting nationalistic feelings."

Rami Abdulrahman, director of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a UK-based group that monitors the Syrian war with a network of sources on the ground, says there has been no evidence of systematic expulsion by Kurdish militias on the grounds of ethnicity, despite isolated cases.

But new father Yasin Saeed, who fled Suluk, a Syrian Arab village around 20 km (12 miles) east of Tel Abyad as Kurdish forces entered over a month ago, said he was afraid to return.

"If you are not a Kurd but an Arab who has been living under Islamic State rule, they automatically see you as someone who supports and aids the group," he said, sat in a tent, as his wife played with their 8-month-old daughter.

Reuters

UK adds extra spy plane to fight against Islamic State

LONDON, 17 July — Britain will send an extra spy plane to Iraq and Syria in the coming weeks to help provide surveillance in the fight against Islamic State militants, Defence Secretary Michael Fallon said on Thursday.

Britain's Royal Air Force (RAF) carries out regular air strikes in Iraq but has so far limited its Syrian involvement to flying surveillance missions to gather intelligence. Earlier this month, Prime Minister David Cameron asked lawmakers to consider whether Britain should also join US-led air strikes in Syria.

Britain is buying three Airseeker Rivet Joint surveillance aircraft from the United States, the first of which is already operating in the Middle East along with British aircraft including Reaper drones and Tornado fighter jets. "Our latest Airseeker plane will be delivered next month, seven months ahead of schedule, and will be operational shortly after that in the skies above Iraq and Syria providing essential support in the fight against ISIL (Islamic State)," Fallon told a Royal United Services Institute conference in London.

Fallon likened the fight against Islamic State militants to the Battle of Britain, the 1940 air conflict between the RAF and the German Luftwaffe whose 75th anniversary is being commemorated this year. "I believe we're fighting a new Battle of Britain. Once again, against a fascist enemy, an enemy prepared to kill its enemies and civilians alike," he said.

"The world is a darker place, darker clouds are massing on the horizon."—*Reuters*

Yemen's exiled government says Aden 'liberated' as clashes continue

ADEN, 17 July — The vice president of Yemen's exiled government in Riyadh declared on Friday that the southern port city of Aden was now under the control of Saudi-backed fighters after days of battling with the country's dominant Houthi militia.

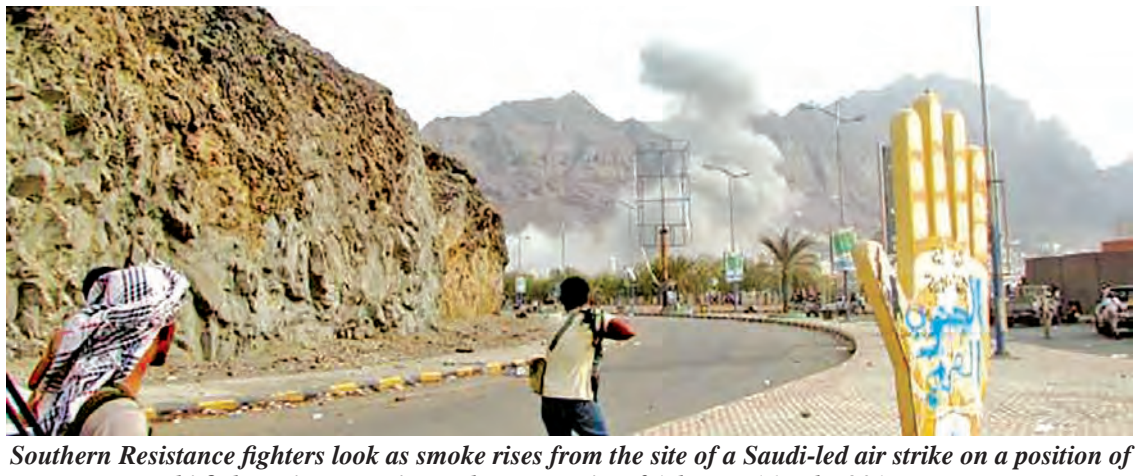
Residents and local fighters said low-level clashes were continuing in the Tawahi District in the west of the city to sweep the Houthis from one of their last redoubts.

"We congratulate the people of Aden and the Republic of Yemen as whole for what has been achieved in the last two days ... The government announces the liberation of Aden province," Khaled Bahah said on his official Facebook page.

Aden has been a focus of fighting since the Houthis first laid siege to it in March when it was home to the government which subsequently fled to Saudi Arabia.

Once one of the world's busiest ports, Aden sits near the Bab al-Mandab shipping lane, a major energy gateway for Europe, Asia and the United States via the Red Sea and the Suez Canal. The Shi'ite Muslim Houthis seized the capital, Sanaa, in September and pushed into Yemen's south and east in March and April in what they say is a revolution against a corrupt government and hardline Sunni Muslim militants.

More than three months of air strikes by the Saudi-led Arab coalition and a civil war has killed at least 3,500 people and rendered more than 20 million of its 25 million residents in need of some form of humanitarian aid.



*Southern Resistance fighters look as smoke rises from the site of a Saudi-led air strike on a position of Houthi fighters in Yemen's southern port city of Aden on 16 July, 2015.—*REUTERS

Ali Al-Ahmedi, spokesman for the local fighters in Aden, told *Reuters* that dozens of Houthi fighters had surrendered themselves to the militiamen as they lost ground. The advances began on Tuesday when local fighters seized the city's international airport, followed by the main sea port the next day, then one district after another. Fighters said they were advancing towards the Anad air base 60 km (40 miles) north of Aden with backing from air strikes.

Nevertheless, on the Muslim feasting holiday of Eid, food and basic supplies were being blocked at Houthi checkpoints on the city's outskirts, residents said.

Reuters

High blood pressure danger equal for slim and obese alike

CHICAGO, 17 July — Though previous research has suggested high blood pressure may be more dangerous for thinner people, a new study finds the cardiovascular disease risks are similar – and high — for the lean, overweight and the obese.

"Some studies done in the past 30 years suggested that for the adverse outcomes associated with hypertension — such as heart attacks and stroke — lean or normal weight people with hypertension had worse outcomes than overweight or obese people with hypertension," said lead author Laura A Colangelo of the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University in Chicago.

"Such a finding might cause one to infer mistakenly that high blood pressure is not important for the overweight or obese but is important for lean or normal weight people," she said.

"We are saying that high blood pressure is important for everyone, regardless of their weight status," Colangelo told Reuters Health by email.

The new study included 3,657 nonsmoking men and women with no heart disease, diabetes or cancer before the study began.

A doctor checks the blood pressure of a patient at the JWCH safety-net clinic in the centre of skid row in downtown Los Angeles on 30 July, 2007.—REUTERS

The researchers analyzed data on these participants from a long-term study of about twice as many people, begun in 2000.

Unlike many studies that group people by weight only, or by body mass index (BMI), a measure of weight relative to height, the current study also included waist circumference. Waist size indicates the degree of fat around the torso, which is linked with heart disease risk.

The researchers divided their subjects into seven groups based on BMI (underweight, healthy, overweight, obese and very obese) and waist circumference, using ethnicity-specific parameters in both cases.

For example, a healthy or "optimal" waist circumference is less than 102 centimetres (40.16 inches) in men and less than 88 cm (34.6 in) in women for white, black and Hispanic ethnicity, and for Chinese ethnicity, less than 90 cm (35.4 in) in men and less than 80 cm (31.5 inches) in women, according to the authors.

Trained technicians collected height, weight, waist circumference and blood pressure measures at the start of the study, and called to check in about any hospital admissions, procedures, cardiovascular diagnoses or deaths every nine to 12 months for an average of 10 years for each participant.

At the start of the study, 1,054 people fell in the healthy BMI range, 1,568 were overweight and 1,172 were obese or very obese.

Most people with a healthy weight also had a waist circumference within the optimal range, whereas almost all obese people had a nonoptimal waist circumference.

Almost 350 of those with a healthy weight had high blood pressure, compared to more than 550 of those in the obese category.

In total, there were 273 cardiovascular disease events during the study, and for every weight category, those with high blood pressure were more likely to suffer one than those without high blood pressure, the study team reports in Hypertension.

Healthy-weight people with no high blood pressure had the lowest risk for cardiovascular events like heart attack or stroke. Obese people without high blood pressure had a higher risk, and healthy-weight and obese people with high blood pressure had equally high risks, the researchers found.

Previous studies, which found greater risk for leaner people with high blood pressure, had included smokers, people with diabetes and cancer, Colangelo noted.

Smokers tend to be leaner but also have more cardiovascular events, which may have affected the results, so they excluded smokers from the new analysis, she said.

"The results in this case still showed normal weight people with hypertension have similar(ly) high absolute risk as obese people," she said.

Getting high blood pressure under control is important for reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease events, Colangelo said.

"First, by adopting a healthy lifestyle — which includes losing weight if overweight or obese, reducing sodium in the diet, not smoking and increasing physical activity," she said. "And second, by adhering to the treatment and medication management prescribed by one's physician."

Reuters

World Bank chief says China's economic fundamentals sound

BEIJING, 17 July — World Bank Group (WBG) President Jim Yong Kim said on Friday that China's economic fundamentals are sound despite the recent equity market volatility.

"China has built the world's second largest economy and it has undertaken significant reforms aimed at providing all of its citizens with an opportunity to enjoy greater prosperity," the visiting WBG chief said at a Press conference in Beijing.

He said China has strong resolve in continuing to adopt fiscal and financial reforms to transform its growth model.

While China's growth has gradually slowed since 2012, signaling what President Xi Jinping has called the "new normal", the country remains "the largest contributor to world growth since the global financial crisis" with roughly 30 percent of global growth coming from China alone over the last couple of years, he told reporters.

China's growth slowed to 7.4 percent last year and the WBG predicted about 7-percent economic growth for 2015, which is "still the envy of the world," he said.

Despite recent stock market fluctuations, "China's economy is strong and its fundamentals are sound," he said. Chinese leaders are moving forward resolutely on their ambitious programme of economic and social reforms aimed at transforming China's growth model toward "more efficient, equitable, and environmentally sustainable" growth, he added.

Reuters

Japan to set budget deficit estimate at around Y6.4 trillion in FY2020

TOKYO, 17 July — The Japanese government is set to estimate that the nation's primary budget deficit will be around 6.4 trillion yen (33 billion pounds) in the fiscal year to March 2021, down from a projection five months ago of 9.4 trillion yen, sources said.

The new estimate is based partly on an expected rise in tax revenue on the back of improved corporate earnings, they said.

The Cabinet Office is scheduled to submit the new estimate to the government's top economic council next week. Japan's new fiscal guidelines approved last month maintained an earlier target of returning to a primary budget surplus in fiscal 2020 and then lowering the debt-to-GDP ratio, which is the worst in the industrialized world at more than twice the size of the economy.

Reuters

South Korea hospital at centre of MERS outbreak to resume normal operation

SEOUL, 17 July — A South Korean hospital at the centre of an outbreak of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) will resume normal operations on Monday, the health ministry said, as a health scare that rattled the economy wanes, with no new cases reported since 4 July.

South Korea's MERS outbreak was the largest outside Saudi Arabia, with 36 deaths and 186 people infected. It was traced to a South Korean man who returned from a business trip to the Middle East in May. The Samsung Medical Centre, a prominent Seoul hospital run by South Korea's massive Samsung Group, had suspended most services and taken no new patients for more than a month, to focus on stopping MERS, after nearly half of the cases were traced to it. Long emergency room waits at the hospital, one of Seoul's top medical centres, helped fuel the spread of the virus, tarnishing its image.

The outbreak forced the closure of thousands of schools, while customers avoided movie theaters and tourists cancelled visits, dealing a blow to an already weakened economy. It also exposed shortcomings in health care in South Korea, where a culture of lengthy group visits to sick relatives was among the factors blamed for worsening the spread of the virus. South Korea's health ministry has said it was discussing with the World Health Organization (WHO) when to declare the end of the outbreak.

No MERS patient in the country has died for six days, with only 16 still in hospital, and just 150 people remaining in quarantine for possible infection, down from 6,700, health ministry data shows.

Reuters

Women wearing masks to prevent contracting Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) walk at Myeongdong shopping district in central Seoul, South Korea, on 9 July, 2015.
REUTERS

India opens railway station modernization project to private investors

NEW DELHI, 17 July — Indian government has approved investment by private persons or entities in modernizing some 400 railway stations across the country, said local media on Friday.

The government also cleared a plan to expand a highway in northern India from Haryana to Uttar Pradesh states outside Delhi which could ease air pollution in Delhi by enabling trucks and other vehicles passing through the region to bypass the capital.

The revamped railway stations will feature business centres, shopping outlets, restaurants and Wi-Fi-enabled waiting lounges, said local daily *The Times of India.*

Rebushed stations will also have luxury hotels, multilevel parking, separate entry and exit levels, it said.

Announcing the plan on Thursday in Delhi, Indian Finance minister Arun Jaitley said the railway stations will be "redeveloped using the Swiss Challenge method," under which open bids are invited from interested parties allowing fair and transparent competition based on values of ideas in their proposals.

Xinhua

Japan aims to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 26% by 2030

A meeting is held at the prime minister's office in Tokyo to discuss measures against global warming on 17 July, 2015. The government officially decided on a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 26 percent by 2030 from 2013 levels, as part of efforts to reach a new international agreement at the end of the year to tackle climate change. — KYODO NEWS

TOKYO, 17 July — The Japanese government officially decided on Friday on a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 26 percent in 2030 from 2013 levels, as part of efforts to reach a new international agreement at the end of the year to tackle climate change.

Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Yoichi Miyazawa told a Press conference that the government will swiftly submit the plan to the Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said, "It is urgently needed to bolster efforts by the international community to combat climate change." He urged relevant Cabinet ministers to work together to realize Japan's national interests at UN climate talks.

The new reduction target, which is touted by Abe as "ambitious," only represents an 18 percent cut compared with the 1997 Kyoto Protocol's base year of 1990 and is viewed as insufficient among environmental activists.

Specifically, Tokyo will aim to achieve a 21.9 percent heat-trapping gas emissions reduction by promoting energy saving and reviewing its energy mix, or the proportion of electricity to be generated by various sources, and a 4.1 percent cut through forest absorption of carbon dioxide and reduced use of alternatives for chlorofluorocarbon, a major greenhouse gas.

The international community is seeking to create a new framework to replace the Kyoto Protocol, the current international framework for fighting global warming, at the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC, or COP21, to be held in Paris in November and December.

As the basis for the reduction target, Japan on Thursday decided on its energy mix for 2030, under which the government plans to make nuclear power, with its near-zero carbon emissions, account for 20 percent to 22 percent of total electricity output.

Nuclear power accounted for around 30 percent of total output in Japan before the March 2011 Fukushima crisis, which put domestic nuclear power generation at a standstill.

Kyodo News

Australia holds memorial service for MH17 crash victims

SYDNEY, 17 July — A memorial service for victims of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 was held in Australia on Friday, one year after the plane was shot down over the Ukraine.

Among the 298 people on board the flight from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur, 38 were Australian citizens and permanent residents. All aboard were killed when the plane was shot down in an area where there was heavy fighting between Ukrainian forces and Moscow-supported separatists.

"We owe it to the living to work for a more just and humane world, a world where people can turn their faces to the sun with the shadows behind them, like the sunflowers blooming again in the fields where MH17 came down," Prime Minister Tony Abbott said during a service held in Canberra.

Earlier, Abbott also unveiled a plaque with the names of the Australian victims.

"The names of the Australians killed in the MH17 atrocity a year ago today are etched on this plaque just as they are etched in our hearts," Abbott said.

The plaque sits on top of soil taken from the Ukrainian town of Rozsypne, the area where the plane went down.

Australia, Belgium, Malaysia, the Netherlands and Ukraine have asked the United Nations Security Council to establish an international criminal tribunal to try those responsible for crimes connected with the downing of the flight.

Most of the victims onboard the Boeing 777 flight were Dutch, and Malaysian victims accounted for 43 including the crew members.

Ukraine claims the plane was downed by separatists supplied by Russia with missiles, while Russia blames the Ukrainian side.—*Kyodo News*

Hillary Clinton proposes tax cuts for profit-sharing firms

DOVER, 17 July — Democratic US presidential candidate Hillary Clinton announced a new plan to give businesses two-year tax credits for sharing profits with workers at a New Hampshire campaign stop on Thursday.

Clinton detailed the first component of her economic platform aimed at raising middle-class incomes at a town hall meeting in Dover, citing local examples of businesses that share profits with employees.

"If you treat somebody like they have a stake in your business, they're going to stand up a little straighter, they're going to work a little harder," said Clinton, the front-runner for the Democratic nomination ahead of the presidential election in November 2016.

Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton says 'Happy Birthday' to Lori Anne Schlinder (R) following a campaign town hall meeting in Dover, New Hampshire on 16 July, 2015. **REUTERS**

Under Clinton's plan, firms would receive a two-year tax credit equal to 15 percent of the profits distributed to workers, capped at a value of 10 percent of employees' wages.

The tax credit would be available only to firms that share profits widely with employees, would phase out credits available for profits shared with high-income workers and end after two years when businesses that benefited from the credits would no longer need them, Clinton's campaign said.

If a firm provided a $5,000 profit-sharing payment to a worker earning $50,000 per year, for example, it would receive a $750 tax credit under the proposal. The tax benefit available to any single firm in a given year would be capped to "prevent an excessive credit for very large corporations," the campaign said, emphasizing Clinton's focus on supporting small business.

Clinton's campaign estimated the cost of her "Rising Incomes, Sharing Profits" tax credit would be between $10 billion to $20 billion over 10 years and could be paid for by closing tax loopholes that she will detail in coming weeks.

Roughly 40 percent of US workers participate in profit-sharing plans and it has a meaningful impact on their wealth, according to economic research cited by Clinton's campaign. "When companies share profits, not only do workers benefit, but the companies themselves see higher productivity," said Alan Blinder, a Princeton University economics professor who is advising Clinton's campaign.

The profit-sharing proposal is the first piece of Clinton's economic agenda outlined in a Monday speech. She said that over the course of the summer she would explain how she would raise the hourly minimum wage, support collective bargaining, fight employer wage theft, encourage long-term investing and regulate Wall Street.

Reuters

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THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
THE MINISTRY OF RAIL TRANSPORTATION
MYANMA RAILWAYS
NOTIFICATION

1. For the Dry Ports projects which will be implemented in Yangon Region (Ywathargyi) and Mandalay Region (Myitnge), the Tender Invitation and Evaluation Committee led by Ministry of Rail Transportation selected the (7) potential companies on 5th November, 2014 as prior position in the first step. In the second step, the developers competed undertaking the preliminary survey in accordance with their proposals. The (6) companies submitted the Feasibility Study reports to the committee on 9th January, 2015.
2. In line with rules and regulations, the following (5) companies were evaluated and short listed as second step-potential developers by the committee.
   (a) KERRY Logistics Network
   (b) Resources Group Logistics Co.,Ltd
   (c) KMA Shipping Co.,Ltd
   (d) Malikha Automobile Co.,Ltd
   (e) UMG Logistics Co.,Ltd
3. As the third step, the above mentions of short listed companies have to submit their detailed proposals and documents needed to proceed tender completion.
4. The proposal forms (English/Myanmar) will be available at the cost of Ks 1,000,000 (One Million Myanmar Kyat) from the date on 20th July, 2015 during office hour at Deputy General Manager, Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Corner of Theinbyu Street and Merchant Street, Botahtaung Township, Yangon, Myanmar. Phone 95-1-291985, 291994, with the official letter of the respective company.
5. The proposals must be submitted to Deputy General Manager, Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Corner of Theinbyu Street and Merchant Street, Botahtaung Township, Yangon not later than 14:00 hr, on l8th September, 2015. Late submission shall be not entertained.
6. Myanma Railways will select the (2) potential developers which are mostly qualified. Enquires can be made by calling telephones +95-67-77005, 77025, 77024 and also mail to kampi.leitui@qmail.com

Managing Director
Myanma Railways
Ministry of Rail Transportation

WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is vigorous in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 18th July, 2015: Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Mandalay and Magway Regions and Kayah State, widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of regionally heavy falls in Upper Sagaing Region and Rakhine State and isolated heavy falls in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Yangon and Ayeyawdy Regions, Kachin,Chin, Kayin and Mon States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV ASIATIC GLORY VOY NO (007N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ASIATIC GLORY VOY NO (007N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18.7.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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 INTERASIA LINES
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV NIKATOR VOY NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV NIKATOR VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19.7.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P.L where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm 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 SEA TRANS SHIPPING
Phone No: 2301186

A Ferris wheel is seen as monsoon clouds cover the sky in Kirtipur, the outskirts of Kathmandu, Nepal, on 16 July, 2015. Monsoon season has begun in the country with heavy rainfalls.—XINHUA

Chinese toddler recovering after "brain-shrinking" surgery

CHANGSHA, 17 July — A three-year-old girl with her head weighing 20 kg due to hydrocephalus, is recovering steadily after a 3D-printed titanium alloy skull was implanted, doctors said.

The girl, nicknamed Han Han, underwent the surgery for more than 17 hours on Wednesday morning at the No 2 People's Hospital of central China's Hunan Province and is under observation, said neurosurgeon Kuang Weiping, who is in charge of her treatment.

Born with hydrocephalus, Han Han was admitted to the hospital two months ago. Since September 2014, she has become bedridden as her head grew four times the normal size, taking up more than half of her total weight.

Due to the heavy weight, parts of her brain suffered serious infections and she lost sight because her optic nerve was affected.

Kuang said they believed her skull was likely to rupture as infected parts became thinner and only the "brain-shrinking" operation could save her life.

During the process, neurosurgeon peeled her scalp and skull, then drained the fluid in her head. After the swollen structures in her brain returned to the normal size, they implanted the donated artificial skull and covered it with her scalp.

"We were very, very careful, because brain tissue without a skull is like a peeled egg. Fortunately, it went smoothly," Kuang said.

Xinhua

Cambodia grants work cards to 25,000 foreigners in six months

PHNOM PENH, 17 July — Cambodia's Ministry of Labour granted about 25,000 work permits to foreigners in the first six months of 2015, about 5,000 more than the total of last year, a local newspaper reported on Friday.

Labour Minister Ith Samheng partly credited the jump to a partnership with the Ministry of Interior.

"We have more people applying for employment cards," the *Phnom Penh Post* quoted him as saying. "This is the result of cooperation between the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Interior."

Sok Phal, director-general of the Interior Ministry's General Department of Immigration, said his department is cracking down on employment card and other documentation violations.

From January to June, 1,600 foreigners were deported due to documentation issues, 98 percent of whom were Vietnamese, Sok Phal said.

"Foreigners and investors do not have the right to work here without employment cards," Sok Phal said. "If they do not have employment cards, they will be fined 125 US dollars, and if they still do not obtain a card, they will be jailed for three months and then expelled."

Xinhua

Comedian Matayoshi bags Akutagawa literary award

TOKYO, 17 July — Comedian Naoki Matayoshi on Thursday won the prestigious Akutagawa Prize for up-and-coming authors, after his nomination grabbed attention as it is rare for a popular entertainer to be recommended for the literature award.

In his prize-winning work "Hibana" (Spark), Matayoshi, 35, who is also known for his knowledge of literature, depicts exchanges between a struggling young comedian and a senior comedian. The book has already become a best seller with 640,000 copies sold.

The 153rd Akutagawa Prize was also awarded to Keisuke Hada for "Scrap and Build," while the Naoki Prize for popular fiction went to Akira Higashiyama for "Ryu" (Flow).

Matayoshi, born in Osaka Prefecture, has performed on stage as part of a comic duo Peace. With his trademark long wavy hair, he has also earned a reputation as a recommender of interesting books.

"I was really surprised...I'm just happy," Matayoshi told a Press conference in Tokyo, looking nervous.

The story by Hada, a 29-year-old native of Tokyo, concerns a youth without stable employment who takes care of his grandfather. The novel by Higashiyama, a 46-year-old writer born in Taipei, depicts a teenager investigating the mystery of his grandfather's death in the Taiwan capital in 1975.

The awards will be presented at a ceremony in Tokyo in late August, with each author receiving 1 million yen ($8,060) in prize money.

(From L to R) Akira Higashiyama, winner of the Naoki Prize, a literary award for popular fiction, and Naoki Matayoshi and Keisuke Hada, recipients of the Akutagawa Prize, a literary award for up-and-coming novelists, pose for photos at a hotel in Tokyo on 16 July, 2015. Matayoshi, a popular 35-year-old comedian, won the award for his debut novel "Hibana" (Sparks), which already has sold about 640,000 copies.
KYODO NEWS

The Akutagawa Prize was founded in 1935 in memory of renowned Japanese novelist Ryunosuke Akutagawa, while the Naoki award, also created in 1935, is named after popular writer Sanjugo Naoki.

Kyodo News

I want to be accepted as an actress: Cara Delevingne

LOS ANGELES, 17 July — Cara Delevingne has revealed that she wants people to "accept" her as an actress, not just as a supermodel.

The 22-year-old diva put a full stop at the rumours that she is planning to leave modelling and said it will happen, but not very often, reported *OK!* magazine.

"I have five movies coming out this year (plus "Suicide Squad" in 2016), which is really exciting, so you don't really have a choice but to accept me as an actress now! I'm going to shove myself down your throat, in the nicest way possible," Delevingne said ahead of the release of her upcoming movie "Paper Towns". However, despite her excitement for the big screen, she will not be giving up modelling.

"I'm going to carry on modelling — it's just going to happen a lot less. Actresses do modelling jobs, so it'll be kind of the same thing," she said.—*PTI*

Cara Delevingne

Robbie Williams turns auctioneer, raises $226,000 for charity

LONDON, 17 July — Pop singer Robbie Williams has turned auctioneer at a charity sale of his belongings and raised some $226,000 for a British children's hospice.

The "Let Me Entertain You" singer appeared at London's Bonhams auction house on Wednesday for the "Doing it for the Kids" sale, held to raise money for the Donna Louise Children's Hospice, of which he is a patron.

The auction, where fans bid online, by phone and in the room, saw more than 150 lots go under the hammer — including belongings from when Williams was part of boy band Take That — raising 145,000 pounds ($226,475), the hospice said in a statement.

Singer Robbie Williams performs on stage during a concert to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the reign of Albert II, in front of the Palace in Monaco, on 12 July, 2015.—**REUTERS**

To loud cheers, the singer took over as auctioneer to sell his handwritten "Kids" single lyrics, estimated at 2,000–3,000 pounds, for 6,875 pounds.

"It's just a set of handwritten lyrics for the popular song from last century, 'Kids' — Robbie Williams featuring Kylie Minogue," the singer told the room as he set off bidding.

Popular lots included handwritten lyrics for Williams' 2013 single "Go Gentle", which sold for 31,250 pounds, and a Take That MTV Movie Award, which went for 10,625 pounds.

A cream suit Williams wore in the music video for 2004 single "Radio" sold for 5,250 pounds while a set of handwritten lyrics for "Let Me Entertain You" sold for 2,750 pounds, according to the hospice.

Williams said it was "a privilege" to auction the possessions to raise money for the hospice.—*Reuters*

Kung fu star Jet Li leads group in $187 million HK 'shell' deal

HONG KONG, 17 July — A group led by Chinese movie star Jet Li and his wife Nina Li invested $187 million in a Hong Kong-listed firm, as appetite surged for so-called "shell" companies listed in the city.

The duo made the bulk of the investment, agreeing to buy 11.5 billion new shares of Far East Holdings International Ltd at HK$0.10 each, or about HK$1.15 billion ($148.4 million), via a holding company, according to filings with the Hong Kong stock exchange this week. That is equivalent to a 97 percent discount to Far East's closing price on 26 June, before the stock was halted pending an announcement.

Private companies and individuals are rushing to cash in on a steady flow of Chinese funds that have fueled a rally Hong Kong stocks, by snapping up so-called listed 'shells'. Typically, such shell companies get a large injection of cash and assets that often change their business.

Demand for shell companies, entities which usually have few material operating assets, has soared in recent months. Such deals are generally considered a quicker and easier way for investors to gain a listing and access to funds than going through an initial public offering.

Li, better known for his acrobatic martial arts films, and his wife bought the stake on 10 July through Regent Pacific Business Ltd, the filings showed.

Far East didn't immediately return a *Reuters* request for comment on the investments.

Fast East describes itself as an investment holdings company active in the technology, media, manufacturing and financial services sectors, according to its website. The Far East deal follows a similar transaction last month by China's largest China's No 1 social network and online media company Tencent Holdings Ltd and developer Evergrande Real Estate Group to buy a loss-making solar panel maker.—*Reuters*

Singer David-Troy Somerville dies

Co-founder and lead singer of '50s rock 'n' roll band The Diamonds' David-Troy Somerville has died in Santa Barbara, California. He was 81.—**PTI**

LOS ANGELES, 17 July — Co-founder and lead singer of '50s rock 'n' roll band The Diamonds' David-Troy Somerville has died in Santa Barbara, California. He was 81.

Canada-native Somerville passed away on Tuesday following a battle with cancer, reported *Billboard*.

He co-founded rock 'n' roll band The Diamonds in 1953 with members of a vocal group who were waiting to audition for a talent show, and became their coach before assuming the role of lead singer.

Throughout the late 1950s and early 1960s, The Diamonds scored 16 hit singles on the US Billboard charts, including popular tracks "Silhouettes", "The Stroll", and "Little Darlin", which was the third best-selling song in America in 1958, just behind Pat Boone's "Love Letters in the Sand" and Elvis Presley's classic "All Shook Up".

In 1961, Somerville quit The Diamonds to focus on a solo career under the name David Troy.

He also had a brief stint in a new group called The Four Preps, but left to form the duo Belland and Somerville with the band's lead singer Bruce Belland.

Somerville has been honoured by five different music halls of fame — the Canadian Music Hall of Fame, Doo Wop Music Hall of Fame, Vocal Group Hall of Fame, Doo Wop Hall of Fame of America and Rockabilly Hall of Fame.

PTI

GENERAL

No solace for food-deprived polar bears as sea ice wanes

A polar bear keeps close to her young along the Beaufort Sea coast in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska in a 6 March, 2007 file photo.—REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 17 July — Polar bears are the kings of the ice surface covering the top of the globe, but the ongoing loss of the Arctic sea ice on which they hunt seals is causing summer food deprivation that threatens these imposing white-furred predators.

Some experts had thought the bears might be able to mitigate the effects of reduced food intake by entering a "walking hibernation" during summers, an energy-conserving state of reduced activity and metabolic rate akin to the winter hibernation other bear species undertake.

A study released on Thursday showed this is not happening. Researchers who monitored the body temperature, activity levels and movements of 30 bears found they limited their summer energy expenditure a bit, but not enough to compensate for the food deprivation they face.

The findings indicate polar bears cannot use reduced metabolic rates to extend their reliance on stored body fat when food becomes scarce.

"They are unable to reduce their metabolism to levels similar to hibernation," University of Wyoming zoology and physiology professor Merav Ben-David said. University of Wyoming biologist John Whiteman added: "We found that bears appear to exhibit a typical mammalian response to food limitation in the summer, including slow, moderate declines in body temperature and activity."

The loss of sea ice in the Arctic, attributed to rising temperatures amid global climate change, has prompted worry about the future of polar bears.

They are specialized sea ice predators, hunting ringed and bearded seals from the surface of sea ice, mostly from April to June. During that time, they accumulate fat reserves that help them survive the summer when the sea ice melts.

With rising temperatures, sea ice is melting earlier in the spring. In some areas, this has reduced bears' hunting opportunities and left them with diminished fat stores. Such a compromised body condition before winter could threaten their survival. The researchers collected data on bears on shore and on the ice in the Arctic Ocean's Beaufort Sea, north of Alaska and Canada. They surgically implanted tiny devices to record body temperature hourly and placed collars on the bears with satellite tracking technology to monitor activity levels.

"To this day, polar bears are tied to the ice. All bears spend the majority of their lives on the ice, and in some regions, bears are born and die on the ice, perhaps never setting foot on land," Whiteman said. The research appears in the journal *Science*.—*Reuters*

mitv Myanmar International

(18-7-2015 07:00 am~19-7-2015 07:00 am) MST

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MRTV Entertainment Channel

(18-7-2015, Saturday)

6:00 am
• Classical Songs
6:15 am
• Pyi Thu Ni Ti
6:45 am
• Dramatic Arts
7:15 am
• Cassette Drama
8:30 am
• Dramatic Arts
9:30 am
• Teleplay
10:00 pm
• Myanmar Video

EU tells Thailand more to do on illegal fishing

BANGKOK, 17 July — The European Union has warned Thailand that it is still not doing enough to stamp out illegal fishing practices, the country's defence minister said on Friday, raising the prospects of a trade ban. Thailand, the world's third-largest seafood exporter, was given six months by the EU in April to address issues such as ensuring all fishing vessels are registered, have registered equipment and are fitted with a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS). "The EU sent a letter saying our actions were still not correct both in terms of administration and legislation," Defence Minister Prawit Wongsuwan told reporters on Friday. Prawit said that 3,000 fishing boats nationwide were still unregistered. The Thai government's efforts to tighten regulations last month prompted many of the country's fishermen to stop work in protest against the new requirements. Thailand's annual exports to the EU are estimated to be worth between 575 million to 730 million euros ($641 million - $813 million). Overall fish exports were worth around $3 billion in 2014, according to the Thai Frozen Food Association.—*Reuters*

Magician Messi extols retiring sorcerer Aimar

Benfica's Pablo Aimar answers a question during a news conference at Luz stadium in Lisbon on 26 March, 2012. Benfica will face Chelsea in a Champions League first leg quarter-final match on 27 March.
REUTERS

BUENOS AIRES, 17 July — Lionel Messi assumed the rare role of fan on Thursday conveying his best wishes to his idol and Argentina great Pablo Aimar who retired on Wednesday.

"A great player is retiring, one of my idols. Pablo Aimar, I wish you the best in the next stage (of your life)," the Argentina captain wrote on his Facebook page. "Thanks for all the enjoyment you gave us with your magic," added Messi, who was Aimar's team mate at the 2006 World Cup in Germany and 2007 Copa America in Venezuela where Argentina reached the final.

Messi has often said that the former River Plate, Valencia, Benfica and Argentina midfielder Aimar — who won 52 caps and scored eight goals — was a player he idolised as a child.

Aimar announced that he was quitting football having failed to make River's squad for the last two rounds of the Libertadores Cup.

The playmaker, who was nicknamed 'Payaso', meaning clown, because he always wore a smile, returned home last year hoping for one last fling at River.

He had surgery on a nagging ankle problem in April, which restricted him to a couple of substitute appearances for the club in May.

The 35-year-old, who also played at the 2002 World Cup in South Korea and Japan, complained this month that the pain remained and told coach Marcelo Gallardo, another former team mate, that he was retiring.

River are 90 minutes from a place in their fifth Libertadores final after a 2-0 home win over Guarani of Paraguay in the first leg of their semi-final on Tuesday.

They are looking to win South America's top club prize for the third time.—*Reuters*

Philippines, Japan forge action plan for industrial cooperation

MANILA, 17 July — The Philippines and Japan have signed an action plan to further strengthen their industrial cooperation, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) said on Friday.

Philippine Undersecretary for Industry Development Adrian Cristobal Jr and Japan Deputy Director-General for Trade Policy Toshiyuki Sakamoto inked the "Action Plan on Industrial Cooperation" on Thursday at the Philippine Board of Investments in Makati City, Metro Manila. The Action Plan outlines broad initiatives in key areas of interest and cooperation including automobile, manufacturing, micro, small and medium enterprises, services and human resource development.

"These initiatives are geared towards identifying and addressing supply chain gaps between the Philippines and Japan by providing technical and institutional capacity building to domestic industry players," Cristobal said.

Xinhua

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‘Winner’ Ramos needed at Real Madrid, says Benitez

MELBOURNE, 17 July — Spain defender Sergio Ramos is not leaving Real Madrid and is an integral part of the La Liga giants’ plans, according to new coach Rafa Benitez.

Ramos has been linked to a move to Manchester United for a number of weeks, despite having two years left on his contract.

According to Spanish media reports, Real have already rejected offers of over 28 million pounds ($43.77 million) from the Premier League club for the 29-year-old Ramos.

Benitez, who replaced sacked Italian Carlo Ancelotti after a trophy-less 2014-15 season, was reluctant to discuss transfer speculation but was forthright about the status of his seasoned central defender.

“In terms of Sergio Ramos, there’s a lot of talk about his situation,” Benitez told reporters in Melbourne on Friday. “For me, he is an enormous professional. In person, he applies himself, he does everything that the team and I ask of him.

“And for me, the matter (is that) the president has already commented that he is staying with the club.

“I have spoken to him at length in the summer about his ideas, about his future. I see Sergio as an integral part of our team, he’s a winner and that’s what we need in our team.”

United manager Louis van Gaal is seeking to shore up his club’s defence to help improve on last season’s fourth-place finish in the Premier League.

Benitez, who has been contracted at the world’s richest club for three seasons, has also declared Real must improve their defence after a season in which they surrendered both their Champions League title and domestic King’s Cup crown.

Offensively, Benitez has been grilled over how he intends to deploy Cristiano Ronaldo and Gareth Bale after reports the pair were unhappy about the positions they typically played under Ancelotti.

Benitez has tried a number of different lineups during training in Melbourne ahead of Real’s International Champions Cup opener against AS Roma on Saturday, fuelling speculation the Briton might play a more central role in the Spaniard’s attacking setup.

Managing the million-dollar egos in the dressing room will be one of Benitez’s most demanding tasks and the 55-year-old treaded gently when discussing his plans for the pair.

“Ronaldo, Bale, all of them are so good,” he said.

“All of them have an option... Ronaldo is a key player for us. Bale is a key.”—*Reuters*

Spain’s soccer player and UNICEF ambassador Sergio Ramos plays soccer with Cuban children in Havana on 16 June, 2015.
REUTERS

Serena Williams withdraws from Swedish Open with elbow problems

STOCKHOLM, 17 July — Six-time Wimbledon champion Serena Williams pulled out of the Swedish Open on Thursday with an elbow injury.

The US star was due to play in the round of 16 but withdrew from the tournament shortly before the match, public broadcaster SVT reported.

“I am devastated, but I hope to be back some day,” Williams told SVT by the side of the court. Williams said she had to heed her medical team’s advice after a practice session on Thursday morning.

“It hurt when I hit the ball. I’ve had great problems with it so today when it didn’t feel good, the doctors said it would be best not make it worse,” said Williams. The 33-year-old claimed her sixth Wimbledon title at the weekend, leaving only the US Open on her path to a full Grand Slam in 2015. “I had problems with my elbow at Wimbledon and the French Open. Playing many matches makes it worse. But I’m positive I can continue my journey toward a real Grand Slam,” she said.—*Xinhua*

Wimbledon champion Serena Williams

Everton’s Martinez backs winter World Cup in Qatar

Everton manager Roberto Martinez

SINGAPORE, 17 July — Everton manager Roberto Martinez has thrown his backing behind a winter World Cup in Qatar, believing the 2022 tournament should be embraced as a chance for the global game to bridge new boundaries.

Earlier this year, soccer’s world governing body FIFA relented on previous demands that the tournament would be held in summer, opting instead for a November-December event to avoid matches kicking off in temperatures higher than 50 degrees Celsius.

“A World Cup in Qatar is an incredible experience for everyone concerned and I think we should embrace it,” the Spaniard told reporters in Singapore on Friday, a day ahead of Everton’s Premier League Asia Trophy final against Arsenal.

“Once that decision is made, it’s not good for us in football to keep going on about the negative aspect of playing it in winter. From my point of view, we need to enjoy it and adapt to whatever changes will come our way because of it.”

Martinez is an advocate of taking the game to new countries and the first-hand experience of Everton’s positive reception in Singapore has given him a firm belief that Qatar would be equally as accommodating given the right conditions.

“My thoughts on the World Cup are that you play it everywhere in the world, if the decision is to be given to Qatar then it is clear that the tournament must be played in winter.

“There’s no way you can play it in the summer. We were in Qatar not that long ago and they have all the facilities, so I don’t think it will be a problem to play the World Cup there.

“You could play the games in the summer because of the air conditioning in the stadiums but it would be very tough for the fans to enjoy a World Cup in the summer heat.”

Martinez also believes there is plenty of time for European clubs opposed to moving the tournament from its traditional summer timing to prepare the leagues and players for a winter tournament. “I don’t think it’s even up for debate, it has to be a winter World Cup and as a football manager and a football person you have to adapt towards it and we will do that,” he added.

“We will start making plans for it and get the players prepared to make sure they are ready for what is ahead of them.”

Reuters

Blatter to attend World Cup draw in Russia, says Mutko

MOSCOW, 17 July — FIFA President Sepp Blatter will attend the 2018 World Cup’s preliminary draw in St Petersburg on 25 July, Russia’s Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko was quoted as saying on Thursday. “Sepp will be coming. He confirmed this to me yesterday. He will also meet with the President of Russia,” Mutko said in an interview with the newspaper *Sport Express*.

Blatter, 79, said on 2 June he would step down from his post after US and Swiss authorities widened their investigations into bribery and corruption at world soccer’s governing body.

Blatter has not been charged with any wrongdoing. Swiss authorities are also investigating the awarding of the 2018 and 2022 World Cups to Russia and Qatar respectively.—*Reuters*

FIFA President Sepp Blatter speaks during an event for workers building the planned FIFA museum in Zurich on 25 June, 2015.—REUTERS

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