THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Our Tribute to Martyrs on 68th Martyrs' Day

Work Harmoniously Together

**It is essential for us
all to work together
in perfect harmony
in the post-independence era
of
the country.
Otherwise, the free Burma
will no way be able
to taste freedom to the full.**

(An excerpt of a radio speech by
General Aung San in March 1947)

INSIDE

President U Thein Sein urges peace, unity in Kayah State — Page-3

Vice president inspects Western Yangon University — Page-3

Pyithu Hluttaw speaker meets local communities in Bago Region — Page-2

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing takes part in monsoon tree planting ceremony — Page-2

Pyithu Hluttaw speaker meets local communities in Bago Region

Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann cordially greets Kayin elder woman in Bago Region.—MNA

BAGO, 18 July — The Speaker of the Pyithu Hluttaw visited Phyu, Nyaunglebin and Daik-U townships in Bago Region on Friday, urging local communities to help ensure a successful 2015 general election.

Thura U Shwe Mann said although the Union Election Commission is mainly responsible for staging the 8 November ballot, citizens must also contribute to the electoral process.

Thura U Shwe Mann also said Myanmar was on the path to building a peaceful democratic nation, with the country practicing market-oriented economics for over four years.

Bago Region Chief Minister U Nyan Win and local authorities explained development programmes in the region.

MNA

Waso robes offered to monks and novices in Wa region

Officials offer Waso robes to Venerable monks in Wa region.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 18 July— The Work Committee for Implementation of Development for Border Areas and National Races, in partnership with the Ministry of Border Affairs, on 15 July organized a religious ceremony to offer robes to members of the Sangha in the Wa region.

Suddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Chandasiri, presiding Sayadaw at Panyadipa Monastery, gave the Ninefold Precepts to the congregation, followed by local officials presenting Waso robes and offertories in cash and kind for monks and novices.

MNA

South Korea trade exhibition set to open in Yangon

By *Khaing Thanda Lwin*

YANGON, 18 July—An exhibition of South Korean products will take place in Yangon at the end of the month, organizer U Htin Aung Tun said Saturday.

Korea Expo 2015, organized by Logic Myanmar Co in cooperation with Kotra and Korea Association in Myanmar, will run from 30 July through 2August at Tatmadaw Exhibition Hall on U Wisara Road in Yangon.

"This is the seventh time Logic Myanmar Co has held the Korea expo since 2010,"said U Htin Aung Tun who expects that around 60,000 visitors will come to the four-day event.

Past expos have received more than 10,000 visitors per day, he added.

The expo will include 150 booths showing products such as electronic equipment, food and beverages, cosmetics and automobiles from more than 70 companiesincluding Samsung Electronics.

Samsung official Daw Aye Kyawt Mon said the electronics giant would display a wide range of its consumer products.—*GNLM*

Samsung displayed its products at the last year's Korea Expo in December in Yangon.
PHOTO: LOGIC MYANMAR CO

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing takes part in monsoon tree planting ceremony

NAY PYI TAW, 18 July — Command-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing joined monsoon tree planting ceremony held around Yezin dam in Zeyathiri Township here on Saturday.

The Senior General and wife planted a starflower plant and Gangaw plant (Mesua ferrea) at the ceremony, as the families of Defence Services (Army,Navy and Air) planted 5,000 saplings of teak plant.

Families of Tatmadaw have planted more than 74,810 perennial plants in monsoon tree planting ceremonies near Yezin dam since 2011 as a move for environmental conservation.

Myawady

***Senior General Min Aung Hlaing plants a tree at the Monsoon Tree Planting Ceremony held around Yezin dam in Zeyathiri Township.*—MYAWADY**

Myanmar, India discuss bilateral relations, exchange views on regional, intl' affairs

NAY PYI TAW, 18 July — The Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister for Foreign Affairs H.E. U Wunna Maung Lwin arrived back here by air on 18 July 2015 after attending the First Myanmar-India Joint Consultative Commission (JCC) Meeting in New Delhi from 15 to 17 July. The Myanmar delegation comprised senior officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Construction, Ministry of Rail Transportation, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and from the Regional Governments of Sagaing Region and Chin State.

On 15 July, the Union Minister accompanied by the Ambassador of Myanmar to India U Aung Khin Soe and members of Myanmar delegation, paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India at the Prime Minister's Office. They touched upon matters relating to bilateral relations between the two countries and exchanged views on regional and international affairs.

The Myanmar delegation visited the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) of India. The Dean of the FSI. H.E. Mrs. Nengcha Lhouvum and visiting Faculty members briefed the functions and activities of FSI to Myanmar delegation.

On 16 July, the Union Minister and the Minister for External Affairs of India H.E. Mrs. Sushma Swaraj co-chaired the First Myanmar-India Joint Consultative Commission Meeting. The two sides discussed a wide range of bilateral issues of mutual interests of further strengthen the bilateral relations and cooperation between the two countries.

The first ever JCC meeting was convened in accordance with the Protocol on Consultations which was signed between the two foreign ministries in 2003, to enhance bilateral cooperation, to promote inclusive growth and development and to contribute to peace, prosperity and stability in both countries. A joint statement on bilateral cooperation, which covers a wide range of issues of mutual interests, was also issued after the successful holding of the said meeting.—*MNA*

President U Thein Sein urges peace, unity in Kayah State

NAY PYI TAW, 18 July— President U Thein Sein visited Kayah State on Saturday to attend ceremonies for the opening of a bridge and commencement of state-wide electricity supply via the national grid.

In an address, he urged locals to ensure peace and unity in the state.

U Thein Sein met local communities from Loikaw, the state's capital, and Demoso Township at the state government office.

The president said the newly opened Thanlwin Bridge (Paswang) will help people link with the Mese area, on the eastern part of Thanlwin river near the Thai border, and promote quality of life of residents.

The government has plans to set up a border trade zone at Mese after discussions with the Thai government, U Thein Sein said.

He added small and medium-scale industries are to be set up to produce export items for the neighbouring country. The border state is now supplying power to eight townships and 254 villages.

Electricity could be distributed to only five townships and some villages in Kayah state until 2011, although the Beluchaung hydropower project has provided electricity to major cities in the state since 1960.

At the meeting, Union Minister for the President's Office U Hla Tun, Union Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development U Ohn Myint, Union Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Win Tun, Union Minister for Electrical Power U Khin Maung Soe, Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint, Union Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lwin and Union Minister for Health Dr Than Aung outlined development programmes in Kayah state.

President U Thein Sein and senior government officials visited Thiri-Mingalar Taunggwe Pagoda and Myo-Nan Pagoda in Loikaw in the morning. They returned to Nay Pyi Taw in the afternoon.—*MNA*

President U Thein Sein accepts a picture presented by the Pagoda Board of Trustees of Myo-Nan Pagoda in Loikaw, Kayah State.
MNA

Vice president inspects Western Yangon University

YANGON, 18 July— The education sector budget has been increasing year by year, Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham said Saturday, in a meeting with faculty at Western Yangon University.

Higher learning institutions should be furnished with necessary teaching aids, the vice president said, urging teachers to concentrate on continuous self-improvement so as to nurture academically excellent students. He also pointed out the need to establish mutually beneficial links with overseas universities.

The vice president took a guided tour of the university, inspecting the geological booth, the library and the language lab.

Opened on 29 June 2001, Western Yangon University has nearly 30,000 students.

It is one of around 180 universities and colleges across the country.—*MNA*

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham observes geological booth displayed at Yangon West University. **—MNA**

DVB cerebrates its 23rd anniversary of transmission

YANGON, 18 July— The Democratic Voice of Burma celebrated its 23rd anniversary at the Novotel Hotel here on Saturday.

U Aye Chan Naing, director of DVB Multimedia Group, made a welcoming speech at the ceremony which was attended by Deputy Minister for Information U Pike Htway, U.S. Ambassador to Myanmar Derek Mitchell, Sale Director Christopher Joseph Hajecki, the representatives from political parties, the funders, the members of 88 Generation Peace and Open Society, and the representatives from local and foreign media groups. The deputy minister made speech at the ceremony, saying that the information ministry reformed media landscape of the country, with issuing media visas for foreign journalists and licenses for newspapers, journals, magazines and online media publications.

The U.S. ambassador then congratulated the ceremony, and the DVB's Deputy Director U Khin Maung Win explained the media's movements along political mainstreams of Myanmar.

The Chiang Mai-based media began broadcasting programmes into Myanmar from studios in Oslo, Norway in July 1992.—*MNA*

Sompo Japan Nipponkoa begins operating in Thilawa SEZ

By *Ye Myint*

YANGON, 18 July — Sompo Japan Nipponkoa Insurance Inc, one of three Japanese insurers granted a license to operate in Myanmar's special economic zones, kicked off its insurance business operation in the Thilawa SEZ on Saturday.

The government of Myanmar on May 25 this year granted Sompo Japan Nipponkoa the very first license to operate in a special economic zone.

"So far, we are expecting to provide fire insurance, contractor risk insurance, marine cargo insurance and motor insurance", said Mr. Keiji Okada, general manager of the company's Yangon Representative Office, which was opened in January 1996. "As the underwriting capacity of Myanmar insurers is limited compared with foreign ones, we can serve investors in the Thilawa SEZ with a larger capacity", Okada said.

The licenses granted to the three Japanese insurers including Sompo allows them to conduct business not only in the Thilawa SEZ but also in the Dawei and Kyaukpyu SEZs. But, they are not allowed to operate outside the SEZs in accordance with the Insurance Law of Myanmar.

The types of products that the foreign insurance companies are allowed to sell in the SEZs are limited to property insurance, motor insurance, marine cargo insurance, contractor risk insurance and cash insurance, said Deputy Minister for Finance Dr Maung Maung Thein.

Although there are around 15 representative offices of foreign insurers in Myanmar, only three have officially been allowed to conduct business here, he added.

GNLM

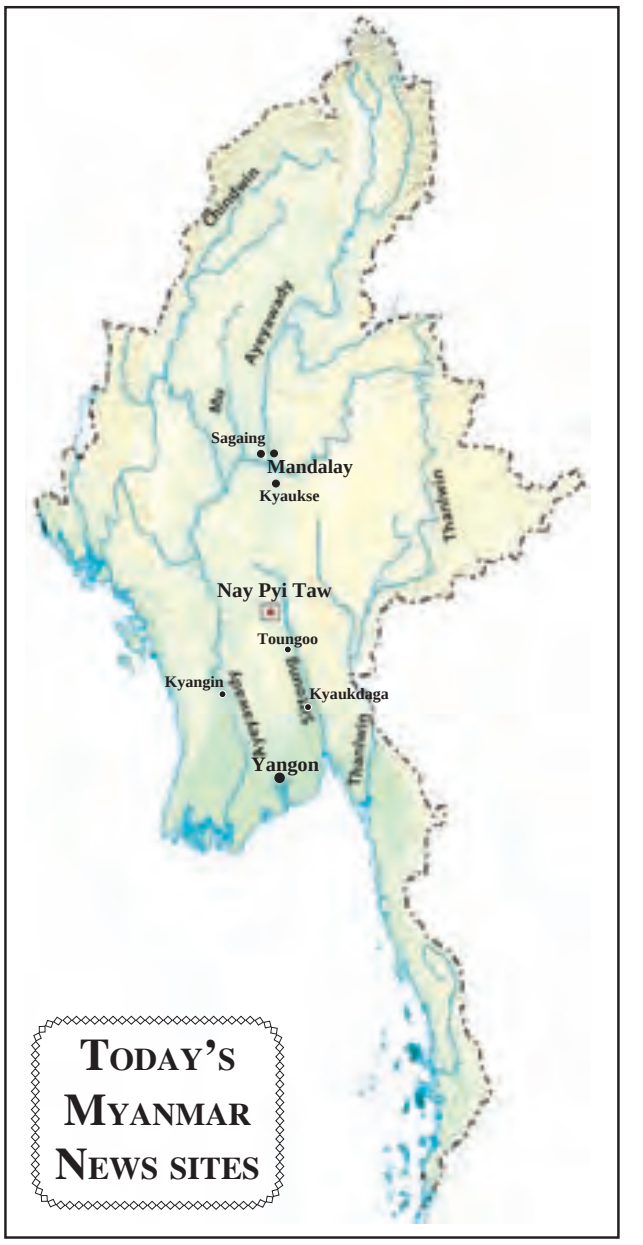
Farmers prepare for new cultivation season in Kyaukse Tsp

KYAUKSE, 18 July—Local farmers have been ploughing and nurturing paddy saplings using water from the Zawgyi River in Kyaukse Township, Mandalay Region, as of early July.

They use tractors and power-tillers to cultivate land that it is difficult to plough by cattle.

The 25-day paddy saplings are easy to grow on the farmlands, and weeding should be carried out by power-tiller, a local farmer from Kula village said.

Local farmers spend K120,000 per acre on ploughing, paddy transplanting, harvesting and winnowing. Each acre of paddy can yield 80 baskets on average.—*Khin Maung Lwin*



TODAY'S MYANMAR NEWS SITES

Kyaukdaga Tsp focuses on rural development tasks

KYAUKDAGA, 18 July—Kyaukdaga Township will prioritise construction of roads and bridges, electrification and supply of water in its spending of K100 million allocated by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw this fiscal year.

Township authorities will build 34 road sections, including rural thoroughfares and laterite roads. A plan is under way to build three wooden bridges and five concrete bridges.

Five tube-wells will be sunk in Thabayakhon village-tract to address water shortages for the local residents while one 200-KVA transformer will be installed in Nyaungbintha village, Bago Region, Hluttaw MP U Kyaw Hsan Oo said.

Khin Ko (Kyaukdaga)

***The Kyangin Township Rural Development Department plans to sink a 4-inch diameter tube-well and build a pump station and water tank in Myintha Village, Kyangin Township, Ayeyawady Region, this fiscal year at a cost of K7.58 million.—*TOWNSHIP RDD**

Toungoo Tsp residents attend flood demonstration

TOUNGOO, 18 July—A flood preparedness demonstration was presented recently in Mogaung Village, on the eastern bank of the Sittoung River in Bago Region's Toungoo Township.

The demonstration gave local people knowledge about rescue and rehabilitation tasks after flooding.

Officials of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) supervised the demonstration.

Those who attended practiced evacuation, rescue and first-aid.

Maung Shwe Win (Pyay)

Life ban for Thai politicians sacked over certain offences

BANGKOK, 18 July — Thailand's Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC) on Friday decided to ban politicians who have been removed from office for certain offences from politics for good.

The interim charter requires that the CDC design mechanisms to politically ban corrupt politicians, CDC spokesman Lertrat Rattanavanich was quoted by *Bangkok Post* as saying.

Section 111 (15) of the newly-revised draft charter prohibits politicians sacked for four offences from applying to become members of parliament (MPs) or senators, according to Lertrat.

The offences include being unusually rich, corrupt practices in violation of duties, disgracing public office and corruption on judicial positions. As stipulated by Section 111 (8), those who, according to court judgments or legal orders, have undermined the fairness of an election, are also banned from politics for life.

People involved in minor offences, such as unethical practices and dishonesty in asset declaration, are banned for five years. It is speculated that the new draft will likely keep former prime ministers Thaksin Shinawatra and his sister Yingluck Shinawatra out of politics.

Thaksin, who remains in self-exile overseas following the 2006 military coup which ousted him from premiership, was convicted in absentia by the Supreme Court of corruption which landed him a two- year jail term involving a Bangkok land grab scandal a decade ago. Yingluck was impeached by the National Legislative Assembly early this year for alleged dereliction of duty in a controversial rice subsidy scheme. She also faces criminal charges for alleged negligence in the same rice scheme.

Lertrat was noncommittal about whether Thaksin and Yingluck would be affected by these provisions.

Xinhua

Chinese premier meets Japan's national security advisor in Beijing

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang (R) meets with Japan's National Security Advisor Shotaro Yachi, who came to China to attend the first China-Japan high-level political dialogue, in Beijing, capital of China, on 17 July, 2015. — XINHUA

Chinese economy to pick up in 2nd half of 2015: US analysts

NEW YORK, 18 July — Wall Street analysts have predicted a pick-up of China's economy in the second half of this year after its gross domestic product (GDP) data for the second quarter was published well above market expectations.

China's second-quarter GDP expanded 7 percent year-on-year, remaining unchanged from the first quarter. It grew 1.7 percent over the previous quarter, the National Bureau of Statistics announced on Wednesday.

The growth rate beat the median market forecast of 6.9 percent for the second quarter.

"The economic data points released are positive indications that China's economy is coming through a bottoming process," said Brendan Ahern, chief investment officer of the US fund company KraneShares.

"Second quarter GDP generally surprised on the upside. The largest driver appears to be the services," said Qu Hongbin, chief China economist with the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) in a report.

"The acceleration was broad based: primary, secondary and tertiary industry GDP all rebounded sequentially," said Song Yu, an economist with Goldman Sachs.

The growth rates of 7.5, 7 or 6.5 percent are still the envy of other economies. The most impressive is the 10.6-percent growth rate in retail sales, which shows the long-run policy benefit of urbanization and raising domestic consumption, Ahern said.

He expected that China's re-balancing would take years with peaks and valleys as the destination is most important. Recent interest rate cuts have steepened the Chinese yield curve, which is a sign the economy has likely bottomed out with stronger prospects going forward.

Other analysts also believed that China's economic recovery will continue with the help of government policies.

The underlying economy appears to be growing at a more modest pace, and it remains both at an early stage and rather fragile. In order to strengthen and sustain the recovery, more policy easing measures are likely still needed and likely in the second half of 2015, Qu said.—*Xinhua*

India, Sri Lanka sign currency swap agreement

NEW DELHI, 18 July — India's central bank, the Reserve Bank of India on Friday signed a special currency swap agreement with the Central Bank of Sri Lanka to let the latter draw 1.1 billion US dollars in six months, said local media.

The agreement is aimed at helping Sri Lanka in availing a safety net against the probable volatility of its currency and providing short-term liquidity that would contribute to Sri Lanka' s economic recovery.

Signed by officials of the two central banks in Mumbai, the arrangement is in addition to the existing Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) member countries, according to *Press Trust of India.*

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in April approved the agreement with Sri Lanka when he visited Colombo.

The framework arrangement for SAARC members has existed since 2012 to swap 2 billion US dollars among the central banks of these countries up to November this year.

Xinhua

Philippines remaining poor in Asia despite faster growth

MANILA, 18 July — Despite impressive economic growth during the past few years, the Philippines continues to be among the poorest countries in Southeast Asia as shown by recent findings of two reputable agencies, one foreign and the other locally-based.

In its report, entitled An Outlook for Key Emerging Asian Markets, released this month, the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) said the gap between the rich and the poor in the Philippines has continued to widen.

The EIU is the research analysis division of The Economist Group that includes *The Economist* newspaper which is based in London but with global affiliates.

The EIU said by 2019, "the Philippines will remain one of Southeast Asia's poorest economies, with a lower level of GDP (gross domestic product) per head than the majority of the region's other major economies." Despite the robust growth and rising average income per capita, poor Filipinos would be left behind and they would not feel the gains from a fast-expanding economy, the EIU said.

"The Philippine economy will also remain marked by wide inequalities of income, and the disparity between the richest and poorest households will stay particularly acute. Consequently, large numbers of Filipinos will continue to live in poverty," the report said. Based on 2014 EIU data, the country remained a "small market" despite a medium-sized population of about 100 million as the GDP per head or the value of the economy divided by the population stood at only 2,843 US dollars at market exchange rates and 6,914 US dollars at purchasing power parity (PPP) rates.

The EIU projected the GDP per head in the Philippines to rise to 3,122 US dollars (market exchange rates) or 7,320 US dollars (PPP rates) in 2015.

In contrast, EIU data showed that ASEAN neighbor Indonesia, even with a bigger projected population of 265.3 million in 2019, would still have a higher GDP per head of 5,515 US dollars given expectations that it would have a 1.46-trillion US dollar economy, or almost three times larger than that of the Philippines, four years from now.

The EIU findings confirmed the result of a survey conducted by the Social Weather Stations (SWS), a local survey firm, which showed that the number of Filipinos who consider themselves as poor remain the same. According to the SWS, about 51 percent of Filipinos felt they are poor in the first quarter this year, unchanged from 52 percent in December survey last year, or equivalent to 11.4 million families.

The survey was conducted last 20-23 March among 1,200 respondents.

The EIU said it expected the Philippine economy to grow by 6.3 percent this year, "led by strong growth in private consumption," The government's GDP growth target is at a higher range of 7 percent to 8 percent, although international ratings agencies have all trimmed their growth forecast for the Philippine to only about 6 percent this year. Still, the Philippines' average annual growth rate of 6.3 percent from 2010 to 2014 was the highest five-year average during the past 40 years.—*Xinhua*

Passengers experience a demonstration flight of the ARJ21-700 jet in Xi'an, capital city of northwest China's Shaanxi Province, on 17 July, 2015. The ARJ21, short for Advanced Regional Jet for the 21st Century, is a type of regional airliner designed and manufactured by the Commercial Aircraft Corporation of China (COMAC). Over twenty representatives were invited on Friday to experience the one-hour demonstration flight and give feedbacks so as to help improve the overall performance of the jet. — XINHUA

New Greek ministers sworn in after reshuffle

ATHENS, 18 July — New ministers in Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras' government were sworn in on Saturday after a reshuffle expelled dissidents from his cabinet and began a new phase of negotiations for a third bailout package.

Tsipras sacked hardline former Energy Minister Panagiotis Lafazanis and two deputy ministers on Friday in a change that marked a split with the main leftist faction in the ruling Syriza party following a rebellion over the bailout terms.

Panos Skourletis, a close Tsipras ally who left the labour ministry to take over the vital energy portfolio, said the reshuffle marked "an adjustment by the government to a new reality".

The deal, approved with the support of opposition parties on Thursday after 39 Syriza rebels withheld their backing, agrees a painful mix of tax hikes, spending curbs and pension cuts as well as a rollback of collective bargaining agreements.

Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras (2nd L) looks on as Greek President Prokopis Pavlopoulos (L) leads a swearing in ceremony under political oath of newly appointed members of the government at the Presidential Palace in Athens, Greece on 18 July, 2015.—REUTERS

In addition, 50 billion euros ($54.14 billion) in public assets are to be placed in a special privatisation fund to act as collateral for loans of up to 86 billion euros that must now be agreed with European partners. In place of the rebels, Tsipras named allies of his own or his junior coalition partners, the right-wing Independent Greeks party, aiming to seal the bailout accord with European partners over the next few weeks before likely new elections.

"Our aim is to negotiate hard for the terms of the agreement, not just to seal it, but on how it will be implemented. There are many vague terms in the text," said newly-appointed Labour Minister George Katrougalos.

He said the government, elected in January on an anti-austerity platform, would fight for an agreement that was "socially just" and dismissed suggestions that it would have to take on the powerful labour unions and risk street protests. "The Left is with demonstrations. The Left wants the people on the streets," he said.

Acceptance of the tough bailout terms marked a turnaround for Tsipras after months of acrimonious talks and a referendum that resoundingly rejected a less stringent deal proposed by the lenders. But opinion polls suggest the prime minister's own popularity remains high.

A poll published on Saturday in the leftwing *Efimerida Ton Syntaknon* newspaper suggested Syriza would get 42.5 percent of the vote if an election were held now, almost double conservative New Democracy's 21.5 percent.

In addition, 70 percent said they would prefer to accept the bailout deal if it kept Greece in the euro.

Negotiations on the package are set to begin from next week after parliaments in Germany and other European countries gave their asset and European authorities approved emergency funding that should enable Athens to avoid defaulting on a 3.5 billion euro debt repayment due on Monday.

The European Central Bank has also agreed to release 900 million euros in emergency credit next week to the stricken Greek banking sector. But banks remain closed until at least Sunday and it is still unclear whether they will be able to reopen immediately.

Reuters

Iran leader withholds verdict on nuclear deal, vows anti-US policies

DUBAI/ BEIRUT, 18 July — Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei withheld his verdict on Iran's nuclear deal on Saturday but in a fiery address vowed enduring opposition to the United States and its Middle East policies, saying Washington sought Iran's 'surrender'.

In an speech at a Teheran mosque punctuated by chants of "Death to America" and "Death to Israel", Khamenei said he wanted politicians to examine the agreement to ensure national interests were preserved, as Iran would not allow the disruption of its revolutionary principles or defensive abilities.

An arch conservative with the last word on high matters of state, Khamenei repeatedly used the phrase "whether this text is approved or not", implying the accord has yet to win definitive backing from Iran's factionalised political establishment.

"Whether the deal is approved or disapproved, we will never stop supporting our friends in the region and the people of Palestine, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Bahrain and Lebanon. Even after this deal our policy towards the arrogant US will not change," he said. Under the agreement reached on Tuesday, 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 denies it seeks a nuclear bomb.

Khamenei's combative remarks about US policies in the Middle East may sit awkwardly with a diplomatic offensive Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif plans in coming days in the wake of the deal.

Iran regards its nuclear programme as an emblem of national dignity and dynamism in the face of what it sees as decades of hostility from Western countries that opposed its 1979 Islamic revolution.

Khamenei did not echo criticisms of the deal made on Friday by a top cleric, Ayatollah Mohammad Ali Movahedi Kermani, who said in an address broadcast on radio that it reflected excessive demands by world powers that were an "insult". But Khamenei's remarks radiated a broad mistrust of US intentions, claiming that successive American presidents had sought Iran's "surrender", and declaring that if war broke out America would come off worst, nursing "a broken head".

"The Americans say they stopped Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon," Khamenei said.

"They know it's not true. We had a fatwa (religious ruling), declaring nuclear weapons to be religiously forbidden under Islamic law. It had nothing to do with the nuclear talks."

He said the slogans of "Death to America" and "Death to Israel" chanted at demonstrations in Iran this week supporting the Palestinian cause showed what Iranians think and "shook the atmosphere of the country". "We have repeatedly said we don't negotiate with the US on regional or international affairs; not even on bilateral issues. There are some exceptions like the nuclear programme that we negotiated with Americans to serve our interests.

He said US policies in the region were "180 degrees" opposed to Iran's policies. He paid tribute to Iranian negotiators who thrashed out the accord in marathon negotiations in Vienna, saying their work was worthy of reward, whether the deal was approved or not, and added there was now "a foreseen legal path" in Iran for the nuclear agreement to take. "Our expectation is that those involved will very carefully keep the issues of the country and national issues in mind. And what they present to the people they should also be able to present to God with their head held high." —*Reuters*

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei speaks during the 16th summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Teheran, on 30 Aug, 2012. —REUTERS

Germany, France call for Minsk agreement to be fully effective by end 2015

French President Francois Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel arrive at a joint statement at the Elysee Palace in Paris, France, on 6 July, 2015.
REUTERS

PARIS, 18 July — German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Francois Hollande held a telephone conversation with the leaders of Russia and Ukraine on Friday to discuss the situation in eastern Ukraine, the French presidency said.

The four countries agreed on a package of measures last February dubbed "Minsk II" and aimed at ending military tensions in the former Soviet state.

Ukraine's parliament approved a draft law on Thursday to grant two eastern separatist regions greater autonomy.

"This dynamic needs to be maintained to ensure the Minsk measures are fully effective by the end of this year", the French presidency said in a statement.

"These political steps must go along with the strict respect of the commitments made by all parties regarding security", the statement said.

Clashes between government forces and separatists have taken place in recent weeks despite the ceasefire agreement.

Reuters

EU panel urges more pilot screening after Germanwings crash

LONDON / BERLIN, 18 July — A task force set up after the Germanwings disaster has recommended improved psychological screening for new pilots, a European database with details of medical visits and better support networks to reduce the risks of a similar tragedy.

The panel of experts led by Europe's aviation safety regulator also called for the introduction of random drugs and alcohol testing of pilots and better oversight of the doctors responsible for their regular medical checks. It delivered its findings to the European Commission on Friday.

European Union Transport Commissioner Violeta Bulc ordered the review after a young pilot barricaded himself inside the cockpit and crashed a Germanwings jetliner into the Alps in March, killing all 150 people on board.

Prosecutors have found evidence that the co-pilot, who had suffered severe depression and may have feared losing his job, had researched suicide methods and concealed an illness from his employer, sparking a debate on supervision and medical secrecy.

A traveller walks past logos of Germanwings and Lufthansa (R) at Duesseldorf airport on 24 March, 2015.—REUTERS

"We don't know everything that happened in this tragedy but we know a certain number of causes," Patrick Ky, executive director of the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), told *Reuters*.

The idea is to "minimise the risk of a similar tragedy in the future", he said in an interview.

The psychological tests would apply only to new pilots because it would be difficult to implement this for all those currently flying, an EU official said.

Co-pilot Andreas Lubitz broke off his training due to a period of severe depression, but Germanwings parent Lufthansa (LHAG.DE) has said he passed all medical and suitability tests again upon resuming training.

The EASA panel is proposing better support schemes to allow pilots or colleagues to come forward with concerns about health or other issues and discuss them confidentially.

Unions backed the proposal.

"It's important for pilots not to want to hide problems because of the fear they will lose their jobs," Markus Wahl, a spokesman for German pilots' union Vereinigung Cockpit, said.

The EASA task force — drawn from airlines, flight crews, doctors and aviation authorities — did not recommend changes to cockpit doors that were specially strengthened after the 11 September, 2001, attacks in the United States.

But it endorsed a recent shift towards ensuring that there are always two people in the cockpit.

France's BEA crash investigation agency has found that Lubitz took advantage of toilet breaks by the captain, both to rehearse the manoeuvre on the previous flight and then to carry out his plan to destroy the jet on flight 9525.

The head of the agency welcomed the EASA findings, even though it is still working on its own recommendations.

It is studying whether cockpit door-locking systems should be changed and how to balance safety with medical secrecy, a sensitive issue in nations such as France and Germany.

BEA Director Remi Jouty told *Reuters* that both areas raised difficult dilemmas.

"I can't imagine a miracle solution (on cockpit doors) that would increase safety without weakening security," he said.

One question to be examined is whether the rules can be changed without creating disproportionate risks, he added.

The medical database proposed by EASA would initially only record the dates and places of specialist 'aero-medical' check-ups and whether a pilot had been deemed fit to fly.

That would not have helped in the case of Lubitz, who is suspected of concealing notes written by a general practitioner, but would prevent what Ky called "medical tourism" or going abroad to get a favourable certificate for the pilot licence.

EASA called for a deeper examination of medical secrecy in all 28 EU nations. Some such as Britain already advise doctors to report any concerns where public safety is at stake.

The BEA is looking at whether contacts between pilots and general doctors should also come under scrutiny, but officials agree such changes are likely to trigger a difficult debate about privacy that goes beyond aviation.

Reuters

Israel signals may ask for more US military aid over Iran deal

JERUSALEM, 18 July — Israel signalled on Friday that it would ask the United States for increased military aid to counter any threats that may arise as result of the international agreement on Iran's nuclear programme.

Israel gets $3 billion (£1.92 billion) in annual military aid from Washington under a package due to expire in 2017 and has in recent years secured hundreds of millions of dollars in additional US funding for missile defence.

Israel and the United States had been in talks on future grants but Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu suspended them in the run-up to Tuesday's agreement which curtailed Iran's nuclear projects, which he condemned as insufficient.

Netanyahu plans to lobby the US Congress not to approve the nuclear deal.

But Defence Minister Moshe Yaalon on Friday appeared to regard congressional ratification as a foregone conclusion and described the deferral of aid discussions with Washington as an opportunity to assess the ramifications of the agreement.

"We talk about the American defence aid, it is clear that the situation here has changed and must be studied," Yaalon told Israel's Channel 2 TV.

Yaalon said Teheran's economic gains from a lifting of Western sanctions could boost Iranian-backed guerrillas in Lebanon and the Palestinian territories. It could also lead to an arms race with Arab states unfriendly to Israel, he said.

"We will ultimately, of course, have to go and talk about the trade-offs that Israel has coming to it in order to preserve a qualitative edge," he said, referring to Israel's military superiority in the Middle East.

This would not be next week, when US Defence Secretary Ashton Carter visits Israel, he said.

"It will be in several more months, certainly, after the (Iran) deal is approved and studied."

Before Netanyahu's suspension of aid talks, the two sides were close to a new package of grants starting in 2017 and worth $3.6 billion-$3.7 billion. US and Israeli officials said.

That sum would likely rise once talks resumed, they said.

In the interim, defence-related contacts between the allies have not ceased completely.

Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper said Defence Ministry director-general Dan Harel was in the United States this week to assess the Obama administration's planned military aid to Gulf Arab states and its impact on the Israeli "qualitative edge".

An Israeli official confirmed Harel's US trip to *Reuters* but did not comment on Yedioth's account of what was discussed.

Isaac Herzog, centre-left leader of Israel's parliamentary opposition, closed ranks with Netanyahu against the Iran nuclear deal and said he would go to Washington "to work on advancing a package of security measures befitting the new situation".

Reuters

Brazil's Rousseff warns against anti-democratic moves in region

Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff gestures during a Summit of Heads of State of MERCOSUR and Associated States and 44th Meeting of the Common Market Council in Brasilia, on 17 July, 2015.
REUTERS

BRASILIA, 18 July — Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff told regional peers on Friday there is no room for "anti-democratic adventures" in South America, a day after the speaker of Brazil's lower house said he was weighing legal arguments for her impeachment.

Speaking to the heads of state of the Mercosur trade bloc, Rousseff said political leaders should strive for dialogue to resolve ideological differences.

Rousseff comments came just two hours after the speaker of the lower house of Congress, Eduardo Cunha, broke ties with her government.

Reuters

White House says restoring Cuba ties has strong support in Congress

Retiree Lance Veit (C), 65, from California, enjoys a ride in a vintage car at the seafront Malecon during a cultural exchange trip in Havana, on 11 July, 2015.
REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 18 July — US restoration of relations with Cuba has strong support in Congress except for a vocal minority with "entrenched partisan interests" who have tried to block the moves, the White House said on Friday.

Spokesman Josh Earnest said the Obama administration will try to move forward on US-Cuba relations using all the authorities it has. He said he does not expect the Republican-dominated US Senate to move rapidly on any nominee the administration puts forth to become ambassador to Cuba.—*Reuters*

PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 19 July, 2015

Corruption stands in way of development

By *Aung Khin*

The current administration has vowed to ensure a "clean government and good governance" since taking office in 2011. It has passed a number of laws aimed at improving the management of government agencies.

Despite the liberalizing reforms of the government, corruption remains one of the biggest concerns and barriers to development for Myanmar. Although the government has warned civil service staff about accepting bribes, people are still reporting having to pay extra money at government offices, including additional charges for documents. Small-scale, bureaucratic or petty corruption is the everyday graft that undermines the image of government.

People encounter such petty corruption at public service branches including schools licensing authorities, police and taxation authorities, just to name a few. This petty corruption can undermine the trust between the people and the government, while chronic corruption can damage the economy of an entire country.

The administration and government agencies are like the locomotive and the carriages. If the carriages derail, the locomotive will not move forward. Ensuring the cars are on the right track is like tightening law enforcement. Any plan, at state level or among private firms, needs proper oversight to avoid corrupt activities.

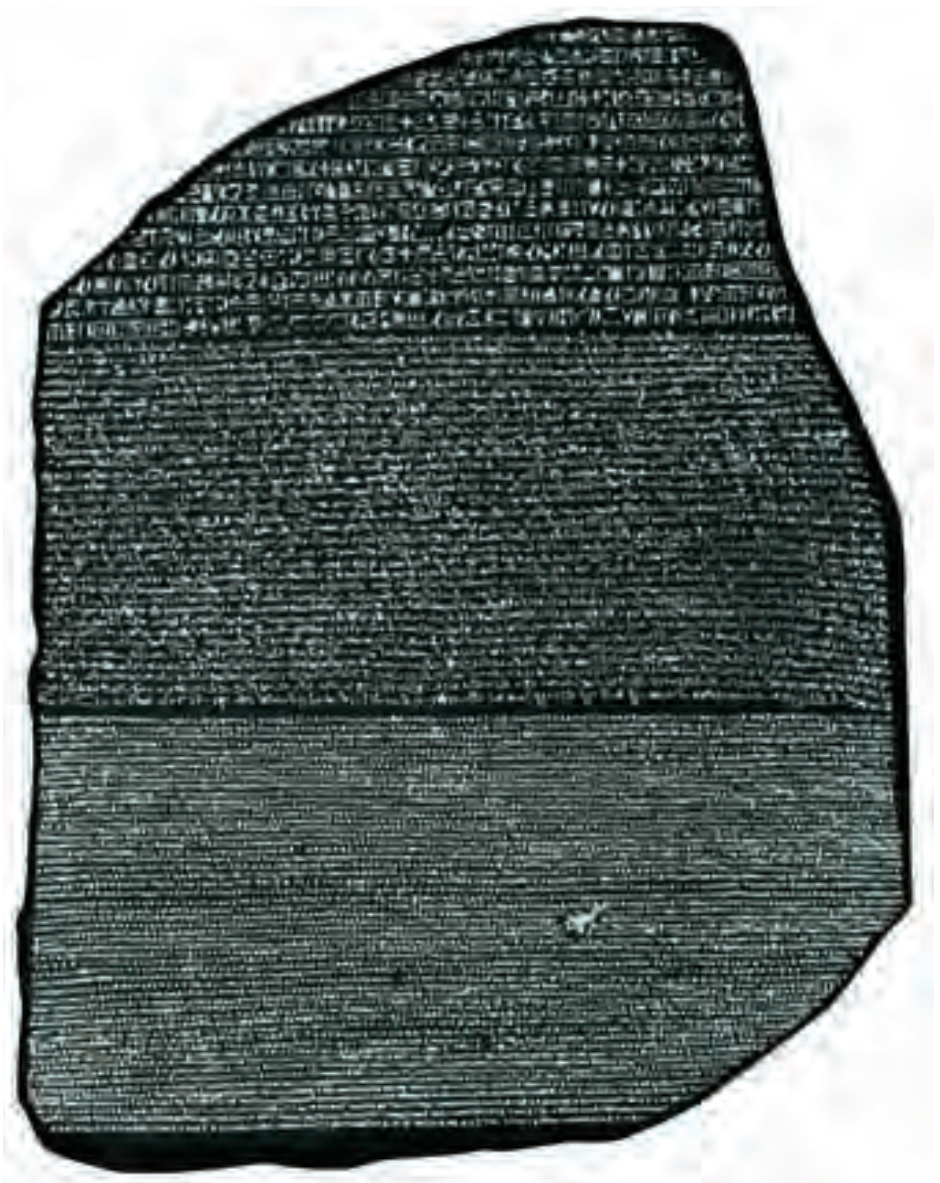
Fighting corruption is necessary to achieve a fair and just society. Without making these efforts, the goals of the government cannot be achieved.

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 II)



Maha Saddhamma Jotika dhaja Sithu, Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt

(Continued from 18-7-2015)

Scholars across the world are tempted to compare Yaza Kumar Stone Inscriptions with other stone inscriptions of similar nature, particularly the Rosetta Stone Inscription.

"The Rosetta stone is a granodiorite stele" inscribed with three scripts on one page, apportioned into three divisions. In upper division is the text in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, in the middle is the same text in Demotic script and the lower division bears the same text in ancient Greek. Because it presents essentially the same text in all three scripts [with some minor differences among them], it provided, like Yaza Kumar Stone Inscription, the key to the modern understanding of Egyptian hieroglyphs.

It measures 45 inches high, 28.5 inches wide and 11 inches thick. The date of the inscribed stone is 196 B.C. very much older than Yaza Kumar Inscription. But like the latter, the Rosetta is not the oldest but only one of old Egyptian inscriptions. However both the Rosetta and Yaza Kumar deserve the credit of a certain degree of antiquity in the context of the histories of their respective countries.

Unlike in the case of Yaza Kumar Inscription, the background history of the discovery of the Rosetta inscribed stone is different. It was first discovered by chance by an amateur collector of antiquities, who was a French soldier named Pierre-Francois Bouchard, of the Napoleonic Expedition to Egypt. During the Battle of the Nile between Britain and France under Napoleon Bonaparte fought in 1799, the said French soldier strolled around the nearby ruined monuments whenever the fighting were suspended. It was near a village named Rosetta on the delta of the Nile that he found the stone among the debris in 1799. In 1801, when the British defeated the French and took over the ancient Egyptian seaport capital Alexandria, Rosetta stone inscription was taken to England. Now it is on display at the British Museum, London. This Rosetta stone of 3 feet 9 inches high, 2 feet 4 ½ inches wide and 11 inches thick has the upper portion and the right side corner broken and the broken pieces are still at large.

As in the case of Yaza Kumar stone inscription, the Rosetta stone inscription gives clues to the deciphering of Hieroglyphics [Pictorial writing of ancient Egypt]. From other two scripts Demotic and ancient Greek clues were obtained. An English philologist named Thomas Young first picked out the word "Ptolemy" from Egyptian Hieroglyphics through Demotic and ancient Greek. But it was the French scholar Jean-Francois Champollion in Paris who was able to transliterate the entire Egyptian Hieroglyphics in 1822.

The text of the Rosetta was a decree issued at Memphis, ancient Egypt in the year 196 B.C. on behalf of King Ptolemy V. After the coronation of King Ptolemy V the decree was issued establishing the divine cult of the new ruler and permitting other cults to exist by a congress of priests. So like Yaza Kumar stone inscription, the Rosetta stone inscription was the essential key to modern understanding of ancient Egyptian literature and civilization. The term Rosetta Stone is now used in other contexts as the name for the essential clue to a new field of knowledge.

Just as the Rosetta Stone continues to be a popular subject of study among scholars, so also is Yaza Kumar Stone Inscription.

Myanmar People, both monks and laymen alike are very much thankful to the UNESCO for enlisting the world's largest marble Book at Mandalay in the memory of the world and three ancient Pyu city states of Vishnu, Sri Kestra and Hanlin admitted into the World Cultural Heritage. They are also hopeful that Yaza Kumar Stone Inscription and other inscriptions of similar nature and value across the country queuing up for UNESCO's attention would get their deserving places in the world.

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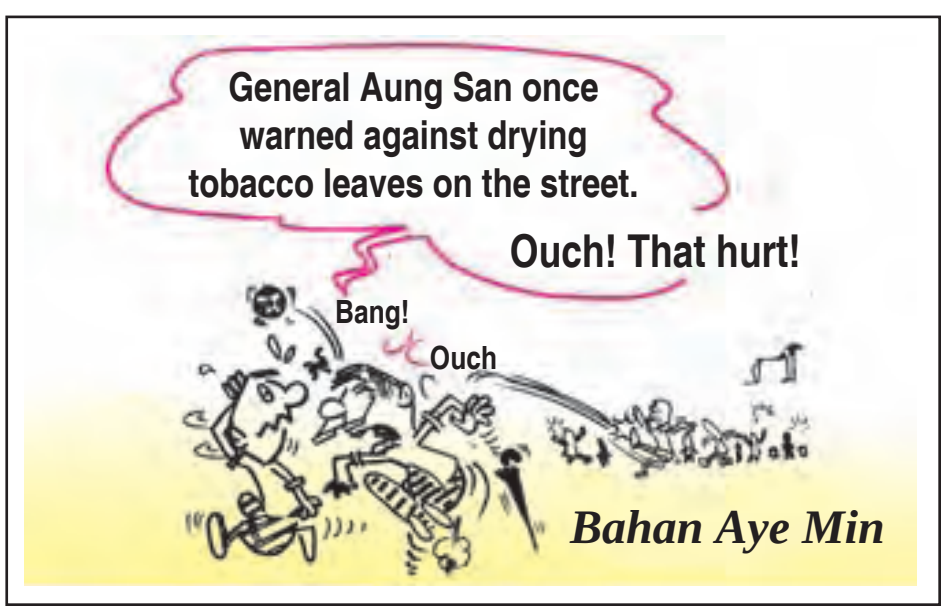

PHOTO ESSAY

Secretariat Building tells story of Martyrs' Day

General Aung San and his colleagues were assassinated at 10:37 a.m. on Saturday, 19 July 1947 while they were gathered to discuss the rebuilding of newly independent Myanmar at a meeting room in the Secretariat Building in Yangon.

The photos taken by Ye Khaung Nyunt and Myat Thandar Maung of the Myanmar News Agency on 17 July 2015 show the historic places where General Aung San and other leaders were assassinated.

The building in which the martyrs were assassinated.

Stairs leading to the meeting room.

The corridor in front of the meeting room.

The stairs used by the assassins.

MONUMENT TO THE MARTYRS: ***The inscription reads, "Minister General Aung San, Deputy Chairman of the Executive Council of Burma, born on 1st Waxing Day of the month of Taboung, 1276 (Myanmar Era) and died at 10:45 am on Saturday, 2nd Waxing Day of the month of Wagaung, 1309 (Myanmar Era)".***

A place where General Aung San sat and where he was assassinated.

15 killed in tribal clashes in southern Libya

TRIPOLI, 18 July — At least 15 people were killed on Thursday in tribal clashes in the southern Libyan city Sebha, Libyan official news agency *LANA* reported on Friday.

The deadly clashes occurred between members of Tabu and Tuareg tribes, two large rival tribes in southern Libya. The report said that three others were killed on Wednesday. And tribal clashes have claimed the lives of over 60 people in the city in a month, according to the city statistics.

Sebha, Libya's largest southern city, has been witnessing escalating violence and similar clashes between the two rival tribe members despite government and elders reconciliation efforts.—*Xinhua*

Islamic State claims suicide car bomb that kills more than 100 in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 18 July — More than 100 people were killed in a suicide car bombing at a busy market in an Iraqi town on Friday, in one of the deadliest attacks carried out by Islamic State militants since they overran large parts of the country.

The blast brought down several buildings in Khan Bani Saad, about 30 km (20 miles) northeast of Baghdad, crushing to death people who were celebrating the end of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, police and medics said.

Islamic State, which controls large parts of northern and western Iraq claimed responsibility for the attack in the mixed eastern province of Diyala where Khan Bani Saad is located and said the target was "rejectionists", as the group refers to Shi'ite Muslims.

Angry crowds went on the rampage after the explosion, smashing the windows of cars parked in the street in grief and anger. Body parts were flung onto the roofs of nearby buildings by the force of the blast, police said.

"Some people were using vegetable boxes to collect children's body parts," said police major Ahmed al-Tamimi from the site of the explosion, describing the damage to the market as "devastating".

An officer from the Diyala police command said rescue crews were still retrieving bodies from under the debris so the death toll could rise.

The Diyala provincial government declared three days' mourning and ordered all parks and entertainment places to close for the rest of the Eid al-Fitr holiday to pre-empt any further attacks.

Islamic State said in a statement issued on Twitter that the attack was to avenge the killing of Sunni Muslims in the northern Iraqi town of Hawija, and that the suicide car bomber was carrying around three tonnes of explosives.

Iraqi officials declared victory over Islamic State in Diyala earlier this year after security forces and Shi'ite paramilitaries drove them out of towns and villages there, but the insurgents remain active in the province.

Security forces and militia groups are currently focussed on the western province of Anbar, where they have been gearing up for an offensive to retake the mainly Sunni governorate — Iraq's largest.

The United Nations said earlier this week that nearly 15,000 people had been killed in the 16-month period up to 30 April.—*Reuters*

Anti-Houthi forces advance in Yemen amid heavy Arab air strikes

ADEN / SANAA, 18 July — Local fighters and army forces in Yemen have wrested two military bases from Houthi forces overnight, residents and officials said, building on a week of gains against the country's dominant faction.

The advances come a day after Yemen's government in exile declared the key southern city of Aden "liberated," in their biggest victory yet in a Saudi-led air campaign and civil war that has raged almost four months and killed more than 3,500 people.

Saudi-backed Yemeni forces backed up by air strikes seized the Labuza army base in Lahj Province north of the port city and the headquarters of the 117th armoured division in eastern Shabwa Province some 230km (145 miles) away.

Officials in the anti-Houthi forces say the offensive was planned for weeks and benefited from training and arms deliveries from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

The war in Yemen has pitted the Sunni Muslim Gulf states, which support the exiled government, against the Shi'ite Houthis allied to Iran, in a conflict that has further raised the stakes as the Middles East grapples with regional rivalries and sectarian strife.

Military vehicles of the Southern Resistance fighters move during clashes with Houthi fighters on a street in Yemen's southern port city of Aden on 17 July, 2015.—REUTERS

But power struggles have simmered for years in the impoverished and conflict-wracked country, and fighters in Yemen's south — the setting for most of the recent battles — have long sought independence from the North, the Houthis' home.

Residents said Houthi forces and their allies in Yemen's army made an attempt to regroup and take back northern fringes of Aden on Friday, firing rockets at the Khor Maksar district.

Their push was repelled, anti-Houthi fighters said, and an offensive backed by air strikes is underway to take Anad air base, one of Yemen's largest, 60 km (40 miles) north of Aden.

Reuters

50 killed as twin blasts hit Muslim praying ground in Nigeria: official

ABUJA, 18 July — Fifty people were killed in twin blasts that hit a Muslim praying ground in northeastern Nigeria on Friday, an official told *Xinhua*.

The incident took place in Damaturu city, capital of Nigeria's northeastern state of Yobe, as local residents gathered for prayers on Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

Spokesperson for the Nigerian army Col Sani Usman said 43 people were killed in the first blast which occurred at about 7:40 am local time (0640 GMT), as some Muslim faithful arrived at the praying ground located in Layin Gwange in central Damaturu.

A second blast, which followed two minutes later, killed seven other people, he said, adding several people were injured.

Usman said two female suicide bombers carried out the attacks, adding that the first attack was carried out by an elderly woman and the second bomb was detonated by a 10-year-old girl.

The incident occurred less than 24 hours after Gombe, another northeastern state in Nigeria, witnessed two bombings in a local market on Thursday which killed at least 25 people and injured more than 30.

Local people are blaming the terrorist group Boko Haram for recent attacks in Nigeria. The group usually claims responsibility for such attacks in the West African country.

Boko Haram has killed more than 13,000 people in violent attacks carried out since 2009 in Nigeria, Africa's most populous country.—*Xinhua*

Islamic State used poison gas in northeast Syria — Kurds, monitor

A Civil Defence member carries a damaged canister in Ibleen village from what activists said was a chlorine gas attack, on Kansafra, Ibleen and Josef villages, Idlib countryside on 3 May, 2015.—REUTERS

BEIRUT, 18 July — The Islamic State group used poison gas in attacks against Kurdish-controlled areas of northeastern Syria in late June, a Syrian Kurdish militia and a group monitoring the Syrian conflict said on Saturday.

Two UK-based organizations investigating the attack said they had confirmed Islamic State's use of chemical weapons against Kurdish forces and civilian targets in Syria and Iraq, where they said chemical agents were also used in an attack on an Iraqi Kurdish peshmerga position on 21 or 22 June.

Kurdish forces are playing a vital role in the fight against Islamic State in both Syria and Iraq. The ultra-radical group has seized wide areas of both countries, declaring them part of a cross-border "caliphate" claiming to rule all Muslims.

The Syrian Kurdish YPG militia said Islamic State had fired "makeshift chemical projectiles" on 28 June at a YPG-controlled area of the city of Hasaka, and at YPG positions south of the town of Tel Brak to the northeast of Hasaka city.

It was the first Islamic State attack of its kind against the YPG, said Redur Xelil, spokesman for the militia.

The type of chemical used had not been definitively determined, he said. None of the YPG fighters exposed to the gas had died because they were quickly taken to hospital.

The White House said it was aware of the reports of chemical weapons use and was seeking additional information.

"We continue to monitor these reports closely," Alistair Baskey, a spokesman for the White House National Security Council, said in a statement.

The YPG has emerged as an important partner for the US-led campaign against Islamic State. Backed by US-led air strikes, the YPG has seized wide areas of northern Syria from Islamic State this year.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a UK-based group that reports on the war using an activist network on the ground, said it had also documented the use of poison gas by Islamic State in an attack on a village near Tel Brak on 28 June.

It said 12 YPG fighters had been exposed to the gas. The Observatory also said it had received information about the gas attack on Hasaka city but gave no further details.

In a statement, the YPG said its forces had captured industrial grade gas masks in the last four weeks from Islamic State fighters, "confirming that they are prepared and equipped for chemical warfare along this sector of the front".

Reuters

Aerobic exercise helpful for asthma

Women take part in an aerobics class at the gymnasium of a sports centre in Cartago, east of San Jose on 10 July, 2012.—REUTERS

NEW YORK, 18 July — People with moderate to severe asthma who add aerobic exercise to their treatment regimen may have an easier time controlling common symptoms than people who rely on drugs alone, a small study suggests.

Patients randomly assigned to a three-month treadmill exercise regimen showed decreases in two aspects of the illness that make it difficult to breathe: inflammation and heightened sensitivity in the airway.

While it's not surprising that asthma patients may benefit from aerobic exercise, the findings offer new evidence that physical activity can help even in patients who are already controlling symptoms with medication, said lead author Dr Celso Carvalho, a researcher at the University of Sao Paulo School of Medicine in Brazil.

"This information strongly suggests that aerobic exercise has an anti-inflammatory effect in asthma," Carvalho said by email. The findings point to a potential benefit of exercise for enhancing the effectiveness of treatment with drugs, he said.

Globally, an estimated 235 million people suffer from asthma, according to the World Health Organization.

The incurable chronic disease leads to sudden attacks of breathlessness and wheezing. During attacks, the lining of the bronchial tubes swells, narrowing the airways and restricting the flow of air in and out of the lungs.

Many people with asthma routinely or periodically take daily anti-inflammatory medications to reduce swelling and mucus production in the airways, which can help control or prevent symptoms.

In addition, asthma patients may use drugs known as bronchodilators, which come in long-acting forms to control symptoms and short-acting versions to help stop sudden attacks. These drugs relax the muscle bands that tighten around the airways, letting more air in and out of the lungs.

Carvalho and colleagues studied the impact of exercise on 43 asthma patients between 20 and 59 years old, whose symptoms had been well managed by drugs for at least 30 days and who had been monitored by their doctors for at least six months.

They excluded patients who had cardiovascular, musculoskeletal or other chronic lung diseases, as well as current or former smokers and people who already regularly got plenty of exercise.

Regardless of whether or not they were assigned to the exercise group, all patients received yoga breathing classes twice a week for 12 weeks. The exercisers also worked out on treadmills for 35 minutes twice a week.

By the end of the study, bronchial hyper-responsiveness, or extreme sensitivity that causes narrowing of the airways, decreased significantly in the exercise group but not in the other patients.

Exercise also appeared to curb levels of some proteins, known as cytokines, linked to inflammation.

One limitation of the study, in addition to its small size, is that the cytokines, which were measured in blood tests, may not necessarily reflect airway inflammation specifically, the authors acknowledge in the journal *Thorax*.

Another concern is that exercise may actually trigger an asthma attack, said Dr Simon Bacon, an exercise science professor at Concordia University and director of the Rehabilitation Centre at Sacred Heart Hospital of Montreal in Canada.

To minimize the risk, patients may need to use an inhaler before they start exercising, and also take care to cool down properly at the end of a workout, Bacon, who wasn't involved in the study, said by email.

"With the growing evidence that aerobic exercise seems to help, and certainly doesn't seem to harm, patients with asthma, I think doctors can start suggesting this as a good add-on to regular asthma treatments," Bacon said.—*Reuters*

China home prices rise for second month in June

BEIJING, 18 July — Chinese home prices rose for a second month in a row in June, on a monthly basis, indicating that government efforts to boost the struggling property sector have started to gain traction. Average new home prices rose 0.4 percent in June versus May, according to *Reuters* calculations from official data published on Saturday. That was a faster gain than the 0.2 percent rise in May, the first monthly increase since April 2014.

The second month of rising prices is a sign of bottoming out for one of the country's key sectors and should ease fears of a sharp slowdown in China's economy. On Wednesday, China reported annual growth of 7 percent in the second quarter of this year. A mild recovery in the market could be welcomed by the government as long as it does not turn into a swift rebound, which would risk of rekindling property bubbles. Sheng Laiyun, spokesman of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), said on Wednesday the property sector had shown marked improvement in the second quarter, boding well for the broad economy.

Still, high inventories of unsold homes have weighed in most small cities and developers have slowed the pace of construction, underscoring the unlikeliness of a quick recovery in the property market this year.

Reuters

Panasonic launches 3-D figurine portrait service in Osaka

A model stands at a space inside Panasonic Center Osaka for producing a figurine portrait by using 3-D scanning technology on 17 July, 2015 in the western Japanese city.
KYODO NEWS

OSAKA, 18 July — Panasonic Corp on Friday began offering a figurine portrait service employing newly developed 3-D scanning technology.

Images of customers are taken using 120 digital cameras, creating 3-D data for the production of a figurine a tenth the size for about 60,000 yen ($483).

The system was developed in cooperation with 3-D printing and scanning company iJet Inc. The new service is being offered at Panasonic Centre Osaka.

Kyodo News

JPMorgan reaches $388 million settlement in mortgage securities case

NEW YORK, 18 July — JPMorgan Chase & Co (JPM.N) agreed to pay $388 million (249 million pounds) to settle a suit by investors claiming that the largest US bank had misled them about the safety of $10 billion worth of residential mortgage-backed securities it sold before the financial crisis.

The lawsuit, brought by Fort Worth Employees' Retirement Fund and other investors in offerings made before the 2008 financial crisis, accused JPMorgan of misleading them about the underwriting, appraisals and credit quality of the home loans underlying the certificates.

The lawsuit said that after Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc failed, the certificates were worth at most 62 cents on the dollar.

JPMorgan agreed to a $13 billion settlement with the Justice Department in 2013 over allegations that the bank had misled investors in mortgage-backed securities about the soundness and risks of the investments that helped bring on the subprime-mortgage crisis of 2008.

Throughout the litigation process, JPMorgan has said that the poor performance of the certificates was not due to the quality of the loans, but was caused by the collapse of the overall economy.

The $388 million settlement was disclosed in a court filing on Friday. It is subject to approval by a judge.

The case, whose caption names a different plaintiff, is Fort Worth Employees' Retirement Fund v JPMorgan Chase & Co, US District Court, Southern District of New York, No 09-03701. —*Reuters*

A view of the exterior of the JP Morgan Chase & Co Corporate headquarters in the Manhattan borough of New York City, on 20 May, 2015.—REUTERS

Suspect in slaying of US Marines made 2014 trip to Mideast

CHATTANOOGA, 18 July — The suspect in the fatal shootings of four US Marines travelled to Jordan and possibly other Middle Eastern countries for seven months last year, authorities said on Friday, as the investigation focussed on any signs of a connection to Islamist militants.

Mohammod Youssuf Abdulazeez, a Kuwaiti-born naturalized US citizen, died on Thursday in a firefight with police after a rampage at two military facilities in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

The 24-year-old engineer travelled to Jordan, from around April to November, US government sources and friends of Abdulazeez in Chattanooga told *Reuters*. One childhood friend, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said he went there for a job opportunity.

Investigators will try to establish if he was part of an organization or the latest "lone wolf" militant, radicalized US Muslims acting on their own who President Barack Obama has said pose a greater risk to the country than a large-scale operation.

Friends were shocked by the actions of Abdulazeez, who they said lived about 150 miles (241 km) away in Franklin, Tennessee, but had returned to his hometown to visit family for the holy fasting month of Ramadan, which ended on Thursday.

"He was a friend of mine, a good Muslim. But there were no red flags, nothing unusual. It is shocking," said another childhood friend, who prayed with him at the Islamic Centre of Greater Chattanooga over the past month.

***Sheriff deputies' cars sit in front of the house of where suspected gunman Mohammod Youssuf Abdulazeez lived in Hixson, Tennessee on 17 July, 2015.—*REUTERS**

A little more than 24 hours after the shooting, the FBI said it continued to investigate it as an act of terrorism and that it was "premature" to speculate on the motive.

"We are exploring all travel that he has done and we have asked our intelligence partners throughout the world to provide us with any information they may have," Ed Reinhold, FBI special agent in charge, said during a news conference.

Born to Palestinian parents and raised in a Chattanooga suburb, Abdulazeez may have family in Jordan and may have made several stops, said a government source, adding that a visit to Yemen, long viewed as a training ground for Islamic militants, has not been ruled out.

Law enforcement officials have said they are investigating whether Abdulazeez was inspired by Islamic State or similar militant groups. Islamic State had threatened to step up violence during Ramadan.

But the Federal Bureau of Investigation said Friday it had no indication that the attack was linked to that group.—*Reuters*

Dozens flee homes as wildfires rage in Greece, PM urges calm

ATHENS, 18 July — Forest fires fanned by strong winds and high temperatures broke out around Athens and in other parts of southern Greece on Friday, sending residents fleeing as clouds of smoke billowed over their homes.

The wildfires created a new problem for the government of Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, which is struggling to obtain a fresh bailout from foreign creditors.

The police said 34 separate fires had broken out on four main fronts in a region stretching from the island of Evia, northeast of Athens, to the southern Peloponnese. A 58-year-old died after inhaling fumes and suffering respiratory problems but there were no other reports of casualties.

Tsipras urged calm as more than 140 firefighters with 80 fire engines and 11 aircraft battled the flames near Athens, which a *Reuters* photographer said were near homes. A neighbourhood playground was razed and flames surrounded the local church. Dozens of people, including elderly women covering their faces with headscarves, tried to put out the flames with buckets of water. "We all need to stay calm," Tsipras told reporters.

He said he had asked the air force and armed forces for help and had also appealed to other European countries for assistance with extra fire-fighting aircraft.

Forest fires are common during the summer months in Greece but memories remain vivid of the huge damage and heavy loss of life in 2007, during the most serious outbreak of the past few years.

"The situation is difficult," said Michalis Karagiannis, deputy mayor of Vyronas, one of the suburbs near the flames.

Energy Minister Panagiotis Lafazanis, who spoke to Greek TV from the scene with a protective mask across his face, said: "We are all making an effort to stop the worst."

He was heckled by angry residents who accused him of doing "micro politics" and urged him to "take off your jacket and help". In the region of Laconia in the southern Peloponnese one fire-fighting aircraft was forced to make an emergency landing.

"Things are very bad," Peloponnese Governor Petros Tatoulis told state television. "The situation is critical. We are working to prevent casualties."

Adamantia Koroni, deputy head of a hoteliers' association on the nearby island of Cythera, said about 40,000 visitors and residents were left without power on the popular tourist destination "probably until Sunday", and four hotels were forced to share one generator.

Reuters

Burned cars are seen in a car lot as a wildfire rages at the town of Neapoli in the region of Laconia in Peloponnese, southern Greece on 17 July, 2015.
REUTERS

More than 200 passengers injured in train collision in Johannesburg

At least 250 people are wounded in a trains crash on the evening in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 17 July, 2015. — XINHUA

JOHANNESBURG, 18 July — More than 200 people were injured in a train collision in Johannesburg on Friday night, authorities said.

Currently there was no report of deaths after the accident took place near the Booysens station in the city, said Netcare, a private emergency service.

The service put the number of injured at about 250 and said more injuries were expected as some passengers were still trapped in the wreckage.

Some of the injured are in serious condition and have been sent to various hospitals for treatment, Netcare spokesperson Santi Steinmann said.

"There are currently still patients at the scene, so the number might even increased to approximately 300," he said.

A group of paramedics were at the scene to rescue the passengers still trapped in the wreckage.

Witnesses said one train overturned when it collided with another train.

But the cause of the accident could not be determined right now, police said.

This was the second train collision in Johannesburg in less than three months. In late April, two trains collided at a station east of Johannesburg, killing one and injuring more than 200 others. —*Xinhua*

Quake measuring 6.9 magnitude sparks brief tsunami warning for Solomons

SYDNEY, 18 July — An undersea earthquake measuring 6.9 magnitude struck near the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific on Saturday, prompting a short-lived tsunami warning for the area. The quake, initially recorded at 7.5 but later downgraded, struck at a depth of 33 km (20 miles) near the Solomon's Santa Cruz islands, said the US Geological Survey.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre in Hawaii issued a warning, saying "hazardous tsunami waves from this earthquake are possible within 300 km (186 miles) of the epicentre along the coasts of the Solomon Islands".

But 30 minutes later, the Centre said there was no longer a tsunami threat, but that small sea level fluctuations above and below the normal tide may continue for a few hours.—*Reuters*

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (057N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (057N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19.7.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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 WAN HAI LINES PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV JRS CARINA VOY NO (1507-19N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV JRS CARINA VOY NO (1507-19N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19.7.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.I.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 TRANSOFFSHORE LOGISTICS PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

WEATHER REPORT

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 19th July, 2015: Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Magway Region, Kachin and Kayah States, widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavy falls in Sagaing, Mandalay, Bago Regions, Shan, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Occasional squalls with rough sea will be experienced off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40) m.p.h.

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

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MYANMA RAILWAYS
Amendment of Tender Opening Date

The Following Tenders Opening date shall be amend as follows.

Sr No	Tender No	Description	Initial Closing Date & Opening Date	Extension of Closing Date & Opening Date
1	2/MR/INDIA(M) 2015-2016	Machinery (4) Items	29.7.2015	17.9.2015
2	6/MR/INDIA(M) 2015-2016	Diesel Rail Crane 60 Tons (at 9 M radius and 360° slew) (1)Item	29.7.2015	17.9.2015
3	7/MR/INDIA(E) 2015-2016	Ballast Cleaning Machine (2) Items	29.7.2015	30.9.2015
4	8/MR/INDIA(E) 2015-2016	Track Geometry Measuring Trolley(6)Nos Rail-Road Excavator with Five Attachments (5)Nos, Self-Propelled Trolley for Ultrasonic Rail Inspection(2)Nos and Track Off-Trackable Tamping Machine (6) Nos	29.7.2015	30.9.2015
5	9/MR/INDIA(E) 2015-2016	Small Track Maintenance Machines (10) Items	29.7.2015	30.9.2015

Enquiry about tender can be made to Managing Director, Myanma Railways(Fax No. 95-67-77016) by fax or by phone to 95-67-77001, 95-67-77181, 95-1-291994 , 95-1-291985 during office hours.

Managing Director, Myanma Railways,
Ministry of Rail Transportation, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar

UN chief pays tribute to victims of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 one year after tragedy

UNITED NATIONS, 18 July — UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Saturday paid tribute to the victims who lost their lives one year ago aboard the "tragic" Malaysia Airlines flight MH17, which crashed in eastern Ukraine.

"As the international community marks this sombre anniversary, the secretary-general's thoughts are with the families of those who lost their loved ones," said a statement issued here by Ban's spokesman.

A total of 298 people, 196 of them Dutch, were killed after the commercial passenger plane crashed in the Donetsk area of east Ukraine. *The Boeing 777-200ER* was en route from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur when it crashed over Ukraine.

A preliminary report published last September said the plane "broke up in the air probably as the result of structural damage caused by a large number of high-energy objects that penetrated the aircraft from outside." "While the pain caused by this tragedy cannot be erased, the victims must be honored by a collective effort to ascertain the truth about the incident and ensure that any persons determined responsible will be held to account," the statement said.

"The secretary-general welcomes the progress made by the independent international investigation in accordance with Security Council Resolution 2166,' the statement said.

The resolution was unanimously adopted on 21 July, 2014, and it expressed support for the "efforts to establish a full, thorough and independent international investigation into the incident in accordance with international civil aviation guidelines" and called on all United Nations member states "to provide any requested assistance to civil and criminal investigations." The final report of the investigation into the crash of flight MH17 is expected to be published in the first half of October, the Dutch Safety Board told *Xinhua* in The Hague on Thursday.

The board refused to comment on CNN reports saying that the investigation pinned the downing of MH17 on "pro-Russian rebels."

"This anniversary is another stark reminder of the continuing dire situation in eastern Ukraine and the need to bring an urgent end to this conflict," the statement said.

The Netherlands is leading the international investigation into the crash with representatives from Australia, Malaysia, Russia, Ukraine, Britain and the United States. Excluding Russia, these countries on Tuesday asked the UN Security Council to establish an international criminal tribunal to try those responsible for the downing of the passenger jet. Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday expressed opposition to the formation of an international criminal tribunal for the downing of the flight.

Calls for such a tribunal are counterproductive, Putin told Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, whose country plays a leading role in the international investigation of the incident, in a telephone conversation. Putin said the international investigation should be "thorough and objective" and in full compliance with UN Resolution 2166.—*Xinhua*

Swimming beach opens in Tokyo after decades of restriction

TOKYO, 18 July — A bathing beach was opened in Tokyo on Saturday for the first time since all beaches in the capital were closed for swimming in the 1960s due to pollution.

The beach is part of Kasai Rinkai Park in Edogawa Ward in the southeast of the city's central business district.

The Tokyo metropolitan government will open it for swimming through the end of August and monitor water quality before deciding whether to open it permanently during the swimming season.

A nonprofit organization in Tokyo has held swimming events since 2013 with the Tokyo government's permission and some 15,000 people participated in last year's, which was held for 20 days. According to the group, all bathing beaches in Tokyo disappeared in the 1960s.

Mami Tsukuda, 40, who visited the beach with her 4-year-old daughter, said, "It is surprising to be able to swim in central Tokyo. I would like to see it become cleaner as we try harder to take care of the environment."

Kyodo News

Mass killer Breivik to study at Oslo University, from jail

OSLO, 18 July — Norwegian mass murderer Anders Behring Breivik won a place on Friday to study at Oslo University from solitary confinement in prison, despite outrage at his massacre of 77 people four years ago.

"He meets the admission requirements. We stick to our rules and he will be admitted," Oslo University rector Ole Petter Ottersen told *Reuters*, saying prisoners are eligible to study as long as their academic grades are good enough.

Many were appalled when Breivik, who holds far-right anti-Muslim views and has shown no remorse, applied for the three-year bachelor's course in political science. Some students now at the university survived his attacks, while others had friends or relatives killed.

"I realise there are many feelings involved here. He tried to demolish the system. We have to stay faithful to it," Ottersen said.

Norwegian mass killer Anders Behring Breivik adjusts his tie as the Oslo Court delivered the verdict of his trial in Oslo Courthouse on 24 Aug, 2012.—REUTERS

The course includes study of democracy, human rights and respect for minorities.

Breivik, now 36, planted a bomb on 22 July, 2011 in central Oslo that killed eight people and destroyed the government headquarters. He then travelled to an island where the then-ruling Labour Party was holding a summer camp and shot dead 69 people, many of them teenagers.

Under the terms of his sentence, Breivik is held in solitary confinement and will be unable to attend lectures or seminars. All his work will go via prison staff, with no direct contact with professors. "His study will be carried out exclusively in his own cell," Ottersen said. Breivik has access to books but not the Internet. Norway will open a "22 July Centre" next week in Oslo with information and exhibits about the attacks. Some relatives and survivors fear it risks becoming a Breivik "hall of fame".—*Reuters*

Obama to appear on one of Jon Stewart's final 'Daily Show' episodes

*US President Barack Obama (L) participates in a taping of the Daily Show with Jon Stewart at the Comedy Central Studios in New York, on 18 Oct, 2012.—*REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 18 July — President Barack Obama will tape his seventh appearance on Jon Stewart's "Daily Show" in New York on Tuesday, the White House said on Friday.

Obama has appeared on Comedy Central's satirical news show twice as president and four times prior to that.

This is likely to be the last appearance Obama makes since Stewart has announced that he will be leaving the show on 6 August.

The White House did not announce when the segment with Obama would air.—*Reuters*

Louis Tomlinson takes to stage first time since baby news

Louis Tomlinson

LOS ANGELES, 18 July — One Direction star Louis Tomlinson took the stage with band members Harry Styles, Liam Payne and Niall Horan for the first time since his baby news emerged.

The 23-year-old singer looked in high spirit when performing with his bandmates during their "On the Road" gig in Seattle, reported Ace Showbiz.

During the performance, Tomlinson didn't address the baby news. The singer seemed happier than usual, flashing wide smile at the audience as they screamed their affections for their idol.

He showed off his muscles and myriad of tattoos in a sleeveless black top paired with skinny black jeans and black sneakers with white soles. His hair was slicked back. Other One Direction members looked unfazed as they carried on with the concert in the wake of Tomlinson's fatherhood news.—*PTI*

Little Mix top UK singles chart with 'Black Magic'

***Members of the pop group Little Mix pose for photographers at the Capital Summertime Ball at Wembley Stadium in London, Britain on 6 June, 2015.—*REUTERS**

LONDON, 18 July — "Black Magic," the new single from Girl group Little Mix topped the British pop charts on Friday, their third No 1 single since winning the 2011 series of ITV's "X Factor" talent show, Electronica trio Years and Years' stayed at No 2 for a second week with "Shine" while "Are You With Me?" by Lost Frequencies was up one place at three, according to the Official Charts Company.

Dutch DJ Sam Feldt with Kimberly Anne entered the chart at number four with "Show Me Love", while last week's number one, DJ David Zowie's "House Every Weekend" dropped to five.

In the album charts, Years and Years came in at No 1 with their debut album "Communion," pushing Ed Sheeran's album "X" down to second place. James Bay's "Chaos and the Calm" moved up one place to third.—*Reuters*

Marvel reverses scale, elevates comedy with compact hero 'Ant-Man'

LOS ANGELES, 18 July — After going intergalactic with "Guardians of the Galaxy," and hanging an entire city from the sky in "Avengers: Age of Ultron," Marvel is reversing its scale but still packing the punches with an insect-sized superhero.

"Ant-Man," out in movie theaters on Friday, sees a new addition to Disney-owned Marvel's expanding universe as Paul Rudd steps into the Ant-Man suit, which allows the wearer to shrink and gives him super strength.

The film follows the origins of Ant-Man, otherwise known as Scott Lang. Unlike Iron Man's billionaire alter-ego Tony Stark or Captain America's patriotic soldier Steve Rogers, Lang is decidedly less heroic — a deadbeat father and petty criminal who has spent time in jail. Lang is recruited by scientist Hank Pym (Michael Douglas) to wear the shrinkable superhero suit and save the world from the villainous corporate tycoon Darren Cross (Corey Stoll), with the help of Hope van Dyne, Pym's feisty daughter (Evangeline Lilly). "He made some pretty questionable decisions in his life, things are not working out for him. He has to decide if he's going to do the right thing," Rudd told *Reuters* of Lang. The heart of the film lies in the father-daughter relationships between Pym and van Dyne, and Lang and his estranged daughter Cassie.—*Reuters*

Bacharach tunes soar again in London cast of off-Broadway hit

***Burt Bacharach performs on the Pyramid stage at Worthy Farm in Somerset during the Glastonbury Festival in Britain, on 27 June, 2015.—*REUTERS**

LONDON, 18 July —The 1960s and 1970s hit songs that Burt Bacharach wrote with his late lyricist, Hal David, are most often heard now in elevators and hotel lobbies, but a musical that opened in London this week lifts them right back into the stratosphere. "What's It All About? Bacharach Reimagined" has turned the tiny Menier Chocolate Factory Theatre in south London into a happy place, where the audience wastes no time getting into the spirit by singing and clapping along with the exuberant young seven-member cast.

"Do You Know the Way to San Jose?", "Walk on By", "Raindrops Keep Fallin' On My Head" and "(There's) Always Something There to Remind Me" haven't sounded this fresh, or drawn such attention to David's often artful and clever lyrics, since they were hits for the likes of Dionne Warwick, Dusty Springfield, Cilla Black and BJ Thomas decades ago. The question in the title is the signature line from Bacharach and David's theme song for the 1966 Michael Caine movie "Alfie", about a London cad who uses women. The question - minus the mention of Alfie — pops up repeatedly, even in other songs, as something of a "what is the meaning of life" trope, but that's as profound as things get.

The show, set to run through 5 September, is the brainchild of its music director and lead performer, Kyle Riabko. The programme notes say he sold the now 87-year-old Bacharach on the idea of a rethink of his songs some years ago, when Riabko sang demos of new arrangements to the composer at a Los Angeles studio.

The resulting 90-minute tune fest was an off-Broadway hit. It ran for more than a year at the New York Theater Workshop, won several awards and was extended twice before closing in February of last year.

Riabko, an almost alarmingly fresh-faced Canadian with the energy of a young Pete Townshend, reprises his role as lead singer and guitarist, this time with a cast that draws on talent from both sides of the Atlantic.

Anastacia McCleskey, the troupe's strongest soul-Motown voice, brings down the house with a searing version of Warwick's "Don't Make Me Over". She hails from Nashville while guitarist-singer Daniel Bailen, who was in the off-Broadway cast, is from New York City.

The British-based talent includes singer-guitarist Greg Coulson, keyboardist-vocalist Renato Paris and singer-percussionist James Williams. Singer and instrumentalist Stephanie McKeon, who sings a wistful "Walk On By", is from Ireland.

The stage in the production directed by Steven Hoggett is set to resemble a ramshackle urban apartment. Chairs, sofas and a variety of table lamps are dotted about, suggesting the type of environment where Bacharach and David would have worked to come up with the tunes and lyrics that made them into a hit factory. That gives license for Riabko and his cast to, as the title has it, "reimagine" Bachararach, as if the songs are being dreamt up and performed for the first time.

Other than that, there is no attempt to provide a backstory, or any plot at all. What you see and hear is what you get — performers who weren't even born when Bacharach and David wrote these songs making them sound as if they were written yesterday.—*Reuters*

Zoo animals in Athens at risk as crisis hits feed imports

ATHENS, 18 July — Curious and noisy, a group of Madagascar lemurs surround Jean-Jacques Lesueur, founder of Attica Park in Athens, unaware that the special biscuits he is handing out to them are running low and they may soon not have enough to eat.

Three weeks after capital controls were imposed on Greece's moribund banking system, supplies of the special imported dietary supplements needed to feed 2,200 animals from 345 species at Athens' only zoo are under threat.

Like other foreign companies, suppliers of products ranging from frozen fish from the Netherlands to meal worms from Germany or special additives from France who used to be paid 60 days after delivery are now demanding payment in advance. "Many of our animals require a special diet, which demands specific nutrition that can only be imported," Lesueur, a 71-year-old Frenchman who has lived in Athens for more than 45 years, told *Reuters*.

Jean-Jacques Lesueur sits surrounded with Madagascar lemurs in Athens, Greece on 16 July, 2015.— REUTERS

Two weeks ago on 7 July, he received a call from his suppliers, telling him that the regular three-week delivery due in two days time would have to be paid in advance.

Lesueur tried to keep calm but realized that with the banks closed, he could not meet the payment.

"You can't do this, we're talking about animal lives here," he told the suppliers, who eventually relented and agreed to make an exception. But they warned that future orders would have to be paid in advance. Walking through the zoo, he points to ant-eaters, which get through around a tonne of meal worms a year or seals, pelicans, penguins or dolphins which rely on frozen herring from the Netherlands. Meanwhile, he tries to find other solutions such using domestically produced horse feed additives for rhinos. Already suffering as visitor numbers have dropped during the economic crisis, the privately owned zoo is also bracing for the shock of a steep rise in value added tax, which has jumped to 23 percent with immediate effect under the latest bailout deal.

But it is the plight of the animals which gives Lesueur the most urgent headaches.

"We want to pay them, we just don't have a way at the moment, the country is blocked, I can't get money out and our frozen supplies won't last more than two more weeks," he said. "After that it will become very urgent to get supplies. It's a matter of life or death for the animals."—*Reuters*

mitv Myanmar International

(19-7-2015 07:00 am~20-7-2015 07:00 am) MST

* News
* The Martyrs' Day
* Making of Nawarat Rings
* Live: 68th Anniversary of Martyrs' Day Ceremony
* News
* Myanmar Scout
* Traditional Snacks
* News
* Short Trip With Steve (Mon State)
* Kindhearted Pet Lovers
* News
* Creator of Imagination
* Chaung Tha Souvenir Business
* News
* Food Trip (Ep-5)
* Cosplayer
* Today Myanmar: Election 2015
* News
* Architect: U Thaw
* Myanmar Masterclass: Cubism
* News
* Great Shwedagon: The Prayer Halls And Buddha Images (Part-1)
* Black Gold (Part- I)
* News
* Lisu New Year Festival
* Tipitaka Hteinlin Pariyattisarthintike
* The Photographer (Portiature) "Aung Kyaw Moe"
* News
* Let's Cook (EP-7) "Seafood Baguette Pizza and Sizzling Garlic Prawn"
* Crab Business "Soft Shell Crab"
* Kyauk Gu Umin Cave Gu Pha Ya
* Made in Myanmar "Mixxo"
* News
* Myanmar's Traditions and Culture "A stir about of Rainbows"
* Myanmar Railways City Circular Train

Old Lisbon market cooks up food-to-media concept to go global

LISBON, 18 July — In the past year, Lisbon's 19th-century riverside market has soared from dilapidated oblivion to a top attraction on a zesty blend of fine food, drinks, arts and hip shopping — a concept its owners now plan to replicate in London and New York. Aside from serving as a gigantic window display for downtown renovation and the Portuguese capital's tourism boom, the two-storey Mercado da Ribeira also gives a physical dimension to the mostly-digital Time Out magazine, which owns the expanding project.

The Lisbon unit of the London-based global media brand, which provides tips to dozens of cities worldwide, had assigned its journalists and critics to handpick their favourite chefs, bars and shops for the market.

"This is a magazine, with various of its sections, brought to life," said Joao Cepeda, director of Time Out Lisbon and now the chief of international operations of the new Time Out Markets unit that will expand the project overseas.

The venue sells Time Out-brand tours, invites musicians and houses an urban art project called Underdogs, which is a gallery and a public art programme for local and foreign artists. Portuguese street artist VHILS is one notable co-founder of Underdogs.

Cepeda said the project was meant to "use our know-how to save the local edition".

During Portugal's 2010-2014 economic crisis, revenues from advertising and website views fell. So when city hall offered a 20-year concession to renovate and run the market in 2011, the magazine seized the opportunity.

With 60,000 visits on a good week, the commercial success has exceeded initial expectations almost two-fold, he said.

Time Out is choosing locations to open a market in London by 2017 and another in New York by 2018. In the meantime, it is also looking at Portugal's second-largest city of Porto. Day and night, tourists and locals sit at long wooden tables and bar counters sampling fusion food and local dishes made in 20 busy, see-through kitchens. Popular choices are salmon-cuttlefish burger with seaweed on cuttlefish ink bun, salad with goat cheese and ice cream or fish tartar with avocado puree.

Joao Cepeda (C), director of Time Out Lisbon poses for a picture at Ribeira Market in Lisbon, Portugal, on 15 July, 2015. — REUTERS

Rave reviews on travel websites frequently label the spot a "foodies' paradise", with many praising it as a pioneering "cross between a food court, a Shoreditch food market and a chef's restaurant", while others highlight its "hipster aura" and modest prices considering a vast choice of quality food.

Cepeda calls it "a simplified version of fine dining experience", which sets it apart from souped-up street food generally served at similar venues abroad, including New York.

The chefs are happy too as client numbers keep growing.

"Now, over a year on, the business is better than when we opened, way past the novelty peak, and it has all the goings of improving further," said Susana Felicidade, a prominent chef who runs Cozinha da Felicidade (Kitchen of Joy) in the market and a popular restaurant called Pharmacia in an old quarter nearby.

The chef, who specializes in Portuguese-inspired "petiscos" — a more elaborate and heartier cousin of Spain's tapas — says the success of the food court also supports the remaining part of the old market where locals buy vegetables, meat and seafood.

She buys some 80 percent of all ingredients from the market.

The renovation and a new riverside promenade helped boost the wining and dining scene in the hip Cais do Sodre area where 14 restaurants and bars have opened up in the past year.—*Reuters*

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(19-7-2015, Sunday)

6:00 am
• Myoema Nyein Music Troupe
6:20 am
• Myanmar Video
7:45 am
• **(2015) 68th Martyrs' Day LIVE Broadcast**
7:55 am
• Fashion (Music)
8:15 am
• Teleplay
8:50 am
• Sing & Enjoy
9:40 am
• Pyi Thu Ni Ti
9:50 am
• Musical Programme
10:00 am
• Myanmar Movie
12:00 noon
• Closed Down

Montana train derailment spilled 35,000 gallons of crude oil

MONTANA, 18 July — A train derailment in rural eastern Montana spilled 35,000 gallons (132,489 liters) of crude oil and forced the evacuation of about 30 people, a US official said on Friday in an email to state officials.

About 20 cars on the Berkshire Hathaway-owned BNSF [BNISF.UL] crude oil train went off the rails east of Culbertson, Montana, on Thursday evening, officials said. There was no fire and no injuries were reported. A hazardous materials team from BNSF responded to the scene and contained the spilled oil with earthen dams, Michael Turnbull, an official with the US Department of Transportation, said in an email to Montana officials that was released to the media. The spilled crude did not reach any waterways, the email said.

Culbertson authorities temporarily evacuated about 30 people from an area a half-mile around the accident site, Turnbull's email said.

The spilled crude came from three breached tank cars on the train, which in total had 106 loaded tank cars along with two buffer cars and two locomotives, according to Turnbull.

An investigation into the cause of the derailment is under way, Turnbull's email said. The segment of railroad where the accident occurred is expected to reopen for travel at midnight on Friday, he said. A BNSF spokesman did not immediately return calls on Friday.

In 2013, the derailment of an oil train at Lac-Mégantic, in the Canadian province of Quebec, killed 47 people in an explosion that flattened the centre of the town. —*Reuters*

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Sunday, 19 July, 2015

Dibaba breaks world women's 1,500 metres record

*Genzebe Dibaba of Ethiopia wins the 5000m at the IAAF Diamond League athletics competition at Bislett Stadium in Oslo, Norway on 11 June, 2015.—*REUTERS

MONACO, 18 July — Ethiopia's world indoor champion Genzebe Dibaba broke the 22-year-old 1,500 metres world record on Friday when she clocked three minutes 50.07 seconds at the Monaco Diamond League.

Running the last lap on her own after the pacemaker dropped out, the 24-year-old dipped inside Chinese Qu Yunxia's previous mark of 3:50.46 set in Beijing on 11 September, 1993.

"I am very happy," Dibaba told the track announcer as the crowd stood and applauded.

Dibaba, the younger sister of three times Olympic champion and 5,000 metres world record holder Tirunesh Dibaba, said on Thursday she would decide whether to run the 1,500 or the 5,000 at next month's Beijing world championships after Friday's race.

She told reporters she had been concentrating on her speed in training this year.

Five personal bests were set in the race.—*Reuters*

Major sponsors, Coca-Cola, McDonald's, demand reforms at FIFA

MIAMI, 18 July — Two top sponsors of FIFA and its World Cup tournaments on Friday ratcheted up pressure on the global football body for major reforms as a corruption scandal casts a lengthening shadow over the sport.

Coca-Cola Co (KO.N) and McDonald's Corp (MCD.N) both made it clear that they are deeply unhappy with the way FIFA is governed and want major change.

Their intervention comes only days ahead of a crucial FIFA executive committee meeting on Monday at which both possible reforms and a timetable to elect a new president to replace Sepp Blatter, who has run FIFA for 17 years, will be discussed.

FIFA has been the subject of a series of allegations in the media — and in books — for many years. The scandal came to a head in May when US prosecutors indicted nine football officials, most of whom had FIFA positions, and five marketing and broadcasting company executives with a range of bribery-related offences, including fraud, money-laundering and racketeering.

Coca-Cola urged Zurich-based FIFA to support the creation of an independent body to reform the way it is run. "We have written to FIFA and asked them to support an independent third-party commission for reforms," a spokeswoman for Coca-Cola said on Friday. And McDonald's said it has told FIFA that there needs to be "meaningful changes to restore trust and credibility with fans and sponsors alike," stressing that FIFA's internal controls and compliance culture "are inconsistent with expectations McDonald's has for its business partners throughout the world." —*Reuters*

Delph performs U-turn and quits Villa for Man City

Fabian Delph

LONDON, 18 July — Manchester City signed England international Fabian Delph from Aston Villa on Friday, with the midfielder performing a dramatic U-turn a week after assuring fans he would be staying at Villa Park.

Delph has signed a five-year contract, the twice Premier League champions said in a statement.

The 25-year-old was thought to be close to moving to City last week when reports said the north west club had triggered a release clause in his contract, but he issued a statement stating his desire to remain at Villa.

Delph, however, has now changed his mind and arrives at the Etihad Stadium for a fee reported to be in the region of 8 million pounds ($12.5 million).

"Leaving Aston Villa is the hardest decision I've ever had to make," he said in a statement.

"My decision to stay initially was purely based on the emotion and feelings that I hold for the club rather than looking at the football opportunity that had been placed in front of me.

"I am now excited for the future with Manchester City."

Delph moved to Villa from Leeds United in 2009, making 128 appearances. He made his England debut against Norway last year and now has six caps.

"Fabian Delph is an excellent player and I am looking forward to working with him," City manager Manuel Pellegrini told the club's website (www.mcfc.com).

"He has made a huge impact in recent seasons at Aston Villa, and is now one of the brightest young midfielders in the Premier League.—*Reuters*

Schneiderlin scores on debut to give United 1-0 win

SEATTLE, 18 July — Morgan Schneiderlin took less than five minutes to score on his Manchester United debut in a 1-0 win over Mexico side Club America on Friday.

The French midfielder, who signed a four-year contract and cost United a reported 25 million pounds ($38.9 million), got on the end of a cross from Juan Mata to score with a looping header in the International Champions Cup friendly in Seattle.

Schneiderlin, who joined United after seven seasons with Southampton, was one of four big summer signings to debut in the first match of the team's pre-season American tour.

*Manchester United's Morgan Schneiderlin (R) in action against Club America's Javier Guemez.—*REUTERS

Forward Memphis Depay and defender Matteo Darmian also played the first half, before manager Louis van Gaal substituted his entire team at half-time.

Germany captain Bastian Schweinsteiger came into the game for the second half and the former Bayern Munich midfielder quickly established his presence.

United should have gone 2-0 up when Andreas Pereira sent a dangerous cross into the six-yard box in the 53rd minute that Adnan Januzaj somehow failed to make contact with from point-blank range.

Club America almost equalised in the 73rd minute when Alejandro Diaz hit the post at CenturyLink Field, home of the NFL's Seattle Seahawks.

United, who will return to the Champions League this season after finishing fourth in the Premier League, will play their next game on their American tour against the San Jose Earthquakes on Tuesday.

Reuters

Beckham group presents new plan for Miami soccer stadium

MIAMI, 18 July — A group led by David Beckham has solidified plans to build a Miami stadium to house its Major League Soccer team on city-owned land next to the Miami Marlins baseball park.

In a statement after a conference call with Miami's mayor, a spokesman for the Miami Beckham United group confirmed the new site, saying "we're excited about sharing our plans with the city, county and community soon."

Miami Mayor Tomas Regalado told a Press conference that he spoke with one of Beckham's partners, Sprint Corp chief executive Marcelo Claure, a soccer-mad, Bolivian-born billionaire, who told him the group had chosen the new site.

"We're still in the early planning stages and several viable options still exist, but our preferred stadium location is the former Orange Bowl site," the Miami Beckham United group spokesman said. The site was formerly home of the city's famous Orange Bowl stadium, which was demolished in 2008 to make way for the Marlins baseball park.

Beckham's group, which includes "American Idol" creator and fellow Briton Simon Fuller, has explored stadium options for months and saw two earlier downtown waterfront sites blocked by local politicians and business interests.

The 40-year old former England soccer captain, who played several seasons for LA Galaxy late in his career, announced he would exercise his option to become the owner of a new MLS franchise in Miami in February, 2014 but struggled to find political support for a stadium plan.

He has said he wants to build a 20,000-seat stadium with $250 million in private financing and launch the team by 2018-2019.

The group previously spurned the Orange Bowl site, about two miles west of downtown, which was long promoted by city officials.—*Reuters*

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