

Gov't, ethnic armed groups optimistic of ceasefire deal after Day 2



U Hla Maung Shwe (L), Pu Zing Cung (C) and Nai Hong Sa answered questions of media at a press conference after the second day of finalizing the national ceasefire deal at Myanmar Peace Centre on Thursday.

PHOTO: YE MYINT

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 23 July — Negotiators representing the government and ethnic armed group reached agreement on 10 of 13 amendments to a prospective national ceasefire deal Thursday, on the second day of talks aimed at finalizing the draft pact.

With only three amendments outstanding after the two days of talks, the Union Peace-Making Work Committee and a senior delegation of ethnic armed organizations are confident of finalizing the draft pact during the current round, negotiators said.

Pu Zing Cung, a deputy leader of the ethnic delegation, said all proposed

amendments have been discussed during the two days, but some points need approval from the command centre of the ethnic side.

Among the amendments approved on Day 2 was the stipulation that women should comprise around 30 percent of participants in political dialogue after the ceasefire deal, he added. U Hla Maung Shwe, senior adviser at Myanmar Peace Centre, said the government side was hopeful of reaching agreement on the pending three points within three or four days.

"Amendment of the draft nationwide ceasefire accord is expected to be finalized within a few days," he said.

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Park visitors raise concerns over rowdy behaviour

YANGON, 23 July — Visitors to parks in the former capital of Yangon have raised concern about rowdy behaviour and a lack of safety in recreation and amusement areas, demanding better management of these public spaces.

"People's Park and People's Square have become a disgrace to the beautiful culture of the Myanmar people, especially due to young revelers losing themselves to the music playing in the swimming pool," a park security worker said. "Sometimes their revelry turns to brawls."

The park is located at the bottom of the Singuttara Hill, on which the world-famous Shwedagon Pagoda stands.

Shwe Taing Shwe Pyi Company leased a 3.13-acre plot to operate a recreation centre with swimming pools, water slides,



Adolescents and young people lose themselves to the temptation of over-indulgence in a swimming pool.

joy rides and water fountain gardens.

"The lease will expire in March 2038, but the contract is renewed every five years, which includes set-

ting new rents and changes to terms of conditions as well. The current yearly rent is over K15.4 million," said U Ko Ko Lin, an official of the Yangon City De-

velopment Council.

The recreation centre currently receives 1,000 to 5,000 visitors every day, earning at least K1 million. The admission fee is

K1,000 per head. Some businesspeople have calculated that the company's total annual earning will hit K3.6 billion.

Officials said plans

are under way to stop sales of alcohol in restaurants in parks to ensure visitors can relax and enjoy themselves.

Khin Yadana

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Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker meets French Ambassador to Myanmar



NAY PYI TAW, 23 July — Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann on Thursday received French Ambassador to Myanmar

Mr. Thierry MATHOU, who has completed his tour of duty in the country, at his office here.

Also present at the call

were Pyithu Hluttaw International Relations Committee U Hla Myint Oo and officials of the Hluttaw Office.—MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw



Deputy Minister for Immigration and Population
U Win Myint.—MNA



Deputy Minister for Construction
U Soe Tint.
MNA



Deputy Minister for Education
Dr Zaw Min Aung.
MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw

Region, state ethnic ministries can be formed: President's Office

NAY PYI TAW, 23 July — If regional and state governments wish to form their own ministries for ethnic minorities' affairs, they must put the issue forward to President's office, Deputy Minister U Kyaw Kyaw Win told the Pyithu Hluttaw on Thursday.

Responding to an MP's question, the deputy minister said the President's Office had suggested regional and state governments put forward the issue so that the Union government can carry out procedures for formation of the regional ministries.

The government has been working on formation of a union-level ministry for ethnic minorities'



Deputy Minister at the President's Office
U Kyaw Kyaw Win.
MNA

affairs, aiming at serving in the interests of ethnic minorities in accordance with the law to protect their rights, he said.

The deputy minister responded to Dr Soe Moe Aung of Bilin Constituency, who had asked the President's Office if it had



U Kyaw Ni Naing of Laukkai Constituency.
MNA

a plan to form a union ministry or regional ministries on ethnic affairs.

During the meeting, U Kyaw Ni Naing of Laukkai Constituency asked how many members would be allowed within an expanded leading body of the Self-Administered Divi-



Dr Soe Moe Aung of Bilin Constituency.
MNA

sion or Self-Administered Zone. Deputy Minister U Kyaw Kyaw Win replied that expansion of the leading body was not within the rights of the Union Government, as the constitution limited a leading body to not more than 10 members.—MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Speaker warns recall bill could have unwanted consequences

NAY PYI TAW, 23 July — The Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on Thursday sought approval from members of parliament in connection with the recall bill, over which the Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw were divided.

Thura U Shwe Mann said the recall bill might have negative effects on measures for national consolidation, national reconciliation and democratic reforms, provoking confrontation and misunderstanding among political parties and ethnic groups.

The speaker stressed the possibility of taking legal action against unprincipled MPs in accordance

with the constitution, the parliamentary law and existing laws, warning that the issue had the potential to obstruct the upcoming general election.

He urged the Bill Committee to negotiate with political parties and

MPs for the recall bill and inform the parliament of the outcomes.

The parliament observed two minutes' silence to remember U Aung Thaung, late representative of Taungtha constituency.

MNA



Lt-Col Thein Lwin.
MNA



Major Kyaw Naing Htay.—MNA

Farmers in Oaktwin Tsp to receive compensation over land acquisition

NAY PYI TAW, 23 July — The Ministry of Construction plans to compensate farmers in Oaktwin Township over the resumption of more than 1,000 acres of farmland for construction of the Yangon-Mandalay Highway, the deputy minister said Thursday in the Amyotha Hluttaw.

The ministry will disburse more than K1.5 billion to farmers on 29 and

30 July, setting compensation at K 1.5 million per acre, said Deputy Minister for Construction U Soe Tint told the Upper House.

The deputy minister explained the programme in answering a question raised by a MP from Bago Region over delays in compensating farmers.

The Yangon-Mandalay Expressway was opened in 2010.

Regarding the national races and ethnics in the 2014 national census, Deputy Minister for Immigration and Population U Win Myint said that the ministry would release the

draft of the list of ethnics in the future after discussing the issue with organizations concerned.

Currently, Myanmar has eight national races and more than 135 ethnics.

During the meeting, the Upper House bill committee put forward its recommendations on the Bill Amending the Election for the President and Vice Presidents Law and the marriage bill.

The Amyotha Hluttaw also agreed to discuss the Basic Education Bill and the Technical and Vocational Educational Bill.

GNLM

Gov't, ethnic armed groups optimistic of ...

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Negotiations on who the NCA signatories and international witnesses should be and the number of ethnic armed groups to ink the ceasefire deal are set to take place on the third day of the talks, added the MPC senior adviser.

At the press conference following Day 2, spokespersons for both sides described the atmosphere of the latest talks as "a win-win situation."

Although Day 2 was concluded around 4.30 pm, the press conference started late as ethnic negotiators held informal talks with their government counterparts on ongoing fighting in some parts of the country.

On the issue, representatives from the Tatmadaw said at the talks that the military does not wish to see fighting while peace talks are under way, according to Pu Zing Cung.—GNLM

Laotian delegation pays homage at Shwedagon Pagoda

YANGON, 23 July—A Laotian delegation led by Vice President Bounnhang Vorachith paid homage Thursday at Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon after departing Nay Pyi Taw earlier in the day.

The vice president and his wife were seen off at Nay Pyi Taw airport by Yangon Region Minister for Border Affairs and Security Col Tin Win and his wife, the military attaché of Laos to Myanmar and his wife, and officials from the Foreign Affairs Ministry.

At the pagoda, the vice president and spouse offered flowers, water and lights to the pagoda as well as funds to the pagoda board of trustees.

After their visit, the



Laotian Vice President Bounnhang Vorachith pays homage to the Jade Buddha Statue at the Shwedagon Pagoda.—MNA

delegation attended a lunch hosted by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint

Swe and wife at Chatrium Hotel.

The Laotian guests

left Yangon on Thursday evening.

MNA

Japan Grants US\$110,587 for Water Supply System in Kawhmu Township, Yangon Region

YANGON, 23 July—The Japanese Government, under its Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) Scheme, has granted US\$110,587 for a humanitarian assistance programs entitled “The Project for Construction of Kyungale Village Water Supply System in Kawhmu Township, Yangon Region”.

The handover and opening ceremony of the project took place in Kawhmu Township, Yangon Region on 20th July 2015. Mr. Yuhei MURAKAMI, Official of the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs of Japan, Committee Chairman, committee members of the construction project, and local residents attended the ceremony.

The villagers in Kyungale Village had to walk 20 minutes to another village to fetch water in the dry season. Under such circumstance, the Japanese Government, under its GGP scheme, provided funding for construction of a water pond with water supply pipelines and brick tanks, solar centrifugal pump, fence and signboards. The project will benefit 400 vil-

lagers of 74 households of the village.

The Government of Japan has assisted 727 various grass-roots projects in Myanmar under the GGP scheme since 1993; the number consisting of 328 education projects, 192 healthcare projects, 138 public welfare and environment projects, 34 infrastructure projects and 35 other projects. It is anticipated that these assistances will further strengthen the existing friendly relations between Japan and Myanmar.

GNLM



The villagers in Kyungale Village get benefits from water supply facilities constructed under Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) Scheme of the Japanese government.—EMBASSY OF JAPAN

MYANMAR GAZETTE

NAY PYI TAW, 23 July—The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has transferred U Yin Myo Zaw, Managing Director of the Myanmar Investment and Commercial Bank, to the Myanmar Economic Bank as Director General from the date he assumes charge of his duty.—MNA

Over 100 pearl lots sold on second day of auction

NAY PYI TAW, 23 July—Over 300 pearl lots remain on sale following the second day of the Myanmar Pearl Auction at the Maniyadana Jade hall here.

A total of 114 pearl lots—105 from Myanmar Pearl Enterprise, eight from Myanmar Atlantic Co and one from Aungza-

bu Co—were sold to tender winners for the second day.

Merchants from Japan, Norway, China, Singapore, Thailand and India are visiting the pearl sale, along with local merchants.

The auction runs until 24 July.

MNA

Gems merchants evaluate pearls at the Myanmar Pearl Auction.—MNA



Handover Ceremony for the Project on Establishing the Master Plan for Arterial Road Network Development in Myanmar

NAY PYI TAW, 23 July—The Handover Ceremony for the Project on Establishing the Master Plan for Arterial Road Network Development in Myanmar was held by KOICA on July 24 in 2015 at Ministry of Construction (MOC) Building, Nay Pyi Taw in Myanmar.

KOICA has contributed to the transportation infrastructure development, especially the road network, of Myanmar through the Master plan which has been completed by the close cooperation between KOICA and MOC from 2013 to 2015 as part of KOICA'S grant

program.

The Master Plan contains developing 7x5 Expressway Network (9,470km), Main Arterial Road Network (Union Highway: 13,224km), and Sub-Arterial Road Network (State/Region Road: 11,684 km) with the total length of 34,378km and, performing a Feasibility Study for Road Improvement from Monrya to Gan-gaw (180km).

Chief Resident Representative of KOICA, Mr. Nam Kwon-Hyoung remarked “We sincerely hope that the Arterial Road Development Master Plan will serve as cornerstone not only for the road in-

frastructure development, but also for the sustainable socio-economic development in Myanmar.”

At the ceremony, KOICA also hand over the vehicle and various office equipments as well as the final reports of the Master Plan to the Ministry of Construction in this occasion.

Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Construction U Kyaw Linn, Korea Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Lee Baek-Soon, Chief Representative of KOICA, Mr. Nam Kwon-Hyoung, and a number of officials attended the ceremony.

GNLM

Thai pilgrims top visits to Shwedagon



YANGON, 23 July — Pilgrims from Thailand have topped the table of visitors to Shwedagon in the past three months, with officials at the pagoda saying that a total of 79,249 tourists visited the country's most well-known re-

ligious edifice during that period.

The number of visitors from Thailand totaled 20,253, followed by China and Korea with 7,014 and 5,604 respectively.

Tourists are required to pay K8,000 (nearly

US\$8) to visit the historic pagoda in Yangon.

Over 500,000 tourists visited Myanmar from January to June 2015, with the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism expecting five million visits to the country.

Taiwanese-run trade expo showcases autos parts, tools



CRK and Parts Corporation displays its auto parts and accessories at 3-in-1 multi-tech shows at Myanmar Event Park in Yangon.

PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 23 July—A three-in-one trade expo showcasing auto parts, machine tools and electronic components kicked off Wednesday in Yangon.

Auto Expo Myanmar, the Myanmar International Machine Tool & Automation Exhibition, and Power Myanmar 2015 will run until 25 July at Myanmar Event Park in Yangon.

The four-day expo is jointly organized by the Taipei World Trade Centre, Yorkers Trade and Mar-

keting Service Co and Taiwan Transportation Vehicle Manufacturers Association, with the organizers expecting about 10,000 combined visitors. The shows include more than 200 booths featuring products such as engine parts, fuel tanks, electric transformers, portable power generators and healthcare products exhibited by over 130 companies from 12 countries.

Mr Francis Kuo-Hsin Liang, chairman of Taipei World Trade Centre, said the

expo focuses on Myanmar's role in the ASEAN Economic Community, set to launch at the end of the year and forecast to become the world's fourth-largest economic community by 2050. After TWTC opened its Yangon branch in 2013, Myanmar-Taiwan trade grew 16.7 percent the following year to US \$328 million, Mr Liang said, adding he believed the current exhibitions, along with the opening of Myanmar's Taipei trade office last month, would further enhance the bilateral relationship.—GNLM

Myanmar has 1,167 hotels and guest houses whose combined rooms total 45,563.

Ko Moe (GNLM)

Volunteers remove dead fish from Nawntung Lake in Kengtung

KENG TUNG, 23 July — Volunteers have been working to remove a large number of dead fish found floating in Nawntung Lake in Kengtung, eastern Shan State.

The mass death of fish was discovered Tuesday, with a foul odour spreading throughout the local area and forcing the temporary closure of a nearby restaurant.

Kengtung District's Deputy Commissioner U Nay Oo and Township



Administrator U Thein Oo supervised the removal of the dead fish by volunteers including members of the

Hnalonhla social association, fire fighters and local residents.

Kengtung District IPRD

Evacuees return home as floodwaters recede



KYUNHLA, 23 July—With floodwaters receding, evacuees in Sagaing Region's Kyunhla Township have begun returning home from emergency re-

lief camps.

Homes in urban wards and villages of the township were flooded after Minmyin Creek burst its banks amid heavy

rainfall from 16 to 18 July. Transportation in the township was suspended along the inundated Kyunhla-Thaphan-seik road and local roads. Bus services have resumed as of 19 July. Soldiers are continuing to repair local roads damaged in the flooding.

Kyunhla Township IPRD

Thai PM says Vietnam a friend, not competitor

BANGKOK, 23 July — Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha on Thursday brushed aside concern that Vietnam is eclipsing Thailand as a regional manufacturing base, saying Vietnam is a friend not a competitor.

The comments came during a visit to Bangkok by Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung, and at a time when a number of foreign companies are shifting manufacturing operations from Thailand to Vietnam, partly for logistical reasons.

“Today, we use the word friend and not competitor,” Prayuth told a news conference with Dung, adding that Thailand was Vietnam’s biggest trade partner in the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) region.



Vietnam's Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung (C) and Thailand's Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha (L) review the honour guard during a welcoming ceremony at Government House in Bangkok, Thailand on 23 July, 2015. —REUTERS

Thai officials have expressed concern that Vietnam is attracting more foreign manufacturing investment, an additional

worry for a government seeking to spur private investment to quicken slow growth. A decade of intermittent political turbulence

in Thailand, including outbreaks of violence on the streets, has added to questions about the country’s suitability as a regional

manufacturing base for some foreign investors.

Prayuth is a former army chief who staged a coup in 2014 to end the most recent bout of political tension. Dung told the news conference Thailand and Vietnam agreed to increase two-way trade to \$20 billion by 2020.

Two-way trade between Thailand and Vietnam was \$11.8 billion in 2014, according to Thailand’s Commerce Ministry.

Since the 2014 coup Thailand has sought to improve its ties with China, whose relations with neighbour Vietnam have been strained by a territorial disputes in the South China Sea. China has overlapping claims with Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Taipei and Brunei in the South China Sea through which \$5 trillion in sea-borne trade passes every year.

Thailand and Vietnam said in a joint press release on Thursday territorial disputes in the South China Sea had affected trust and confidence and “may undermine peace and stability as well as safety and freedom of navigation”.

Both countries emphasized the need for full and effective implementation of a declaration on the conduct of parties in the South China Sea.

Both Vietnam and Thailand have been accused by rights groups of serious human rights violations. Last month, Thai police forced the New-York based Human Rights Watch to cancel an event it wanted to hold at a Bangkok media club to launch a report alleging Vietnam’s persecution of an ethnic minority.—Reuters

Japan seeks “constructive” Chinese action to fix E China Sea gas row

TOKYO, 23 July — Japan on Thursday called for “constructive” action by China to address a dispute over its unilateral gas development in the East China Sea in line with a 2008 bilateral accord on joint gas development there.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga dismissed Beijing’s claim on Wednesday that Japan’s “hyping up” of China’s oil and gas development in the East China Sea through the release of photographs of 12 newly confirmed Chinese offshore structures “will do nothing good to carry out dialogue and co-operation” between the two countries.

“The Chinese claim is totally pointless. Our country has been demanding that China stop such unilateral action,” Suga said.

“We have been demanding on various occasions that (China) immediately implement a June 2008 agreement on Japan-China cooperation for resource development in the East China Sea.”

“I would expect China to respond to the Japanese call and solve this issue in a constructive way,” the top government spokesman told a news conference.

“We would like to continue to strongly urge China to respond so as to make (the East China Sea) a sea of peace, cooperation and friendship.”

Following the release Wednesday on the Japanese Foreign Ministry’s website of 14 photos and a map showing locations of the 12 newly confirmed Chinese offshore structures and four existing ones, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang said later in the day Japan’s action “provokes (a) confrontation” and “is not constructive at all to the management of the East China Sea situation and the improvement of bilateral relations.”

Of the 16 structures, 14 are platforms and two are just foundations. The photos show most of the platforms equipped with heliports and some of the platforms emitting flames apparently from burning gas. The 16 are on the Chinese side of the median line between the shorelines of the two countries.

Japan is concerned that China may siphon off resources from beneath the Japanese side of the line.

While the two countries have yet to agree on a boundary between their

overlapping exclusive economic zones in the East China Sea, China does not recognize the line and claims its EEZ stretches further to the edge of the continental shelf, closer to Japan’s Okinawa Prefecture.

Some Japanese officials have warned China may use some of the platforms for military purposes, for example by installing a radar system to strengthen monitoring of activities of Japan’s Self-Defence Forces and US forces in the East China Sea.

Repeating China’s position, Lu said, “China’s oil and gas exploitation in the East China Sea is in undisputable waters under China’s jurisdiction, and falls within China’s sovereign rights and jurisdiction.”

Asked why Japan disclosed information with the photos at this point, Suga told reporters on Wednesday that China has shown no sign of suspending unilateral resource development and that there has been growing attention in Japan and abroad toward Beijing’s attempts to force changes in the status quo, particularly in the East and South China seas.

Kyodo News

India expresses concerns over US military sale to Pakistan

NEW DELHI, 23 July — India has conveyed to the US its concerns over the sale of missiles and military choppers to Pakistan, saying it is keeping a close tab on the developments in the region which are of this country’s national interest.

“Government has sensitised the US of our concerns on US military sales to Pakistan.

Government has consistently conveyed to the US that it must take into account India-US relations and the impact on India’s security in deciding its military assistance to Pakistan,” External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj informed the parliament on Wednesday.

“Most recently, we have noted that the US

State Department made a determination approving possible Foreign Military Sales to Pakistan of AH-1Z Viper Attack Helicopters and AGM-114R Hellfire II Missiles and associated equipment, parts, training and logistical support for an estimated cost of 952 million US dollars,” said the minister.

Xinhua

China opens antidumping probe into Japan-made electrical steel

BEIJING, 23 July — China said on Thursday it has opened an antidumping investigation into imports of a grade of electrical steel from Japan, South Korea and the European Union.

The Commerce Ministry said the probe is aimed at determining if the imports of grain-oriented flat-rolled electrical steel have damaged the Chinese steel industry. The steel is used

in manufacturing such products as motors and transformers. The start of the Chinese investigation follows the European Union’s decision in May to impose provisional antidumping duties on imports of the steel from China, Japan, Russia, South Korea and the United States. The European Union’s provisional decision was made following a complaint lodged in June 2014

by the European Steel Association. Under the decision, Chinese companies, including Baoshan Iron & Steel Co and Wuhan Iron & Steel Co, have been slapped with antidumping duties of 28.7 percent, while two Japanese firms, JFE Steel Corp and Nippon Steel and Sumitomo Metal Corp, have faced duties of 34.2 percent and 35.9 percent, respectively.

Kyodo News

Indonesia to host regional peacekeeping meeting

JAKARTA, 23 July — Indonesia is to host the Asia Pacific Regional Meeting to be attended by representatives of countries contributed to peacekeeping forces, regional organizations and the United Nations, officials said on

Thursday.

The meeting themed Complex Peacekeeping Strategies: Enhancing Capabilities and Responses of the UN Peacekeeping Operations would run from 27 to 28 July, to discuss mandates of UN peacekeeping missions

which are going to be more complex and multidimensional.

Besides that, delegations attending the meeting would also discuss increasing global demands on the need of UN peacekeeping forces presence.—Xinhua

Obama administration takes Iran nuclear deal fight public

WASHINGTON, 23 July — US lawmakers skeptical about the nuclear deal with Iran promised to press senior Obama administration officials to make more information about it public at a Senate hearing on Thursday as Congress begins its two-month review of the agreement.

Secretary of State John Kerry, Treasury Secretary Jack Lew and Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz will testify before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the first such public appearance by the cabinet officials since the deal was announced on 14 July.

They briefed the entire Senate and House of Representatives in separate closed-door sessions on Wednesday, and administration officials have held a series of private telephone conversations and meetings with lawmakers.

Among other issues, lawmakers said they wanted more information about the timing of sanctions relief and ability to “snap back” sanctions if Iran cheats, clarity on the timing of inspections and more answers about how much money would go to Iran.

“We have leverage, but in nine months, they’ll



US Secretary of State John Kerry makes a statement to the media before a closed door briefing with House members on the recent Iran nuclear deal in Washington on 22 July, 2015. —REUTERS

have their cash and all the sanctions will be relieved. People will be in there

signing contracts, and then the leverage sort of shifts to them,” said Senator Bob

Corker, the Republican chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

Corker has said he is skeptical about the agreement, but would wait until he knows more before deciding whether to vote against the deal.

Ben Cardin, the top Democrat on the panel, said the closed-door briefing had been useful but questions remained. “There are many areas of concern that we want to get clarified,” he said.

Cardin is one of many Democrats who have not yet decided how they would vote on the deal.

Under a bill President

Barack Obama signed into law in May, Congress has until 17 September to approve or reject the agreement, in which Iran agreed to rein in its nuclear programme in exchange for sanctions relief.

With many Republicans lining up to oppose it, Obama needs to convince as many of his fellow Democrats as possible to back the deal. If a disapproval resolution passes Congress and survives a veto, Obama would be unable to waive most of the US sanctions imposed on Iran, which could cripple the nuclear pact.

Reuters

New N Korean missile might be capable of reaching US: report

SEOUL, 23 July — North Korea is preparing to launch an upgraded missile possibly capable of reaching the US mainland amid speculation the launch might take place before October, a Seoul daily reported on Thursday, citing a high-ranking South Korean government official.

“The North is working hard to test the rocket engine,” the official told the *JoongAng Ilbo* newspaper.

“I am not at liberty to discuss the timing and number of attempts, but the North conducted at least

two engine combustion tests during the first half of this year,” the official said.

South Korean Defence Ministry spokesman Nah Seung Yong said South Korea is closely monitoring all missile-related movements in the North.

“We are tracking down with special attention all developments that are happening around the western launch site of Dongchang-ri, including the construction work,” Nah said during a press briefing, without providing further details.

South Korean intelli-

gence authorities said the rocket engine tests took place at an arms research institute in Sanum-dong of Ryongsong District in northern Pyongyang and the Tongchang-ri Missile and Space Launch Facility near the Chinese border.

“Taking into account the scope of the tests, the new rocket will be larger than Unha-3 and it will have a range of about 10,000 kilometres,” the official said, referring to the North’s existing long-range rocket.

A construction project is under way to extend

a launch tower at a missile facility, and there has been intelligence that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has ordered the launch of a satellite.

“So, we believe the launch will take place before October,” the official said. North Korea celebrates the founding of its ruling Workers’ Party on 10 October as an important political event, and this year marks the 70th anniversary, fueling speculation of a series of provocations in October.

Kyodo News

Rouhani defends Iran nuclear deal as ‘new page in history’



Iran’s President Hassan Rouhani

DUBAI, 23 July — President Hassan Rouhani, stepping up his defence of a nuclear deal under attack by Iran’s conservatives, said on Thursday the historic agreement with world powers was “more valuable” than a domestic debate about its fine details.

The elite Revolutionary Guards, a powerful political and military force, has started to attack the deal as endangering Iran’s security and have also hit out at a UN Security Council resolution passed on Monday endorsing it.

In remarks that will be seen as admonishing critics of the accord, Rouhani said in a televised speech: “Now they are scrutinising one by one the terms of the deal reached in Vienna and the UN Security Council’s resolution 2231.

“That’s good but what has happened is more valuable and more significant than that,” he told a medical conference in Teheran.

“How can one be an Iranian and not cheer for our negotiating team?” Rouhani added referring to Foreign Minister Moham-

mad Javad Zarif and the head of Iran’s Atomic Energy Organization, Ali Akbar Salehi, both of whom were present for Rouhani’s speech.

Rouhani argued that the deal reflected the nation’s will and suggested that blocking the accord would ignore what the people had asked for when they elected him to office in 2013.

“This is a new page in history. It didn’t happen when we reached the deal in Vienna on 14 July, it happened on 4th of August 2013 when the Iranians elected me as their president.” Rouhani and US President Barack Obama both have to win support for the nuclear accord from hardliners at home.

In the case of Iran, the deal must get final acceptance from the National Security Council and ultimately from Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the country’s highest authority. He has withheld final judgement, thanking the negotiators while saying the text must still be scrutinised and approved.—Reuters

After 25 years together, study shows two Germanys still wide apart

BERLIN, 23 July — From the amount they earn to their religious convictions and cars they drive, gaping differences between Germans in the former Communist East and the West persist after almost 25 years of reunification, a study published on Wednesday showed.

Many don’t even like each other, with a third of East Germans viewing westerners as arrogant.

The authors of the study, the Berlin Institute

for Population and Development, said it would take another generation for Germany to grow together.

“The results of the study surprised us,” Reiner Klingholz, director of the Berlin Institute, told reporters. “Now as then (in 1990) the two parts of Germany are astonishingly different.”

Helmut Kohl, chancellor at the time, pushed through political union, exchanged West Germany’s deutsche mark for the East German mark and

promised flourishing landscapes for the former Communist states. But a mix of factors, including outdated economic structures and a way of life imposed on citizens by communist rule, have hampered real integration. “Unity is not a political act of will but a long process,” said Klingholz. Although economic differences are narrowing and the flow of people moving westwards has largely dried up, the study showed East German workers earn on average a quarter less than western counterparts, work longer and have lower productivity. While a few cities in the east, such as Dresden and Leipzig, are booming, property there on average is worth only half as much as that in the west, said the study. Ahead of celebrations to mark 25 years of unity on 3 October, perhaps the most striking rifts are in peoples’ attitudes. Roughly three quarters of East Germans

do not belong to a religious community whereas the situation is virtually the reverse in western states.

In a country obsessed by cars, brand preferences also reflect differences: West Germans drive luxury BMWs almost twice as much as East Germans who, in turn, prefer Skodas, originally from the Czech Republic. Roughly 30 percent of West Germans believe that it is better for men to work full time and for women to stay at home, about double the proportion in East Germany where traditionally women went out to work. Some 19 million Germans — just under a quarter of the population — have been born in the last 25 years and the report estimated that share would rise to more than half by 2040, when Germany celebrates 50 years of togetherness. “By then, at the latest, we will have a new Germany,” said Klingholz.—Reuters



General view of the main railway station of Essenduring a nationwide strike of Germany’s train drivers’ union GDL on 22 April, 2015.—REUTERS

WORLD

US Republicans, pro-Israel groups step up campaign against Iran deal

WASHINGTON, 23 July — Top Republicans vowed on Wednesday to do their utmost to scrap President Barack Obama's nuclear deal with Iran as the biggest pro-Israel lobby prepared for an all-out campaign to pressure wary lawmakers into rejecting the agreement.

A bigger push against last week's historic accord in Vienna was being met with a counteroffensive by senior Obama administration officials, who have already spent hours on in-person and telephone briefings with members of Congress.

Secretary of State John Kerry, Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz and Treasury Secretary Jack Lew briefed the entire House of Representatives and Senate in separate closed-door sessions on Wednesday and will defend the deal at a public Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on Thursday.

As Congress opened a 60-day review of the deal, Republican US House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner told report-

ers: "Because a bad deal threatens the security of the American people, we're going to do everything possible to stop it."

Obama insists that the Iran deal is the only alternative to more war in the Middle East.

Israel pressed lawmakers on Wednesday to block the deal, with Israeli Ambassador Ron Dermer meeting privately with a group of about 40 House conservatives.

The most influential pro-Israel group, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), will deploy about 300 lobbyists on Capitol Hill next week to try to convince lawmakers, especially undecided Democrats, to vote against the deal, according to officials in the pro-Israel camp.

AIPAC's plans are being coordinated with allied groups such as Citizens for a Nuclear Free Iran that are sponsoring a national television advertising campaign, the pro-Israel sources said. They are expected to spend upwards of \$20 million, one



An inflatable mushroom cloud stands among demonstrators during a rally opposing the nuclear deal with Iran in Times Square in the Manhattan borough of New York City, on 22 July, 2015.—REUTERS

source said.

Under a bill reluctantly signed into law by Obama in May, Congress has until 17 September to decide whether to approve or reject the agreement between Iran and world powers to rein in Iran's nuclear programme in return for sanctions relief.

Republicans control majorities in both houses of Congress. Many have come out strongly against the pact, which they say will empower Iran and threaten US ally Israel.

Some said they wanted to know more.

Republican Representative Dennis Ross said he was predisposed against the agreement but, after the briefing, "I am probably inclined now to dig further and verify for myself."

But if Congress passes a resolution disapproving of the deal, dozens of Democrats would have to vote with them to override the Democratic president's threatened veto, which is not likely in the fiercely

partisan Congress.

"It's a steep climb but not an impossible climb," the pro-Israel group official said of the coming campaign.

House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi has come out strongly in favor of it. Among the senior Democrats whom pro-Israel lobbyists hope to win over is Senator Chuck Schumer, a strong advocate for Israel's security who has yet to state his position.

Schumer told reporters as he left the hearing that he was still deciding. "It's a serious issue and I'm studying it carefully, giving it what it deserves," he said.

Several Republicans said the Cabinet secretaries had not eased their concerns about several issues, particularly the ability to "snap back" sanctions if Iran violates the deal and the system for inspecting Iranian nuclear facilities.

Senator Ted Cruz, a 2016 Republican presidential candidate, said the agreement would provide Iran with billions of dollars

that would be used to murder Americans and their allies.

"If this deal goes through, it will transform the Obama administration into the world's leading financier of radical Islamic terrorism," he said.

Deal opponents in the pro-Israel camp believe more lawmakers can be swayed by detailed arguments about what they see as loopholes that Iran could use to skirt the agreement.

Pressure from AIPAC, whose members' support is widely coveted, could also worry lawmakers up for re-election. AIPAC boasts 100,000 members.

At the same time, J Street, a smaller liberal pro-Israel group, is urging supporters to lobby Congress to support the Iran deal.

Kerry told reporters before the House meeting that the deal "will make the region, our friends and allies, safer. It will make the world safer ... in the absence of any viable alternative."

Reuters

In Clinton vs Clinton fantasy run-off, Hillary wins: Reuters/Ipsos poll

WASHINGTON, 23 July — Neither her husband, nor George Clooney, Michelle Obama, Oprah or Al Gore would come close to challenging Hillary Clinton's polling dominance for the Democratic presidential nomination.

While Republicans wrestle to pick a favourite among 16 candidates, Democratic voters — facing a far smaller field — strongly favour the former first lady and secretary of state, even when presented with a fantasy list of notables, according to a recent Reuters/Ipsos poll of 1,033 Democrats.

Hillary Clinton remains head and shoulders above her legitimate challengers and would thump Bill Clinton in a head-to-head contest if the constitution were amended to allow him to run for a third term.

But potential "first gentleman" and former President Bill is the fantasy candidates who comes closest to his wife, at 26 percent compared with Hillary's 51 percent.

The online poll, which has a credibility



Hillary Clinton

interval of 3.5 percentage points, looked at whether any Democrat — experienced politician or not — could pose a threat to Clinton in the primary race.

Oscar-winning actor and liberal activist George Clooney? Just 10 percent would vote for him.

Liberal darling and retiring "Daily Show" host Jon Stewart? Sixteen percent. Oprah? 11 percent.

Current First Lady Michelle Obama was second to Bill Clinton with 20 percent.

Former Democratic presidential nominees Al Gore and John Kerry were in the 15 percent range. California Governor Jerry Brown and Julian Castro, the US secretary for

housing and urban development and a former San Antonio mayor, lingered in the 6 to 8 percentage range.

Brittany Tomes, a 21-year-old university student from Levittown, Pennsylvania, said some characters in the poll's "dream team" were unrealistic.

"They need experience of actually being in the government and handling those issues to be trustworthy," Tomes said. "For the most part, people who are in television don't really have that background."

When it comes to the actual Democratic primary race, Reuters/Ipsos' polling shows Clinton attracting 51.5 percent of Democratic support as of 21 July vs 21.5 percent for Senator Bernie Sanders, her nearest opponent.

Thirty-nine percent of Democrats said they would "enthusiastically" vote for Clinton, while another 21 percent said they would vote for her because they think she would be most likely to win the presidential race in November 2016. Twenty percent said they would "definitely not" vote for her.

"This is a shrug of the

shoulders," said Larry Sabato, director of the University of Virginia's Centre for Politics, saying the less-than-full-throated enthusiasm reflects a "bubble-wrapped" and overly staged campaign.

Forty percent of Democrats said Clinton is a "great" candidate for president, while 39 percent described her as "adequate."

Beth Grimes, 62, of Piedmont, West Virginia, said Clinton is the only Democratic candidate she has heard from so far.

"I may not even vote because Hillary is the only decent Democrat," Grimes said. "I don't really like Hillary. She sways positions too easily."

If Clinton wins the primary, Democrats are apt to become more enthused about her candidacy once she is pitted against a Republican, Sabato said.

"In this very polarized era, it's the opposition party that generates more enthusiasm — the fact that you're not the other nominee, you're not the other party," he said.

Reuters

Foreign ship's crew stuck in New Zealand awaiting pay: union

WELLINGTON, 23 July — Russian, Ukrainian and Filipino crew members of a bulk carrier ship detained in New Zealand have begun receiving several months of back pay from their employers, union officials said on Thursday.

The 18-strong crew of the Greek-owned and Panamanian-flagged *Lancelot V* had also been given temporary visas to allow them to leave their ship in the port of Tauranga, on the east of the North Island.

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) had been working on behalf of crew, who had their wages stopped about two months ago, ITF New Zealand inspector Grahame McLaren said in a statement.

The government's Maritime New Zealand agency ship inspection in Auckland in May had revealed defects to several cranes and the vessel was detained when it later arrived in Tauranga as its annual classification society certificates had expired.

Crew visas expired during this time, forcing them to remain on board as

virtual prisoners until they received temporary visas, said McLaren.

Extensive representation had been made to the embassies of the Russian, Ukrainian and Filipino crew members with little result.

Following a New Zealand court last week, 23,000 US dollars in interim wages was obtained to be distributed amongst the crew for the time being.

The ITF was seeking the prompt repatriation of all crew members to their home countries once the remaining back pay claims, estimated to be over 100,000 US dollars, had been resolved and for the crew to be paid at ITF rates by the charterer in the meantime.

McLaren said the problems with the ship are a result of the deregulated shipping industry where "flag of convenience" shipping had undermined safety and standards.

"These ships of shame are coming into New Zealand ports. They are ripping off their crews and creating a health and safety hazard in ports and on the New Zealand coast," he said.

Xinhua

PERSPECTIVES

Friday, 24 July, 2015

Fluctuations, manipulation have serious consequences

By Aung Khin

THE Central Bank of Myanmar recently warned private lenders that they faced investigation for possible involvement in currency manipulation following a plunge in the value of the kyat versus the U.S. dollar.

The warning does not appear to have been unfounded. In June, a friend went to an official

money changer to buy a fixed amount of US dollars before departing on an overseas trip. But the staff at the counter refused to sell the currency, saying they were only buying it.

At that time, the exchange rate was stable. But my friend became suspicious that it was not an ordinary situation in the monetary market. Some days later, the kyat began to fall against the dollar. The circumstance raised suspicions that the downtrend was not accidental.

Inflation and wild currency fluctuations can damage, even topple, the whole economy of a country. Despite warnings from the government and central bank officials, the exchange rate is still declining.

While the central bank has made attempts to adjust the official currency rate, some economists

have said it should take a stronger hand in managing the exchange rate.

It can be quite difficult for ordinary people to understand financial theories or terms. Fluctuations and manipulation of the financial market have had serious consequences for the country and the people, through higher commodity prices and falling purchasing power, which signals a decline in the country's GDP.

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Let's try to control the greed for superlatives

By Myo Myint

AS social animals that can only survive with the strength of numbers, humans are both altruistic and selfish. They are altruistic towards members of their group so that they can be part of the membership and they are selfish for their own individual survival and success. Humans have basic needs which are traditionally defined as food, clothing and shelter. But, they also have basic wants such as material possessions, affection, success, fairness, respect and freedom. In striving to fulfil their individual needs and wants, humans have been striving to be the best among the group.

This strong desire to excel has given rise to many traits in human beings, some good, and some bad. Due to the desire to improve their conditions, individually and in groups, they have achieved much progress regarding their basic needs as well as the quality of life,

their intellectual development and the capacity to innovate. On the other hand, the passion to excel has intensified their selfish trait to the extent that at certain points in history, they have enslaved, exploited and exterminated their own species and other species to possess the best of things. Civilization has taught human beings to restrain many of their wild traits. With the passing of time, and the influence of civilization and religious teachings, outwardly, have made their acquisitive nature and greed less transparent. However, in their heart of hearts, these do not appear to have diminished very much. In fact, with the progress in all fields related to the physical and mental well being of humans, the growth of commerce, and the need to make profit through increased sales, new products and models, their greed has probably multiplied. The strong desire of someone to have uninterrupted access to more of something is not just limited to food and

money, immovable things like real property (land) and moveable things like personal property (e.g. jewelry), but also extends to other tangible and intangible things as well as persons. Much lusted for is power which has many dimensions; it can be used to influence persons and events, exert control over resources and capabilities of humans as well as non-humans, and it can also serve as a status symbol. Equally desired by many is wealth which rightly, or wrongly, many feel as mattering most in the world, and many will spend their whole life slaving or enslaving others for it. Other things that people are greedy for are fame and attention, and some may go to great length to achieve them, even sacrificing health, wealth and reputation. Another group of persons known as workaholics, who like alcoholics, suffer from an addiction. They are obsessed with their work and find it difficult to stay away from it. Some people

covert knowledge so much that they may spend their lifetime attending one course after another and working for one degree after another, ignoring their responsibilities towards family and society. There are also those who are greedy, not for themselves, but for others who are less fortunate than themselves, or for religious causes. They will spend their time and fortune working untiringly to get the necessary funds to help others. The last group of greedy people consists of those who hunger for companionship, affection and sensual pleasure and enjoys spending a vast amount of their time and money being amused by a retinue of hangers-on, entertainers and so-called friends.

In Buddhism, loba (greed) is regarded as one of the three main roots of evil, the other two being dosa (anger), and moha (delusion), and they lead to evil deeds, evil speech, and evil mind. Hence, greed of all kinds leads to actions and

feelings such as anger, delusion, dissatisfaction, obsession, envy, insanity, dishonesty, theft, robbery, murder, inhuman acts, etc. In brief, blinded by greed, some people lose their humanity and will resort to anything to satisfy their insatiable greed. They become worse than animals, as animals do not cause senseless destruction or death. Animals may kill or attack others due to necessity for food, security and self-preservation, but rarely out of greed or pleasure-seeking. As taught by Lord Buddha, greed causes suffering, and unfortunately, in most cases, a person's greed not only enflames himself/herself, but also those who are connected to the object of his/her greed causing them untold suffering. No doubt, man's life has improved because of the greed to improve his lot. But ambition based on greed alone will not always be realized and even if realized, it cannot guarantee peace of mind. Unbridled greed can also be self-destructing as well as causing destruction to others. Many realize only before their last

breath that amounts and numbers of things that they have accumulated do not matter. What matters most, when we are about to depart this world, is not the amount of worldly possessions we leave behind for our offspring, but the possession of a tranquil mind which is based on the knowledge that one has not caused harm to others in satisfying one's greed. It is true that as a human being one will have innate needs as well as wants, such as food, shelter, clothing, security, peace of mind, affection, respect, justice, freedom, and dignity. However, these can all be gained by balancing one's needs with the needs of others. As Lord Buddha has expounded, treading the middle path will lead to liberation from suffering. The right dose of greed like the right dose of medicine can be beneficial for a person's progress, but if it is a dose, much larger than necessary, it will either kill a person instantaneously, or cause a kind of cancer that will grow insidiously within him/her and bring about immeasurable suffering.

Negotiation, Stability and Peace Party allowed to register as political party

NAY PYI TAW, 23 July—The Union Election Commission on Thursday announced that Negotiation, Stability and Peace Party headquartered at No 4/361 on 12th Karya Street in Thingangyungyi, Mingaladon Township, Yangon Region, have been allowed to register as a political parties as of 23

July 2015 in line with Section 9 of the Political Parties Registration Law.

The party's registration number is 98.

MNA

All Myanmar Kaman National League for Democracy Party, Dynet National Race Development Party apply for registration as political parties

NAY PYI TAW, 23 July—The Union Election Commission has been scrutinizing and passing the applications for registration of political party. All Myanmar Kaman National League for Democracy Party and Dynet National Race De-

velopment Party applied for registration as a political party to the UEC on Thursday.

MNA

We must be sparing in our communication.

Mobile recharges are taking too much of our income.

What!?



Hla Htut Oo

ARTICLE & NATIONAL

Is it possible to eradicate Nepotism?

By Tommy Pauk

There are many different systems of governments in the world e.g. autocracy, kleptocracy, plutocracy, monarchy and democracy etc. It is common that nepotism is practiced in the workplace in the world. Nepotism is derived from human attachment and ties. We are aware that the nepotism is being practiced in family business, companies, government offices and foreign agencies in the world. Giving jobs to the relatives or kindred by powerful authorities or boss or higher rank officials is always heard in most of the societies in the world. Whenever job vacancies arise in the organization, the boss usually selects his or her relatives to fill the vacant positions. Generally, this practice seems to have sense because humans do favor their family members or kinship or relatives in social life. Naturally, we, human beings incline to support our blood folks or kin-folks when we have power or authority. To some extent, the practice of nepotism is not a blameworthy human-behavior, but we need to emphasize whether it is beneficial to the whole organization or government agency or company or corporate body etc. Does it only benefit to those who

are authorities and their relatives concerned? Absolutely, yes, it does.

The authorities concerned or bosses and their relatives achieve mutual benefits. If the authorities concerned commit misappropriation and outright corruption, their relatives protect them from being punished. Subsequently, the evidence of malpractice or the inefficiency of relatives in a specific organ of government or an organization is effaced or obliterated. Moreover, the unjust favoritism causes conflicts and disunity between the ordinary staff and the relatives of the authorities concerned. Mostly, the appointed relatives within a certain corporate body are unqualified to their positions or jobs. If seventy- per- cent of the appointees are the relatives of the high boss in a certain corporate body, the poor job performance will be prevalent. This happens because seventy- per- cent of the said appointees do not cooperate with the rest thirty- per- cent of qualified appointees in the work place. As a consequence, the negative impact affects that corporate body due to undesirable circumstances. More or less, the practice of nepotism can be found in foreign agencies, corporate body, government organizations and companies etc.,

but sound judgment must be made on recruiting staff thoroughly and properly. Even then, all hierarchies must adhere to the disciplines, rules and regulations and ethics stipulated for the respective organizations or corporate etc. Unfairness, bias and clique in the workplace jeopardize the progress and development of the corporate body, organization and government agencies etc. The high bosses manipulate the subordinates by using the assistance of their appointed relatives as a tool in the workplace.

Gradually, the authorities and their relatives at the work place ignore the fundamental human decencies such as honesty, uprightness, fairness and good reputation. Their colleagues feel disgruntled at the way they are treated in the workplace. There are no unity and harmony in dealing between two groups in the same workplace - the employees who practice nepotism and the simple employees.

Nepotism stimulates the authorities to commit corruption. Thus the organization concerned is jeopardized. The persons involved in practicing nepotism degrade their characters or decencies, and the progress of a certain government agency or organization or corporate body is hampered. The simple and qualified candi-

dates oppose the practice of nepotism so as to attain the golden opportunity of employment for the corporate or government agencies or organizations in their society smoothly. Undeniably, nepotism is a type of corruption or malpractice in the work place. Moreover, sensible people around the world thumb up their noses at the authorities who practice extreme nepotism. Nevertheless, it is hard to eradicate nepotism in the work place in the world.

Naturally, man's attachment to his relatives is so strong that he favors or helps them by any means. His top priority is the interest of his relatives whether it is just or unjust. When he has power or authority, he surely supports or creates chances to give jobs to his kin by using improper way. Likewise, kin who are awarded jobs will be loyal to their blood kin the authorities. Up to this stage, the sentiments, tendency and feelings are acceptable, but they should abstain from committing corruption, discrimination, bias and unfair judgment in the work place. If they can abstain from committing all that bad stuff, the progress of the organization etc., will be stable and advanced. The stability, harmony and unity can reach a certain goal or vision planned by

the organization concerned indeed. Equal rights and benefits must be given to all employees concerned by the management or administrator. Unless they pay attention to fundamental human decencies, the corporate body or the organizations will be undermined significantly.

The ties between them are awesomely firm so other non-relatives working in the same work place cannot enjoy sound or fair judgment by the management. Obviously, the authorities protect or defend the inefficiency and poor performances of their relatives in the work place. Such inappropriate behaviors tarnish the image of a certain organization. However, the authorities who practice nepotism will face punishment or trouble one day in near future. If the degree of the practice of nepotism is greatest or highest in all the various governmental organizations in a certain country, that country will be in regression.

In order to protect jeop- ardy, punitive actions must be taken against the civil servants who extremely take advantages of power, especially handling of nepotism. Nepotism can destroy good governance

and the entire operations of the organization as well. To be able to achieve success of the either government organization or others, the authorities should seriously consider the impact of nepotism on the management or administration in the work place. As human beings, the higher rank officials might regard the practice of nepotism as a kindred culture. Apparently, they give unfair support and make biased protection to their kindred. Nevertheless, as for non relatives in the work place, they do not regard as an adorable culture because nepotism persuades misleading acts and behaviors. e.g. corruption or clique.

Everyone knows the bad outcome, resulting from the practice of nepotism, which can even ruin the organization. The people from different societies in the world have come across with nepotism in their government organizations or agencies through many eras. Therefore, they insist on demanding for eradicating the practice of nepotism, whereas the practice of nepotism still persists. It cannot be eradicated effectively. So, be honest and treat other employees like your relatives even!!!!

Tommy Pauk is the pseudonym of U Thein Swe, who is B.A (English) and (Registered Law) R.L I. degrees holder. He has English Teaching experience at Yangon University English Department and Workers' college in Yangon, and now is working as freelance writer and English Teacher cum Translator/Interpreter for foreign firms.

Officials seize unauthorized jade stones

MUSE, 24 July – Authorities recently seized roughly K49 million worth of jade for which duties had not been paid in northern Shan State.

Officers found the jade during a search of an unaccompanied car at

Asia World Toll Gate near 105th Mile. According to officials, the car is worth K16.5 million.

They handed over the jade and car to the Myanmar Gems Brokerage and the Customs Department.

Ko Mine (IPRD)



Public Remonstrance

1. All Myanmar Kaman National League for Democracy Party headquartered at No. 20 on 139th Street in Maugone Ward, Tamway Township, Yangon Region, has submitted its application for the registration as a political party to the Union Election Commission on 23 July, 2015 in accord with Section 5 of Political Parties Registration Law, along with the following party's name, flag and emblem.
2. It is hereby announced that those who want to remonstrate with the UEC about the party's name, flag and emblem they may submit a complaint along with the strong evidences within seven days starting from issuance of this announcement in line with the Section 14 (d) of the Political Parties Registration Rules.

Flag of All Myanmar Kaman National League for Democracy Party



Emblem of All Myanmar Kaman National League for Democracy Party



Union Election Commission

Public Remonstrance

1. Dynet National Race Development Party temporarily headquartered at No. 593 on Minsawmon Street in 4th Thabyaygone Ward, Buthidaung Township, Rakhine State, has submitted its application for the registration as a political party to the Union Election Commission on 23 July, 2015 in accord with Section 5 of Political Parties Registration Law, along with the following party's name, flag and emblem.
2. It is hereby announced that those who want to remonstrate with the UEC about the party's name, flag and emblem they may submit a complaint along with the strong evidences within seven days starting from issuance of this announcement in line with Section 14 (d) of the Political Parties Registration Rules.

Flag of Dynet National Race Development Party



Emblem of Dynet National Race Development Party



Union Election Commission

Kurd militants say kill two Turkish police to avenge Islamic State bombing



Armed men escort the coffins of victims who were killed in Monday's bomb attack in Suruc, as they arrive at Gazi Cemevi, an Alevi place of worship, in Istanbul, Turkey, on 21 July, 2015.

REUTERS

ANKARA, 23 July — Kurdish militants claimed responsibility for the killing of two Turkish police officers on Wednesday in what they said was retaliation for a suspected Islamic State suicide bombing which killed 32 mostly young students.

The Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) said in a statement on one of its websites that the two police officers were killed at around 6 am in the south-eastern town of Ceylan-

pinar for "collaboration with the Daesh (Islamic State) gangs".

Security sources earlier told *Reuters* the officers were found dead with bullet wounds to the head in the house they shared in Ceylanpınar, on the border with Syria about 160 km (100 miles) east of Suruc, the site of Monday's suicide bombing.

Many of Turkey's Kurds and opposition supporters suspect President Tayyip Erdogan and the

ruling AK Party of covertly backing Islamic State against Kurdish fighters in Syria, something the government has repeatedly denied.

Anti-government protests after Monday's bombing in Suruc erupted in several cities for a second night on Tuesday, with some of the demonstrators chanting "Murderer Islamic State, collaborator Erdogan and AKP".

"Although Islamic State has been held responsible for this attack, Turkey's AKP government, by resisting the taking of effective measures to prevent Islamic State and other reactionary forces, bears the real responsibility," the opposition Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), whose support base is mostly Kurdish, said in a statement.

Turkey's NATO allies have expressed concern about control of its border with Syria which in parts runs directly parallel with territory controlled by Islamic State. The prospect

of conflict spilling onto Turkish soil, embroiling Kurds, Islamist militants and security forces will raise alarm inside and outside Turkey.

Speaking during a break from a cabinet meeting attended by the commander of Turkey's ground forces on Wednesday, Deputy Prime Minister and government spokesman Bulent Arinc told reporters border security would be tightened.

"What is important in the face of Deash (Islamic State) is to block the terrorists' transit points and to have physical obstacles to this. A physical security system will be established at the border," he said, without giving details.

A senior Turkish official told *Reuters* there was "strong evidence" to suggest the bomber was a 20-year old man born in the southeastern province of Adiyaman and of Kurdish origin, who had travelled to Syria last year with the help of a group linked to Islamic State.

"He was active in a Syria-linked group supporting the Islamic State. We know that he went to Syria illegally. It was not possible to track him during his time there," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the investigation.

He had links with another alleged bomber who attacked an HDP rally in the mostly Kurdish south-eastern city of Diyarbakir days ahead of a 7 June parliamentary election, killing four people and wounding at least 200, the official said.

The *Radikal* newspaper quoted what it said was the man's mother saying he was a former student at Adiyaman university who had worked as a painter with his 25-year-old brother before going abroad.

"I don't know where he is now. I don't know if they joined ISIL (Islamic State), if they went for jihad," Semure Alagoz told the newspaper. They

are both good kids, they wouldn't harm anyone."

Two lawmakers from the HDP submitted separate parliamentary motions on Wednesday naming a 20-year old woman as a suspect, and asking why police had released her from custody last month.

The turmoil comes at a difficult time for Turkey, with a caretaker government in charge while the AKP seeks a junior coalition partner after losing its majority in the June election for the first time in more than a decade.

At least 51 people have been arrested in protests in Istanbul alone and police seized more than 200 petrol bombs and a rifle, the governor's office in Turkey's biggest city said.

There were also protests overnight in the capital Ankara, where demonstrators carried pictures of those killed in the Suruc attack as well as banners of the youth federation of which many of the victims were members.—*Reuters*

Saudi arms shipment arrives in Yemen's Aden airport

ADEN, 23 July — A Saudi military plane loaded with arms for fighters loyal to Yemen's deposed president landed at Aden airport on Wednesday, an airport official said, the first flight to reach the embattled port city in four months. Saudi-backed militiamen meanwhile exchanged heavy artillery fire with their Houthi foes in the northern approaches to Aden on Wednesday.

The militiamen said they were advancing toward Anad air base, Yemen's largest, 60 km (40 miles) north of Aden, and were close to linking up with other anti-Houthi fighters nearing

the facility from its northern end. The fighting and a near-blockade have pushed the humanitarian situation in Yemen to the brink of disaster but loyalist advances in Aden, scene of the heaviest combat, have opened it up to aid and guns.

"A Saudi military plane landed at Aden airport this afternoon carrying weapons and military assistance to the popular resistance forces, in the first flight there since 25 March," the airport official said.

Loyalist fighters backed by air strikes from a Saudi-led Arab alliance wrested Aden, Yemen's main port, from the dominant Houthi

group last week and Yemen's government in exile aims to turn Aden into its base to take back more territory from the Iran-allied group. The foreign intervention and war raging across the country have killed over 3,600 people. Last week's loyalist gains were heavily supported by Gulf Arab training, arms shipments and air strikes. Local fighters said 140 combat vehicles arrived from the Gulf on Wednesday. A United Nations chartered ship carrying 500,000 litres of fuel and other goods also berthed safely in Aden port on Wednesday, a World Food Programme spokeswoman said.—*Reuters*

Two car bombs explode in eastern Libyan city of Derna

BENGHAZI, (Libya) 23 July — Two car bombs exploded on Wednesday in Libya's eastern city of Derna, an Islamist hotspot, residents and a military source said. There was no immediate word on casualties.

The area around Derna,

located east of Benghazi, has seen heavy fighting in recent weeks between Islamic State militants and a rival Islamist group.

Islamic State fighters left the city last month but had taken up new positions outside Derna, residents

said. Islamic State has thrived in the North African oil producer since two rival governments began fighting for control, leaving a security vacuum, four years after the civil war that ended the rule of Muammar Gaddafi.

Reuters

Nineteen people drown in shipwreck on Nile River



Egyptians gather at the site of a shipwreck on the Nile River in the Warraq district of Giza, southwest of Cairo, Egypt, on 23 July, 2015. At least 19 people died on Wednesday in a shipwreck on Nile River in Cairo, capital of Egypt, according to the statement from the Egyptian Interior Ministry.—XINHUA

CAIRO, 23 July — At least 19 people died on Wednesday in a shipwreck on Nile River in Cairo, capital of Egypt, according to the statement from the Egyptian Interior Ministry.

The accident happened when a ferry carrying at least 30 people struck a barge and sank in the Warraq district

of Giza, southwest of Cairo, at late night, said Hossam Abdel Ghaffar, the spokesman of the Egyptian Health Ministry, in a TV speech.

The spokesman also said that 16 ambulances and two rescue boats have been dispatched to the site and the search for the missing ones is still underway. The

injured people have been sent to four hospitals nearby. Eyewitnesses at the site of the accident told *Xinhua* that rescue boats and divers are working to search for the missing ones. However, the poor illumination and crowded river bank made the rescue work more difficult.—*Xinhua*

15th China Youth Robot Competition held in China's Inner Mongolia



A student examines a robot during the 15th China Youth Robot Competition in Ordos, north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, on 22 July, 2015. Nearly 1,500 teenagers all over the country took part in the competition that kicked off on Wednesday.—XINHUA

New crew arrives at space station after two-month delay

CAPE CANAVERAL, 23 July — A Russian Soyuz capsule carrying three new crew for the *International Space Station* arrived at the orbital outpost on Wednesday after a two-month launch delay, a NASA TV broadcast showed.

Veteran Russian cosmonaut Oleg Kononenko and rookie astronauts Kjell Lindgren with NASA and Japan's Kimiya Yui blasted off aboard a Russian Soyuz rocket at 5:02 pm from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

They arrived less than six hours later to begin a five-month mission aboard the station, a \$100-billion laboratory that flies about 250 miles (400 km) above Earth.

The trio had been set to fly in May, but Russia delayed the mission after a botched launch of a similar Soyuz rocket on 28 April. That accident stranded a Progress cargo ship in an orbit too low to reach the station.

Nine days later, the capsule, loaded with three

tons of equipment and supplies, fell back into Earth's atmosphere and was incinerated.

Accident investigators determined that the Progress failed to separate properly from the Soyuz rocket's third-stage engine. The Soyuz returned to flight on 3 July, successfully launching a replacement load of cargo to the station.

"We're confident in the rocket ... we're all very excited to launch," Lindgren, 42, told a pre-launch news conference.

Two US companies that fly cargo to the station under contract with the US space agency also lost capsules after recent failed launches. Privately owned SpaceX and Orbital ATK remain grounded following accidents last month and in October 2014, respectively.

A fourth station resupply line is operated by Japan, which is scheduled to fly again in August." It's certainly no fun to see several of the cargo vehicles undergo mishaps," Lindgren said. "It underscores



The Soyuz TMA-17M spacecraft carrying the *International Space Station* (ISS) crew of Kjell Lindgren of the US, Oleg Kononenko of Russia and Kimiya Yui of Japan blasts off from the launch pad at the Baikonur cosmodrome, Kazakhstan on 23 July, 2015.—REUTERS

the difficulty of this industry and ... how unforgiving the space environment is."

The arrival of Lindgren, Kononenko, 51, and Yui, 45, returns the space station to a full six-member crew for the first time in six weeks. "We look forward to seeing them," US station flight engineer Scott Kelly said during an inflight interview on Tuesday.

Kelly and Russia's Mikhail Kornienko are par-

ticipating in the station's first year-long mission. Also aboard is veteran cosmonaut Gennady Padalka, the current station commander.

The Soyuz capsule arrived on Wednesday with just one pair of its power-producing solar arrays deployed. NASA mission commentator Kyle Herring said the glitch had no impact on the capsule's flight and docking.—Reuters

LG Display to build OLED plant; second-quarter profit beats estimates

SEOUL, 23 July — LG Display Co Ltd (034220.KS) said on Thursday it will invest nearly \$1 billion to build a fourth organic light-emitting diode (OLED) display factory, pinning its future firmly on the high-end next-generation technology.

The world's biggest maker of liquid crystal displays (LCD) later said April-June operating profit tripled on year, marginally exceeding analyst estimates. But it said overall panel shipments are likely to be flat in the third quarter from the second, and that it expects average panel prices to decline.

OLED investment could give the South Korean manufacturer a leg up against competition in markets as varied as television sets, smartphones and automotive devices.

The differentiation could be critical to long-term success as low-priced Chinese rivals boost LCD panel production.

"LG Display's investment will help pioneer future display technologies

such as foldable displays and large-size auto displays," the company said in a statement about its new plant, to be built in South Korea at a cost of 1.05 trillion won (\$900.67 million).

LG Display and Samsung Electronics Co Ltd (005930.KS) unit Samsung Display are the only firms in the industry capable of mass-producing OLED screens, which are physically more flexible and consume less power than current LCDs.

The firm said as early as last year that it aimed to add capacity for OLED screens for small and mid-sized devices as clients such as sister firm LG Electronics Inc (066570.KS) and Apple Inc (AAPL.O) increasingly use the screens on products like smartphones or smartwatches.

Its latest investment will begin in the third quarter, with the plant scheduled to start mass production of small and mid-sized OLED screens in the first half of 2017.

Monthly capacity will be double that of its current small and mid-sized OLED display line. In its earnings statement later on Thursday, LG Display said it would improve cost competitiveness in OLED by converting some large-LCD production capacity for OLED in the second half, and increase advertising to grow the market.

LG Display reported operating profit of 488 billion won for the second quarter, beating the 469 billion won average estimate of 31 analysts in a

Thomson Reuters I/B/E/S survey. Profit was buoyed by sales of high-margin screens for large TVs and premium mobile devices, the firm said. But revenue fell slightly short of analyst estimates as broadly weaker demand for information technology-related devices weighed on panel prices.

The specter of declining panel prices left LG Display shares ending 1.5 percent lower after the earnings release, compared with a 0.02 percent rise in the broader market .KS11.

Reuters



A customer browses LG Electronics' television sets, which are made with LG Display flat screens, at its store in Seoul, South Korea, on 23 July, 2015.

REUTERS

Astronomers get clearest ever look inside earliest galaxies in Chile

SANTIAGO, 23 July — A team of international astronomers has observed for the first time how galaxies were formed in the early days of the universe in Chile, thanks to the ALMA telescope of the European Southern Observatory (ESO). ALMA, the largest telescope array in the world, had been focusing on detecting the earliest galaxies emerging after the Big Bang, of which little was known until now.

According to ESO, the astronomers led by Roberto Maiolino, from the University of Cambridge, changed their approach by not looking for the light from stars but focusing on the faint glow of ionized carbon, emitted from gas clouds within which stars form. This allowed the astronomers to study the relation between newly created stars and the clumps that would go on to become the first galaxies.

"This is the most distant detection ever of this kind of emission from a normal galaxy, seen less than 1 billion years after the Big Bang. It gives us the opportunity to watch the build-up of the first galaxies," said Andrea Ferrara, co-author of an article about the discovery published in *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*.

"For the first time, we are seeing early galaxies not merely as tiny blobs, but as objects with internal structure," he added. The astronomers focused on finding galaxies that were inconspicuous and out of the ordinary, which would go on to "reionize the universe" and eventually gave rise to most of the galaxies we see today.

In this search, ALMA obtained a thin but clear signal of glowing carbon from a galaxy named BDF3299 that could be a typical example of galaxies responsible for reionization of the universe. However, the glow was not coming from the center of the galaxy, but from one of its sides.

According to the ESO team, this could be due to "central clouds being disrupted by the harsh environment created by the newly formed stars, both from their intense radiation and the effects of supernova explosions, while the carbon glow was tracing fresh cold gas being accreted from the intergalactic medium." —Xinhua

Call for media publishers to enter data in Register of Media



The Serbian Ministry of Culture and Information called on media publishers to fulfil their legal obligation and enter the missing data in the Register of Public Media in the next three weeks.

TANJUG

BELGRADE, 23 July — The Serbian Ministry of Culture and Information called on media publishers to fulfil their legal obligation and enter the missing data in the Register of Public Media in the next three weeks.

All media publishers entered into the Register of Public Media have the obligation to enter the lacking data in the Register of Public Media by 13 August, in keeping with the Law on Public Information, the Ministry released on Wednesday.

The media register is kept in the Business Register Agency and the entry began on 13

February.

Entry of all data into the Register of Public Media as envisaged in the law is important for both the public and the media because it will allow a transparent insight into the media ownership structure, the Ministry released.

On the other hand, this is a key prerequisite for the media for applying for government assistance and project co-funding for media content that protects and promotes public interests in the future, on all government levels, the release states.

Tanjug

Near-naked foreigners dispersed by Beijing police

BEIJING, 23 July — Beijing police dispersed a group of scantily-clad foreign men who were causing a stir in downtown Beijing on Wednesday.

The Beijing public security bureau said on Thursday that it had received reports at around noon on Wednesday that dozens of foreign men wearing only underpants had appeared in the up-market shopping district

of Sanlitun, attracting many onlookers. The bureau said their actions disturbed public order.

Hired by a snack store for a promotional activity, the muscular men wore underpants and cloaks like the warriors in the movie “300”. Photos of them have gone viral online. One of them shows two men being pressed onto the ground by police officers.—Xinhua

US presidential hopeful Trump rivals Clinton in speech fees

NEW YORK, 23 July — Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump may not have as much political experience as Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton, but he does rival her in one area: the amount he charges for a speech.

The flamboyant real estate magnate earned on average \$250,000 per speech in the past year, according to his personal financial statement released on Wednesday by the Federal Electoral Commission.

That number is on a par with Clinton, who charged an average of \$235,000 per address, according to her own FEC financial statement filed several weeks ago.

But the former first lady made many more speeches than Trump and raked in almost \$12 million from 51 speeches in a year. The figure does not include speaking fees that went directly to her family’s Clinton Foundation charity.

Trump’s public speaking engagements earned him a total of \$1.75 million and he charges anywhere between \$50,000 to \$450,000 per talk.

The TV show host received \$450,000 each for three speeches to a multi-level marketing company called ACN, according to his filing.

That pales in comparison to speeches he made at real estate seminars in 2006



US Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump arrives to speak at the Family Leadership Summit in Ames, Iowa, United States on 18 July, 2015.

REUTERS

and 2007 that netted \$1.5 million each, which *Forbes* reported at the time was the highest speaking fee ever.

Trump has caused con-

troversy with comments about Mexican immigrants and Senator John McCain’s war record as he campaigns for the November 2016 presidential election.

His FEC document shows he has stakes in more than 500 enterprises from New York to China to Qatar. He said last week his net worth stands at more than \$10 billion but *Forbes* magazine, which closely tracks his finances, says Trump has hugely exaggerated the number, putting it at \$4 billion.

Clinton has been criticized for giving lucrative speeches to major companies after she resigned as secretary of state in 2013.

Reuters

Jazz world finds prodigy pianist from Indonesia

NEW YORK, 23 July — A young Indonesian pianist who just turned 12 is gaining plaudits from jazz aficionados around the world, impressing them with his playing and arranging skills.

Joey Alexander, from Bali, has been hailed by US media outlets such as *Downbeat* magazine and *The New York Times* as a “prodigy” and “sensation.” His debut CD “My Favourite Things” was just released in Japan on Wednesday.

He began tinkling the ivories at age 6, playing melodies he learned by ear. The first tune he learned by heart was Thelonius Monk’s complex composition “Well, You Needn’t.”

Joey’s parents recognized his talent as a pianist and the family soon moved to Jakarta. When he was 8,

Joey had a chance to play in front of jazz legend Herbie Hancock during his visit to Jakarta as a UNESCO goodwill ambassador. Joey says Hancock’s strong words of encouragement after his performance, calling on him to believe in his talent, eventually led to his decision to turn professional.

In 2013, Joey won a piano improvisation contest in Ukraine. The following year, he moved to New York with his family and made his debut in the United States in May that year, appearing in a gala concert at the Lincoln Centre and playing Monk’s jazz standard “Round Midnight.” He also played the same tune at the Apollo Theater in Harlem. On both occasions, the young pianist was met with a standing ovation.

His debut album con-

sists of nine tunes including John Coltrane’s “Giant Steps.” (The Japan version contains one bonus track.) For the recording, he was joined by top-notch musicians such as bassist Larry Grenadier and drummer Ulysses Owens Jr “I selected the tunes and did all the arrangements,” Joey said in an interview.

While he has only limited experiences of playing with a band, Joey seems to enjoy doing it. “It’s fun to share the thoughts and trust each other to play,” he said, adding that one of his dreams is playing with great musicians such as Christian McBride on bass and Jack DeJohnette on drums.

“I think jazz is a language with no border. I want to be a musician forever,” he said.

Kyodo News



Photo taken on 11 June, 2015, in New York shows Joey Alexander, a 12-year-old pianist hailing from Bali, Indonesia. He is gaining plaudits from jazz aficionados around the world. Now based in New York, the young jazz pianist released his debut CD “My Favourite Things” in Japan on 22 July.—KYODO NEWS

Japan to detach critical info from Internet to counter cyberattacks

TOKYO, 23 July — The Japanese government plans to isolate its systems handling critical information from the Internet to protect data from cyberattacks, following an attack in May that led to a massive personal data leak from the country’s pension service, government sources said on Thursday.

The latest measure will be included in a draft strategy to bolster Japan’s defences against cyberattacks, which is set to be formulated when a meeting of the government headquarters for cybersecurity

strategies is convened next month at the prime minister’s office.

The government is stepping up efforts to improve computer security following a rise in the number of reported cyberattacks on government organizations to 264 in fiscal 2014, double the figure in the previous year, the sources said.

Reports of cases involving the opening of infected e-mail attachments tripled in fiscal 2014 from the year before, they said.

An e-mail attachment infected a computer at the

Japan Pension Service, leading to the leaking of names and ID numbers of about 1.25 million people.

“The government is seeking to drastically strengthen its cybersecurity policy so that the public will feel safe,” said Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga at Thursday’s meeting of the headquarters for cybersecurity that he heads.

The draft of the updated cybersecurity strategy will call for cyber training related to cloud computing at government agencies that makes use of text-

books compiled through joint efforts by industry, government and academia.

The government is also eyeing expanded monitoring by the National Center of Incident Readiness and Strategy for Cybersecurity, a key organization to counter cyberattacks against Japan that was newly established in January.

The pension service said after the massive data leak that it had cut Internet access for all of its computers, but an employee continued to receive and send e-mails for a week afterward.—Kyodo News

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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.

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

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

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

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

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WEATHER REPORT

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 24th July, 2015: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway and Taninthayi Regions and Kayah State, fairly widespread in Shan, Chin and Kayin States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavy falls in Upper Sagaing and Mandalay Regions, Kachin and Rakhine States. Degree of certainty is (100%).
STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough sea are likely at times Deltaic off and along Rakhine Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35 - 40) m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters.

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Koran fragments found in UK library are among world's oldest, says university

LONDON, 23 July — Fragments of a Koran manuscript found in a British university library are from one of the world's oldest surviving copies of the Islamic text, and may even have been written by someone who knew Prophet Mohammad, researchers said on Wednesday.

Radiocarbon dating indicated that the parchment folios held by the University of Birmingham in central England were at least 1,370 years old, which would make them one of the earliest written forms of the Islamic holy book in existence.

"They could well take us back to within a few years of the actual founding of Islam," said David Thomas, Professor of Christianity and Islam at the university.

Researchers said the manuscript consisted of two parchment leaves and contained parts of Suras (chapters) 18 to 20, and was written with ink in an early form of Arabic script known as Hijazi.

The university said for years it had been misbound

with leaves of a similar Koran manuscript which dated from the late seventh century.

The radiocarbon dating, said to have a 95.4 percent accuracy, found the parchment dated from between 568 and 645. Mohammad is believed to have lived between 570 and 632.

"(These fragments) give us glimpses into potentially how something which we now call the Koran might have been used in this early period and how it might have been recorded," said Sajjad Rizvi, Director of the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies at the University of Exeter.

Thomas said the tests carried out on the parchment of the folios strongly suggested the animal from which it was taken was alive during the lifetime of the Prophet Mohammad or shortly afterwards.

"The person who actually wrote it may well have known the Prophet Mohammad. He would have seen him probably, he would maybe have heard him preach. He may have known him personally,"

Thomas told BBC TV.

The manuscript was part of the university's collection of 3,000 Middle Eastern documents which was acquired in the 1920s by Alphonse Mingana, a Chaldean priest born near Mosul in Iraq.

His trips to acquire the manuscripts were funded by philanthropist Edward Cadbury, whose family made their fortune in chocolate, to raise the status of Birmingham as an intellectual centre for religious studies.

"The parts of the Ko-

ran that are contained in those fragments are very similar indeed to the Koran as we have it today," Thomas said. "So this tends to support the view that the Koran that we now have is more or less very close indeed to the Koran as it was brought together in the early years of Islam."

Muslim scholars said the discovery, along with similar recent finds and studies in Europe, would help academics piece together the development of the manuscript into its modern form.

"The discovery of the written Koran dating back to the time of Mohammad may serve as an opportunity to make us reconsider the scholarly paradigm that Islamic culture is more oral-aural rather than visual," said Hatsuki Aishima, a lecturer in Modern Islam at the University of Manchester.

The University of Birmingham said it would put the manuscript on public display in October, and Muhammad Afzal, chairman of Birmingham Central Mosque, said he expected it to attract people from all over Britain.

pected it to attract people from all over Britain.

"When I saw these pages I was very moved. There were tears of joy and emotion in my eyes," he told the BBC.

Whilst some manuscripts are major attractions elsewhere in the world, their appeal to visitors is determined more by the status of the person who is understood to have recorded them.

"The problem with this particular fragment is that we don't actually know where it comes from," Rizvi said.

However, he said that the fragments would be studied worldwide if, in line with the recent trend for such finds, digital images were published on the internet, and that there was potential for other significant discoveries in Britain.

"The catalogues of which were in collections in Britain are not complete in most cases. It's quite possible we might find some further things - even in the British Library itself."

Reuters



A fragment of a Koran manuscript is photographed in the library at the University of Birmingham in Britain on 22 July, 2015.
REUTERS

Chases and explosions as Bond returns in 'Spectre' trailer

LONDON, 23 July — The first full trailer for the upcoming James Bond film "Spectre" was released on Wednesday, promising the usual action-packed explosions, fast-paced chases and dealings with sinister characters.

Daniel Craig reprises his role as secret agent 007 for the fourth time in the movie directed by Academy Award winner Sam Mendes and scheduled for release later this year.

Mendes also directed the last Bond film "Skyfall", which grossed \$1.1 billion at box offices worldwide.

The two and a half minute trailer starts with a cool and collected Bond being questioned by M, portrayed by Ralph Fiennes, over a rogue mission to Mexico City.

In all the character-



Actors Daniel Craig (R) and Monica Bellucci pose during a photo call for the new James Bond film "Spectre" in downtown Rome, on 18 Feb. 2015.—REUTERS

istics of a Bond film, action-packed scenes soon follow as the secret agent uncovers the shady Spectre organization and its dark link to villain Franz Oberhauser, played by Oscar winner Christoph Waltz.

"It was me, James, the author of all your pain," Oberhauser can be seen teasing Bond in the clip.

British actress Naomie Harris plays Miss Moneypenny while Italian actress Monica Bellucci and

French actress Lea Seydoux also have roles.

"Spectre", the 24th James Bond film, is scheduled for release in UK cinemas on 26 October and in the United States on 6 November.—Reuters

Charlize Theron confronts family murder in 'Dark Places' role

LOS ANGELES, 23 July — A film adaptation of best-selling author Gillian Flynn's "Dark Places" stars Academy Award winner Charlize Theron as a woman revisiting a brutal family murder. Theron plays Libby who, 25 years after her mother, played by "Mad Men" actress Christina Hendricks, and sisters were brutally killed, confronts the tragic events of that night, investigating whether her jailed brother Ben, portrayed by Corey Stoll, was indeed responsible. The film also stars "X-Men" actor Nicholas Hoult and "Kick-Ass" actress Chloe Grace Moretz.

"It is a huge ensemble cast and everybody has really fleshed out bony characters," Theron said at the film's Los Angeles premiere on Tuesday night.

"The story is only as

good as them and they get to tell it. I think that's what made it something really appealing to me, the idea of going to work with all these characters and telling this story." Theron, last seen in cinemas in "Mad Max: Fury Road", is also a producer of the film directed by Gilles Paquet-Brenner.

"I love the movie making process so whether I'm producing or not, I'm always on set. I don't like being in a trailer (or) ... isolated in a little room," she said of her producing role.

"I'm fascinated by camera equipment and the crew that makes it happen."

The movie follows the 2014 film adaptation of Flynn's best-selling novel "Gone Girl", which starred Ben Affleck and Rosamund Pike. "Dark Places" hits US cinemas on 7 August.—Reuters

Schindler's List producer presents his Oscar to Yad Vashem memorial

Croatian Auschwitz survivor Branko Lustig and his wife Mirjana stand next to his Academy Award during a ceremony at Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem on 22 July, 2015.—REUTERS



JERUSALEM, 23 July — Auschwitz survivor Branko Lustig, one of the producers of Schindler's List, presented his Academy Award to Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial on Wednesday, saying it had found its rightful resting place.

Lustig, 83 from Croatia, worked

with director Steven Spielberg on the 1993 film that won seven Oscars. It recounts the tale of German industrialist Oskar Schindler's efforts to save Jews from Nazi death squads in World War Two.

"I'm very honored, I feel this is a good (resting place) for the Oscar," Lustig told Reuters before the ceremony in Jerusalem, also attended by

Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic.

Lustig said he did not feel he was separating from one of his two Academy Awards — the other was as producer of "Gladiator". "I'm not parting with it, I am leaving it to the nation, for generations to come... All Yad Vashem's visitors will see it, at my home there is only my wife and my daughter," he said.

Yad Vashem's chairman, Avner Shalev, said Lustig's donation was added proof that the memorial site was "a natural center for commemoration and a universal symbol."

"His decision to separate himself from the award which means so much to a producer, to a creator, and to send it to Yad Vashem for eternity is very meaningful," Shalev said.—Reuters

South Korean films bloom in Chinese market

BEIJING, 23 July — Amid the rising boom of South Korean filmmakers tapping the Chinese market, the two countries' co-production list has added a new blockbuster.

Honeymoon Enemy, overseen by South Korean veteran director Kwak Jae-young (My Sassy Girl), will hit the Chinese mainland theaters in September, it was announced on Monday. The 40-million-yuan (\$6.4 million) flick stars Chinese A-list actress Zhang Yuqi and Taiwan actor Wallace Huo, a heartthrob for his die-for-love roles in several hit fantasy TV series.

Another highlight of the cast is South Korean supermodel-turned-actor Kwon Sang-woo, who shot to fame thanks to the 2003 hit rom-com My Tutor Friend. The tale features a blind-dating site's senior consultant relying on her professional knowledge to win her true love from a competitive, rich rival. Long known for picturesque scenes and touching details, South Korean romance movies and TV series have a wide market in China. Kwon, who has focused on the mainland market since 2012, says that Chinese viewers' swelling demand is very "inspiring" and praises Chinese movies.

"Compared to Hollywood blockbusters, South Korean movies seem more like Chinese titles as our two countries have close connections in culture," he told domestic media in an earlier interview.—Xinhua



Actor Wallace Huo



Model Cara Delevingne debuts first major role in 'Paper Towns'

NEW YORK, 23 July — British model Cara Delevingne takes up her first major movie role in "Paper Towns", stepping off the catwalk and onto the silver screen in the film adaptation of American author John Green's novel about young love and adventure.

The 22-year old, who made her acting debut in the 2012 film adaptation of "Anna Karenina", plays Margo in the movie, her neighbor Quentin's (Nat Wolff) longtime crush.

The pair embark on a night escapade before Margo disappears and Quentin goes on a mission to find her.

"I've wanted to act ever since I was a child. It's one of my biggest dreams," Delevingne said at the film's premiere in New York on Tuesday night. "Living your dream is very emotional, I'm very happy."

The Burberry and Chanel model has turned her attention to acting with several films in the works including the much-anticipated "Batman" spin-off "Suicide Squad", set for release next year.

"I work really hard, I don't want anyone to ever think that this is a fluke or I got this because of my social media presence," Delevingne, who has 15.8 million followers on Instagram, said of her acting career. "Paper Towns" hits US cinemas on Friday. —Reuters

GENERAL

Chelsea fans banned after racist incident on Paris Metro

LONDON, 23 July — Four Chelsea fans who refused to allow a black man onto the Paris Metro were banned on Wednesday from attending football matches for between three and five years.

The incident occurred in February when Chelsea fans were in the French capital to watch the Champions League match against Paris St Germain.

Video footage showed Chelsea fans refusing to allow Souleymane Sylla, a black Frenchman, from boarding the train amid chants of “We’re racist and that’s the way we like it”.

Richard Barklie, from Carrickfergus, Northern Ireland, Josh Parsons and William Simpson, both from Surrey, were each banned for five years at Thames Magistrates’ Court, the Metropolitan Police said.

Jordan Munday, from



Sidcup in Kent, was banned for three years. All four had denied racist behaviour.

Police Chief Superintendent Colin Morgan said in a statement: “Violence and racism have no place in football and we will continue to put offenders before the courts as part of our efforts to make football a safer environment for every-

one.” Chelsea followed suit by banning the four for life from buying tickets from them or attending games at their Stamford Bridge stadium.

Another individual, Dean Callis, was also handed a lifetime ticket ban by the west London club.

“The club will always reserve the right to decide

who purchases tickets to attend Chelsea matches, and the behaviour of these five individuals was abhorrent, against all of the club’s values and falls way below the standards the club expects of supporters attending our games,” they said in a statement on their website (www.chelseafc.com).—Reuters

Oregon salmon trucked north to stem die-off in warm waters

PORTLAND, (Ore), 23 July — Federal officials in Oregon have been trucking hatchery salmon more than a hundred miles (160 km) north to another hatchery in Washington state throughout July to preserve fish that had been dying off by the thousands in an unseasonably warm river.

Water that would rarely top 70 degrees Fahrenheit (21 Celsius) at this time of year in the Warm Springs River has reached 76 (24.4 Celsius), hot enough to weaken juvenile spring salmon immune systems, US Fish and Wildlife Service fisheries supervisor Rich Johnson told Reuters on Wednesday.

About 2,000 of the fish

were dying every day before they were relocated, he said. “If the weather continues warm, there could be more problems for fish,” Johnson said, noting that river temperatures across the region spiked a full month earlier than usual this year.

The effort to save Warm Springs National Fish Hatchery’s 160,000 remaining baby fish — plus 680 adults — comes as state wildlife officials in both Oregon and Washington have imposed rare fishing restrictions. High temperatures have been blamed for hundreds of thousands of wild and hatchery fish deaths throughout the US Pacific Northwest.

At central Oregon’s

Rock Creek Hatchery, a mechanical error that halted water flow was made worse by high water temperatures in June, killing 400,000 pre-smolt spring Chinook salmon.

Washington and Oregon state wildlife officials have reported hundreds of wild fish found dead along riverbanks in both states over the past month as well. The salmon at Warm Springs National Fish Hatchery were particularly vulnerable because of their location east of the Cascade Mountains, Johnson said.

Despite its name, there are no warm springs nearby, but low snowpack on nearby Mount Hood has left the hatchery with little

of the chilling runoff that would normally cool its waters, he said. After rejecting a proposal to chill the water at Warm Springs as too expensive, officials opted instead to transport the fish to Little White Salmon National Fish Hatchery in Washington, located on the much cooler Columbia River, Johnson said.

“We will hold these little fish at little White Salmon until around October, when the temperatures cool, then we will move them back to Warm Springs to let them finish maturing there,” he said. Once the salmon mature enough, they are tagged and released into the wild.

Reuters

West Ham sign Argentine youth international on loan

LONDON, 23 July — West Ham United have signed Argentine youth international Manuel Lanzini on loan from United Arab Emirates side Al Jazira with an option to make the deal permanent, the Premier League club said on Wednesday.

The 22-year-old midfielder, who came through the youth system at famed Argentine club River Plate, has been capped four times at under-20 level.

“This is very emotional because it is one of the best teams I have ever signed for,” he said on the club website. “It is a very important step for my career and for my future.”

Lanzini becomes West Ham’s seventh close-season signing following the arrivals of Dimitri Payet, Angelo Ogbonna, Pedro Obiang, Carl Jenkinson, Stephen Hendrie and Darren Randolph.

Reuters



River Plate’s Manuel Lanzini (L) dribbles past Boca Juniors’ Fernando Gago during their Argentine First Division soccer match in Buenos Aires on 30 March, 2014. — REUTERS

mitv Myanmar International

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MRTV News Channel in Brief

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Djokovic, Williams head elite fields for US Open

NEW YORK, 23 July — Wimbledon champions and world number ones Novak Djokovic and Serena Williams head the field for the men's and women's events at this year's US Open, the United States Tennis Association announced on Wednesday.

Djokovic, who has reached the US Open final five times and won the title in 2011, tops an elite list that includes other former champions in Roger Federer (2004-08), Rafa Nadal (2010, 2013), Andy Murray (2012) and last year's winner Marin Cilic.

Serbian Djokovic will be aiming to land his third grand slam crown this year, having triumphed at the Australian Open in February before beating Federer in four sets in the Wimbledon final earlier this month.

The US Open will be played from 31 August to 13 September at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Centre in Flushing, New York.

Serena Williams will command much of the spotlight over that fortnight as she bids to become only the third woman to win the "calendar year" grand slam in the professional era.

Aged 33, she outclassed Spaniard Garbine Muguruza 6-4, 6-4 in the Wimbledon final earlier this month.

It was a sixth Wimbledon

title and a 21st grand slam crown for Williams and, unless she suffers a dip in form, it seems unlikely anyone can stop her march into the history books at Flushing Meadows where she is unbeaten since 2011.

She won her sixth US Open last year, and has since landed the Australian Open, French Open and Wimbledon titles this season. Joining Williams will be Russian world number two Maria Sharapova, the 2006 US Open champion; third-ranked Simona Halep of Romania and fourth-ranked Czech Petra Kvitová, the 2011 and 2014 Wimbledon champion.

Reuters



Novak Djokovic of Serbia shows off the trophy after winning his Men's Singles Final match against Roger Federer of Switzerland at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London, on 12 July, 2015.—REUTERS

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Bayern confirm deal to sign Juventus midfielder Vidal



Chile's Arturo Vidal celebrates after scoring his penalty kick during a shootout against Argentina in the Copa America 2015 final soccer match at the National Stadium in Santiago, Chile, on 4 July, 2015.—REUTERS

BERLIN, 23 July — Bayern Munich have confirmed they have reached an agreement with Italy's Juventus to sign Chile international Arturo Vidal, the German club's CEO Karl Heinz Rummenigge said on Thursday.

"I can confirm that we have with both parties, Juventus and the player, reached an agreement. What is missing is the medical and the signature of the contract," Rummenigge told reporters on Thursday during the team's trip to China.—Reuters

Liverpool sign striker Benteke from Villa

LONDON, 23 July — Liverpool wrapped up a deal for Christian Benteke on Wednesday, luring the targetman to Anfield on a long-term contract having finally struck a deal to prise the Belgian powerhouse away from Aston Villa.

"The 24-year-old put pen to paper on a long-term contract with the Reds today after successfully completing a medical in London," Liverpool said on their website (www.liverpoolfc.com), bringing to a close several weeks of negotiations between the clubs.

British media reported last week that the Merseysiders had finally agreed to meet a 32.5 million pounds (\$50.75 million) release clause in the striker's contract, having previously sought and failed to persuade the Midlands club to reduce

their asking price.

Benteke becomes Liverpool's seventh close-season signing and represents the latest effort by manager Brendan Rodgers to recruit some front-line firepower after last season's struggles in front of goal.

The forward joins Brazil international Roberto Firmino, fellow Belgian Divock Origi and England Under-21 striker Danny Ings, who have all been brought to Anfield with the intention of reinvigorating Liverpool's attack.

Benteke's bullish qualities are likely to add an extra dimension to a Liverpool front-line who looked lightweight last season, finding the net just 52 times in the Premier League after plundering 101 in the previous campaign.

Reuters

Prince Ali tells Blatter to stay away from FIFA reform process

ZURICH, 23 July — Prince Ali bin Al Hussein of Jordan, who failed in an attempt to replace Sepp Blatter as FIFA president in May, says Blatter should not be handling the reform process at world football's scandal-hit governing body and that the task should be left to his successor.

In a statement issued on



Prince Ali bin Al Hussein of Jordan, FIFA presidential candidate, speaks before the election process at the 65th FIFA Congress in Zurich, Switzerland, on 29 May, 2015.—REUTERS

Wednesday, Prince Ali, who withdrew from May's FIFA presidential election after winning 73 votes to Blatter's 133 in the first round of voting, said he feared Blatter, who has ruled the body since 1998, was trying to rush through reforms before he leaves office on 26 February.

Blatter announced he would be stepping down from the presidency only days after his reelection as a corruption scandal led to mounting criticism of his leadership. "We need a clear process, clear timelines, and a very clear remit. And all this should belong to the new president," said Prince Ali, who has yet to declare whether he will run again in February's vote.

"Although reforms are welcome and much needed, they are the mandate of the new president, not the old one.

"It is the role of the new president to put in place the necessary systems to implement the changes that FIFA so desperately needs, not a Task Force trying to rush this through in less than 60 days," he added.

FIFA was thrown into turmoil in May when nine people who were or had been football officials, most of whom had held

positions in FIFA, and five sports marketing or broadcasting executives, were indicted in the United States on bribery, money laundering and wire fraud charges.

On Monday, Blatter announced FIFA was setting up a task force made up of 10 members of FIFA's six continental confederations and a 'neutral chairman'.

Sources have told Reuters that Swiss businessman Domenico Scala, who holds two other positions in FIFA, has been approached by at least three confederation heads to lead the process.

FIFA has asked for recommendations from the task force to be delivered by the next executive committee meeting in late September, a schedule that Prince Ali believes is too brief.

"How can this Task Force address change in any meaningful way within such a short timeline? There can be no quick fix to issues that are clearly structural," he said, adding that the set-up of the task force was wrong.

"Any Task Force that really will have the clout to bring about such vital reform should be a totally independent body, not from within the governance structure of FIFA."—Reuters

Jamaicans upset US in Gold Cup semi-finals

ATLANTA, (Georgia), 23 July — Darren Mattocks and Giles Barnes scored first-half goals to propel Jamaica to an upset 2-1 victory over the United States in the CONCACAF Gold Cup semi-finals in Atlanta on Wednesday.

The victory ensured Jamaica became the first Caribbean team to reach the Gold Cup Final since its inception in 1991.

They will face the winner of the other semi-final later on

Wednesday between Mexico and Panama.

The 2013 champion Americans had reached five successive Gold Cup finals and were coming off a 6-0 thrashing of Cuba in the quarter-finals.

Mattocks, who was suspended for his team's quarter-final win against Haiti last week, struck in the 31st minute with a header before Barnes scored from a free-kick five minutes later.

The US had made defensive

changes entering the match, as John Brooks returned from suspension and replaced Omar Gonzalez while Brad Evans replaced Timmy Chandler, but they did not pan out.

American captain Michael Bradley helped claw the home side back with a goal in the 48th minute.

The US, however, could not find the equalizer despite pressuring Jamaica goalkeeper Ryan Thompson for much of the second half.—Reuters

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www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
www.facebook.com/globalnewlightofmyanmar
R/489 Printed and published at the Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at No. 150, Nga Htat Kye Pagoda Road, Baha Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light of Myanmar Daily.