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Gov't prepares to issue citizenship cards to migrant workers in Thailand

PHOTO: REUTERS

Migrant workers in Thailand are urged to cooperate with volunteers in conducting a survey to issue citizenship cards to them.

By *Ko Moe*

YANGON, 28 July — Myanmar will begin a survey of its citizens in Thailand in order to issue national citizenship scrutiny cards to migrant workers with temporary Thai residency, the Labour, Employment and Social Security Ministry said Tuesday.

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WEATHER NEWS

Heavy rainfall, strong winds, flash floods across country: forecast

YANGON, 28 July— A depression over northeast Bay of Bengal slightly moved to southwards and is still persisting, according to the observation of the Meteorology and Hydrology Department Tuesday.

The depression is currently centered at about 130 miles northwest of Maungdaw and 170 miles northwest of Sittwe, the weather bureau said.

Monsoon is strong to vigorous in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal, according to the announcement.

(See page 9)

China repatriates Myanmar illegal migrant workers

NAY PYI TAW, 28 July — Chinese officials released and handed over a total of 205 Myanmar nationals who were detained in China for illegal migration and working in Shandong Province and Jiangxu Province.

U Khin Maung Oo, the officer of Muse District Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force and U Win Hlaing, the deputy District Immigration Officer, accepted the immigrants who from Chin State, Sagaing region, Magway region and Kachin state on 10 June at 19:00 hours upon request from Myanmar side.

The release came about after the Ministry of Foreign Affairs discussed with Chinese authorities due to the message of the speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw to President U Thein Sein at the request of Sagaing region's parliamentary representative.—*MNA*

Livestock, fisheries body urges parties to explain policy stances ahead of election

By *Ye Myint*

YANGON, 28 July — The Myanmar Fisheries Federation on Tuesday urged the country's two major political parties—the Union Solidarity and Development Party and the National League for Democracy—to unveil their election policies for development of the livestock and fisheries sectors.

The peak body for the country's fisheries and livestock producers will urge its members and affiliated associations to vote for the party most committed to reviving the sectors, which are at their lowest point in the past eight years, MFF general secretary U Win Kyaing said.

According to the MFF, the value of this year's marine export is estimated to be U.S.$250 million below the peak year when the sector earned more than $650 million. Last year yielded only$420 million, down roughly $100 million from the preceding 12 months.

Despite the lifting of western sanctions and a 10-percent tax for fishery exports, as well as the granting of access to the EU's generalized system of preferences (GSP), the sector had been unable to boost earnings, the MFF general secretary said, blaminga lack of support and encouragement from the government.

(See page 9)

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visits Indian military facilities

Nay Pyi Taw, 28 July — Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, viewed Indian military facilities Monday during his visit to the neighbouring country.

The senior general and party viewed aircraft at India Naval Aviation Squadron (INS Hansa) and a submarine of Indian Armed Forces at Goa Port.

They also visited Goa Shipyard Limited's shipyard built as Estaleiros Navais de Goa by the Portuguese government in 1957.

The senior general and party left Goa for Pune where they were seen off by Fleet Officer Rear Admiral Ravneet Singh of Goa Commanding Area and wife.

While in Pune, the senior general and party visited Tata Motors Limited attending a dinner that evening hosted by the company's Executive Director Mr Ravi Pisharody.—*Myawady*

***Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visits Submarine of Indian Armed Forces.*—Myawady**

Nomination for Hluttaw candidates continues

Nay Pyi Taw, 28 July — Fifteen candidates for Pyithu Hluttaw, 2 candidates for Amyotha Hluttaw, 28 candidates for state/region Hluttaws and one candidate for state/region ethnic affairs submitted their nomination for 2015 General Election on Tuesday.

From 20 to 28 July, a total of 114 candidates including 31 for Pyithu Hluttaw, 12 for Amyotha Hluttaw, 58 for state/region Hluttaws and 13 for ethnic affairs constituencies.

They represent 14 political parties while 22 of them are individual candidates. Detailed nomination process is available at www.uecmyanmar.org.

MNA

CLMV tourism ministers meet in Nay Pyi Taw

***Ministers join hands at CLMV Tourism Ministers Meeting.*—MNA**

Nay Pyi Taw, 28 July — The third meeting of tourism ministers from CLMV countries was held at the Royal Ace Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday afternoon.

Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Htay Aung chaired the meeting and made an opening speech.

After the meeting, CLMV countries issued a joint statement on cooperation in regional tourism. The meeting aims to turn CLVM tour destination into a single international destination.

The senior tourism officials meeting was also held in Nay Pyi Taw in the morning. Present were senior tourism officials from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam.—*MNA*

BTMU, DICA to promote Japanese investment in Myanmar together

***Director-General U Aung Naing Oo shakes hands with Mr Yasushi Itagaki, BTMU General Manager of Global Planning at signing MoU.*—BTMU**

Tokyo, 28 July — The Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ Ltd signed a memorandum of understanding Tuesday with Myanmar's Directorate of Investment and Company Administration to collaboratively promote Japanese investment in Myanmar.

Mr Yasushi Itagaki, BTMU General Manager of Global Planning and U Aung Naing Oo, Director General of the DICA, signed the agreement in Tokyo.

Under the agreement, BTMU will collaborate with DICA to promote foreign direct investment and provide stronger support to its customers exploring the possibility of investing in, or expanding into, Myanmar, according to a BTMU press release.

BTMU held its first Business Matching event for Japanese, Thai and Myanmar companies on 22 July in Yangon, attracting more than 20 Japanese firms seeking to invest in Myanmar.

Thirteen Myanmar companies and three from Thailand also attended the event, which saw some 100 meetings arranged between participating firms, according to the organizer.

The Japanese companies represented diverse business sectors including food, consumer products, media, chemical products and construction. The first business matching fair in Yangon followed a Myanmar investment seminar which attracted about 1,000 businesses last month in Japan. BTMU opened its Yangon Branch three months ago, partnering with Myanmar-owned CB Bank, which has 120 branches across the country.— *GNLM*

Fifty-eight members of Kyaw Thet-Saw San Aung group return to legal fold

Nay Pyi Taw, 28 July— Understanding the correct attitudes of the government and the Tatmadaw, members of armed groups led by Kyaw Thet and Saw San Aung have been returning to the legal fold recently.

Fifty-eight members of them led by Saw Bi Kyi returned to the legal fold at a BGF troop in Kyain-seikkyi Township Tuesday afternoon together with 45 assorted weapons, 67 bombs, 2,300 round of ammunition, 79 magazines, 3 landmines and one grenade.

Those who returned to the legal fold were received warmly and provided with necessary assistance.—*Myawady*

President U Thein Sein meets former Prime Minister of Australia Kevin Rudd

NAY PYI TAW, 28 July — President U Thein Sein on Tuesday received a delegation led by Former Prime Minister of Australia Mr Kevin Rudd at the Presidential Palace to discuss Myanmar's ongoing reforms.

At the meeting, U Thein Sein and Mr Rudd, now President of the US-based Asia Society Policy Institute (ASPI), discussed arrangements for the upcoming general election, which marks the next phase in the country's transition to democracy. The talks covered security arrangements for the pre-election, election and post-election periods.

Also present at the call were Union ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko and U Soe Thane, Deputy Minister U Tin Oo Lwin and officials.—*MNA*

***President U Thein Sein poses for documentary photo with Mr Kevin Rudd, President of US-based Asia Society Policy Institute and party.*—MNA**

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham addresses National Health Forum

NAY PYI TAW, 28 July —Myanmar is on target to meet the United Nations' millennium development goals, but there are still many challenges ahead, Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham said Tuesday at the National Health Forum in Nay Pyi Taw.

Present at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-2 were union ministers, deputy ministers, Hluttaw representatives, ambassadors and representatives of UN agencies and NGOs.

In his speech, the vice president said the government is taking measures to provide affordable healthcare services to the public with financial and technical assistance from the World Bank.

The vice president said a lack of knowledge about disease prevention and the role of the media in health promotion are challenges for the country.

Then the vice president explained construction of new medical facilities and measures taken for development of the health sector.

In conclusion, the vice president thanked the World Bank and other organizations providing support to the country's health sector.

The forum will continue until 29 July.

MNA

***Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham views nutritious foods and fruits displayed at National Health Forum.*—MNA**

Excess water drained from reserviors

NAY PYI TAW, 28 July — Irrigation authorities are draining off water from dams and reserviors as water levels are increasing at irrigation facilities after heavy rains across the countries began from mid-July.

Floods caused by heavy rainfall in many parts of the country have damaged bridges, roads and farm fields. Authorities are now releasing water from 31 irrigation facilities as they are monitoring the level of water to prevent damage.

According to the official release of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, hundreds of thousands of farm fields were inundated in many parts of the country, with the highest figure of 14,143 acres in Sagaing region.—*MNA*

Food security, hunger eradication plans on track: vice president

NAY PYI TAW, 28 July — Myanmar is on track to achieve its 2025 target for the National Zero Hunger Challenge in conjunction with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, Vice President U Nyan Tun said Tuesday at a meeting of the Committee on Security of Food and Nutrition.

The vice president, who is chairman of the committee, said the target must be achieved step by step, ranging from security of food to conservation of natural resources.

The United Nations' General Assembly will approve the Sustainable Development Goals in September this year to globally eradicate chronic undernourishment by 2030 under the Zero Hunger Challenge promoted by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Myanmar has also adopted long-term plans to eradicate hunger and ensure food security, with relevant ministries working together.

At the meeting of committee, Dr. Hiroyuki Konuma, FAO Assistant Director- General and Regional Representative for Asia and Pacific, explained the status of global and regional food security and future outlook and their implication to Myanmar.

In the evening, the vice president received a Japanese delegation led by Mr. Yoshihiro Shigehisa, the Chairman Emeritus of JGC Group. They discussed the construction of Hanthawady International Airport, other infrastructure projects and aviation safety measures at Myanmar airports.—*MNA*

***Vice President U Nyan Tun presents certificate to Dr. Hiroyuki Konuma, FAO Assistant Director- General and Regional Representative for Asia and Pacific.*—MNA**

Flood victims receive cash assistance, medical treatment

MANDALAY, 28 July — Mandalay Region Minister for Security and Border Affairs Col Aung Kyaw Moe and township officials recently inspected flood damage in Mogok Township.

Myanmar Police Force, fire brigade and Red Cross members, as well as local residents cleared debris from flood-damaged areas. The minister and party provided cash assistance, food and household goods to flood victims in Inchauk village.

At Mogok Township People's Hospital and Kyetpyin station hospital, they also comforted patients who were injured in recent heavy rains.

The same day, region minister U Aung Zan also provided K500,000 each and relief supplies to 57 flood-affected families in Thabeikkyin Township. He inspected repair work on the approach structure of the Shadaw Bridge on Mandalay-Tagaung-Bhamo Road.

Local residents and authorities distributed food and relief aid to flood victims in rural areas of the township.

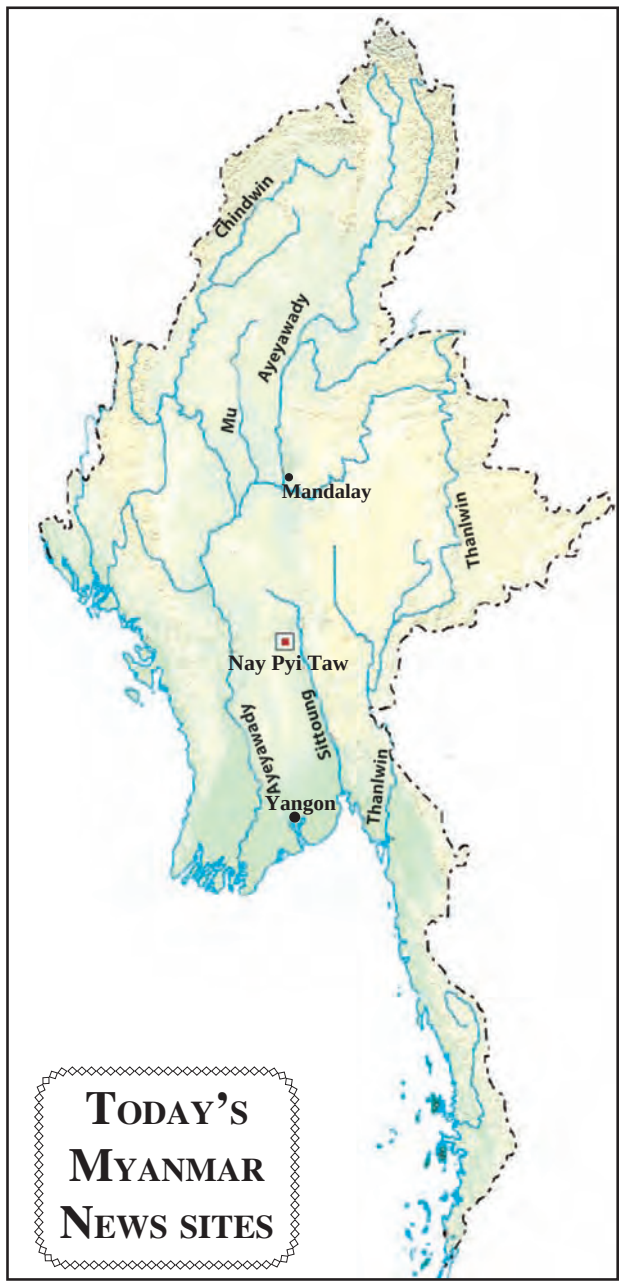
Tin Maung (Mandalay)

University students join first-aid course

MANDALAY, 28 July — Mandalay Region Red Cross Supervisory Committee and Mandalay University of Medical Technology recently launched a basic first-aid course.

Region minister Dr Win Hlaing donated K500,000 to the fund of the training course to an official.

Altogether 60 trainees are attending the two-week training course at weekends. Red Cross officials and medical officers gave lectures on basic rescue works, use of medical kits and first-aid process for patients.—*Maung Pyi Thu (Mandalay)*



TODAY'S MYANMAR NEWS SITES

VietJet set to launch Yangon-Ho Chi Minh City service

YANGON, 28 July — Vietnam-based airline VietJet will launch a Yangon-Ho Chi Minh City service as of 2 October, the carrier said Tuesday.

"We expect satisfaction of passengers for our flights at special prices along the route between Ho Chi Min City and Yangon," VietJet Vice Chairman Nguyen Thi Thuy Binh said.

Flights will leave Ho Chi Minh City at 10.25 a.m. and arrive in Yangon at 12:10 p.m. Flights will depart Yangon at 1 p.m. and arrive in Ho Chi Minh City at 3:35 p.m.

The airlines will operate the service five days a week on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The airline gives sales of ticket free of charge from 24 to 29 July.

Myanma Alinn

Talks focus on worksite safety

MANDALAY, 28 July —The Factories and General Labour Laws Inspection Department and the Global Enchanting Safety & Management Training Centre jointly staged talks entitled "Know safety, save lives" at Mandalay Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Mandalay recently.

Managing Director Daw Khin Swe Win of GESMTC explained the purpose of holding the talks while department Director U Soe Win Sein spoke about worksite safety and basic health knowledge.

Senior trainer U Kyaw Moe Naing and Assistant Director U Myo Myint Naing of the department gave lectures on safety in construction projects and reviews of accidents. Departmental personnel, managers of factories and workshops, and workers participated in the discussions.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Religious leaders gather at paper-reading session in Mandalay

MANDALAY, 28 July — The Upper Myanmar Interfaith Friendship Committee recently staged a paper-reading session at Oriental House here.

Officials of Mandalay, Magway and Sagaing regions, Shan and Kayah states and religious leaders read out the papers outlining efforts of the committees at region and state levels, formation of more interfaith groups, avoiding hate speech, diversity and peaceful co-existence.

The paper-reading session concluded with a remark by Chairman of the Central Interfaith Friendship Committee, retired ambassador U Sein Win Aung.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Indonesia's President Joko Widodo (2nd R Front) inspects the guard of honour during the welcoming ceremony held by Singapore's President Tony Tan Keng Yam (R 2nd Row) in Singapore on 28 July, 2015. Joko Widodo was on a state visit to Singapore from Tuesday.
XINHUA

Abdul Kalam, father of India's missile programme, dies at 83

NEW DELHI, 28 July — Former Indian president APJ Abdul Kalam, considered the father of the country's missile programme, died on Monday in hospital at the age of 83, a doctor said.

Popularly known as "Missile Man," Kalam led the scientific team that developed missiles able to carry India's nuclear warheads. He became a national folk hero after helping oversee nuclear tests in 1998 that solidified India's status as a nuclear weapons state. India's first atomic test was in 1974.

Kalam died from cardiac arrest in Bethany Hospital in the northeastern city of Shillong, capital of Meghalaya state, according to hospital chief executive officer John L Sailo.

Kalam, who was India's 11th president from 2002 to 2007, had collapsed earlier in the day while delivering a lecture, according to Indian media reports.

Former Indian president APJ Abdul Kalam

Kalam, who wrote a book called "Ignited Minds," became best known as a tireless campaigner for unleashing India's technological muscle and discouraging expensive imports from the West.

Born on 15 October, 1931 in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, Kalam graduated from the prestigious Madras Institute of Technology in aeronautical engineering.

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley expressed his condolences on Twitter: "We have lost an ideal citizen. May his soul rest in peace."—*Reuters*

Britain can easily double Indonesia investment — Cameron

JAKARTA, 28 July — British Prime Minister David Cameron sought to forge closer business ties with Indonesia on Tuesday, saying British investment could easily double if deals can be clinched on infrastructure projects.

Indonesia is Cameron's first stop on a four-day trade mission to Southeast Asia to spur lucrative business deals and encourage new political alliances to counter Islamist militancy.

Britain, Indonesia's fifth largest foreign investor, is particularly interested in investing in Indonesia's infrastructure, insurance and Internet services industries. "When Indonesia announced its 276 billion pound infrastructure plan, the next opportunity for British businesses became clear," Cameron told a Jakarta forum of government and business officials from both countries, according to a pool report.

Cameron highlighted Britain's 15 billion pound Crossrail project, that will connect Heathrow airport west of London to the county of Essex in the east, through 42 km (26 miles) of new tunnels, as an example of the expertise it can bring to Indonesia's traffic-clogged capital.

Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron

He also lobbied officials to allow British companies to help build infrastructure for Indonesia to host the Asian Games in 2018.

Britain ships only 0.2 percent of its total exports to Indonesia but last year invested $1.6 billion, excluding the banking and energy sectors.

"We could frankly double, triple, quadruple that number without making a huge change to the overall picture," Cameron said. "The scale of the opportunity here is immense." On Monday, the prime minister met President Joko Widodo and announced that the British government would make available up to 1 billion pounds of export finance credit to Indonesia.

But for Indonesia, the problem with fixing dilapidated roads, ports and bridges is not about the money. The Indonesian government has struggled to spend its own budgeted funds due to bureaucratic infighting and burdensome red tape.

"I say to my ministers if you want to introduce a regulation, you want to cut two regulations first. I made that as a free offer to Indonesian ministers as a great idea," Cameron said.

Reuters

Malaysian PM reshuffles cabinet, appoint new deputy

Malaysia's Prime Minister Najib Razak

KUALA LUMPUR, 28 July — Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak announced a cabinet reshuffle on Tuesday, appointing Ahmad Zahid Hamidi to replace Muhyiddin Yassin as his new deputy.

Speaking at a Press conference in Putrajaya, Najib said that the reshuffle will strengthen the cabinet to face challenges in managing the country before the 14th general election. The prime minister said that political considerations and administrative needs were taken into account when the decision was made to reshuffle the cabinet, adding that the decision to replace Muhyiddin was a difficult one but it was necessary to ensure the cabinet to move as a united team. "I can accept differences in opinion and criticisms as part of the decision-making process, but these differences in opinion should not be in an open forum that can affect the government negatively," he added. The cabinet reshuffle, first after the general election in 2013, came at a time when Najib was under pressure over allegation on fund embezzlement.

The Wall Street Journal reported earlier that some 700 million US dollars related to 1MDB, a debt-laden state investment company, had been transferred into Najib's personal account.

Najib has denied taking any public fund for "personal gains," and his legal team is mulling legal action against the *Wall Street Journal*. The country's longest serving Prime Minister Mahathir, a former mentor of Najib, has openly called for the Prime Minister to step down. Some local analysts have considered Muhyiddin as a potential candidate to succeed Najib if he steps down. Muhyiddin has also called on Najib to take the lead to explain the 1MDB issue to the people.—*Xinhua*

Thailand aims for upgrade from US trafficking blacklist next year — PM

BANGKOK / CHIANG MAI, 28 July — Thailand is working flat out to combat human trafficking, Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha said on Tuesday, adding he hoped Thailand would be lifted from a US list of worst human trafficking centres next year.

The US State Department highlighted in its annual report on trafficking on Monday the suspected role of Thai officials as an obstacle Thailand will have to overcome to stop the trade.

The report covered Thailand's efforts to eliminate trafficking for the year through to March.

A recent crackdown came too late to persuade the United States to take Thailand off the list, Prayuth said, but US diplomats recognised his administration's intent to end trafficking.

"The US Embassy has seen our intention and we hope it will be better (in the next review)," Prayuth told reporters.

"We have been working at full capacity to resolve human trafficking. But the timing of their evaluation was in the early stage of our work."

Thailand, a long-time US ally whose relations with Washington have cooled since a military coup led by Prayuth last year, said it "strongly disagrees" with the decision to keep it on the lowest ranking.

The Thai Embassy in Washington said the decision failed to take into account "significant efforts undertaken by the Thai Government on all fronts during the past year". Prayuth ordered a crackdown after the discovery of dozens of bodies at suspected trafficking camps in southern Thailand in May. The crackdown disrupted routes through Thailand used by smuggling networks.

Smugglers abandoned ships crowded with migrants from Bangladesh and Myanmar rather than risk landing in Thailand. A humanitarian crisis unfolded at sea, and images of starving migrants drifting on boats drew international outrage.

Thai authorities have since indicted 72 people, including 15 state officials, over suspected links to trafficking in what police said was their biggest investigation of people smuggling.

The most senior official to face trafficking charges is Manus Kongpan, a three-star army general who surrendered to police on 2 June. He denies all charges, which include human trafficking, holding people for ransom and hiding corpses.

The US Embassy in Thailand said it welcomed additional efforts by Thailand since 31 March, which would be covered in next year's report.

"We anticipate high-level engagement between US and Thai officials both in Thailand and in international fora on this important issue," the embassy said.

Deputy Prime Minister General Tanasak Patimapragorn said the United States had complimented recent efforts and he was "confident" of being lifted from the lowest ranks of human trafficking centres next year.—*Reuters*

N Korea rejects one-sided call for denuclearization: envoy

North Korean Ambassador to China Ji Jae Ryong is seen prior to a Press conference at the North Korean Embassy in Beijing on 28 July, 2015. He stated that North Korea has "no interest at all in dialogue that one-sidedly calls for a nuclear freeze or abandonment" on the part of Pyongyang. KYODO NEWS

BEIJING, 28 July — North Korean Ambassador to China Ji Jae Ryong reiterated on Tuesday that his country has "no interest at all in dialogue that one-sidedly calls for a nuclear freeze or abandonment" on the part of Pyongyang.

Ji told a Press conference at the North Korean Embassy in Beijing that tension on the Korean Peninsula is caused by the United States' hostile policy toward the North.

His remarks were believed aimed at reemphasizing North Korea's position as attention is focused on the country's nuclear ambitions following Iran's recent landmark nuclear agreement with major powers to curb its nuclear programme.

The ambassador, who previously gave a Press conference in Beijing in January last year, noted the difference between his country and Iran, saying North Korea is a nuclear-capable state both "in reality and in name."

"Our nuclear deterrent power is an essential measure to protect our country's autonomy from the US hostile policy," he said.

Ji said that while Pyongyang is making efforts to resume talks with Washington and others, the United States is getting in the way with its hostile policy, such as by repeatedly conducting joint military exercises with South Korea.

On whether North Korean leader Kim Jong Un plans to attend China's military parade scheduled in Beijing in September to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, the envoy said he has nothing to announce on the matter yet.

The Press conference was attended by about 30 representatives of media organizations, including those of Japan, the United States, China and South Korea.

Kyodo News

South Korea declares country effectively out of MERS danger

SEOUL, 28 July — South Korea declared on Tuesday it is effectively out of danger from Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), more than two months after the first case was reported and began spreading in hospital settings to kill 36 people.

The outbreak grew to become the largest outside Saudi Arabia, infecting 186 people and at its peak putting nearly 17,000 in quarantine. It was traced to a man who returned from a business trip to the Middle East in May.

"It is the assessment of the government and the medical community that the public can rest easy," Prime Minister Hwang Kyo-ahn told a government meeting on public health.

Twelve people remain hospitalized in South Korea and under treatment for MERS although only one is still testing positive for the MERS virus, the Health Ministry said, adding that no new cases have been reported since 4 July. Health experts say the virus has an incubation period of about two weeks.

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

The outbreak has dealt a major blow to an already weakened economy, knocking second-quarter growth to its worst in more than six years as it closed thousands of schools, kept consumers at home and scared foreign tourists into cancelling trips.

The schools have reopened and shoppers are back in the stores, but officials are keen to repair lingering damage to sentiment.

Hwang said it was too early to declare the outbreak over but urged the public to return to normal daily life. He added that the government would implement reforms to fix health care shortcomings exposed during the outbreak, although he did not specify what steps it would take.

MERS infection is linked to the same family of coronaviruses that triggered a deadly outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003.

British health authorities are investigating two suspected cases of MERS in northern England. Twenty-six countries have reported cases since 2012.

Reuters

China says not planning military bases in the Maldives

BEIJING, 28 July — China is not planning to build military bases on the Maldives, the foreign ministry said on Tuesday, after the Maldives allowed foreigners to own land despite opposition concern the reform could be used for military expansion by China. The Indian Ocean island nation passed legislation last week to allow foreigners to own land within a project site on condition at least 70 percent of the area is reclaimed from the sea.

The opposition Maldivian Democratic Party said the bill could give "unprecedented access to foreign parties to operate in the Maldives". One party member said the government was facilitating a more robust Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean. China's Foreign Ministry, in a statement sent to *Reuters*, said the vote was an internal matter for the Maldives, but that China wanted good relations with the country, best known for its luxury diving resorts.

China "has always respected and supported the Maldives' efforts to maintain its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity", the ministry said.

"What the relevant people said about China building bases in the Maldives is totally baseless," it added.

India, which traditionally has strong ties with the Maldives and Sri Lanka, has been concerned about China's growing involvement in the Indian Ocean as it opens its purse strings and builds a network of ports dubbed the String of Pearls. In September last year, during a visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping, the Maldives signed a deal with a Chinese company to upgrade its international airport after cancelling a $511 million deal with India's GMR Infrastructure in 2012. In an effort to damp fears about Chinese plans connected to its increasingly modern and confident military, Beijing has repeatedly said it does not want military bases abroad. But experts have said China is likely one day to have to overcome its discomfort about overseas military bases, as its forces are drawn into protecting the growing interests of the world's second-largest economy.—*Reuters*

Japan enacts legislation to narrow vote weight disparities

Japan's parliament passes a bill into law at a plenary session of the House of Representatives in Tokyo on 28 July, 2015, for redrawing electoral districts to narrow vote weight disparities between constituencies in upper house elections that the Supreme Court has ruled "in a state of unconstitutionality."—KYODO NEWS

TOKYO, 28 July — Japan's parliament passed into law on Tuesday a bill to redraw electoral districts to narrow vote weight disparities between constituencies in upper house elections that the Supreme Court has ruled "in a state of unconstitutionality."

The revised Public Offices Election Law will thus apply to the next triennial House of Councillors election scheduled for the summer of 2016.

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party and four opposition parties submitted and passed the bill through the upper house last week before Tuesday's passage through the House of Representatives.

While keeping the total number of upper house seats unchanged at 252, the law will narrow the vote weight disparity between the most and least populated constituencies to 2.97 times from 4.77 times in the previous upper house election in July 2013, which the top court found last year as being "in a state of unconstitutionality."

It will merge four two-seat prefectures — Tottori, Shimane, Tokushima and Kochi — into two two-seat constituencies, cut the number of seats from four to two each for Miyagi, Niigata and Nagano prefectures and raise the number by two each for five others — Hokkaido, Tokyo, Aichi, Hyogo and Fukuoka. As an upper house election takes place every three years to elect half of the 252 lawmakers for six-year terms, half of the number of seats for each district will be up for grabs in the 2016 election.

The law also stipulates that a conclusion will be reached on fundamental electoral reform toward the 2019 upper house election to further narrow the vote weight gaps.

Kyodo News

Obama knocks Huckabee, Trump for slide in Republican rhetoric

ADDIS ABABA, 28 July — US President Barack Obama criticized Republican presidential candidates Mike Huckabee and Donald Trump on Monday for their blunt rhetoric about the Iran nuclear agreement and other issues, calling it damaging to political debate.

Huckabee, one of more than a dozen candidates vying for the Republican presidential nomination, denounced a deal with world powers over Iran's nuclear programme by saying Obama was marching Israelis "to the door of the oven," a reference to the Nazi gas chambers that killed millions of Jews in the Holocaust.

US President Barack Obama

Trump has suggested that many Mexican illegal migrants were rapists and has mocked Republican Senator John McCain's Vietnam War record.

Speaking to reporters in Ethiopia, Obama said the former Arkansas governor's remarks were emblematic of a slide in public discourse coming from the opposition party.

"The particular comments of Mr Huckabee are, I think, part of just a general pattern that we've seen that ... would be considered ridiculous if it weren't so sad," he said.

"We've had a sitting senator call John Kerry 'Pontius Pilate.' We've had a sitting senator who also happens to be running for president suggest that I'm the leading state sponsor of terrorism. These are leaders in the Republican Party."

Obama was referring to Senator Ted Cruz, who has criticized the president's foreign policy, and Senator Tom Cotton, who compared Secretary of State John Kerry to Pilate, the biblical figure who sent Jesus to be crucified.

Huckabee responded to Obama's criticism with a critique of the Iran nuclear deal.

"What's 'ridiculous and sad' is that President Obama does not take Iran's repeated threats seriously," he said in a written statement. "For decades, Iranian leaders have pledged to 'destroy,' 'annihilate,' and 'wipe Israel off the map' with a 'big Holocaust."

Obama also singled out Donald Trump, the billionaire businessman who has rocketed to the top of Republican presidential polls, his controversial comments about undocumented immigrants and McCain, a former prisoner of war in Vietnam, notwithstanding.

"When he's made some of the remarks that ... challenged the heroism of Mr McCain, somebody who endured torture and conducted himself with exemplary patriotism, the Republican Party is shocked," Obama said. "And yet, that arises out of a culture where those kinds of outrageous attacks have become far too commonplace."

Obama beat McCain in the 2008 presidential election. His comments on Monday showed an increasing willingness to step into the political presidential primary process even as he defends the Iran deal, which Kerry and leaders from other world powers helped negotiate.

Republicans largely oppose the deal and the White House is in the midst of a vigorous campaign to shore up support in Congress. "There is a reason why 99 percent of the world thinks it's a good deal — it's because it's a good deal," Obama said when asked how the selling job with lawmakers was going.— *Reuters*

***This photo, from 7 Dec, 1941, shows the USS West Virginia in flames after the attack on Pearl Harbor.*—REUTERS**

US military exhumes remains of unidentified victims of Pearl Harbor attack

HAWAII, 28 July — The remains of unidentified members of the US military killed in the sinking of the *USS Oklahoma* during Japan's World War Two attack on Pearl Harbor were exhumed in Hawaii on Monday in a bid to identify them, the Department of Defence said.

Five caskets draped in US flags containing the remains of sailors and Marines who died in the 7 December, 1941 attack were transferred from a cemetery to a laboratory where they will be analysed with modern forensic methods, including DNA testing.

The remains were among those of the 388 service members who died in the attack and were buried as individuals who were unknown. The Pentagon wants to identify all of them in coming years. The new effort aims to disinter 61 caskets at 45 gravesites.

"Recent advances in forensic science and technology, as well as family member assistance in providing genealogical information, have now made it possible to make individual identifications for many servicemembers long buried in *USS Oklahoma* graves marked 'unknown,'" the Defence Department said in a statement.

The Marines and sailors who are identified will be returned to their families for burial with full military honours, the Pentagon has said.

There has been a series of identification efforts in the decades since the surprise attack at Pearl Harbor, which took 2,403 lives and drew the United States into World War Two.

The battleship *Oklahoma* sank when it was hit by torpedoes during the assault, the Pentagon said. A total of 429 sailors and Marines were killed.

In the years immediately after, 35 crew members were identified and buried. During salvage operations from 1942 to 1944, the remaining service members' remains were removed from the ship and interred as "unknowns" in cemeteries in Hawaii.

In 1947, remains in those cemeteries were disinterred, but requests to try and identify them using dental records were not approved.

By 1950, all unidentified remains from the *USS Oklahoma* were reinterred at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, in Hawaii, the department said.

The Defence Department laboratory in Hawaii disinterred one casket in 2003 and was able to identify five servicemen based on historical evidence provided by a Pearl Harbor survivor.—*Reuters*

German 'wisemen' say euro zone states should be able to go bankrupt

BERLIN, 28 July — The German government's panel of independent economic advisers favours the creation of a sovereign insolvency mechanism for euro zone states to prevent future crises and says countries should be able to leave the currency bloc as a last resort.

In a special report published on Tuesday, the council of five experts known as the "wisemen", said the Greek debt crisis had underscored the urgent need for further reforms to make the euro zone more stable.

Alongside measures such as deepening the European banking union, the council said the euro area's crisis toolkit should be complemented by a mechanism for orderly sovereign insolvencies, which would make the currency area's no bail-out clause credible.

"To ensure the cohesion of monetary union, we have to recognise that voters in creditor countries are not prepared to finance debtor countries permanently," said Christoph M Schmidt, Chairman of the German Council of Economic Experts.

The Greek crisis has called into question the future of the currency bloc with popular misgivings in Germany over a third bailout for the heavily indebted country running deep.

Such an insolvency mechanism would force creditors to bear losses if states went bankrupt, in turn prompting investors to assess sovereign risk in more detail, the council said.

The council recommended that an exit of a country from the euro area should remain possible, albeit as an "utterly last resort."

"A permanently uncooperative member state should not be able to threaten the existence of the euro," the council wrote.

They also warned against "quick-win" policies, such as the creation of a euro zone treasury, a European unemployment insurance scheme or an economic government for the bloc.

"Making the euro area collectively responsible for potential costs without member states giving up any national sovereignty over fiscal and economic policies would — sooner or later — make the currency union more unstable," they wrote.

Their warning came after a report in German magazine *Der Spiegel* that Germany was willing to discuss the creation of a euro zone finance minister who would have his own budget and the power to raise extra taxes.

Reuters

PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 29 July, 2015

Lives threatened by developers' lack of ethics

By *Aung Khin*

Construction engineers recently disclosed their concerns about the strength of some new buildings due to contractors having used low-quality materials and failing to observe building regulations.

Some experts expressed doubt about the strength of multi-storey concrete buildings, which normally should be in a good condition for 75 years. They also said some buildings were expected to stand firm for only 20 years, blaming contractors and a lack of monitoring by authorities.

An official from Yangon City Development Committee recently told local media that although the committee has issued rules and regulations for construction projects, they did not monitor and inspect every construction site.

The quality of residential buildings in Myanmar is relatively low. As real estate prices are increasing in Yangon, many people cannot buy their own house. In some cases, middle-class property owners have sold their home and opted to live in suburban areas.

Real estate developers should observe international standards in construction projects. The lives of residents depend on their ethics. Some new buildings have uneven and unsafe stairways or prominent cracks along the walls within months after being built.

Governing bodies must make an effort to scrutinize and inspect construction projects to ensure developers observe rules and regulations.

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A VISIT TO NEW VISION ART AND BOOK EXHIBITION

Maung Hlaing

Last month, Saya Maung Zeyar, Executive Editor of (the) "Myanmar Studies Journal" presented me with a copy of No.4, June, 2015 issue. It is published twice a year by the Myanmar Knowledge Society. The journal reminded me of OM and SPECTRUM that attracted both common readers and researchers in 1960s and 1970s.

Likewise, the contents of Myanmar Studies Journal took me to the pages of rare literary works. Among the interesting research articles, research talks, research notes and views, especially, the talk on "Burma Translation Society" by U Thant (the then Secretary, Ministry of Information, and later Ex-Secretary- General of the United Nations) at the British Council on the 5th. April, 1950 made me trace the valuable severed links of the history of Sarpay Beikman where I worked for over 30 years.

What is more, other works by prominent scholars were so interesting that I couldn't help going through the whole journal in a short time. All the articles should be collected for life by the departments concerned. I take my hat off to the writers and consultant editors.

As for researchers or those who are hunting for rare books or important linkages of some subject matter, they are like the ones who get into a well, while they are feeling thirsty when they come across some important facts and figures they badly need. So goes the saying: To be cherished with pleasures one is seeking. It is no doubt that in a country with more than 50 million people who are making endeavours to keep abreast of the world nations, rare books in Myanmar or in English may be needed indeed.

The other day, while I was hunting for rare books on children, I happened to reach the New Vision Art and Book Exhibition (234/236, 1st. floor, Pansodan Street, Kyauktada Township, Yangon) where I found a precious collection of rare books on children and other subjects. As the saying goes, I was the one who looked for sweets finds molasses (one who looks for a damsel finds a virgin).

At the New Vision Centre, over one thousand rare books including over 100-year old ones and rare paintings by late famous artists such as U Ba Kyi, U Tun Nyunt, U Chit Mye, U Myat Kyaw, U Than Kywe, etc. have been displayed. If you have time, you can go there and browse through the books you need and can have discussion with U Hla Min Aung owner of the rare books and art centre. Rare books on fiction and non-fiction, general knowledge, history, culture, religion, architecture, biographies, classic novels are on display at the centre.

"I would like to conduct such exhibition occasionally although all the expenses cannot be covered. But, I do so for the sake of rare book hunters," said U Hla Min Aung, the owner of the centre. The mottos of the centre are "Let's read to enhance the quality of life!" "Let's build up libraries for the uplift of people's life!" and "From individual improvement to national development!"

Generally speaking, service personnel may feel very happy on the day on which they begin to enjoy their retirement. However, as they grow older and older, they gradually come to feel lonely and need something that cannot be expressed. As for a senior citizen who enjoys his retirement from the literary field or from the arena of research works, he may have some feeling to employ his mind and body sensibly an intelligently during his spare time so that idleness may not grow upon him and rust his mind. The writer of this article, who retired as the chief editor of Sarpay Beikman, Ministry of Information, I have devoted myself to research works on literary activities. Most of my time is occupied with the work of writing and hunting for rare books which will contribute to my research works.

In some countries, researchers are making endeavours to bring about the books that talk in order to solve the problem of lack of time to read. What they need is a portable cassette player and they can curl up with a good tape. They don't have to know even how to read. They can thereby engage in other activities and hear a book at the same time.

Doubtlessly, every nation is reading hard and working hard to be able to keep pace with the trend of international development and to promote its own national interests.

According to the World Book of Encyclopaedia, even historians do not know when the first books appeared. However they can say that people have used books in some form for more than 5,000 years. Since then, millions and millions of books have been printed on various subjects in every written language. Although people can now have easy access to e-books and the Internet users are on the increase, a feeling of elation in reading a real book is beyond words.

Rare book hunters, book lovers, and researchers should not fail to visit the New Vision Centre.

Not all old books are termed as rare. But a rare book has its own quality and value. Be careful!

POEM

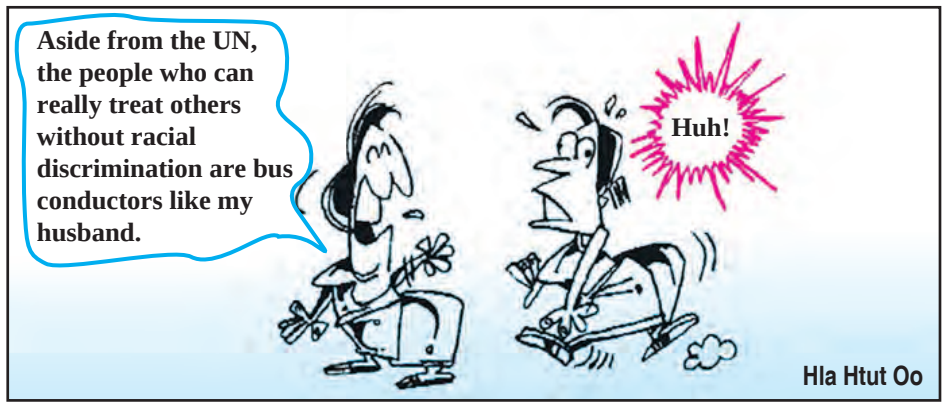
Expanding Yangon City

Bangkok, according to a recent a story on TV
in two decades may like Venice be !
The reason given is that there are
too many high-rise buildings by far
that 'weighs down the land'
and too much extraction of ground water
is also to blame for that matter.
Climate change could add to the ditty
of the rising sea and sinking city.

Perhaps years later, the City of Yangon
may be faced with a similar situation.
Even now the down town areas of the City
has a rather high population density
and facing problems of drainage, water distribution,
waste and sewage management, traffic congestion
all of which in future will surely worsen.
As yet we can take early action
to ward off such a dire prediction.
Thus expanding the city 'up-wards' may not be a sound option.
In fact 'thinning out' high-rise building construction
and interspersing, them with patches of green
will make Yangon more livable, beautiful and clean.
In Yangon Division land is hardly a scarce commodity
Northwards, it's possible to expand the City
With a bridge or two built across the Yangon River
expanding South-West too may be an answer.

Development of 'Satellite Towns' in such locations
with blocks of affordable 'low-rise' buildings
modern facilities for health and education
markets ,department stores and places for relaxation
Government branch offices and banks as well
so that people who in the Satellite Towns dwell
need not go to Yangon City centre
for their business and official matter.
It'll prevent the population density from increasing
and Yangon City from 'sinking' due to 'high-rise' building.
At the same time traffic flow into and out of the city
will be manageable with some certainty.
The humble suggestions are from the layman's point of view
may be the City Fathers are considering them too.

Lokethar



Hla Htut Oo

Heavy rains cause flooding in Myanaung Township

Myanaung, 28 July — Heavy rains left 750 acres of farmlands flooded in Magyigon village, Myanaung Township on Monday, while part of Inbin-Nyaungchaydauk Road was inundated.

Basic education primary schools in Sapekalo and Kyauktan villages were temporarily closed due to the overflowing of Phatashin Creek.

Staff Officer U Myo Zaw Zaw of Township Irrigation Department and staff supervised maintenance of an embankment along Ma Mya Creek where water levels were dangerously high. No casualties were reported.—*Win Bo (Myanaung IPRD)*

Gov't prepares to issue …

(from page 1)

In its statement,the department said it had already formed five regional supervisory teams and 21 data collecting teams comprising people who can speak Thai, Myanmar and local ethnic languages to conduct the door-to-door surveys.

The department has urged more than 1 million migrant workers and their dependents to cooperate with the teams.

The teams would also go the factories collect data from those without temporary residency cards.

The temporary residency card are due to expire next March.—*GNLM*

Heavy rainfall, strong winds, flash floods …

(from page 1)

The weather bureau, issuing a yellow alert, said the low pressure is not likely to move towards Myanmar.

Due to the depression, regionally heavy rainfall, strong winds and flash floods can occur in Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady regions and Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon states within 24 hours from 1.30 pm Tuesday, said the Meteorology and Hydrology Department.

Squalls with rough seas could occur occasionally off and along Myanmar's coasts, with surface wind speeds reaching 45 miles per hour, the announcement said.—*GNLM*

ADB works with Customs to speed up import, export process

Yangon, 28 July— The Asian Development Bank is working with the Myanmar Customs Department to develop a new system that will simplify and expedite the release of imported and exported goods, the ADB said in a press release Monday.

Customs officials will begin developing the Authorized Economic Operators (AEO) scheme at a three-day workshop, the press release said.

The scheme will give reputable trade operators access to quicker customs processing, it said.

"As Myanmar's economy continues to expand and open to the world, it's increasingly important for it to have strong customs measures in place to facilitate the free flow of goods", James Lynch, ADB Director for Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination in Southeast Asia, said.

"By taking this important step, Myanmar Customs is ensuring adherence to the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint and the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement, and ensuring the country is in line with important World Customs Organization's international standards and the World Trade Organization's Trade Facilitation Agreement."

The development of the AEO scheme is supported under the ADB's Regional Technical Assistance to strengthen trade facilitation in the Greater Mekong Subregion.—*GNLM*

Livestock, fisheries body urges parties…

(from page 1)

"That's why, we have to seek commitments from the next government to develop our sector," he said.

MFF senior vice-chairman U Hninn Oo said he wanted the parties to provide a major strategy and policy for fishery sector development.

Without standard hatcheries, breeding and production cannot develop in the country, the senior official said, stressing the need to know which party best represents the industry's interests. The MFF is a national level business organization of 10 affiliated associations and 13 region/state fisheries associations.

Political parties must articulate their policy stances on the livestock and fisheries sectors ahead of the 8 November general elections, the Myanmar Fisheries Federation says. — Photo: Ye Myint

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 3 million people in Myanmar depend on the fishery sector for their livelihoods. — *GNLM*

Programme aims to combat chronic hepatitis B in remote areas

People receive free hepatitis B blood test at an event to mark the World Hepatitis Day.
Photo: Khaing Thanda Lwin

By *Khaing Thanda Lwin*

Yangon, 28 July — The non-governmental GI and Liver Society of the Myanmar Medical Association will visit remote areas after wet season as part of its efforts to raise awareness of hepatitis B virus, its spokesperson said Tuesday.

In an interview with the Global New Light of Myanmar, Prof Win Win Swe of the organization said the target areas are Belugyun in Mon State as well as Myeik and Kawthoung in Taninthayi Region, with plans to provide medical examinations in about 500 rural communities free of charge.

She said,"Knowledge dissemination is a fundamental and effective way in taking preventive measures against the virus."

During this year, the organization will accelerate its works on preventive measures and vaccination against hepatitis across the country, especially in far-flung areas, she added.

The organization provided free medical services in Loikaw, Kayah State, and in Mudon, Mon State, between May and June, and administered vaccinations against hepatitis B virus to hundreds of monks with the contribution of a liver specialist, Prof Win Win Swe said.

"The 500-bed specialty hospital and the North Okkalapa General Hospital are providing free medical testing for hepatitis to people one day a week."

Hepatitis B is widespread in Myanmar, and is caused by a virus that attacks the liver. It is estimated that around 12 percent of the country's population are living with hepatitis B infection.—*GNLM*

Turkey, US aim for zone cleared of Islamic State in northern Syria

ISTANBUL / WASHINGTON, 28 July — Turkey and the United States are working on plans to provide air cover for Syrian rebels and jointly sweep Islamic State fighters from a strip of land along the Turkish border, bolstering the NATO member's security and possibly providing a safe haven for civilians.

Long a reluctant member of the US-led coalition against Islamic State, Turkey last week made a dramatic turnaround by granting the alliance access to its air bases and bombarding targets in Syria linked to the jihadist movement.

Struggling with more than 1.8 million Syrian refugees, Turkey has long campaigned for a "no-fly zone" in northern Syria to keep Islamic State and Kurdish militants from its border and help stem the tide of displaced civilians trying to cross.

While no such formal arrangement has been struck with Washington, Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said the two allies saw eye to eye on the need to provide air cover for moderate Syrian rebels fighting Islamic State.

"What we have now is air coverage to clear a region from Daesh (Islamic State) and support the moderate opposition so they can gain control of that region," Davutoglu told Turkey's ATV in an interview broadcast live.

"We do not want to see Daesh on Turkey's borders."

In Washington, US officials said discussions were ongoing about the size and scope of a zone along the border that would be cleared of Islamic State fighters and allow moderate Syrian rebels to operate freely.

US officials ruled out the joint imposition of a formal no-fly zone and said the plan was not aimed at creating a "safe zone" for Syrian refugees.

"The purpose of the operation is not to create a safe zone into which Syrian refugees will go," a senior Obama administration official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"They might go, but that's not the purpose of the operation. The purpose of the operation is to clear the border and close the border to Daesh," the official said.

*A masked far left-wing protester walks during clashes with riot police at a demonstration against the death of Gunay Ozarslan, a member of the far left People's Front who, according to local media reports, was killed by Turkish police during a security operation on Friday, in Istanbul's Gazi neighbourhood, Turkey, on 26 July, 2015.—*REUTERS

NATO will hold an emergency meeting to discuss security on Tuesday at Turkey's request. Ankara is expected to brief its allies on the measures it is taking but did not request any air or troop support during preparations for the meeting, according to two people with knowledge of the discussions.

"Turkey has a very strong army and very strong security forces so there has been no request for any substantial NATO military support," NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg told the BBC.

Alongside its action in Syria, Turkey launched a second night of air strikes on Kurdish insurgent camps in Iraq on Sunday, part of what a senior Turkish official described as a "full-fledged battle against all terrorist organizations".

The renewed military campaign against the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which has waged a three-decade insurgency against the Turkish state partly from camps in northern Iraq, has raised suspicions that Turkey's real agenda is checking Kurdish territorial ambitions rather than fighting Islamic State.

US State Department spokesman John Kirby disputed suggestions that Washington had condoned Turkey's strikes on the PKK as a quid pro quo for Ankara's expanded cooperation against Islamic State. He described the timing as a "coincidence".

"PKK is a foreign terrorist organization, Turks have a right to defend themselves against it," Kirby said. "There's no connection between what they did against PKK and what we're going to try to do together against ISIL," he said.

Ankara is concerned that the success in northern Syria of the Kurdish YPG militia, which has pushed back Islamic State with the help of US-led air strikes, will stoke separatist sentiment among its own Kurds and embolden the PKK.

Turkey's Kurds say that by reviving open conflict with the PKK, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan is also seeking to undermine support for the pro-Kurdish opposition ahead of a possible early election and stoke up nationalist sentiment.

Highlighting the precarious path Ankara is treading as it simultaneously battles Islamic State in Syria and Kurdish insurgents in Iraq, the YPG on Monday accused the Turkish army of shelling its positions in a village on the outskirts of the Islamic State-held border town of Jarablus.

A senior Turkish official confirmed that the Turkish army had shot back after it came under fire from across the border late on Sunday, but said it was unclear which group was involved and stressed that the YPG was not a target.

"The ongoing military operation seeks to neutralize imminent threats to Turkey's national security and continues to target Islamic State in Syria and the PKK in Iraq," the official said, adding that Ankara was investigating.

Reuters

Libyan city Benghazi plunges into darkness as fighting hits power plants

BENGHAZI, (Libya), 28 July —Libya's eastern city of Benghazi has been plunged into darkness as clashes between pro-government forces and Islamist fighters have knocked out three of five power stations serving the city, the country's second largest, officials said on Monday.

Power has been off for 16 hours a day in the port city where forces loyal to the official government based in the east have been fighting Islamist groups for 15 months in a battle that has turned parts of Benghazi into ruins.

A spokesman at state power firm GECOL in Benghazi said output at the gas-fired main power plant was still stable at 650 megawatts on average a day, but three sub-stations distributing electricity inside the city had been damaged.

He said ongoing fighting made it impossible to reach the damaged stations, adding that the state power firm was running out of spare parts. A turbine needed to be repaired but a German firm that used to do the maintenance work had pulled out and was refusing to send any engineers to Benghazi.

The closure of the city's port due to the fighting also made it difficult to import spare parts, he said, asking not to be named. The Benghazi fighting highlights the chaos in Libya, where armed groups back two governments vying for control. The official prime minister has been based in the east since the capital, Tripoli, was seized by a rival group which set up its own government.

Both sides command loose coalitions of former anti-Gaddafi rebels. After the ouster of dictator Muammar Gaddafi, the various factions split along political, regional and tribal lines.

Reuters

Sweden investigates if wreck in its waters is Russian submarine

STOCKHOLM, 28 July — The Swedish military is studying a video taken by shipwreck hunters who say it shows a wrecked submarine just off the eastern coast of Sweden which appears to be Russian, a spokesman said on Monday.

The discovery comes less than a year after Swedish troops and ships unsuccessfully hunted for a Russian submarine reportedly cited near Stockholm, in the country's biggest military mobilization since the Cold War.

Swedish Armed Forces spokesman Anders Kallin did not say whether the military also believed it was a Russian submarine.

"We choose not to comment on it before we have seen more material. We will continue the analysis together with the company in the coming days," Kallin said.

Ocean X Team, the company behind the discovery, said on its website: "It is unclear how old the submarine is and for how long it has been at the bottom of the sea, but the Cyrillic letters on the hull indicate that it is Russian."

One of the men who discovered the submarine, Dennis Asberg, told the *Expressen* newspaper it looked modern. But one expert quoted by the paper said he believed it was a Russian submarine that sank in 1916.

Concerns about possible incursions by Russian submarines have increased as relations between Moscow and the West have worsened due to events in Ukraine.

During the Cold War, the navy repeatedly chased suspected Soviet submarines along its coast with depth charges.

In 1981, in an incident known as "Whiskey on the Rocks," a Soviet nuclear Whiskey-class submarine was stranded near a naval base deep inside Swedish waters after it ran aground, causing a diplomatic standoff.

There have been many false alarms. In 1995, then-Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson said the military on several occasions thought it had detected submarines only to find many of the underwater sounds were made by minks.

In April, the Finnish military used handheld underwater depth charges as a warning against what it suspected was a submarine in waters off Helsinki.

Reuters

China shares slip again as Beijing scrambles to calm markets

SHANGHAI, 28 July — Chinese shares fell on Tuesday, as Beijing scrambled once again to prop up a stock market whose wild gyrations have heightened fears about the financial stability of the world's second biggest economy.

After a plunge of more than 8 percent in major indexes on Monday, Chinese regulators said they were prepared to buy shares to stabilize the stock market, while the central bank injected cash into money markets and hinted at further monetary easing.

But despite those moves, aimed at bolstering the confidence of the ordinary investors who dominate China's equity markets, the CSI300 index .CSI300 of the largest listed companies in Shanghai and Shenzhen fell 0.2 on Tuesday, while the Shanghai Composite Index .SSEC shed 1.7 percent.

A highly volatile day — not unusual in China's unruly stock markets — had seen both indexes lurching between losses as deep as 5 percent and gains of more than 1 percent.

"Retail investors' confidence in the mainland market is very weak," said Steven Leung, a director from UOB Kay Hian in Hong Kong.

Monday's dramatic slide shattered three weeks of relative calm for Chinese equities, secured through heavy government intervention in which authorities pumped liquidity into the market while effectively barring many investors from selling.

An investor stands in front of an electronic board showing stock information at a brokerage house in Huaibei, Anhui Province, on 27 July, 2015.—REUTERS

The rapid sell-off, which saw China's major indexes suffer their biggest one-day loss in more than eight years, may have been partly due to authorities testing the water for withdrawing some of that heavy-handed support.

Three people in the banking industry with direct knowledge told *Reuters* on Monday that the state-run margin lender had returned ahead of schedule some of the funds it borrowed from commercial banks to stabilize the stock market.

"The authorities picked an inopportune time to float a trial balloon about scaling back market support operations," wrote Tim Condon, head of research Asia for ING Bank in Singapore, in a note on Tuesday.

"Lesson learned: sentiment manifestly remains fragile."

The wild volatility in China's markets has stoked fears among global investors about the broader health of the Chinese economy, and sent Asian investors scurrying on Tuesday for safe-haven assets such as government bonds and the Japanese yen.

The renewed turbulence also raised questions about the long-term viability of Beijing's strategy of intervening to control its markets.

"The government's intervention in the market may work in the short-term, but will nonetheless create longer-term issues," said Bernard Aw, market strategist at IG in Singapore. "So in that sense, a government bent on control most of the time and free markets simply cannot meet each other halfway."

But, while recent stock market weakness will have caught out many Chinese retail investors and companies, the relatively low rate of stock ownership by households and a disconnect between valuations and economic fundamentals mean the impact on the economy is likely to be less than it would be in other markets.

China's top economic planner described the stock market turbulence as "abnormal", but said it was optimistic on the outlook for the economy in the second half of the year.

"The fundamentals of China's economy are stabilizing and turning better," Li Pumin, secretary general of the National Development and Reform Commission, told a briefing in Beijing.

"So we have the foundation and necessary means to keep the healthy development of capital market including the stock market."

The People's Bank of China said on Tuesday it would inject 50 billion yuan ($8.05 billion) into money markets in its biggest liquidity boost since 7 July, near the trough of the last market sell-off.

The central bank also said, in a statement before the stock market opened, that it would use "various monetary tools" to maintain "appropriate levels of liquidity", a signal that the further monetary easing that many analysts have predicted could be in store.

Despite a slowing economy, China's main stock indexes had more than doubled over the year to mid-June, when a sudden swoon saw shares lose more than 30 percent of their value in a matter of weeks.

Markets finally began stabilizing in the second week of July after a barrage of official support measures that were rewarded with a rebound of more than 15 percent, prior to Monday's slide.

China's central bank cut interest rates, brokerages formed stabilization funds and regulators lifted restrictions on pensions and insurers investing in stocks.

Beijing also cracked down on "malicious" short-sellers in the futures market, froze IPOs to prevent a liquidity drain and looked the other way as around 40 percent of companies suspended trading in their shares to escape the rout.

In the latest in a series of supportive commentaries from state-owned media, the *Shanghai Securities News* said in a front page editorial on Tuesday that investors should view the latest sell-off "logically" and that China's economic fundamentals were still sound.

"The stable development trend of the A-share (domestic) market will not be altered by a single day plunge," it said.

Reuters

Australian scientists close to important malaria breakthrough

MELBOURNE, 28 July — Australian researchers say they are a step closer to finding an improved treatment for malaria, which still causes an estimated 800,000 deaths worldwide each year.

The researchers, from the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute (WEHI) in Melbourne, studied how the disease, which is contracted by 200 million people annually, invades the body and attacks the red blood cells.

In their research paper, published on Tuesday in the *Nature Structure and Molecular Biology journa*l, the scientists reveal the first three-dimensional image of a "bus conductor" protein, which the mosquito-borne infectious disease uses to facilitate the infection.

Professor Alan Cowman, of WEHI, Australia's oldest medical research institute, said the image of the "bus conductor" protein was a significant breakthrough in treating the disease.

"Trying to design a drug to target a protein without knowing the shape is possible, but it's a bit like working in the dark," professor Cowman, who is joint head of the institute's malaria division, told *News Limited* on Tuesday.

Cowman said the finding would accelerate their development of a new drug to treat and possibly prevent the disease.

WEHI's Dr Justin Boddey added that targeting the protein could lead to the eradication of two species of malaria that can cause death in humans.

Plasmepsin V is the parasite that uses the malaria-facilitating protein.

"This parasite basically moves in and renovates the red blood cell," Professor Cowman said.

"The first step in that process is selecting and exporting other proteins to go in and do the renovations, so the carpenters, plumbers and roofers."

The "bus conducted" protein allows Plasmepsin V to renovate other proteins, leaving the bacteria free to infect the required cell structures.

"Without that conductor protein, the parasite cannot renovate and dies," Cowman said.

"For the first time, we can see the exact shape of the protein, which is critical for the next step in developing better drugs," Cowman said.

The research paper highlights how WEHI members used the Australian Synchrotron in Melbourne to map out the proteins' structure.

News Limited reported a deal has been struck by WEHI to partner with a major pharmaceutical company to turn the research into a public-accessible drug.—*Xinhua*

World Hepatitis Day: get to know hepatitis B, C

BEIJING, 28 July — The World Health Organization (WHO) is focusing on hepatitis B and C by calling for prevention of the viral hepatitises on the World Hepatitis Day 2015.

The hepatitises together cause approximately 80 percent of all liver cancer deaths and kill close to 1.4 million people every year.

A vaccine against hepatitis B has been available since 1982. There is currently no vaccine for hepatitis C, but research is ongoing.

Hepatitis B, caused by the hepatitis B virus, is a major global health problem, which can lead to chronic infection and puts people at high risk of death from cirrhosis and liver cancer.

During the acute infection phase of Hepatitis B, most people do not experience any symptoms. However, some people have acute illness with symptoms including yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice), dark urine, extreme fatigue, nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain.

The incubation period for hepatitis C lasts for as long as 2 weeks to 6 months. Those who are infected may exhibit symptoms like fever, fatigue, decreased appetite, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, dark urine, grey-coloured faeces, joint pain and jaundice.

WHO alerts people to the risks of contracting hepatitis from unsafe blood, unsafe injections, and sharing drug-injection equipment.

Besides, as Times of India warms, tattoo, body piercing can also put you at hepatitis risk.

Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C usually occur as a result of contact with infected body fluids. Common ways of transmission for both viruses include receipt of contaminated blood or blood products, invasive medical procedures using contaminated equipment. For hepatitis B, transmission happens from mother to baby at birth, from family member to child, and also by sexual contact, according to information on WHO official website. WHO recommends that all children get vaccine against hepatitis B infection. Prevention of Hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection depends upon reducing the risk of exposure to the virus in health-care settings and in higher risk populations, for example, people who inject drugs, and through sexual contact.—*Xinhua*

Fuel weight, heat may have led to plane crash in Tokyo

TOKYO, 28 July — The small plane that crashed in a residential area in western Tokyo on Sunday was likely close to its weight limit as it was carrying five times as much fuel as needed, transport ministry officials said on Tuesday.

In addition, temperatures of around 34 C around the time of the aircraft's takeoff could have reduced the power of the plane's engine and prevented it from gaining altitude, according to aviation sources.

The *Piper PA-46* aircraft crashed around 11 am Sunday, less than a minute after taking off from the Chofu Airfield.

The crash killed the pilot Taishi Kawamura, and two others believed to be Nozomi Suzuki, a resident at the crash site and All Nippon Airways Co employee Mitsuru Hayakawa, though police would not verify this. Five others were injured.

Police and the Transport Safety Board are investigating whether the high temperature or the load weight was behind the cause of the accident while also looking into the possibility of engine trouble.

The aircraft, which was scheduled to make a one-hour flight to Izu Oshima Island about 100 kilometres south, was carrying enough fuel (about 280 kilograms) for a five-hour flight, according to the flight plan submitted by the pilot.

The theoretical weight limit for the 1,200 kg aircraft was 1,950 kg. The fuel along with the five men on board and their luggage is likely to have brought the total weight of the plane to over 1,850 kg.

A ministry official said it is possible the aircraft was fueled for a round trip and given extra fuel.

Single-engine propeller aircraft like the *Piper PA-46* tend to drastically lose power when the outside temperature rises to around 35 C, the aviation sources said. Little wind and the 800-metre runway at Chofu Airfield may have also made it difficult for the plane to gain altitude bearing in mind its heavy load, they said.—*Kyodo News*

Photo taken on 28 July, 2015 from a Kyodo News helicopter shows the Piper PA-46 aircraft, covered in a blue sheet, that crashed in a residential area in western Tokyo on 26 July. Police and the Transport Safety Board are investigating whether the high temperature that day or the load weight was behind the cause of the accident, which killed three people, while also looking into the possibility of engine trouble.—KYODO NEWS

48 Vietnamese rescued off south China coast

NANNING, 28 July — A total of 48 Vietnamese crew members of six cargo ships have been saved in waters off south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, local border police said on Tuesday.

The Vietnamese vessels capsized or ran aground on Monday afternoon in the sea near the city of Fangchenggang due to stormy weather and huge waves. Some sailors fell into water and some were stranded on a grounded ship. Local border police, together with maritime and fishery personnel, braved heavy rains and strong winds to get to the site Monday afternoon and saved 41 Vietnamese crews from water by Monday evening.

Seven other crew members were saved from the cockpit of a grounded ship on Tuesday morning after the huge waves receded.—*Xinhua*

Strong quake kills one in Papua, Indonesia

JAKARTA, 28 July — One person was killed and 1 hospital was damaged after a strong quake of 7.2 magnitude rocked Papua of Indonesia earlier Tuesday, official said here.

The quake also collapsed 1 house and caused light damages on 2 other houses, Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, spokesman of national disaster management agency told *Xinhua* via phone. The quake struck at 04:41 am Jakarta Time Tuesday (21:41 GMT Monday) with epicenter at 75 km southeast Mamberamoraya of Papua, an official of the agency meteorology and geophysics agency said. The shakes of the quake were felt at 4 MMI (Modified Mercally Intensity) in Sarmi, 3 MMI in Sentani, 2 to 3 MMI in Jayapura, Wamena and Biak, the official said. The US Geological Survey reported earlier that the quake was detected to be 7.0 magnitude. Indonesia is prone to quake as it sits on a vulnerable quake- hit zone called "the pacific Ring of Fire."—*Xinhua*

Cambodia panning out draft law on trade unions: Labour Minister

PHNOM PENH, 28 July — Cambodia has almost completed the drafting of a law on trade unions, which will be passed by the parliament by the year-end, Labor Minister Ith Samheng said on Tuesday.

"Up to now, 90 percent of the law has been drafted," he told reporters after presenting the draft bill to trade union leaders, representatives of employers and International Labour Organization officers.

The minister said the draft law would be finalized and sent to the Council of Ministers next month and probably reached the parliament by the end of this year. "The purpose of this law is to protect and enhance the rights and freedoms of trade unions in Cambodia and is also to prevent any irregular activities conducted by unionists," said the minister.

Labour Ministry spokesman Heng Sour said the ministry has spent about eight years to draft this law, which will govern about 3,400 trade unions operating in Cambodia, particularly in 1,087 garment and footwear factories with some 700,000 workers.

The details of the draft law have not been released after the meeting.

Ath Thun, president of Coalition of Cambodian Apparel Workers Democratic Union, said his union was concerned that the bill would restrict the freedoms of unions.

"We still disagree with the draft bill that requires trade unions to report on their finances, or they will be de-registered or fined," he said.—*Xinhua*

Three killed, 13 wounded in N Philippine clash

MANILA, 28 July — Three government soldiers were killed and 13 others injured in an ambush staged by New People's Army (NPA) rebels on Monday night in Kalinga Province, which Philippine military declared as "insurgency-free" five years ago.

Brig Gen Paul Atal, commander of the army's 503rd brigade, said the rebels first detonated landmines before opening fire on the troops who were aboard three military trucks and on the way back to their base.

Atal said the incident occurred around 11:20 pm in Apatan village in Pinukpuk town. He said the troops had been receiving reports about sightings of NPA rebels in Pinukpuk and in the nearby town of Balbalan, prompting the troops to conduct operations against the rebels.

However, the operation was terminated, apparently after falling to have an armed engagement with the rebels. "They were on the way back to their command post when they were ambushed," the official said of the attacked soldiers.

He said the troops returned fire, ensuing a 25-minute skirmish.

"After the explosions, we fought back," said Atal, adding that casualties of NPA remains unclear.

The Armed Forces declared Kalinga as "insurgency free" in November 2010. The insurgency free branding was later renamed by the military as "peaceful and ready for further development." At present, there are 60 provinces that were already declared as insurgency-free or peaceful and ready for further development. The NPA has been waging a guerrilla campaign against the government in the countryside for four decades. Military estimates the NPA strength at more than 4,000 men.

Xinhua

Bangladesh police arrest six in crackdown on Islamist groups

DHAKA, 28 July — Police in Bangladesh have arrested six suspected militants, including the chief of the outlawed Jamaat-ul Mujahideen group, as authorities stiffen a crackdown on hardline Islamists.

Bangladesh, a Muslim-majority nation of 160 million people, targeted the militants after machete-wielding attackers this year hacked to death three online critics of religious extremism, including American blogger Avijit Roy.

Police also seized explosives and other bomb-making materials during overnight raids on the militants' hideouts in the capital, Monirul Islam, joint commissioner of the detective branch of Dhaka police, said on Tuesday.

"During the raids we arrested six militants, including the head of Islamist outfit Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen," he added.

Indian security officials uncovered a plot against Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in October, after two members of the group were killed in an explosion while building bombs in the state of West Bengal, which borders Bangladesh.

The banned Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen was thought to have been lying low after facing action by authorities following its detonation of nearly 500 bombs across the country almost simultaneously on a single day in 2005.

Its militants later carried out attacks on several courthouses, killing 25 people and injuring hundreds.—*Reuters*

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (058N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (058N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 29.7.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S WAN HAI LINES PTE LTD
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV FSL SANTOS VOY NO (0009S)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV FSL SANTOS VOY NO (0009S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 29.7.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S CHINA SHIPPING LINES
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV ASIATIC GLORY VOY NO (008S)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ASIATIC GLORY VOY NO (008S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 29.7.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S INTERASIA LINES
Phone No: 2301185

Bank Holiday

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WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (13:30) hrs MST today, the depression over Northeast Bay of Bengal almost stationary and it is centered at about (90)miles West-Southwest of Chittagong (Bangladesh), (140)miles West-Northwest of Maungdaw (Myanmar) and (190)miles Northwest of Sittwe (Myanmar). Monsoon is strong to Vigorous in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 29th July, 2015: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in the whole country with likelihood of regionally heavy falls in Magway, Bago and Yangon Regions, Chin, Rakhine and Mon States and isolated heavy falls in Sagaing, Mandalay, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi Regions. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Frequently squalls with rough seas will be experienced off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40 - 45) m.p.h.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuation of increase of rain in the Coastal areas.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 29th July, 2015: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 29th July, 2015: Some rain or thundershowers which may be heavy at times. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 29th July, 2015: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

Over 7,000 people rushed to hospitals amid summer heat last week

TOKYO, 28 July — Scorching temperatures saw 7,392 people rushed to hospitals across Japan with heatstroke or heat exhaustion in the week through on Sunday, up over 1,000 from the week before, with three people dying on the way, government data showed on Tuesday. On Sunday alone, 1,534 were taken to hospitals as the mercury topped 35 C at 129 locations — the largest number this summer — according to the Japan Meteorological Agency. The latest tally brought the total since 19 May to 21,865, compared with 20,524 in the same period last year.—*Kyodo News*

US softens view of Malaysia, Cuba in human trafficking report

WASHINGTON, 28 July — The United States took Malaysia off its list of worst offenders in human trafficking on Monday, removing a potential barrier to a signature Asia-Pacific trade pact despite opposition from human rights groups and nearly 180 US lawmakers.

The US State Department's annual Trafficking in Persons report also upgraded Cuba from its lowest rank for the first time since it was included in the annual report in 2003.

South Sudan, Burundi, Belize, Belarus and Comoros were downgraded to the lowest rank, Tier 3, where Thailand remained for a second year, alongside countries with some of the world's worst trafficking records, including Iran, North Korea and Zimbabwe.

Egypt was downgraded, to the so-called "Tier 2 Watch List" status, while Cuba, Saudi Arabia and Uzbekistan were upgraded to "Tier 2 Watch List."

Malaysia's expected upgrade to the "Tier 2 Watch List" from Tier 3 removes a potential barrier to President Barack Obama's signature 12-nation Trans Pacific Partnership trade agreement, or TPP, which Washington hopes to conclude this year.

Congress approved legislation in June giving Obama expanded trade negotiating powers, but prohibiting "fast-track" approval of a deal that included Tier 3 countries, as Malaysia then was.

After a 8 July *Reuters* report on plans to upgrade Malaysia, 160 members of the US House and 18 US senators wrote to Secretary of State John Kerry urging him to keep Malaysia on Tier 3. They said there was no justification for an upgrade and questioned whether the plan was motivated by a desire to keep the country in the TPP.

US Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights Sarah Sewall rejected the notion that any political considerations had influenced Malaysia's ranking.

"No, no, no," she told a news briefing when asked whether the upgrade was connected to the TPP. She said it was based on standards for how well Malaysia was dealing with trafficking.

Sewall said Malaysia had made efforts to reform its victim-protection regime and legal framework, and had increased the number of investigations and prosecutions compared to 2013.

Even so, she said: "We remain concerned that low numbers of trafficking convictions in Malaysia is disproportionate to the scale of Malaysia's human trafficking problem."

Sewall said Cuba, with which Washington reestablished diplomatic relations on 1 July after more than 50 years of Cold War estrangement, was upgraded due to progress in addressing sex trafficking, although Washington remained concerned about its failure to battle forced labour.—*Reuters*

Herdsmen pulling camels attend the opening ceremony of the 13th Nadam Fair in Sunite Right Banner, Xilingol League, north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, on 28 July, 2015. Nadam is a mass traditional Mongolian festival where people celebrate harvests and pray for good luck. During the three-day event, activities including archery, wrestling, horse racing and folk performance will be held.—XINHUA

Volcanic alert raised for Mt Meakandake in Hokkaido

SAPPORO, 28 July — The weather agency said on Tuesday it has raised the volcanic alert for Mt Meakandake on Japan's northern main island of Hokkaido due to fears of a possible small eruption. For the 1,499-metre mountain in Akan National Park in eastern Hokkaido, the Japan Meteorological Agency raised the alert from 1, or "be mindful that the volcano is potentially active," to 2, or "do not approach the crater" on a five-point scale.

In response, the local municipalities of Kushiro and Ashoro restricted climbing within 500 metres from the crater. But the alert does not impact a hot spring resort area by Lake Akan about 8 kilometres away, the Kushiro city office said.

The agency said there have been an increasing number of small volcanic earthquakes around the mountain since Sunday, although they were too slight to be noticed by humans. An aerial observation on Monday and on-site investigation on Tuesday confirmed increased volcanic smoke near the crater, the agency added.—*Kyodo News*

‘Bheja Fry’ director’s next a situational comedy

MUMBAI, 28 July — After ticking the funny bones of the audience with “Bheja Fry” and “Bheja Fry 2”, Bollywood director Sagar Ballary is again working on his next comedy film that will have established stars.

“I have a script which is a comedy. It is not an out-and-out comedy film but it is a real situational comedy film where people laugh at situations. The scripting is done and we have producers who are looking to cast suitable actors,” Sagar told *PTI*.

The makers are in talks with several actors for the upcoming film.

“The film will have one hero and two heroines. We are looking to cast established actors and so the project is taking time as we need to get their dates,” Sagar said.

If all goes well the project might go on floors early next year.

When asked if his good actor friend Vinay Pathak will be a part of this project, Sagar said, “No he is not a part of this film. But we are working on something for him. I don’t know how much time that will take.” Sagar and Vinay have worked together in “Kachha Limboo” and the hit “Bheja Fry” series.

PTI

Joe Jackson, father of Michael and Janet, suffers a stroke in Brazil

SAO PAULO, 28 July — Joe Jackson, patriarch of the Jackson family of musical performers, suffered a stroke in Brazil on Sunday and is being treated in a Sao Paulo hospital.

Jackson, who was in Brazil to celebrate his 87th birthday, was diagnosed with a stroke associated with cardiac arrhythmia, the Albert Einstein hospital said in an e-mailed statement early Monday morning.

Joe was estranged from Michael — who became one of the world’s most successful and best-known performers — before his 2009 death. He also strayed apart from his wife, Katherine, and many of his other eight children.

A Press representative for the hospital said Jackson continued to undergo treatment on Monday.

A representative for Jackson could not immediately be reached.—*Reuters*

Joe Jackson (C), Michael Jackson’s father, and guests pose on the red carpet as they arrive for the screening of the film “Sicario’’ in competition at the 68th Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France, on 19 May, 2015. —REUTERS

Artists perform at the Steinberg Tafelrunde during Rheingao Music Festival in Hattenheim, Germany, on 25 July, 2015. The Rheingao Music Festival is held from 27 June to 12 September.
XINHUA

Spanish film studio hit by state aid probe fails to find buyer

MADRID, 28 July — Authorities in the Spanish region of Valencia failed on Monday to find a buyer for a film studio touted as the most modern in Europe but which was forced to close after being ordered to repay state aid.

The Ciudad de la Luz complex attracted only one bid at an auction, which failed to meet the minimum conditions for a sale, chief press spokesman for the Valencia regional government, Joaquim Clemente, said on his Twitter feed.

Those included a base price of just over 94 million euros, according to several Spanish media reports.

Clemente said a second attempt will be made to auction the studio, located outside Alicante, one of the main seaside resorts on the Costa Blanca.

Ciudad de la Luz opened in 2005 and shot 33 films up to 2009, according to European Union data, backed by 265 million euros ($294 million) of funding from Valencia’s regional government that prompted antitrust complaints to Brussels from competitors.

The European Commission upheld the complaints in 2012 and ordered Ciudad de la Luz to repay the aid, leading to its assets being auctioned off.

These are described on the studio’s website as “the most modern ... in Europe (with) ... all the facilities and installations necessary for the various stages of the development of cinematographic and audiovisual productions.”

In another cut-price auction on 17 July for now unviable infrastructure built during Spain’s boom years, a group of international investors won Ciudad Real airport with a 10,000 euro offer, sources said, the only bidder for a complex that cost more than 1 billion euros.

Reuters

Tom Cruise’s assistant goes public with her boyfriend

LOS ANGELES, 28 July — Tom Cruise’s assistant Emily Thomas has shut down dating rumours with the “Mission Impossible: Rogue Nation” star after she posted a picture with her current boyfriend.

Thomas, 22, changed her Facebook profile picture with a photo of her and 25-year-old partner Alex Roberts together, reported Ace Showbiz.

She met Roberts on the set of “Rogue Nation” and they have been dating for five months but have been enjoying romantic trips to Rome, Venice, Miami, Atlanta and Abu Dhabi.

Rumours about Cruise, 53, and Thomas surfaced ahead of a heavy promotional schedule for his new blockbuster “Mission Impossible: Rogue Nation”.

PTI

Katy Perry
performs 1st time post split with Mayer

LOS ANGELES, 28 July — “California Gurls” hitmaker Katy Perry gave a sombre performance after her split with on-and-off boyfriend John Mayer.

The 30-year-old singer performed during the Starkey Hearing Foundation’s “So the World May Hear Gala” at the St Paul River Centre in Minnesota, reported E!online.

Perry wore a strapless, floor-length ball gown for the event and also posed for a picture with two former US presidents, Bill Clinton and George W. It was reported last week that Perry and Mayer had called it quits once more. No reason was given for their latest split.—*PTI*

Morgan Freeman to star in ‘Down to a Sunless Sea’

LOS ANGELES, 28 July — Morgan Freeman will star in upcoming action movie “Down to a Sunless Sea”.

Bruce Cohen and Freeman’s company Revelations, which is headed by Lori McCreary, are producing the project.

While the logline is under wraps, the film is said to be similar in tone with “Air Force One”.

It’s another plum project for Focus whose CEO Peter Schlessel won the most coveted title at Cannes for the Tom Ford-directed movie “Nocturnal Animals” starring Jake Gyllenhaal and Amy Adams, reported Ace Showbiz. Freeman, 78, will reprise his role as Allan Trumbull in “London Has Fallen” alongside other original stars like Gerard Butler, Aaron Eckhart, Angela Bassett and Robert Forster. The “Olympus Has Fallen” sequel directed by Babak Najafi is scheduled to be released on 22 January, 2016.

PTI

IOC expects US 2024 bid despite Boston pullout

KUALA LUMPUR, 28 July — The International Olympic Committee remains confident the United States will deliver a bid to host the 2024 Summer Games despite Boston's withdrawal from the race on Monday.

"For the IOC this was always about an American bid put forward by the United States Olympic Committee," IOC President Thomas Bach told reporters on the opening day of an Executive Board meeting in the Malaysian capital on Tuesday.

"This invitation phase is also an opportunity to determine which city will eventually be chosen by a National Olympic Committee. We are confident that USOC (US Olympic Committee) will choose the most appropriate city for a strong US bid."

Just hours before the Kuala Lumpur meeting opened, USOC rescinded Boston's bid to host the 2024 Games after the mayor said his city's taxpayers could not afford to host the large-scale event.

The news is the latest setback for the Olympic bidding process and comes after four cities dropped out of the running for the 2022 Winter Games.

Chinese capital and 2008 Summer Games host Beijing will go head-to-head with the little-known Kazakh city of Almaty for the right to host the 2022 Olympics when the IOC elects the winner at its 128th Session in Malaysia later this week.

The IOC has since passed a string of reforms to make bidding more attractive to cities.

"USOC have made it clear that they would still very much like to see a US city host the Olympic Games 2024," IOC spokesman Mark Adams said.

A man walks past the Olympic rings before the opening of the 127th International Olympic Committee (IOC) session in Monaco on 8 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

The deadline for applicant city submissions for the 2024 Games is 15 September with Hamburg, Paris, Rome and Budapest already having entered the race.

"We are confident that the US will make the right choice and that they can still put forward a strong candidate by 15 September," Adams added. Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti has said his city, which hosted one of the most successful Games in US history in 1984, was interested in taking Boston's place. The United States last hosted the Summer Games in Atlanta in 1996. The IOC will elect a winning bid in 2017.

Reuters

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* A Way of Life: Karate-do

People take part in a carnival in commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the establishment of the city, in Santiago de Cuba, Cuba, on 27 July, 2015.—XINHUA

More and bigger drilling-linked earthquakes rattle Oklahoma

OKLAHOMA CITY, 28 July — Several earthquakes shook Oklahoma on Monday as the state experiences a sharp increase in the frequency of tremors linked to wastewater disposal from gas and oil drilling, including from fracking, state and federal officials said.

Three of Monday's quakes measured above a magnitude 4.0, with a 4.5 earthquake centred just north of Crescent, roughly 45 miles (72 km) north of Oklahoma City, the US Geological Survey (USGS) said.

The largest tremor, logged a "significant earthquake" by the USGS, could be felt as far away as Wichita, Kansas, about 160 miles north, broadcaster KOTV reported. There were no reports of damage.

The rate of earthquakes in Oklahoma has increased by about 50 percent since 2013, greatly increasing the chance for a damaging quake, according to the USGS. Noticeable quakes — above magnitude 3.0 — now hit the state at a rate of two per day or more, compared with two or so per year prior to 2009. During the past seven days, Oklahoma has experienced about 40 earthquakes, according to the USGS.

Scientists say the seismic activity is triggered by the injection of wastewater from booming oil and gas drilling operations into deep geological formations.

The state's oil and gas regulator released a directive this month expanding "Areas of Interest", parts of the state that have been worst-hit by the quakes, and adding restrictions for 211 disposal wells.—*Reuters*

Florida family finds $1 million in treasure from sunken Spanish armada

ORLANDO, 28 July — A Florida family who has hunted treasure for years found more than $1 million worth of gold artefacts this summer from the wreckage of a 1715 Spanish fleet that sank in the Atlantic, according to a salvage company's estimate.

The find included 51 gold coins of various denominations and 40 feet (12 metres) of ornate gold chain, said Brent Brisben, whose company, 1715 Fleet — Queens Jewels LLC, owns the rights to the wreckage.

The Schmitt family — parents Rick and Lisa and their two children and daughter-in-law — who hunt for treasure off their salvage vessel Aarrr Booty, could not immediately be reached for comment.

Brisben said Rick and Lisa's 27-year-old son, Eric, found and recovered the pieces in June.

Brisben said he timed the announcement to coincide with Friday's 300th anniversary of the sinking of 11 galleons brought down by a hurricane off the coast of Florida as the convoy was sailing from Havana to Spain.

Eric Schmitt found the artefacts in 15 feet (4-1/2 metres) of water off Fort Pierce, approximately 130 miles (210 km) north of Miami.

Gold coins and gold chain found in the wreckage of a 1715 Spanish fleet that sunk in the Atlantic off the Florida coast are seen in an undated handout picture courtesy of 1715 Fleet - Queens Jewels LLC.
REUTERS

The Spanish convoy's manifests indicated the ships carried cargo valued today at about $400 million, of which $175 million has been recovered, Brisben said.

His company bought the rights to the site in 2010 from heirs of the legendary treasure hunter Mel Fisher and the firm allows others, including the Schmitts, to search under subcontract agreements.

The centrepiece of the Schmitt's latest find is a perfect specimen of a coin called a royal made for Spain's King Phillip V and dated 1715. Only a few royals were known to exist, according to a news release from Brisben's company.

The gold chains are made of small, handcrafted, two-sided links of six-petaled olive blossoms. They were called money chains and are believed to have been used as a tax-free coinage, the news release said.

Under federal and state law, Florida will take possession of up to 20 percent of the find for display in a state museum. Brisben's company and the Schmitt family will split the reminder, Brisben said.

Reuters

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Wednesday, 29 July, 2015

Local youths show skills in Sepak Takraw tourney

MYAWADY, 28 July— The Myawady District Deputy Commissioner's cup Sepak Takraw tournament concluded on 27 July at the township gymnasium.

Pyi Khaing Phyo team finished first, No 3 team second and Khit Kyaung Thar (a) team third in the double regu event. Pyi Khaing Phyo team secured first place in the regu event, while Khit Kyaung Thar (a) team finished second and No 3 team third.

Deputy Commissioner U Lwin Ko Oo and township officials presented victorious teams.

Htein Lin Aung (IPRD)

Myanmar secure three points in first match

PHNOM PENH, 28 July—The AFF U-16 Championship 2015 continued its group matches at Olympic Stadium, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on Tuesday.

Myanmar thrashed Singapore 3-1 in the group (B) match. Hein Htet Aung scored an opening goal in the 12th minute, Win Naing Tun added one more for Myanmar in the 39th minute and Htet Phyoe Wai netted the third goal in the 62nd minute.—*GNLM*

Official in charge of Olympic stadium construction to resign

TOKYO, 28 July — The sports ministry said on Tuesday the official in charge of construction of the new national stadium will quit and be replaced next week amid criticism over the scrapping of an earlier plan to rebuild the centerpiece for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics due to spiraling costs.

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology said Kimito Kubo, 58, will resign as director general of the Sports and Youth Bureau for personal reasons.

Effective 4 August, Michiyasu Takahashi, 54, currently the director for the Office for the Counsel for the Implementation of Education Rebuilding at the Cabinet Secretariat, will be appointed the new Sports and Youth Bureau director general.

The personnel change comes after Prime Minister Shinzo Abe decided to scrap the original stadium plan and devise a new one from scratch following public criticism over its construction costs.

The Japanese government had originally estimated the stadium's cost at 130 billion yen ($1.1 billion). However, the price tag almost doubled to 252 billion yen due to rising labor and material costs.

Kubo assumed his current post in January 2012 and was involved in efforts to have Tokyo chosen to host the 2020 Summer Olympics. As head of a ministry bureau overseeing the Japan Sports Council, the operator of the venue, he was in charge of coordination with the Tokyo metropolitan government and other parties over the total construction cost.

Photo taken on 17 July, 2015, shows Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announcing the government's decision to scrap the initial construction plan for the new national stadium and devise a new one from scratch following public criticism over its soaring costs. The sports ministry said on 28 July that the official in charge of stadium construction will quit and be replaced the following week.—KYODO NEWS

Although more than 18 months remain until Kubo's mandatory retirement age, both sports minister Hakubun Shimomura and Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga did not clarify whether he had been forced out of his position over the stadium issue.

Shimomura emphasized at a Press conference that Kubo made "an honourable retirement to step aside for younger people." On his own responsibility over the stadium, the minister said that he will humbly accept criticism and "build it in time for the Tokyo Olympics without creating a national burden."

Suga separately only said, "The person with appointive power made a comprehensive judgment and the prime minister's office gave its consent."

Shimomura has said that the government plans to set up an independent panel to look into the process that led to the scrapping of the original plan and compile an interim report by mid-September.

Kyodo News

Stoke sign Dutch winger Afellay

Ibrahim Afellay

LONDON, 28 July — Stoke City have signed Netherlands winger Ibrahim Afellay on a two-year contract, the Premier League club said on Monday. The 29-year-old, who has played 50 times for his country, left Barcelona at the end of last season after four years. "It's no secret that Ibrahim was wanted by a number of clubs and we are understandably delighted that he has chosen to join us," Stoke chief executive Tony Scholes told the club's website. "He's clearly excited about the prospect of playing in the Premier League and the fact that he knows so many players who are already at the club will no doubt help him settle into his new surroundings." Afellay started his career with PSV Eindhoven and helped the Netherlands reach the 2010 World Cup final before joining Barca. The Spanish giants won the Champions League in 2011 but Afellay's career in Spain was stalled by injuries and he was sent out on loan to Schalke 04 from 2012-13 and Olympiakos last season. Afellay was Stoke's eighth signing of the close season after Philipp Wollscheid, Jakob Haugaard, Joselu, Marco van Ginkel, Glen Johnson, Shay Given and Moha.—*Reuters*

Van Gaal seeking galactico touch for resurgent United

LONDON, 28 July — Louis van Gaal wants to recruit a new galactico match-winner for Manchester United in a bid to fulfil his ambition of bringing another Premier League title to Old Trafford before he walks away from the club in two years.

Yet though United's Dutch manager also talks of his side still needing more speed and creativity, the impact of his new signings on their successful pre-season US tour persuades him he now has a team that is better equipped to launch an assault on the title after finishing fourth last season.

Van Gaal, who vowed to stick to his promise to retire in 2017, cut an upbeat figure after the tour win over European champions Barcelona, suggesting that in his second year at the United helm his side could be ready for a more concerted challenge for major silverware.

"You want always more," Van Gaal told reporters in San Jose.

"In my other teams I was already, in my first year, a champion so I hope that we can manage that in three years' time.

"But when it is this year I am very happy. But I cannot say this year we shall be the champion. We have to fight for it. That is the most important thing. Until the end we have to challenge the number one. And maybe we are.

"I think that we have now a selection more balanced than last year. The positions are occupied double. But I think we need still more speed in front and also more creativity and that is why I want (Angel) Di Maria to stay. But we don't know that so we have to wait and see."

Asked if it would be difficult to secure the signing of a creative superstar, Van Gaal said: "Of course. I can give examples of champions. Bayern Munich have (Franck) Ribery and (Arjen) Robben, Chelsea have (Eden) Hazard and Willian, speed and creativity.

"Real Madrid have (Cristiano) Ronaldo and (Gareth) Bale. Manchester United fans want us to compete with these teams. Barcelona have Neymar and (Lionel) Messi.

"(Ashley) Young has made a fantastic season. (Juan) Mata the same, with assists and goals but to win the Champions League we need speed also."

United, who have won all their three matches in America, end their tour on Wednesday against Paris St Germain in Chicago.

Reuters

Editorial Section — (+95) (01)8604529, Fax — (01) 8604305
Advertisement & Circulation — (+95) (01) 8604532
gnlmdaily@gmail.com
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
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