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President U Thein Sein helps flood victims in Rakhine State

News on page 3

INSIDE

Government prepares to dedicate all available financial, human and material resources in bringing normalcy to flood stricken areas

PAGE-2

ASEAN has always done its best to transform diversities and differences in political, and economic systems, different religions and uneven developments of Member States into unity and strength

PAGE-2

DELTA IN DANGER

ARMY OF VOLUNTEERS FIGHTS RISING RIVERS

Third batch of aid from India arrives in Kalay, Sagaing Regiom, which was severely hit by the flooding.
PHOTO: KALAY DISTRICT IPRD

By *Aye Min Soe*

YANGON, 7 Aug — Volunteers including military personnel and local residents fought back rising water Friday in the country's Ayeyawady Delta, where swollen rivers have forced the evacuation of more than 19,000 people.

The rice bowl of Myanmar was at risk of flooding as the Ayeyawady and Ngawun rivers remained above their designated danger level in Hinthada, Zalun and Seiktha townships. About 180,000 volunteers have been working together on the front line of Hinthada, laying more than 50,000 sand bags on the banks of the rivers.

So far more than 5,400 people from vulnerable areas in Hinthada have moved to shelters, an official of the Hinthada Township General Administration Department said.

(See page 3)

Gov't, armed groups remain deadlocked, agree to 'final' talks in Nay Pyi Taw

By *Ye Myint*

YANGON, 7 Aug — Negotiations on a national ceasefire accord remained deadlocked Friday over the number of ethnic armed groups to be included in the signing of the agreement.

Despite the hurdle, the negotiation teams representing the government and ethnic armed groups managed to finalize the contents of the peace deal on the final day of the ninth round of talks at the Myanmar Peace Centre in Yangon.

The document, comprising 33 paragraphs and seven chapters, will be made public soon, according to a joint statement between the government's Union Peace-making Work Committee and a senior delegation of ethnic armed organizations.

(See page 3)

Negotiators from the government and a senior delegation of ethnic armed organizations conclude talks in Yangon, with a further round set to take place later this month in Nay Pyi Taw.
PHOTO: YE MYINT

Government prepares to dedicate all available financial, human and material resources in bringing normalcy to flood stricken areas

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Aug—*The following is the full text of monthly radio address delivered by President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein.*

Fellow Citizens

Since the second week of July, heavy and continuous rains have led to unprecedented flooding, landslides, destruction of homes and farms, loss of livestock and loss of life in Rakhine and Chin states and Magway and Sagaing regions.

At the same time, large areas of Rakhine State were hit by Cyclone Komen that came in from the Bay of Bengal which brought additional heavy rains and wind.

The flood victims in the path of this unprecedented natural disaster had to leave behind their belongings and flee, with their young and their elderly, to areas of safety. The townships that were most impacted by the floods include: Mokaung, Kawlin, Wuntho, Kalay, most of the townships in Chin state and Rakhine state, and Pwintbyu and Salin townships in Magway region.

Local communities and responsible authorities with much empathy and conviction are currently assisting the flood victims at temporary shelters. Up to date, there are over two hundred and thirty seven thousand families who are in need of assistance.

The first responders including the local people, community leaders, municipal personnel, Red Cross, fire brigades, Tatmadaw, police and government officials have taken action to provide food, clothing and meet the needs of the flood victims. At the same time, donors, civil society organizations, monks, individuals, NGOs, and the diplomatic community have donated food, personal goods, clothing and medicines to the people in need. On behalf of our nation, I would like to sincerely thank everyone helping the flood victims.

The government has systematically undertaken relief activities to help the flood victims. The government is also prepared to dedicate all available financial, human and material resources in bringing normalcy to flood stricken areas. Although it is impossible to prevent natural disasters from occurring, the government will do everything it can to minimize the negative effects of the disaster to the public, accountably and in collaboration with all stakeholders.

The flood caused by torrential rain has destroyed railway lines, bridges and roads. Relevant government agencies have started working to prevent the disruption of communication and transportation. The government will make paddy seeds and tractors available to the farmers in order to enable them to start cultivation of paddy as soon as floodwaters recede. The government is also ready to provide necessary assistance to the renovation or rebuilding of the houses damaged by the flood and rehabilitation of the disaster victims.

In the areas where the floodwaters have receded, some residents have to rebuild their houses. The government will provide them with rice and financial assistance for a certain period of time. The government is also undertaking relief activities in the areas in central and lower Myanmar where flooding has started.

Relevant government agencies are closely monitoring the water level in dams and reservoirs in order to prevent their collapse. With great concern, I would also like to note that the water level at the Ngawun and Ayeyawady rivers has passed the danger level and that the water level in the towns of Hinthada and Nyaungdon has reached the danger level. Since it is impossible to prevent these waters from reaching communities in these areas, I would like to urge the residents to move to safety.

ASEAN has always done its best to transform diversities and differences in political, and economic systems, different religions and uneven developments of Member States into unity and strength

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Aug—*The following is the full text of message sent by Agga Maha Thayay Sithu, Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on the occasion of the 48th Anniversary of ASEAN Day.*

Esteemed national brethren,

Today is the 48th anniversary of the founding of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). I have the pleasure to extend my warmest greetings and best wishes to the people of Myanmar and the peoples of the Member States of ASEAN for their well-being on this auspicious day.

This year's significance of ASEAN lies in the imminent emergence of the ASEAN Community, as it will be integrated by political, security and socio-cultural pillars, at the end of the year. ASEAN has made achievements in its endeavours towards regional peace, stability and security, economic integration and sustainable economic development. At the time we are maintaining and enhancing our concerted efforts to achieve our common objective, the ASEAN Community will emerge as a respected and dignified community in the world.

The perpetuity of ASEAN Community is the ultimate goal of ASEAN. Towards this long term goal, ASEAN decided to build an ASEAN Community that is based on the guidelines in the 2003 Bali Concord II. This goal has been reaffirmed in the Charter of ASEAN that was adopted in 2008.

The ASEAN Community that is based on the unity and the cohesiveness of the ASEAN Member States has been pursuing a "People-centered, People-oriented" Community. In this respect, the theme of this year: "Our People, Our Community, Our Vision," chosen by the current Chair, Malaysia, is very appropriate and serves the purposes and principles of community building. This theme also reflects precisely on the ASEAN's regional integration process and the people-centered approaches undertaken by ASEAN in the past forty-eight years. Today, the ASEAN Leaders are having interface meetings with the representatives from ASEAN Inter-governmental Parliamentary Assembly, Civil Societies Organizations, youth organizations and the private sectors.

The three Pillars of ASEAN Community, made up of the Political and Security Pillar, the Economic Pillar and the Socio-cultural Pillar, are collaborating and coordinating together towards enhanced peace and security, higher economic and social status and mutual trust and understanding in the region.

The Political and Security Community will be a solid foundation and a platform to realize the goals of conflict prevention, peaceful settlement of disputes, post-conflict peace-building, promotion of democracy, human rights and good governance, and promoting ASEAN norms and values.

The Economic Community will strive to create a stable, prosperous and competitive economic region through free flow of goods, services, investments, capitals, poverty reduction and equitable development.

Within the Socio-cultural Community, ASEAN will be carrying out the noble tasks of making ASEAN a compassionate, caring and sharing community. It will continue its efforts to improve the living conditions of people, promote the rights of women, youth and children and enhance resilience to natural disasters.

Moreover, ASEAN Member States continues to resolve to address their domestic issues through peaceful dialogues and negotiations. Placing the on-going peace process as our national priority, Myanmar is playing its role in ASEAN towards regional peace and stability. Furthermore, Myanmar is working together with other ASEAN member states in promoting ASEAN norms and values on democracy, human rights and good governance.

As the integral part of the ASEAN Community, the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) will emerge as part of the ASEAN Community where benefits will be enjoyed by all ASEAN member states. The objectives of the AEC are to enhance ASEAN's economy through fair and just competition. AEC offers opportunities as well as rules and regulations to maintain and promote fairness in the economic activities in the Community.

Following the establishment of ASEAN Community, our country will continue to give priority to the expansion of the existing main sectors in the national economy, such as agriculture, fishery, and small and medium size enterprises. The government has been supporting these sectors to be competitive and outward looking. The government has also completed and enacted the National Export Strategy.

The ASEAN Socio-cultural Community aims to fulfil our wishes to reduce and eliminate poverty through promotion of education and health sectors. ASEAN is now working among its members and also with its dialogue partners to address the concerns and challenges related to all disasters, environmental conservation, climate change, early disaster response, humanitarian assistance, and food security and energy security.

Esteemed national brethren,

All the activities and endeavours that will be carried out in the name of the ASEAN Community are aimed at bringing betterment for the peoples of ASEAN. As there are great opportunities for the peoples of ASEAN with the emergence of the ASEAN Community; nonetheless, at the same time we must also be mindful of the challenges that we all will face in the near future. ASEAN has always done its best to transform the diversities and differences in the political, and economic systems, different religions and uneven developments of the Member States into unity and strength. In light of the achievements that ASEAN has made in the past forty-eight years, I would like to encourage the citizens of Myanmar to be proud of the successes, unity in diversity of ASEAN, and to welcome the ASEAN Community with solemn pledge to continue to work hard for the development of our country and for the success of the ASEAN Community. Moreover, I would like to urge you to continue to strive to be responsible citizens of ASEAN and to make the best use of the opportunities that are associated with the ASEAN Community.

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President U Thein Sein helps flood victims in Rakhine State

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Aug — President U Thein Sein met flood victims Friday in Buthidaung, Maungtaw and Yathedaung townships in Rakhine State and explained the government's rescue missions and recovery activities.

At the Buthidaung command, the president urged local officials and residents to embrace humanitarianism with consciousness of duty, responsibility and accountability in rescue operations.

During his visits, the president, as well as Co-operative Bank Chairman U Khin Maung Aye and artists, donated emergency supplies to flood victims.

President U Thein Sein flew back to Nay Pyi Taw in the afternoon.—*MNA*

President U Thein Sein meets local residents during his visits to Yathedaung township in Rakhine State.—IPRD

UN Special Rapporteur observes ongoing peace talks

YANGON, 7 Aug — Ms Yanghee Lee, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, visited the Myanmar Peace Centre here on Friday to observe the ongoing truce talks between ethnic armed groups and the government.

The Union Peace-making Work Committee and the Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team concluded their ninth round of talks Friday to finalize the nationwide ceasefire agreement. In the afternoon, Ms Lee paid a courtesy call on Cardinal Charles Bo, Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Yangon, on Theinbyu Road. She also met foreign diplomats at the UN Office, followed by a press conference.

"Ahead of the elections, one key recommendation I can make to the Government of Myanmar is to reconsider its fear and opposition to critical and independent voices," she said at the press conference.

"Civil society actors, journalists and ordinary citizens exercising their rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association are not threats; instead they are the voice of different communities and interests in Myanmar – in all its wonderful and rich diversity — and they play a vital role in contributing to and sustaining a robust democracy, and in advocating for the promotion and protection of human rights," she added.

She urged the government to considers the citizens as partners and not to restrict their actions and voices. Friday was the final day of Ms Lee's third visit to Myanmar.—*MNA*

Gov't, armed groups remain deadlocked, . . .

(from page 1)

At a press conference, spokesmen for the two sides said top leaders from both parties are expected to meet in Nay Pyi Taw later this month to iron out their difference over the issue of inclusiveness in the signing process.

Ethnic armed group spokesman Pu Zing Cung reiterated his side's insistence that all 17 senior delegation members be included in the NCA signing.

U Hla Maung Shwe, spokesman for the government side, repeated the government policy of initially signing the deal alongside the 15 ethnic armed groups with which it has already struck bilateral peace agreements.

The ethnic side said no guarantees had yet been given against attacks by government forces on groups not included in the signing process.

Nai Hong Sar, another ethnic spokesman, said a nationwide ceasefire would be meaningless if groups still locked in fighting with the government were not part of the signing process.

The ninth round of talks marked the second formal meeting between the UPWC and the recently formed delegation of senior ethnic armed group representatives.

According to the press conference, the Nay Pyi Taw meeting will be the final negotiations on whether the signing of NCA will take place before the country's 8 November election.—*GNLM*

Delta in danger

(from page 1)

An official of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement said Friday that the nationwide death toll had reached 89, including 56 from Rakhine State.

Meanwhile, aid from private donors has been flowing into the Ayeyawady Delta including Nyaungdon, which is also threatened by flooding from the Ayeyawady River. The Ministry of Relief and Resettlement has already provided K 72 million worth of aid to Rakhine State, where at least 55 people have died.

A relief mission of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and affiliated associations set off for Rakhine State on Friday aboard a naval vessel carrying K70 million worth of rice, edible oil and drinking water. The Rakhine State Government will distribute the aid to the flood victims, according to UMFCCI. The flooding, which began a few weeks ago, has inundated more than 1.2 million acres of rice fields, damaging more than 600,000 acres and destroying more than 367,000 acres, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation.

The ministry has stockpiled more than 81,810 kilos of rice seeds and distributed more than 1,380 kilos of seeds to farmers in the flood-ravaged areas.

GNLM

Global New Light of Myanmar seeks experienced journalists

The Global New Light of Myanmar, the country's longest-running English-language newspaper, is looking for experienced journalists to join its expanding editorial team.

The GNLM currently has openings for copy editors and reporters at its newsroom in Yangon.

Copy editors must have English as a native language, excellent writing and proofreading skills, and ideally an extensive background in print or online media. Experience in newspaper layout and design is a major plus.

Reporters must be fluent in Myanmar and capable of filing clear, concise news copy in English. Experience writing for English-language print or online media is an advantage.

Applicants should send a cover letter and CV to Maung Maung Than at mnmnthn2@gmail.com, by 14 August, 2015, or phone **09 5088924** for further information.

Mandalay residents mobilize for charity

MANDALAY, 7 Aug — Volunteers and members of social organizations have been tirelessly collecting donations for flood victims in public places around Mandalay.

The volunteers have collected cash, clothes, foodstuffs and purified drinking water. In addition, artists, journalists and cartoonists have been putting on performances and selling their works to raise funds for the victims.

Contestants in the recently-held Miss Myanmar Mandalay 2015 also assisted with collection of donations.—*Tin Maung (Mandalay)*

Red Cross sends emergency supplies to Taikkyi, Okkan

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Aug — The Myanmar Red Cross Society on Friday sent bottles of purified drinking water, shampoo, detergent powder and 10 bales of clothes donated by well-wishers to the northern Yangon Region towns of Taikkyi and Okkan.

The MRCS has also been arranging delivery of foodstuffs and health equipment to Kalay in Sagaing Region, as well as rice to flood-affected townships in Rakhine State.

The society is drafting the emergency plan of action in cooperation with partner Red Cross societies. Moreover, it assigned three survey teams in Kawlin, Sedoktara and Pwintbyu townships for observation of lists of casualties in the flooding.—*MNA*

Bangkok Bank supported aids relief for flood victims in Myanmar. Mr. Kanet Buranasin, Branch Manager of Bangkok Bank, Yangon Branch and Mr. Tossatis Rodprasert, Marketing Manager donated aids relief for flood victims to Dr. Set Aung, Vice Governor of Central Bank of Myanmar, amount of 35,000,000 kyats (1,000,000 Baht) on Aug 7, 2015.—GNLM

Evacuees, animals take shelter in Myingyan Tsp

MANDALAY, 7 Aug — Emergency shelters in Myingyan Township, Ayeyawady Region, accommodated a total of 1,967 evacuees, as well as 351 animals, as of 3 August.

Mandalay Region Minister for Planning and Economy U Aung Zan, officials of Mandalay Region Relief and Resettlement Department and local authorities donated purified drinking water, bags of rice, instant noodles, cooking oil and relief supplies to the flood victims.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Women players gather donations at Zaygyo Market

MANDALAY, 7 Aug — Myanmar women's national football team members collected donations for flood victims Thursday at Mandalay Zaygyo Market.

The footballers, led by manager Daw Myat Myat Oo, head coach Daw Thet Thet Win and officials, accepted cash, clothes, medicines, foodstuffs, books and other donations from well-wishers.

They will distribute the relief supplies to victims in flood-affected areas and monasteries.

The team will play two tune-up matches with the Myanmar Football Academy youth team on 8 August and the Mandalay Sports and Physical Education Institute youth team on 10 August.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

China's muscle-flexing at sea pushes Japan closer to ASEAN

KUALA LUMPUR, 7 Aug — With China flexing its muscles in the South China Sea, one of the world's vital and busiest shipping lanes, Japan is stepping up its efforts to team up with Southeast Asian nations engaged in territorial spats with Beijing, political experts and Japanese officials said.

"We fully explained Japan's security policies as well as its stance on the situation in the South China Sea and gained support and understanding from many participating countries," Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida said in Kuala Lumpur after attending a series of regional meetings involving the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and its regional partners including Japan, China and the United States.

The ASEAN Regional Forum held in the Malaysian capital on Thursday saw the South China Sea as a hot-button issue given Beijing's fast-paced and massive reclamation work there, which fueled concerns that the facilities being built such as an airstrip could be for military purposes.

According to the Japanese Foreign Ministry, Kishida urged countries that took part in the ARF to refrain from taking unilateral actions that heighten tensions and act in line with the rule of law, a remark alluding to China's unilateral attempts in the past months to change the status quo.

Recognizing the importance of the South China Sea for Japan as a possible "Achilles heel" for its economy in times of contingencies, Tomohito Shinoda, vice president of the International University of Japan and expert on international relations, said at a recent forum in Tokyo on South China Sea issues that Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe aims to build a "maritime coalition" with the United States, Australia, India and ASEAN.

Within a year since he assumed office in late 2012, Abe visited all 10 members of ASEAN — Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Japan, which has traditionally strong ties economically, politically and culturally with ASEAN, has continued to help boost maritime capabilities of countries including the Philippines and Vietnam — the more vocal among claimants in the South China Sea disputes that also involve Malaysia and Brunei — through means such as patrol boat provision.

The South China Sea has also become the ground for a tug-of-war between China and the United States, drawing U.S. allies such as Japan into the picture, political observers say.

At the ARF on Thursday, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry expressed "serious concerns" on China's land reclamation and urged claimants to "take concrete steps in order to try to lower the tensions by refraining from further land reclamation, militarization and construction projects."

China, which claims most of the South China Sea, frowns upon U.S., Japanese or any intervention in the territorial rows as it prefers settling the issues bilaterally.

But fed up with China's increasing assertiveness at sea to the disadvantage of smaller Asian countries, the Philippines, another U.S ally, brought its case to a U.N. arbitration tribunal in The Hague in 2013.

Randolf David, professor emeritus of the University of the Philippines Department of Sociology, said China is "really just so angry with what the Philippines did by bringing them to court instead of sitting down with them like the rest of ASEAN does on a bilateral basis."

"They can use the economic and political muscle that they have in the international system to buy off in effect the support of each of the individual nations in Southeast Asia," David said.

David Arase, a Johns Hopkins University professor well-versed in international politics, said the U.S. position in protecting "freedom of navigation" in the South China Sea lies in defending the interests of the United States and its defense cooperation partners, and upholding the international rule of law.

Arase said that if China decided to pursue a "balance of power" approach in the South China Sea issue, the United States will "change its strategy from engagement to China to probably lean toward stronger hedging."

With ASEAN as a whole reluctant to be tough against China, the world's second-largest economy, Pham Quang Minh, vice rector of the University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Vietnam National University in Hanoi, proposed a "mini-multilateralism" framework wherein the two vocal claimants of Vietnam and the Philippines, together with another major ASEAN player Indonesia, can create a common guiding position on maritime law in the South China Sea.

Japan has no direct territorial stakes in the South China Sea but faces expectations to help shoulder the security duties of Washington for their alliance. Also, at a time when Japan has its own territorial tensions with China, boosting cooperation with ASEAN in maritime security is vital, observers said.

One proof of Japan's readiness to play bigger security roles in the region is the more robust Japan-Philippines ties in the face of an increasingly assertive China over the hotly contested Spratly Islands in the South China Sea, with the two countries enjoying one of the best times in bilateral ties in recent years, diplomatic sources said.

Tensions remain between Japan and China as Beijing claims the Japan-administered Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea. China and Taiwan also claim the uninhabited islets, calling them Diaoyu and Tiaoyutai.

In fresh evidence of China's assertiveness, Japan revealed last month a map and aerial photos of 12 offshore structures in the East China Sea, showing Beijing's unilateral gas field development near the median line between China's shoreline and that of Japan.

Kyodo News

Tourists visit Shilin (The Stone Forest), in Shilin county, southwest China's Yunnan Province, Aug. 6, 2015. —XINHUA

Sonia Gandhi, Rahul slam Indian FM over helping fugitive ex-cricket boss

NEW DELHI, 7 Aug — India's main opposition Congress party chief Sonia Gandhi and her son Rahul Gandhi Friday slammed External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj over her explanation on helping the country's tainted former cricket boss Lalit Modi, now a fugitive in London.

"Sushma Swaraj is an expert in theatrics," Sonia Gandhi told the media in the national capital.

The external affairs minister told parliament Thursday that she provided assistance "on humanitarian grounds" for Lalit Modi's wife, who is suffering from cancer, and also asked "what would Sonia Gandhi have done in my place?"

Sonia Gandhi responded: "I would have helped but without breaking the law." Her son Rahul Gandhi and the second-in-command of Congress party added: "Sushma Swaraj's family has received money from Lalit Modi."

The Congress party has been demanding the minister's resignation over her help to Lalit Modi, who is accused of money laundering and fled to Britain in 2010, disrupting parliament proceedings since the monsoon session began last month.—*Xinhua*

U.N. agrees to lend Cambodia maps for border line verification with Vietnam

PHNOM PENH, 7 Aug—The United Nations has agreed to loan original maps in its keeping to Cambodia for verifying with the current maps the Cambodian government is using to demarcate border line with Vietnam, U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said in a letter.

The loan of the maps came after Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen requested him last month to borrow Bonne map, scale 1/100,000, that Cambodia deposited at the United Nations in 1964.

In a letter replied to Hun Sen's request on Wednesday and released to the media Thursday night, Ban said the U.N. Secretariat was unable to find the mentioned maps, but identified amongst the holdings of the U.N. Dag Hammarskjold Library both electronic and print copies of maps which may be of interest to the Cambodian government.

"A full set of copies of these maps in digital format was provided to His Excellency Mr. Ry Tuy, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Cambodia to the United Nations, on July 27, 2015," he said. The library did not loan maps in its keeping, but it was an exceptional basis for Cambodia, Ban said, adding that the library would loan the aforementioned maps to the Cambodian government for a limited period of time, subject to conditions and understandings to be set out in an exchange of letters between the U.N. and the Cambodian government.

In a replied letter, Hun Sen thanked Ban for lending the maps to Cambodia.

He said the government has set up an ad-hoc committee, led by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Hor Namhong, in order to receive the maps.

Cambodian and Vietnamese border issues have become a hot topic in Cambodia in the last few months after the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party has accused the Phnom Penh government of using wrong maps to demarcate border line with Vietnam.—*Xinhua*

China accuses Manila, Tokyo of joining forces over South China Sea

BEIJING, 7 Aug — Japan and the Philippines teamed up at a regional security forum this week to attack China over the disputed South China Sea, China's Foreign Ministry said, detailing the feisty defense its foreign minister mounted in return.

China claims most of the South China Sea, through which $5 trillion in ship-borne trade passes every year. The Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei also have overlapping claims.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry on Thursday accused China of restricting navigation and overflights in the contested waterway, despite giving assurances that such movements would not be impeded.

Addressing the East Asia Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Kerry said China's construction of facilities for "military purposes" on man-made islands was raising tensions and risked "militarization" by other claimant states.

In a statement released just before midnight on Thursday, China's Foreign Ministry said the Philippines foreign minister "attacked" China's South China Sea policy, and received support from his Japanese counterpart.

"First off, the situation in the South China Sea is generally stable, and there is no possibility of a major clash," the statement cited Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi as telling the forum, which was attended by foreign ministers from around the region.

"China opposes any non-constructive words and acts which widen division, exaggerate antagonism or create tensions."

China is also concerned about freedom of navigation, but to date there have been no instances of this being compromised, he added.

China is the real victim in the South China Sea, Wang told the forum, pointing to what he said was the "occupation" of some of its islands there, including by the Philippines.

"But to maintain and protect the peace and stability of the South China Sea, we have maintained huge restraint," he added.

Turning to Japan, Wang said Japan had built up a remote island in the Pacific called Okinotori to enforce Japanese territorial claims.

China has previously refused to recognize Tokyo's claims to an exclusive economic zone around Okinotori, which lies about halfway between Guam and Taiwan, 1,700 km (1,050 miles) from Tokyo. It is also known as Douglas Reef or Parace Vela.

"Before criticizing others, Japan must first take a good look at its own words and behavior," Wang said.

Chinese reclamation and building work on its islands in the South China Sea are to improve living conditions and provide facilities like light houses and weather stations, he added.

Reuters

China Communist Party expels former regulatory official

BEIJING, 7 Aug — China's Communist Party has expelled a former official of the country's securities regulator after an investigation showed he had taken bribes, the anti-graft watchdog said on Friday.

Li Liang, former head of the investor protection department at the China Securities Regulatory Commission, was found to have abused his previous position and accepted bribes, the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection said.—*Reuters*

Kerry says U.S. ties can grow if more freedom in Vietnam

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry talks about Fulbright University during an event at the American Center at the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi, Vietnam, August 7, 2015.—REUTERS

HANOI, 7 Aug — U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry on Friday lauded the warming of ties with former war enemy Vietnam but said the scope of relations would depend on the communist rulers' willingness to protect human rights and freedoms.

Kerry is Vietnam's latest high-profile visitor from Washington as the former war enemies mark two decades of calibrated engagement since the normalization of ties that have expanded rapidly in the past year.

In a speech to mark the anniversary, Kerry said barriers of "mistrust and misunderstanding" were falling and urged Vietnam to show greater commitment to pursuing legal reforms and allowing freedom of expression and assembly. "Progress on human rights and the rule of law will provide the foundation for a deeper and more sustainable strategic partnership," Kerry said.

"Only you can decide the pace and direction of the process in building this partnership." Despite seeking deeper Western engagement and reform to its economy, Vietnam's government has been criticised for its zero-tolerance approach to dissent, with bloggers, religious activists and journalists among those facing harassment and arrest, or languishing in jail.

The United States has been intensifying efforts in building stronger ties with Vietnam to boost its clout in Asia and offset China's influence, but human rights and political prisoners have been a sticking point.

Kerry said the United States respected the different political systems of both countries but said it was important for stability to formally recognise free speech and assembly, which millions of Vietnamese were already demonstrating with Facebook and through workers defending their rights.

"The United States recognizes that only the Vietnamese people can determine their political system.

"But there are basic principles we will defend: No one should be punished for speaking their mind so long as they are peaceful."

He added: "We believe that progress in upholding these basic human rights will serve Vietnam's interests in several ways."

Kerry earlier met President Truong Tan Sang, who recognised the importance of guaranteeing human rights, he said.

"In our conversation today with President Sang, he couldn't have been more clear about how important it is (to Vietnam's leaders) to respect the rights of their people," Kerry said.

Reuters

S. Korea voices concerns over N. Korea's new standard time

SEOUL, 7 Aug — South Korea on Friday voiced concerns over North Korea's announcement earlier in the day that it would adopt a new standard time later this month 30 minutes behind the South.

"It will likely cause some inconvenience to those people going back and forth to the Kaesong industrial zone," Jeong Joon Hee, spokesman of the Unification Ministry, said during a press briefing, referring to a joint industrial park in a North Korean border city.

"In the longer term, it will bring about impact that will cause troubles for the integration between the two Koreas," he said.

The North's official Korean Central News Agency reported Friday that from Aug. 15, the 70th anniversary of independence from Japan's 1910-1945 colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula, clocks in the North will be turned back 30 minutes.

The two Koreas currently adopt the same standard time, which was set in the colonial era to match that of Japan. The report decried it as one of the "unpardonable crimes" committed by "wicked Japanese imperialists" that deprived "Korea of even its standard time."

The North's Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly, or its parliament, made the decision on the new "Pyongyang time" on Wednesday, KCNA said.

The South Korean spokesman questioned the North's motivation for changing its standard time, saying the standard practice for countries located between two contiguous time zones is to adopt the eastern one, which for the peninsula is Japan Standard Time.—*Kyodo News*

Virgin Australia halts Bali flights due to volcanic eruption

SYDNEY, 7 Aug — Virgin Australia (VAH.AX) said it had halted all flights in and out of the Indonesian holiday resort island of Bali on Friday because of volcanic ash billowing from a nearby volcano.

Mount Raung in East Java has been erupting on and off for more than a month, forcing several airports to close and disrupting the travel plans of tens of thousands of passengers.

"We have been advised that Mt Raung continues to erupt and winds are blowing in an unfavourable direction, and are forecast to continue to do so for the rest of the day," Virgin said in a statement, cancelling a dozen flights to and from Denpasar Airport.—*Reuters*

Mount Raung (top) spews ash into the air, as seen from Mount Bromo in Indonesia's East Java province, July 31, 2015.—REUTERS

Low-polling U.S. Republicans direct fire at Trump

Republican presidential candidates (L-R), former Virginia Governor Jim Gilmore, U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham, Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal, former Texas Governor Rick Perry, former U.S. Senator Rick Santorum, former HP CEO Carly Fiorina and former New York Governor George Pataki, debate at a Fox-sponsored forum for lower polling candidates held before the first official Republican presidential candidates debate of the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign in Cleveland, Ohio, August 6, 2015. — REUTERS

CLEVELAND, 7 Aug — U.S. Republican presidential candidates who did not qualify for a prime-time debate wasted no time in criticizing poll leader Donald Trump on Thursday, calling him a flip-flopper on key issues and too close to Democrats Bill and Hillary Clinton.

Seven low-polling candidates squared off at Quicken Loans Arena for a nearly 90-minute debate hours before the top 10 ranking Republicans were due to hold the first major debate of the 2016 presidential race.

The seven, businesswoman Carly Fiorina, former Virginia Governor Jim Gilmore, South Carolina Senator Lindsey Graham, Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal, former New York Governor George Pataki, former Texas Governor Rick Perry, former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum, were in search of a breakthrough moment that would help them rise in the polls and give themselves some much-needed momentum.

There was a general consensus among commentators afterward that Fiorina, the former Hewlett-Packard CEO, had done herself the most good at the debate. Republican strategist Alex Castellanos said she and Jindal turned in good performances and "made you wonder why they weren't at the big boy table." (Factbox on candidates' policy positions in the debate:)

Trump, the New York billionaire real estate tycoon who has rocketed to the top of opinion polls, proved to be an easy target for Perry and Fiorina when they were asked about Trump's rapid rise.

Since Trump was appearing at the later event, he was not at the first event to defend himself.

Perry, who has tangled with Trump over how to secure the U.S.-Mexican border, said Trump in the past had expressed support for a so-called single-payer healthcare system, which is a dream for many liberals. Trump now says that as president he would repeal President Barack Obama's signature 2010 healthcare law and replace it.

"How can you run for the Republican nomination and be for single-payer healthcare?" Perry said of Trump. "I ask that with all due respect." He said Trump has been "using his celebrity rather than his conservatism" to advance in the presidential race, but noted that at this early stage of the 2008 Republican presidential race, former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani was leading the polls, and he quickly faded.

The only woman in the Republican field, Fiorina had a tart response when asked about Trump.

She mentioned news reports that Trump had fielded a phone call from Clinton's husband, former President Bill Clinton, before Trump entered the 2016 race, and that Clinton had urged Trump to play a larger role in Republican politics.

"I didn't get a phone call from Bill Clinton before I jumped in the race. Did any of you get a phone call from Bill Clinton?" she said, looking toward others on stage. "Maybe it's because I didn't give to the Clinton Foundation or give to his wife's campaign."

Hillary Clinton is the front-runner for the Democratic Party nomination ahead of the November 2016 election.

Fiorina said that Trump had tapped into Republican voters' frustration with Washington but that as a Republican presidential candidate he had flip-flopped on illegal immigration, on healthcare and on abortion.

"Whatever your issue, your cause, the festering problem you hoped would be resolved, the political class has failed you," she said. "That's what Donald Trump has tapped into."

Graham, a hawk on national security, expressed his displeasure that an average of national polls was used to determine the top 10, saying this made the competition all about name recognition.

The seven Republican candidates in the first debate ranked lower in opinion polls than the 10 in the main event.

Graham said Brad Pitt would have been in the main event if the American actor had been in the opinion polls.—*Reuters*

Obama's choice on Iran deal 'absurd' — Senate leader McConnell

WASHINGTON, 7 Aug — U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on Thursday rejected President Barack Obama's pitch for the Iran nuclear deal, saying it was "absurd" to argue that lawmakers must essentially choose between the agreement and going to war.

Obama made a "huge mistake" with that argument, McConnell, a Republican, told reporters in response to a speech by Obama on Wednesday.

"It's not this deal versus war. That's the argument they've been making during the whole negotiation. It's either this deal or a better deal, or more sanctions."

Obama defended the July 14 U.S.-led international deal against a furious lobbying effort by political opponents and Israel, and said abandoning the agreement would open up the prospect of war.

The Democratic president said if the Republican-controlled Congress blocked the deal, it would accelerate Tehran's path to a nuclear bomb.

"Let's not mince words. The choice we face is ultimately between diplomacy or some form of war. Maybe not tomorrow, maybe not three months from now, but soon," Obama said. But McConnell was not buying it. "That's an absurd argument," he said. The Senate leader also complained that the president had treated the Iran debate like a political campaign when he said that Tehran hardliners were "making common cause" with Republican lawmakers.

Obama's speech was part of a push to promote the accord negotiated over 18 months between Iran and six world powers. The six agreed to lift economic sanctions on Iran in return for curbs on its nuclear programme, which Tehran said was for peaceful energy purposes only.

Opponents of the agreement have said the deal does not go far enough to ensure Iran will never be able to develop a nuclear weapon. They have cited the length of time between notifications and inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency and their objections to doing anything that might help Iran because of its backing for Islamist militant groups.

Senate Majority Leader Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY) (C) speaks during a news conference accompanied by (L-R) Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS), Senator John Thune (R-SD), Senator John Barrasso (R-WY) and Senator John Cornyn (R-TX), following party policy lunch meeting at the U.S. Capitol in Washington August 4, 2015.—REUTERS

Obama urgently needs his fellow Democrats' support in Congress, but only a few dozen have come out so far as strongly in favour.

However, several Democrats have endorsed the Iran deal this week. New York Senator Kirsten Gillibrand announced her support on Thursday, saying it was an "imperfect" agreement but deserved Congress' support because Iran had made essential concessions and the deal would provide inspectors with access they otherwise would not have had to Iran's nuclear sites.

Gillibrand's fellow New York Senator Chuck Schumer has still not announced his decision. A pro-Israel Democrat who is expected to take over as the party's Senate leader after 2016, he is considered pivotal to the Iran deal's future. The White House has pressured Congress to support the deal as lawmakers head home for an August recess. Congress has until Sept. 17 to vote on it.

A resolution rejecting it would cripple the agreement by eliminating Obama's ability to waive many sanctions - if the resolution survives a presidential veto.

Senate leaders have agreed to start the Iran debate as soon as they return to Washington on Sept. 8.

Reuters

Vucic dissapointed with embassies for not lowering flags

BELGRADE, 7 Aug — Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic said that he was sad and disappointed to see that Western embassies in Belgrade failed to lower their flags at half-mast on Wednesday, the day of mourning and the 20th anniversary of the Croatian military and police operation Storm which led to the expulsion of over 220,000 Serbs, while nearly 2,000 were killed or reported missing.

In his comment for the Belgrade daily Politika, the prime minister did not specify if the government will lodge an official protest over the issue.

According to Politika, the government interpreted the embassies' decision not to lower the flags at half-mast as a gesture of disrespect for Belgrade's decision to declare a day of mourning, as well as a breach of the diplomatic protocol.

Embassies of the Quint — comprised of the United States, Great Britain, Germany, France and Italy — made this decision after mutual consultations and in agreement with their governments, the daily claims.

Tanjug

PERSPECTIVES

Saturday, 8 August, 2015

Coordination vital to bridging rescue information gap

By *Kyaw Thura*

Establishing emergency relief networks is what rescue teams in action should do in the aftermath of disasters. An extensive rescue network will save time and energy, and hasten rescue missions through coordination.

The main point is that rescue workers should coordinate searches for stranded groups of flood victims across the country, instead of rushing to places described on social media as urgently in need of emergency relief.

It is understandable that the situation in every flood-affected region calls for urgent attention and immediate action. On the other hand, this urgency in itself has resulted in coincident visits of several rescue teams to a single place.

This highlights the importance of coordination between rescue teams by exchanging information on their whereabouts, so as to avoid unnecessary overlaps. In addition, the establishment of information centres has a greater part to play in rescue operations.

In this respect, rescue teams and aid agencies will be required to provide information on where they are going so that the centres can give other rescue teams more specific information of places left unattended.

The ongoing disaster requires all parties to make rescue missions and recovery activities more effective and efficient by keeping a strong sense of community spirit.

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

Lessons for Democracy in Myanmar

(Opinions expressed here are those of the author.)

Sonu Trivedi

With the elections exactly three months ahead, what are the lessons that the current regime may learn from 8888 movement heralded twenty seven years ago? In view of the upcoming elections on November 8, it provides an opportunity for the government to bridge the trust deficit and build a concrete foundation for development of democracy and its consolidation.

Given the troika of challenges the country faces today—political reconciliation and reforms; religious and sectarian violence; and centre-periphery contestations—regime's survival and return to power will depend upon how meaningfully it addresses these issues. Its appeal to the youth and masses in general and its success in wooing them will determine the future of a just and durable democratic set-up in Myanmar.

Most of the activists who participated in 8888 movement are 'elders' leading the pro-democratic forces in Myanmar today. The challenge before the government is to provide an alternative discourse and win over the hearts and minds of the youth at the moment. Engaging them in a constructive dialogue and addressing issues influencing them directly—such as educational reforms, employment avenues, information technology, good governance, poverty alleviation, human rights agenda etc—could have a multiplier effect. As a harbinger of revolution, the younger generation must be taken into confidence for grass-root mobilization and bridging the centre-periphery divide.

The political scenario seems to be in a pandemonium now. USDP is expected to run hard in the elections in view of the tough competition anticipated from NLD, mainly in the ethnically Bamar areas. NLD, on the other hand, though hopeful of its victory, suffers from leadership vacuum. Given the rising expectations of the people, one of the most significant challenges is to revitalize the party and introduce inner-party democracy, which has long been dominated by the aging political leaders of the 8888 generation. Ethnic based political parties may perhaps, play a greater role in this election in the regions inhabited by ethnic nationalities. This would significantly increase their bargaining power in the new legislature.

This complex matrix between the three power-centres in post-election Myanmar would shape the formation of a new government in the country and guide the future road-map to Presidency in March 2016.

Subsequent to the rejection of the constitutional amendment procedure by the legislators, all hopes of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi running for the post of Presidency has been dashed off. This puts her into a 'catch 22' situation and in the present scenario she is taking on a path of 'cautious optimism' supporting the reform process at an incremental level for political restructuring and institution building in Myanmar. Amidst the limited political role she is expected to play in the next Parliament, she needs to take calculated steps in this democratic re-engineering and re-structuring.

Her critics also appear to be at loggerheads for not having come out openly on the issue of worsening sectarian violence. The widening 'majority-minority' divide has been an unfortunate development in Myanmar. This historic religious conflict has flared up sectarian violence complicating the socio-religious fabric and aggravating tensions. She appears to have failed to act, given the possibility of alienating voters before the forthcoming elections.

Nevertheless, in this initial phase of democratization, rule of law, internal security, stability and peace must take precedence. It is this attempt at establishing a sustainable democratic order which must be imbibed from the iconic 8888 movement. Any move at this juncture, to hasten the process of transition may result in democratic reversals. It is however, noteworthy that national consensus in Myanmar is gradually emerging and for any significant change to be visible, we need to be patient and follow the 'middle way'.

Thereby keeping its spirit alive, the 8888 movement may act today as a driving force, transforming the social and political landscape of the country and giving an opportunity to its citizens to reconcile with history. It must be celebrated as an occasion to commemorate the sacrifices of hundreds and thousands of people to ascertain freedom and justice in the country. The lessons from 8888 people's movement are nonetheless relevant and its spirit still alive. Its legacy is likely to play a significant role in the years to come.

(Sonu Trivedi teaches Political Science at University of Delhi)

POEM:

Breastfeeding is the best

Aye Phyu

Human or breast milk
Brings a vast array of benefits
With protein, vitamins and minerals in it
Plus protective factors and fatty acid

Coming straight from mom's breast
For infants, easy to digest
Helps them to fight many illnesses
And raises their level of intelligence

Breastfeeding mothers
From childbirth and pregnancy, quickly recover
Get lifelong health advantages
With savings in time, labour and expenses

Breastfeeding's best part
Holding baby close to mom's heart
The time just starts
To get a special love string knotted fast

Breastmilk substitutes
As a last resort to be used
None is proved as an equal drink
To a mother's breastmilk.

SWRR Ministry issues list of contact persons

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Aug—Those wishing to seek relief and rehabilitation in flood-affected areas may contact following telephone numbers of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement round the clock.

They may call hot line of state of emergency management centre on 067-404021~2 and fax: 067-404540; office of state of emergency management centre on 09-423000297, 09-423000298 and 09-8603401~2; director-general of Relief and Resettlement Department on 067-404541 and 098600025; deputy director-general of natural disaster management committee office on 067-590006 and 067-69011; deputy permanent secretary of SWRR Ministry on 067-404022 and 09-49202022; deputy director-general of RRD on 067-404048 and 098601165, assistant secretary of the ministry on 067-404021 and 0949208718, assistant secretary on 067-404337 and 0943026670; assistant secretary on 067-404373 and 09250965889; director (finance) of RRD on 067-404316 and 092021491; director (rehabilitation) on 067-404317 and 09254170011; director (relief) on 067-404318 and 0943120865; director (coordination/research) on 067-404485 and 0943020864; and director (relief) on 067-404420 and 09428125027.

MNA

Service personnel proud to work for flood victims

Col Aung Kyaw Tun, Deputy Commander of Mingaladon Airbase.

Lt-Col Aye Lin of Yangon Command Headquarters.

SIP Zin Paing Soe of No 7 Security Police Branch.

Sgt Naing Lin Soe of No 1 Vehicle Store Deport.

The revving of a plane engine resonated across the airbase headquarters Friday morning, as a military aircraft returned from delivering emergency relief supplies to Kalay in Sagaing Region.

At 8 a.m., the plane took off from the airport, where Tatmadaw and police personnel continued to busily carry and sort relief supplies.

"Although it is difficult to donate cash for flood victims, I am proud that I can contribute my labour for delivering aid," police officer Zin Paing Soe said.

The air base headquarters has been a staging point for airlifts to Rakhine State, the Kalay area and Chin State since 1 August, according to Lt-Col Aye Lin.

"Usually, priority is given to Rakhine State but we are transporting relief assistance to Kalay first today and when the plane comes back from Kalay, it will transport aid to Rakhine," he said.

A steady flow of vehicles ferries relief supplies into the airbase, which has been accepting donations from well-wishers from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.

However, Lt-Col Aye Lin said, "We can't finish our work until 9 o'clock at night because we need to classify the relief items. Then, we have to decide whether the aid should be sent by air or by boat. Sometimes, we have to accept relief assistance even at night."

The plane, which can carry only 6 tons per flight, continues to make trips back and forth to the disaster hit regions. For places where there are no airfields, the airbase has been deploying helicopters. In addition, the airbase headquarters has had to arrange supplies at a day's notice based on reports from chief ministers of disaster-hit regions and states. Personnel at the base finish their work very late, but sergeant Naing Lin Soe said they did not feel tired, but proud of working for flood victims.

Khin Maung Htwe
Photos: Zaw Min Latt

U.S. embassy announces humanitarian assistance for flood-affected people

YANGON, 7 Aug—US Embassy Friday issued a press release: "Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with those affected by the flooding and heavy rains in Myanmar. Yesterday, Secretary of State John Kerry announced the United States government would provide $600,000 for immediate response through USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA).

"We have a team on the ground working with local officials and our existing partners to meet the urgent needs of those in the affected communities. In addition to the support from OFDA, USAID partners are realigning their activities to provide immediate support and looking at ways to assist in recovery.

"USAID is working to address the urgent need for clean drinking water, sanitation, hygiene and other essential items. Our partners are supporting the distribution of water purification packets to generate over 50 million liters of clean water. Essential supplies and services will be distributed in the 15 emergency centers sheltering over 2,000 people based around MraukU in Rakhine State. USAID partners in Magway and Sagaing are providing water purification packets, hygiene kits, and the building of latrines at emergency shelters. USAID is also funding a technical advisor to support Myanmar's National Emergency Operations Center in disaster response coordination and management capabilities.

"The U.S. Embassy will continue to closely follow the situation and work with our partners to best help those in need in Rakhine, Chin, Sagaing, Magway and other areas affected by the floods. Since the start of fiscal year 2015, the U.S. government has provided over $48 million in humanitarian assistance in Myanmar."—*GNLM*

MNHRC launches ethnic-language Declaration of Human Rights

YANGON, 7 Aug — Two years after its translation into the Myanmar language, copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights became available Friday in Kachin, Mon and Shan languages.

The Myanmar National Human Rights Commission launched the ethnic language translations in a ceremony at its office in Yangon.

Chairman of the commission U Win Mra gave an opening speech while commission members Dr Nyan Zaw and Daw Mya Mya presented translated versions to representatives of ethnic literature and culture committees.

Ma May Yi Aung, who works on a Kachin-language programme for an ethnic channel under MRTV, said the translations would broaden understanding of human rights.

"That will help us to improve our society," Ma May Yi Aung said. "The translated version is of great benefit for ethnic people."

With the assistance of the Sweden-based Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law and the Swedish International Development Authority, the commission published the declaration in Myanmar language in June 2013.

The declaration is available at the commission's website www.mnhrc.org.mm.

Win Win Maw

MRTV channels to broadcast programmes for those with deaf and disabilities

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Aug — MRTV News Channel and Entertainment Channel broadcast hand posture programmes for those with deaf and disabilities to understand electoral knowledge from 3 to 8 August.

The channels will regularly broadcast the programme once every two weeks at 7.35 pm in August.

MNA

Asian farmers discuss forestry, land issues

By *Ko Moe*

YANGON, 7 Aug — The Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development held a workshop on sustainability of forestry and farmland here on 5-7 August, officials said.

The Regional Sharing Workshop discussed conservation of forests and farmland and proper land management, with participants from AFA's 13 member states sharing experiences and views.

The AFA is mainly engaged in sustaining forests and farmland, protecting the environment, creating an equitable society and helping small-scale farmers.—*GNLM*

Correction

Please read International Telecommunication Union (ITU) instead of International Telecommunication Federation (ITF) in the headline and second line of the first paragraph of the news "ITF provides communication devices" on page 9 of this daily issued on 7-8-2015.—*GNLM*

Education Ministry supports school stationery to flood affected areas

Teacher presents notebooks to students at Kwetanshay BEMS Branch in Bago.

NYI PYI TAW, 7 Aug — According to the rehabilitation plans by the Ministry of Education, the ministry supports school stationary amounted K 349.08 million including textbooks, notebooks, pencils, pens and others to the schools in the flood affect regions and states. In 2015-16 academic year, the ministry will allocate the funds for maintenance to flood-affected schools.—*MNA*

Macedonian police arrest nine for involvement in Syria and Iraq

SKOPJE, 7 Aug — Macedonian police arrested nine people on Thursday believed to have fought alongside Islamist insurgents in Syria and Iraq and recruited others from the Balkan country, the interior minister said.

In a security sweep in four towns, the police forces searched 21 houses, an internet cafe and a mosque in the capital Skopje, Mitko Cavkov told reporters. An imam was among those arrested.

"According to our information he could be seen as the main ideological leader," Cavkov said, adding that charges would be brought against a group of 36 who had violated Macedonian law by "fighting for another army or paramilitary organisation".

Of the 36, 27 are believed to be out of the country, most of them still fighting in Syria and Iraq.

Some 16 Macedonian citizens have been killed in Iraq and Syria, while another 130 are believed to have taken part or are still fighting there, according to Macedonian police figures.

Most of the ethnic Albanians who make up one third of the country's 2 million population are Muslim, but practise a moderate form of Islam. Cavkov declined to comment whether the group had been planning attacks in the Balkans and said further investigation would provide more information.

Many young Muslims from the region have fought for global Islamic causes in recent years.

In May, a prosecutor in neighbouring Kosovo indicted 32 people for fighting in Syria and Iraq while dozens have been arrested in Bosnia on the same grounds in the past year.—*Xinhua*

8 killed, 400 injured in bomb blast in Afghan capital

ISLAMABAD, 7 Aug — A bomb exploded in the Afghan capital Kabul on Friday, killing at least eight people and injuring over 400 others, according to local police and news reports.

The Associated Press said the pre-dawn blast occurred near a Defense Ministry compound but the target of the blast was not immediately known.

All of the victims were civilians, including women and children, according to the report.

In addition to regular attacks against Afghan and coalition security forces by the Taliban insurgent movement, the influence of the Islamic State group in the country is also spreading, leading to a worsening of security.

Kyodo News

People gather at the site of a blast in Kabul, capital of Afghanistan, Aug. 7, 2015. At least eight civilians were killed while nearly 400 others wounded in a truck bomb attack in Afghan capital Kabul at wee hours of Friday, sources said. —XINHUA

Suicide bomber kills 15 in Saudi security site mosque

CAIRO, 7 Aug — A suicide bomber killed at least 15 people in an attack on a mosque used by members of a local security force in southwest Saudi Arabia on Thursday, the interior ministry said, an assault that an online statement said was carried out by Islamic State.

The attacker struck as men were praying in the mosque in the headquarters of the Special Emergency Force in Abha, the capital of Asir province, a ministry spokesman told state news agency SPA.

Twelve of those killed were members of the force and three were workers in the compound, the ministry said. It earlier put the toll at 13, but later said two of the wounded had died.

A statement circulating on Twitter said an Islamic State suicide bomber had attacked a "military camp" in Asir province. It did not mention a mosque and Reuters could not verify the statement's authenticity.

"He (the suicide bomber) was able to infiltrate security barriers and reach their wicked gathering inside a training camp in Abha City in the Asir area where the force of the explosion led to the death and injury of dozens," the statement, purporting to come from Islamic State, said.

In May, two suicide bomb attacks on Shi'ite Muslim mosques in Saudi Arabia were claimed by Islamic State.

The first on a mosque in Qatif in the east of the kingdom killed 21 worshippers, and another four died in a bombing a week later at a mosque in Dammam.

Another bombing claimed by Islamic State on a Shi'ite mosque in Kuwait in June killed 27 people.

The militant group, bitterly opposed to Gulf Arab rulers, is trying to stir sectarian confrontation on the Arabian peninsula to bring about the overthrow of the states' ruling dynasties.

It has urged young Saudi Sunni Muslims in the kingdom to attack targets including Shi'ites. There was no immediate indication of the sectarian affiliation of the mosque in Thursday's bombing.

Reuters

Damage inside a mosque used by members of a local security force is pictured in Abha, southwest Saudi Arabia August 6, 2015.—REUTERS

4 Russian tourists killed in road accident in southern Turkey

ISTANBUL, 7 Aug — At least four Russian tourists were killed and 38 other people were injured in a road accident in southern Turkey, local Dogan News Agency reported on Thursday.

The report said the accident happened as a bus carrying Russian, Ukrainian, Belarussian and Kazakh tourists rolled over on a slippery mountain road from Pamukkale to the popular southern resort of Antalya.

The Russian Embassy in Turkey has earlier confirmed the death of the four of its nationals, saying some consular staff have rushed to the accident site. The report also said that the injured people were transferred to hospitals and the police launched an investigation into the accident.—*Xinhua*

120 Palestinian prisoners go on hunger strike in Israeli jails

RAMALLAH/ GAZA, 7 Aug — About 120 Palestinian prisoners went on a hunger strike on Thursday in several Israeli jails, the Palestinian corporation for prisoners' affairs said in a statement.

The corporation, which belongs to Palestine's Liberation Organization (PLO), said in an emailed press statement that prisoners decided to go on a hunger strike in protest of the inhumane treatment they receive in Israeli prisons.

"The prisoners' demands are clear: they want Israeli prisons to stop their humiliating measures such as breaking into their sections and conducting intrusive inspections of the prisoners," said the statement. The prisoners also said that they want Israeli prison services to stop repetitive displacement of prisoners from one jail to another whilst beating them as they are taken out from their cells.

Meanwhile, Eassa Qaraqe'a, chairman of the corporation, told Xinhua that Israeli prison services have recently waged a furious assault on dozens of Palestinian prisoners in several Israeli jails, prisons and detention camps.

"Prisoners began their hunger strike today as the situation in the prisons became increasingly tense once Israeli prison authorities tightened their measures against prisoners and prevented their families from their weekly visits," said Qaraqe'a.

Dozens of the prisoners' relatives and representatives of various factions demonstrated on Thursday in Gaza before the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) calling on Israel to stop its punitive measures.

Mo'een Shadid, a spokesman for the Gaza Hamas movement, said during the protest that Palestinian prisoners currently face "extremely severe" conditions inside Israeli jails and prisons.

"Hamas warned of further Israeli escalation against prisoners, as this will negatively reflect on Palestinian territories," said Shadid. Israel still has almost 7,000 Palestinian prisoners in its jails and prisons, dozens of whom have spent over 20 years in jail.

Xinhua

UN Security Council slams deadly terrorist attack in Saudi Arabia

UNITED NATIONS, 7 Aug — The UN Security Council Thursday night condemned "in the strongest terms" a terrorist attack at a mosque in Saudi Arabia earlier in the day, which killed at least 15 people, underlining "the need to bring perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors of these reprehensible acts of terrorism to justice."

The strong condemnation came in a press statement issued here by the 15-nation UN body following the deadly terrorist attack claimed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, also known as ISIL or Da'esh, at a mosque at the headquarters of the Special Emergency Security Forces (SESF) in the Asir Region of Saudi Arabia.

"The members of the Security Council stressed again that ISIL must be defeated and that the intolerance, violence and hatred it espouses must be stamped out," the statement said. A blast triggered by a suicide bomber took place at the mosque inside a special forces headquarters in Saudi Arabia near the border with Yemen, reports said, adding that 12 of those killed were members of SESF, while the other three were workers at the compound.—*Xinhua*

People take part in a group yoga practice on the morning of the summer solstice in New York's Times Square, June 21, 2013.—Reuters

Fitness fundamentals still challenge Americans, poll finds

New York, 7 Aug — Despite an explosion of fitness advice from TV shows, blogs, books and online experts, a basic knowledge of health and exercise still eludes most Americans, according to a poll.

It showed that almost three-quarters of more than 1,000 people questioned did not know that they had to burn 3,500 calories to lose a pound of fat, according to the poll by fitness equipment maker Nautilus Inc. The results were posted online, along with an interactive quiz.

Only 39 percent grasped that an egg is a healthy source of protein and a mere 13 percent understood that women who weight train will not bulk up like a man.

The average score was 42 percent out of 100.

"There are just so many myths and misconceptions out there," said fitness adviser and author Tom Holland, including the mistaken belief, shared by 45 percent, that weight training can turn fat to muscle.

But his big concern was the belief that women who lift weights will bulk up.

"When you think how important strength training is for women, this is doing a disservice," Holland added.

Almost three-quarters recognized that running a mile burns more calories than walking a mile, and 67 percent understood that resting heart rate is a good indicator of aerobic fitness. Regular aerobic exercise makes the heart stronger and more efficient.

Forty-five percent selected morning as the most effective time of day to exercise, although afternoon or evening is equally as good.

But Jessica Matthews, senior adviser for health and fitness education at the American Council on Exercise, said the truth is sometimes complicated.

"Research shows body temperature is warmer later in the day, so afternoon exercise can be good, but we also know that people who exercise early in the morning tend to exercise more consistently," she said.

While men and women were equally misinformed, young adults 18 to 24 scored highest and seniors, 65 years and older, had the lowest marks.

"Older people may have learned things in high school physical education class that are now outdated because the science evolved," Matthews explained.

She said the Internet can be a double-edged sword.

"The Internet is a wonderful thing but not everything that appears there is true. There's misinformation, complicated information," Matthews explained. "There needs to be good practical information people can use."

Reuters

UK starting salary growth hits 18-month low in July — REC/KPMG survey

London, 7 Aug — British starting salaries for permanent jobs rose at the weakest pace in 18 months in July and firms hired staff at the slowest rate in over two years, according to a survey of recruitment agencies that adds to signs of a cooling labour market.

The monthly report by the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC) comes a day after the Bank of England said it was unclear if a recent fall in hiring was due to skills shortages or a slowing of the economy.

The REC said growth in the number of both permanent and temporary staff hired was its weakest in more than two years. While the number of vacancies continued to rise strongly, growth here was also the weakest since mid 2013, when Britain's labour market first started to pick up.

Average starting salaries for permanent jobs rose at the slowest pace in one-and-a-half years, but many recruiters said skill shortages were still putting upward pressure on wages.

Wage growth is a key factor for the Bank of England as it gauges when to raise interest rates from their crisis-era record low so it can keep future inflation in check.

Official data last month showed Britain's unemployment rate rose for the first time in more than two years in the three months to May, but earnings rose strongly. Business surveys this week pointed to a slowing pace of hiring, suggesting the labour market is moderating after a strong two-year run.

REC's chief executive Kevin Green singled out a shortage of construction workers as a particular worry.

"If construction companies don't have the people they need, both infrastructure projects and housebuilding will be constrained, and this will have an impact on wider economic growth," he said.—*Reuters*

Workers walk in the rain at the Canary Wharf business district in London in this file photo taken on November 11, 2013.—Reuters

Huawei becomes bigger name among individual consumers

Helsinki, 7 Aug — "People used to know little about Huawei, but it is becoming a really big name nowadays," a shop assistant in an electronics store in downtown Helsinki said to a Xinhua reporter on Wednesday.

The salesman also mentioned a partnership agreement that Huawei signed with Finland's prominent ice hockey team, Jokerit, on Monday. He said the move was a sign that the Chinese ICT Giant was paying huge attention to individual consumers.

Having provided communication equipment and solutions globally for more than two decades, Huawei has entered the consumer products market in high profile very recently and experienced a remarkable success.

Late July Huawei was reported to become the third largest mobile producer in the world, following Apple from the United States and Samsung from South Korea.

Finnish media took up the piece of news with a focus on the fact that Huawei reached the position after surpassing Microsoft, which purchased the brand of Nokia and the whole mobile production business from the Helsinki-based company in 2013.

In the last few weeks, Huawei became the best sold tablet brand in Finland, adding to its successful story in the consumer business. In the second quarter of this year, about 30,000 Huawei tablets were sold in Finland, surpassing Samsung and Apple, a source of the company told Xinhua on Tuesday.

"The brand sold pretty well in the beginning of this year, and in the last three weeks it was continuously ranked the first place," said the source.

While Huawei's share in the Finnish tablet market reaches about 35 percent, Apple has nevertheless secured the most sales value, followed by Samsung and Huawei.

Sofia Lehtimaki, marketing director for Huawei's consumer device business, attributed the company's strong position in Finland market to the consumer oriented approach.

"Huawei is consumer centric brand and aims to respond to the consumers´ needs by introducing devices that have an existing demand in the market," she told Xinhua.

Mikko Terho, a former fellow researcher of Nokia and now working with Huawei Finland, gave two factors as the reason for Huawei's success in Finland — "right products at right time and big change in consumer behavior." Huawei's approach has been "consistently offering products that the mobile operators want to sell," said Terho.

While Finnish consumers were loyal to Nokia as their main provider of mobile devices for quite a few years, things have started to change. Due to the collapse of Nokia and the stagnant progress of Apple, Huawei products emerged as an option.

"New video based social media solutions are fast gaining ground and Huawei products are well tailored for heavy social media consumption," Terho pointed out.

Kenneth Fredriksen, Huawei's Regional Vice President, said the Finns' unique taste for mobile phones could be "both challenge and asset" for Huawei.

In 2012, Huawei built up a research and development (R&D) center in Finland, and has recruited about 100 people so far. The team has contributed a lot in designing the latest Huawei handset portfolio, according to Fredriksen.

Talking about Huawei's core values of competitiveness, Terho believed in the "good form factors and design of products."

"Our own chipset Hisilicon provides always the latest standard and speed, so operators are very eager to take the product. In software we have the latest version of Android and our user interface modification and graphics EMUI are simple to use," said Terho.—*Xinhua*

Popular Vietnamese beach sees surge in Chinese tourists

Ho Chi Minh City, 7 Aug — The number of Chinese visiting Mui Ne in Vietnam's Binh Thuan province has increased sharply, outnumbering Russians, local online newspaper Thanh Nien (Young People) News reported on Friday.

Binh Thuan has attracted more than 2.3 million visitors so far this year, a 7.4 percent increase over last year, including 258, 200 foreigners.

According to an official report from province authorities this week, Chinese tourists accounted for 20 percent, followed by Russians at 16.5 percent. Other visitors came from South Korea, Britain, the United States, France, Australia, Germany, the Netherlands, Canada. Revenues from tourism topped 4.2 trillion Vietnamese dong (193 million U.S. dollars), an 18.5 percent increase. Tran Van Binh, deputy chairman of the Binh Thuan Tourism Association, said Chinese tourists stay in all categories of hotels, from unranked to five-star. "They also visit Mui Ne during weekdays instead of only on weekends like most local tourists. That is good for the province's tourism," Binh said.

But many Chinese came to the province for sightseeing rather than relaxing on the beach, he said. "Many of them visited Mui Ne for the first time and it is important to make them return," he stated. Vietnam welcomed more than 593,500 international visitors in July, a 12-percent increase over June. But the number of international visitors so far this year has reduced to 4.4 million, a 9.4-percent drop from last year.

Xinhua

Women shop at a store selling goods from the inter-Korean Kaesong Industrial Complex in North Korea, in Seoul, South Korea, August 6, 2015. Picture taken on August 6, 2015.—Reuters

Made in North Korea: goods store opens to brisk business in Seoul

Seoul, 7 Aug — A shop in South Korea's capital specialising in goods made in the North has run nearly $140,000 through its tills in just three months of business, helping dispel the notion that products from the impoverished state are shoddy and undesirable.

The Kaesong Industrial Complex Shop opened in May showcasing North Korea and the skills of its workers, to present the country as a viable business partner to the prosperous South.

"North Korean employees are young and are fast learners, and we use materials from the South. So the quality is just as good as products of South Korean brands, at relatively lower prices," said shop vice president Lee Joung-duk.

Lee is president of Young Inner Foam Corp, one of 125 firms from the South operating in Kaesong. The industrial zone was set up by the two Koreas in 2003 a few kilometres north of their armed border, and now employs about 53,000 North Koreans.

Lee partnered the owners of 11 other Kaesong companies, investing about $17,000 each, to set up the store to bring Kaesong goods directly to consumers.

"We are the first to be using the line 'Made in Kaesong.'"

The two-storey store, the first of several planned outlets, sells clothing and jewellery boxes in downtown Seoul. Business has been brisk, with sales of about $1,700 a day and more than 200 daily visitors.

Lee Ae-ran, a defector from the North who runs a nearby restaurant serving North Korean-style food, welcomed the idea of a platform to change attitudes towards the North's workforce.

"Many South Koreans assume North Korean products to be poor quality because the country isn't doing so well economically."

Yang Sang-cheol, a taxi driver parked outside the shop, said he would be interested in buying something for his son-in-law.

"We should know better than to always criticise and compete with each other," he said of the Koreas. "We should allow more things to come and go between us so that we can actually 'feel' one another."

Reuters

G-7 finance chiefs meeting in Sendai to be held in May 2016

Tokyo, 7 Aug — The Group of Seven finance ministers' meeting planned in the northeastern city of Sendai next year will be held on May 20 and 21, Finance Minister Taro Aso said Friday.

"We would like to hold a heart-to-heart discussion in a relaxed atmosphere as the town is in harmony with the natural environment," Aso told reporters.

"It would also be an opportunity to show our efforts to rebuild Tohoku," the northeastern region of Japan that was devastated by a massive earthquake and tsunami in 2011, he added.

Sendai, the capital of Miyagi Prefecture, is the largest city in the region.

The gathering of finance ministers and central bank chiefs will be held prior to the 2016 summit in the western Japanese prefecture of Mie on May 26-27.

The G-7 groups Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States.

Kyodo News

Akira Amari (L), Japan's minister in charge of Pacific free trade talks, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (C) and Finance Minister Taro Aso attend a regular Cabinet meeting in Tokyo on Aug. 7, 2015. Aso told reporters later in the day that the Group of Seven finance ministers' meeting planned in the Japanese city of Sendai in 2016 will be held on May 20 and 21. —Kyodo News

Policeman committed to training search dogs after 1985 jet crash

Tokyo, 7 Aug— After the bitter experience of having to handle the world's deadliest single-plane crash, a police inspector has been dedicating himself over the years to training search dogs to locate survivors at disaster sites in and outside Japan.

Yoshihiro Yamakawa, 63, of the Metropolitan Police Department still remembers the day when he went to the site where Japan Airlines flight 123 carrying 524 passengers and crew crashed on Mt. Osutaka in Gunma Prefecture on Aug. 12, 1985.

Soaked in sweat and covered in mud, he spent nearly 5 hours climbing a trackless mountainside. The blazing rays from the sun seared his skin.

Once Yamakawa arrived — at a scene of scorched plane wreckage with a pervading stench of oil — he spotted the dead body of a young girl who was probably around the same age as his own daughter at the time.

As he carried countless bodies wrapped in blankets off the mountain, Yamakawa's one thought was, "Weren't there any other ways to rescue more people?" Only four people survived the crash. Back in Tokyo, he asked to be transferred to an office in charge of search dogs.

But when the 1995 Great Hanshin Earthquake struck western Japan, Yamakawa said, his team was not dispatched because of insufficient training in disaster relief work.

He was all the more disappointed after seeing on television that search dogs dispatched from overseas were active in the rescue operation.

After years of training, Yamakawa's first disaster-relief mission using search dogs came in 2003, when an earthquake hit Algeria. The following year, at the site of an earthquake in Niigata Prefecture, a dog he had taken great pains to train found a 2-year-old boy wedged between rocks from a mudslide. With the help of a special Tokyo Fire Department squad, the boy was finally rescued after around 92 hours.

"On Osutaka, I cried tears of sorrow but at that time (in Niigata) I shed tears of joy," Yamakawa said. Since then he has brought his search dogs to numerous disaster sites, including northeastern Japan after the 2011 earthquake and tsunami disaster and Hiroshima city following mudslides last summer.

Whenever a disaster happens, Yamakawa says he recalls the hot summer of the plane crash site 30 years ago.—*Kyodo News*

Request for Proposal (RfP) for Myanmar Satellite System

The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) has issued a Request for Proposals (RfP) to obtain proposals for the lease of multiple satellite transponders through a condosat agreement. The RfP can be downloaded from http://www.mcit.gov.mm/tenders_listing.
Proposals must arrive at the MCIT by 5:00 P.M. on September 1st, 2015.

Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX)

Logo Design Competition

Yangon Stock Exchange Joint-Venture Co., Ltd. ("YSX") is newly established stock exchange in Myanmar. YSX invites company's logo design from Myanmar people and a winner design becomes YSX's official logo!
- Eligibility: Myanmar citizens
- Deadline: 31st August 2015
- Prize: MMK 500,000

Submission: by Email (logodesign.ysx@gmail.com) or on CD-R to YSX's office

For more information, please visit our website below!
http://ysx-mm.com/

Contact:
Yangon Stock Exchange Joint-Venture Co., Ltd.
2nd Floor of MEB (H.O) Building, 21-25 Sule Pagoda Road, Kyauktada Township, Yangon
- Phone: 09-251169347 (9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)
- Email: logodesign.ysx@gmail.com

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV CONMAR DELTA VOY NO (005W)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV CONMAR DELTA VOY NO (005W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8.8.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of B.S.W 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 THE SHIPPING CORP. OF INDIA LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV KULSAMUT VOY NO (09/15)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KULSAMUT VOY NO (09/15) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8.8.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W (7) 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 KULNATEE CO

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INVITATION FOR PRICE QUOTATIONS

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received financing from the International Development Association (IDA) toward the cost of the National Community Driven Development Project (NCDDP). The Department of Rural Development (DRD) of the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, in its role as implementing agency of the NCDDP, intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of this credit to eligible payments under the contract for which this Request for Quotation is issued.
Department of Rural Development now invites eligible suppliers to express their interest in supplying the following items:

Ref No	Description of Goods or Services	Quantity	Units
G. 9	Microsoft Office Software	300	Licenses
G. 11(b)	GSM Mobile	36	Nos
G.18	MIS Server	18	Units
G.27	Motorcycle Crash Helmets	1493	Pieces

The Request for Quotation must be submitted in a written form to the address below (in person) by **August 28, 2015** and clearly indicate one or more of the Reference number(s) above. Eligible suppliers having expressed interest will receive a REQUEST FOR QUOTATION. Sealed Quotations will be submitted to the address below at the latest the dead line, after which no Quotations will be accepted.
The goods will be contracted in 4 (four) separate contracts. Suppliers will be selected following the Shopping Method as per the "Guidelines for Procurement of Goods, Works and non-Consulting Services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers" dated January 2011.
Please submit Request for Quotation with Sealed Envelope to:U Kyaw Soe, Deputy Director General, Department of Rural Development, Office No.(14), Nay Pyi Taw.
For detailed information please contact Mr. U Kyaw Swa Aung, Director, Procurement and Logistic Section, Mobile phone 0943434333 or office phone 067409413.
For more information on the NCDD Project please also visit DRD's Website: www.cdd.drdmyanmar.org.

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

COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT FOR YANGON CENTRAL RAILWAYS STATION COMPLEX

INVITATION TO SUBMIT EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FROM DEVELOPERS

1. In line with the National Development Plan, the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has been identifying the economic potentials to contribute to the country's economic development. As our endeavors for national development, Myanma Railways (MR) is committed to develop Yangon Central Railways Station Area as a Rail Concerned Business, High-rise Building, Comprehensive Development and Transport System also the essential part of Greater Yangon City development.

2. During previous Tendering process Myanma Railways was unable to select successful developer.

3. Myanma Railways now invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from reputable local, international or joint venture developers to undertake design and build works for Yangon Central Railways Station Area Comprehensive Development.

4. Interested Developers shall submit EOI documents to prove themselves capable enough for the development. MR shall be in charge of the selection of potential developer as prequalification.

5. Developers passing the prequalification shall be invited to prepare and submit Technical and Financial proposal documents.

6. The successful Tenderer (hereinafter referred to as the "Concessionaire"), shall be responsible for designing, engineering, financing, procurement, construction, operation and maintenance of the Project under and in accordance with the provisions of a concession agreement to be entered into between the successful Tenderer and the Myanma Railways.

7. EOI Document and Background information of the proposed Yangon Central Railways Station Development could be obtained from the above address or from the website http://www.yangonrailwaystation.com.mm . Enquiries can be made by contacting e-mail: yrsdev@yangonrailwaystation.com.mm or calling telephones +95 1 393424; 291985 or 291994.

8. The EOI in original hard copy, one duplicate copy and an electronic copy of the EOI in CD ROM shall be submitted to the Deputy General Manager, Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Corner of Theinbyu Street and Merchant Street, Botahtaung Township, Yangon, Myanmar, Phone; + 95-1-291985, 291994 or 393424 not later than 14:00 hours on 6 November 2015. Submission by email shall NOT be entertained.

9. Myanma Railways reserves the right to accept or reject any EOI, and to annul the selection process and reject all expression at any time, without there by incurring any liability to the affected Developers or Myanma Railways.

Managing Director
Myanma Railways
Ministry of Rail Transportation

China to spend 1.6 bln on wetlands protection

BEIJING, 7 Aug — The central government plans to spend 1.6 billion yuan (262 million U.S. dollars) to preserve and restore China's wetlands, the Ministry of Finance said on Friday.

The planned investment includes 680 million yuan for protection and restoration projects, 405 million in compensation for services that benefit the environment, 400 million in incentives for those who help protect the environment and another 115 million used to revert agricultural lands to wetlands.

China ranked the fourth in the world in terms of wetland surface, with important wetlands such as Poyang Lake and Dongting Lake. The government vowed to protect the wetlands with 1.59 billion yuan in fiscal spending last year, helping them expand in many parts of the country.—*Xinhua*

WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is strong in the Andaman Sea and South Bay and weak to moderate elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.
FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 8th August, 2015: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Magway Region and Kayah State, scattered in Mandalay and Bago Regions, fairly widespread in Yangon Region, Shan and Rakhine States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavy falls in Lower Sagaing and Ayeyarwady Regions, Mon State. Degree of certainty is (100%).
STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough sea are likely at times Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon - Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35) m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters.
OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of increase of rain in the Southern Myanmar areas.
FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 8th August, 2015: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).
FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 8th August, 2015: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).
FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 8th August, 2015: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

Jennifer Aniston weds Justin Theroux in LA

Actress Jennifer Aniston and fiance Justin Theroux arrive at the 2015 Vanity Fair Oscar Party in Beverly Hills, California, in this file photo taken February 22, 2015.—Reuters

Los Angeles, 7 Aug — Former "Friends" star Jennifer Aniston has married her longtime boyfriend Justin Theroux at their Los Angeles-area home in a secret ceremony that took the media and many of the couple's guests by surprise, celebrity media reported on Thursday.

People magazine and Us Weekly, citing unidentified sources, said the couple, who have been dating for four years, exchanged vows in front of some 70 family members and friends at their Bel-Air home on Wednesday.

Representatives of the couple did not return requests for comment. But celebrity news website TMZ.com posted photos of a stage, an outdoor dance floor, dining tables and a large cake being brought into the house that Aniston and Theroux share in Bel-Air, a posh hilltop neighborhood of Los Angeles.

"Guests were told it was a birthday party for Justin. Jen and Justin wanted to surprise guests and guests were certainly surprised," People magazine reported, citing a source.

"Jen has been very good at keeping her wedding planning secret. Only her closest confidants knew that the party was actually a surprise wedding."

Aniston, 46, whose first marriage to actor Brad Pitt ended in divorce 10 years ago, met actor and "Tropic Thunder" screenwriter Theroux, who turns 44 next week, in 2008, and the couple announced their engagement in 2012.

People and Us Weekly said guests at the wedding included Aniston's "Friends" costar Lisa Kudrow, comedians Ellen DeGeneres and Chelsea Handler, TV's "America's Got Talent" judge Howard Stern and British actress Emily Blunt.

Aniston has forged a lucrative film career in romantic comedies such as "Marley & Me" and "Just Go with It," since the hit TV comedy "Friends" ended in 2004, having made her a global star.

Her love life, including romances with musician John Mayer and actor Vince Vaughn, has been the focus of intense celebrity media speculation since the split with Pitt, who went on to strike up a relationship with Angelina Jolie. Pitt and Jolie married quietly in France in August 2014.

Reuters

Actor Harrison Ford doesn't remember small plane crash

Los Angeles, 7 Aug — Actor Harrison Ford does not recall the moments before crashing his vintage plane onto a Los Angeles-area golf course in March, badly damaging the aircraft and suffering serious injuries, according to an National Transportation Safety Board report released on Thursday.

The 72-year-old star of such blockbuster films as "Star Wars" and "Raiders of the Los Ark" was the sole occupant of the 1942 single-engine Ryan Aeronautical ST-3KR when it went down on a golf course near the Santa Monica Municipal Airport.

Ford had just taken off from the airport on March 5 when he experienced a loss of power at about 1,100 feet (335 meters), according to the report, which was published in the Los Angeles Times.

"(The pilot) stated that he did not attempt an engine restart but maintained an airspeed of 85 mph (137 kph) and initiated a left turn back toward the airport; however during the approach he realized that the airplane was unable to reach the runway," an NTSB investigator said in the report.

"The pilot did not recall anything further about the accident sequence," the investigator said. "Subsequently, the airplane struck the top of a tree that was about 65 feet (20 meters) tall and then impacted the ground in an open area of the golf course."

The crash, which saw the actor's plane come down a short distance from houses, follows years of complaints by residents in the heavily populated beachside community outside Los Angeles that the airport interferes with their quality of life.

Reuters

Actor Harrison Ford's damaged airplane is taken away after its crash landing at Penmar Golf Course in Venice, Los Angeles California March 6, 2015.—Reuters

The guests launch the 65th Miss World Final in Sanya, south China's Hainan Province, Aug. 6, 2015. Miss World Organization announced at a press conference that the 65th Miss World Final would be held on December 19 in Sanya.—Xinhua

Kristen finds expectations of actor 'really ridiculous'

Los Angeles, 7 Aug — "Spider-Man" star Kirsten Dunst feels the expectations that actors have placed on them are "really ridiculous".

The 33-year-old actress said it is "unfair" to expect that actor will always say good things and not get hurt, reported People magazine.

"What people expect of an actor is totally ridiculous.

It's unfair that an artist is expected to speak really well in public and have skin tough enough to withstand sometimes really hurtful criticism, but also, in order to do the job, be really sensitive and in touch with their feelings," Dunst said.

But, the actress admitted that she has learned to get through it by staying true to her own self.

"So all you can do is be yourself ? just be who the hell you are," she said.

Dunst also opened up about her love life with actor Garrett Hedlund.

"We've been together for three and a half years, so, yes, it's going really well. We're the same age. We have similar backgrounds. He feels like family to me," she said.

PTI

Steven Spielberg's 'Ready Player One' to release in 2017

Los Angeles, 7 Aug — Filmmaker Steven Spielberg's upcoming sci-fi action adventure project "Ready Player One" will release on December 15, 2017.

An adaptation of Ernest Cline's novel, the story is set in a virtual world called Oasis and revolves around a teenager, who finds himself competing in a treasure hunt against ruthless foes after the game's founder dies and offers his fortune as the grand prize.

Screenwriter Zak Penn has adapted the novel, according to The Hollywood Reporter. Spielberg, Donald De Line and Dan Fara are producing the film. The project, backed by Warner Bros, was originally brought to the Studio by De Line and Farah. "Any film from Steven Spielberg is an event film, so it felt right to date this thrilling new project from one of our greatest filmmakers for the holiday season," said Dan Fellman, president of domestic distribution, Warner Bros in a statement. Spielberg, 68, was roped in to direct the film in March.—*PTI*

Direcor Steven Spielberg

Asia's first sprint king Ning puts doping stain behind him

China's Ning Zetao celebrates after winning the men's 100m freestyle final at the Aquatics World Championships in Kazan, Russia, 6 Aug, 2015.—Reuters

Kazan, (Russia) 7 Aug — Ning Zetao's stunning 100 metres freestyle win at the world championships was an unexpected triumph for a swimmer determined to put a troubled past and the smear of a doping ban behind him.

The 22-year-old from China's heartland province of Henan became the first Asian swimmer to win the blue riband event, roaring home to edge Australian favourite Cameron McEvoy and clock an impressive 47.85 seconds in the Kazan pool.

"I didn't come here expecting any medal, not even dreamed of it," said Ning, who held his swimming cap aloft to show the red flag of China to the terraces.

"When I touched the wall I didn't think I could come first so it was huge to see it on the board."

Ning's first world title came four years after he tested positive for clenbuterol, a stimulant that has put an array of high-profile athletes in hot water, including Tour de France-winning cyclist Alberto Contador and Mexican boxer Erik Morales.

Many caught with it in their systems have claimed to have unwittingly ingested it from eating contaminated meat from animals fed the chemical to keep them lean.

Then an up-and-coming teenager swimming for a provincial team affiliated with China's navy, Ning pleaded the same case but was banned for a year.

"(The team's) conditions weren't especially good. I would often eat instant noodles at night," he said in comments published by Chinese magazine Life Week (www.lifeweek.com.cn) last month.

"It wouldn't be good to just eat noodles alone. I was still growing, so I'd add some ham, some beef, salted duck egg to be kinder to myself.

"I've said 10,000 times that this 'slip of the tongue' and my greediness was to be a life-long lesson."

The clenbuterol issue is but one of a number of bitter pills Ning has had to swallow in his rise to the pinnacle of world swimming.

He has long battled a stomach condition that saps him of strength and spent most of 2013 seeing specialists and trying different medicines to keep it under control.

He was also born with a chronic bone condition in his right knee, which caused him to switch to freestyle earlier in his career after having first trained as a breaststroke specialist.

However, Ning's biggest torture was to wait out the year of his ban, and though he never betrayed his depression to team mates, he told a coach that he would often "shed tears in the water".

His break-out moment came at China's 2013 National Games when he set Asian records in both the 50 and 100m freestyle.

A year later he celebrated Asian Games gold at Incheon where he became the first swimmer from the continent to break the 48-second barrier in the 100m, while sweeping another three titles.

Named the Best Male Athlete of 2014 by state broadcaster CCTV, Ning now has more than 1.5 million followers on his Weibo account, China's Twitter-like social media platform, and has joined Olympic and world 1,500m freestyle champion Sun Yang as a household name in his home country.

With Russian swimming great Alexander Popov looking on, Ning gave a naval salute on the winner's podium as China's national anthem rang out over the pool.

In a 2013 interview, Ning said Popov was his idol, for returning to the pool to win more titles after being stabbed in a dispute with Moscow street vendors shortly after the 1996 Atlanta Games.

"He is a fighter and I need to learn from him," Ning said.—*Reuters*

U.S. authorities return rare Stradivarius violin stolen in 1980

New York, 7 Aug — On a late June afternoon in a Manhattan hotel, a woman handed one of the world's rarest musical instruments to Phillip Injeian, a violin maker and appraiser.

The woman was simply hoping to learn more about the violin, which she had received years before as a gift from her late former husband, Philip Johnson. But Injeian immediately recognised it for what it was: a valuable Stradivarius violin that had been stolen 35 years earlier.

"It was a 'Eureka' moment," Injeian said at a press conference on Thursday.

U.S. authorities formally returned the violin to the family of its rightful owner, the famed Polish violinist Roman Totenberg, who died in 2012 at the age of 101.

The violin, known as the Ames Stradivarius, was made by renowned Italian violin maker Antonio Stradivari in 1734.

Approximately 550 Stradivarius instruments, including violins, violas and cellos, remain in existence. One violin sold for a record $15.9 million at auction in 2011.

The Ames violin was stolen in 1980 after Totenberg delivered a performance in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The Ames Stradivarius violin is placed for viewing during a news conference in New York August 6, 2015.— Reuters

Its recovery was first reported earlier on Thursday on National Public Radio by Nina Totenberg, its legal affairs correspondent and a daughter of Roman Totenberg.

In an interview, Nina Totenberg said her father had long suspected the violin was taken by Johnson, another violinist. Johnson was never charged and died in 2011.

"The FBI didn't have enough for a search warrant," she said. "So that was that." When Johnson's former wife showed Injeian the violin, he immediately called authorities. The woman voluntarily agreed to return it to the Totenberg family once she learned it was stolen, according to Manhattan U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara.

Asked whether Johnson had stolen the violin, Bharara declined to comment, saying that the "facts speak for themselves." He added that no criminal case is expected against the woman.

Nina Totenberg said the family plans to sell the violin to a performer.

"Stradivarius owners are really just guardians of these great instruments," she said. "They are meant to be played."

A handful of stolen Stradivarius instruments remains missing, including a 1727 violin taken from the New York City apartment of violinist Erica Morini in 1995.

Last year, the concertmaster of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra was attacked with a stun gun after a performance and robbed of his Stradivarius violin. Two men were convicted and sentenced to prison for the crime, and the violin was recovered.

Reuters

Dutch police arrest 60 before Southampton, Vitesse match

Amsterdam, 7 Aug — Police detained at least 60 soccer supporters in the city of Arnhem on Thursday after violence broke out ahead of a Europa League qualifying game between Vitesse and Southampton, news agency ANP reported.

One police officer was injured during clashes with rioters, who brawled and threw chairs in the town's main square. Police on horseback charged the crowd to break up fighting rival supporters, ANP said. It was unclear if any supporters were injured. Most of those detained were fans of the Dutch side, it said.—*Reuters*

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(8-8-2015 07:00 am~9-8-2015 07:00 am) MST

* News
* Great Shwedagon - Auspicious Grounds And Devotional Posts
* Myanmar's Traditions and Culture "The Golden Land"
* News
* Lantern Floating Festival in Kyauk Kyi Township
* The Beauty In The North Of Myanmar
* News
* Let's Cook (Episode- 10)
* Independent Filmmaker
* Sitagu International Buddhist Academy (Part-2)
* A Tea Business: Pankwan (Part-1)
* News
* Discovering Tribes "Bwe"
* Philatelic Pleasure
* News
* Beauties Of Makyee Island - Island Of Tamarind Tree
* Made in Myanmar "Mixxo"
* Today Myanmar "Reasons Behind Traffic and Accident"
* News
* Temple Stalls
* News
* Yathe Taung Township In A Nut-Shell
* Culture Show: Theatrical Make Up
* News
* Writer, Philanthropist: Daw Than Myint Aung (Part-1)
* Kyeikhteeyoe: Welcome All
* News
* Myanmar Social & Charitable Association (Ep-1) Mingalar Byuha
* Kindhearted Pet Lovers
* News
* Soft Crab Breeding Procedure
* Myanmar Street Food

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(8-8-2015, Saturday)

6:00 am
• Classical Songs
6:10 am
• Teleplay
7:00 am
• Fashion Music
7:20 am
• Cassette Drama
8:30 am
• Dramatic Arts
9:55 am
• Documentary
10:25 am
• Pyi Thu Ni Ti
10:50 am
• Musical Programme
11:10 am
• Myanmar Video

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Saturday, 8 August, 2015

Pyae Sone Naing sends Myanmar U-16 to final

Phnom Penh, 7 Aug — Myanmar beat Laos 1-0 in first semifinal in the AFF U-16 Championship 2015 on Friday.

Third-place match and final will be held on 9 August.—*GNLM*

Mayweather defends upcoming Berto fight

Los Angeles, 7 Aug — Floyd Mayweather's latest title defense began outside the ring on Thursday as he fought to validate his upcoming bout against Andre Berto.

Mayweather, coming off his victory over Manny Pacquiao in May, is gearing up for what he says will be the final fight of his career on Sept. 12 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

Victory would take him to 49-0 and match the record of former heavyweight great Rocky Marciano, though Mayweather has been criticized for choosing what many consider an easy opponent for his swan song.

"I hear I've been getting backlash. I chose Berto because he's exciting," Mayweather told reporters from his podium.

"The difference between Berto and Pacquiao is you guys put all the hype in Manny. But this fight is a very intriguing matchup."

The fight is a far cry from Mayweather's 'mega-fight' clash with Pacquiao, which took five years to finalise and became the richest bout in boxing.

There was less fanfare on Thursday with both Mayweather and Berto in casual dress and flanked by the boxers confirmed for the undercard while the 38-year-old Mayweather took time out to pose for photos with fans.

The 31-year-old Berto, who has known Mayweather since he was a amateur, has a 30-3 record and is a two-time welterweight world titleholder, but is just 3-3 in his past six bouts.

Aug 6, 2015; Los Angeles, CA, USA; Mayweather Promotions CEO Leonard Ellerbe looks on as Floyd Mayweather, Jr. and Andre Berto face off during a press conference to announce the upcoming fight on September 12, 2015 at J.W. Marriott LA Live.—Reuters

Despite the impressions that Mayweather ignored several more qualified boxers, Berto promised if the fight does not deliver a good show he would not be to blame.

"Have you ever seen a boring Andre Berto fight? Everyone needs to question Floyd," Berto said in relation to reaction from the outcome of the clash with Pacquiao where Mayweather was criticized for being too defensive and the fight failed to live up to expectations.

"Every time I fight it's exciting. Every time Pacquiao fights it's exciting. There's one common denominator that's making it (boring)."

For his part, Mayweather does not seem fazed by the muted interest in the fight. "No one is forced to buy this fight," Mayweather added.

"Andre Berto is going to push Floyd Mayweather to the limit. That's one thing I do know."

Reuters

Nishikori advances to quarterfinals in Washington

Japan's Kei Nishikori hits a forehand in his third-round match against Leonardo Mayer of Argentina at the Citi Open in Washington on Aug. 6, 2015. Nishikori won 6-4, 6-4 to advance to the quarterfinals.—Kyodo News

Washington, 7 Aug — Japan's Kei Nishikori defeated Leonardo Mayer of Argentina in straight sets on Thursday to advance to the Citi Open quarterfinals for the second year in a row. Second-seeded Nishikori never faced a break point as he dispatched his opponent 6-4, 6-4 in a little over an hour and a half. "I was returning well, and that's why I could break once each set," Nishikori said.

In the first set, which was interrupted twice as light rainstorms in the area caused delays lasting less than ten minutes each, Nishikori managed a decisive break in the seventh game. He followed an aggressive forehand return with a crafty drop shot to win the game's first point, and converted the final point in a triple break opportunity as Mayer's 40-30 forehand sailed long. Nishikori served out the set, closing with an ace up the middle. After creating another triple break chance in the ninth game of the second set, Nishikori secured a crucial break as world No. 35 Mayer dumped an unforced error into the net. The Japanese ace held serve for the win. "I have been training hard and looking forward to playing this week," Nishikori said of his return to competition after withdrawing from a second-round match at Wimbledon due to a left calf injury.

"I'm feeling pretty well. I love hard court tennis, so I hope I can do well this summer season."

The Citi Open is a hard court tune-up ahead of the U.S. Open, where Nishikori reached the final last year. He faces 62nd-ranked Sam Groth of Australia in the quarterfinals of the Washington event.

Kyodo News

Di Maria says sorry to United fans in open letter

New Paris Saint Germain player, Argentina's Angel Di Maria, poses for supporters after a news conference in Paris, France, August 6, 2015. Reuters

Paris, 7 Aug — Angel Di Maria apologised to Manchester United fans for his underwhelming stint at Old Trafford but insisted it was not due to a lack of effort.

The Argentina international joined United for a British record fee of almost 60 million pounds (about $93 million) from Real Madrid last year but completed a switch to French champions Paris St Germain on Thursday after only 12 months.

"I write this note to thank all the Manchester United family for the great support received during the year I've been part of this Club," Di Maria told United fans in an open letter, published widely by the British media.

"I'm aware things didn't work as we all expected and believe me, I feel really sorry about it."

The winger made an impressive start at Old Trafford with three goals in his first four games, but suffered a two-month injury layoff and then failed to nail down a regular starting place under manager Louis Van Gaal.

"I can guarantee you it was not for trying. I did my best but football is not like maths: often a lot of things out of our control affect the way we feel and the way things turn out," the 27-year-old said.

"I am sorry it did not work out as I would have wished in this amazing huge club."

Di Maria was also reportedly unsettled by a break-in at his Chesire home in January.

Reuters

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