

Three Bridges in Myanmar of world fame Part III

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Tiger injures two people in Kawkayeik

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All you need is a change of heart

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PARKWAY PLOT NOT SOLD

“A grant of land is not a deed of sale.”

U Aung Naing Oo

Secretary, Myanmar Investment Commission

ISSUING a grant of land is not signing a deed of sale. We have not sold the plot of land at the corner of Bogyoke Aung San Street and Phonegyi Street to Singapore-based Parkway Hospital Group, which has formed a joint venture with Myanmar nationals with an ownership ratio of 67.5

per cent versus 32.5 per cent, said U Aung Naing Oo, the secretary of Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC), in his refutation of the rumours spreading widely that the government has sold out the 4.4-acre plot of land to foreign entrepreneurs.

We've rented this plot of land

to this joint venture for 50 years. Upon termination of the 50-year contract, the government will get back not only the land but also all the buildings constructed on it. We get the money as rent. When we considered the project proposal, we've not only taken into

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Workers are seen catching fish at a fishing farm. PHOTO: MIN THIT

Fish farmers fortify fisheries for El Niño

ALTHOUGH an El Niño weather front has been predicted to cause excessive heat and water scarcity in the country, there will be no immediate impact on local fish consumption, reported Myanmar fish breeders.

Dr Myint Sein, a local fish breeder, said local fish consumption will not be affected by El Niño event since preventive measures have been taken to help breeders reduce possible losses.

However, the breeder warned of further drops in the country's fish exports in the coming fiscal year due to the effects of El Niño.

The Myanmar Fisheries Federation has publicised necessary measures to be taken by breeders to prevent their fish farms from excessive heat in the event of extreme weather.

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Incumbent govt may not be accountable to new parliament: U Ye Htut

MP Daw Khin San Hlaing submitted an urgent proposal to the parliament yesterday calling for a discussion on in the government's urgent privatisation of public enterprises and properties after the election and the forced removal of squatters.

However, Union-level government bodies decided not to appear in parliament to discuss the proposal, despite being invited by MPs.

In an interview with *Myanmar News Agency*, Union Minister for Information U Ye Htut said: "Whether the incumbent

Union government should be accountable to the second parliament or not is an issue to be reviewed according to the constitution."

However, Union-level ministers and deputy ministers did offer clarifications on issues related to the conflict in northern Shan State and on El Niño preparations as they are connected with national interests, U Ye Htut said.

Following questions and proposals submitted to the second parliament, the current government decided to suspend its clarifications and discussions in

parliament, he said.

"In order to confer on issues with the incumbent government, the incoming government can hold discussions with the support committees formed for to manage the handover of the responsibilities of the State," said the Union minister.

The information minister also said the accusations made by MP Daw Khin San Hlaing in parliament are contrary to the truth.

"For example, in the 2600 MHz issue the RedLink company used the wave free of charge

from Yatanarpon Teleport since 2009 for commercial purposes, so the government tendered out that wave in order not to cause any more losses for the State," said the Union minister.

The government has a plan to backdate the costs to year the company started to use the wave, he added.

Though members of the Union government will not appear in parliament, they will clarify to the people the issues raised by MP Daw Khin San Hlaing, the Union minister said.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Union Minister for Information U Ye Htut. PHOTO: MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw

Amyotha Hluttaw continues for 12th day, endorsing six inter-parliamentary friendship associations

THE Second Amyotha Hluttaw's first regular session entered its 12th day, endorsing the formation of inter-parliamentary friendship associations with the proposed members yesterday.

Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than announced that U Zon Hlyal Htan of Chin State Constituency 4 has been appointed as chairman of the Myanmar-Australia Inter-parliamentary Friendship As-

sociation, U Kyaw Thiha of Mandalay Region Constituency 12 as chairman of the Myanmar-Republic of Korea Inter-parliamentary Friendship Association, Dr Than Win of Mandalay Region Constituency 1 as chairman of the Myanmar-Malaysia Inter-parliamentary Friendship Association and Dr Htay Kywe of Yangon Region Constituency 1 as chairman of the Myanmar-Philippines

Inter-parliamentary Friendship Association. Likewise, the Amyotha Hluttaw approved the Myanmar-Indonesia Inter-parliamentary Friendship Association that will be chaired by Dr Win Myat Aye of Bago Region Constituency 4 and the Myanmar-China Inter-parliamentary Friendship Association by Dr Mya Thaung of Bago Region Constituency 7. — Myanmar News Agency



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than. PHOTO: MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw

Pyithu Hluttaw session continues with urgent motions, parliamentary committee formation



U Lagan Zal Jon. PHOTO: MNA



U Saw Victor Kha Laik. PHOTO: MNA



Daw Khin San Hlaing. PHOTO: MNA

THE second Pyithu Hluttaw's first regular session entered its 12th day, with discussions on an urgent motion, submission of another urgent motion and the proposed formation of three parliamentary committees.

A total of 23 representatives held discussions on an urgent motion submitted by U Lagan Zal Jon of Waingmaw Constituency, calling on the Union government to support mass participation in the fight against narcotic drugs, protect citizens from possible attacks and extend

necessary assistance to them.

The urgent motion was put to the vote and approved in favour of majority at the Parliament.

Daw Khin San Hlaing of Pale Constituency put forwards an urgent motion calling for necessary measures to prevent the process of quickly transferring, selling, leasing and privatising state-owned property and enterprises, granting projects with no proper management, removing squatters by force and the managing of natural resources with-

out necessary measures in place or having agreements prior to the transfer of State responsibilities.

While seeking parliamentary approval the Pyithu Hluttaw approved the urgent motion to be discussed.

Next, the Speaker proposed to form three parliamentary committees— The Economic and Financial Development Committee, the Public Administration Committee and the Citizen's Fundamental Rights Committee. — Myanmar News Agency

Myanmar Saemaul Undong training school breaks ground

A STAKE-driving ceremony at the future site of the Myanmar Saemaul Undong training school was held in Zeyathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday to mark Peasants' Day that falls on second of March.

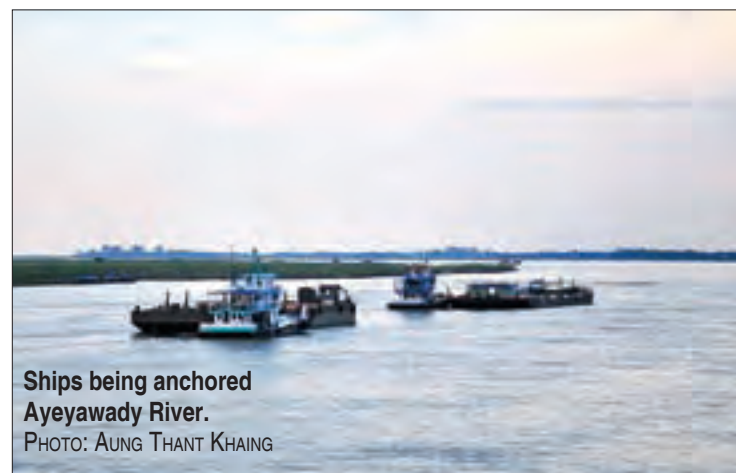
The event was attended by Union Ministers U Soe Maung, U Myint Hlaing and U Win Myint, Deputy Minister U Ohn Than, Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Myint Shwe, President of the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) Mr. Kim Young Mok, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Myanmar Mr. Lee Baek-soon, KOICA res-

ident representative Mr. Nam Kwon Hyoung and officials.

Following greetings by Union Minister U Myint Hlaing, the KOICA President and the Korean ambassador, officials concerned drove stakes for the construction of the training school.

The Myanmar Saemaul Undong construction project will be implemented by the Republic of Korea as a gesture of delivering on its pledge to support the Myanmar President's new village project that was revealed during his visit to the ROK in 2012. — Myanmar News Agency

Waterway warning released on dangers posed by rising water level



Ships being anchored Ayeyawady River. PHOTO: AUNG THANT KHAING

THE Water Resources Utilisation Department has warned of the dangers on waterways after the sudden surge in the water levels of Ayeyawady River brought about by recent downpours in Kachin State, with the release of a warning for watercrafts on Wednesday.

Its warning came after a statement by the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology in Nay Pyi Taw saying that water level of Ayeyawady River in Myitkyina rose by 12 feet.

U Toe Aung Lin, deputy director of the Water Resources Utilisation Department in Mandalay stressed the need of using old waterways by watercrafts while the river is widened fol-

lowing the water level rise.

The department's warning calls for the use of waterways previously set by the department and adherence to the rules while crossing under river-crossing bridges.

The water level rose to 551 centimeters yesterday from the level of 359 centimeters two days ago, said U Than Zaw, assistant director of the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology in Mandalay. The department said that water levels of the Ayeyawady River are expected to reach five feet from the current level of 348 centimeters in Mandalay and 233 centimeters in Sagaing over the next few days. — Aung Thant Khaing

Tiger injures two people in Kawkayeik



Villagers check the dead body of the tiger. PHOTO: DAWNA HTET AUNG

TWO people were injured in a tiger attack in Kawkayeik township, Kayin State, yesterday morning, according to a local army officer.

An officer from the local border guard force confirmed the report, adding that the tiger was shot around 11.30 am. The two victims are receiving medical treatment at the township's hospital. — Myanmar News Agency

Parkway Plot not sold

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account the rents but also other important social, health and education factors, he continued.

Because we will have a world class hospital, our people will no longer need to go to another country to undergo medical treatment or medical check-ups. We can have this joint venture to conduct training courses for our physicians, surgeons, nurses and medical technicians as agreed in the contract signed. This is a good chance of technology import and technical assistance at least. And as this plot of land is located close to Yangon General Hospital, University of Nursing and other privately owned hospitals and clinics, it is quite convenient to provide mutual assistance and to co-operate closely, explained U Aung Naing Oo at great length.

Buyers of Dagon City Housing Estate needn't worry about their apartments

Those who have bought apartments at the Dagon City Housing Estate under an advanced payment system need not worry about losses as all four construction companies will be compensated by granting them plots of land as replacement, said the Myanmar News Agency, quoting the secretary of Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) who it exclusively interviewed yesterday.

According to U Aung Naing Oo, the secretary of MIC, Marga Land Mart has already been granted more than 17.7 acres of land at the corner of Kaba Aye Pagoda Road and Thitsar Street. This area of land is more than half of 33 acre land belonging to the Ministry of Science and Technol-

ogy.

The remaining three developers will also be granted plots of land as a replacement for the land granted to them at the foot of Shwedagon Pagoda to compensate their losses occurred in the suspension of the Dagon City Project to ensure the sustainability of Singuttara Hill on which Shwedagon Pagoda was built.

U Aung Naing Oo justified the granting of new plots of land as a replacement by saying that those who suffer are the citizens who have purchased the apartments under the advanced payment system. However, he guaranteed that MIC has taken all necessary measures to ensure no evil consequences will arise from the granting of new plots of land to the developers.— *Myanmar News Agency*

Appointments

1. The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has transferred Director General Dr Ye Tint Tun of the Department of Agricultural Research under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation to the Department of Agriculture under the same ministry as Director General from the date he assumes charge of his duties.
2. The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed the following persons as heads of service organisations shown against each on probation from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name	Appointment
(a) U Tin Myint	Director General
Deputy Director General	General Administration
General Administration	Department
Department	Ministry of Home Affairs
Ministry of Home Affairs	
(b) Dr Daw Yi Aye	Rector
Pro Rector	University of Cooperatives
University of Cooperatives	(Sagaing)
(Sagaing)	Ministry of Cooperatives
Ministry of Cooperatives	
(c) Dr Win Tun	Director General
Pro Rector	Department of Human
Monywa Institute of Economics	Resources and
Higher Education Department	Educational Planning
Ministry of Education	Ministry of Education

Japan and Myanmar conduct research on ancient pottery kilns in Mon and Kayin States

A REPORT of findings from a field study conducted by Myanmar archaeologists and their Japanese counterparts on ancient earthen kilns in Mon and Kayin States, has been submitted, according to the Mon State government.

The study group included a group of Japanese archaeologists from the Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, a group of Myanmar archaeologists and teachers from Yangon University.

Archaeological digs were conducted by the group in February in locations of earthen kilns in the township of Kyaikmayaw in Mon State and Kawkaeik in Kayin State, says Dr. Min Nway Soe, Mon State Minister of Finance and Projects.

“One group of foreigners after another made their way to our Mon State. Brick experts studied the bricks. Bead experts, the beads; pot experts the pots, they each came and conducted study on that which was relevant to their field of expertise. I think foreign experts came to study our culture

and our way of life. Research digs are currently being conducted in the villages of Bilin and Winka to be able to identify the site as the ancient capital of Thuwannabumi. But, I don't know how the current research on pots and beads is connected to the Thuwannabumi excavation activities.” said Dr. Min Nway Soe.

The study on the earthen kilns in Mon and Kayin States was conducted between 2-7 February. During this six day period, archaeological field studies, excavation digs and conservation activities were carried out.

Findings on the mound of an ancient earthen kiln over in the Kyaikmaraw township village of Kawtar revealed that half of it was already destroyed, while pot, cup and brick fragments found on the face of the mound were still of good quality, showing good colours.

However, it is known that the earthen kiln was not a location of production for large scale pot varieties.

A study was also conducted



People visit an ancient kiln in Twantay, about 20 miles south of Yangon. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

on the site of a earthen kiln located in Kawpalaing village, twenty odd miles from Mawlamyine, during which shards of large pots were discovered, leading to the belief that it was the former site of such a large scale pot producing earthen kiln. Furthermore, other pieces of pot were found in another plot of land within the same village, although the mound in which they were originally discovered has long since been destroyed, it is known.

As the areas in which archaeological excavations were conducted were located in densely populated regions of Mon and Kayin States, no original earthen kilns were discovered as people had built dwellings on areas where they would have once been located.

The findings displayed in the study report revealed that the Mon region had, at one time, a thriving pot culture, connected by the three Than Lwin, Kyaing and Ehtayan

rivers. As such, pots were easily traded and transported by waterway to other regions, rendering the region, it is believed, economically prosperous from the distribution activities of these products.

The report also reveals how a rise in the interest of foreign archaeological study on regional heritage supports the requirement for conservations efforts on a once thriving pot industry and those earthen kilns that still remain today.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Fish farmers fortify fisheries for El Niño

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The Myanmar Fisheries Products Producers and Exporters Association predicted that the country is likely to miss its target for marine product exports due to the effects of El Niño. Myanmar earned US\$86 million from fishery products exports in the last fiscal year.

U Aung Myint Oo, another fish breeder from Maubin Township, said preventive measures are being taken against possible losses for his fish farms.

“I have stored some water to supply my fish pond when the water in it is removed by evaporation due to temperature rises,” he said.—*Min Htet*

El Niño forces fish firms to adopt measures against losses

THE Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF) on Tuesday adopted preventive and risk management measures to be followed by fish farmers to mitigate possible losses resulting from this year's expected El Niño, pegged to be the most powerful to hit Myanmar in over 100 years.

An eight-point preparedness and response plan for farmers dealing with aquaculture business across the country was released following a meeting at the federation's office in Yangon.

The measures storing clean water for fish and prawn ponds, to plant small shady trees around lakes, to keep a small number of fish and shrimp in the lakes, to take care of feeding, to inform respective fishery departments of fish death, to supply new water if the water in the lake cannot hold enough oxygen for fish and shrimp to survive and to send fish stocks to the market as soon as possible if possible losses are foreseen.

The preventive measures will help the fish and shrimp farming

industry to reduce the impact of El Niño on the country's fishery output which is expected to fall due to excessive heat this year, said Daw Toe Nanda Tin of the federation.

She stressed the need to take measures to reduce possible suffering and losses caused by extreme weather.

According to the MFF, fish are being farmed in a total area of 455,000 acres in the country, providing a large volume of fish stock for local consumption and export.—*Thein Ko Lwin*

Rehabilitation projects being implemented in fire-hit Namhsan

REHABILITATION projects are being carried out in fire-hit Namhsan in northern Shan State after sanitation measures were taken across the fire-affected areas on 21 February.

All of the projects are being undertaken by the Public Works Department under the Ministry of Construction in cooperation with the Shan State Government and the Palaung Self-Administered Zone governing body.

The projects cover three phases for urban development. Phase one includes the expansion of roads and the construction of houses on the vacant spaces. The second phase will establish cir-

cular roads and bridges. The third phase includes searching for and creating vacant spaces to build housing.

A huge fire hit in Namhsan Township on 4 February, destroying 209 houses and centering 300 families homeless.

With the assistance of civil society organisations and members of the public, the authorities began implementing rehabilitation programmes shortly after the fire.

U Maung Kyaw, the head of the Palaung Self-Administered Zone, said: "We, the fire victims of Namhsan, will never forget all of the people who extended their helping hands to us."—*Ko Latt*

Premier Skills programme aims to educate football trainers

THE British Council, in cooperation with Premier League, will provide its third stage of coach educator training to local trainers at the end of February in a five-day course.

The Premier Skills programme will be supported by the Myanmar Football Federation.

Jeremy Weeks, head coach of the Premier Skills programme and former head coach during the London Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012, and Graham Andrew Robinson of the Sunderland AFC Football Club will share their knowledge and experience during the five-day training course.

A total of 12 local basic football trainers across the country were selected to attend the course,



British Council in cooperation with Premier League. PHOTO: BC

which is scheduled to be conducted between 29 February and 4 March at the Youth Training Centre at the Thuwunna Sports Stadium in Thingangyun

Township in Yangon and on the Myanmar Football Federation's turf pitch.

The partnership programme supports the development of commu-

nity football coaches in Myanmar and develops football-focused English learning materials for teachers and learners of English.—BC

Crime News

Vehicle plunges into ravine

A VEHICLE heading for Ma Ei from Taung up, Rakhine, with 150 rice bags and five passengers on board plunged into an 80 foot ravine beyond Hpaung Thaung village on 21 February when the driver lost control. The accident

was caused by overloading. The vehicle conductor and all five passengers sustained serious injuries. They are now receiving medical care at Thandwe general hospital.— *Maung Muang Htay (IPRD)*



The vehicles seen after diving into the 80 foot ravine. PHOTO: MAUNG MUANG HTAY (IPRD)

Raw opium seized in Kyaukse

AN anti-drug squad in Kyaukse seized raw opium from two suspects on motorbikes in Min Yat ward, Kyaukse on 21 February.

Acting on a tip-off, members of the police discovered 9.2 kilograms of raw opium on

a motorbike being driven by one Nay Win Kyaw, 19, and 6.3 kilograms of raw opium on a motorbike being driven by one Naing Oo, 31. The police have filed charges against the suspects under the Anti-Narcotic Law.— *Myanmar Police Force*



Nay Win Kyaw and Naing Oo. PHOTO: MPF

Murder investigation underway in Nga Pyin

A KILLER is wanted by police for a murder near Nga Pyin village, Aung Lan township on 22 February, according to the Aung Lan police station. According to an investigation, village administrator U Thant Zin from Nga Pyin village found a body in a nearby field. Police identified the victim as Kyaw Linn, 32, from Kwan Laung village. Police are investigating the case.— *Kyaw Zayya*

Yabba seized in Mawlamyine, Loilem

MEMBERS of the police discovered 33,000 yabba pills on a motorbike being driven by one Ni Naing Latt with one Tun Oo on board on the Loilem—Namhsan road on 20 February. Similarly, police seized 170 yabba pills and cash from a house owned by one Min Myat Thu alias Min Thu in Ye Baw Gon-1, Shwe Taung ward, Mawlamyine on 19 February. The police have filed charges against the suspect under the Anti-Narcotic Law.— *The Mirror*

Fire destroys municipal market



Fire breaking out at Mindat municipal market. PHOTO: DISTRICT IPRD

A FIRE broke out at the municipal market in Sanpya ward, Mindat town, on Tuesday. The fire broke out when Maung Law Har Man, 21, burned his shop following a dispute with his father. The fire was put out by firemen with

the help of neighbours. The fire destroyed 38 buildings owned by the Municipal Department and a building of the social welfare department. Charges have been filed against the offender.— *District IPRD*

7,000 Yabba pills seized in Kutkai

A LOCAL anti-drug squad seized yabba on a motorbike on Kutkai-kaungkhar road, Kutkai town, on Monday. Acting on a tip-off, police discovered 7,000 yabba pills on a motorbike being driven by one Kyan Yaw, 19. The police have filed charges against the suspect under the Anti-Narcotic Law.— *Myanmar Police Force*



Kyan Yaw. PHOTO: MPF

LOCAL Business



A worker feeds chicken at a farm in Tatkon. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

Chicken prices driven up by fatally high temperatures

HIGH temperatures in Mon State have resulted in the deaths of many battery farmed chickens, augmenting the price of chicken meat locally, according to Mon State chicken farmers.

A viss (1.63 kilos) of battery farmed chicken in the first week of February fetched a wholesale price of approximately K2,300, which rose to as much as K3,400 just two weeks later.

“Chickens were dying off over a month ago from extremely cold weather. There were major financial losses at that time. Now, chickens are dying again because of the extreme heat. We have to make up our previous losses with the slight rise in the price of chicken meat. The amount of profit we’re getting at the moment, though, is only just

enough to scrape by on,” said U Than Aye, a chicken breeder from Mon State.

Chicken farmers incur approximately K2,800 per viss of chicken meat in general expenses per chicken in feed, medicine and worker salaries from the time a chicken is bred until the time it can be sold.

On top of that, a baby chick must be raised for a period of approximately forty days before it can be sold. As such, many losses can be incurred if the price of chicken meat depreciates while it is maturing, says U Min Maung, a battery chicken farmer.

“Factory farmed chickens have to be sold once they’re fully grown. If one waits for the market price to appreciate before selling off fully grown

birds, they will incur a loss because they have to spend on extra feed. The other factor to bear in mind is that these chickens die if they aren’t sold after they are fully grown as they can’t bear the excess weight of their own bodies. We’re lucky as the price of chicken meat is up, but it’s down more times than most,” he said.

There are only few independent chicken breeders in the Mon State chicken breeding business, with the majority of breeders involved in joint ventures between baby chicken sellers and chicken farmers.

The rise in the price of retail chicken bought by consumers has meant the value of one viss currently costs around K6,000.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Export of parboiled rice on the decline

Soe Soe Yu

THE export market for parboiled rice is on the decline as demand from Russia has hit a low, said U Thaung Win, managing director of a leading rice exporter company.

“Previously, there was the demand for parboiled rice from Russia. As they have stopped importing we have turned to Europe to find a new export market. Still, we’ve got a problem because we have to buy

the rice at much higher prices in our domestic market”, he added.

When there was demand from Russia, the export target had been up to 20,000 tons a year but in practice, up to 15,000 tons could be exported.

“What is worse is that we’ve had to export the parboiled rice at a reduced price of US \$400 or so per ton,” he continued.

“We’re selling the parboiled rice at a price of US\$445 or so per ton nowadays. In 2013,

we got between US \$ 530 and 550 per ton”, said an exporter from Kyonpyaw, Ayeyawady Region.

“Because of the sharp fall in price, we can now export only 15 container loads of parboiled rice, i.e 375 tons. This is for one month. So, there will be only 4,500 tons per year. In the 2012-2013 fiscal year we exported more than 15,000 tons”, said U Thaung Win, who is also the secretary of Myanmar Rice Mill owners Association.

High supply of mung bean causes fall in market price

Soe Soe Yu

A FALL in the market price of green gram has been brought about by high supply in the aftermath of the harvesting season, according to the Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants’ Association.

The price of green gram dropped to around K1.4 million a ton this month, with a decrease of K100,000 from K1.5 million a ton last month, said Dr Myat Soe, communication officer of the association.

The doctor predicted that the recent slump in the price of green gram will not last long as it is mainly exported to India, a large market for Myanmar’s beans and pulses, stating that a sharp fall in price is impossible.

Despite his prediction, growers are worried that green gram price will continue to fall.

“If price is expected to be high later, a good price will be enough for farmers to make a profit,” said green gram growers from Wundwin Township in Mandalay Region.

However, a merchant who exports pulses and beans to India expressed a different view, saying that the time of harvesting green gram led to a brief fall in the price.

According to the association, green gram prices had soared to a record-breaking K20 million a ton before the end of last year.

So far, 902,000 tons of beans and pulses have been exported, earning US\$ 856 million, up to 22 January this year.



A scale model of Grand ACE Villa Project.

Grand ACE Villa Project launched in Nay Pyi Taw

GRAND ACE Villa Project is being implemented beside Taungnyo and Pyinmana Road, near Zezawah roundabout in Dekkhina Thiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, with US\$ 100 million investment by Group of ACE companies.

To fulfill the convenient housing needs of Nay Pyi Taw for diplomats and business people, the project has been initiated on 54 acre of land beginning from 2013 with the support of Nay Pyi Taw City Development Committee.

The project includes office buildings, apartment buildings, shopping mall, cinema building, international standard hotel, Restaurant, swimming pool, screen golf course, gym and spacious car parking. Six-storeyed apartment buildings are specially designed for the comfortable and convenient stay of the residents with

spacious master bed room, extra 2 bed rooms, living room, dining room, kitchen, common bath room, store and balcony. The total area is 2471 sq ft. Energy saving lighting systems, CCTV, elevators and stand-by generator system are installed and provided with 24 hour security guard system.

Up to now, 48 apartments are completed for rental and half of them have been occupied by inhabitants.

Some Business people both local and foreign expect that the administrative capital city Nay Pyi Taw will be on the rise in future for the administrative centre of the government as well as for the favourable environment to develop the businesses. However, Yangon will remain as financial and commercial capital while Mandalay as cultural and economic capital.—*GNLM*

Indian farmers deep in debt, seek subsidies, help with insurance

MUMBAI — Indian government action to increase spending on irrigation and crop insurance is not enough to end a cycle of indebtedness that has led to thousands of farmer suicides, and a complete overhaul of credit and subsidies to farmers is needed, activists said.

Drought in many parts of the country has hit rice, cotton and other crops, and lower world commodity prices have added to the farmers' plight.

More than half India's farming households are in debt, owing banks and moneylenders hundreds of millions of rupees, despite numerous loan write-offs by successive governments.

Tens of thousands of farmers across the country have killed themselves over the past decade, several farmers' lobbying groups said. Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, who presents the federal budget for fiscal 2016-17 on 29 February has to balance stimulating economic growth with aiding farmers and poorer sections of society.

Farmers' groups have been demanding better monsoon forecasts, bigger fertiliser subsidies and a state-funded insurance scheme for all crops, to help farmers improve yields and help prevent crop failures.

"The need of the hour is a focus on the dying farmer community," said activist Kishor Tiwari,



A farmer channels water to irrigate his wheat field on the outskirts of Ahmedabad, India, in December 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

who heads a task force set up to recommend action to tackle farmer suicides in Maharashtra, which accounted for more than half of all suicides among Indian farmers in 2014.

"Debt is a core issue, and it needs a long-term plan to resolve it," he said. While inter-generational bonded labour in the farming community is no longer as common as before, the number of

poor and landless workers who are in debt bondage is rising, particularly in agriculture, brick kilns and stone quarries, activists say.

Indian farmers seldom own the land they cultivate, and often take loans to buy seeds and fertilisers. Only about one tenth of India's 263 million cultivators take out crop insurance because of the high premiums.

Unpredictable weather and

low crop yields have made farming unviable for many. Financial assistance provided by the government usually doesn't cover the losses, and some farmers have migrated to urban areas for low-paid jobs, even selling their blood to make ends meet.

Tiwari, in a plan submitted to the Maharashtra government, has recommended direct cash subsidies for farmers instead of the cur-

rent indirect agriculture credit.

He also suggested the central and state governments help underwrite full crop insurance cover and promote the adoption of organic farming methods in drought-prone districts, to help restore soil quality and benefit from the higher price of organic produce, even though yields are lower.

A total of 5,650 farmer suicides were recorded in India in 2014, more than half of them in Maharashtra, according to the National Crime Records Bureau. The states of Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Chattisgarh and Karnataka also had large numbers of farmer suicides.

The cabinet last month cleared a proposal for the country's first major crop-damage insurance scheme. The government has said it will reduce premiums to be paid by farmers, and ensure faster settlements. Delays in estimating crop damage and paying claims are a big challenge, said Sunita Narain, director of non-profit Centre for Science and Environment in New Delhi. The government must encourage the use of new technologies, including remote sensing and mobile-based image capturing systems to improve yield data and claims processing, she said.

"Insurance coverage has to be universal and payouts enough to cover losses," she wrote in a blog.—Reuters

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Chief Executive Officer -

Nakagawa Kiyoshi
gnlmdaily@gmail.com

Chief Editor - Khin Maung Aye
khinmaungaye@hotmail.com

Deputy Chief Editor - Aye Min Soe
koayeminsoe2006@gmail.com

Chief Reporter

Ye Myint, uyemyint76@gmail.com,

Consultant Editors

Jacob Goldberg
jgold.news@gmail.com

Alec Wilmot
alec.wilmot.gnlm@gmail.com

Editors

Ye Htut Tin
myehtuttin@gmail.com

Kyaw Thura, kthura.spk@gmail.com,

International news

Tun Tun Naing
tunyunaing@gmail.com

Reporters

Khaing Thanda Lwin
juniorlwin25@gmail.com

Tun Aung Kyaw
tunaungkyaw.31@gmail.com

Translators

Hay Mar Tin Win
haymarfat@gmail.com

Proof reader

Nwe Nwe Tun

Computer Team

Tun Zaw, Thein Ngwe,
Zaw Zaw Aung,

Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,

Sanda Hnin, Zu Zin Hnin

Circulation & Advertising

San Lwin (+95) (01) 8604532

Ads and subscription enquiries:

adv.gnlm@gmail.com

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Australia warns travellers of possible militant attacks in Indonesia

JAKARTA — Australia issued a warning yesterday about possible militant attacks being planned in Indonesia, only days after a similar warning for the Malaysian capital, another sign of rising concern over militancy in Southeast Asia.

"Recent indications suggest that terrorists may be in the advanced stages of preparing attacks in Indonesia," said the travel advisory on an Australian government website.

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade did not respond to a request for more details.

Australia issued a similar statement on Sunday about possible attacks in and around Kuala Lumpur.

The British, New Zealand, Canadian and other diplomatic missions in Malaysia soon followed with notices advising against travel to coastal islands in the eastern state of Sabah.

Malaysia has been on high alert since a bomb and gun attack in Indonesia's capital in January in which eight people were killed, including four attackers. The attack was claimed by the Islamic State militant group.

Australia has consistently

placed Indonesia in the second-lowest of four warning categories, recommending that travellers "exercise a high degree of caution".

Indonesia has been cracking down on suspected militants since the attack in Jakarta last month.

However, a spokesman for the Indonesian national police, contacted after the Australian warning was issued, said there were no indications of an imminent attack.

"We're working continuously with relevant institutions and with the public to maintain security," said Agus Rianto.—Reuters



A security guard checks a car before entering the National Counter-Terrorism Agency building in Bogor, on 5 January 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

South Korea summons China envoy for remarks over US antimissile system

SEOUL — The South Korean Foreign Ministry summoned the top Chinese envoy in Seoul to complain about his remarks over the planned deployment of a US missile defence system in South Korea, a ministry official said.

A deputy foreign minister lodged the protest with Chinese Ambassador to South Korea Qiu Guohong, the official said.

On Tuesday, Qiu expressed strong concerns about the anticipated deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defence in South Korea. The THAAD system is expected to help South Korea

cope better with North Korea's nuclear and missile threats.

The ambassador said in a meeting with a South Korean opposition party leader that deploying the antimissile system could damage China's national interest and if so that could damage relations between the two countries.

Qiu's remarks, taken by many as China putting explicit pressure on the South Korean government, sparked public criticism in South Korea.

China and Russia have expressed their opposition to the deployment of THAAD in South

Korea, saying the missile system could hamper their strategic interests.

The United States has dismissed their concerns, insisting the missile system will be focused solely on defence against North Korea.

Earlier Wednesday, South Korea's presidential spokesman expressed displeasure apparently at the Chinese envoy's remarks on the missile system, saying, THAAD is a matter of "self-defence" against North Korea's nuclear and missile threats.

In a separate statement, the

South Korean Foreign Ministry emphasized that North Korea is the fundamental reason for considering THAAD in South Korea.

Shortly after North Korea launched a long-range rocket carrying a satellite on 7 February, the United States and South Korea jointly announced they will begin formal talks on the feasibility of THAAD deployment as part of efforts to cope with North Korea's nuclear and missile threats.

THAAD is designed to intercept ballistic missiles flying at high altitudes inside and outside the atmosphere.—Kyodo News

US to present draft UN sanctions resolution on North Korea

UNITED NATIONS — The United States will submit to the UN Security Council on Thursday a draft resolution that would expand sanctions against North Korea over its latest nuclear test, a spokesman for the US mission to the United Nation said.

“Ambassador (Samantha) Power intends to submit for consideration by the Security Council a draft sanctions resolution in response to (North Korea’s) recent nuclear test and subsequent proscribed ballistic missile launch,” spokesman Kurtis Cooper said in a statement.

“We look forward to working with the council on a strong and comprehensive response to the DPRK’s (North Korea’s) latest series of tests aimed at advancing their nuclear weapons programme,” he said.

On Wednesday council diplomats said the United States and China had agreed on a draft resolution and hoped to put it to a vote in the 15-nation council in the coming days.

The two veto powers had been negotiating on the text for the past seven weeks following Pyongyang’s fourth nuclear test on 6 January.

“It’s a substantive, long, full



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (R) waves during a concert marking the 70th founding anniversary of the Korean People’s Army (KPA) military band in this undated photo released by North Korea’s Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) in Pyongyang on 23 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

draft,” a senior council diplomat said.

The draft resolution is expected to call for the blacklisting of a number of individuals and entities, diplomats said. They were reluctant to provide further

details.

North Korea’s Ministry of Atomic Energy Industry and its National Aerospace Development Agency or ‘NADA’, the body responsible for February’s rocket launch, will be amongst

the sanctioned entities, South Korea’s Yonhap news reported.

The secretive General Reconnaissance Bureau, already sanctioned by the United States for its suspected role in the 2014 cyber attack on Sony Pictures,

was also included in the blacklist, Yonhap said.

The council is scheduled to discuss the UN North Korea sanctions regime on Thursday at 3 pm (2000 GMT), the UN press office said.

China and the United States have had different views on how strong the response should be to North Korea since Pyongyang’s nuclear test last month, with Washington urging harsh punitive measures and Beijing emphasizing dialogue and milder UN steps confined to non-proliferation.

Western diplomats told Reuters that limiting North Korean access to international ports was among the measures Washington was pushing Beijing to accept.

Washington also wanted to tighten restrictions on North Korean banks’ access to the international financial system, the diplomats said.

North Korea has been under UN sanctions since 2006 because of its multiple nuclear tests and rocket launches. In addition to a UN arms embargo, Pyongyang is banned from importing and exporting nuclear and missile technology and is not allowed to import luxury goods.—Reuters

South Korea warns North Korea of collapse if it continues provocations

SEOUL — South Korea on Wednesday warned North Korea that its political system would collapse if Pyongyang continues acts of provocation, the latest on Tuesday involving the army’s threat to attack South Korea and the United States.

“We clearly warn North Korea that its provocations will bring about a collapse of the dictatorial regime,” South Korea’s Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement.

In a related development, South Korea’s presidential spokesman Jeong Yeon Guk said North Korea “will be held fully responsible for all situations that may arise from (its) unacceptable words and deeds.” North Korea’s army on Tuesday warned it would attack South Korea and the United States if their special forces brought in for joint military exercises in March take any moves that threaten the North.—Kyodo News

Aust’n widow of MH370 victim sues Malaysia Airlines, claiming possible sabotage by crew

MELBOURNE — The widow of a Melbourne-based Chinese businessman who was a passenger on downed flight MH370 is demanding a six-figure payout from Malaysia Airlines, claiming the crew may have orchestrated its mysterious disappearance. Jennifer Chong has launched civil action against the airline, seeking 115,000 US dollars for the unexplained death of her husband, Chong Ling Tan.

Almost two years after the tragedy, Chong plans to sue the airline in Australia’s Supreme Court, after filing a statement of

claim late on Wednesday.

In the legal documents, published in part by News Corp yesterday, Chong has alleged that Malaysia Airlines should be accountable for the actions of their crew.

“By reason of the breach of duty of care, the defendant’s aircraft disappeared and is presumed to have crashed, causing the death of the deceased and consequent loss and damage to the first plaintiff, the children of the deceased and other dependants,” Chong said in the documents submitted to the court.—Xinhua

China’s Xinjiang to use entertainment, possibly singing and dancing, in terror fight

BEIJING — China’s violence-prone far western region of Xinjiang will use entertainment to fight terrorism, holding cultural activities — which typically involve singing and dancing — to spread its law-enforcement message, state media said yesterday.

Hundreds of people have been killed over the past few years in resource-rich Xinjiang, strategically located on the borders of central Asia, in violence between the Muslim Uighur people who call the region home and ethnic majority Han Chinese.

The government has blamed the unrest on Islamist militants, though rights groups and exiles say anger at Chinese controls on the religion and culture of the Uighurs is more to blame for the unrest. China denies any repression in Xinjiang.

The official Xinjiang Daily said the government would begin a new round of public education activities to spread knowledge about China’s new counter-terrorism law, passed last year, to help improve the region’s peace and stability.

These activities will “mo-



People wearing costumes perform at a square during a celebration on the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, in Urumqi, Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, in 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

bilise the masses from all ethnicities to proactively and actively participate in the anti-terrorism struggle”, the paper said.

While law enforcers and lawyers would hold public talks, there will also be a “leading role for culture”, it added.

“Hold many cultural propaganda activities that delight the masses, and let them be educat-

ed through entertainment,” the paper said, citing instructions from the government. It did not give details, but typically such events involve song and dance routines and comedic skits. Generally these days they happen in more remote parts of the country rather than China’s increasingly sophisticated large cities.—Reuters

OPINION

All you need is a change of heart

Kyaw Thura

AS we live in a multicultural society, we have a very obvious responsibility to embrace cultural diversity, encourage social equality and integration and combat racial discrimination by breaking down all cultural, racial and religious barriers through the

practice of tolerance. However, peaceful coexistence remains beyond our reach.

Armed conflict has long posed a major hindrance to Myanmar's development in all sectors. Instability and poverty have become a common refrain in today's underdeveloped countries.

Clearly, any form of conflict has the potential to reverse economic and social development. In any outbreak of conflict, widespread human suffering is inflicted on the warring parties, as well as on the innocent people trapped in the conflict area. Just as it takes considerable time to restore peace, it also takes time to recover.

Myanmar's decision makers should not overlook the important fact that political instability is a constant source of violence and corruption, which can, in turn, become a breeding ground for poverty and cronyism. All the stake-

holders in the peace process should be aware that there is a direct correlation between political stability and national development. A single misjudgement based on egomania will no doubt be enough to entail the cobra effect—a situation in which a solution to a problem actually exacerbates it. There is nothing to lose in restoring lasting peace for national development.

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email khinmaungaye@hotmail@gmail.com with your name and title.

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

Three Bridges in Myanmar of world fame Part III

Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dhaja
Sithu, Dr. Khin Muang Nyunt

IN the post WWII period, many films with war background appeared on the screens, among them "The Bridge over The River Kwai" was the hit. The writer of this article saw this film at home and in London many times. Besides, he himself had the experience of acting as a side part in one war background Film named "Yesterday's Enemy" and a war background story "He refused to die" which was serialized in John Bull Magazine November 1958. In the former the writer was a Japanese soldier depicting and behaving like a typical fascist soldier uttering few vulgar words and curses in Japanese. In the latter he posed as a village headman and the late Ko Kyaw Myint, Rector of Mandalay University and Director-General of Higher Education took the role of a village monk. We both were trying to give all possible help to a British paratrooper who was dropped in the Jungle. While the writer was a lecturer at Mawlamyine College, he visited Thanbyuzayat and the site of Death Railway and the Bridge with the help of his students from those remote areas. So the writer has many sentimental feelings in addition to his historical research in writing this article.

A quick look at the historical backdrop of WWII for the sake of present new generations. The First World War ended in 1918 with the signing of Versailles Treaty and other associated treaties. The League of Nations headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland had the Covenant which vowed to ban war forever and restore peace for good. International conflicts be settled by peaceful means. But all these treaties and the League could not work after an interval of two decades. The treaties contained the seeds of another war and the League could

not peacefully settle the conflicts between big powers. There arose new, dynamic leaderships in defected nations — Hitler with his Nazism in Germany, Mussolini with his Fascism in Italy and militarism of Kampeiji in Japan. New generations hailed and haloed them everywhere. In Asia, SE Asia and the Far East, Japan became a role model to emulate in their struggles against the respective Colonial Rulers — the British, the French and the Dutch. Harvesting on the new political situations in Asia, Japan began its militarism with effective slogans: "Asia for the Asiatics" "East Asia Economic Co-prosperity Sphere".

Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Kampeiji Japan formed "Axis Power Alliance", Germany to lead the entire Europe, Italy to lead entire Mediterranean world and Japan to lead East Asia and Asia. Myanmar young nationalists were attracted to Japan. Japanese wooed them. Aung San led his comrades in quest of a foreign assistance. Japan timely came in.

The above was a brief of how we Myanmar people were drawn into WWII. The Japanese left no stone unturned in their effort to win their cause. In the first phase of the WWII the Axis Powers gained upper hand. When Japanese occupied mainland SE Asia especially Thailand and Myanmar they began their work to support their armies.

The Bridge over the River Kwai was a wooden Bridge for the train to supply all needs for the Japanese armies. It was across a jungle river called Kwai in Thai at the border between Thailand and Myanmar. The construction of the Bridge began in 1942 and finished in 1943. Starting from Ban Paung in Thailand and its end terminus was Thanbyuzayat, a town in Mon State of Myanmar. The total length of the rail line

was 258 miles [413 kilometers]. This long rail line crossed 680 bridges, mostly built of timber trestle. Only eight of them were iron structures seven of which were on Myanmar side. With no machinery and no high technology, the line and the bridges were literally built by hand tools and human labour under most difficult climate, physical environment and health hazards. Malaria infested jungles, heavy monsoon, shortage of food, health care and medicine plus tortures and atrocities of Japanese soldiers. Deaths, loss of lives and limbs were untold. Estimated death tolls was 123,621 Prisoners of war [Pows], over 90,000 forced labour of local and Asian civilians [known in Myanmar as Chway Tat — Sweat Army]. Among deaths, Malays topped — 45,000 and Myanmar came next 40,000. The rest were Chinese, Indians, Javanese and Indo-Chinese. Though officially called "Siam-Burma Railway" it acquired the notorious name, "Death Railway" which in Myanmar is called till today "They min taman Lan" [Railway taking to the King of the Death Kingdom].

The total number of Prisoners of war (P.O.W) of the Western allies was over 12,000. British Pows number over 6,900, Australian Pows over 2,800 and American POWs. 100.

On 4 January 2016 which was the 68th anniversary of that Day that a site museum of the Death Railway line was officially opened in Thanbyuzayat Town in Mon State of Myanmar. Speaking on the occasion the Chief Minister of Mon State government Excellency U Ohn Myint says "This museum was built by the Mon State government and Tala Mon Co. Groups. Previous efforts did not succeed to complete. Now, we have done our job..." U Min Binna San, Chairman of Tala Mon Co. Groups also spoke on the occasion. He says that "in addition to the museum, there are recreation park, play and sports ground, restau-



rants, souvenir shops, public conveniences and parking lots. Public can relax after viewing the displays in the museum. In the museum are shown photos, pictures, press-cuttings and memorabilia pertaining to WWII and Death Railway. Prominent was the charcoal run locomotive which pulls a daily pleasure ride on the bridge for half a mile for visitors and tourists. The original locomotive that first ran the Death Train on the very first day on its operation is displayed outside the Museum.

Present on the occasion of the museum opening, there was a veteran Japanese army officer and his family. He was Mr Mikio Kinoshinla. While the Death Railway and the Bridge were built in 1942 he was a young

army officer aged 24 [Company Commander] He eyewitnessed all difficulties, tortures and atrocities. He himself was involved in driving forced labourers in the construction of the Death Rail and the wooden bridge. He could still recapture the inhumane scenes of these days. He condemned war and worked for peace. He prayed there be peace in Myanmar. He donated cash and kind to orphanages and village monasteries. In the post WWII period he visited Myanmar 26 times. He was glad that the museum was opened for all to see and to be convinced that all wars and all armed conflicts never solve problems, they only lead to more wars and more armed conflicts.

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Mon community celebrate 69th National Day in Yangon



69th anniversary Mon National Day in progress. PHOTO: MIN THIT, ZAW MIN LAT

YANGON'S MON community celebrated the 69th Mon National Day at People's Square and People's Park on 24 February with a wide range of entertainment programmes.

"The ceremony aims to show unity and solidarity among Mon people," said Nai Soe Kyi, secretary of the Mon National Day Executive Committee.

Mon National Day celebrates the founding of the longest-ruling Mon kingdom, the Hanthawaddy Kingdom, by

the two princes—Samala and Vimala—on the 1st Waning of Tabodwe, in the year 1116 of the Buddhist Era, according to Mon tradition. Since 1947, Mon National Day has been marked on that day.

As in previous years, the ceremony includes traditional songs and dances performed by a popular Mon drama troupes and other culture shows. Traditional Mon musical instruments, food and handicrafts were sold at the festival.

Mon National Day is celebrated annually across Mon State and Yangon Region and in Mon communities abroad.

Significant Mon communities are found in Taninthayi, Yangon, Bago and Ayeyawady regions, as well as along the southern border between Thailand and Myanmar.

According to Myanmar's 2014 population survey, the country is home to 5 million Mon people, 40,000 of whom live in Yangon.—*Thi Thi Min*

Monastic school in Kyaukse to increase student enrolment

"ALTHOUGH we are taking in more students than we can expand school facilities, plans are underway to expand student enrolment next academic year," said an administrator of the Evening Star Parahita Educational Help monastic school in Mandalay, which plans to accept up to 500 students.

Located in Kyaukse Township, the school has been established since 2012 by Sayadaw Bhaddanta Thiha in order to provide non-formal education services to needy children from various backgrounds, including orphans and street children, free of charge.

Currently, about 400 students and 57 novices are pursuing their education at the school, but there are just 36 teachers. Some volunteers from down-

town Kyaukse Township have joined the programme to offer educational services to the students.

The school's courses run through Grade 11 and uses syllabi designed by the Ministry of Education.

In addition to offering free education services, healthcare and other needs of the students are covered by the abbot of the school, which is funded by donations from the public. The abbot has called on the public to contribute to the school to allow it to expand its free services to students in need.

To donate to the Evening Star Parahita Educational Help monastic school, donors can dial 09402697156, 09252631302 or 09256298300 to speak to the school's staff.—*Sai Lu Min*

Leiktho Tsp connected to 3G mobile network

MYANMA Post and Telecommunications (MPT) has made its rural 3G mobile network available in Leiktho Township, Kayin State, residents say.

As part of the government's rural development efforts, a communication tower was built in the area last year and began transmitting the 3G network across the township on 19 February.

Leiktho Township is located on the road linking Taunggoo, Yado and Kayah State. The government upgraded road networks across the township in 2008.

A spokesperson said the township will soon have access to electricity 24 hours a day as the authorities are installing the infrastructure necessary to supply power across the township.—*IPRD*

Three Bridges in Myanmar of world fame Part III

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In connection with this tragic story of Death Railway and the Bridge, the writer of this Article recalls another antiwar and pro-peace film shot by a Japanese Film Co. It was titled "The Harp of Burma" which won many Academy Awards. It was a true, real story of a Japanese army officer who unbelievably found kindness of Myanmar people both rural and urban and both laity and clergy after Japan was defeated and unconditionally surrendered after the two atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Instead of taking vengeance upon Japanese soldiers who had persecuted them during Occupation, they showed kindness to the Japanese soldiers. He was rescued by a Burmese village monk and villagers sheltered but hidden. He was given food, clothing and shelter and loving kindness. He made a Burmese harp and made a village boy play. The boy played it with Myanmar classical songs. He shut his mouth regarding his Japanese



master. Later the Japanese soldier liked that peaceful life in the village. He became a Buddhist monk. When orders came calling upon Japanese soldiers to return to Japan, he did not. He kept quiet and incognito. He, as a Myan-

mar Buddhist monk, he moved about in Myanmar societies. Torn between his homeland and family and adopted land he chose the latter where he was laid to rest. A very touching story.

The Writer wants to give his simple message to the readers.
Love begets love.
Kindness is returned by kindness.
To err is human,

but to forgive is divine.
Let's forget our wrongs and mistakes
Move forward with our good heart
and good deeds.
(Concluded)

NATO overcomes Greek-Turkish tensions to agree Aegean mission

BRUSSELS — NATO allies have agreed to a plan for their ships in the Aegean Sea to help Turkey and Greece counter criminal networks smuggling refugees into Europe, NATO's chief said yesterday, overcoming territorial sensitivities between Greece and Turkey.

After late night talks in Brussels, NATO envoys set out how ships sent to the Aegean in early February can work with Turkish and Greek coastguards and the European Union border agency Frontex to rescue refugees at sea and return them to Turkey.

"Greek and Turkish forces will not operate in each other's territorial waters and airspace," NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said in a statement

following. Relations between Greece and Turkey have traditionally been tense and since the 11 February deal by NATO defence ministers to deploy ships to the Aegean, Greece's defence minister has accused Turkey of trying to undermine the deal.

NATO diplomats said one of the issues was where Greek and Turkish ships should patrol and whether that would set a precedent for claims over disputed territorial waters.

Stoltenberg said other NATO vessels will be able to sail in the territorial waters of Greece and Turkey.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu sought the NATO mission to help tackle Europe's worst migration crisis

since World War Two. More than a million asylum-seekers arrived last year.

The European Union is relying on Turkey to help stem the flows of Syrians fleeing civil war, giving Ankara 3 billion euros to set up camps and help take in more refugees, although progress in implementing the deal has been slow.

Germany hopes that unlike the EU's mission off the Italian coast, which brings rescued migrants to Europe's shores, NATO will return migrants to Turkey even if they are picked up in Greek waters, effectively sealing the border.

"In case of rescue of persons coming via Turkey, they will be taken back to Turkey," Stoltenberg said.—Reuters

Cuba allows seven dissidents to travel abroad ahead of Obama visit



Cuban dissident Martha Beatriz Roque gestures during an interview at her home in Havana in 2007. PHOTO: REUTERS

HAVANA — The Cuban government has granted seven dissidents who are out of prison on parole a one-time permission to travel outside the country in an apparent gesture to the United States ahead of a visit by President Barack Obama.

Four others in the same category were not granted the permission for reasons not immediately clear, dissidents reported.

"We welcome the news ... and we continue to encourage the Cuban government to allow the remaining four former prisoners to travel as well," Peter Boogaard, a spokesman for the White House National Security Council, said in a statement.

US critics of Obama's opening to Cuba have complained that the president has received little in return for restoring diplomatic relations with the former Cold War enemy. To cement improving ties, Obama will visit Cuba on 21-22 March.

Around the time of detente

in December 2014, Cuba's Communist government released 53 people whom Washington considered political prisoners.

But some of those 53 were arrested again after being released and two remained in jail, according to the dissident group Cuban Commission of Human Rights and National Reconciliation. Secretary of State John Kerry told a congressional budget hearing that Washington expressed its disappointment to Havana over the re-arrests but that he expected Cuba to release them.

"We believe they will be released ... and that signifies some listening, some movement" on the part of the Cuban government, Kerry said.

Cuba considers the opponents a tiny minority that has lost legitimacy by accepting funding indirectly from the US government.

The seven granted travel freedom were summoned to the

Interior Ministry and told they would be allowed one trip abroad, though upon their return they would resume serving sentences out of prison with a ban on foreign travel.

"It appears to be some kind of gift they want to present to Obama, but in reality it is nothing concrete because when we come back we will return to legal limbo," said Martha Beatriz Roque, one of the seven. The 11 dissidents were among 75 opponents rounded up in the 2003 Black Spring crackdown. With the intervention of the Roman Catholic Church and Spain, all 75 were released in 2010 and 2011 under the condition that they leave Cuba.

However, the 11 holdouts refused and opted to remain in prison rather than abandon their homeland. Eventually they were allowed to continue serving their sentences, which range from 18 to 25 years, while out of prison.—Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

Indonesia overturns acquittal of international school teachers convicted of student abuse

JAKARTA — Indonesia's supreme court has overturned the acquittal of two teachers, a Canadian and Indonesian, convicted of sexually abusing students at an international Jakarta school and ordered them to serve out their original sentence.

The two teachers were originally sentenced to 10 years in prison but were acquitted in August, 2015. The Supreme Court reimposed the sentence and added another year to their sentence.

"They have been sentenced again to 11 years," Supreme Court spokesman Suhadi said by phone. Canadian national teacher Neil Bantleman and Indonesian teaching assistant Ferdinand Tjong were convicted on charges of abusing kindergarten students at the Jakarta Intercultural School (JIS). —Reuters

German government expects arrival of 3.6 million refugees by 2020

BERLIN — The German government expects a total influx of 3.6 million refugees by 2020, with an average of half a million people arriving each year, German media reported yesterday, in a country that took in a record 1.1 million migrants last year.

The calculations are based on internal estimates by the Economy Ministry in coordination with other ministries, German newspaper *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* said. In order to project economic development, the Economy Ministry created "an internal, purely technical estimate on migration in coordination with other government departments". There is no official government estimate on how many refugees Europe's biggest economy expects over the next years, as numbers are highly volatile.—Reuters

Indian railways targets new sources of revenue, cost cuts

NEW DELHI — India's state-owned railway said yesterday it planned to cut costs and generate new sources of revenue next year to offset a big rise in its wage bill and help keep an ambitious modernisation plan on track.

Presenting the annual rail budget for 2016/17, Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu said the planned budget outlay for the world's fourth-largest network would be 1.21 trillion rupees (\$17.6 billion), up about 20 per cent from the current year's estimated expenditure.

But a slowdown in growth of passenger and freight revenues has put pressure on the railways' finances one year after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government unveiled a 5-year \$137 billion investment plan to overhaul the saturated and decrepit network.

"These are challenging times...We are faced with two headwinds, entirely beyond our control; tepid growth of our economy's core sectors due to an international slowdown and the looming impact of the 7th pay commission," Prabhu told India's parliament four days ahead of the federal budget.—Reuters

All bodies of plane crash victims recovered in western Nepal

KATHMANDU — Authorities in Nepal's western Myagdi District said yesterday that the bodies of all 23 people killed in a small plane crash have been recovered.

The bodies were being brought to a helipad in Surkepatal, 150 metres down from the crash site in Soli Ghopte Bhir, said Sagarmani Pathak, chief district officer of Myagdi.

Security officials said the bodies would be brought to the western city of Pokhara, where the ill-fated plane took off Wednesday, for identification.—Xinhua

Blast kills 7, injures 6 in construction of power plant in Indonesia

JAKARTA — An explosion in the construction of a power plant in North Sumatra, Indonesia killed 7 workers and seriously wounded 6 others, a senior official from the disaster management agency said yesterday.

The blast took place in a tunnel located in Rih Tengah village of Karo District on Tuesday, said Jonson Tarigan, secretary of local disaster management agency at the district. "When the workers were conducting their works at the tunnel, suddenly a generator exploded and hit them," Mr. Tarigan told Xinhua by phone from Karo District. All the victims have been evacuated and brought to a nearby hospital, he said.—Xinhua

Ahead of election, Iran's leader warns of Western 'plot'

TEHRAN — Iran's top leader warned voters on Wednesday the West was plotting to influence elections pitting centrists close to President Hassan Rouhani against conservative hardliners in a contest that could shape the Islamic Republic for years to come.

In remarks reflecting an abiding mistrust of Rouhani's rapprochement with the West, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said he was confident Iranians would vote in favour of keeping Iran's anti-Western stance on Friday in the first elections since last year's nuclear accord with world powers.

Rouhani's allies, who hope the deal will hasten Iran's opening up to the world after years of sanctions, have come under increasing pressure in the election campaign from hardliners who accuse them of links to Western powers including the United States and Britain.

Those accusations seek to tap into Iranians' wariness of Western motives and memories of a 1953 coup against nationalist prime minister Mohammad Mossadegh that was orchestrated by the United States and Britain and strengthened the Shah's rule.

Rouhani on Wednesday denied accusations from hardliners that the candidates close to him were affiliated with Western powers, calling it an insult to the intelligence of Iranians.

In remarks on his official website, Khamenei was quoted as saying he was certain the United States had concocted a plot after the nuclear deal to "infiltrate" the Islamic Republic.

"When I talked about a US infiltration plot, it made some people in the country frustrated," said the Shi'ite clerical leader, who has final say on all major state policy in Iran.

"They complain (about) why we talk about infiltration all the



Women walk past electoral posters for the upcoming elections in central Tehran on 24 February.

PHOTO: REUTERS

time ... But this is a real plot. Sometimes even the infiltrators don't know they are a part of it," he said.

"One of the enemy's ruses is to portray a false dichotomy between a pro-government and anti-government parliament," Khamenei was quoted as saying by state news agency IRNA.

"The nation does not want a pro- or anti-government parliament, but rather a strong and faithful parliament that is aware of its duties and is not intimidated by the United States," he said.

Supporters of Rouhani, buoyed by Iran's nuclear deal, aim to gain influence in the elections for the 290-seat parliament

and the 88-member Assembly of Experts, which will choose the country's next supreme leader.

But potential detente with the West has alarmed hardliners, who have seen a flood of European trade and investment delegations arrive in Tehran to discuss possible deals in the wake of the nuclear agreement.—Reuters

Syrian opposition supports idea of two-week ceasefire



A boy carries an opposition flag as rebel fighters and civilians gather during the arrival of an aid convoy of Syrian Arab Red Crescent and United Nation (UN) to the rebel held besieged town of Kafr Batna, on the outskirts of Damascus, Syria on 23 February 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

BEIRUT/WASHINGTON — Syria's opposition indicated on Wednesday it was ready for a two-week truce in Syria, saying it was a chance to test the seriousness of the other side's commitment to a US-Russian plan for a cessation of hostilities.

Combatants are required to say whether they will agree to the "cessation of hostilities" in the five-year war by noon on Friday (1000 GMT), and to halt fighting on Saturday. The United Nations hopes the planned halt will provide a breathing space for Syrian peace talks to resume.

A statement seen by Reuters from the Saudi-backed High Negotiations Committee, which groups political and armed opponents of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, said it "views a temporary two-week truce as a chance to establish how serious the other side is in committing to the points of the agreement." But it objected to Russia being a guarantor of the truce alongside the United States, saying Russia was a direct party to the conflict, and that the plan ignored the role Assad allies Russia and Iran were playing.

Russia intervened in the con-

flict on the side of Assad in September, and Iranian fighters have provided crucial support to the Syrian army in its fight against insurgents.

In Washington, US President Barack Obama expressed caution about a plan to stop the fighting in Syria, which has killed 250,000 people and created a refugee crisis in Europe.

The last round of peace talks in Geneva broke up earlier this month without progress after the Syrian government launched a Russian-backed offensive on the city of Aleppo, where more fighting was reported on Wednesday.

Obama told reporters that if some progress was made in Syria, that would lead to a political process to end the war there. "We are very cautious about raising expectations on this," he said. Although US officials have raised the question of a political transition in Damascus, Assad, backed by Russia, shows no sign of stepping aside.

The cessation of hostilities plan does not include Islamic State or the Nusra Front, an al Qaeda affiliate that is widely deployed in opposition-held areas.

The opposition has expressed fears government forces backed by the Russian air force will continue to attack rebels under the pretext of targeting the Nusra Front.—Reuters

Islamic State bomb supply chain includes firms in 20 countries including India

ANKARA — Companies from 20 countries are involved in the supply chain of components that end up in Islamic State explosives, a study found yesterday, suggesting governments and firms need to do more to track the flow of cables, chemicals and other equipment.

The European Union-managed study showed that 51 companies from countries including Turkey, Brazil, and the United States produced, sold or received the more than 700 components used by Islamic State to build improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

IEDs are now being produced on a "quasi-industrial scale" by the militant group, which uses both industrial components that are regulated and widely available equipment such as fertiliser chemicals and mobile phones, according to Conflict Armament Research (CAR), which undertook the 20-month study.

Islamic State controls large swathes of Iraq and Syria. NATO member Turkey shares borders with both countries and has stepped up security to prevent the flow of weapons and insurgents to the hardline Sunni group.

A total of 13 Turkish firms were found to be involved in the supply chain, the most in

any one country. That was followed by India with seven.

"These findings support growing international awareness that IS forces in Iraq and Syria are very much self-sustaining — acquiring weapons and strategic goods, such as IED components, locally and with ease," said James Bevan, CAR's executive director.

The sale of these cheap and readily available parts, some of which are not subject to government export licences, is far less scrutinised and regulated than the transfer of weapons.

The study found that Islamic State is able to acquire some components in as little as a month after their lawful supply to firms in the region, suggestion a lack of oversight in the supply chain.

"Companies having effective accounting systems to establish where the goods went after them would act as a deterrent," Bevan said.

Bevan said the Turkish government refused to cooperate with CAR's investigation so the group was not able to determine the efficacy of Ankara's regulations regarding the tracking of components.

Turkish government officials did not reply to requests for comment.—Reuters

Britain registers EU membership deal at UN



Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron leaves 10 Downing Street to travel to the Houses of Parliament in central London, Britain, on 22 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

UNITED NATIONS — Britain on Wednesday registered with the United Nations a deal on new terms for its membership in the European Union ahead of a 23 June national referendum on whether Britain should stay or quit the

28-nation bloc.

Britain's UN Ambassador Matthew Rycroft said he registered the text of the deal as an official treaty at the United Nations. He said it has officially entered into force, but will only take effect if Britain votes in June

to remain in the European Union.

Rycroft told reporters that registering the deal at the United Nations "puts beyond doubt the fact that the deal the prime minister agreed is legally binding and irreversible in international law."

Prime Minister David Cameron and EU leaders agreed unanimously last week on a package of measures aimed at keeping Britain in the EU to avoid a potentially disastrous divorce.

Cameron, campaigning for Britain to stay in the European Union, has the edge over London Mayor Boris Johnson, the most popular figure in the "Out" camp, in trying to sway the key group of undecided voters, a new poll indicated on Wednesday.—Reuters

Mexican mother sick with Zika gives birth to healthy baby

MEXICO CITY — A young Mexican woman sick with Zika during her pregnancy has given birth to a healthy baby with no signs of microcephaly, announced health authorities in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas on Wednesday.

This is the first case in Mexico where a mother infected by Zika delivered a healthy baby, since measures were reinforced after the World Health Organisation (WHO) issued a global alert against the virus on 1 February.

According to Cuitlahuac Ruiz, general director of the health ministry's epidemiology department, the 17-year-old mother

from the small community of Carmen in the municipality of Pijijiapan on Chiapas' Pacific coast, gave birth on 19 February in a hospital in the state capital of Tuxtla Gutierrez.

The teenager mother and her child, both in good health, have returned home and had their first check-up on 23 February in the local hospital.

"Everything is fine. The baby is healthy and he will continue to be monitored," said Ruiz.

The virus usually causes discomforts such as fever and joint pains. However, the WHO sent out an alert since Brazil reported cases where babies, whose mothers caught Zika while

pregnant, were born with microcephaly.

The Brazilian government has reported that seven other pregnant women have the virus transmitted by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, which also spreads yellow fever, dengue fever and chikungunya. Some of these women also came from Chiapas but they are all in the gestation period.

Ruiz also said that the case of the healthy baby does not mean they will relax vigilance and measures to control and prevent the virus among pregnant women. The department will continue to offer their best services possible to the infected pregnant women.—Xinhua

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES –Individual Consultants) The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Agricultural Development Support Project (ADSP) Credit No.: 5624 MM

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar is in the process of receiving funds from the World Bank toward the cost of the ADSP Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The Project Management Unit now invites expressions of interest from qualified candidates for the below positions. Interested consultants must provide their updated curriculum vitae, indicating personal and technical skills, qualifications and experience in similar assignments. In submitting their expressions of interest, consultants are kindly requested to indicate the positions they apply and the reference numbers stated below.

1. National Project Manager (Ref# SC-18)
2. National Finance Officer (Ref# SC-23)
3. National Procurement Officer (Ref# SC-25)
4. National Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist (Ref# SC-21)
5. National Environmental Safeguards Specialist (Ref # SC-19)
6. National Social Safeguards Specialist (Ref# SC-20)
7. International Financial Management Advisor (Ref# SC-22)
8. International Procurement Advisor (Ref# SC-24)

The Services are expected to be carried out over a period of 12 months with the possibility of extension, starting in May 2016. The location of work will be the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers dated July 2014 ("Consultant Guidelines"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest. A Consultant will be selected in accordance with procedures set out in the Consultant Guidelines. Further information and a copy of the detailed Terms of Reference (TORs) can be obtained at the address below during working days from 10:00 to 15:00 hours. Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail, or by Fax) not later than March 15, 2016.

Attn: U Tint Lwin, Director of Procurement
Department: Irrigation Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation.
Address: Building No. 15, MOAI, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.
Phone: +95-67-410019, Fax: + 95-67-410102
Email: tlwin4.irr@gmail.com; hatint2009@gmail.com

Eritrea won't shorten national service despite migration fears

ASMARA — Eritrea is not prepared to stop forcing its youth into lengthy stretches of work as soldiers and civil servants, a conscription policy that is driving waves of refugees to make the perilous trip across the Sahara desert and Mediterranean Sea to Europe.

European nations say that the poor Horn of Africa nation is moving only slowly and cautiously to stabilize the economy to stem the tide of migrants which is aggravating the refugee crisis that is gripping the European Union. The Asmara government insists conscription is vital for national security saying that it fears attack by its far bigger neighbor Ethiopia with which it fought a bloody and expensive war that ended in June 2000.

On paper, citizens between the ages of 18 and 40 must complete 18 months of service to the state but diplomats and those who have fled say this can stretch to a decade or more. The government reserves the right to extend length of service in periods of emergency.

Eritrea is raising national service salaries, printing new local currency notes to deter people-traffickers and investing in mining and other sectors, but diplomats are not convinced it is doing enough to retain its young



Passangers wait for public transport at a bus-stop in Eritrea's capital Asmara, on 20 February 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

people. Western diplomats said the strategy, boosted by a new EU financial package, showed greater engagement and openness by one of Africa's poorest countries, which has championed "self reliance" and has long accused world powers of trying to push it into isolation with UN sanctions.

But the diplomats, who all spoke on condition of anonymity, accused Eritrea of back-tracking on privately made commitments by some officials last year to fix national service at 18 months, a term stipulated four years after Eritrea's

independence from Ethiopia in 1991.

European nations say that as long as national service dragged past the time limit Eritrean youths would continue to leave the country, thereby losing valuable workers that are needed to prop up the domestic economy.

Each month as many as 5,000 people flee Eritrea according to UN figures, estimates the Eritrean government disputes. The government puts the population at about 3.6 million, while other estimates suggest it could be almost double that.

"The government is

doing the utmost that it can do, under the circumstances," Information Minister Yemane Ghebremeskel told Reuters in Eritrea, saying salaries would rise but there were no plans to scrap or cut national service.

"Demobilization is predicated on removal of the main threat," Yemane said in his office overlooking Asmara.

"You are talking about prolongation of national service in response to ... continued belligerence by Ethiopia," he said referring to Eritrea's neighbor with a population of 97 million.—Reuters



Children swim in the Rakiraki River among the Cyclone Winston-damaged landscape in Fiji, on 24 February, 2016 in this image supplied by UNICEF. PHOTO: REUTERS

Tens of thousands of Fijians homeless after cyclone — disaster agency

SYDNEY — Tens of thousands of Fijians remain homeless and living in evacuation shelters in the aftermath of a devastating cyclone at the weekend, officials said yesterday, as aid began trickling in to the outer reaches of the South Pacific archipelago.

The death toll from Cyclone Winston, the worst storm ever recorded in the southern hemisphere, remained at 42 but officials at Fiji's National Disaster Management Office fear that figure will rise.

Officials from the disaster agency estimate that 35,000 people are sheltering in evacuation centres, some of which are damaged and running short of food and other supplies. Some 900,000 people live in the

archipelago of more than 300 islands.

International aid agencies said supplies were being delivered but the scale of the damage to infrastructure, particularly jetties and communications equipment, was making it hard to reach remote communities where help was most needed.

CARE Australia spokesman Dylan Quinell said there had still been no contact with some remote communities, including one at Yasawa on the northwest coast of Fiji's largest island, Viti Levu, since the cyclone made landfall on Saturday. Others had been reached using radios dropped by the New Zealand air force.

Alice Clements, a UNICEF aid worker, told Reuters by phone from Nadi,

Fiji's main tourism hub, that some communities had been totally destroyed but that rebuilding had already begun.

"People are going out during the day to recover what they can, it's not like they're sitting in the shelters helpless, they are salvaging what they can and dusting themselves off," Clements said.

Ahmad Sami, the acting head of the International Red Cross in the Pacific, said providing shelter and water remained immediate priorities.

"Volunteers on the ground are saying the destruction is like nothing which they have ever seen before," Sami said.

"Houses have collapsed, communications are still down, power transmis-

sion is down, wharves are still not accessible and roads and highways have been damaged," he said.

Joseph Hing, another UNICEF worker, landed on the worst-hit island of Koro on Tuesday and said it "looked like someone took a torch and just burnt from one side to the other".

"As we sailed closer, we started to smell the dead carcasses of livestock that were floating past the ships. When we smelt those, we knew that this disaster was really, really bad," he said in a statement.

Aid workers have warned of potential outbreaks of the Zika and Dengue viruses, both carried by mosquitoes that could breed in the stagnant water left by the storm.—Reuters

Argentina's new president faces strike, discontent as prices leap

BUENOS AIRES — In power just two months, Argentina's President Mauricio Macri is already facing labour unrest, with a national public sector strike planned for Wednesday as workers protest rocketing inflation and job cuts.

Unions representing hospital staffers and government office workers, among other public sector employees, are staging a one-day walkout across the country.

It is the first such strike that Macri, Argentina's first non-Peronist president in more than a decade, has faced since taking over in December with promises to end leftist populism and revive the South American

nation's ailing economy.

One of Macri's first moves in power was to slim down Argentina's bloated public payroll, firing thousands in a bid to tame a ballooning fiscal deficit.

The government also devalued the peso currency and erased long-running fuel subsidies, further stoking inflation already running at 30 per cent.

Although praised by international investors eyeing Argentina's rich resources, Macri's rapid policy moves are fuelling rising discontent at home.

Polling firm Ricardo Rouvier & Asociados found that approval of the government, while still relatively

high at 60 per cent, has fallen 11 percentage points in the two months since Macri took office. Some 12 per cent of those polled who voted for Macri in November's election say they would change their vote now.

"The carrying out of the campaign promises seems to me very hurried, not well analysed, as if they only wanted to show that they are fulfilling their promises," said 40-year-old Marcelo Garcia, who voted for Macri but said he felt "a bit disappointed."

Looking to cool inflation, Macri had hoped pay increases would not be any higher than the 2016 infla-

tion goal of 25 per cent. But a source at the labour ministry who has been present at wage negotiations said "there was no 25 per cent roof."

The country's powerful teachers' unions, who say they were promised 32 per cent, are now also threatening action, days from the start of the beginning of the academic year in Argentina.

"The government is walking on a knife edge," said political analyst Ricardo Rouvier. "On one side there are those who are building pressure for orthodox economics and shock policy. On the other is the threat of action from social movements."—Reuters

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY HOLIDAY NOTICE

As the wharves, warehouses and chellan Offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the 2nd MARCH 2016 (Peasant's DAY) Loading, Unloading and delivery for Goods will be received on Payment as Holiday Fees.

ILO's new contact telephone and fax numbers

Due to the changes of Myanmar Post and Telecommunications (MPT) services for its auto telephone customers, Yankin RSU Exchange needs to upgrade its mechanical functions. MPT advised that the old system will be replaced with modern MSAN Exchange urgently. Hence, the first three digits of the ILO's telephone have been changed. The following are the new telephone numbers of the ILO Liaison Office for the general public's record and information.

Liaison Officer International Labour Organization (ILO)

Office address : No # 1/A, Kanbae (Thitsar) Road
Yankin township, Yangon, MYANMAR
Telephone : 01 233 6538, 01 233 6539
01 578 925, 01 579 956
Fax : 01 233 6582
P.O Box : 679
E-mail : yangon@ilo.org

ILO takes this opportunity to inform the general public of its other numbers in different locations.

Forced Labour complaint

Contact number in Bago Region : 09 73 22 02 06
Contact number in Magway Region : 09 44 80 59 036
Contact number in Mon State : 09 42 11 75 562
Contact number in Chin State : 09 45 26 59 346
Contact number in Mandalay Region : 09 45 26 59 345

Contact number 24/7 : 09 45 26 59 344

Peace Project (Shan State)

Office address : No # 14, Nawarat Road, Thittaw
Ward, Taunggyi Township, Shan
State (South)
Contact number in Shan (South) : 09 25 07 86 411

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV SINAR BIAK VOY NO (458N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SINAR BIAK VOY NO (458N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26.2.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's 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 SAMUDERA SHIPPING
LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV DARINA VOY NO (022016)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV DARINA VOY NO (022016) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25.2.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's 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 BEN LINE AGENCIES
(S'PORE) PTE LTD.

Phone No: 2301186

Adele steals the show at 2016 BRIT Awards

LONDON — British singer Adele stole the show on Wednesday evening at the 2016 BRIT Awards in London, making a triumphant return to the star-studded ceremony as she picked up four trophies, including the coveted “album of the year” award.

The BRIT Awards, held in London’s O2 arena, are the mainstream British music industry’s most prestigious awards ceremony, having been held every year since 1982. On the bill at this year’s bash were international stars Rihanna and Justin Bieber, as well as home-grown artists James Bay and Coldplay.

Adele’s “25” album missed out on a Grammy nomination because its November release date made it ineligible for this year’s awards, so the BRITs gave the British songstress her first major award show recognition for her third studio album, which became the best-selling album of 2015.

“To come back after so long away and be so warmly received is really lovely — thank you so much,” said Adele, dressed in a floor-length red gown, as she picked up her first award of the night for best British female. Her previous album, “21”, was released four years earlier.

The London-born singer also scooped awards for best British female, best British single, and the “BRITs Global Success” award. She was the only artist or group to receive more than one award at the ceremony.

After a shaky and out-of-key performance at the Grammys earlier in the month, after which Adele said she cried all day, she closed the show with an accomplished rendition of “When We Were Young”, a song from “25”, having changed into a star-spangled glittery gown before her performance.

Adele also said she wanted to “publicly support” American pop star Kesha, who claims that her former music producer, “Dr Luke”, raped and emotionally manipulated her. A judge ruled last week that Kesha could not be released from her six-album recording contract with Sony Music. The late British rock star David Bowie, who died last month, was paid an emotional tribute by Scottish singer Annie Lennox, who called Bowie a “quintessential visionary” who would be “loved and revered for as long as the earth still spins”.

Bowie’s friend, British actor Gary Oldman, picked up a posthumous “BRIT Icon” award for the singer, while New Zealand’s



British singer and songwriter Adele accepts the award for best British female solo artist at the BRIT Awards at the O2 arena in London, Britain, on 24 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

Lorde performed Bowie’s hit song “Life on Mars”.

The ceremony, which mainly recognises British music, also saw international awards handed out to Justin Bieber, Tame Impala and Bjork.

The awards have come under fire for not representing non-white artists, just as the Oscars ceremony has. Black British

singer Laura Mvula said she would not attend the ceremony, citing the lack of diversity.

Barbados-born Rihanna marked her first performance on British soil since 2012 with a raunchy performance of “Work”, her new song with Drake, which featured a surprise appearance from the Canadian rapper. —Reuters

I get a rush by honouring the classics: Lady Gaga

LOS ANGELES — Lady Gaga hopes her Super Bowl National Anthem performance proves once and for all she’s much more than a provocative pop star.

The 29-year-old stunned fans earlier this month when she performed a faultless rendition of “The Star Spangled Banner” at the Super Bowl, reported Rolling Stone magazine.

Gaga insists that despite her outlandish costumes and catchy pop songs, she takes her performances very seriously.

“I get a thrill out of pushing the envelope, but I also get a true rush by honouring the classics. I like to bring a little bit of the past into the future,” she said.

Gaga is riding on a career high at the moment, having won a Golden Globe for her acting work on TV series “American Horror Story: Hotel”, and she’s also up for an a Best Original Song Oscar for her collaboration with songwriter Diane Warren on “Til It Happens to You”. —PTI

David Bowie wins posthumous BRIT ‘Icon’ award



A man walks towards a mural of David Bowie in Sheffield, Britain, on 3 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — The late visionary British rock star David Bowie was honoured with a posthumous “Icon” award at the BRITs music ceremony in London on Wednesday night, just over a month after his death.

Bowie was paid an emotional tribute first by British singer Annie Lennox, then by his friend, British actor Gary Oldman, who

picked up the award on Bowie’s behalf. “The world lost an artist of transcendent talent,” Oldman said. “He was the very definition, the living embodiment of that singular word: icon.”

New Zealand singer Lorde performed Bowie’s hit song “Life on Mars” in tribute to the singer after the award was announced. —Reuters

Philippine bishop tells Catholics to boycott Madonna concert

MANILA — A Roman Catholic bishop in the Philippines on Wednesday urged the faithful to stay away from American pop singer Madonna’s two-night concert in Manila, calling her music “suggestive” and her clothes “vulgar”.

Madonna, 57, is on a world tour to promote her 13th studio album, “Rebel Heart”, which combines her trademark sexually charged performance and lyrics.

She performs on Wednesday and Thursday in the same hall where Pope Francis met Filipino families a year ago.

“Why is the Catholic Philippines the favourite venue for blasphemy against God and the Holy Mother?” asked Ramon Arguelles, archbishop of Lipa City, south of the capital.

“Pinoy and all God-loving people should avoid sin and occasions of sin,” he said in a statement on the website of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines, referring to Filipinos. Roman Catholics make up about 80 per cent of the Philip-

pine population of more than 100 million and the church has strong influence, blocking legislation on the death penalty, divorce and same-sex marriage.

There was no immediate reply to telephone calls from Reuters seeking comment from the event organiser or Madonna, who arrived in Manila on Monday and visited Catholic-run orphanages, including one of the oldest, near the presidential palace.

Tickets for the concert can cost as much as 57,750 pesos (\$1,211.84).

Madonna is famed for her hits, “Like A Virgin” and “Material Girl”, but some of her music videos used religious symbols in ways the Roman Catholic prelates found offensive and disrespectful.

The performer’s concerts were among “subtle attacks of the evil one”, the bishop added, in an apparent reference to Satan. In 2012, Arguelles also opposed the Manila concert of Lady Gaga as the work of Satan. —Reuters

Liv Tyler among honourees at Elle Style Awards

LONDON — Hollywood actress Liv Tyler was among the winners at the Elle Style Awards in London on Tuesday night, picking up the TV Actress of the Year award.

“I was very shy and nervous ... I was completely out of breath by the time I got to the stage so I just said ‘Thank you, thank you for having me’ and I left,” Tyler told Reuters.

“Honestly, I have a real thing about stage fright for some reason but ... if they’d have brought the award to the table I’d have been fine.”

The evening unofficially wraps up London Fashion Week. Others honored on the night included models Karlie Kloss who won Inspiring Woman of the Year award and Jourdan Dunn who was named Style Influencer of the Year. —Reuters

Merlin Entertainments profit hurt by Alton Towers crash

LONDON — Merlin Entertainments (MERL.L) reported flat profit for 2015, held back by a drop in visitors to its Alton Towers theme park in Britain after a rollercoaster crash in June left four people seriously injured.

Merlin, the world's second-biggest visitor attractions group behind Walt Disney (DIS.N), said on Thursday it made a profit before tax of 250 million pounds in the year to 26 December.

The company, which

also operates attractions such as Madame Tussauds waxworks, Legoland and the London Eye, had previously forecast a result broadly in line with 2014's 249 million pounds.

Like-for-like sales at the group's resort theme parks division, which includes Alton Towers, fell 12.4 per cent.

Visitors stayed away from Alton Towers, one of Britain's biggest theme parks, after the "Smiler" ride crash, caused by human error, led to two teenagers

having leg amputations.

Visitor numbers and revenue at Merlin's other UK theme parks, including Thorpe Park and Chessington World of Adventures, also suffered. For the group as a whole, total revenue rose 3.9 per cent to 1.28 billion pounds at constant exchange rates as visitor numbers edged-up 0.3 per cent to 62.9 million.

The group said it would pay a final dividend of 4.4 pence to give a total payout of 6.5p for the year, up 4.8 per cent.—Reuters



An ambulance drives past the Smiler ride at Alton Towers in Alton, Britain in June 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

Milan fashion week opens with eclectic, embellished looks

MILAN — Six days of catwalk shows began in Milan on Wednesday with Italian luxury brands Gucci, Fay and Roberto Cavalli among the first to show the creations their designers hope will fill women's wardrobes next winter.

In a first, Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi kicked off Milan Fashion Week with an industry lunch as international journalists and buyers descended on the city, home to fashion giants like Giorgio Armani and Prada.

Gucci, which last week reported a forecast-beating sales rebound in the fourth quarter, presented a vibrant and colourful autumn/winter 2016/2017 collection, which designer Alessandro Michele called "Rhizomatic Scores".

From one-colored outfits — including a pink furry coat teamed with pink tights, shoes, scarf and bag — to clashing print combinations and designs emblazoned with snake patterns,



A model presents a creation from the Gucci Autumn/Winter 2016 woman collection during Milan Fashion Week, Italy, on 24 February . PHOTO: REUTERS

Michele showed a selection of eclectic looks.

Models wore sequined skirts, tailored trouser suits, Chinese-style silk dresses, shiny brocade coats, capes, brightly coloured tights and a range of hats. The looks were accessorized with an array of bags, platform heels and large glasses.

At Fay, which is part

of the Tod's luxury goods group, creative directors Tommaso Aquilano and Roberto Rimondi looked to the US Western coast for their daywear. "The inspiration is the new Californian generation ... mixed with the new Italian generation," Aquilano told Reuters.

He said the line included "beautiful Italian coats

but with a more folk take and with embroidery that is reminiscent of the great American plains".

Fringes and tassels were ubiquitous, decorating denim jackets and dresses, worn with embroidered cowboy boots. With nods to the romantic and folk, models wore floral, frilly dresses, flared skirts and jackets in sand, burgundy, orchid, dark blue and black.

At Roberto Cavalli, creative director Peter Dundas, who took over from the founding designer last year, showed a richly-embroidered array of outfits. Staying loyal to founder Cavalli's love of animal print, Dundas used tiger and leopard print patterns on furry coats, suits, skirts and scarves.

Flower embroidery crept up jeans while sequins adorned sheer dresses and dark trouser suits, reminiscent of the 1970s. The show, also featuring menswear, included brocade jackets.—Reuters

mitv Myanmar International

(26-2-2016 07:00am ~ 27-2-2016 7:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Myanmar's Traditions and Culture "A stir about of Rainbows"
07:50	Am	Kay Tu Mar Lar "The Decision"
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	YUFL
08:40	Am	Young Talent "Animator Swan Thura Htun"
08:46	Am	Civic Duty
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Entrepreneur "Nan Ei Ei Zar"
09:39	Am	Chanmyay Yeiktha Meditation Centre — Chaw Dwin Gone
09:55	Am	Myanmar Puppet

10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	The Eel Business (Fisherman the eel culture)
10:41	Am	Myanmar Weaving
10:53	Am	Temple Stalls

(11:00 Am~03:00 Pm)-Thursday Repeat(07:00Am~11:00 Am)
(03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:27	Pm	Travelogue: "Anyar Myay" or Upcountry (Part- III)
07:43	Pm	Serene and Fun Festivities of Yaw
07:53	Pm	Cosplayer
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Architect: U Thaw
08:51	Pm	Myanmar Masterclass: Artist Khin Maung Zaw

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm)- Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00Pm~03:00 Am)-Thursday Repeat(07:00 Am~11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) -Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

(For Detailed Schedule – www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)



News Channel in Brief

(26-2-2016, Friday)

6:00 am <ul style="list-style-type: none">Paritta by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw	2:35 am <ul style="list-style-type: none">Myanmar Traditional Boxing
7:35 am <ul style="list-style-type: none">People's Talk's	3:15 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">2016 University Entrance Examination (Chemistry)
8:35 am <ul style="list-style-type: none">Current Affairs	4:35 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">Football Magazine
9:35 am <ul style="list-style-type: none">2016 University Entrance Examination (Myanmar)	5:35 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">Hyper Sports
10:35 am <ul style="list-style-type: none">MRTV's Youth Programme	6:35 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Farmer
11:15 am <ul style="list-style-type: none">Weekly Youth Info	7:15 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">TV Drama Series
11:35 am <ul style="list-style-type: none">Science & Technology Programme	8:00 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">News / International News/ Weather Report
12:35 am <ul style="list-style-type: none">TV Drama Series	9:00 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">News
1:50 am <ul style="list-style-type: none">TV Drama Series	10:05 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">My Dream
2:25 am <ul style="list-style-type: none">Talk on Old Film (Part-2)	10:15 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">Myanmar Video

Note/ Hourly News Bulletins (Local + International)



Entertainment Channel

(26-2-2016, Friday)

6:00 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">Alinka Wut Yee Music Troupe	8:35 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">Stories
6:20 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">Pyi Thu Ni Ti	9:10 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">Dramatic Arts
6:40 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">Song Programme	10:05 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">My Dream
7:00 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">TV Drama Series	10:15 pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">Myanmar Video

From 26.2.2016 (Friday) 06:00 Pm
To 27.2.2016 (Saturday) 06:00 Pm

This schedule will be repeated four times in 24 hours.

Man City close on last eight after 3-1 win at Dynamo

KIEV — Manchester City moved within touching distance of a first appearance in the Champions League quarter-finals after a dynamic first-half display at Dynamo Kiev helped them secure a 3-1 last-16 first-leg win on Wednesday.

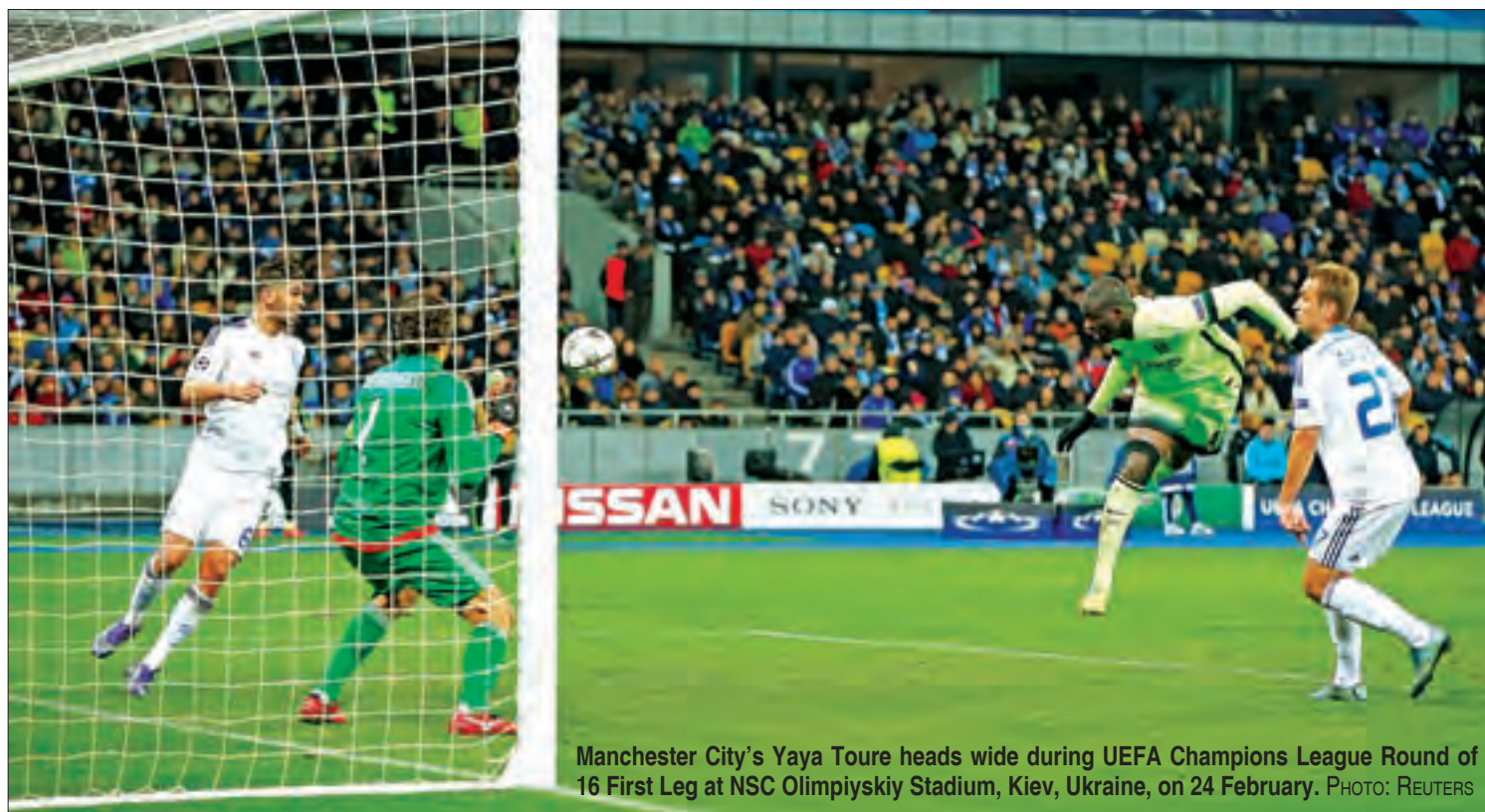
City were irrepressible in the opening 45 minutes, slicing through their opponents almost at will and taking a 2-0 lead with goals from Sergio Aguero and David Silva.

The hosts, however, improved dramatically after the restart and Vitaliy Buyalskiy's deflected effort reduced the arrears to fire up the home crowd and spur on the Dynamo players.

City keeper Joe Hart was forced into a superb save to deny Buyalskiy an equaliser, but Yaya Toure curled home late on to leave the tie firmly balanced in City's favour ahead of the return leg on 15 March.

The English side, who reverted to a full-strength team after resting a host of players in a humiliating 5-1 FA Cup defeat by Chelsea, began with real intent, dominating possession and pressing their opponents into near submission in a classy first-half display.

The hosts, returning from their winter break, looked very much a side who had not played



Manchester City's Yaya Toure heads wide during UEFA Champions League Round of 16 First Leg at NSC Olimpiyskiy Stadium, Kiev, Ukraine, on 24 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

an official match in two and a half months.

After a minor scare for City when Hart pushed an effort from Andriy Yarmolenko on to the crossbar, the visitors took the lead after 15 minutes.

Toure headed Silva's corner into the path of Aguero, who made the most of the space he had been afforded to chest the

ball down and volley sharply past keeper Olexandr Shovkovskiy for his 16th goal in his last 17 Champions League starts.

The visitors missed chances to extend the lead with Aguero flashing a shot fractionally wide and Toure forcing Shovkovskiy to palm his effort away at the near post, but it was not long before they doubled their advantage.

Silva, playing in a central playmaker role, finished off a teasing low cross from Raheem Sterling at the far post on 40 minutes after good work from Aguero.

Kiev came out in the second half with renewed vigour and reduced the deficit when Buyalskiy's rasping effort from the edge of the area took a big deflec-

tion off Nicolas Otamendi and nestled in the corner of Hart's net.

Kiev piled forward and Hart was forced into a superb low save to deny Buyalskiy an equaliser with 10 minutes remaining, but Toure put City within touching distance of the last eight when he curled in from 20 metres in the 90th minute.—Reuters

Ten-man PSV hold on to frustrate Atletico

EINDHOVEN — PSV Eindhoven played for more than 20 minutes with 10 men but held on for a goalless draw at home to Atletico Madrid in the first leg of their Champions League last-16 tie on Wednesday.

The Spanish club have earned a well-founded reputation for iron-clad defence this season but it was the Dutch champions who had to produce a stout rearguard action to avoid being beaten and leave the tie balanced ahead of the return leg on 15 March.

PSV, making their first appearance in the knockout phase of the competition since 2007, were forced to play the closing stages deep in their own half after 20-year-old striker Gaston Pereiro was sent off for a second booking in the 68th minute.

Having been cautioned in the first half, he was dismissed for a needless shoulder challenge on Atletico defender Diego Godin.

"It was a difficult game. They



Atletico Madrid's Juanfran in action against PSV Eindhoven's Jurgen Locadia (R) during UEFA Champions League Round of 16 First Leg at PSV stadium, Eindhoven, Netherlands, on 24 February 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

were super good and super quick," PSV defender Jeffrey Bruma told reporters.

"We fought with power and we did it well and we can be satisfied with the 0-0. We still have it in our own hands." The home side had started the game in an ambitious mood, fielding three attackers despite the absence of suspended top scorer Luuk de Jong.

Godin did put the ball in the net with a close-range header midway through the second half but his effort was ruled out for a push on a PSV defender.

The best chance of the first

half also fell to Atletico.

Forward Luciano Vietto raced on to a long ball inside the opening three minutes and scooped it over PSV keeper Jeroen Zoet, but saw his effort cleared off the line by the back-tracking Bruma.

Atletico had to wait almost an hour for another opportunity with substitute Fernando Torres hitting a good effort wide almost immediately after coming on.

Bruma blocked a close-range effort from Angel Correa in the final 10 minutes with the ball striking him full in the face and knocking him off his feet.—Reuters

Nishikori crashes out of 2nd round in Acapulco

ACAPULCO — Kei Nishikori's run at the Abierto Mexicano Telcel came to an early second-round end on Wednesday as American Sam Querrey beat the world No 6, 6-4, 6-3 to advance.

Nishikori entered the match having recently beaten Querrey twice, once in straight sets at the Japan Open in late 2015 and then on the way to the title at his most recent tournament in Memphis.

In Acapulco, however, Nishikori was thoroughly outplayed, dropping his serve three times in the straight-sets loss as Querrey, ranked 43rd in the world, beat Nishikori (No.7) for the first time since 2012.

Querrey attacked his Japanese second seed's serve relentlessly, but Nishikori did not do himself any favors by only getting a pitiful 46 per cent of his first serves in play. By the end of the match, Querrey had piled up 10 break-point opportunities to Nishikori's one.

"I had no chance with returning his serve and it wasn't my day," Nishikori said. "Both

of us were making mistakes and that made it even harder to find a rhythm."

"My opponent played well but my serves weren't getting in at all, and 90 per cent of the reason for the defeat is with me. My second serves, too, were right down the middle and he was attacking me off of them."

Next up for Querrey is 18-year-old American compatriot Taylor Fritz, whom Nishikori beat in the Memphis final.

In the women's draw, 18-year-old Naomi Osaka won her second-round match, beating Mariana Duque-Marino of Columbia, 6-3, 7-6(5). But there was no smile for the youngster as the number of errors off her serve increased in the second set.

"I was concentrating in the first set but I got a little erratic in the second," said Osaka, who is closing in on the top 100 in the WTA rankings. "I'd like to reach the final," she said.

In the quarterfinals, Osaka will face second seed Sloane Stephens of the United States. Stephens beat Olga Govortsova 6-4, 6-1.—Kyodo News