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TAKE US TO THE BRIDGE

Winner of Yangon new town project to donate five bridges

WITH the donation of five river bridges, a new town plan on the western outskirts of Yangon is expected to take at least ten years to complete, said U Kyaw Soe, Yangon Region Minister for

Forest and Energy, in an exclusive interview with *the Myanmar News Agency*.

The chairman of the committee for scrutinising tender forms for the new town project said that

the committee is still scrutinising the process in detail in order to select a winner for the project which will be established on 30,000 acres.

Out of 54 companies who

bought tender forms, only three competed for the project.

The three developers are Yangon South West Development Public Company, Business Capital City Development Ltd

and Shwe Popa International Development Co Ltd.

"The winner of the project will build five bridges for the country in return for the project,

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Tourists enjoy a boat
trip across Inle Lake
PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE



Myanmar tourism industry could double in the next decade

FRENCH based online hotel booking agent, Jovago, has made it known that the Myanmar tourism industry could expand by two-fold within the coming decade.

"Myanmar is a top destination within the world tourism industry for its beautiful scenery and friendly people," says Hugo Schleicher, Myanmar country manager for Jovago.

The Myanmar tourism industry grew by fifty per cent between 2013-15 and is anticipated to grow even further in 2016.

"Myanmar is leapfrogging in growth. Year after year the number of tourists [visiting the country] and tour guide companies operating are increasing. It's expanded about ten fold [in recent years]. We will continue to monitor the situation throughout this coming year," said U Thet Lwin Toe, chair of the Myanmar Tourism Entrepreneurs Association.

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INSIDE



Increased demand
seen for hand-
woven Chin clothing

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Poor service, high prices blamed for hindrances of tourism development

Ko Moe

THE Myanmar Tourism Entrepreneurs Association has named poor services and high prices as hindrances of tourism development in Myanmar, pointing out that it is expensive to travel to Myanmar compared to other countries.

It costs tourists between 50 and 70 per cent more than other countries while traveling in Myanmar,

said U Thet Lwin Toe, chairman of the association.

"Prices are higher than those of other countries but the country does not meet world standards in terms of services yet."

U Tin Tun Aung, managing director of Thingaha travel & tour company, called on those in the country's tourism industry to review their performance and seek ways and means for their service

improvement, not to be money-oriented.

Tourism industry being a driver of employment growth, it is needed to develop it in which around 100,000 people were employed, added the MD.

According to figures, Myanmar welcomed 4.5 million visitors last year while Thailand receives 20 million visitors, Viet Nam, nine million and Cambodia, seven mil-

lion a year.

Travel agents and tour operators highlighted the importance of developing infrastructure and improving services for ensuring the sustainability of the tourism sector as tourist arrival in Myanmar is expected to double over the next 10 years.

Statistics show Myanmar has more than 1,400 hotels with 5,000 rooms.

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker meets Israeli ambassador, UNHCR resident representative

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint received Israeli Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Daniel Zohar Zonshine and UNHCR Resident Representative Mr. Giuseppe de Vincentiis separately in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the call with the UNHCR delegation, the Speaker

held discussions with the resident representative on the UN agency's activities and works to be done in the country.

Also present at the calls were Deputy Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat and officials of the Pyithu Hluttaw Office. — Myanmar News Agency



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint receives Resident Representative of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Myanmar Mr. Giuseppe de Vincentiis. PHOTO: MYANMA NEWS AGENCY

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker meets UNHCR resident representative

SPEAKER of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw Mahn Win Khaing Than received Mr. Giuseppe de Vincentiis, resident representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Myanmar at a hall

of Amyotha Hluttaw Building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Also present at the call were Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw U Aye Tha Aung as well as officials from the Amyotha Hluttaw Office.—Myanmar News Agency



Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than welcomes Resident Representative of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Myanmar Mr. Giuseppe de Vincentiis. PHOTO: MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw forms inter-parliamentary friendship associations

THE Amyotha Hluttaw session continued for its thirteenth day with the process of approving Inter-parliamentary Friendship Associations yesterday.

Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than announced parliamentary approval of the proposed formation of the Myanmar-Cambodia Inter-parliamentary Friendship Association, the Myanmar-France

Inter-parliamentary Friendship Association, the Myanmar Brunei Inter-parliamentary Friendship Association, the Myanmar-Latvia Inter-parliamentary Friendship Association, the Myanmar-Poland Inter-parliamentary Friendship Association and the Myanmar-Belarus Inter-parliamentary Friendship Association.—Myanmar News Agency

Government supervision proposed for hasty management of state-owned properties: Pyithu Hluttaw

THE Pyithu Hluttaw yesterday approved an urgent proposal calling for closer supervision of the swift undertaking of the handover of state-owned enterprises and properties during the transitional period.

Daw Khin San Hlaing of the Pale constituency presented her proposal that the central government should supervise what she called post-election developments prior to the transfer of state responsibility.

The pressing proposal pointed out the prompt leasing, handover

and privatisation of state-owned land, factories and enterprises; aggressive removal of squats and the hasty management of the country's natural resources without supervision and transparency. She suggested placing them under the close supervision of the central government in the interest of the people and the country as a whole.

Her suggestion prompted 12 MPs to raise their voices that the issues required greater coordination and negotiation in such a transitional period, which they considered

delicate enough for first-timers. Daw Khin San Hlaing's proposal was accepted by a majority of votes.

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint sought parliamentary approval for the establishment of three committees with fifteen members each. The Economic and Financial Development Committee, the Public Affairs Management Committee and the Fundamental Rights of Citizens Committee were formed as proposed by the speaker.—Myanmar News Agency

Mandalarians gear up for El Niño-related illness

NECESSARY arrangements have been made for the provision of medical assistance to Mandalarians as extremely hot weather that might be caused by the upcoming El Niño can cause heat strokes, according to an official from Mandalay General Hospital yesterday.

Public awareness of tips for avoiding a heat stroke has been disseminated since 2010 when an extreme heat wave hit Mandalay. People will be able to deal with possible severe heat during the El Niño season, said U Min Lwin, communication officer of the hospital. Coordination had been made with ice factories for adequate supply of ice needed for

heat stroke treatment and with local social associations for provision of manpower and ambulances as well, he added. According to the communication officer, a heat stroke control committee led by the Mandalay Region Chief Minister was formed, including the hospital's medical superintendent, professors and medical staff. As preparations for heat emergencies, spacious air-conditioned rooms with deployment of medical staff and medical equipment are ready for 24-hour health care service at the hospital. El Niño may affect people with heat strokes, said Dr Myint Kyaw, medical superintendent of Myo Daw private hospital.

Despite the excessive heat expected to hit the people, there will be fewer cases of heat stroke, the medical superintendent of the private hospital predicted.

He said that 24-hour electricity supply is imperative to operate air-conditioners and air-coolers needed to help people suffering from heat emergencies. According to statistics, 22 people died from heat stroke in 2010 when the highest temperature ever recorded in Mandalay, placing heat stress and heat-related illness on 1, 536 people. There were no heat stroke deaths in 2012 and 2015, but heat stroke killed six of 91 patients in 2014.—Aung Thant Khaing

Asia-Pacific, Myanmar scouts hold talks

MISTER Paul D Parkison, chairperson of the Asia-Pacific Scout Committee, held a meeting with Dr Tin Nyo, chief commissioner of the Myanmar Scouts and party, on Myanmar efforts to be a member of the World Scouting Organisation in Yangon yesterday.

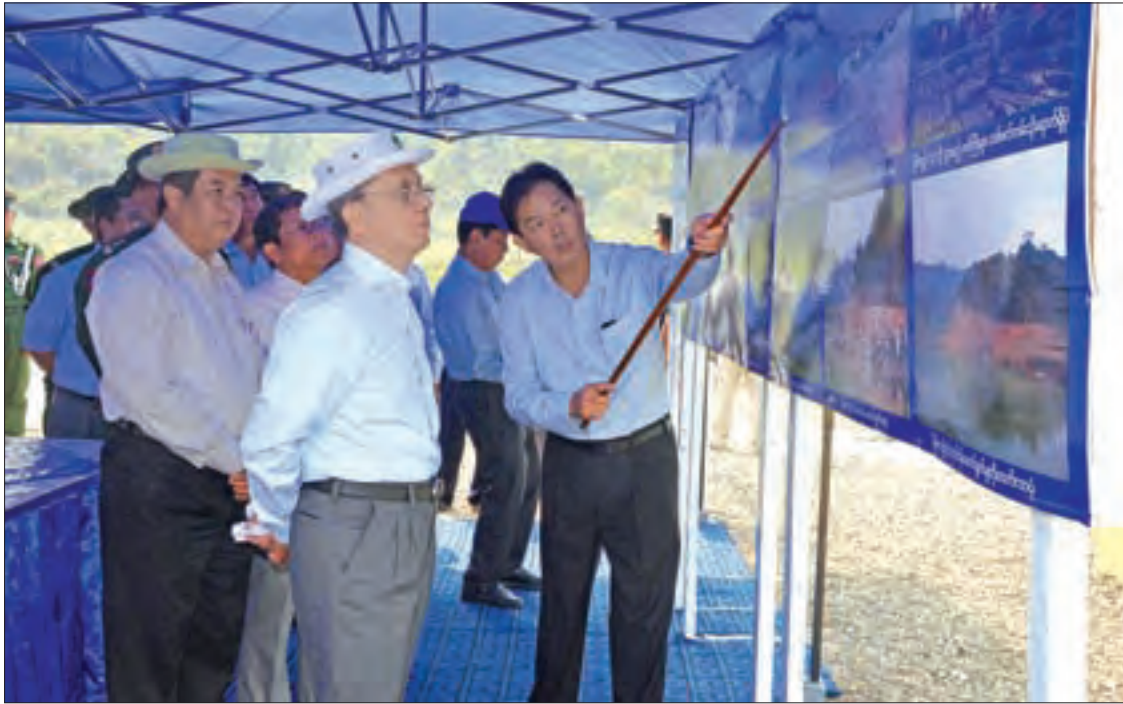
During the meeting held at the office of Myanmar Scout Federation, Mr. Paul D Parkison and party gave suggestions on



Scouts of Myanmar and Asia-Pacific Scout Committee are holding talks. PHOTO: TIN MAUNG LATT

Myanmar's scouting activities and further works following the presentation of officials of the federation.

Next, the Asia-Pacific Scout Committee chairperson and party visited BEHS No (1) in Dagon Township.—Ko Latt (MNA)



President U Thein Sein hears report on widening the Myittha River. PHOTO: MNA

President inspects Myittha River dredging operations

PRESIDENT U Thein Sein inspected river dredging operations in Myittha river to prevent flooding in Kalay Township, Sagaing Region yesterday.

At a briefing hall near Kyegon village in the township, Union Minister U Myint Hlaing, Sagaing Region Chief Minister U Tha Aye and an official reported to the President on progress in the dredging of the Myittha river to allow the proper flow of water, dam construction plans for further supply of water and planning for electricity generation.

Next, the President and party visited Razagyo Dam where they oversaw the main dam, the spillway and water outlets and the hydropower facility.

According to officials concerned, dredging operations that include the removal of scrub from river banks and sandbank excavation in the river have been completed by 70 per cent.

On completion, proper flow of water in Myittha river will help villages along the river to prevent flooding, thereby contributing towards ensuring flood risk

mitigation for their farmlands and improving their livelihoods.

Prevention and mitigation of flooding in Kalay plain can be brought about by the emergence of dam projects on the Myittha river and its two tributaries, said the Irrigation Department.

Under the influence of cyclonic storm 'Komen', heavy downpours occurred in Kalay Township in June and July last year, causing flooding on the Kalay plain following heavy inflows of water into the Myittha river and its tributaries.—*Myanmar News Agency*

C-in-C visits Coco Island

COMMANDER-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing met with local people and families of the Tatmadaw during his trip to Coco Island yesterday, assisting in health care services and socio development.

During the meetings, he pledged that the Tatmadaw would keep on assisting in livestock breeding and production of value added products from the palm trees which are abundant on the island.

The Senior General and wife presented food to department personnel and the local people.



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects construction of the jetty. PHOTO: MYAWADY

During his visit, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing also inspected construction of a jetty.

The jetty has seen more than 90 per cent completion, targeting

to handle vessels by the rainy season in 2017. Currently, Thanlwin mobile hospital ship is providing medical services to the local people there.—*Myawady*

Three aircrafts detected to have invaded restricted territory

DESPITE the warning that the navy will be conducting a combined fleet exercise from 22nd February to 2nd March, three aircrafts were detected to have flown in the restricted air territory at a high speed.

The aircrafts were found to have entered from the north, heading for the south. The type

of the invading aircrafts is not known yet. Further warning will be issued to prevent the unwanted occurrences from taking place.

Aircrafts and helicopters have been warned against flying under an altitude of 15,000 feet above the sea level, and the ships, big and small, cargo motorized boat, fishing vessels and motorized

sampams have also been warned for their safety against cruising, anchoring, fishing and deploying fishing equipment and apparatus within the five-mile radius of the undermentioned areas where the combined fleet manoeuvres are taking place for the period between February 22nd and March 2nd.—*Myawady*

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission Notification 7/2016

3rd Waning Day of Tabodwe, 1377 ME
(26 February, 2016)

Defense Services Personnel representative substituted

According to a request made in accordance with Section 33 of the Amyotha Hluttaw Election Law to substitute a Defense Services Personnel Amyotha Hluttaw Representative, the Union Election Commission scrutinised and substituted the following representative under Notification 2/2016 of the Commission dated 18-1-2016.

The Defense Services Personnel Amyotha Hluttaw Representative to be substituted was nominated by the Commander-in-Chief of the Defense Services in the second multi-party general elections held on 8 November 2015.

BC 46977
Captain Kyaw Myat Soe

BC 52277
Captain Min Min Thein

Chairman
Union Election Commission

UEC declares disqualified candidates, representatives

THE Union Election Commission yesterday announced that 160 candidates and their representatives have been disqualified for failing to submit campaign expenses within the prescribed period.

The disqualified candidates were also barred from standing for elections in the current parliamentary term in accord with section 88 (c) of respective Election Laws, said The UEC.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Winner of Yangon new town project to donate five river crossing bridges to country, people in return

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pledging that people can use them free of charge," U Kyaw Soe said.

With 8-lane, 6-lane and 4-lane roads, the new town eyes meeting the international standards.

The new town plan is one of seven modern housing projects of the Greater Yangon Development Strategic Plan 2040 designed by the region government and the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

The new town project, approved by the Yangon Region Parliament, will be established on 30,00 acres between the Panhlaing River and the Twantay-Yangon Canal and between the Hlaing River and Hlaingthaya-Twantay Road in western Yangon.

The seven modern housing projects will be established on more than 100,000 acres of land on the outskirts of Yangon and accommodate more than 10 million people.—*GNLM*

Myanmar tourism industry could double in the next decade

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It is known that the increase in development of basic building infrastructure is mainly because of the tourism industry.

"The Myanmar tourism industry is the most important thing for the country. It must be prioritised whichever govern-

ment comes to power," said U Htun Myat, central executive of the Myanmar Tour Guides Association.

The total number of foreign tourists entering Myanmar during 2015 equated to 4.8 million, up by a million on those that entered the country throughout the year prior.

Energy Ministry has privatised all but 12 fuel stations: Permanent Secretary



U Pe Zin Tun. PHOTO: MAY OO MOE

THE Ministry of Energy has transferred most of its enterprises, except primary ones, to private companies over the past five years, according to its permanent secretary.

U Pe Zin Tun said that the government still remains the sole distributor of natural gas for local demand. No right to distribute natural gas is granted even to regional governments, he added, stressing that his ministry will continue to support private dis-

tributors.

He pledged that the ministry will place greater transparency on the production and distribution in line with its existing policies.

The ministry has privatised 261 of its 273 fuel stations since 2010, he said.

Up to date, the number of private fuel refilling stations has reached 1,228 and six storage tanks while 12 ship tankers have been granted license for distribution of fuel.

The private companies which have been permitted for importing petrol and diesel reached 406 while the Pioneer Services and the National Puma Energy Aviation Service has been granted the license for distributing aviation fuel, the permanent secretary said.

With the aim of reducing the environmental pollution and deforestation, Myanmar Oil and Gas



PHOTO: ENERGY

Enterprise under the ministry reached agreement with Singapore-based Ava Kahyasi Invest-

ment Pte Co and SAME Sky and Guiding Star companies owned by Myanmar nationals to cooper-

ate in importing, storage and distribution of liquefied petroleum gas. — *Khin Yadana*

Crime News

Yabba seized in Tachileik

AN anti-drug squad in Tachileik seized 415 grams of yabba worth more than K10 million, five guns and a vehicle at a house owned by one Aik Sikyauk in San Phoo village on Wednesday. When interrogated,

Aik Sikyauk said the items were given to him by one Aik Saung from Mae Yan village, who absconded to Laos. The police have filed charges against both of them under the Anti-Narcotic Law.— *Myint Moe (Tachileik)*



Aik Saung. PHOTO: MYINT MOE (TACHILEIK)

More than six million Yabba bills seized in Tachileik

ON anti-drug squads seized more than six million yabba bills in Meiphone village, Tachileik Township.

Led by Inspector Ye Win Tun and local militia, the police halted the SKAT six-wheel vehicle, heading from Tachileik to Wanpon, being driven by Aik-Kyaung and Aik-Khit for loading sand and stone. During the investigation, the police found 6,300,000 yabba bills weighting 630 kilograms and 5 mobile phones in the secret drawer on the floor at the back side of vehicle.

The Police filed charges against both of them under the Anti Narcotic Law at Wanpon region police station. —*District (IPRD)*



Aik-Kyaung and Aik-Khit. PHOTO: DISTRICT (IPRD)

Car accident kills three, injures four

A THREE wheel motorbike collided head on with a 12 wheel vehicle on the Yangon-Mandalay road, between mileposts 101/1 and 101 /2, Nyaunglebin Township on Tuesday, leaving three dead and four injured.

The motorbike, driven by one Khin Maung Myint, 51, with Kyaw Zin Htet, Win Aung and Myint Zaw on board col-

lided with the 12 wheel vehicle being driven by one Min Zaw with Kyaw Hla Win on board. The reason for the collision is not known yet.

The accident killed Khin Muang Myint while four were injured seriously and are now receiving medical care at Nyaunglebin general hospital. Police are currently investigating.— *Nay Lin (Nyaunglebin)*



The 12-wheel truck being seen overturned. PHOTO: NAY LIN (NYAUNGLEBIN)

Police seized heroin in prison

MEMBERS of the police seized 0.5 grams of heroin inside coffee sachets in Katha prison on Tuesday.

Police discovered the heroin in coffee sachets belonging to Kyaw Tun who is serving a 12- year sentence in Katha prison. When interrogated,

Daw Kyi Tha, who had come to see Kyaw Tun, admitted that she had brought it and said she received the drugs from one Tan Tun alias Hla Tun, the brother of the convict. The police have taken action against all three.— *Aye Mya That Htar*

LOCAL Business

Bamboo growers may buy saplings at better prices

GREEN Move Co will sell 70,000 saplings to local bamboo farmers at a reasonable price, said its Chairman U Htain Win, who has established a modern bamboo plantations on 175 acres of farmlands located along Taik-kyi-Phaunggyi-Bago Road.

The company said it will sell for K1,500 per sapling to those who will buy under 100 saplings, planning to offer discount price at K1,000 for customers who will buy above 100 saplings.

There are 25 species of bamboo in Myanmar. Among them, 18 species have been cultivated by the company in such areas for public observations with the aim of raising awareness about the cultivation of bamboo and its

health benefits for both people and environment.

Yangon residents normally purchase bamboo at high prices from rural areas as there are few plantations in Yangon.

Modern farming has been implemented by Green Move Co on the outskirts of Yangon since March last year after gaining the permission of the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry, which leased out the farmlands to the Myanmar Rattan and Bamboo Entrepreneurs Association.

Plans are underway to establish a bamboo industrial zone in future in order to produce bamboo-related products.—*Soe Win (SP)*

Myanma Timber Enterprise to organise open tender sales in March

THE Myanma Timber Enterprise will organise the selling of teak and hardwood logs including sawn timbers through an open tender system, planning to conduct the auctions twice in March.

All citizenship scrutiny certificate holders have the right to participate in the tender. Those who participate need to pay a K5 million (US\$4,034) deposit for the auction of timber under 2,000 cubic tons and K10 million (\$8,069) for timber above 2,000 cubic tons.

Teak and other hardwood including Pyingadoe, Ingyin, Padauk, Inkanyin, Tamalan, Thabyay and Sagawa, Taung-thayet will be displayed for sale during the auction.

The enterprise recently sold timber including illegal logs and sawn timber the forest department seized through the open

biddings system in US dollars. It attracted 127 private entrepreneurs nationwide.

Apart from April, the MTE has conducted the open tender sales every month. We normally sell teak and hardwood produced from lower Myanmar—Yangon, Bago and Ayeyawady regions, Nay Pyi Taw council area, Kayah and Rakhine states—in the first week of a month and products from upper Myanmar—Sagaing and Mandalay regions, Shan and Kachin states in the third week of the month. Despite increase in both local and foreign consumption year by year the Myanma Timber Enterprise will fulfil the future market demand with an annual timber production of no more than 1,160,000 cubic tons, an official said.—*Myo Min Thein (Mayangon)*



Logs to be tendered are piled in Yangon. PHOTO: MYO MIN THEIN



A Chin woman weaves clothes in Gangaw. PHOTO: GYI MYINT NAING

Increased demand seen for hand-woven Chin clothing

LOOM employers in Gangaw Township, Magway Divisional Region have seen high income due to heightened demand from both local and foreign markets for hand woven clothing.

“The hand-woven Chin traditional dresses are made for men and women, such as coats, shirts and so on. Likewise, la-

dies not only wear Chin traditional modern clothes like the shirt and longyi but they also wear old fashion dresses. We are all proud that people are wearing our traditional backstrap loom clothing especially during the time of festivals and special events.”, said a local resident.

More than 10,000 Chin

people lived in Gangaw Township.

As most Chin people wear traditional dress for various kind, of festivals and ceremonies the demand has increased. Employers have expanded their business to villages to produce more traditional costumes.—*Gyi Myint Naing*

One tical of Myanmar gold tips over K800,000 mark

GOLD shopkeepers said a slight rise in the price of gold on the world market on 24 February has tipped the value of one tical (0.576 ounces) of Myanmar pure gold over the K800,000 mark.

An ounce of gold on the world market on 24 February increased in value to US\$1,230 from the previous day's value of \$1,220, resulting in the price of one tical of Myanmar pure gold rising from K798,000 on 23 February to K802,000 the following day.

“The price of Myanmar gold has risen back up in the last couple of days because of the increase in the value of gold on the world market. It's difficult to estimate the trajectory of the value of gold for the coming months because of its current



Golden jewellery are displayed at a shop in Yangon. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

fluctuations,” said U Zaw Aung, a member of the Myanmar Gold Entrepreneurs Association (MGEA) and owner of the Taite gold shop.

The price of Myanmar gold is dependent upon the value of the US dollar and the value of gold on the world market, and while the price of Myanmar gold is currently rising, it has not affected trading.

“The price of world market gold is up, and the dollar is down. Myanmar pure gold has followed the same trend as world market gold, increasing in value. That said, the buying and selling of gold

is proceeding as normal,” said U Maw Maw, general manager of the Aung Thamardi gold shop.

The second week of February showcased the extent of current fluctuations in the value of a tical of Myanmar pure gold, peaking at K803,000, with the lowest value recorded that week being K791,000.

On 24 February, a tical of Myanmar pure gold was valued at K802,000; a tical of 15-carat gold cost K752,000; an ounce of gold on the world market fetched \$1,230; while \$1 bought K1,245, according to gold shopkeepers.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Bangkok shrine bombers first targeted pier for Chinese tourists

BANGKOK — The perpetrators of last year's deadly explosion at a Bangkok shrine originally chose a pier packed with Chinese tourists as their primary target and had amassed enough chemicals to make 10 equally powerful bombs, the chief of Thailand's police bomb squad told Reuters.

A bomb planted at the Erawan Shrine on 17 August killed 20 people and turned a popular tourist site into a scene of carnage.

Another device, which was left at a crowded pier on Bangkok's Chao Phraya river but failed to explode, might have inflicted much greater casualties, said a leading security analyst.

Bomb squad chief Police Colonel Kamthorn Auicharoen's disclosures to Reuters bolster a widely held theory that the perpetrators of the shrine bombing were trying to kill Chinese tourists.

The Thai police have maintained that the motive for the Erawan bombing was Thailand's earlier crackdown on human smuggling networks.

But many analysts, diplomats and even Thai officials say the 17 August bombing was likely an act of revenge for Thailand's deportation to China of more than 100 Uighur Muslims in July.

Acknowledging that Chinese tourists were intentionally targeted could dent one of Thailand's biggest industries. A record 7.9 mil-



Thai army soldiers patrol a pier popular among Chinese tourists at Chao Phraya River in Bangkok on 16 February 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

lion Chinese visited the kingdom in 2015, or more than a quarter of the 28 million tourists that year.

Tourism is one of the few thriving sectors of an economy that has floundered since the military seized power in a May 2014 coup.

When asked about the Bangkok bombers' possible targeting of Chinese citizens, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told

reporters on Thursday that attacks against civilians around the world, including Chinese, were increasing.

"We believe Thai authorities can severely punish the murderers according to law," said Hua.

Thai police have uncovered evidence in the shrine bombing that points to a large and well-organised network, according to ex-

perts and documents reviewed by Reuters. Dangerous chemicals and other materials discovered in Bangkok apartments connected to two suspects could have made ten more bombs, said bomb squad chief Kamthorn.

Yusuf Mieraili and Adem Karadag, the two suspects arrested last year by Thai police, are Uighur Muslims from China's restive Xin-

jiang region. Hundreds of people have died in recent years in unrest in Xinjiang, where most Uighurs live, and in attacks elsewhere in China attributed to Uighurs.

Exiles and human rights groups say those Uighurs engaging in violence are lashing out at oppressive government policies that restrict their culture and religion. Beijing denies this and blames Islamist militants for the rise in violence.

The two suspects appeared in a Bangkok military court on 16 February to hear the ten charges against them, including murder and illegal possession of explosives. Both men say they are innocent.

Police have issued arrest warrants for 15 other suspects, many of whom are thought to be Turkish or in Turkey. Thai police turned down repeated requests by Reuters for information about the investigation. National police chief Jakthip Chaijinda declined several interview requests.

The military indictment, which Reuters reviewed, accuses the men of planting the first bomb at the Chao Phraya Princess Pier where hundreds of Chinese tourists gather each day to board dinner cruises along the river.

It failed to detonate, and after two or three hours, was taken away by a blue-shirted figure later identified in an arrest warrant as an "Asian man".—Reuters

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Sri Lanka could accept international actors in war crimes probe

WASHINGTON — Sri Lanka's foreign minister said on Thursday he is willing to consider international participation in investigating possible war crimes during the 26-year Tamil insurgency.

"I think it is only fair that the victims of the war would want some form of guarantee that the new courts will deliver justice and accountability in a fair manner, and for that we are willing to consider the participation of international actors," Mangala Samaraweera, the minister, said at a Washington think tank.

Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena has previously said that foreign participation was not needed for an impartial inquiry.

The foreign minister's comments come after the United Nations said earlier this month that it would not force Sri Lanka to accept a role for international judges, but any process must be impartial and independent.

The United Nations says the Sri Lankan military and Tamil Tiger rebels were both likely to have committed war crimes dur-

ing the war, which ended with a military victory in 2009.

A UN resolution calls for all alleged war crimes to be investigated and tried in special courts by international judges.

"They could be judges, they could be forensic experts, investigators, prosecutors, all these options are being looked at," Samaraweera said.

Many Sri Lankans oppose foreign involvement, and supporters of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa believe the UN resolution aims to punish the mil-

itary unfairly.

Samaraweera said the "contours and the architecture" of the court would be worked on in the next five or six months, after consulting with parties including the Tamil National Alliance.

He said that while the judiciary was on the right track, it had been politicized over the years.

Samaraweera met with US Secretary of State John Kerry on Thursday and is expected to take part in a strategic dialogue between the two countries later this week.—Reuters

Philippine army kills 42 Islamist militants in battles in south

MANILA — Philippine security forces killed as many as 42 Muslim rebels claiming links with Islamic State and captured their stronghold during five days of fighting in the mountains of a southern island, an army spokesman said yesterday.

Three soldiers were killed and 11 wounded when the forces seized the bastion of an affiliate of Jemaah Islamiah, a Southeast Asian network of Islamist militants, in the province of Lanao del Sur.

"Our troops were able to seize a stronghold of the terrorists on Thursday night," the spokesman, Major Filemon Tan, told reporters by telephone from the southern island of Mindanao, estimating that about 42 militants had been killed.

"We are still pursuing the rebels, using armoured assets."

Tan said the army was shelling rebel positions with 105-mm howitzers yesterday, while air force planes dropped bombs and helicopters fired rockets near the

town of Butig, a base of the country's largest Muslim rebel group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). But the MILF stayed away from the skirmishes and helped about 8,000 people displaced from their homes when the fighting began on 20 February, the military said.

The Philippines signed a peace deal with the MILF in March 2014, ending 45 years of conflict that killed more than 120,000 people, displaced 2 million and stunted growth in the

poor but resource-rich south.

Army and police officials believe some Muslim rebel factions, including the small but violent Abu Sayyaf group, have pledged allegiance to Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria, but say they have found no evidence to support this. Elsewhere in Mindanao, soldiers were also chasing the Abu Sayyaf group, which is holding captive several foreigners, including a Japanese, a Dutch national, two Canadians and a Norwegian.—Reuters

China says Taiwan president-elect must respect constitution

BEIJING — Taiwan's president-elect Tsai Ing-wen must respect the island's own constitution that states Taiwan and the mainland are both part of one China, China's foreign minister has said during a visit to Washington.

China considers Taiwan a wayward province, to be brought under its control by force if necessary. Defeated Nationalist forces fled to Taiwan in 1949 after the Chinese civil war.

Beijing has warned against any moves towards independence since January's landslide win by Tsai and her independence-leaning Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in Taiwan's presidential and parliamentary elections and said it would defend its sovereignty. Tsai has said she would maintain peace with China, and Chinese state-run media have also noted her pledges to maintain the "status quo" with China.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, a former head of China's Taiwan Affairs Office, said Tsai's election was a normal political process that did not come as too big a surprise. "We do not care that much who is in power in the Taiwan region of China," Wang said at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Washington on Thursday, without directly using Tsai's name. His comments were carried on the centre's website.

"What we care about is, once someone has come into power, how he or she handles the cross-strait relationship, whether he or she will maintain the peaceful development of cross-strait relations, whether he or she will recommit to the political foundation of cross-strait relations, the one China principle," he said.

Wang said he hoped that, before Tsai assumes power in May,



Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) Chairperson and presidential candidate Tsai Ing-wen waves to her supporters after her election victory at party headquarters in Taipei, Taiwan on 16 January 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

she would indicate that she wants to pursue the peaceful development of ties and accept the provision in Taiwan's own constitution that the mainland and Taiwan belong to one China.

"It will be difficult to imagine that somebody elected on the basis of that constitution should try to do anything in violation of its own constitution," Wang said.

DPP spokesman Ruan Chao-hsiung said Wang's remarks were consistent with Tsai's position, which was to maintain the status quo under the island's constitutional framework. "We hope to communicate with China in a more positive way in efforts to maintain peace across the Taiwan Strait," Ruan said. Wang said Taiwan's people wanted the peaceful development of ties, wanted Chinese tourists and business relations, and wanted to live in a climate of peace.—Reuters

Japan opposition parties to merge with eye on July election



Leader of Japan's opposition Democratic Party of Japan, Katsuya Okada looks on at the plenary session for a vote on security bills at the Upper House of the parliament in Tokyo, Japan, in 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

TOKYO — Japan's biggest and third-largest opposition parties yesterday agreed to merge and reach out to smaller rivals, in what they hope will be a first step towards building an alternative to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's

behemoth Liberal Democratic Party.

The merger of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) with the smaller Japan Innovation Party poses no immediate threat to Abe's ruling bloc, but the LDP's

support is more fragile than recent landslide election wins suggest and polls show many voters would opt for a credible rival if they felt one existed.

"We want to respond to the voices of those with anxiety and doubts about the Abe administration," DPJ leader Katsuya Okada told a news conference announcing the merger.

The Democrats surged to power for the first time in 2009 but were ousted by Abe's LDP-led bloc three years later, after a reign that left a lasting image of incompetence and infighting. Abe, pledging to end decades of economic stagnation and boost Japan's global profile, has since led his party to two more big elections wins.

Many experts, though, attribute his longevity at least partly to voter perception of a lack of a viable alternative.

"If there were a unified op-

position, the LDP is vulnerable," said Jeffrey Kingston, director of Asian studies at Temple University's Japan campus.

In the short-term, the merger, along with proposed election cooperation with the Japanese Communist Party, could also make it harder for the LDP and its allies to win a majority of two-thirds in a July upper house poll needed to tackle Abe's cherished goal of revising the pacifist constitution.

The LDP and its junior partner, the Komeito party, won a two-thirds "super-majority" in a December 2014 lower house election, but with record low turnout of about 53 per cent.

More recently, Abe's voter support, shaken by scandals and gloomy economic news, fell seven points to below 50 per cent in a weekend Kyodo news agency poll.

More than 35 per cent of

poll respondents backed no party at all, close to the 38.1 per cent supporting the LDP.

Changing voting patterns by such independents can produce big swings in election outcomes.

With 93 members in the more powerful lower house, the merged party, which is to be formally launched under a new name in March, will still be dwarfed by the LDP, which has 290.

Overcoming public memories of the DPJ's perceived failures will be tough, however. "They have to gain competence or a semblance of competence, rather than just change the name," said Sophia University professor Koichi Nakano.

Absorbing other small parties will also be vital to success.

"It will be meaningful if other parties join in," said Jiro Yamaguchi, a political science professor at Hosei University.

—Reuters

UN ban on DPRK mineral exports to hurt foreign currency income

SEOUL — The expected ban under the new UN Security Council resolution on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)'s mineral resources exports will significantly damage Pyongyang's foreign currency income, South Korea's unification ministry said yesterday.

Unification Ministry spokesman Jeong Joon-hee told a press briefing that if media reports on fresh UN sanctions that include a ban on DPRK's mineral exports are true, it will cause a "signifi-

cant" disturbance to the securing of foreign currency by the DPRK.

Jeong said it has been known that mineral exports account for almost 40 per cent of DPRK's total exports.

A draft of new UN Security Council resolutions has been reportedly circulated among member countries to punish Pyongyang for its recent rocket launch and nuclear test.

The DPRK launched an alleged Earth observation satellite on 7 February, to test a ballistic missile technology, after deto-

nating what it claimed was its first hydrogen bomb on 6 January.

Asked whether South Korea will announce its unilateral sanctions against the DPRK, Jeong said follow-up measures by the South Korean government will be discussed after the fresh UN resolution is fixed.

Included in Seoul's unilateral restrictions under discussion is a ban on third-country ships visiting the DPRK from entering South Korean ports.—Xinhua

Aircraft crash lands in Nepal, pilot in critical condition

KATHMANDU — An aircraft with nine passengers and two crew members on board crash landed in Kalokot District in mid-western Nepal yesterday noon, according to local media reports.

Earlier media reports said that nine people were on board the Air Kasthamandap plane, which was heading to the remote Jumla district from Nepalgunj. Meanwhile, a foreign media report said the 9N-AJB plane was carrying eight people.

It has been reported that the pilot is in critical condition whereas the passengers have sustained injuries.

The single engine aircraft had taken off from the Nepalgunj airport at 12:20 local time.

Air Kasthamandap flies over 11 remote locations in Nepal.

Earlier on Wednesday, an aircraft of Tara Airlines crashed in Myagdi district, killing all 23 people on board including three crew members.—Xinhua

OPINION

Many a true word is spoken in jest

Kyaw Thura

THERE is a traditional belief in our country that things will start to go wrong when amoral customs are endemic. Accordingly, legend has it that floods, fires, storms, thieves and inhumane rulers are deemed the five conventional public enemies.

These disasters have a tendency to have a negative impact on people.

From the religious point of view, throwing insults at someone superior in virtue or something sacred will undoubtedly set off ill consequences. A glance is enough to convince us that our country is now experiencing disasters which are unheard of before. It is, therefore, imperative that we should all assuage our guilty conscience. The time has come for all of us to awaken to the realisation that the prevention of these disasters is a national concern which demands a shared responsibility with a strong sense of community spirit. Nobody can be left behind in this process for the simple reason that warding off these enemies stresses the need for a more inclusive public participation.

Nobody in their right minds will dare to get

a ride in a car to be driven by a person who does not know how to drive at all. After all, many a true word is spoken in jest. Now is not the time for us to abandon ourselves to despair. It is time for us to take up the courage to come together to abandon what is sending us into the depths of this despair.

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.

Nation Building, National Identity and Ethnic Groups

Sayar Mya

It is my pleasure and honor in sharing knowledge with the esteemed readers of the Global New Light of Myanmar on "Nation Building", and that my earlier article was "Nation Building and Education".

In this context, some issues on "National Identity" and "Ethnic Groups" are the vital ingredients in the Nation Building, and therefore, I would like to share two themes in a single article with the esteemed readers.

National Identity is one's identity or sense of belonging to **one state** or to **one nation**. The term Nation comprises people, tribe, kin, genus, class, flock, and it is a social concept with no uncontroversial definition. However, it is most commonly used to designate larger groups or collectives of people with common characteristics attributed to them. They include language, traditions, customs, habits, and ethnicity. A nation, by comparison, is more impersonal, abstract, and overtly political than an ethnic group. It is a cultural-political community that has become conscious of its autonomy, unity, and particular interests.

The expression of one's national identity seen in a positive light is patriotism which is characterized by national pride and positive emotion of love for one's country. The extreme expression of national identity is chauvinism, which refers to the firm belief in the country's superiority and extreme loyalty toward one's country.

Formation of National Identity

National identity is not an in-born trait and it is in essence socially constructed. A person's national identity results directly from the presence of elements from the "common points" in people's daily lives such as national symbols, language, colors, nation's history, blood ties, culture, music, cuisine, radio, televi-

sion, and so on. Under various social influences, people incorporate national identity into their personal identities by adopting beliefs, values, assumptions and expectations which align with one's national identity. People with identification of their nation view national beliefs and values as personally meaningful, and translate these beliefs and values into daily practices.

Race and ethnicity in the United States

The United States has a racially and ethnically diverse population. The census officially recognizes six ethnic and racial categories namely (1) White American, (2) Black or African American, (3) Native American and Alaska Native, (4) Asian American, (5) Native Hawaiian and (6) Other Pacific Islander. Interesting point is that people of two or more races is being termed as a race called "Some other race". It is also used in the census and other surveys, but is not official. The United States Census Bureau also classifies Americans as "Hispanic or Latino" and "Not Hispanic or Latino", which identifies Hispanic and Latino Americans as a racially diverse **ethnicity** that composes the largest minority group in the nation.

National identity can be salient and significant when the nation confronts external or internal enemy and natural disasters. An example of this phenomenon is the rise in patriotism and national identity in the U.S after the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001. **The 9/11 attacks** were a series of four coordinated terrorist attacks by the Islamic terrorist group Al-Qaeda on the United States on the morning of Tuesday, 11 September 2001.

The identity of being an American are prominent after the terrorist attacks and American national identity are evoked with patriotism. Having a common threat or having a common goal unite people in a nation and en-

hance national identity.

Anthony D. Smith (born 1939) is a British historical sociologist who is Professor Emeritus of Nationalism and Ethnicity at the London School of Economics. Anthony Smith argues that national identity has the feature of continuity that can transmit and persist through generations. By expressing the myths of having common descent and common destiny, people's sense of belonging to nation is enhanced. However, national identities can disappear over time as more people live in foreign countries for a longer time, and can be challenged by involving in more than one country such as supranational identities. In other words, it refers to identifying with a more inclusive, larger group that includes people from multiple nations.

Ethnic Group

An **ethnic group** or **ethnicity** is a category of people who identify with each other based on common ancestral, social, cultural or national experience. Unlike most other social groups, ethnicity is primarily an inherited status. Membership of an ethnic group tends to be defined by a shared cultural heritage, ancestry, origin myth, history, homeland, language or dialect, symbolic systems such as religion, mythology and ritual, cuisine, dressing style, art, and physical appearance.

Ethnic groups, derived from the same historical founder population, often continue to speak related languages and share a similar gene pool. By way of language shift, acculturation, to learn to live successfully in a different culture, adoption and religious conversion, it is possible for some individuals or groups to leave one ethnic group and become part of another ethnic group. Ethnicity is often used synonymously with ambiguous and unclear terms such as nation or people.

Among many cases—for instance, the sense of **Jewish Ethnicity**—it has more than one aspect to determine membership.

The exact world Jewish population, however, is difficult to measure.

The largest ethnic groups in modern times comprise hundreds of millions of individuals namely **Han Chinese**. Han is being the largest, while the smallest are limited to a few dozen individuals with numerous indigenous peoples worldwide.

Larger ethnic groups may be subdivided into smaller subgroups known variously as **tribes** or **clans**, which over time may become separate ethnic groups themselves due to endogamy, the custom of marrying only people from own local community, or physical isolation from the parent group.

Conversely, formerly separate ethnicities can merge to form a pan-ethnicity, and may eventually merge into one single ethnicity. Whether through division or amalgamation, the formation of a separate ethnic identity is referred to as **ethno genesis**. In simple term, it defines as a process in which a group of people acquire an ethnicity, or a group identity that identifies them as a cultural group. This can originate through a process of self-identification as well as come about as the result of outside identification.

Conceptualization

Rupert Emerson (20 August 1899 – 9 February 1979) was a professor of political science and international relations. He served on the faculty of Harvard University for forty-three years and served in various U.S government positions. Political scientist Rupert Emerson defined national identity as "a body of people who feel that they are a nation". This definition of national identity was endorsed by social psychologist, **Henri Tajfel**, who formulated social identity theory together with **John Turner**.

Henri Tajfel (formerly Hersz Mordche) (22 June 1919 Włocławek, Poland – 3 May 1982 in Oxford, United Kingdom) was a British social psychologist, best

known for his pioneering work on the cognitive aspects of prejudice and social identity theory, as well as being one of the founders of the European Association of Experimental Social Psychology.

John Napier Wyndham Turner, (born 7 June 1929) is an English born Canadian lawyer and politician, who served as the 17th Prime Minister of Canada from 30 June to 17 September 1984.

Affect of National Identity

National identity, like other social identities, engenders positive emotions such as pride and love to one's nation, and feeling of obligations toward other citizens. The socialization of national identity, such as socializing national pride and a sense of the country's exception idea contributes to harmony among ethnic groups. For example, in the U.S, by integrating diverse ethnic groups in an overarching identity of being an American, people are united by a shared emotion of national pride and the feeling of belonging to the U.S, tend to mitigate and tone down ethnic conflicts.

Nation, Tribe and Ethnic Group in Africa

Some progressive Africans argue that tribalism is one of the most disruptive influences confronting newly independent sub-Saharan African states. Tribalism, they argue, is the basis for hatred between peoples within a country as well as between countries. If African states are to take their rightful place in the world, progressive Africans believe, tribalism must be destroyed. There is little evidence; however, that tribal identity is on the wane, even among the most progressive elements within the newly created states. Furthermore, there is a growing body of evidence suggesting that post-independence efforts to eliminate tribal identities may have contributed significantly to Africa's catastrophic problems.

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Population survey of the Sarus crane to be conducted in Myanmar

A POPULATION survey of the Sarus crane (*Grus antigone* sharpie) will be conducted in the specie's habitats in seven states and regions including the Ayeyawady Delta by the International Crane Foundation in cooperation with the Zoological Department of Yangon University (YU).

"We can observe some limited migrations at an Orchard Farm, a natural fish breeding pond, located in Malet to Village, Maubin District, Ayeyawady Region," said Dr Myo Sanda Win of YU who is currently visiting the farm for the survey.

The Sarus crane is a native bird of Myanmar, mostly found in the Ayeyawady Region and Indawgyi Lake, the country's largest natural freshwater lake.

Thanda, a local observer said, "I saw two Sarus cranes last year within the compound



Sarus cranes, the endangered species, are native to Myanmar. PHOTO: THANDAR

of the Orchard Farm and I started taking notes about them."

The Sarus Crane is the tallest crane species and of all fly-

ing birds, with a height of about 176 cm. They feed on wide

range of wetland plant materials, seeds and grains. They tend to breed inland but always in wet areas.

The specie lives mainly on wetlands such as canals, ponds, marshes, even near humans. They can be found in cultivated areas too, and also in high-altitude wetlands.

During the dry season the Sarus Crane is found in shallow wetlands, rice fields or wet grasslands.

The Sarus crane is included on the list of endangered bird species as the population has notably declined. The rare bird can be found in Myanmar, Cambodia, Viet Nam and India in Southeast Asia.

The number of Myanmar's total bird species will reach 1,114, including new species found within the late five years. Forty-nine are in danger of extinction, a bird observation agency said at a conference last year.

The Orchard Farm has received greater interest from both local and international bird observers. According to the 2013 survey, more than 140 species covering painted stork, pelican and other winter birds reside in the natural fish breeding pond.—*Thi Thi Min*

Around 700,000 students to sit matriculation examination this year

A TOTAL of 671,431 students have registered to sit the country's matriculation examination for the 2015-2016 academic year, according to

Myanmar Board of Examination.

The examination is scheduled to begin on 9 March this year and will finish on 18

March. The Myanmar Board of Examination will organise the examination through 1,453 local exam centres and 17 foreign centers.

Students across the country will answer the same questions issued by the Myanmar Board of Examination.—*Tin Win Lay (Kyimyindaing)*

Nation Building, National Identity and Ethnic Groups

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State versus Nation

In Africa, "state" is the least politically correct or politically charged, and therefore, the best term to describe is "countries", the largest political unit that people recognize. Even "state," however, is not a term that all peoples of Africa would use to describe accurately the political system of which they find themselves as a part.

Members of numerous, culturally distinct groups in Ethiopia, for example, insist that they were conquered and never allowed to choose to join the country. Ethiopia is a multilingual nation with around 80 ethno-linguistic groups. Among them, the three largest groups are the Tigray, Oromo and Amhara.

Many of these ethnic groups do not even officially recognize Ethiopia as a legitimate political entity. Therefore, they insist, until they have equal representation in the central government and the freedom to choose their political affiliation, Ethiopia is more accurately referred to as an "empire."

Conquered groups in Ethiopia prefer to be called "nations" following the original meaning of the term which meant persons closely associated with each other by common descent, language or history. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, such groups "form a race or people, usually organized as a separate

political state and occupying a definite territory."

Challenges

Ethnic Identity

In countries that have multiple ethnic groups, the ethnic identity and the national identity may be in conflict. These conflicts are usually referred to as **ethno-national conflict**. One of the famous ethno-national conflicts is the struggle between the Australian government and **aboriginal population** in Australia.

The Australian government and majority culture imposed policies and framework that supported the majority, European-based cultural values and a national language as English. The aboriginal cultures and languages were not supported by the state, and were nearly eradicated by the state during the 20th century. Because of these conflicts, aboriginal population identifies less or do not identify with the national identity of being an Australian, but their ethnic identities are salient and significant.

Immigration

As immigration increases, many countries face the challenges of constructing national identity and accommodating immigrants. Some countries are more inclusive in terms of encouraging immigrants to develop a sense of belonging to their host country. For example, **Canada** has the highest permanent immigration rates in the world. The

Canadian government encourages immigrants to build a sense of belonging to Canada, and has fostered a more **inclusive concept** of national identity which includes both people born in Canada and immigrants.

Some countries are less inclusive. For example, **Russia** has experienced two major waves of immigration influx, one in the 1990s, and the other one after 1998. Immigrants were perceived negatively by Russian population and were viewed as **"unwelcome and abusive guests."** Immigrants were considered outsiders and were excluded from sharing the national identity of belonging to Russia.

Globalization

As the world becomes increasingly globalized, international tourism, communication and business collaboration had increased. People around the world cross national borders more frequently to seek cultural exchange, education, business, and different lifestyles. Globalization promotes common values and experiences, and it also encourages the identification with the global community.

People may adapt cosmopolitanism and view themselves as global beings, or world citizens. This trend may threaten national identity because globalization undermines the importance of being a citizen of a particular country. Several researchers ex-

amined globalization and its impact on national identity found that as a country becomes more globalized, patriotism declined, which suggests that the increase of globalization is associated with less loyalty and less willingness to fight for one's own country.

Issues

In some cases, national identity collides with a person's civil identity. For example, many **Israeli Arabs** associate themselves with the Arab or Palestinian nationality, while at the same time they are citizens of the **State of Israel**, which is in conflict with the Palestinian nationality.

Taiwanese also face a conflict of national identity with civil identity as there have been movements advocating formal "Taiwan Independence" and renaming "Republic of China" to "Republic of Taiwan." Residents in Taiwan are issued national identification cards and passports under the country name "Republic of China", and a portion of them do not identify themselves with "Republic of China," but rather with "Republic of Taiwan". This is the main reason for the confusing and completely different names. In some contexts, especially official ones from the ROC government, the name is written as "Republic of China (Taiwan)", "Republic of China/Taiwan", or sometimes "Taiwan (ROC)".

Markers

National identity markers are those characteristics used to identify a person as possessing a particular national identity. These markers are not fixed, but fluid, varying from culture to culture and also within a culture over time. Such markers may include common language or dialect, national dress, birthplace, family affiliation, etc.

Come together

Some close friends asked me to characterize and define in shortest possible term what the ingredients are in building a nation with diverse ethnic groups in the world. It is undeniable that each country has its own way of nation building in the context of "appropriate" approach for the diverse ethnic groups.

If I may take the liberty to say — in a safe way — and share knowledge with the esteemed readers through shortest possible words on the nation building, this planet fundamentally requires a strong leadership that upholds greater national interest with the strongest support of the people. It may need time and space to compromise solutions in the context of political aspirations and the wishes of diverse ethnic groups. The buzzword should be **"All Inclusive"** approach, and seek sensible supportive strong allies.

Europe's free travel will end unless Turkey halts migrant flow, officials say



A stranded refugee pulls a crib with one of his children as his family walks along a national motorway towards the Greek-Macedonian border near the Greek town of Polykastro after ignoring warnings from Greek authorities that the border is shut, as hundreds of migrants set off on the country's main north-south motorway to Idomeni border crossing on 25 February, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

BRUSSELS — Europe's cherished free-travel zone will shut down unless Turkey acts to cut the number of migrants heading north through Greece by 7 March, European Union officials said on Thursday.

Their declaration came as confrontations grow increasingly rancorous among European countries trying to cope with the influx of refugees. Those recriminations culminated in Greece's recalling its ambassador to Austria on Thursday.

"In the next ten days, we need tangible and clear results on the ground," the top EU migration official, Dimitris Avramopoulos, said after EU justice and home affairs ministers met in Brussels on Thursday. "Other-

wise there is a danger, there is a risk that the whole system will completely break down."

EU leaders are now pinning their hopes on talks with Turkey on 7 March and their own migration summit on 18-19 March. The two meetings look like their final chance to revive a flailing joint response to the crisis before warmer weather encourages more arrivals across the Mediterranean.

Seven European states have already restored border controls within the creaking Schengen passport-free zone. More said they would unilaterally tighten border controls unless a deal with Turkey shows results before the two March summits.

That deal promises Turkey 3

billion euros (\$3.3 billion) in aid to help it shelter refugees from the Syrian war, in return for preventing their travelling on to Europe.

"By 7 March, we want a significant reduction in the number of refugees at the border between Turkey and Greece," German Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere said. "Otherwise, there will have to be other joint, coordinated European measures."

Germany has been pushing the Turkey plan hard. Many other EU states are increasingly frustrated and sceptical, though. Another 110,000 people have arrived on the continent so far this year, mostly from Turkey via Greece, after more than a million arrived last year.—Reuters

US test-fires ICBM amid tensions with Russia, North Korea

VANDENBERG AIR FORCE BASE, (Calif) — The US military test fired its second intercontinental ballistic missile in a week late on Thursday to demonstrate the reliability of American nuclear arms at a time of rising strategic tensions with countries like Russia and North Korea.

The unarmed Minuteman III missile blasted off from a silo at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California shortly before midnight, a Reuters reporter witnessed, headed toward a target area near Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands of the South Pacific.

Deputy Defence Secretary Robert Work said the US tests, conducted at least 15 times since January 2011, send a message to strategic competitors like Russia, China and North Korea that Washington has an effective nuclear arsenal.

"That's exactly why we do

this," Work told reporters prior to the launch.

"We and the Russians and the Chinese routinely do test shots to prove that the operational missiles that we have are reliable. And that is a signal ... that we are prepared to use nuclear weapons in defense of our country if necessary."

Demonstrating the reliability of the nuclear force has taken on additional importance recently because the US arsenal is near the end of its useful life and a spate of scandals in the nuclear force two years ago raised readiness questions.

The Defence Department has poured millions of dollars into improving conditions for troops responsible for staffing and maintaining the nuclear systems. The administration also is putting more focus on upgrading the weapons.

President Barack Obama's

final defence budget unveiled this month calls for a \$1.8 billion hike in nuclear arms spending to overhaul the country's aging nuclear bombers, missiles, submarines and other systems.

The president's \$19 billion request would allow the Pentagon and Energy Department to move toward a multi-year overhaul of the atomic arms infrastructure that is expected to cost \$320 billion over a decade and up to 1 trillion dollars over 30 years.

The nuclear spending boost is an ironic turn for a president who made reducing US dependence on atomic weapons a centerpiece of his agenda during his first years in office. Obama called for a world eventually free of nuclear arms in a speech in Prague and later reached a new strategic weapons treaty with Russia. He received the Nobel Peace Prize in part based on his stance on reducing atomic arms.—Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

Foreign submarine sighted in Sweden last year: Dagens Nyheter

STOCKHOLM — Swedish military sighted a foreign submarine in the Stockholm archipelago during a drill last year, just six months after the biggest submarine hunt in Sweden for over two decades, daily *Dagens Nyheter* reported yesterday.

A submarine periscope was observed by Swedish defence personnel during a drill in spring 2015 but was first taken for belonging to a Swedish vessel. Only later did the military realise no Swedish submarine had been in that location during the drill. The observation is classed as "probable submarine", the second highest level of certainty.

Sweden conducted the biggest submarine chase in decades in late 2014 after several sightings of a sub in the Stockholm archipelago. Although the defence forces said it couldn't identify the nationality of the submarine, most analysts suspected it was Russian.—Reuters

Prominent Turkish journalists freed after top court ruled their rights violated

ISTANBUL — Two prominent Turkish journalists from a leading opposition newspaper have been freed in the early hours of Friday after Turkey's top court ruled that their detentions had violated their rights.

The arrest of Can Dunder, editor-in-chief of Cumhuriyet, and Ankara bureau chief Erdem Gul last November drew international condemnation and revived concern about media freedom in Turkey under President Tayyip Erdogan.

They were detained after the publication of video footage purporting to show the state intelligence agency helping send weapons to Syria. "We think the Constitutional Court's ruling is a historic one," Can Dunder told reporters outside the prison, next to their friends and families.

"This verdict has cleared the way not only for us but for all of our colleagues and freedom of press and expression," he said.—Reuters

Two suicide bombers kill 15 in Baghdad

BAGHDAD — Two suicide bombers blew themselves up at a Shi'ite mosque in Baghdad on Thursday, killing at least 15 people in an attack claimed by Islamic State militants.

Fifty other people were wounded in the blast in the predominantly Shi'ite Shulaa neighbourhood of the Iraqi capital, police and medical sources said. The first bomber detonated his vest inside the mosque and the second blew himself up when security forces gathered at the site of the initial blast.

Four of the victims were members of the security forces, the sources said. Islamic State, which controls swathes of Iraq's north and west, said the attacks targeted "apostates" — a term the ultra-hardline Sunni group uses to describe Shi'ite Muslims.—Reuters

Two miners found dead, 28 still trapped after accident at Russian mine

MOSCOW — Two miners were found dead on Thursday evening and the search for 28 more miners was continuing after an accident in a coal mine owned by a subsidiary of Severstal in Russia's northern Komi Republic.

At the moment when the accident happened in coal-mining town Vorkuta, 110 people were in the mine and 80 of them were taken to the surface as of 1655 GMT, Severstal's subsidiary Vorkutaugol said in a statement. "We all hope now that there will be no other casualties. We are doing everything possible for quick evacuation of miners who remain in the mine," Vadim Shablakov, the subsidiary chief executive, said.—Reuters

Israeli stabbed, seriously injured, in overnight stabbing attack

JERUSALEM — An Israeli security guard was seriously wounded in a West Bank mall overnight in an apparent stabbing attack, the Israeli police said.

Israeli forces were called to a mall in Ma'ale Adumim, a Jewish settlement east of Jerusalem, at 1:00am early Friday, where they found a 47-year-old security guard stabbed in his upper body, police spokeswoman Luba Samri said.

An initial investigation by the Israeli police and the Shin Bet security services determined that the attacker was Palestinian who managed to flee the scene. Security forces are still in the middle of a manhunt for the perpetrator.—Xinhua

Iranians vote in contest likely to shape post-sanctions era

TEHRAN — Iranians voted in two crucial elections yesterday, with Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei urging a big turnout in order to frustrate Tehran's foes, a remark reflecting the Islamic Republic's traditionally anti-Western policies.

The vote, Iran's first since last year's nuclear deal with world powers, could determine whether the Islamic Republic continues to emerge from diplomatic and economic isolation after years of sanctions.

"Whoever likes Iran and its dignity, greatness and glory should vote. Iran has enemies. They are eyeing us greedily. Turnout in the elections should be so high to disappoint our enemies ... People should be observant and vote with open eyes and should vote wisely," Khamenei said after casting his vote.

The contest is for parliament and the Assembly of Experts, a body that has the power to appoint and dismiss the supreme leader, Iran's most powerful figure. Both are currently in the hands of hardliners.

Supporters of pragmatist President Hassan Rouhani, who championed the nuclear deal and is likely to seek a second presidential term next year, are pitted against conservatives deeply opposed to detente with Western powers.

Influential former president Ayatollah Akbar Hashemi Raf-



People walk past electoral posters for the upcoming parliamentary elections in central Tehran on 24 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

sanjani, a veteran pragmatist politician allied to Rouhani, told Reuters that Iran would lose if reformists were defeated in Friday's contests.

Asked what would happen if reformists did not win, he said: "It will be a major loss for the Iranian nation."

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who led nuclear talks with world powers, said while voting at a polling station at the Jamaran mosque in northern Tehran that Iranians would continue to support policies that

brought about the nuclear deal.

"The message to the international community from this election is the Iranians are solidly behind their government," he said. "They will continue to support the policies that have been adopted leading to the conclusion and successful implementation of the nuclear deal and this will continue."

"Whatever the choice of the Iranian people, it will be respected," he said. Both sides have called for a strong turnout. Most reformist candidates have been

barred by a hardline clerical vetting body, along with many moderates, but their supporters have called on voters to back Rouhani's allies and keep the conservatives out.

Results are hard to predict, with conservatives traditionally doing well in rural areas and young urbanites favouring more reformist candidates.

At stake is control of the 290-seat parliament and the 88-member Assembly of Experts. During its eight-year term it could name the successor to

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who is 76 and has been in power since 1989.

If the Assembly of Experts is called upon to choose a successor to Khamenei, its decision could set the Islamic Republic's course for years or even decades to come.

Mistrust of the West runs deep, and hardliners have sought to undermine Rouhani's allies by accusing them of links to Western powers.

A more supportive parliament would allow Rouhani to continue his economic reforms at home and diplomatic engagement abroad.

Whatever the outcome, though, Iran's political system places significant power in the conservative establishment including the Guardian Council, the judiciary and the Supreme Leader.

The 12-member Guardian Council must approve all new laws and vet all electoral candidates. It has already played a role in Friday's vote by excluding thousands of candidates, including many moderates and almost all reformists. Nevertheless, prominent reformists and moderates have scrambled together a joint list of candidates in Tehran — 30 for parliament, and 16 for the Assembly of Experts — and hope this can propel them to an overall majority in both bodies.—Reuters

Hamas not seeking a war with Israel, says top official

GAZA — A senior leader of the Islamist group Hamas said the Palestinian movement was not seeking a new war with Israel and insisted a network of tunnels it is digging, some of which have reached into Israel in the past, was "defensive".

Speaking to members of the Foreign Press Association in Gaza, Mahmoud al-Zahar, a medical doctor seen by many as a hardliner, suggested the prospects of reconciliation with the rival Fatah party of President Mahmoud Abbas were slim, despite years of international efforts to forge unity.

"I think nobody here in the region is looking for a war," said Zahar, 71, who has survived two Israeli assassination attempts, one of which, in 2003, killed his son.

"We are not looking for any confrontation with Israel, but if they are going to launch an aggression we have to defend ourselves," he told reporters late on Wednesday.

Hamas seized control of

Gaza in 2007 after a brief civil war with Abbas's forces. It maintains strict security over the coastal territory, where more than 1.9 million people live. Zahar is one of Hamas's founders and one of its most senior figures in Gaza, regarded as close to the military wing.

The movement has, since its founding in 1987, advocated the destruction of Israel, seeing all of historic Palestine, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean, as its land.

However, some of its leaders have indicated in recent years that they would accept a Palestinian state in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem, captured by Israel in a 1967 war, in return for a long-term truce with their neighbour.

Israel regards the truce idea as a ploy and will not negotiate with Hamas, which the EU and United States list as a terrorist group.

Asked why Hamas was building tunnels, Zahar said

they were defensive and suggested they were nothing against the might of the US-supplied Israeli military.

"You are speaking about tunnels? You are not speaking about F-35 (fighter planes)? You are not speaking about the nuclear bomb in Israel... The tunnels are a matter of self-defence," he said.

Hamas's armed wing has lost 10 fighters this year in tunnel collapses. In strongly worded speeches, the group's leaders have pledged to pursue the tunnel building, prompting alarm in Israel, which has stepped up efforts to find the tunnels and stop them reaching its territory.

The heightened tension on both sides has fuelled fears of another war, which would be the fifth since Hamas won Palestinian elections in 2006. The last war, in July-August 2014, left more than 2,100 Palestinians dead, most of them civilians, while 73 Israelis, nearly all soldiers, were killed.—Reuters

Syria war rages hours before deal to halt fighting

BEIRUT — Heavy air strikes were reported to have hit rebel-held areas to the east of Damascus as fighting continued across much of western Syria yesterday, hours before a US-Russian plan aimed at halting the fighting is due to take effect.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring organisation reported at least 10 air raids and artillery shelling targeting the town of Douma in rebel-held Eastern Ghouta near Damascus.

Rescue workers in the opposition-held area, reporting on their Twitter feed, said there were confirmed civilian casualties but did not say how many. Syrian military officials could not immediately be reached for comment.

The "cessation of hostilities" agreement is due to take effect at midnight (5pm ET on Friday).

The government has agreed to the plan. The main opposition alliance, which has deep reservations about the terms, has said it is ready for a two-week truce to test the intentions of the government and its Russian and Iranian backers.

Damascus has made clear it will continue to target Islamic State and the al Qaeda-linked Nusra Front which are not included

in the agreement. The opposition fears the government will continue targeting rebels on the pretext they are jihadists.

The government says the agreement could fail if foreign states supply rebels with weapons or insurgents use the truce to rearm.

Eastern Ghouta is regularly targeted by the Syrian army and its allies. It is a stronghold of the Jaish al-Islam rebel group, which is represented in the main opposition alliance, and has been used as a launchpad for rocket and mortar attacks on Damascus.

The Observatory also reported artillery bombardment by government forces and air strikes overnight in Hama Province, and artillery bombardment by government forces in Homs Province.

Fighting also resumed at dawn between rebels and government forces in the northwestern province of Latakia, where the Syrian army and its allies are trying to take back more territory from insurgents at the border with Turkey.

US President Barack Obama said on Thursday the United States was resolved to try to make the deal work but that "there are plenty of reasons for scepticism".—Reuters

'You saved my life': Paris attack survivors seek solace with Bataclan security man

PARIS — Thirty-five-year-old Didi saved scores of lives on 13 November when Islamic State militants attacked the Bataclan concert hall where he was in charge of security. Now those he saved say they turn to him for solace.

They meet, mostly in cafes, just to be together, to chat and support each other.

"It was just surreal to see him show such composure, and be methodical and efficient, and also so human ... we lapped up everything he said, he was our point of reference," says Myriam, a survivor who regularly meets up with him.

And while Didi, an Algerian who asked not to give his full name, says he is no hero, Myriam said meeting him is helping her move on.

"Without him, I would not be here. He was the one who told me 'go there, get out this way, be careful'."

Franck Auffret
Survivor

Like other survivors of the attacks, in which 90 were killed, she sought him out for weeks to say "Thank you."

"It was very important, it was key for me to feel better and move on with life. Being able to say thank you to someone about that night was something really good. To be able to hold someone in my arms and just tell him 'you saved my life'," said the single mother of a 10-month-old baby.

Didi, who has not been back to work since the attacks, is constantly on the

phone with survivors.

"Without him, I would not be here. He was the one who told me 'go there, get out this way, be careful'," said Franck Auffret, who along with other survivors created the victims' association "Life for Paris".

"Someone tried to shoot me when I was in the street, and Didi told me to take shelter. Otherwise I would have stayed in the middle of the street and I would have been shot," he said as he met with Didi and another survivor in a Paris cafe this week.

Survivors have



Didi (C), a security guard at the Bataclan concert hall, hugs Emmanuel Domenach (L) as Franck Auffret looks on, all who are survivors of the Bataclan attack, in a cafe in Paris, France, on 24 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

launched petitions asking the government to reward the security manager for his acts, and sources at the foreign affairs ministry said they were discussing awarding Didi the Legion of Honour award.

Didi explained that like everyone else, he laid down

on the floor, turned off his walkie-talkie and then took advantage of a moment when the attackers were reloading their weapons to tell people to head for the emergency exits. While shots rang out, dozens of people packed into the emergency exit, which led to a small

alleyway behind the venue. Didi opened the doors and guided concert-goers to a student residence down the street. "Helping others and seeing them make progress in their healing process is the thing that's going to help me get better and heal," he told Reuters.—Reuters

UK's Osborne pushes G20 to warn against Brexit

SHANGHAI — British finance minister George Osborne is pushing the Group of 20 leading economies to warn about the dangers of Britain leaving the European Union, the Financial Times reported on Thursday.

Osborne said he hoped G20 support for Britain staying in the EU would be an important outcome of a meeting on Friday and Saturday in Shanghai of finance ministers, the FT said, citing people close to the finance minister.



British Finance Minister George Osborne.
PHOTO: REUTERS

Britain's finance ministry declined to comment.

Chinese officials expressed concerns about a "Brexit" in bilateral meet-

ings with their British counterparts in Beijing on Wednesday, the FT said.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said he had "noted" Osborne's comments. China supported the European integration process, he added, and would like to see Europe play an even greater role in the world.

"We hope that Britain and the EU can appropriately handle the relevant issue," Hong told a daily news

briefing.

A G20 official, who spoke to Reuters on condition of anonymity, said the prospect of Britain voting to leave the EU in a referendum on 23 June had been raised with Osborne by officials from other countries on the sidelines of the G20 meetings.

"We understand some countries are raising the issue with the Chancellor in bilateral meetings. If they are concerned, then it could end up in the communique,

though this would be unusual and the British have not put it on the agenda," the official said.

The possibility that Britain might leave the EU has led to a sharp fall in sterling in recent weeks. Some economists say an 'out' vote could deliver a shock to the global economy, which is already struggling to grow quickly, because it would raise questions about the future of the bloc as a whole.

Prime Minister David Cameron is campaigning to

keep Britain in the EU and has the support of London's financial district, major companies, much of the Labour Party, major trade unions, international allies and Scottish nationalists.

International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde, in an interview with CNN Money on Wednesday, warned Britain against Brexit. She said trade and financial ties, and migration between the UK and Europe have boosted growth.—Reuters

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

Finland to provide \$88m investment aid to renewables projects

OSLO — Finland will provide 80 million euros (\$88 million) in aid to bio-fuel and new energy technology projects to meet its climate goals by 2030, the government said on Thursday. The Nordic country wants to source more than half of its energy needs from renewables by the 2020s.

The government also confirmed its plans to phase out coal and reduce its use of

imported oil. "Finland will stop using coal in energy production and halve the use of imported oil for domestic needs during the 2020s," the Ministry of Employment and the Economy said in a statement.

Consumption of hard coal, which is mainly imported from Russia, fell in 2015 by 26 per cent year-on-year to 2.6 million tonnes, the lowest level since ear-

ly 1980s, preliminary data from the Finland's statistics office showed.

Finnish utilities have already mothballed or permanently closed a number of coal power plants as Nordic power prices plunged to 15-year lows last year, reducing profitability.

Finnish utility Lahti Energia said on Thursday it planned to mothball its 170 megawatt (MW) Kymijär-

vi coal and gas power plant from June 2019.

Last year, another Finnish utility, PVO, decided to permanently close its 240 MW Tahkoluoto and 240 Kristiina coal power plants. In total, up to 1,800 MW of electricity production capacity, equivalent to two nuclear reactors, was expected to be decommissioned in Finland during 2013-2016, PVO has said.—Reuters

Eleven killed in mass Papua New Guinea jail break

SYDNEY — Police in Papua New Guinea shot and killed 11 prisoners and wounded 17 after a mass prison breakout in the Pacific nation's second largest city, PNG media outlet EMTV reported yesterday.

More than 30 prisoners attacked two guards at the Buimo prison in

Lae, nearly 320 km (200 miles) north of the Papua New Guinea capital, Port Moresby, before escaping, EMTV said.

"It is confirmed that 11 prisoners have been shot and killed and 17 wounded and recaptured," EMTV quoted Metropolitan Superintendent Antho-

ny Wagambie as saying.

It was not clear how many prisoners were unaccounted for, the station said.

In 2009, 73 prisoners cut through two fences to escape from the same facility, the Australian Broadcasting Corp reported.

Papua New Guinea,

formerly administered by its near-neighbour Australia, struggles with endemic violence and poverty.

The Australian government warns of "high levels of serious crime" on its travel advice website and refers to a "general atmosphere of lawlessness".—Reuters

Morocco suspends contacts with EU over court ruling on farm trade

RABAT — Morocco said on Thursday it had suspended contact with European Union institutions over a court ruling invalidating their farm trade accord with Rabat and saying it should exclude the disputed territory of Western Sahara.

The EU lodged an appeal last week against a European Court decision announced on 10 December to void the trade deal with Morocco in response to a suit filed by the Polisario Front, which wants independence for the Moroccan-controlled territory.

The complaint, brought to the court in 2012, involves trade of agricultural products, processed agricultural products and fisheries. Reuters reported last month the government had decided to suspend contacts with the EU delegation in Rabat.

Thursday's statement, issued after the weekly cabinet meeting, said Morocco rejects the court ruling as against international law and UN Security Council resolutions.

"Morocco cannot accept to be treated as a subject of a judicial process and to



A farmer picks strawberries, to be exported, in a field in the town of Moulay Bouselham in Kenitra Province in 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

be buffeted between European institutions," it said. "Continuing in that position would deeply threaten the mutual trust and even the continuation of the partnership between the two sides."

There was no immediate comment from the EU.

Moroccan farm trade in 2015 amounted to 43 billion dirhams (\$4.39 billion) and most of it was done with EU countries.

An EU source said the December court decision would have no direct impact on trade pending a ruling on

the EU appeal. But Morocco's formal suspension of contacts could disrupt some 1.03 billion euros (\$1.12 billion) of EU grants to the North African kingdom.

The EU and Morocco have struck agreements allowing duty-free quotas for

agricultural products such as tomatoes and granting access for European vessels to fish in Moroccan waters in return for financial assistance. The two sides also began negotiations in 2013 to form a deeper and broader free trade agreement.

Morocco has controlled most of Western Sahara since 1975 and claims sovereignty over the sparsely populated stretch of desert to its south, which has offshore fishing, phosphate reserves and oilfield potential.

Morocco's annexation of Western Sahara prompted a rebellion by the Polisario Front backed by Morocco's neighbour Algeria. The United Nations brokered a ceasefire in 1991, but talks have since failed to find a lasting settlement in Africa's longest-running territorial dispute. Rights groups such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch accuse Morocco of continuing to use excessive force against activists and repressing political freedom in Western Sahara. Rabat invests heavily there, hoping to calm social unrest and independence claims.

Earlier this month, Morocco's King Mohammed launched an 18 billion dirham (\$1.85 billion) investment plan in Laayoune, Western Sahara's biggest city, driven by state-run phosphate company OCP.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO (144W)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO (144W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27.2.2016 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 ORIENT OVERSEAS
CONTAINER LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA RESTU VOY NO (RSU-505)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA RESTU VOY NO (RSU-505) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27.2.2016 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 ADVANCE CONTAINER
LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV BANI BHUM VOY NO (-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BANI BHUM VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27.2.2016 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 COSCO CONTAINER LINES**
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV UBC CANADA VOY NO (47)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV UBC CANADA VOY NO (47) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28.2.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T-3 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 MERIDIAN PORT
AGENCIES PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301186

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KULSAMUT VOY NO (01/16)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KULSAMUT VOY NO (01/16) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27.2.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-1 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 KULNATEE CO LTD.**

Phone No: 2301186

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KUROBE VOY NO (034)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KUROBE VOY NO (034) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27.2.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.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 NYK LINE**

Phone No: 2301191, 2301178



Singer Kylie Minogue. PHOTO: REUTERS

Kylie Minogue celebrates 10 years of being cancer-free

LONDON — Singer Kylie Minogue celebrated the 10-year of being ‘all-clear’ from cancer with an adorable childhood picture.

The 47-year-old “I Was Gonna Cancel” songstress shared the picture on Instagram.

“Today marks my official 10 year ‘all clear’ from breast cancer. Naturally, my nearest and dearest were at the forefront of my mind. Behind the tears were relief and thanks and thoughts.

“Thoughts of all those who are making their way towards

this landmark, those who are past the landmark and of those who we sadly miss. Thank you just doesn’t say enough...” she wrote in the caption.

Minogue was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2005, at the age 36.—PTI

Meryl Streep clarifies ‘We’re all Africans’ remark

LOS ANGELES — Oscar-winning actress Meryl Streep on Thursday said her “We’re all Africans” comment was taken out of context, writing in the *Huffington Post* about the controversy she sparked up amid Hollywood’s ongoing diversity debate.

Streep, who earlier this month headed up her first international film jury at the Berlin Film Festival, said her comments to an Egyptian reporter during a press conference about whether she was familiar with cinema from Africa and the Middle East, were “distorted.”

“I was not minimizing difference, but emphasizing the invisible connection empathy enables, a thing so central to the fact of being human, and what art can do: convey another person’s experience,” Streep wrote.

The furor over her comments came amid an uproar in Hollywood over this year’s all-white Oscar acting nominees for a second consecutive year, sparking the #OscarsSoWhite discussion.

The actress also added in the piece entitled “Setting The Record Straight From Berlin” that she was not asked at the press conference about the all-white jury at this year’s festival.

“I did not ‘defend’ the ‘all-white jury,’ nor would I, if I had been asked to do so. Inclusion —



Actress Meryl Streep. PHOTO: REUTERS

of races, genders, ethnicities and religions — is important to me, as I stated at the outset of the press conference,” she said.

The comments from the three-time Oscar winner, one of the most admired actresses of her generation, quickly went viral and made headlines around the world as some critics expressed disappointment. Others at the time said her remarks were taken out of context.

Streep said she hoped the attention drawn by her “misconstructed remarks” would be directed toward celebrating this year’s Berlin film festival award winners, which included Gianfranco Rosi’s “Fire At Sea” about African immigrants.—Reuters

Michael Jackson’s Neverland ranch up for sale

LONDON— King of pop Michael Jackson’s former Neverland Ranch is on the market for USD 100 million.

Colony Capital is offloading Sycamore Valley Ranch in Los Olivos, California and to help attract interest for the property the company has created a five-minute promotional video of the property, reported Female First. A source said that Colony didn’t have permission to use the late pop superstar’s music in the video.

The clip features the song “Man in the Mirror” in the background of a virtual tour of the plush property and its surrounding grounds. In November 2008, Jackson transferred the title of Neverland to Sycamore Valley Ranch Company LLC — a joint venture between him and a Colony affiliate. The “Beat It” hitmaker purchased the ranch, which was named after the fantasy island which features in “Peter Pan”, a book series by novelist J M Barrie — for USD 19.5 million in 1987.

Last year, Michael’s daughter Paris Jackson, 17, built a Zen garden at the ranch.—PTI

It is a man’s world (again) in the Oscars best picture race

LOS ANGELES — From abandoned astronauts to testosterone-fueled Wall Street traders, dogged reporters and frontiersmen bent on revenge, it is a man’s world in the best picture race at Sunday’s Oscars with women again taking supporting roles.

The Oscars have not seen a female-led film win best picture in a decade, since “Million Dollar Baby” starring Hillary Swank won the top accolade in 2005. The #OscarsSoWhite backlash that took place this year after no actors of color were nominated has overshadowed much of the coverage of Hollywood’s awards season.

Yet the male-dominated race is indicative of the larger gender gap in Hollywood, observers say.

Male stars from Leonardo DiCaprio and Tom Hardy to Christian Bale and Matt Damon anchor the frontrunners for best picture this year in Wall Street misdeeds film “The Big Short,” pioneer-era revenge tale “The Revenant,” Boston Globe’s Catholic Church probe “Spotlight” and space adventure “The Martian.”

“Brooklyn” and “Room,” both female-driven films and whose leads are both nominated for best actress, are included in the pack, but neither film is predicted by awards pundits to win the best



Actor John Krasinski (L) and Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences President Cheryl Boone Isaacs announce the Best Picture nominees during the nominations announcements for the 88th Academy Awards in Beverly Hills, California, on 14 January. PHOTO: REUTERS

picture contest.

“A woman’s film is always harder to get made at a studio,” veteran film producer Lynda Obst told Reuters. “They (studios) have never been convinced that a female market 100 per cent exists.”

That is despite the box office success of big budget films with female leads, including Jennifer Lawrence in “The Hunger Games” franchise, Shailene Woodley in the “Divergent” series, Scarlett Johansson’s “Lucy” and newcom-

er Daisy Ridley in “Star Wars: The Force Awakens.” But studio executives attribute the success of those films to the popularity of the star actress rather than the strength of the female movie-going audience, said Obst, who has produced films such as “Sleepless in Seattle” and “Interstellar.”

According to a study published this week, women made up only one-third of speaking characters in 414 Hollywood movies and TV shows in 2014.

“Award shows can only be a reflection of the material out there,” said Katherine Phillips, professor of leadership and ethics at Columbia Business School.

Much of the problem, Phillips said, lies in movie studios sticking to business models that have worked in the past, leading to “history repeating itself over and over again.” Films with popular male leads tend to do well on average at the box office, so the formula is replicated.—Reuters

Flying Scotsman steam train puffs again, thrilling enthusiasts

YORK, (England) — Legendary British steam train The Flying Scotsman returned to the tracks on Thursday after a 10-year, 4.2-million-pound (\$5.9-million) refit, billowing smoke over train enthusiasts as it thundered from London to the northern city of York.

Built in 1923 and now the sole survivor of its class, the train is considered a national treasure because of its longevity and popularity. It became too costly to run in 2004 but an appeal to save it attracted donations from thousands of people.

“I’ve always loved



People watch from a railway platform as the Flying Scotsman steam engine prepares to leave Kings Cross station in London, on 25 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

steam trains, my dad worked on the railways, but I wasn’t quite old enough to see them. So to be here today, the smell of the steam and the noise of the engine, it’s just been unforgettable. I’ve had a tear in my eye several times,” said Michael Cooper, 48, who works for the Post Office in London.

With its distinctive green livery and round clock face, it was named The Flying Scotsman after the London to Edinburgh service it covered, and made famous at a British Empire Exhibition in 1924.

The Scotsman took just under five hours to puff the 200 miles to York, a journey which now takes around two hours on a modern train.

Back in 1934, however, The Scotsman was the first train in Britain to reach a speed of 100 miles per hour (160 km per hour).

Steam trains hold a particular place in the British imagination due to the country’s pioneering role in developing the railway industry in the 19th century, and to the enduring popularity of children’s fiction character Thomas the Tank Engine. The train is now headed to the National Railway Museum in York.—Reuters

Zoo animals starve in Yemen city shattered by war

DUBAI —Fighting, bombing and a blockade by militiamen of food and water that have killed hundreds of people in the southwestern Yemeni city of Taiz have not spared the animals of the local zoo.

But thanks in part to the work of an animal-lover a world away in Sweden, the beasts now have a better chance of surviving.

The feathered and furry denizens of the city zoo are slowly dying from starvation and untreated wounds before the eyes of helpless keepers, in another sign of suffering the impoverished country has endured in nearly a year of war. King of the jungle no longer, one male lion is so emaciated that every bump in his spine pokes up and sores cover much of his body.

The critically endangered Arabian leopards which once stalked the verdant highlands are dropping dead from hunger.

Zoo staff allow them to feast on their expired breth-

ren - anything to keep them alive.

“When I first arrived, the scene was terrifying. Animals would be fed one day and not eat again for another five. They were bleeding, angry and would fight each other over any scraps to eat,” said one volunteer working at the zoo.

“It was a picture of hell on earth,” he added.

The man, who declined to give his name for security reasons, said the number of staff was down to just 17 — none of them had been paid in months and were working for love of the animals.

“They’re doing the best they can given the shortages,” he told Reuters.

Taiz is contested between local militias and the armed Houthi group which many residents say blocks aid from entering and bombs civilian targets. It is one of the worst fronts of the war, in which forces loyal to a government ousted by the Houthis in March are seeking to fight back to

the capital Sanaa.

The Houthis say it is fighting extremist groups in Taiz and around the country and denies blockading basic supplies.

Residents say the Houthis have repeatedly shelled hospitals and civilian areas, while their network of checkpoints around the city mean locals must smuggle in cooking gas and bread through rutted mountain passes. A Saudi-led military coalition that backs the pro-government fighters bombs Houthi positions multiple times a day and residents live in constant fear of death.

Medics in the city say at least 1,600 people have been killed in the city since the start of the war. At least 6,000 people have been killed in Yemen, according to the United Nations, around half of them civilians.—Reuters



A lion sits inside its cage at a zoo in Yemen’s southwestern city of Taiz, on 22 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

Prada offers ‘see now, buy now’ bags straight off the Milan catwalk

MILAN — Italy’s Prada blended military, nautical and 1940s looks for women next fall at Milan Fashion Week and joined in on the “see now, buy now” retail model by offering two new styles of bag at selected outlets from Friday.

Miuccia Prada, regarded as a trailblazer by fashionistas, mixed prints with luxurious fabrics to create glamorous, colourful, layered outfits, for her collection. The designer, 66, put fur on sleeves and linings of check or leather jackets and cloaks, embroidery on slinky velvet dresses and played with an array of prints — cactus plants, flowers and fruit — on tops, skirts and dresses.

Brocade also featured heavily in the collection — namely in gold on jackets and skirts.

Dark coats reminiscent of an elegant military style were teamed with white nautical hats and thick

tights. Dresses and slinky jackets had big shoulders, a nod to 1940s silhouettes, and some were worn with chunky, elbow-length gloves.

Nearly all looks were teamed with wide corset-like belts, tie-up boots, buckled sandals or peep-toe shoes and handbags, some with charms, others so small they were worn around the neck.

The brand, known for its luxury leather goods with handbags costing as much as 6,000 euros (\$6,600), presented its latest addition to the its accessories range at the show: the new Pionnière and Cahier bags.

The small, shoulder-strap bags retail for about 1,750 euros and 2,400 euros respectively, with the round-shaped Pionnière inspired by hunting, uniforms and travel and the more expensive Cahier reminiscent of old book bindings and notebooks.—Reuters

mitv

Myanmar International

(27-2-2016 07:00am ~ 28-2-2016 7:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03 Am News

07:26 Am Great Shwedagon-Historic And Mysterious Places

07:55 Am Goldsmith

08:03 Am News

08:26 Am Ar Khar New Year Festival

08:47 Am Myanmar Railways City Circular Train

09:03 Am News

09:26 Am Hanlin, A Treasure Trove Of The Ancient Pyu City

09:51 Am Independent Filmmaker

10:03 Am News

10:26 Am Size Does Matter (Episode-IV)

10:46 Am Elegant and Exquisite Myanmar Cotton Fabrics

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

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

Prime Time

07:03 Pm News

07:26 Pm To The Land Of Countless Temples - Bagan Trip (EP-1)

07:52 Pm Today Myanmar: Low Cost Rental Housing Project

08:03 Pm News

08:26 Pm Hanthawaddy U Win Tin “A Fearless Man” (Episode- 1)

08:49 Pm Myanmar Masterclass: Artist Tin Win (Beikthano)

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

(11:00 Pm~ 03:00 Am) - Friday 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)

MRTV

Entertainment Channel

(27-2-2016, Saturday)

6:00 pm

• Classical Songs

6:30 pm

• Fashion Music

6:45 pm

• Myanmar Series

8:10 pm

• Pyi Thu Ni Ti

8:25 pm

• Musical Programme

8:40 pm

• Dramatic Arts

9:40 pm

• Myanmar Video

Midnight

• Close Down

From 27.2.2016 (Saturday) 06:00 Pm
To 28.2.2016 (Sunday) 06:00 Pm
This schedule will be repeated four times in 24 hours.

Double debut delight as Rashford rescues Man United

LONDON — Manchester United flirted with calamity before coasting into the Europa League last 16 as debutant Marcus Rashford helped them overcome an early blow with two goals in a 5-1 home victory over Midtjylland on Thursday.

United, who secured a 6-3 aggregate win, looked on their way out when Pione Sisto gave the Danes the lead but an own goal by Nikolay Bodurov, Rashford's double, an Ander Herrera penalty and a late goal from Memphis Depay saw them safely through.

They will be joined in Friday's draw by one of the most appealing last-16 lineups in recent seasons with Liverpool, Tottenham Hotspur, Borussia Dortmund, Valencia, Villarreal and holders Sevilla among those marching on.

Athletic Bilbao, Lazio and Bayer Leverkusen also progressed.

Louis van Gaal's United side looked set to endure another frustrating night when they fell behind to Sisto's opener, a superb jinking run and sharp finish from the edge of the area after 28 minutes putting the visitors in control.

After last week's surprise 2-1 first leg success, the Danes seemed to be heading for a famous upset but four minutes later



Manchester United's Juan Mata in action with Midtjylland's Tim Sparv during UEFA Europa League Round of 32 Second Leg at Old Trafford, Manchester, England, on 25 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

a Memphis cross was turned into his own net by Midtjylland's Bodurov and the muted fans inside Old Trafford came to life.

Juan Mata had a penalty saved but United kept coming forward and Rashford's first goal arrived in the 63rd when he lashed Mata's pull-back into the net before he gave United the lead on aggregate with a sharp first-time

finish 12 minutes later.

Herrera slammed home from the spot with two minutes remaining and Depay drove in a fifth in stoppage time.

"It was a great performance. The fans will have enjoyed our attacking football," said under-pressure Dutchman Van Gaal, whose struggling side have been accused by pundits and for-

mer United players of dishing up boring football this season.

Five former European champions were among the contenders in the first knockout round of the continent's second-tier competition, which since last season has carried the added incentive of a place in the Champions League for the winners.

The Europa League is almost

certainly Liverpool's best hope of competing with the continent's elite next term but the five times European Cup winners, who have fallen off the pace in the Premier League, were made to sweat in a 1-0 win over Augsburg.

Having played out a goalless draw in the first leg, Jurgen Klopp's side spurned several chances after James Milner's early spot kick and survived a nervy finale at Anfield.

There was no such tension for Tottenham who eased past Fiorentina 3-0 with strikes from Ryan Mason and Erik Lamela plus a Gonzalo Rodriguez own goal wrapping up a 4-1 aggregate win.

It was an unsurprisingly easy stroll for Valencia, who took a 6-0 first-leg advantage into the return against Rapid Vienna and continued their recent upturn in form with a 4-0 win that secured a 10-0 aggregate thrashing.

Valencia boss Gary Neville endured little but misery in his first months in Spain but his team have now won four games in a row and inflicted Rapid Vienna's joint-worst home loss in Europe.

Borussia Dortmund reinforced their status as the clear bookmakers' favourites to win the trophy with a 1-0 victory at Porto to complete a 3-0 success over the two legs.—Reuters

Blatter disappointed soccer ban upheld by FIFA appeal body

ZURICH — Longtime FIFA President Sepp Blatter is disappointed the global soccer body's appeal committee upheld his ban from the sport, he told a Swiss newspaper in an interview published yesterday.

"I am deeply disappointed," Blatter told the Aargauer Zeitung when asked about the decision to

uphold the ban.

"That of all things the independent appeal committee, on which there are many old comrades, bans me, is really hard on me. But for what? For a financial procedure that has nothing to do with ethics."

Blatter and European soccer head Michel Platini had their

bans for ethics violations upheld on Wednesday, although they were reduced from eight years to six. The pair were banned over a payment of 2 million Swiss francs (\$2 million) made to Platini in 2011 by FIFA with Blatter's approval for work done a decade earlier.

He called the decision to reduce the ban by two years "a bad joke".

The comments from Blatter, head of soccer's scandal-plagued governing body since 1998, come the same day that Zurich-based FIFA will elect his permanent successor.

Asian Football Confederation (AFC) president Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa is the bookmaker's favourite with UEFA's Swiss general secretary Gianni Infantino a close second.

His ban means Blatter is not allowed to attend Friday's FIFA congress but he said had many associations and groups had still asked him for advice on who to vote for.

"I only answered: vote for

who you want," Blatter is quoted as saying.

He also said he had contact with all of the candidates except Jordanian Prince Ali Bin Al Hussein.

"At Christmas in Visp I drank mulled wine with one of the candidates," Blatter said, then confirming this had been with Infantino.

FIFA is currently caught in the worst crisis in its 112-year history.

More than 40 individuals and entities, including many former FIFA officials, have been charged with corruption-related offences in the United States. It also faces a parallel Swiss investigation.

Blatter, who is the subject of a criminal investigation in his native Switzerland over the Platini payment, said he had not received an offer to be a whistleblower in the United States.

Blatter told the newspaper: "And I would not accept such an offer because I am not a referee." —Reuters

Djokovic retires with injury during Dubai quarter-final

DUBAI — Novak Djokovic pulled out of his Dubai Championships quarter-final on Thursday after suffering an eye problem.

The world number one had lost the first set against Spain's Feliciano Lopez when he decided to retire, the day after achieving his 700th career win.

Djokovic had earlier been treated by his trainer during the first set, after having dropped his serve.

After losing his serve again to concede the set 6-3, making 18 unforced errors, he decided not to continue, denying him the chance of reaching an 18th successive ATP Tour final.

The Serb was not immediately available to explain his decision, but Lopez told the media that his opponent had suffered an eye infection.

Lopez now meets Marcos Baghdatis in the semi-finals on Friday for the right to meet Nick Kyrgios or Stan Wawrinka in the final.—Reuters



FIFA's suspended president Sepp Blatter. PHOTO: REUTERS