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HLUTTAW BACKS PARKWAY SUSPENSION

Thein Ko Lwin

THE Pyithu Hluttaw approved a proposal to suspend the lease of a 4.3-acre plot owned by the Ministry of Health near Yangon General Hospital, which was originally slated to house a private Parkway Hospital, at a parliamentary session yesterday.

Lawmakers called for the suspension of the lease of land for the private hospital during their discussions on a proposal submitted by MP Dr San Shwe Win of Yekyi Constituency early this month.

In his discussion, Union Minister for Health Dr Myint Htway expressed his support for the proposal, vowing that the land lease for the private hospital would be suspended.

The ministry leased the 4.3-acre plot on the corner of Bogyoke Street and Pyay Road in Lanmadaw Township to the Singapore-based Parkway Company for the construction of a private hospital following an agreement signed on 9 January 2016.

The Union minister told the Pyithu Hluttaw that no tender was invited to lease the land, and it was leased by the previous government.

According to sources, the company was allowed to rent the land at a rate of US$4.50 per square metre, and $2.58 million was transferred to the account of the ministry, amounting to 30 per cent of the land use premium.

Representatives who took part in discussions on the proposal said the rental process lacked transparency, and the lease price was much lower than the market rate.

Myanmar set to export garments of US$1.14b to EU

THE Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association (MGMA) and French NGO Evalliance have entered into an agreement to boost textile exports in the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

Evalliance's president Mr Jean Francois Limantour said he expects that the European Union would double its imports of garments from the country in 2017.

Their action plan includes the creation of new employment opportunities, the enhancement of productivity and the reduction of the country's reliance on other countries for raw materials.

Limantour also expressed his belief that the country enjoys huge potential for competitiveness in the garment industry with prospects of increased exports to EU.

"Myanmar's democratic reforms will be a magnet for European textile markets to promote cooperation and make new investments in the country," he said.

The memorandum of understanding signed last year between the two organisations enabled Myanmar to export garments valued at US$450 million. The export value of garments this fiscal year is expected to exceed $1.14 billion.—*Chan Chan*

Garment workers on a production line in Hlinethaya Industrial Zone. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

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Yangon to prioritise seizures, arrests during 100-day drug crackdown

Ko Moe

THE Yangon Region government will focus on drug seizures and arrests rather than the elimination of drug production during its 100-day drug crackdown, said regional Minister for Security and Border Affairs Col Tin Aung Tun yesterday.

"It is required to ensure security effectiveness in order to curb the inflow narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances from other parts of the country into Yangon," said the regional minister.

The flow of narcotic drugs into the region has increased with smooth transport and the speedy flow of commodities, added the minister, pointing out that it is easy to smuggle drugs as well as arms into the region as some checkpoints have been removed.

The minister called for more deployments of police personnel and the use of modern equipment and technology to interrupt drug smuggling.

Police Lt-Col Kyaw Kyaw Min expressed his view that the eradication of narcotic drugs is easier said than done, stressing the need to take necessary measures for the prevention and control of narcotic drugs.

"Under the 100-day plan, drug-related arrests and seizures

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Kokang rehabilitation works seek help from President's special fund

Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Than Htut. PHOTO: MNA

Union Minister Dr Aung Thu. PHOTO: MNA

THE Kokang Self-Administered Zone leading body can seek help from the President for implementation of its rehabilitation works with the use of the President's special fund in accordance with rules and regulations, said Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Than Htut during his response to a question by a representative at the session of the Amyotha Hluttaw yesterday.

As provisions that allow the President to use his special funds for certain matters are clearly stated in Union Government Budget Law, the President's special fund can be used for the rehabilitation of the region under the agreement of the Union government, he added.

According to the deputy minister, regional undertakings are being carried out by ministries concerned to rehabilitate Kokang region following budget allocations to various sectors.

Regarding the construction of a rural road to better socioeconomic development opportunities in Falam Township, the deputy minister said that works are underway to upgrade a rural road that passes through 13 villages in the township with the use of Peace and Construction Fund this fiscal year and remaining works are set to continue in accordance with allocation of funds for the next fiscal year.

Next, Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Dr Aung Thu responded to a question on implementation of a dyke construction project in Yathedaung Township.

A fund of K623 million has been allocated to the Rakhine State government for this fiscal year to be spent on the construction of the Pan Zin Maw saltwater protection dyke, said the Union minister.

Finally, the Amyotha Hluttaw Bill Committee read out its report on a proposed bill revoking powers of the State to detain and prosecute individuals thought to be inciting subversive activity. — *Myanmar News Agency*

CSOs push to amend Local Administrator Law

SUGGESTIONS from over 40 civil society organisations (CSOs) regarding the amendment of local ward and village administration legislation will be put forward to both the Pyithu and Amyotha hluttaws.

CSOs have announced that they will also strive to hold meetings with parliamentarians from both hluttaws as well as send their recommendations concerning the legislation.

"We want to amend 11 of the 14 sections of the law, which include articles relating to the right to vote for anyone over the age of 18 years old. They are points that are needed for the democratic selection of candidates and the holding of elections. We've requested to meet with parliamentarians during the second week of May. But we haven't received a reply yet," said Daw Thinzar Shunlei Yi, advocacy coordinator at the Action Committee for Democracy Development Committee.

Amendments made by the previous parliament to legislation on local administration were not enough to quell the objections and protests that have prompted further amending of the legislation during the current parliament.

"It's the people's voice that is making the current changes – it's the public who staged protests and objected during the selection of local administrators. They want articles of law to be amended. They want a transparent selection process. Since the public does not approve of [the current method of] electing local administrators, we will not accept it either," said Ko Kyaw Htin, programme officer from the New Myanmar Foundation.

In addition to submitting the aforementioned recommendations to the parliaments, efforts will be made to meet with the Ministry of Home Affairs to discuss the amendments.

However, the Union Deputy Minister for Home Affairs told the Lower House in the second week of May that there are no plans to make amendments to the 2012 Ward and Village Administration Law any time soon. —*Myitmakha News Agency*

Issuance of CNG books for city buses set for completion during 100-day period

EFFORTS are being made to ensure the speedy issuance of books to BRT city buses for buying CNG from the Ministry of Electricity and Energy, said Daw Khin Khin Aye, assistant secretary of the ministry at a press conference yesterday.

The issuance of CNG books to the city buses of the Yangon Bus Public Company Limited is set for completion during the period of the government's 100-day plan, added the assistant secretary.

According to the ministry, the present CNG supply of 0.35 million litres for the city buses is not enough to fully operate their service as buses run from 6 am to 10 pm every day. A city bus consumes more than 600 litres a day, said Daw Khin Khin Aye, adding that the ministry is planning to meet the CNG demand of 65 buses.

The Ministry has allowed 30 city buses to get 600 liters of CNG as of 2 May.—*Myint Oo (NPT)*

Mandalay Region govt to tackle river erosion in seven villages

Workers lay stones at the bank of Ayeyawady River in Mandalay to prevent erosion. PHOTO: ATK

THE Water Resources and River Development Department will take emergency measures to prevent river bank erosion in several villages as part of the new government's 100-day project initiative. The department will use money from its emergency fund amounting to K150 million (US$128,425). The department began preventive measures on 4 May in two villages, and the project will begin in other villages beginning on 12 May.

"We included emergency measures in the schedule of the 100-days project. River banks collapse mostly during high tide. Therefore, we included preventive measures in this project," said U Toe Aung from the Water Resources and River Development Department.

This April, tides were higher than usual because of El Niño.

Hsinkyin and Kyunhsin villages were the first to receive assistance under the project. Other villages that require action include: Sinthal Village and Hhinthar Ma Village in Sintku Township; Konetan Village and Thatansin Village in Madaya Township; and Chaintagyi Village in Patheingyi Townsip. — *Aung Thant Khine*

Free short-term technical and vocational training courses being offered

SHORT courses on skill-based technical and vocational training are free to trainees and accommodation is also provided free of charge, said Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi at the opening of the courses in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Jointly organised by the Asian Development Bank and the ministry, the bricklaying and bar-bending courses were opened for the first time, intended to nurture skilled workers.

In his address, the Union minister said that the short-term practical courses are aimed at meeting industry demand for skilled workers in respective regions of the country.

The courses are set to run for three months, with no more than 12 trainees per course. Those aged between 18 and 40 who completed primary education are allowed to take part.—*Myanmar News Agency*

China-Myanmar JV starts building power plant in Myanmar's Yangon

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein and dignitaries formally commence Thaketa 106MW Combined Cycle Power Plant construction. PHOTO: MNA

UNION Resources and Engineering Company limited (UREC) laid a cornerstone to start building a 106 megawatt (MW) Thakayta gas-fired combined cycle power plant in Yangon on Thursday.

The plant, about 10 kilometer from Yangon and 16 kilometer from Thilawa Special Economic Zone, is the largest power plant in Myanmar as well as the fifth private run in Yangon, U Htein Lwin, permanent secretary of the Ministry of Electricity and Energy said at the cornerstone laying ceremony.

The 106 MW project is the first phase of the about 500 MW's joint venture project named U Energy Tharketa Power Co Ltd established by the department of electric power management of Myanmar and UREC and will be operated under build-operate-transfer (BOT) system.

The construction period for the 106 MW plant is set for two years and power production is expected to start in March 2018.

According to the agreement, the company will operate the plant for 30 years with 20 million cubic feet of gas to be supplied per day from Zawtika offshore gas field, sad U Htein Lwin.

After completion of the project of 500 MW plant, it will meet Yangon's power demand of 720 million kW annually, according to the company.

The power consumption of Yangon region, which constitutes half of the country's total, stands high annually and is expected to reach about 1250 MW in this 2016-2017 fiscal year compared with the fiscal year 2011-2012 when the figure was 690 MW.

At present, the total production of the power plants in Yangon cannot meet the demand as the four state-owned power plants in the commercial city had been used for 20 years, U Htein Lwin added.

Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Hong Liang said that China stands top in Myanmar's foreign investment line-up and lay emphasis on the development of Myanmar's power sector.—*Xinhua*

President forms committee to prevent conscription of minors

THE President's Office has formed a Committee for the Prevention of Recruitment of Minors in Military Service with the release of Notification 17/2016, dated 5 May.

The committee includes 12 members, including the deputy attorney-general as secretary. The committee will be chaired by the Union Minister for Defence.

The committee is set to be tasked with 12 points of action, including discharging minors from military service or basic military training to reunite them with their families and enhancing cooperation with UN agencies, including UNICEF and the UNDP.—*Myanmar News Agency*

FAO provides disaster relief to Northern Rakhine State

THE UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) is offering food subsidies to impoverished communities in northern Rahkine State. Nearly a year on since Cyclone Koman, communities still rely on food assistance.

FAO has provided 1,700 households with paddy seed, cowpeas and vegetable seeds to help them recover from losses due to the flooding. The FAO provided 1,600 households with goats, pigs and training in animal care and breeding.

"Now we are receiving FAO assistance with goats, and we will be able to generate more income. With the extra income we will use the money to buy food and use the rest for the children to attend school," said An Bira Hatu, a resident of Warcha Village.

According to a 6 May FAO press release, Rahkine State has one of the highest poverty rates in the country at 78 per cent, based off of World Bank statistics.

Warcha Village is located near Buthidaung and Maungtaw Townships, where "the percentage of children consuming the minimum acceptable diet is alarmingly low, at two and three per cent, respectively," said FAO Myanmar's Emergency Coordinator Mr Andrea Berloffa.

"FAO's project in northern Rakhine State aims to improve income-generating opportunities and diversify livelihoods through the provision of livestock and agricultural inputs.

"At the same time, we are increasing access to and availability of food, particularly high-quality animal proteins, to cover basic needs and improve nutrition. This helps communities to be more resilient to withstand future natural disasters," Mr Berloffa added.

The largely Muslim population of northern Rahkine State faces travel bans that make trade difficult for the communities. Over 10,000 households were levelled by Cyclone Koman, which also damaged 20 per cent of the state's paddy fields and more than 13,000 hectares of fishponds and 23,000 hectares of shrimp ponds, according to the FAO.—*GNLM*

Deputy Minister for Transport and Communication appointed

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw appointed U Kyaw Myo as Deputy Minister for Transport and Communications yesterday.

The President Office Order No. 40/2016 stated that U Kyaw Myo has been appointed as Deputy Minister for Transport and Communication under provisions stated in article 234 (a) and (c) of the Constitution and section 16 (b) (9) of the Union Government Law.—*Myanmar News Agency*

MRTV, BBC Media Action look forward to further cooperation

UNION Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint held talks with Mr. Edward Pauker, Country Director for BBC Media Action in Myanmar, on further cooperation between Myanmar Radio and Television and BBC Media Action in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The two discussed matters related to enhancing human resources development objectives and production works of the MRTV.

Also present at the meeting were Permanent Secretary U Tint Swe and officials.—*Myanmar News Agency*

UEC Chairman meets DRI expert

CHAIRMAN of the Union Election Commission U Hla Thein received Ms. Charlemagne Sophia Gomez, an expert from Democracy Reporting International (DRI), in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting the two held talks on the DRI's assistance to CSOs to enhance capacity building for their roles in the election process, bringing about more female representation in Union Election Subcommissions and Parliament, further cooperation between the UEC and CSOs in the country's future elections and revision of the legal frameworks of laws.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Rumours and confusion abound over 11PM lockout laws

Alec Wilmot

YANGON Region Minister for Security and Border Affairs Col Tin Aung Tun told press on 11 May that the government did not issue "any orders" to ensure that restaurants, KTVs and nightclubs close at 11pm. This comes amongst the NLDs "100-day plan" to establish rule of law in Myanmar.

The 11pm "lockout" clause is, in fact, a contractual stipulation applied to all liquor licenses issued to venues in Myanmar, the Global New Light confirmed with a number of industry sources.

The Myanmar Times reported yesterday that a number of venues on Tuesday night were forced to close in order to abide by the 11PM lockout rule brought about by police who threatened further action if their instructions were ignored, seemingly as a result of the Region Government's crackdown.

The Myanmar Times quoted Police Major Thein Aung as saying that the 11PM lockout rule would be strictly enforced by Yangon Police as a part of the new government's "100 day plan" to install the rule of law. This has created a public and media storm where it seemingly contradicts the statement made by the Region Minister for Security and Border Affairs.

The Security Minister further stated that rumours came about after meeting with the government.

Social media exploded with angst regarding the news, with many feeling as though the decision was contrary to the regional government's aims, raising concerns over the potential negative effects on night-time trade.

"I would say that enforcing the early closure rule on the basis of cracking down on crime is about as useful as surgically amputating the foot of a patient with lung cancer," said Yan Nyein Aung, a Yangon socialite.

Adding, "Crime, gang-related or otherwise, is not an issue at any of the establishments we (colleagues, friends) frequent. I applaud the transition of our country to a democratic system and wish our new government all the best but I feel this decision will do great harm to the nightlife and the people of my community."

Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Phyo Min Thein earlier this week gave his vow that he would curb organised gang violence and other crimes in Yangon Region at a meeting focused on the regional government's 100-day plan, citing a need for increased police presence.

If the 11PM contractual lockout is enforced there are concerns that the measure will not prove effective and may become counterproductive, considering the manpower and resources required to enforce the rule city-wide. According to UN statistics from 2012 Myanmar overall had 154 police per 100,000 people, a number considered to be alarmingly low. From September 2013-15 the European Union organised community policing and crowd management training courses with the Myanmar Police Force. The programme was cancelled earlier this year.

Intl food and hotels event coming to Yangon

WITH the aim of promoting Myanmar's hospitality industry, an international exhibition for food and hotels is scheduled to be held in early June in Yangon, said U Nay Linn, chairman of the Myanmar Restaurant Association.

'International Food & Hotels Myanmar 2016' will run between 1 and 3 June at Myanmar Event Park on Shinsawpu Road in Yangon.

A total of 220 exhibitors from 27 countries, including South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Germany will take part in the three-day event by showcasing various products and services.

This is the third time Bangkok Exhibition Services Ltd has organised the recurring event in Myanmar.

Special talks on food safety, a food quiz game and some food and drink-related contests will be held during the event.

The Myanmar Chefs Association is offering special training to young people with hearing loss from Mary Chapman School for the Deaf to compete in the contest.

Myanmar has rapidly emerged as one of Asia's newest and brightest frontier markets, with economic growth estimated at an annual rate of seven per cent for the next two years. Last year's tourist arrivals up to the end of November reached more than 4.2 million, according to figures released by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. Investments in the country also continue to grow each year.—*Myint Maung Soe*

Yangon to prioritise seizures, arrests during 100-day . . .

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have increased fivefold," said Police Lt-Col Kyaw Kyaw Min, adding that most of the seized drugs are believed to have been transported to Bangladesh via Rakhine State.

According to the Yangon Police Force, an anti-narcotic squad of 876 police personnel has been deployed in the region's four districts, including Yangon International Airport and the jetties.

Under 'Operation Dagon' from 1 to 11 May, 105 suspects were arrested in 77 drug-related cases, police said.

Minister Col Tin Aung Tun suggested that the Union government allow police to use seized money in anti-narcotic drug activities.

During the 12-year period from 1993 to 2014, police seized movable and unmovable assets worth K57.236 billion in connection with drug-related cases, he said.

In his recent pledge to ensure the rule of law in Yangon, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein said measures will be taken to ensure the effectiveness of police service by increasing police strength and equipping them with modern devices and technology.

EU pledges 100 million Euros in Myanmar's development sector

IN its efforts to lay emphasis on ensuring stability and prosperity around the world the European Union (EU) has elected to support Myanmar and its people to establish a democratic country, said Mr. Roland Kobia, EU ambassador to Myanmar.

The EU has allocated one billion Euros to aid Myanmar's development over the period 2014-2020.The funds are directed at four key issues in Myanmar. The funds will help to develop rural areas and agriculture, ensure food and security improves nutritional value, promote education, improve governance and the rule of law and contribute to peace building. Myanmar will continue to receive support in matters of democratic governance and human rights, the environment and climate change, human development, sustainable energy as well as trade, according to a statement made at the EU establishment ceremony held at the Inya lake hotel yesterday.

EU lends the support of 100 million Euros to Myanmar annually. The EU first started its support in 2013 for the election in Myanmar and is still supporting the country through the STEP Democracy programme. The EU has increased its support for the promotion of livelihoods and development in ethnic areas which have been destroyed by armed conflicts. The EU also attempted to train over 6,500 Myanmar Policemen in regard to human rights.

The EU has enabled over 200,000 local households to access to credit, over 60,000 households to have higher earnings, over 900,000 children to receive books and stationary and over 200,000 people to attend training on environmental conservation. The EU will build on and continue to promote peace, sustainable development and democratic governance for the benefit of all people in Myanmar, it said. —*Myint Maung Soe*

Crime NEWS

Locals rob forestry staff of logs

Logs tooked by thelocal robbers. Photo:Tun Hlaing (Myine)

OFFICIALS and staff of the Taikkyi Forestry Department seized illegal logs in a field near Wun Kait village, Taikkyi town on Saturday. The forestry staff found four carts carrying the logs.They also found 66 teak logs hidden inside a straw dump.

Forestry staff put the illegal logs onto a vehicle to move them to a secure location. Over 20 villagers from Wun Kait village arrived to the vehicle with knives and sticks.

They looted the logs from the vehicle and returned to their village. Forestry staff informed local police. The police have filed charges and taken action against the villagers.— *Tun Hlaing (Myine)*

Yaba, Heroin and black opium siezed

LOCAL police arrested a man accused of selling narcotics in Kaing Wun village, Kawlin township, Sagaing region on 8 May.

Acting on a tip-off, a combined investigation team comprising officers and staff from the Myanmar Police Force seized heroin weighing 7 grams, 230 Yaba pills and black opium weighing 4.25 grams from one Myint Thaung, 48. Police have filed charges against him under the Anti-Narcotics law.— *Ko Ko Nyein (Kawlin)*

Yaba, guns and ammunition seized

A COMBINED team comprising officers and staff from the Myanmar Police Force seized Yaba and ammunition from one Saw Aung Htut near Kyauk Phyu mountain, Hpa-an township, on Monday. The police searched Saw Aung Htut and found 779 yaba pills, four guns and four bullets. He admitted that he had bought the weapons and drugs from one Zar Ni.

Similarly, police searched the home of one Hon Kaye in Kaung Hmu Lwe ward, Muse town on Tuesday and found 3,000 yaba pills. On that same day a combined team searched the home of one Cho Tu on Htar Nar road, Ahlon township and discovered 2,000 yaba pills.

Yaba, guns and ammunition seen together with criminals. Photo: MNA

A local police squad in Hpa-an seized 344 yaba pills from one Ma Chit Nyunt and 212 yaba pills from one Ma Mu Kei in Kaw Sun Ain village, Hpa-an township.

Police have filed charges against all suspects under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.— *MNA*

Fire destroys petrol station in Ingapu

A FIRE broke out at around 11:15pm at a petrol station at the corner of Thamardi road and Angardon road, ward3, Ingapu township on Tuesday.

According to an investigation, U Phone was filling petrol into a running generator. U Phone's son pulled the generator plug, causing short –circuiting and leading to the outbreak of fire.

The fire was put out within 30 minutes by firemen with the help of neighbours. The fire destroyed U Phone's petrol station, U Tun Kyaw Oo's agriculture products shop and U Saw Hlaing's motorcycle workshop. The accident seriously injured U Phone's son while U Phone sustained minor injuries. They are receiving medical treatment at Hinthada District general hospital. Local police have filed charges against U Phone.—*Man Kyaw (IPRD)*

LOCAL Business

Laydauntkan hatchery set to produce 100,000 fingerlings under 100-day plan

Ko Moe

A FISH hatchery at Laydauntkan in Yangon Region is set to produce over 100,000 fingerlings under its 100-day plan, said U Ye Tun Naing, person in-charge of the hatchery yesterday.

Technology will improve fish hatchery production in order to exceed the fingerling stock of previous years at the hatchery, he added.

That hatchery, which produced more than 38.5 million fingerlings last year, set a target of production of over 40 million fingerlings this year. It has 49 hatchery ponds in an area of 60 acres.

According to the hatchery, fish farms in Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions are its regular customers. Fingerlings have also been delivered to townships in Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions and Rakhine State.

Fish are caught to be bred at Laydauntkan farm in Yangon on 11 May. PHOTO: ZAW GYI (PANITA)

Ayeyawady fish paste makers say they use no prohibited substances

FISH paste manufacturers in Noutmeelin Village, Ayeyawady Region, have said they do not use prohibited dyes or fly repellents in their fish paste products.

Located in the Amar Sub-township in Pyapon District in the Ayeyawady Delta, villagers normally operate fish paste manufacturing businesses, producing between 65 per cent and 70 per cent of the country's fish paste.

"We local entrepreneurs have not used restricted dyes since we started a special project by the Food and Drug Administration in May 2009," said U Myat Thu, a fish paste producer in the village.

He went on to say as much as 20 per cent of fish paste products in the local market contain prohibited dyes.

Daw Aye Aye Khin, the owner of the Boma shrimp paste factory, said: "We already know that putting prohibited dyes in fish paste can cause health problems, including cancers in human bodies, and we have never seen fly repellents as we only produce shrimp paste, which has no need for it."

Fish paste producers in Ayeyawady Region suffered losses after the chairman of the Consumer Protection Association, U Ba Oak Khaing, said 80 per cent of fish pastes produced in the delta region contained prohibited dyes.

Noutmeelin Village has 50 fish paste manufacturers, who carry out regular production in cooperation with the FDA.—*PTK/Union Daily*

Myanmar and India to conduct G to G or bean export

THE Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association will be involved as an agency of a G to G (Government to Government) system between Myanmar and India, said U Zin Oo, the Head of the Department of this association.

India proposed to purchase 25,000 metric tonnes of mung beans and pigeon peas a year at the prevailing market price under the G to G system.

According to a draft agreement sent by India, an agency is also required to be set up with the Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association planning to conduct business as an agency under the guidance of the Ministry of Commerce.

Previously, pea trade between Myanmar and India was carried out under a seller and purchaser relationship system under which merchants from India had to purchase from many different pea companies. Under the new system India will be able to buy Myanmar peas in a streamlined fashion through the agency.—*200*

Sales of FMI shares fall by over 90 per cent

THE price of First Myanmar Investment (FMI) shares on the nascent Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) continued to depreciate in value to K27,000 per share, while the buying and selling of shares has fallen by 94 per cent, according to a statement by the YSX.

By 25 March, FMI had sold a total of over 100,000 shares since the beginning of trading on the YSX, while on 12 May, the total shares amounted to over 60,000.

"The price of shares is dependent upon buying and selling demand. As buyers wait for a fall in the market, sellers try and make as many sales as they can. There's a lot of supply. That's the nature of the market," said U Then Htun Oo, chief executive director of the YSX.

The highest price of FMI shares shortly after the company started trading was K31,000 per share, with a total of over 100,000 being sold. However, it is known that by 29 March the company sold 200,000 shares at a cost of K41,000 each.

The current share price has fallen to K27,000 per share, close the primary initial price of K26,000, while a total of 6,483 shares have been bought and sold at this price.

"I haven't bought any shares yet because I don't have any expendable income. I think the market will fall with people buying and selling shares in bulk," said U Kyaw Min Naing, who is involved in the agricultural fertiliser and pesticide business.

The Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings Co was the second company to trade on the YSX as of this May 20. Of the six currently listed companies on the YSX, only two which have been granted official permission to trade shares.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Gold supply exceeds demand in Yangon market

THE gold market in Yangon sees an excess in supply these days, said U Ohn Myaing, the owner of a gold shop on 29th Street in downtown Yangon.

He added that gold shops around Lanmadaw, Latha and Pabedan townships, as well as Bogyoke Market, have seen low demand for gold wares.

Gold merchants say most middle-income customers sold the bulk of their gold to buy school equipment before the beginning of the school year in June.

The local gold market is likely to cool next month, said U Aye Cho, the coordinator of the Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association.

Myanmar's gold market is influenced by fluctuations in the global market.

The value of one ounce of gold on the world market before the Thingyan Water Festival in April stood at US$1,263, while the price of Myanmar gold was K781,500 ($669) per tical (0.576 ounces).

The global gold price rose to $1,287 on 7 May. The price of Myanmar gold has similarly risen in value to K795,000 ($681) per tical.

The rising value of gold on the world market during the first week of April has resulted in the price of a tical of Myanmar gold rising by around K14,500, according to gold dealers.

Local gold merchants are struggling to export quality Myanmar gold.

"We need to change from traditional units of measurement to the global measurement system to enter the international market," said U Myo Myint, the chairman of the Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association.—*Tin Win Lay*

Gold jewelry displayed at a shop in downtown Yangon.
PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

Malaysia says two more debris confirmed from missing MH370

Photo taken on 3 March 2016 shows a piece of an airplane during a news conference in Maputo, capital of Mozambique. PHOTO: XINHUA

KUALA LUMPUR — Two pieces of debris discovered in South Africa and the Mauritian island of Rodrigues were confirmed by expert team as "almost certainly" from missing Malaysia Airlines MH370, Malaysian Transport Minister Liow Tiong Lai said on Thursday.

Following a thorough examination, the expert team concluded that the two pieces of debris, an engine cowling piece with a partial Rolls-Royce logo and an interior panel piece from an aircraft cabin respectively, are consistent with panels found on a Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 aircraft, Liow said in a statement.

"As such, the team has confirmed that both pieces of debris from South Africa and Rodrigues Island are almost certainly from MH370," he said.

Malaysian and Australian authorities have confirmed earlier that two pieces of debris found in Mozambique originated from the missing flight.

Liow said the governments of Malaysia, Australia and China continue to be wholly committed to the search for MH370.

More than 105,000 square-km of the 120,000 square -km search area have been completed, he added.

Flight MH370 disappeared on 8 March, 2014 enroute from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing with 239 people on board, most of them being Chinese nationals.

A joint search effort has not yet found the main body of the aircraft in the south Indian Ocean, where it has presumably ended its journey. —*Xinhua*

Viet Nam says would welcome US accelerating lifting of arms ban

HANOI — Viet Nam would welcome the United States "accelerating" the lifting of a lethal arms embargo, which would reflect trust between the two countries and recognition of its needs to defend itself, its foreign ministry said on Thursday.

Viet Nam's comments on a topic that has long been a source of friction with the United States comes just over a week ahead of a visit by President Barack Obama, and amid debate in Washington over whether to remove the ban, which was eased in late 2014.

The arms embargo is one of the last major vestiges of the Viet Nam War era. The United States has not indicated publicly it would remove the embargo and has long said such a move would depend on Viet Nam showing progress on human rights.

"We welcome the United States' acceleration to fully lift the lethal arms sales ban on Viet Nam," the ministry said in response to Reuters questions.

"This is consistent with the development trend of the comprehensive partnership ... demonstrating trust between the two countries."

Lifting the embargo would mark a major step forward in ties 21 years after normalisation began.

The ministry said it welcomed the "many supporting voices" in the United States that had called for the removal of the embargo. US engagement with Viet Nam was stepped up rapidly during 2014, in what experts say was a calibrated move by the United States to seize on deteriorating ties between Viet Nam and communist neighbour China over rival territorial claims in the South China Sea.—*Reuters*

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China says has wide support for stance on South China Sea case

BEIJING — China has widespread support in the international community for its decision not to have anything to do with a legal case lodged by the Philippines against Chinese claims in the South China Sea, a senior diplomat said on Thursday.

China has been stepping up its rhetoric ahead of a ruling expected in a few weeks by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague on the Philippines case. China says it is fully within its rights not to participate in what it views as forced arbitration, and says the Philippines is using the case to directly undermine Chinese sovereignty.

In February, the United States and the European Union said China should respect the ruling. The court has no powers of enforcement and its rulings have been ignored before.

Xu Hong, head of the Chinese foreign ministry's Department of Treaties and Law, said the issue was being hyped up by people who lack a proper understanding of international law.

Xu Hong, director-general of the Department of Treaty and Law of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, answers a question at a news conference in Beijing, China, on 12 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

"We can see so many countries coming to the fore hyping this issue up, but it doesn't matter how loud their voices are, they still represent a minority of countries in the world," he told a news briefing.

"If you look at who is talking about international law all the time, it is politicians and non-professionals with ulterior motives. It is them who really need to learn something about international law."

The foreign ministry has in recent weeks been claiming support for its South China Sea position from countries as diverse as Cambodia and Yemen.

Xu said no country would accept compulsory arbitration when core interests were at stake.

"Actually there are a number of voices of reason on this issue from genuine international law experts who have had some serious and objective comments, but all those comments have been neglected or ignored by some people," he said.

"Some people are trying to change the concept stealthily to confound right and wrong and black and white. They may be able to mislead public opinion for some time but eventually lies are lies and even repeated a thousand times will not become truth," Xu said.

China had always been a firm defender and practitioner of international law, he said. "We don't feel isolated at all." China claims almost all of the energy-rich waters of the South China Sea, through which more than $5 trillion of maritime trade passes each year.

The Philippines, Brunei, Viet Nam, Malaysia and Taiwan have overlapping claims.—*Reuters*

Australian PM Turnbull named in Panama Papers, denies wrongdoing

CANBERRA — Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull on Thursday denied any wrongdoing after being been named in the Panama Papers as a former director of a British Virgin Islands company set up to exploit a Siberian gold prospect. Turnbull and former New South Wales Premier Neville Wran joined the board of Australian-listed Star Mining NL in 1993. The company hoped to develop a A$20 billion ($14.67 billion)Siberian gold mine called Sukhoi Log, according to the Australian Financial Review, which first reported the story.

Both Turnbull and Wran were subsequently appointed directors of Star Technology Services, a subsidiary of Star Mining in the British Virgin Islands which had been incorporated by Mossack Fonseca, the Panama-based law firm at the centre of the global scandal.

"There is no suggestion of any impropriety whatsoever. There is nothing new there," Turnbull told reporters. "The company of which Neville Wran and I were directors was an Australian listed company and had it made any profits — which it did not, regrettably — it certainly would have paid tax in Australia." The details are included in documents obtained by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists known as the Panama Papers but are not part of the publicly searchable database. Tax havens and transparency have been thrust into the spotlight as governments worldwide launch probes into possible financial wrongdoing after the details of hundreds of thousands of clients' tax affairs were leaked from Mossack Fonseca. Turnbull, a former investment banker and technology entrepreneur, is campaigning ahead of a general election on 2 July, with his ruling Liberal-National coalition in a virtual tie with the main opposition.—*Reuters*

Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull stands outside Australia's Parliament House in Canberra on 4 May 2016 following the announcement Australia's 2016-17 Federal Budget. PHOTO: REUTERS

Jacques Rogge President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) announces Tokyo as the city to host the 2020 Summer Olympic Games during a ceremony in Buenos Aires on 7 September 2013. PHOTO: REUTERS

Japan denies alleged bribery in Tokyo's bid for 2020 Olympics

TOKYO — Japan's top government spokesman on Thursday denied allegations of bribery in Tokyo's campaign to host the 2020 Olympics, saying the government understands the organising committee conducted the campaign in "a clean way."

"We understand the campaign for the 2020 Tokyo Games was conducted in a clean way," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said at a news conference after a British newspaper reported the Tokyo Olympics organising committee paid a 1.3 million euro ($1.48 million) to the account of the son of Lamine Diack, who was an International Olympic Committee member at the time, before Tokyo was awarded the Games in 2013.

Suga said he is "not aware of" the Guardian report, which also said French authorities were investigating the allegations. "If we receive a request (for investigation) from French judicial authorities, our country will respond appropriately," he added.

Suga said the Japanese government has no plan to question the Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games or conduct its own investigation into the allegations.—*Kyodo News*

Strong quake strikes northeast Taiwan, shakes buildings in capital

TAIPEI — An earthquake with a magnitude of 5.6 shook northeast Taiwan on Thursday, the US Geological Survey said, with tremors felt in the capital, Taipei.

The quake was centred 14 km (nine miles) northeast of the coastal town of Su-ao, the US Geological Survey said.

There were no immediate reports of injuries, collapsed buildings or other damage.

Earthquakes are common in Taiwan. In February, a 6.4 magnitude quake toppled a large apartment complex in southern Taiwan killing more than 100 people.—*Reuters*

Singapore expert says slower growth 'brings its own benefits' as Chinese economy matures

SINGAPORE — Singapore expert said at a forum that the slowdown of China's economic growth is the "new normal," which is inevitable and brings its own benefits as its economy matures, local media the *Strait Times* reported on Thursday.

"It's a slowdown, but only by Chinese standards. China can't be expected to grow 6 to 7 per cent forever; no economy can keep growing at such high rates," Professor John Wong of the East Asian Institute at the National University of Singapore said at the Straits Times Global Outlook series on Wednesday.

China's economy grew 6.9 per cent year on year in 2015, the country's most sluggish expansion since 1990, which triggered concerns over whether the world's second largest economy will face a hard landing.

However, Wong said that the new normal in fact gives China a chance to promote reforms and restructure of the economy. "China's economy is really being restructured; growth used to be externally driven and labour intensive, now it's domestically driven and capital intensive," he said.

China's service sector contributed 50.5 per cent to the country's GDP in 2015, up from 48.1 per cent in 2014. It is the first time the sector has exceeded 50 per cent. —*Xinhua*

UN statement condemning North Korea missile launches faces opposition

SEOUL — Some members of the UN Security Council have opposed issuing a press statement condemning North Korea's launches of what appeared to be two intermediate-range Musudan ballistic missiles late last month, South Korea's Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Thursday.

"It is regrettable the adoption of a press statement is being delayed," Cho June Hyuck said during a press briefing, adding that the reason cited by some of the members was unrelated to North Korea.

"It is true it has become difficult to adopt the statement at the moment," he said, adding South Korea will try to hold consultations with allies, such as the United States, about the matter.

Cho declined to provide further details.

The United States requested informal consultations at the UN Security Council after North Korea launched the missiles on 28 April, in violation of UN resolutions. No statement denouncing North Korea has been issued, as yet. The country has been subject to rounds of Security Council resolutions banning the use of ballistic missile technology.

North Korea fired what appeared to be Musudan missiles, but the launches apparently failed, South Korea's military said.

On 15 April, North Korea fired another missile, presumed also to be a Musudan, from its east coast, but this too appeared to have failed, having disappeared from radar seconds after being launched.

The Musudan missile has an estimated range of between 2,500 and 4,000 kilometres, which would enable it to reach not only any target in South Korea or Japan, but also potentially US military facilities on the Pacific island of Guam.—*Kyodo News*

Opinion

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 ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.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.

Time to change the clichéd image of government

Kyaw Thura

THE National League for Democracy's landslide election victory last November offers an excellent example of the social stigma attached to the delivery of government services to people living on the margins of society. The prolonged marginalisation of the ordinary people led to civil unrest in 1988, which is still described as the worst mass demonstration in living memory.

As the NLD came to power with its election slogan that read "It's time for change", the people are eager to know whether the ruling party can live up to their expectations and make change happen. It is, therefore, imperative for the government to prove its political muscle by erasing public doubts over how its cabinet members will work together with parliamentarians and other stakeholders to reshape public welfare programmes during its tenure.

Having been accustomed to autocracy for over five decades, the people find it difficult to change their attitudes to politics. However, it is found that most public evaluations of intergovernmental management are often based on the pre-established images of previous governments. It is often argued that the nature of government itself makes it difficult to change the clichéd image of government. Therefore, the government must make a bold move to take concrete action in ensuring greater transparency and accountability in the delivery of its public services.

Heat stroke awareness be raised

THERE were 87 locals recorded as suffering from heat stroke caused by the impact of scorching heat in Mandalay Region from 6 April to 10 May. Eight people were reported to have died of heat stroke according to figures of the Health Department of Mandalay.

Outbreaks of heat stroke was seen mostly in Kyaukse and Myitthar townships, according to the figures. "Temperatures above 110 C can cause fits and coma. If these signs are seen on a person they should be taken to hospital to immediately receive medical treatment" said Dr Win Naing, the regional head of the health department of Mandalay.

The temperature of Mandalay started to rise from 6 April, reaching up to 42.5 C (108.5 F) on Monday, according to the Chanmyathazi Meteorological station.

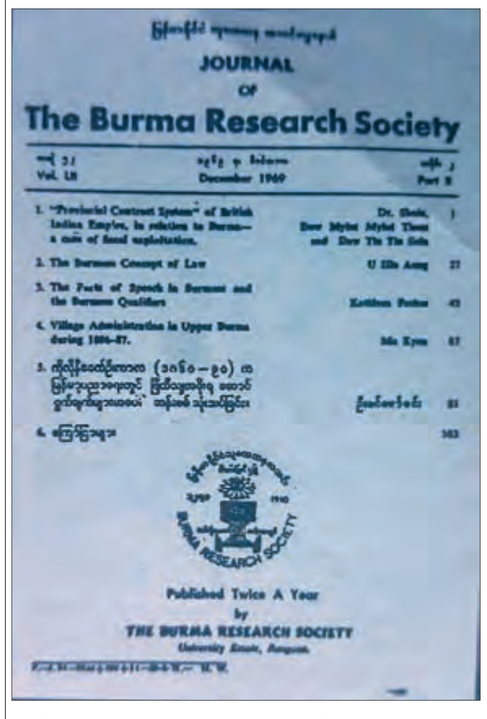
"The temperature is still on the rise and will be high until it rains. Senior citizens are particularly at risk said U Than Zaw, assistant director of the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (Mandalay). —*Aung Thant Khaing*

The Burma Research Society

Dr. Saw Mra Aung

THE Burma Research Society, which lasted from 1910 and 1980, has entered its 116th anniversary this year. As its existence came to cease 36 years ago, the people of Myanmar, except a few Myanmar ardent readers and researchers, might forget it. Although many religio-political organizations emerged in Myanmar at the time of its foundation, it had been standing as a purely academic association from its inception up to its termination. In its hey-day, its reputation could stand comparison to other two renowned academic associations- the Asia Society founded in US in 1957 and the Siamese Society in Thailand in 1904. Especially, the Journal of Burma Research Society, its main periodical, whose contributors were the intellectual giants of Myanmar in those days and western scholars who specialized in Myanmar, lent more brilliance to its reputation. Copies of the JBRS are still assets to many world famous well-stocked libraries. No doubt, the Burma Research Society and the Journal of the Burma Research Society reflected the then high educational status of Myanmar.

The Executive members of the Burma Research Society



The Cover of the Journal of the Burma Research Society

It was J.S. Furnivall who first conceived the idea of establishing the Burma Research Society. It is said that he got a copy of the Journal of the Siam Society in 1908 by the courtesy of U Tun Nyein, a then Reader and Wun-thauk, who had received it from a former staff of his, U Aung Thein alias Nai Thein, who was at that time serving as an assistant secretary in the Siam Society. Once he saw the journal, he was taken with it. Its appearance and contents convinced him that an academic journal like it should be published in Myanmar. He, therefore, got down immediately to the business of meeting those interested in the publication of such a journal in Myanmar, explaining its contents and the benefits to be accrued from it and seeking support and advice from them. He telegrammed those whom he could not meet personally. Thus he got replies from 238 interested persons all over the world on 18 November, 1909.

On 19 February 1910, a committee was formed at Bernard Free Library in Yangon. It was decided during that meeting that it was to be called the Burma Research Society. Meanwhile, ten executive members were selected, the five nominees for the executives to be invited confirmed and the dates of following meetings also fixed. The eminent personalities present at this meeting included the Hon. Mr. G.F. Arnold, Esq, the Hon. Mr. H.L. Eales, J.G. Rutledge, Esq, Dr. G.R.T Ross, U May Aung, U Tun Nyein, C. Duroiselle, Esq. etc. The ten selected executives were(1) M. Hunter, Esq. M.A.,(2) Dr. G.R.T. Ross, M.A., Ph. D,(3) A.D. Keith, Esq., B.A., M.R.A.S, (4)W.G. Wedderspoon, Esq., M.A., (5) J. Stuart., Esq., (6)Rev. D. Gilmore, M.A., (7)Rev. J.F. Smith, B.A., (8)Major W.G. Pridmore, I.M.S., (9)Rt. Rev. Bishop Cardot and (10)J.T. Best, Esq., M.A. The five nominees for the executives to be invited were (1) Maung Kin, Bar-at-Law,(2) Maung Ne Dun, (3)Prince of Pyinmana, (4) U Po Sa, K.S.M and (5)Captain Ba Khet, I.M.S.

Then, three meetings were held at the Bernard Free Library - on 5 March 1910, on 9 July 1910 and on 1st August 1910. Subcommittee meetings were also held twice at Yangon College –on 28 January 1911 and on 27 March 1911. Finally, the Burma Research Society could be established officially at the Bernard Free Library on 29 March, 1911(But it is generally considered to be founded in 1910) with the aims of studying and encouraging Arts, Science, History and Literature in relation to Myanmar and promoting intercourse between the members of different communities with a common interest. It was also decided by the newly-founded society that the principal work of the society was to publish a research journal once or twice a year and that meetings were to be held quarterly, at which papers were to be read and an annual research conference where various scholars read original research papers concerning Myanmar was to be held once a year. As the society had no fixed head-office, its location could not be identified. Its office had to be affiliated with libraries like the Bernard Free Library, the Central Universities' Library, etc.

The journal the Burma Research Society published was generally called the Journal of the Burma Research Society, which was, however, more commonly known as J.B.R.S in abbreviation. But it is noticed that the name of the journal changed three times: Burma Research Society's Journal in the nascent state of the society, the Journal of the Burma Research Society up to 1941 and Journal of the Burma Research Society from 1948 up to 1980, the year of the termination of the society. Although the society generally published this journal twice a year, it sometimes had to do so thrice a year when the situation demanded. When the Second World War broke out, the publication of the journal had to make a temporary halt. Only when it came to 1948, it resumed this job. In the beginning, the journal gave priority to the articles and papers written in English so that the ethnics, culture, literature of Myanmar would be acquainted with the peoples from English-speaking countries. But, later, some articles and papers in Myanmar, Mon, Kayin, Shan, etc were included in the journal. The journal carried different topics such as literature, culture, history, anthropology, archaeology, economics, agriculture, religion, psychology, geography, etc. They were written in the forms of articles, research papers, reviews, comments, theses and translation with the aid of illustrations, photographs, maps and statistics. As the contributors were heads , professors, lecturers, etc from academic faculties and scholars from various fields, the works of the best brains of Myanmar and other countries were contained in the journal. It was sometimes brought out in two or three separate volumes in the same year. Before the publication, research talks and seminars were held. The articles and research papers read out at those talks and seminars were included in the journal. But, there was times when some articles and papers sent from other contributors were also described in it after editing them. In addition to publishing the Journals of the Burma Research Society, the society edited books to be published by its members and other associations with a view to bringing benefits to the public. Besides, one of its special tasks was to record Myanmar classical songs and poems like ***Ratu, Rakan, An-chin, Luta, Mawkwun, ai-chin, Thar-chin, Pat-pyo, Bwet, Kyo,*** etc in tapes to preserve Myanmar culture and music.

At its founding, it had 213 members. The members then fell into four categories: Ordinary members, life members, corresponding members and honourary members. But since 1954, the members had been in five categories: ordinary members, student members, library members, corresponding members and honourary members. Honourary members were very small in number. In 1930, only Sir Reginal Cradock and Mattwe Hunter were honourary members. But in 1980, the number of the honourary members increased to eight: U Chit Thaung, U Lu Pe Win, U Aung Maung, U Khin Zaw, U Thein Han, U Wun, U Myo Min and Dr. Tha Hla. Head of the State was appointed Patron of the society. In 1910, Vice Governor-general Sir Herbert Thirkel White was Patron. There were a total of 36 Presidents and 27 Secretaries between 1910 and 1980. The first President was Herbert L. Eales, I.C.S and the first Secretary Duroiselle, M.R. A.S. The last President was U Htin Gyi and the last Secretary Dr. Zin Aung. The librarians were G.H. Luce(1923-24), G.H Luce and Pe Maung Tin(1925), Pe Maung Tin and F.J. Maggi(1926-28), G.H. Luce and Pe Maung Tin(1929), G.H Luce (1930-35), U Khin Zaw(1936-37), U Ba(1938-39), U Hla Aung(1940-41), U Thein Han(1948-61) and U Thaw Kaung(1962-80). The emblem of the society was a lotus flower suspended over a stack of books placed on a receptacle. Above the lotus was the motto "သိစဝ်ပြင်နှံ့" (Be Knowledgeable, Discernable and Informative) and below another motto "လမ်းရိုးဟောင်းတွင်ဆင့်ကာထွင်" (The New be Innovated Based on the Old). But this emblem first came into use only from 1959. The editors of the J.B.R.S were U May Aung, Maung Tin, Taylor, Maung Ba Kyar, G.H. Luce, Pe Maung Tin, B.R. Pearl, G. Appleton, U Wun, U Myo Min, U Ko Ko Lay, Dr. Than Tun, U Tin Aye, U Tin Hla, U Hla Aung and Nai Pan Hla.

Aside from the J.B.R.S, this society edited and re-published some other ancient Myanmar treatises in order that the people could know, value and preserve ancient Myanmar literary genres. It edited and published a total of 46 treatises between 1926 and 1941. During the Second World War, it published 11 books in English in India under the name of Burma Pamphlets: ***Burma Back-ground, Burma Setting , Buddhism in Burma , Burma Rice, The Forests of Burma, The Hill Peoples of Burma, The Burma-An Appreciation, The Karens of Burma, Burma Facts and Fingers, The Burma Petroleum Industry and The Birds of Burma***. When the Second World War ended, it edited and published three Mon texts and 16 Myanmar treatises. When this society entered its fiftieth anniversary, it celebrated its golden jubilee conference in Yangon for six days from the 28th December 1959 to the 2nd January 1960. At this conference, some scholars from Thailand, Bangladesh, Vietnam, China, England, etc. read out 20 research-papers. At the conference, J.S. Furnivall delivered the inaugural speech and Dr. Hla Myint, the then Rector of Yangon University, the greeting speech at the end of the conference. The society published No. 1 Golden Jubilee Commemorative Journal and No. 2 Golden Jubilee Commemorative Journal after the conference e. The former included 21 research papers read out at the conference while the latter, 34 already-published papers and articles. That same year, it , funded by the Asian Foundation, re-published ***the Glass Palace Chronicle of the Kings of Burma*** translated by U Pe Maung Tin and G.H. Luce, which was first published by the Oxford University Press in 1923 and ***the Pali Literature of Burma*** written by Mabel Haynes Bodes , which was first published in 1909 in 1965 and re-edited and republished ***the Gavampati*** by Rev. Mr. Halliday.

The Emblem of the Burma Research Society

In brief, it is found that the Burma Research Society in its 70-year long course contributed many copies of the Journal of Burma Research Society and other rare ancient Myanmar treatises not only to the academic field of Myanmar but also to that of the international community. By all accounts, the educational standard of Myanmar and Yangon University of those days earned international recognition to some degree due in part to the contributions of this society, most of whose members were those of faculties of Yangon University. With the support of academic researchers and personages in power of those days, this society managed to get through the two World Wars and to continue lighting the torch of wisdom which sent forth its undiminished radiances even to the West through Asia. But, to our sorrow, while the seventieth anniversary celebration of the Yangon Institute of Economics was being held on 29 December, 1980, Chairman of the Myanmar Socialist Linzin Party, the then Patron of the society, remarked that this society should no longer continue to exist. Thenceforth, this academically prestigious association was put into relegation and sank gradually into oblivion. Today, Myanmar is back on the right track to genuine democracy with the guidance of charismatic public leader Daw Aung San Su Kyi. Only if human and natural resources can be utilized sensibly, can Myanmar be democratized successfully. Therefore, it is suggested here by the author that it is high time an academic association which can help upgrade the educational standard of Myanmar like the Burma Research Society be established very immediately !

References:-

၁။ ဦးသန်းထိုက်(သူတောသန့်)၊ မြန်မာနိုင်ငံသုတေသနအသင်း ၁၀၁ နှစ်ပြည့်အထိမ်းအမှတ်စာတမ်း၊ သင်းစာပေကောမာရွတ်မြို့နယ်၊ ၂၀၁၁ခုနှစ်။

၂။ မောင်ဇေယျာ၊ ဖာနီဝယ်နှင့် မြန်မာပြည်၊ Myanmar Knowledge Society, ဒိုလ်တစ်ထောင်မြို့နယ်၊ ရန်ကုန်၊ ၂၀၁၆။

US activates Romanian missile defence site, angering Russia

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg (L) and Romanian Prime Minister Dacian Ciolos arrive for an official inauguration ceremony at Deveselu air base, Romania, on 12 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

DEVESELU, (Romania) — The United States switched on an $800 million missile shield in Romania on Thursday that it sees as vital to defend itself and Europe from so-called rogue states but the Kremlin says is aimed at blunting its own nuclear arsenal.

To the music of military bands at the remote Deveselu air base, senior US and NATO officials declared operational the ballistic missile defence site, which is capable of shooting down rockets from countries such as Iran that Washington says could one day reach major European cities.

"As long as Iran continues to develop and deploy ballistic missiles, the United States will work with its allies to defend NATO," said US Deputy Defence Secretary Robert Work, standing in front of the shield's massive gray concrete housing that was adorned with a US flag.

Despite Washington's plans to continue to develop the capabilities of its system, Work said the shield would not be used against any future Russian missile threat. "There are no plans at all to do that," he told a news conference. Before the ceremony, Frank Rose, deputy US assistant secretary of state for arms control, warned that Iran's ballistic missiles can hit parts of Europe, including Romania.

When complete, the defensive umbrella will stretch from Greenland to the Azores. On Friday, the United States will break ground on a final site in Poland due to be ready by late 2018, completing the defence line first proposed almost a decade ago.

The full shield also includes ships and radars across Europe. It will be handed over to NATO in July, with command and control run from a US air base in Germany. Russia is incensed at such of show of force by its Cold War rival in formerly communist-ruled eastern Europe. Moscow says the US-led alliance is trying to encircle it close to the strategically important Black Sea, home to a Russian naval fleet and where NATO is also considering increasing patrols. "It is part of the military and political containment of Russia," Andrey Kelin, a senior Russian Foreign Ministry official, said on Thursday, the Interfax news agency reported.

"These decisions by NATO can only exacerbate an already difficult situation," he added, saying the move would hinder efforts to repair ties between Russia and the alliance. Russian President Vladimir Putin's office said Moscow also doubted NATO's stated aim of protecting the alliance against Iranian rockets following the historic nuclear deal with Tehran and world powers last year that Russia helped to negotiate.—*Reuters*

UN rights chief concerned about Austria's tough asylum law

VIENNA — The United Nations' Human Rights chief is concerned about Austria's tough new asylum law, which allows a process under which migrants could be turned away at the border within an hour, he said in an interview published on Thursday.

Austria, a country of 8.5 million, has mostly served as a conduit into Germany for refugees and migrants from the Middle East and Africa but it has also absorbed around 100,000 asylum seekers since last summer.

After initially welcoming refugees, the government capped the number of asylum claims it would accept this year at 37,500 and has made family reunification harder for migrants.

"We are concerned that people could possibly be turned away on a questionable basis," Human Rights High Commissioner Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein was quoted as saying by newspaper *Die Presse* about the law which could be applied as soon as 1 June. Zeid added he was also worried about the law allowing for under-age migrants to be held in detention for up to three days, which he said could represent a breach of children's rights.

"Austria was a leading European country for the defence of human rights globally for a long time. There must be conformity between what you say to other countries and what is applied domestically," he said.

Werner Faymann, who had defended the law against critics, stepped down as Chancellor on Monday after his social-democratic party suffered a humiliating electoral defeat to a far right buoyed by Europe's migration crisis.—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Papua New Guinea releases asylum seekers during day only

SYDNEY — Papua New Guinea has relaxed restrictions on nearly 900 asylum seekers held on behalf of Australia, allowing them to leave the detention centre during the day, a lawyer said on Thursday, but a rights group dismissed the move as "window-dressing".

Papua New Guinea's Supreme Court last month ruled detention of refugees on the country's Manus Island was illegal, forcing the government of the tiny Pacific Island nation to announce it would close the camp. Papua New Guinea has since allowed the 898 men held on Manus to leave the camp during the day, Ben Lomai, a lawyer acting for many of the detainees, told Reuters. They sign up for one of three buses to a nearby town and return to the camp in the evening.—*Reuters*

Ukraine, Russia agree some security measures

BERLIN — Ukraine and Russia agreed on Wednesday to create demilitarised zones and implement other security measures in separatist-held areas of eastern Ukraine, but they remained at odds over how to move towards local elections.

German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier told reporters after talks in Berlin with the foreign ministers of Russia, Ukraine and France that it would be "a big step forward" if the measures were actually implemented and helped strengthen a fragile ceasefire.

Other steps agreed during the three-hour meeting included greater information-sharing and a halt to military exercises along the dividing line between the separatist territories and Ukraine proper that has led to violence in the past, he said.—*Reuters*

Flash floods displace nearly 120,000 in Ethiopia: aid agencies

ADDIS ABABA — Flash floods displaced nearly 120,000 people in Ethiopia last month and a total of almost half a million are expected to be affected this year, government and humanitarian agencies said on Wednesday.

The floods are part of the global El Niño weather phenomenon that had previously caused a severe drought in the Horn of Africa nation following successive failed rains.

The drought has left 10.2 million people in need of food aid and aid agencies say that figure could rise to more than 15 million by August. Ethiopia's total population is 90 million.—*Reuters*

Fifteen rescued after drifting over one month in Pacific

SYDNEY — Fifteen people believed lost at sea in northeast Papua New Guinea have been rescued in the Solomon Islands after drifting for over one month at sea.

Local Papua New Guinean newspaper the *Post Courier* on Thursday reported the group were rescued by Solomon Island authorities earlier this week after suffering engine trouble on their transit between New Ireland province and Lihir Island — approximately 50 kilometres away — in the country's north on 4 April.

Tragically, one of the women has died from dehydration, while two others have been transferred to Honiara General Hospital in the Solomon Islands suffering from serious illness after for one month, six days at sea.—*Xinhua*

Aust'n parents of 3 children lost aboard MH17 welcome new baby

MELBOURNE — A Western Australian couple whose three children perished in the downing of Malaysian Airline flight MH17 have announced the birth of a new baby girl, almost two years on from the tragedy.

On Thursday, Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) released a statement confirming grief-stricken parents Anthony Maslin and Marite Norris had welcomed their fourth child, Violet May Maslin, into the world Wednesday.

The couple's first three children, as well as Norris' father Nick, died when the Boeing 777 airliner, travelling from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur, was shot down while flying over Ukraine on 17 July, 2014.—*Xinhua*

Kenya drawing up timetable to close refugee camp for Somalis

An aerial view shows makeshift shelters at the Dagahaley camp in Dadaab, near the Kenya-Somalia border in Garissa County, Kenya, in 2011. PHOTO: REUTERS

NAIROBI — Kenya is drawing up a timetable to close Dadaab refugee camp that hosts about 350,000 Somalis because of security concerns, the interior minister said on Wednesday, after the United Nations urged the East African nation to reconsider such a move.

Kenya, which has suffered from a spate of attacks claimed by the Islamist Somali group al Shabaab, has set up a taskforce to handle the closure plan, Interior Minister Joseph Nkaissery said.

"They will present the timetable based on all the resources required," the minister told a news conference, adding that state funds had been allocated to proceed with the programme.

"The government has commenced the exercise of closing the complex of Dadaab refugee camp," he said, without specifying what new action had been taken beyond a voluntary repatriation programme already in place.

US Secretary of State John Kerry issued a statement voicing deep concern about the decision and urging Kenya "to maintain its longstanding leadership role in protecting and sheltering victims of violence and trauma ... and not forcibly repatriate refugees."

Kenya's government has long said Dadaab, which lies near the Somali border, has been used by Islamists to launch attacks, such as the Westgate shopping mall assault in Nairobi in 2013.

Hundreds of Kenyans were killed in that attack and other assaults mainly in Nairobi, the northeast and coast.

The Interior Ministry says it hosts 600,000 refugees, many from neighbouring Somalia and South Sudan. Some refugees have lived in Dadaab for decades and some were born there.

Last year, Kenya said it was setting a three-month deadline to close Dadaab, but backtracked on the plan following UN criticism of any forced return. Last week, the Interior Ministry said it would shut Dadaab in the "shortest time possible", prompting the UN refugee agency UNHCR to voice "profound concern" and renew its call for Kenya to reconsider.

The UNHCR, Kenya and Somalia signed a tripartite agreement in 2013 to repatriate Somali refugees voluntarily. As Somalia has slowly started recovering from war and chaos, Dadaab has shrunk from more than half a million people to about 350,000.

The UNHCR said in January it aimed to repatriate a further 50,000 in 2016 but also said this would be a difficult target to achieve given the Somali government is still battling an al Shabaab insurgency and there are few schools or public services.

"There has been a very slow process on the implementation of this agreement," the minister said of the tripartite deal.—*Reuters*

Western Libyan forces prepare attack on Islamic State stronghold

Libyan soldiers stand at a military outpost in Wadi Bey, west of the Islamic State-held city of Sirte, on 23 February, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

MISRATA, (Libya) — Forces in western Libya are preparing to advance on the city of Sirte, seized by Islamic State last year, their spokesman said, pushing ahead with plans for a counter-attack after the Islamists made territorial gains in the last week.

The fighters based in the city of Misrata would like international logistical support to help retake what has become Islamic State's most important base outside Syria and Iraq, but will not wait for it before launching the operation, they said.

"We are ready and we are preparing our security arrangements to attack Sirte," said Brigadier General Mohamed al-Gasri, spokesman for a newly formed military operations room in Misrata.

The operations room was set up by a UN-backed unity government, which arrived in Tripoli at the end of March.

European powers and the United States hope the unity government will be able to unite Libya's rival political groups and armed factions to take on Islamic State, though it is unclear how far its authority extends on the ground.

Misrata's brigades have largely transferred their support to it from a self-declared government formed in Tripoli in 2014.

But the unity government has struggled to win support from another administration based the east and the military forces allied to it. They have also said they would move against Sirte, though past announcements have come to nothing.

Late last month the unity government urged both sides to hold off attacking Sirte before a unified command is created, fearing an uncoordinated offensive could lead to civil war.

"We need logistical support from the international community, and we need weapons and ammunition," Gasri said. "Whether they're going to support us or not, we will be there soon. We will not stand and watch."

Islamic State took advantage of the political turmoil and security vacuum after the uprising that overthrew Muammar Gaddafi five years ago to build a power base in Libya.

The Misrata brigades were present in Sirte as Islamic State began to establish control, but withdrew last summer.

Though it has struggled to win support and hold territory in parts of Libya, Islamic State controls a strip of more than 250 km (155 miles) of Libya's central coastline, from which it has launched attacks to the east, west and south.

Over the last week it has made gains, carrying out suicide attacks in the sparsely populated area between Sirte and Misrata, including at a major checkpoint at Abu Grain.—*Reuters*

Venezuela opposition protests for Maduro recall referendum amid clashes

CARACAS/PUNTO FIJO — Soldiers fired tear gas at stone-throwing protesters on Wednesday as Venezuela's opposition marched to pressure electoral authorities into allowing a recall referendum against unpopular leftist President Nicolas Maduro.

The Democratic Unity coalition has ramped up its push to oust Maduro amid a worsening economic crisis, but says the government-leaning electoral body is intentionally delaying the verification of signatures in favour of the referendum.

Waving flags and blowing whistles, hundreds marched in the capital of Caracas as well as the provinces — where food scarcity and power cuts are worse — but authorities blocked them from reaching election board offices.

Protesters and National Guards squared off on a Caracas highway, where demonstrators chanted "freedom" and waved copies of the constitution.

Some covered their faces and tossed stones.

"They don't let us march. They don't let us eat. They don't let us live peacefully. What else can we do? We have to fight however we can against this tyranny," said Juan, declining to give his surname as he donned a bandana.

At one point, an officer appeared to squirt pepper spray on two-time presidential candidate Henrique Capriles, a video showed. Capriles later tweeted he was fine.

A new election would be held if the opposition succeeds this year in recalling Maduro, whose term ends in 2019.

But if a successful recall referendum is held in 2017, the presidency would fall to the vice president, a post currently held by Socialist Party loyalist Aristobulo Isturiz.

The opposition says Maduro, elected in 2013, is pushing the OPEC country towards economic catastrophe. One recent poll showed almost 70 per cent of Venezuelans want Maduro, 53, gone this year.

"We have to suffer a queue of nine to 10 hours for corn flour, we walk from pharmacy to pharmacy looking for medicine," said Irma Rojas, who was protesting in northwestern Falcon state. "For that and so much more, we want this man out."

In the western opposition hotbed of Tachira, protesters brandished signs reading "we don't want to do die of hunger" while some masked youths blocked streets with trash and prepared Molotov cocktails. The Socialist Party blasts protesters as dangerous coup-plotters and held a separate march on Wednesday. Officials have said a referendum is unlikely this year and have cast doubt over the legitimacy of the signatures. —*Reuters*

Trump draws even with Clinton in national White House poll

WASHINGTON — Republican Donald Trump pulled even with Democratic rival Hillary Clinton in a Reuters/Ipsos opinion poll released on Wednesday, in a dramatic early sign that the 8 November presidential election might be more hotly contested than first thought.

While much can change in the six months until the election, the results of the online survey are a red flag for the Clinton campaign that the billionaire's unorthodox bid for the White House cannot be brushed aside. Trump's numbers surged after he effectively won the Republican nomination last week by knocking out his two remaining rivals, according to the poll. The national survey found 41 per cent of likely voters supporting Clinton and 40 per cent backing Trump, with 19 per cent undecided. The survey of 1,289 people was conducted over five days and has a credibility interval of 3 percentage points.

"Very happy to see these numbers," Trump said in a written comment to Reuters. "Good direction." A spokesman for Clinton's campaign did not respond to requests for comment on the poll.

A Reuters/Ipsos survey conducted in the five days to 4 May had the former secretary of state at 48 per cent and the New York magnate at 35 per cent. Republican strategist Dave Carney said the Reuters/Ipsos poll showed the vulnerability of Clinton, who is still battling US Senator from Vermont Bernie Sanders for the Democratic nomination.

A combination photo shows Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton (L) and Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump (R) in Los Angeles, California on 5 May 2016 and in Eugene, Oregon, US on 6 May 2016 respectively. PHOTO: REUTERS

"She has been in the public eye for decades, served in high office, and now she's in a dead heat with Trump, in a race that everyone thought she would win easily," said Carney, who has been critical of Trump. "Everyone thought it would be a romp."

Trump has his own problems, though. He is struggling to bring some senior Republicans behind his campaign after primary election battles in which his fiery rhetoric rankled party elites.

Several Republican leaders — including House of Representatives Speaker Paul Ryan — are withholding their support.

"After a tough primary, that's going to take some effort," Ryan said about unifying the party. "We are committed to putting that effort in." The former reality TV star will face pressure to tone down his rhetoric and clarify his policy positions when he visits Republican lawmakers, including Ryan, on Thursday.

Former Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney criticised Trump on Wednesday for not releasing his tax returns, saying the only explanation was that the documents contained a "bombshell."

Trump has said that he will make public his tax returns on the completion of an audit.

Clinton and Trump both poll well with voters of their respective parties, but independent voters continue to express uncertainty about who they will support, with 38 per cent in the Reuters/Ipsos poll saying they are unsure or would vote for someone else.

With the party's primary season winding down, the two likely nominees have turned their attention to attacking each other, both on policy and personality. Clinton took aim at Trump's tax reform plan at a rally in New Jersey on Wednesday. With a typical American family earning $54,000 per year, Clinton said, "It would take that family 24 years of work to earn what Donald Trump's tax plan will hand out to people like him in just one year. That is no way to create good job with rising incomes for the vast majority of Americans, is it?"—*Reuters*

Brazil Senate puts Rousseff on trial, ending 13 years of leftist rule

BRASILIA — Brazil's Senate voted on Thursday to put leftist President Dilma Rousseff on trial in a historic decision brought on by a deep recession and a corruption scandal that will now confront her successor, Vice President Michel Temer.

With Rousseff to be suspended during the Senate trial for allegedly breaking budget rules, the centrist Temer will take the helm of a country that again finds itself mired in political and economic volatility after a recent decade of prosperity.

The 55-22 vote ends more than 13 years of rule by the left-wing Workers Party, which rose from Brazil's labour movement and helped pull millions of people out of poverty before seeing many of its leaders tainted by corruption investigations.

Fireworks rang out in cities across Brazil after the vote at the end of a 20-hour session in the Senate. Police had briefly clashed with pro-Rousseff demonstrators in Brasilia on Wednesday, exchanging volleys of tear gas and rocks.

Rousseff, a 68-year-old economist and former Marxist guerrilla who was Brazil's first female president, is unlikely to be acquitted in a trial that could last as long as six months.

A two-thirds majority is needed in the Senate to convict her but the scale of her defeat on Thursday showed that the opposition already has the support it needs.

"Impeachment is a tragedy for the country ... It is a bitter though necessary medicine," opposition Senator Jose Serra, tipped to become foreign minister under Temer, said during the debate. "But having the Rousseff government continue would be a bigger tragedy. Brazil's situation would be unbearable."

The impeachment process began in the lower house of Congress in December. Rousseff has denied any wrongdoing and called her impeachment a "coup".

Temer, a 75-year-old centrist and constitutional scholar who spent decades in Brazil's Congress, now faces the challenge of restoring economic growth and calm at a time when Brazilians, increasingly polarized, are questioning whether their institutions can deliver on his promise of stability. In addition to a towering budget deficit, equal to more than 10 per cent of its annual economic output, Brazil is suffering from rising unemployment, plummeting investment and a projected economic contraction of more than 3 per cent this year.

The voting panel after a session shows the results, in favour of the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff for breaking budget laws in Brasilia, Brazil, on 12 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

"Only major reforms can keep Brazil from moving from crisis to crisis," says Eduardo Giannetti da Fonseca, an economist and author in São Paulo who has written extensively about the country's socioeconomic problems. But those changes, including an overhaul of pension, tax and labour laws and a political reform to streamline fragmented parties in a mercenary Congress, could remain elusive at a time of turmoil. While opposition supporters celebrated in the central Paulista Avenue of Brazil's largest city, Sao Paulo, many Brazilians are concerned that the end of Workers Party rule could bring back bad times for the poor, who have made great strides in the last decade. "Has Dilma made mistakes? Of course. But the Workers Party has done so much for us, for the people," said Benedito Polongo, a 63-year-old janitor outside a shiny Brasilia business centre, who said he had no job or bank account before the party came to power. "I fear that those who come after her will erase all that has been done for the poor." —*Reuters*

Tired of waiting, Greece's migrants turn to business to survive

IDOMENI (Greece) — Within sight of a razor wire fence guarded by Macedonian police, 35-year-old Iraqi migrant Saima Hodep rolls dough with an old steel water pipe outside her tent, in preparation for customers for her unleavened bread.

Saima is one of a small but growing number of migrants eking out a living on the Greek side of the Macedonian border, where about 10,000 people have set up Europe's biggest refugee camp and are showing signs of settling in for the long term.

She sells about 100 pieces of bread a day at the Idomeni camp, which has no running water but at least eight barbers.

"My parents didn't have any choice when we ran out of money a few weeks ago. They had to do something to make money," said Saima's 17-year-old daughter Saven.

The makeshift camp, home mostly to Syrians, Iraqis and Afghans, sprang up four months ago. At the time, huge numbers were making their way to northern Europe in the hope of gaining asylum in countries such as Germany, but border shutdowns in the Balkans stranded thousands in Greece.

They refuse to move, despite being tear-gassed by Macedonian police, and appeals by Greek authorities to move to organised camps deeper inside the country. Today, the Idomeni camp has three improvised mosques, a kindergarten and a school, as well as at least four makers of falafel — the ground spiced chickpea patty of the Middle East — who supplement food provided by non governmental organisations.

Migrants tents are haphazardly placed, jostling for space in the meadow outside Idomeni village. Basic facilities are scarce; there are chemical toilets, but they stink and often overflow.

Yannis Mouzalas, Greece's migration minister, said last week that conditions at the camp were an "affront which should stop". Yet Greece, unlike France which tore down part of an unofficial camp known as "The Jungle" at Calais, goes for the softly-softly approach with the Idomeni migrants. "We will step up the dialogue," Mouzalas told the semi-official Athens News Agency. Raied Anbtauy, a 44-year-old from Aleppo, has been stranded in Idomeni for three months, separated from his family who had already reached Germany. —*Reuters*

Libya's ancient sites not exposed to same risk as in Syria, Iraq

TUNIS — Libya has not faced the same risk to its antiquities as Syria and Iraq, though there is evidence Islamic Sate is involved in the smuggling of antiquities, Libyan and international experts said on Wednesday.

The most famous classical sites have remained largely undamaged, though some illegally excavated artefacts are being smuggled out of the country and Islamist fighters have targeted mosques and Sufi shrines, the experts said on the sidelines of conference on how to protect Libya's cultural heritage.

A view of Leptis Magna, a UNESCO World Heritage site on the Mediterranean coast of North Africa, some 120 km (75 miles) east of Tripoli, in 2011. PHOTO: REUTERS

Libya is rich in ancient sites, including some of North Africa's finest Roman and Greek ruins as well as prehistoric rock art in the desert region of Fezzan. But their preservation has been threatened by the political chaos and security vacuum that followed the toppling of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011.

Islamic State took control of the coastal city of Sirte last year and established a presence in several other parts of the country, leading to fears that it would attack and damage key ancient sites as it has done in Syria and Iraq.

Though Islamic State may still try to attack classical sites as they "search for visibility", a bigger risk is from illegal excavations and looting, and illicit construction by locals, said Stefano De Caro, the director-general of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property.

"The big difference from Syria is that here they are attacking the Islamic heritage sites more than the classical heritage," he said.

Ahmed Abdelkarim, head of Libya's department of antiquities, said extremist violence was the top risk one year ago, but that since Islamic State recently lost ground in and around the eastern cities of Benghazi and Derna, preventing illegal building around ancient sites was now the primary concern.

Looting is also a problem, he said, with international mafia-style groups smuggling artefacts through Libya, and security forces had found antiquities last week in the recaptured house of an Islamic State commander in Benghazi.

"They found prehistoric objects, maybe from Fezzan, and Roman and Byzantine objects. This was a collection from different parts of Libya, for trade."

Authorities had recovered artefacts on two other occasions in Benghazi and Derna, Abdelkarim said. "All these incidents together give us the impression that they are involved in the smuggling of antiquities," he said.

Ramadan Alshebani, a senior official from the department of antiquities in Tripoli, said Roman ruins at Leptis Magna and at Sabratha, where local brigades forced out Islamic State fighters after a US air strike in February, had not been damaged. He said the director of the archaeological site of Medinat Sultan, about 30 km east of Sirte, had told him by telephone about two months ago that it was also intact.

But Alshebani said there was a "major problem" with attacks on mosques and Sufi shrines that the militants consider un-Islamic, with more than 20 such sites attacked in the capital alone.—*Reuters*

Iranian, Indian cities ranked worst for air pollution

NEW DELHI — India is home to four of the five cities in the world with the worst air pollution, the World Health Organisation said on Thursday.

But while WHO experts acknowledge India faces a "huge challenge", many countries are so bad that they have no monitoring system and cannot be included in its ranking.

The dirtiest air was recorded at Zabol in Iran, which suffers from months of dust storms in the summer, and which clocked a so-called PM2.5 measure of 217. The next four were all Indian: Gwalior, Allahabad, Patna and Raipur.

India's capital New Delhi was the survey's ninth worst city, measured by the amount of particulate matter under 2.5 micrograms found in every cubic metre of air, with an annual average PM2.5 measurement of 122. Tiny particulate matter can cause lung cancer, strokes and heart disease over the long term, as well as triggering symptoms such as heart attacks that kill more rapidly. The WHO says more than 7 million premature deaths occur every year due to air pollution, 3 million of them due to outdoor air quality.

New Delhi was ranked worst in 2014 with a PM2.5 reading of 153. It has since tried to tackle its toxic air by limiting the use of private cars on the road for short periods.

A traffic policeman wears a mask to protect himself from dust and air pollution as he stands on a road-divider in New Delhi, India, on 23 December, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

Maria Neira, head of public health, environmental and social determinants of health at the WHO, praised India's government for developing a national plan to deal with the problem when others have been unable to.

"Probably some of the worst cities that are the most polluted ones in the world are not included in our list, just because they are so bad that they do not even have a good system of monitoring of air quality, so it's unfair to compare or give a rank," she said. Common causes of air pollution include too many cars, especially diesel-fueled vehicles, the heating and cooling of big buildings, waste management, agriculture and the use of coal or diesel generators for power.

On average, pollution levels worsened by 8 per cent between 2008 and 2013, although most cities in rich countries improved the state of their air over the same period. The WHO data, a survey of 3,000 urban areas, shows only 2 per cent of cities in poorer countries have air quality that meets WHO standards, while 44 per cent of richer cities do.—*Reuters*

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY HOLIDAY NOTICE

As the wharves, warehouses and Chellan Offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the 21st MAY 2016 (Fullmoon Day of KASON), Loading, Unloading and delivery for Goods will be received on Payment as Holiday Fees.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV E.R. TURKU VOY NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV E.R. TURKU VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 13.5.2016 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 HANJIN SHIPPING LINES
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Actors Johnny Depp and Mia Wasikowska. PHOTO: REUTERS

Depp back as Mad Hatter in 'Alice Through the Looking Glass'

LONDON — Hollywood star Johnny Depp returns as the flamboyant Mad Hatter in "Alice Through the Looking Glass" for more big screen fantasy adventures inspired by the much loved stories by Lewis Carroll.

The movie follows on from the 2010 box office hit "Alice in Wonderland", which starred Depp alongside Australian actress Mia Wasikowska as the titular heroine and Oscar nominee Helena Bonham Carter as the Red Queen.

"It's a lot of fun to revisit the Mad Hatter," Depp told reporters at the movie's London premiere on Tuesday night.

"It was a gas to get back together with the cast of before, and then the addition of Sacha Baron Cohen certainly upped the stakes quite a lot ... It was great because this particular film .... has a bit more of the Hatter — there are a lot more layers of things going on." Cohen, known for his satirical characters Ali G, Kazakh reporter Borat and Austrian fashionista Bruno, joins the cast as new villain, Time, in the sequel, which looks at the Mad Hatter's traumatic childhood.

The plot follows Alice as she rushes to reunite the Mad Hatter and his family while battling Time and the Red Queen.—*Reuters*

Taylor Swift accepts Taylor Swift award at BMI Pop Awards

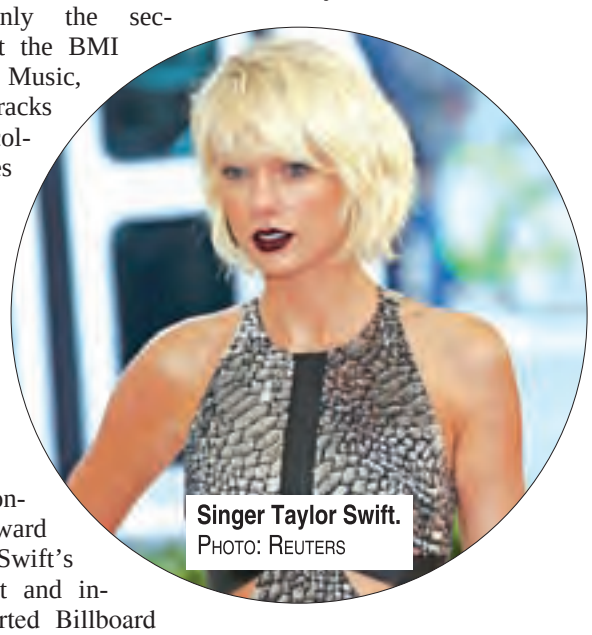
LOS ANGELES — Pop icon Taylor Swift has been presented with the inaugural trophy named after her at the BMI Pop Awards in Los Angeles.

The Taylor Swift Award represents only the second time that the BMI (Broadcast Music, Inc, which tracks airplay and collects royalties for artists) has created an award in a specific artist's name, having done so way back in 1990 for Michael Jackson.

The eponymous award recognises Swift's "artistic talent and influence" reported Billboard magazine.

Accepting the award at the ceremony, the 26-year-old singer said: "If they had chosen someone else to give the Taylor Swift Award to, I'd be kind of bummed about it."

She also said that becoming a globe-conquering star with her fifth album 1989, which made her famous worldwide after a number of nationally successful albums, had not dulled her appetite for creating more music, confessing that she often feels compelled to write songs at any time of day.



Singer Taylor Swift. PHOTO: REUTERS

"My favourite part is when I'm in the middle of a conversation with my friends and my eyes glaze over and I awkwardly run over to a corner," she continued in another speech as she accepted another award — Pop Songwriter of the Year.

"I have to explain to them that I have this issue called: 'I love song-writing so much that it interrupts my daily life'.—*PTI*

Justin Bieber is 'done taking pictures' with fans

LOS ANGELES — Pop star Justin Bieber has decided that he will not take any pictures with fans in future.

In an Instagram post, Bieber, 22, said he feels like a "zoo animal" because of fans constantly seeking photos from him.

"If you happen to see me out somewhere know that I'm not gonna take a picture I'm done taking pictures," he wrote. "It has gotten to the point that people won't even say hi to me or recognise me as a human, I feel like a zoo animal, and I wanna be able to keep my sanity. The singer accepted the fact that "people will be disappointed," but went on to say that he doesn't "owe anybody a picture."

"And people who say 'but I bought ur album' know that you got my album and you got what you paid for AN ALBUM!" he continued. "It doesn't say in fine print whenever you see me you also get a photo."—*PTI*

Jodie Foster mines human impact of financial risk in 'Money Monster'

LOS ANGELES — When Jodie Foster wanted to explore the human relationship with technology and virtual intimacy in her latest directorial effort "Money Monster," she opted to use Wall Street as her setting and raise the dramatic stakes by holding George Clooney hostage.

"I wanted to see how those things affected these two human beings, in this small little room, who are confined with each other," she said.

Sony Pictures' "Money Monster," premiering at the Cannes Film Festival this week and opening in US theaters on Friday, sees Clooney play Lee Gates, a suave, showboating host of a money news TV programme, held hostage live on air.

Gates and his producer Patty (Julia Roberts) are forced by the captor, who lost his life savings investing in stock that Gates had vouched for, to dig deeper into the technical glitch that wiped away millions of dollars of people's savings.

"George's disaffected old school journalist has to learn some new tricks, he has to become more of an activist journalist," Foster said.

The film taps into millennial disillusionment through the captor Kyle (Jack O'Connell), a young man unable to provide for his family, which Foster said "did tap into something, there's a certain rage of a generation of people." "That's the smack in the face, it's almost classist in a way, in that we told (millennials) that you could achieve something and actually you're not going to be able to get a job. That's enraging," she said.

While the film presents an American story, the larger social and financial themes of "Money Monster" will resonate around the world, Foster said.

"Europe is going through massive financial crisis ... so this isn't foreign to them. I feel like this feels pretty international, I don't feel like it's purely an American film," Foster said.

PHOTO: REUTERS

"Money Monster" is the fourth feature film directed by Foster, 53, who started acting as a child and has won two best actress Oscars for 1989's "The Accused" and 1992's "The Silence of the Lambs."

Amid the hot button topic over the lack of gender diversity in Hollywood, Foster said things haven't improved much for female directors over her career, and have been made worse by studios not wanting to take risks in the current economy.

"I don't know why women are seen as a risk, that's really the question," Foster said. "Forty, fifty years I've been working in the film business, why would I be a risk? But it's gender psychology."—*Reuters*

Britons, Mexican first foreigners atop Everest since disasters

KATHMANDU — Two Britons and a Mexican have become the first foreigners to climb Mount Everest from the Nepali side, climbing officials said on Thursday, after disasters in 2014 and 2015 killed dozens and forced mountaineers off the world's tallest peak.

Briton Kenton Cool, 42, and David Liano Gonzalez, 36, of Mexico, reached the 8,850 metre (29,035 feet) summit at 8.24am (0239 GMT), said Ang Tshering Sherpa, chief of the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA). "They reached the top with three Nepali sherpa guides," he told Reuters in Kathmandu after contacting the team on the mountain.

Robert Richard Lucas, a 47-year-old Briton, also climbed with the group, said Ishwari Paudel of the Himalayan Guides hiking group, his local organiser.

"All climbers are on their way down," Paudel said without giving details.

A nine-man sherpa team reached the summit on Wednesday after setting ropes on the final stretch in time for the first clear weather window of this year's campaign to open.

Around 100 climbers are readying to make their final assault in the coming days out of a total of 289 who have received Everest permits.—*Reuters*

Mohinder Singh Gill (R), 79, and his wife Daljinder Kaur, 70, pose for a photo holding their newborn baby boy Arman at their home in Amritsar, Punjab state of India, on 11 May 2016. The aged wife gave birth to her first child last month after two years of in vitro fertilization (IVF) treatment at a fertility clinic in the northern state of Haryana.
PHOTO: XINHUA

Chinese visitors drive boom in New Zealand accommodation sector

WELLINGTON — A rising number of Chinese visitors helped drive a surge in New Zealand's accommodation sector in March, according to figures from the government statistics agency Wednesday.

Guest nights at commercial accommodation in March were up 12.3 per cent year on year, said Statistics New Zealand.

"Guest nights for March were boosted by an early Easter and increased visitor arrivals, and are the highest recorded for any March month," business indicators senior manager Neil Kelly said in a statement.

"Easter this year was in March, whereas last year it was in April. Guest nights have been rising for the last two years."

Domestic guests nights were up 11.5 per cent and international guest nights were up 13.2 per cent.

Figures from Statistics New Zealand last month showed holiday-makers from China helped drive a record number of overseas visitors in March.

Total visitor arrivals reach a new March record of 344,400, up 18 per cent from March last year, with arrivals from China up by 9,600 to 40,400, making it the second largest source country after Australia, from where 133,300 visitors arrived.—*Xinhua*

Rembrandt painting found in New Jersey basement now in museum

NEW YORK — A painting languishing in a New Jersey basement that turned out to be one of Dutch master Rembrandt's earliest works goes on display on Wednesday at the J. Paul Getty Museum in California as a key part of an exhibit on the 17th century artist.

"The Unconscious Patient (An Allegory of the Sense of Smell)" depicts two men wafting a rag under the nose of a third man who is swooning and is dated 1624, the museum said in a press release.

The 8-1/2-by-7-inch (22-by-18-cm) work is among a series of five paintings on the senses that Rembrandt created as a teenager, and will be displayed with two others — hearing and touch — from Wednesday until 28 August, when the exhibit will travel internationally.

The painting's slog from a New Jersey basement to the upper echelons of the art world began in July when adult children cleaning out their family home in Essex County after their parents died contacted John Nye, owner of Nye and Co auction house in Bloomfield, New Jersey.

"The picture was remarkably unremarkable," Nye said, recalling the oil painting was flaking. "It looked like a dark, discolored portrait of three people, one of whom is passed out."

When the painting went up for auction in September, Nye estimated it would fetch up to $800, having spent two weeks on display on the auction house wall and in its online catalog. That is where sharp-eyed art aficionados from three different European countries spotted it, ultimately leading to a Paris art dealer's winning bid of $870,000, or about $1.1 million including the typical added sale premium, Nye said.

"I was stunned," Nye said in a phone interview.

Soon the Paris dealer was in contact with New York financier Thomas Kaplan, who heads the investment firm Electrum Group, and is founder of the Leiden Collection, one of the world's largest private collections of Dutch Golden Age art.

Restoration of the piece confirmed suspicions — it revealed the initials RHF, for Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn fecit.

"Basically, he put his name down and 'fecit' means 'made this,'" said Nye.

Rembrandt's painting of the fourth sense — sight — is in a museum in the Netherlands but the whereabouts of the fifth sense — taste - remains unknown.

"If someone sees an allegorical painting of three fancifully dressed people eating, call me and I'll come check it out," Nye said.—*Reuters*

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(13- 5-2016, Friday)

6:00 pm
- Weather Report
- Music Programme

6:20 pm
- Preparation for Ve Ve Cup Football Matches

6:30 pm
- Pyi Thu Ni Ti

6:40 pm
- Cartoon Programme "Space Chimps" (Part - 3)

7:20 pm
- International Drama Series

8:00 pm
- International Drama Series

9:00 pm
- English Premier League (Review-III)

9:20 pm
- Myanmar Traditional Instruments (MYANMAR DRUM)

10:10 pm
- Myanmar Video

From 13-5-2016 (Friday) 6:00 Pm
To 14-5-2016 (Saturday) 6:00 Pm

mitv Myanmar International

(13-5-2016 07:00am ~ 14-5-2016 7:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	A Glance At A Naga Family Life
07:44	Am	Htan Taw Drums (Part-II) "Dobat"
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	On the River
08:48	Am	Myanmar Traditional Bullock-Cart & Equestrian Racing
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Tigers, Lions and The Guardians
09:36	Am	Natural Mineral Water
09:52	Am	A Nun's Creation in Fruit Carving
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	The Richly Blessed Gem Land
10:53	Am	TECH School

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Thursday 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 My Dream City (Part- 2)
07:44	Pm	Myanmar Traditional Toys
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	An Aficionado of Alluring Antiques

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

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

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

7th Waxing of Kason 1378 ME | Friday, 13 May, 2016

Sunderland joy as Newcastle and Norwich go down

LONDON — Sunderland secured their Premier League survival on Wednesday with a 3-0 victory over Everton that condemned bitter local rivals Newcastle United and Norwich City to relegation and sparked wild scenes of celebration at the Stadium of Light.

It was the fourth season in a row that Sunderland's fans had to endure a gruelling relegation battle before popping the champagne corks, and their victory was a crushing blow for Newcastle and Norwich, whose 4-2 win over Watford on Wednesday proved in vain.

Sunderland's win, which came courtesy of two goals from surprise hero Lamine Kone, moved them up to 38 points with one match remaining, four clear of Norwich and Newcastle.

Sunderland manager Sam Allardyce, a master of steering teams clear of danger, led the Sunderland fans in celebration, pulling off his jacket and flexing his muscles to the crowd after the final whistle.

"There were a long few months winter months," he said. "We became a team that was difficult to beat, who did not like losing and continued the run constantly for the last few months."

Everton's John Stones heads at goal during Barclays Premier League at the Stadium of Light on 11 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Sunderland came into the game knowing victory would secure their survival regardless of other results and they dominated a lacklustre Everton from the start.

They took the lead six minutes before halftime when Patrick van Aanholt's free kick was completely misjudged by Everton keeper Joel Robles before nestling in the net. It was 2-0 three minutes later as Kone lashed home a lofted ball into the box before the Ivorian started the celebrations in earnest 10 minutes after the interval when he converted from a corner which Robles palmed straight to him.

It was a painful end for Norwich, who had lost their previous four league matches without scoring, but found goals easy to come by in a comfortable win over Watford that came too late.

They fell behind to an early strike from Troy Deeney but goals from Nathan Redmond and Dieumerci Mbokani and a Craig Cathcart own goal put them in command.

Odion Ighalo pulled one back for Watford before Mbokani dinked in Norwich's fourth.

The win, however, counted for nothing and left boss Alex Neil cursing an end-of-season collapse that condemned his team to the second tier.

"It is severe disappointment," he said. "In recent matches we have known it was going to be a difficult match. We had it in our hands five matches ago but we came up short.

"The story for us is that as a club, we have dropped short for a variety of reasons. We have made vital errors in games at crucial times and the recruitment has not been as good to strengthen the squad."

In a very different atmosphere to the intensity of the relegation battle, Liverpool's Christian Benteke headed a stoppage-time equaliser in a 1-1 draw against last season's champions Chelsea at Anfield.

Belgian Eden Hazard had earlier lit up a mid-table clash between the division's eighth and ninth-placed sides with a superb individual goal.—*Reuters*

Real Madrid's players celebrate with fans after the game during UEFA Champions League Semi Final Second Leg at Estadio Santiago Bernabeu, Madrid, Spain, on 4 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Real Madrid top Forbes' most valuable teams list

MADRID — Spanish football giants Real Madrid retained top spot on a list of the world's most valuable football teams for a fourth consecutive year, according to a Forbes poll released on Wednesday.

The value of the 10-time European champions rose 12 per cent to $3.6 billion (2.5 billion pounds), making them the world's second most valuable sports team, surpassed only by the National Football League's Dallas Cowboys ($4 billion), Forbes said in a statement.

Barcelona were second on the list with a value of $3.5 billion, also up 12 per cent from last year. Manchester United ($3.3 billion), Bayern Munich ($2.7 billion) and Arsenal ($2 billion) rounded out the top five.

According to Forbes, the 20 most valuable football teams are worth an average of $1.44 billion, a 24 per cent jump from last year that was driven by new lucrative television deals.—*Reuters*

Chelsea's Hazard back to his best: Hiddink

LONDON — Chelsea interim boss Guus Hiddink said Eden Hazard was back to his best after the midfielder scored a stunning goal in the 1-1 draw against Liverpool at Anfield on Wednesday night.

The Belgium international, who was named PFA Player of the Year last season, has struggled for much of the current campaign, scoring his first league goal against Bournemouth last month.

Since that strike, Hazard has racked up four goals in his last four league games, including the sumptuous curler that secured a 2-2 draw with Tottenham Hotspur on 2 May and ensured that Leicester City won their first top-flight title.

"Hazard was terrific and has been growing in fitness for some weeks," Hiddink told British media. "It's good to see. He had to suffer a lot with injuries this year but I'm very happy he's back."—*Reuters*

Contest aims to turn out junior lethwei fighters

THE 13th traditional boxing event will be held in mid-May in Yangon with the aim of turning out talented junior athletes.

The free event will take place on 15 May at the Thein Phyu Boxing Gymnasium in Yangon.

Myanmar Media Group has organised the recurring event since early 2015, aiming to produce talented fighters. Since then, the group has selected at least 10 talented junior boxers from past events.

The event is part of a programme to promote Myanmar's traditional martial arts, said U Wunna, an event organiser. Nearly 15 athletes, including Sithu Aung, Ko Ko Aung, Salai, Aung Myo Thant and Sanda Aung, will participate in the contest.—*Maung Sein Lwin*

Young lethwei fighters try to hurt each other. PHOTO: MAUNG SEIN LWIN

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