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COUNTERING TERRORISM

Myanmar focuses on domestic protection

THE Myanmar Police Force and the United Nation Office on Drugs and Crimes jointly organised a meeting on building the capacity of local organisations to prevent terrorist acts from being carried out in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday, bringing together police officers, officials from related ministries and foreign experts to the meeting.

Police Brig-Gen Myint Htoo, Head of the Department of Transnational organised Crime and UNODC Representative Mr. Thanawan Klumklochit addressed the meeting.

During the meeting the representatives present held discussions on terrorist incidents, the operations of terrorists in the great Asia region and the requirements for information collection, collaboration and cooperation among local organisations concerned in the fight against terrorist organsation.

The meeting was scheduled to last for three days, ending today, covering capacity building programmes to promote Myanmar's cooperation in the fight against terrorism both domestically and internationally.—*MNA*

Policewomen are undergoing further training in mob control at Number 1 Police Training School, Yamethin. PHOTO: MNA

Flood affected people in Rakhine evacuated, provided with aid

THE Laymyo and Kaladan rivers burst their banks after torrential rain in northern Rakhine and Chin States flooding has affected several wards and villages in Kyauktaw, Mrauk-U, Minbya and Kyauktaw townships over 5-6 July.

Floodwaters are receding in some areas in Rakhine State. Authorities are on alert as rain is expected to continue while aid is being delivered to people affected by the floods.

"When heavy rain hits upstream of Laymyo and Kaladan Rivers, people in the low-lying areas move to higher ground. Relief aid including dry rations, drinking water and family kits which have been supplied by the Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Department have been sent to people.

These areas are said to be affected by floods in July every year," said U Tin Maung Swe, Secretary of Rakhine State Government.

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Local people riding in a boat as they cross a flooded field near Htukkanthein Pagoda in MraukU, Rakhine State. PHOTO: ZAR LI

Flood affected people in Rakhine evacuated, provided with aid

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Authorities have already dropped aid to the people in areas that are not easily accessible due to poor infrastructure.

According to local authorities, flooding has affected 6,100 people from 38 villages and three wards in Minbya Township, 2,828 people from 13 villages in Kyauktaw Township, 2,527 from 10 villages in Mrauk U Township. They are all sheltering at monasteries and homes and high places.

Meanwhile, more than 2,900 people in Ann township have been provided with aid and settled in temporary shelters. All schools in Minbya Township remain closed as of 5 July.

"Schools are still submerged underwater. I still can't say for sure yet when they will reopen. It will be only once the waters have receded. The volume of damage caused by the flooding is still unknown," said Shwe Saw Maung, assistant township of education officer for the Minbya Township Office of Education.

Tide levels started to rise on July 4, with increased heavy rain on July 5 pushing rivers to burst, submerging wards and villages in Minbya Township underwater. However, as of 6 June water levels have reportedly begun to recede.

A total of 204 schools, including six high schools and three middles schools, are reportedly submerged in Minbya Township. The current flooding also claimed the Yangon-Sittwe highway causing many traffic delays, while sellers from Minbya and Mrauk-U Townships have been packing up their belongings and relocating to higher ground.

"The water is waist high on the roads within the town. Even if the schools were to open, the water levels pose great danger to children. The rains have also yet to cease. Schools would be hard pushed to reopen right after the waters have subsided. We've given our students lots of homework to revise at home," said Ma Nway Nway, a teacher from a school in Minbya Township.—*GNLM with Myitmakha News Agency*

MFF signs five-year sponsorship deal with MBL

MYANMAR'S Football Federation (MFF) signed a contract with Myanmar Brewery Limited (MBL) on 4 July for a five-year sponsorship deal, it is reported. The contract signing ceremony was held at Yangon's Novotel Hotel on Pyay Road with U Zaw Zaw, chair of the MFF, and representatives from the MBL in attendance.

Myanmar Brewery Limited sponsored the Myanmar National League during its inception in 2008. Now it will begin to sponsor the Myanmar national team.

"Our contract, at the time of signing with Myanmar Brewery, stipulated a detailed agenda about how they would be represented during international competitions," said U Zaw Zaw.

"I'm happy that we're able to provide sponsorship. We've decided to sponsor the Myanmar national team as they're the Myanmar peoples' dream team," said managing director of MBL Takeshi Minakata.

The MFF currently receives financial assistance from FIFA, the world football governing body, but it is reportedly not sufficient to cover expenses with U Zaw Zaw, chair of the federation, having to reportedly subsidize the deficit personally.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Flooding devastates shrimp industry in Rakhine State

Flooding has ruined shrimp ponds in Minbya, Pauktaw and Myebon townships in Rakhine state after flooding started on 4 July. Fences protecting the ponds were destroyed, according to farmers.

Minbya hosts 7,000 acres of shrimp farms and 99 per cent of them have been flooded, according to U Than Kyaw, a Shrimp wholesalesperson.

"People are only now starting to haul in shrimp; the losses are beyond estimation, those who've invested a great deal into the shrimp industry are losing a lot," said U Than Kyaw of Than Shrimp Wholesalers.

"Shrimp farmers had word that their dykes had been breached on 4 July, with most of them being damaged," said U Ani Kyel, chair of the Rakhine State Shrimp Entrepreneurs Association adding that a lot of money has been invested into the industry and that the losses will harm people's livelihoods.

Townships in the south of Rakhine State are currently submerged under 3 - 6 ft of water, it has been reported. Schools have been closed as residents make efforts to relocate to avoid flooding.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Players from MNL sourced for ASEAN University Games

SEVEN young players from teams in the Myanmar National League (MNL) have been selected to play for Myanmar University F.C which will compete at the ASEAN University Games in Singapore.

"We haven't selected players from every club; just young players from the MNL that are attending university. Twenty-two players will travel to Singapore to compete in the tournament," said U Zaw Myint, head coach of Myanmar University F.C., adding that he is personally satisfied with about 80 per cent of the final selections.

Overtures have been made to the Myanmar Football Federation, the governing body of football in Myanmar. Some fixtures of the Myanmar National League will be postponed as they clash with the timetable of the ASEAN University Games.

The 18th ASEAN University Games will take place from 9-19 July, making it the third time Singapore has hosted the competition.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

MEE explains fuel, electricity distribution and safety measures

A representative of Ministry of Electricity and Energy talks to media at the press conference in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

THE Ministry of Electricity and Energy held a press briefing in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday in connection with the topic of fuel distribution and safety measures.

The Myanmar Petroleum Products Enterprise imports aviation fuel in partnership with Singapore-based Puma Energy Group Pte Ltd. After forming a joint venture named the National Energy Puma Aviation Services Co Ltd, the enterprise reached an agreement with the Singapore-based energy company on 15 July this year.

At the press briefing a representative of the ministry explained its plans to construct fuel stations at 11 airports across the country.

The ministry also briefed those present on the distribution of electricity from power stations to consumers in states and divisions through the national grid, progress in the construction of new power plants and the installation of generators and transformers as well as the safety measures called for in undoing and fixing knotted overhead power lines around living quarters. —*Myanmar News Agency*

Road safety body steps up efforts to halve road deaths by 2020

VICE President U Henry Van Thio stressed the need for mass participation in the implementation of road safety schemes, calling for adherence to and knowledge of good driving practices and road safety while addressing the work coordination meeting of the National Road Safety Council (NRSC) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

In his address the Vice-President, who is also the chairman of the Council, said that the NRSC, founded in 2014, has been implementing an action plan for road safety in Myanmar with the aim of halving annual road accident fatalities by 2020.

He pointed out that Myanmar has seen a rise in road fatalities over the previous decade with 4,420 deaths in 2015, up from 1,283 in 2005 as the volume of car traffic has increased considerably.

Road accidents involving motorcycles accounted for 47 per cent of all road casualties last year, added the Vice President, stating that it was because motorcyclists failed to wear helmets and follow safe driving practices.

He also emphasised the importance of wearing seatbelts while driving to reduce road deaths, calling for actions to tackle the issues of drink-driving and the use of mobile phones while driving.

Vice President U Henry Van Thio addresses the work coordination meeting of the National Road Safety Council in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

The Vice President stressed the need for the effective enforcement of seatbelt use, helmet use and banning drink-driving and mobile phone use while driving.

Next, Union Minister Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, vice-chairman of the Council, elaborated on the availability of first aid emergency care for road accidents and road safety enforcement measures including public campaigns and the issuance of driving licenses.

Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung, the other vice-chairman of the Council, reported that the formation of road safety councils at various levels is required in order to achieve the goal of cutting by half the annual number of road deaths by 2020.

Following the reports by officials concerned, the Vice President made concluding remarks calling for the stepping up of efforts to realise the 2014-2020 national road safety plan and for the use of modern technologies to assist in road safety enforcement.

According to available statistics, there are 4.9 million registered motor vehicles in Myanmar. Figures show that there have been 8,591 road accidents during the period from January to June this year — meaning that, on average, 47 cases, 78 injuries and 14 deaths have occurred daily over this period.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Users fined for electricity theft in Mandalay

ILLEGAL electricity users in Mandalay will be fined an amount equal to 12 months of power use calculated on average monthly billing if found guilty of committing power theft, according to an official from Mandalay Electric Corporation.

Inspections have been carried out in Pyigyi Dagun Township, which has seen a huge spike in power over the last two weeks, said General Manager U Soe Lwin, adding that most Mandalay industry is located in the area.

It is reported that ten people who were caught stealing electricity from the grid have been fined the aforementioned 12 month sum. The fine is calculated for a period of one year before the date of conviction.

U Maun Maun Oo, secretary of the industrial zone management committee, confirmed that surprise checks have been conducted on factories in industrial zones.

"Businesspeople are afraid of being electrocuted - it is not easy to commit power theft. It is possible to steal electricity from a municipal electricity point if someone demonstrates how to," said the secretary.—*Aung Thant Khaing*

Village electrification costs recouped in Mandalay

THE Mandalay Electric Corporation has successfully covered the costs of supplying electricity to villages with the use of money collected via the bills of commercial users, according to corporation General Manager U Soe Lwin.

With the rise in the number of rural electrification projects in Mandalay Region, electricity distribution to rural areas has cost the corporation K17 per unit in losses as rural users pay K35 per unit while the standard price of one unit is K52, said the general manager. A unit of electricity for commercial use is K75, he added.

Whatever the losses may be, works to electrify rural regions will continue with the use of funding from the government, said regional Minister for Electricity, Energy and Construction U Zarni Aung.

Embezzlement cases involving rural electrification activities have been reported, added the regional minister.

Statistics show that 3,515 of 4,780 villages in Mandalay Region have been electrified and 1,265 villages remain to be serviced.—*Aung Thant Khaing*

Appointment of Ambassador agreed

THE Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of H.E. Mr. Servio Saul Samudio Bethancourt as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Panama to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Mr. Servio Saul Samudio Bethancourt served at the Foreign Trade of Do Brasil Bank in Panama from 1996 to 1998. From 1999 to 2012, he worked at BellSouth-Movistar. From 2012 to 2014, he became the owner of Panama Mobile and General Manager of distribution channel of Claro Panamá S.A. Since 2014, Mr. Servio S. Samudio has been serving as Ambassador and Consul-General of Panama to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

H.E. Mr. Servio Saul Samudio Bethancourt will serve as concurrently accredited Ambassador of the Republic of Panama to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar with residence in Viet Nam.—*Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

U Hau Do Suan presents credentials to UNSG

U Hau Do Suan, Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the United Nations, New York, presented his Credentials to the Secretary-General of the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon in New York on 5 July 2016.—*Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

No budget to fix tangled power nests in Yangon; official says

FINANCIAL constraint is hampering efforts to replace decades-old service wires and fix tangled cable nests at locations across Yangon, said General Manager U Thant Zin of the Yangon Electricity Supply Corporation at a press conference in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The problem is finding funding to complete the work. If we had public funds to buy the necessary materials, we could provide the manpower and technology to fix the tangled wire nests, said the general manager.

The Ministry of Electricity and Energy said in its press release yesterday that tangled wire nests have been spotted at 379 locations in Yangon and only 40 of them have been fixed so far.

The installation of 150 200KVA transformers in Yangon is slated for completion on Sunday, added the ministry's press release.

Awareness campaigns have been conducted in respective wards and townships, added the general manager, stating that no budget was allocated for the cause.

The general manager appealed to apartment residents to get rid of their wire messes on a self-reliant basis, saying that the corporation is unable to fix it without a budget.

Electrocution deaths have been known to occur in Yangon due to decades-old disorganised wires.—*Thein Ko Lwin*

Tatmadaw flies passengers from Yangon to Coco Island

Passengers boarding a military aircraft. PHOTO: CNC'S OFFICE

FOR the convenience of government servants as well as local staff and families of Tatmadaw-men who are assigned to Coco Island, Myanmar, the Tatmadaw has been arranging for the transport of passengers and goods with the use of military aircraft and sea vessels.

On the morning of Tuesday 5 July, 13 passengers, food stuff and consumer goods were sent from the Headquarters of Mingalardon Air Force Base in Yangon to Coco Island by a Myanmar Air Force aircraft. Later that day 12 passengers were flown from Coco Island to Yangon. They arrived at Yangon at 11:25 A.M, it is learnt—*Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services*

Winrock International will support graft technology to aid avocado cultivation

"WINROCK International, with the assistance of US AID, is conducting a training course on grafting technology with Myanmar farmers to help them grow avocados," participating farmers have reported.

Data collection to categorise avocado growing has already begun in areas of major avocado cultivation like Taunggyi, Heho, Pindaya, Hopong, Nyaung Shwe towns in Shan State.

The farmers are tasked with choosing export quality, pedigree avocados in the growing season for cultivation through the use of the newly learned grafting technique.

Locally, avocados are known as round or sharp and the cultivation is being carried out through traditional methods for the moment. The avocados grown using the new grafting method will be picked next season.

'We are categorising avocado. Currently, they are only being grown using traditional methods.

The avocados which are being grown to export standard by grafting can be picked in one or two years.

There are two types of buyers: those who buy in bulk and those who buy under a retail system.

Although there is demand from abroad, we cannot afford to export because of the under-sized fruits," said a farmer from Heho named U Naung Pant San.—*Zar Zar*

Crime NEWS

Road accident kills one, injures seven

A bicyclist hit by a car died on Tuesday night as the car lost control on Bayintnaung Bridge. The out of control car then crashed into a taxi and bike rider. Then the car overturned and injured seven.

The seven injured in the incident are receiving medical care.

Police are still investigating the case in an effort to arrest the reckless diver who fled on the scene.—*Soe Win*

The car being seen overturned. PHOTO: SOE WIN

Police accelerate crime prevention in Yangon's townships with highest crime rates

YANGON Region Police Force has conducted a pilot project to reduce urban crime in the four townships with highest crime rates in Yangon since June 14, said Acting Police Commander Police Col Win Naing.

Special crime prevention activities has been made in the target areas including South Dagon Township in Yangon East District, Kamayut Township in Yangon West District, Thanlyin Township in Yangon South District and Hlaingthaya Township in Yangon North District.

A project report is planned to release after one month which will cover reviews on public involvement in crime prevention movements, with the police planning to continue this project in the rest areas.

Police see crime rates decrease in the project areas after implementing the rule of law programmes there. During the project, police have arrested unregistered liquor distributers, drug dealers and gamblers.

"Prevention is better than cure," said the acting Police Commander, who plans to submit the proposal about the new project to the regional government in mid-July so as to demand further supports the police need.

He also urged people to actively participate in the new programme that is vital to successfully implement a community-based policing.

U Lwin, one of town's elders from Hlaingthaya, expressed his view that the vast majority of criminal cases that occurred in the township are due to unregistered liquor distributers. According to the official figures released by the Yangon police, five major cases and 84 minor cases were reported between 14 June and 4 July in Hlaingthaya Township while South Dagong saw a major cases plus 24 minor cases, Thanlyin has 28 cases including one major case and police uncovered 23 cases in Kamayut.—*Ko Moe*

Thai national arrested for drug trafficking

A Thai national has been arrested as he was found to be carrying 358 yaba pills in Tachilek township, Shan State. Police have charged the 23-year old with drug trafficking.

Police searched a suspected motorbike being driven by the 23-year-old Thai citizen en route from Whlehlayhtan Village to Tachilek.

The combined anti-drug squad also collected over 300 grams of heroin and stimulant tablets weighting 18.7 grams from other drug dealers in different places within the same day, arresting six people involved in the case.

All drug traffickers have been charged by the police under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, where the people listed in this article are to face between 5-10 years in prison.—*Distrcit IPRD*

Clucking hell: Illegal chicken incinerated in Mandalay

MANDALAY REGION authorities knew something was a foul as they seized Ks3.7m worth of illegally smuggled chicken meat originally from China. The team acted swiftly from a tip-off, police and regional authorities swooped in.

U Aung Win held the illegally sought Chinese chicken between 36 Street and 80th and 81st streets in Maha aung mye Township.

According to the investigators, the confiscated frozen chicken was imported from China through a smuggler named Ma Aye Win who resides in Muse in northern Shan State. She usually sends the goods every five days to Mandalay.

The tasty chicken breasts were roasted at Patheingyi Township.

The Mandalay Region Development Committee is charging Warehouse Manager Zin Maung Maung. As the NLD's '100-day plan' comes to a close they're showing criminals who rules the roost.—*Maung Pyithu Thu*

LOCAL Business

MPA to double fines for delayed container withdrawals

Myanma Port Authority will be fining companies that fail to remove their sea containers from ports on time, starting this month. The US$4 fine will increase to US$16 depending on the cargo. This is an attempt for the ports to be able to move cargo quickly and not backlog, as cargo pile ups in Myanmar ports increase.

The action comes after negotiation between the Myanma Port Authority, Customs Department and Myanmar Container Association.—*200*

A container ship being seen in Yangon River. PHOTO: NYI ZAW MOE

Car imports reach over 600,000 from 2011-2012 FY to May 2016

CAR imports reached over 670,000 from 2011-2012 financial year to May 2016 with a total of 700 container ships with the 2013-2014 FY having the highest import of the cars, according to the statistics from the Myanma Port Authority.

The government granted a permit to import vehicles starting from 2011-2012 fiscal year.

Over 54,000 cars were imported on 52 ships in the first year, with 130,000 cars imported on 148 ships in 2012-2013 FY, over 180,000 on 158 ships in 2013-2014 fiscal year, over 160,000 cars on 150 ships in 2014-2015 and over 110,000 cars on 164 ships in 2015-2016. over 17,000 cars imported on 28 ships as of May in this fiscal year.—*200*

Fish adding ceremony held in Katha

RELEASING of fish into the Ayeyawady River occurred on 6 July at the jetty in front of Shwegugyi Pagoda, Sagaing Region.

U Htay Win, the deputy divisional head of the Sagaing Region, the Amyotha Hluttaw representative, the regional Hluttaw representative, the officials concerned from districts and townships and non-government organizations (NGOs) attended the ceremony at which 300,000 rohus and 100,000 barbus were released into the Ayeyawady River.

980 young fish were released into rivers and creeks while 1650 lakhs of fish were released in 13 dams and embankments, 315 into 630 acres of paddy fields and 217,000 into the lakes in order to enrich the fish resource in Sagaing Region. 9,100 young fish will be added into the rivers, creeks, lakes, dams and acres of paddy fields in Katha district this year.—*Mg Chit Lin*

High quality coffee exports double

THE Myanmar Coffee Association has announced, with glowing pride, that coffee is fetching US$7,000 per tonne, according to the association. 36 tonnes of Myanmar coffee has been exported to the USA.

Myanmar's coffee caught the attention of businessmen from America at the international coffee expo held in Atlanta, Georgia last April. Businesspeople from America plan to import Myanmar coffee.

The quality rating of green coffee seeds from Ywangan reached a score of 83.6 last year that means the coffee beans meet international standards.

Myanmar exported 36 tonnes of coffee to America, 18 tonnes to Switzerland, 8 tonnes to Japan and 10 tonnes to Taipei this year. Previously, the price of cherry-ripe coffee was only Ks300 per viss, rendering growing difficult.

The Myanmar Coffee Association set the price at Ks500 per viss in the 2014-2015 coffee season. The coffee seeds price gradually increased from Ks 850 to 1,000 per viss.—*200*

Green gram export to EU expected to sell 20,000 tonnes

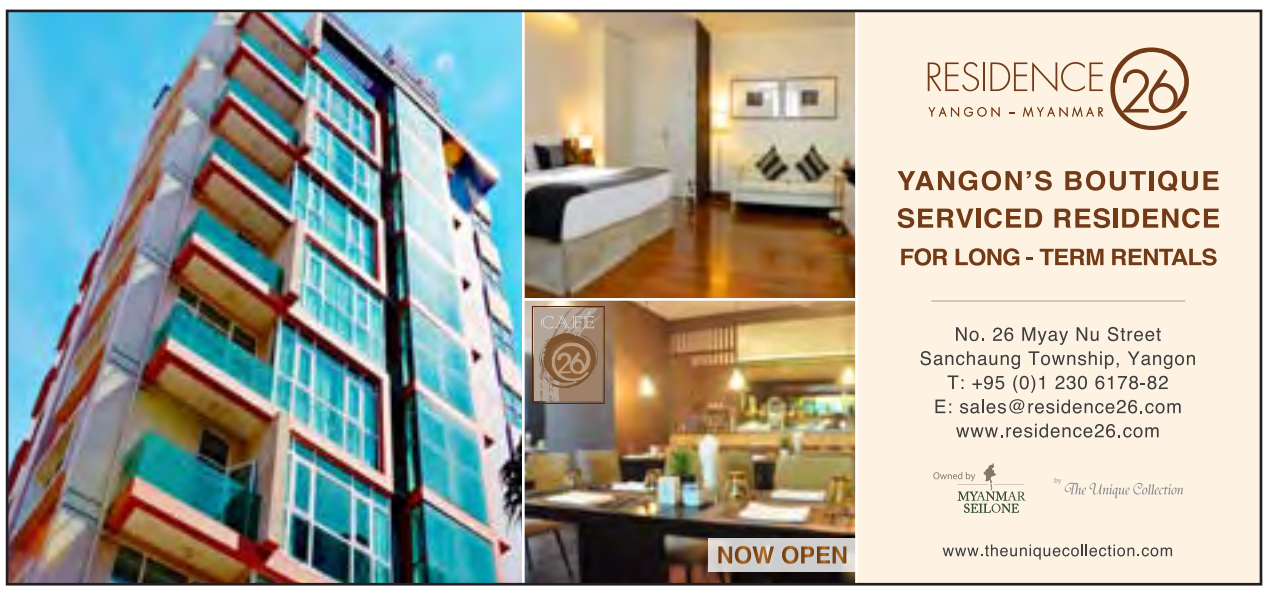
GREEN gram export to the European Union (EU) is expected to sell from 15,000 to 20,000 tonnes in this fiscal year of 2016-2017, according to Myanmar Pulses, Beans & Sesame Seeds Merchants Association.

Green gram is exported mainly to India and China. The green gram market was extended to EU as of 2014; the export volume of green gram to the EU will increase due to their flavour.

EU has offered US$1,600 per tonne of green grams that is about US$200 higher than the price offered by China, India and other countries from ASEAN countries.

"We have expected to export 20,000 tonnes of green grams during this year," said an official from Myanmar Pulses, Beans & Sesame Seeds Merchants Association.

People from EU sprout beans from the quality green gram. Experts from the EU will provide technical assistance to farmers from cultivation to harvest, enabling farmers to export high quality green grams that will meet a standard quality within two years.—*200*



Australian PM wins key support, edges closer to forming government

SYDNEY — Embattled Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull appeared likely to retain power after gaining the support of a key independent on Thursday, although the closeness of the vote signalled more tough political and economic times ahead.

There were signs that the political instability after Saturday's cliffhanger election was beginning to take its toll on the Australian economy, with Standard and Poor's cutting Australia's credit rating outlook to negative from stable, threatening a downgrade of its coveted triple A status.

Turnbull flew to northern Queensland state to win reluctant support from Bob Katter, a maverick former member of the ruling conservative coalition who is now a potential kingmaker if Turnbull is unable to win the 76 lower house seats needed to form government outright.

"Today we are announcing our support ... for a Turnbull government. I do so with no great enthusiasm," Katter told reporters. "I will maintain my right to change at any point of time in the future."

Katter's support gives Turnbull's coalition a total of 74 seats, according to the latest Australian Broadcasting Corp. projections, as vote counting continues.

Labour is projected to win 66 seats, meaning they would need to win the six seats still being counted and do deals with all the four remaining independents to form government — a scenario considered extremely unlikely by pollsters.

"I remain confident that we will form a government, and we will unite the parliament as far as we are able to," Turnbull told reporters after meeting Katter.

"We will unite the nation in a common purpose to continue to ensure that we have strong economic growth," he said.

Turnbull, however, will realistically only scrape through with the slimmest of margins and faces an even more hostile upper house Senate, making it difficult for him to pass planned economic reforms.

A security official assists Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull get into a car outside his home in Sydney, Australia, on 6 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

That point was rammed home by Labour leader Bill Shorten, who acknowledged the coalition would most likely win, but "with a diminished authority, diminished mandate and a very divided political party".

"If Mr Turnbull is dragged across the line narrowly his problems and Australia's are only just beginning," Shorten told reporters in the western city of Perth.

The Australia dollar AUD=D4 fell half a US cent after S&P's announcement, which cited concerns the coalition government would be hampered in its plans to return to budget surplus as it struggles to form a majority government. "I think what the Australian people want to be assured of today is that there is a clear plan, should we be able to form government, to maintain the fiscal health of this country and that is what the agencies are saying is necessary," Treasurer Scott Morrison told reporters soon after the S&P announcement.

Turnbull's gamble in calling an election, ostensibly to clear the upper house Senate of what he saw as obstructive minor parties, backfired badly with a much bigger swing to the centre-left Labour opposition than expected.

It also saw minor parties and independents become even more powerful, making it less likely Turnbull will be able to push his reformist economic agenda, which includes a A$50 billion ($37.6 billion) corporate tax break over 10 years, through an intransigent upper house.

That places Katter and centrist Nick Xenaphon as potential kingmakers with team members in both houses. Two other lower house independents, Andrew Wilkie and Cathy McGowan, have ruled out any deals with the government.—*Reuters*

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China, asked about new North Korea sanctions, says opposes pressure

BEIJING — China's foreign ministry said on Thursday that it opposed the use of unilateral sanctions after the United States announced sanctions on North Korean leader Kim Jong Un for the first time, citing human rights abuses.

Ministry spokesman Hong Lei made the comments at a daily news briefing.

China has signed up for tough United Nations sanctions against nuclear-armed North Korea, but has opposed past unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States. —*Reuters*

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un guides the multiple-rocket launching drill of women's sub-units under KPA Unit 851, in this undated photo released by North Korea's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) in 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

Viet Nam to commemorate 55 years of Agent Orange disaster

HANOI — Viet Nam will hold a series of events to commemorate 55 years of Agent Orange (AO)/Dioxin disaster across the country during July and August.

An international seminar on assessment of consequences of AO/Dioxin in Viet Nam will be held in August, said Viet Nam association of victims of AO/Dioxin at a press conference on Thursday in Viet Nam's capital Hanoi.

Another gathering with the participation of some 1,000 representatives is scheduled to be held on 10 August.

These activities aim at increasing public awareness on danger and long-term consequences of AO/Dioxin on environment and human beings, said the association.

Since 10 August, 1961 during Viet Nam war, the US forces sprayed over 80 million liters of herbicides in Viet Nam. Some 61 per cent of which was Agent Orange, containing about 366 kg of dioxin, the most potent toxin ever known to human beings, according to earlier statistics by the association.

Three million hectares of forests in Viet Nam were devastated. Several species of plants were annihilated and many kinds of animals were extinct and most of water sources were contaminated.

More than 4.8 million people in Viet Nam have been exposed to toxic chemicals. Over 3 million of them have been suffering from deadly diseases, including hundreds of thousands of people have been killed by them, according to statistics by the association.

The war has ended for decades, but many areas in Viet Nam are still contaminated with residues of toxic chemicals. Generations of children have been exposed directly to the toxic.—*Xinhua*

Beijing warns US on sovereignty ahead of South China Sea ruling

A machine gun is mounted on US Destroyer USS Momsen (DDG92) as it docks in the Indian Ocean in Mombasa, in 2008. PHOTO: REUTERS

WASHINGTON/BEIJING — The United States should do nothing to harm China's sovereignty and security in the South China Sea, China's foreign minister told US Secretary of State John Kerry, ahead of a key court ruling on China's claims in the disputed waterway.

Speaking by telephone on Wednesday, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told Kerry the United States should stick to its promises not to take sides in the dispute, China's foreign ministry said.

China hopes the United States "speaks and acts cautiously, and take no actions that harm China's sovereignty and security interests", the statement paraphrased Wang as saying.

Tensions and rhetoric have been rising ahead of a 12 July ruling by an arbitration court hearing the dispute between China and the Philippines over the South China Sea in the Dutch city of The Hague.

China is conducting military exercises around the Paracel Islands in the north of the region this week, while US Navy officials said on Thursday that US destroyers had been patrolling around Chinese-held reefs and islands in the contested Spratly Islands to the south.

While not close enough to be within 12 nautical miles — a so-called freedom of navigation operation that would require high level approval — the destroyers operated within 14 to 20 nautical miles of the Chinese-occupied features, the *Navy Times* reported.

The USS Ronald Reagan and its escort ships have also been patrolling the South China Sea since last week.

"All of these patrols are conducted in accordance with international law and all are consistent with routine Pacific Fleet presence throughout the Western Pacific," Pacific Fleet spokesman Lieutenant Clint Ramsden told Reuters.

China frequently blames the United States for stirring up trouble in the South China Sea, where its territorial claims overlap in parts with Viet Nam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan. Speaking in Beijing following a meeting with Wang on Thursday, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that while he could not comment on the Philippines legal case, he called for a peaceful resolution of differences.

"I did stress to minister Wang, as I have with all other countries involved, the need to resolve their differences in a peaceful manner and to avoid any escalation or misunderstandings that could put security and development in the region at risk."

Wang repeated China's position that it also wanted a peaceful resolution, but that it would not accept forced arbitration.

"This approach will not help bring about a peaceful resolution of disputes. On the contrary, it would only escalate the disputes and tension and should be resisted by all countries and people who uphold justice."

China has accused the United States of militarising the waterway with freedom of navigation patrols, while Washington has expressed concern about China's building of military facilities on islands it controls in the South China Sea.

US officials say the US response should China stick to its vow to ignore the ruling could include stepped up freedom-of-navigation patrols close to Chinese claimed islands in what is one of the world's business trade routes.

In the call initiated by Kerry, Wang also said relations between China and the United States were generally on a sound track and that the two sides should further focus on cooperation while managing their differences.

The US State Department confirmed that Kerry had spoken to Wang, without providing details.

US officials say they fear China may respond to the ruling by declaring an air defence identification zone in the South China Sea, as it did in the East China Sea in 2013, or by stepping up its building and fortification of artificial islands.—*Reuters*

Blast in Bangladesh kills two, wounds nine — officials

DHAKA — Two Bangladeshi policemen were killed and nine other officers were wounded on Thursday in a grenade attack on a security checkpoint in a town hosting Bangladesh's biggest celebrations for the end of the Ramadan fasting month, officials said.

The attack on the police position was close to an area where some 200,000 people had gathered for a prayer service in Kishoreganj town, about 140 km (90 miles) northeast of the capital, Dhaka, said district administrator Zillur Rahman.

Two of the attackers were killed, Rahman said.

The militants attacked police with "sharp weapons" after the grenades exploded, said Mohammad Azimuddin Sheikh, another senior district official.

Rahman said the attack had been brought under control.

"We are still checking for other miscreants but after this incident prayers were held peacefully and we have asked everyone to go home," Rahman said.

The violence rattled nerves less than a week after militants killed 20 people, mostly foreigners, in an attack on a cafe in the capital claimed by the Islamic State militant group.

It was one of the deadliest attacks ever in Bangladesh, where al Qaeda and Islamic State have made competing claims for a series of killings of liberals and members of religious minorities in the past year.

The government has dismissed those announcements and insists that the violence is homegrown. After last week's attack, Islamic State warned that the violence would continue until Islamic law was established worldwide, saying in a video that the Dhaka assault was just a hint of what was to come.

Ramadan ended this week with the Eid al-Fitr festival across the Muslim world.—*Reuters*

Sri Lanka, India agree to increase trade, investment

COLOMBO — Sri Lanka and India have held discussions to increase trade between the two countries, including through bilateral arrangements for trade, investment, technology and training, a Foreign Ministry statement said here on Thursday.

During discussions held between Sri Lanka's International Trade Minister, Malik Samarawickrema and Indian Minister of Commerce and Industry Nirmala Sitharaman, both parties also requested the respective officials of the two countries to continue negotiations on a proposed Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement (ETCA) expeditiously, for which purpose a delegation from India will be visiting Sri Lanka towards the end of July.

The statement said that as a means of promoting trade and investment in Sri Lanka, the two ministers agreed to negotiate early harvest measures to coincide with the signing of the ETCA.

They also agreed to convene the reconstituted Sri Lanka-India CEOs forum at an early date. —*Xinhua*

Hun Sen's eldest daughter counters report on Hun family

PHNOM PENH — Minister Hun Sen reacted strongly on Thursday to an international nongovernmental organisation's new report that exposes the Hun family's alleged vast business holdings in the country.

Hun Mana, 35, posted comments on her Facebook page, asserting that Global Witness manages to "come out with something to try to tarnish (Hun Sen's) reputation" whenever election time comes around in Cambodia.

"We thank you for your destructive efforts, which as a consequence will help my father in the coming election as they are all lies and deceitful (and designed) to confuse the public about what my father has accomplished," she wrote.

Cambodia's communal elections are scheduled in 2017 and a general election is set to be held in 2018.

It is the first time in about a decade that Hun Mana has openly reacted to reports that are critical of her family.

She also noted that *The Phnom Penh Post* and *The Cambodia Daily* — two foreign-owned media organisations — colluded with Global Witness and published news articles on the report on Thursday in an "attempt to attack my family."

Hun Mana, who owns media conglomerate Bayon Television, BTV, ETV and Bayon Radio, is described in the Global Witness report as "the most prominent business tycoon in the family."

The document, titled "Hostile Takeover," details the alleged business empire of Hun Sen's family.

"Our new expose, Hostile Takeover, reveals the economic dimensions of this regime, shedding light on a huge network of secret deal-making and nepotism that emanates from the Hun family and underpins the Cambodian economy," Global Witness said.

"We show how Hun family members are amassing vast personal fortunes in Cambodia's private sector and wield significant control across most of its lucrative industries, with links to major international brands," it added.

The group also recalled how Hun Sen, when publicly declaring his assets in 2011, claimed that the annual salary of $13,800 as prime minister was his only source of income.—*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.

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The opportunity of a lifetime

Kyaw Thura

IT took more than a century for us to pride ourselves in the possession of a democratic icon in the political arena of our country. As a nascent democracy, our country has a lot to do in its pursuit of national prosperity. In doing so, compromise and negotiation are undisputed elements of a healthy democracy with a sustainable and vibrant economy.

At this crucial juncture, there must be strong public support for the government's priority to the realisation of political and economic stability, without which the protection of national interest will be a merely unrealistic goal.

When it comes to safeguarding the country and religion, everyone is nationalistic to a fault. The world is full of stories of how aggressive nationalism ends up. The plight of the people in the Middle East is a telling example of why political and economic stability is of the essence in safeguarding national interest.

Despite other disagreements, all stakeholders engaged in nation building need to find some common ground on the question of national development. In this respect, they need to demonstrate their love for the country with boundless enthusiasm. A real national hero will make more sacrifices in the end.

Now that the 21st Century Panglong Peace Conference will be held under the leadership of State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who has won strong support from the people and the ethnic organisations, this peace initiative is hailed as a huge step to end more than six decades of internal armed conflict. This occasion is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity given the right leader and the right time.

The Sasana Flag

(The sacred flag of Buddhists)

Ba Sein
(Religious Affairs)

HOISTING of the Sasana Flag is considered to be an auspicious sacred rite by Myanmar Buddhists. But, it is often found that the Sasana Flag is incorrectly hoisted at wrong place due to the ignorance of some people. Buddhists are ready to obey the rules and regulations of hoisting the Sasana Flag if they are properly instructed. Therefore, some important points and rules of the Sasana Flag are stated and presented here.

In Myanmar, the term, ''Buddha Sasana'' is more usual than the term ''Buddhist''. Consequently, the Buddha Sasana Council was organized and founded in order to hold the Sixth Buddhist Council in Yangon. The six-coloured Flag was used as an official Sasana Flag for the first time in Myanmar.

The First Congregation of the Sangha of All Orders, which was successfully held at the Maha Pasana Cave (Great Cave) on KabaAye Hillock, Yangon in 1980, passed and adopted the Fundamental Rules of the Sangha Organization of the Union of Myanmar, the Sasana Flag, which consists of the six illuminations of Divine Effulgence, is prescribed in detail in the chapter 10 of the Fundamental Rules of the Sangha Organization.

Instructions and directives are mentioned in the Procedures of the Fundamental Rules of the Sangha Organizations and the Manuals of the Sangha Nayaka Course.

The size of the Sasana Flag

Four sizes of the Sasana Flag are prescribed:-

(a) The first size of the flag is 9 feet in length and 5 feet in width.
(b) The second size is 4 feet, 6 inches in length and 2 feet 6 inches in width.
(c) The third size is 2 feet 3 inches in length and 1 foot 3 inches in width.
(d) The fourth size is 9 inches in length and 5 inches in width.

Arrangement of colour

The Flag has to be depicted in accordance with an specific range of colours:-

Diagram of Flag

Left side	Deep Blue	Deep Yellow	Deep Red	White	Light Pink	Right side
						D.B.
						D.Y
						D.I
						W
						L.P

The Flag can be used on the following Auspicious Days.

They are:-

(a) The Fullmoon of Kason.
(b) The Fullmoon of Nayon (Mahasamaya Day).
(c) The Fullmoon of Waso (Dhammacakka Day).
(d) The Fullmoon of Thidingyut (Abhidhamma Day and Maha Pavarana Day).
(e) The Fullmoon of Tazaungmon (Samannaphala Day).

The Flag can also be used at the following religious ceremonies. The are:-

(a) the ceremony of waso festival,
(b) the Kathina (robes offering) ceremony,
(c) the ceremony of the Abhidhamma Day,
(d) the Shinpyu (Initiation) ceremony,
(e) the ordination ceremony of bhikkhus,
(f) the grand ceremony of offering to the bhikkhus,
(g) the ceremony of maha (State) convocation,
(h) the ceremony of Cula (regional) convocation,
(i) Religious Titles Presentation Ceremony of the State
(j) the ceremony of Tipitakadhara Tipitakabovida convocation
(k) the Religious Examination centres
(l) the ceremonies of Religious seminars, conferences and meetings
(m) the ceremony of reciting scriptures,
(n) the ceremony of hoisting the sacred umbrella,
(o) the ceremony of the Sangha Pujaniya veneration,
(p) the meetings of the Sangha (bhikkhus),
(q) the court of the Sangha Vinicchaya
(r) the training centres concerning Religious Affairs,
(s) the ceremony of recitation of Patthana texts, and
(t) the ceremony of recitation of Nikaya Scriptures.

Means of hoisting and using the Flag

The Sasana Flag has to be hoisted according to the following procedures:-

1. When hoisting the Sasana Flag, the deep blue part of the flag must be at the flag side of the hoister.
2. The deep blue strip of the Flag must be permanently at the very top of the five-mixed coloured portion of the flag (see the diagram).
3. In hoisting the falg, it must be elevated quicky to the top of the mast, and should be lowered slowly.
4. The Flag must be hoisted from dawn to sunset. But, the Flag can be hoisted the whole night at special important and grand occasions.
5. When hoisting the Sasana flag on th stage, it must be put in horizontal position on an elevated part of the background of the stage. And, the falg must be in the flag position.
6. When hoisting the Sasana flag together with other flags, it must be at the centre and in a higher position.
7. When hoisting the Sasana flag at the auditorium, it must be on the right side and in front of the preacher.
8. When hoisting the Sasana flag together with other flags at the auditorium, the Sasana flag must be placed at the left side of the preacher.
9. When hoisting the Sasana flag on big vehicles, the flag must be firmly hoisted on the front part of the roof and if the vehicle is a small one, the flag must be hoisted at the front right of the vehicle.
10. The Sasana Flag must be hoisted on the vehicles only when in procession carrying the Bodhi tree, the sacred umbrellas of the Pagoda, the Venerable Sayadaws, the

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Ancient timber of U Bein Bridge kept in Bagaya monastery

U Bein Bridge. PHOTO: NYI ZAW MOE

"ANCIENT piles and floors of the U Bein Bridge are kept in the Bagaya monastery after the replacing of the piles and floors with new ones as part of the renovation of TaungThaman Inn – U Bein Bridge," said U Nyo Myint Tun, director of the Ministry of Culture's Department of Archaeology and National Museum Mandalay branch.

"The final repair budget will not be known until the work has been completed. The pillars and flooring are being replaced with new teak. Some of the old pillars have decayed too much and can no longer bear heavy loads," he added.

The director called for action to be taken against bridge users guilty of "ill-discipline". Cycling, smoking, littering and food sales are banned on the bridge. However, people are violating these rules and so put the bridge at risk, he said. Archaeology department officials have complained that too many people are misusing the bridge by cycling across it, dropping cigarette butts and littering up the place with betel quid wrappings.

The works on the bridge, carried out by the Myanmar Teak Wood company, which is paying for the renovation and providing the teak, will be followed by the construction of a temporary access bridge. According to Myanmar Teak Wood, it has been constructing the bridge with the assistance of skilled carpenters from Inlay and in consultation with engineers and historical experts.

"During Thingyan, fires broke out twice because of discarded cigarettes. The hollow pillars should be sealed. People also buy betel and cigarettes from vendors on the bridge and then throw away the wrappings, or drop rubbish into the pillars." said U Soe Win, chair of the Taungthaman Lake boating association.

Millions have been spent on the maintenance of the bridge since the 1940s with more than K22 million spent since just 2005. Many of the original teak pillars have been replaced with concrete and steel.

The renovation requires the substitution of about 100 decayed pillars, out of a total of 1086 pillars. *—Aung Thant Khaing with Myanamr Teak Wood*

Management of Mount Popa, Chat Thin and Shwe Settaw Sanctuaries to be aided by Norway

THE Environmental Agency of Norway and the Ministry of Resources and Environmental Conservation will collaborate to aid Mount Popa, Chat Thin and Shwe Settaw, Sanctuaries, it has been learned.

"Arrangements are being made to hold a meeting as an initial step in the last week of August in Yangon," said acting director-general U Hla Maung Thein of the Environmental Conservation Department.

"We will make policy changes to suit climate change, that is the main issue, and the people in our country too are suffering from the effects of climate change. Myanmar is on the list of the countries which will be worst hit in the near future. We are vulnerable. National development shall be carried out in such a way as to sustain the environment as best we can", said U Hla Maung Thein, acting director-general of the Department of Environmental Conservation. *—Zar Zar*

Timber extraction suspended nationally for remainder of year

THE Myanmar Timber Enterprise has suspended timber extraction for the remainder of this financial year throughout the country, it has been learned.

As for Bago Yoma, timber extraction will be suspended over a 10-year period due to the fact that Bago Yoma has experienced the worst rates of deforestation in Myanmar.

In order for the Myanma Timber Enterprise to be able to suspend timber extraction, a proposal has already been submitted to parliament. Currently, Bago Yoma has already suspended timber extraction, said an official from Ministry of Resources and Environmental Conservation.

Bago Yoma is known to be rich in teak trees. Previously, 12 trees out of 100 were teak. However, now only around 8 teak trees grow per 100 due to illegal timber production over recent decades. *–200*

An elephant being made reading to pull the logs. PHOTO: 200

The Sasana Flag

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successful candidates of Sangha and the Dhamma preachers. But, the Sasana flag must be respectfully folded on the vehicles when the procession of the above presonages and sacred things concludes (is over).

11. When hanging the Sasana Flag, it must be in horizontal position. It must never be in an upside down position. When hanging small pieces of Sasana paper-flags, they must always be in vertical position.
12. The Sasana Organizations and other Buddhist religious associations must obey the above instructions concerning the Sasana flag and use it systematically at the Religious meetings and ceremonies.
13. The different levels of the Sangha Organizations of the Union of Myanmar are compulsorily instructed to hoist or hang or stick the Sasana flag during official meetings.

Points to note

It is necessary to take note of the following points concerning the Sasana flag to ensure due respect to the dignity of the flag. Points to note are as follows:-

(a) The Sasana flag is not allowed to be hoisted on the pilgrimage vehicle even if there are monks in it.
(b) Without sound religious reason, the Sasana flag cannot be hoisted at the road sides, junctions, vehicle gates, airports, jetties, markets, stations and other places.
(c) No one must show disrespect to the Sasana flag. No improper behaviour must be tolerated regarding the flag. The flag must not be inclined towards persons or things.
(d) The Sasana flag is not allowed to be torn, stained or destroyed in any way.
(e) No department is allowed to use the Sasana flag as the over-hanging covering of a pavillion.
(f) The Sasana flag is not allowed to be used as wrapper, trademarks, advertisements or designs on billboards.
(g) Wallposters and pamphlets are not allowed to be struck or hung on the post on which the Sasana flag is being hoisted.
(h) When handling the Sasana flag, it is not allowed to be wrapped or fastened.
(i) When using the Sasana flag, it must not touch the ground, the surface of water, the floor of things which are under the flag.
(j) At all times, the Sasana flag must never be used as ground-covers, mats or carpets.
(k) Above the Sasana flag, no other flags must be hoisted.
(l) The Sasana flag, can be hoisted at the conscecration ceremonies of images, holy monuments and statues as a sacred symbol. But the images, the monuments and the statues must not be covered with the flag.
(m) The Sasana flag must never be thrown away for whatever reason. If the flag becomes torn, soiled and useless, it must be burned respectfully.

All Buddhists will have to be aware of sailent points in using the Sasana flag to honour the dignity of the emblem. We wish to express our desire to maintain the dignity and sacredness of the Sasana flag by urging all Buddhists to follow the correct procedures and to avoid even the slightest unseemly manner and behaviour towards the sacred emblem.

US attorney general closes Clinton email case, says no charges

WASHINGTON — The investigation into Hillary Clinton's use of private email while secretary of state is over, US Attorney General Loretta Lynch said on Wednesday, removing a legal cloud that threatened the presumptive Democratic nominee's presidential bid.

Lynch said she accepted the Federal Bureau of Investigation's recommendations that no charges be brought in the probe, as Republicans made clear they would not let Clinton's email headaches fade away easily.

"I received and accepted their unanimous recommendation that the thorough, yearlong investigation be closed and that no charges be brought against any individuals within the scope of the investigation," Lynch said in a statement.

With the 8 November US presidential and congressional elections beginning to heat up, Republicans called on the administration to make public key documents in the Clinton email case.

Donald Trump, the presumptive Republican nominee for president, speaking at a campaign rally in Cincinnati, Ohio, accused Clinton, his likely Democratic opponent, of bribing Lynch to decide not to press charges.

He was referring to reports, including in the *New York Times* this week, that Clinton, if elected president, might ask Lynch to stay on as attorney general.

"She said she's going to reappoint the attorney general and the attorney general is waiting to make a determination as to whether or not she's guilty.

And boy was that a fast determination, wow," Trump said, adding, "That's bribery folks."

On Capitol Hill, Representative Steve Scalise, the No.3 House of Representatives Republican, reacted to Lynch's announcement by proclaiming: "Secretary Clinton broke the law and lied about it."

Senior Senate Republicans insisted that the FBI's investigation be made available to the public, including a transcript of the more than three hours Clinton spent last Saturday in an interview conducted by the agency.

Shortly before Lynch's announcement, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell told reporters, "I think the next step... is to compare what Hillary Clinton said to the FBI with what Hillary Clinton's been saying to all of us over the last couple of years during this controversy." —*Reuters*

In shadow of Brexit, NATO considers Russian deterrence

Paratroopers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade of the US Army in Europe take part in military exercise 'Black Arrow' in Rukla on 14 May, 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

BRUSSELS — NATO leaders meet in Warsaw on Friday to cement a new deterrent against what they see as an emboldened Russia, returning to Cold War-style defence with Washington again taking the part of Europe's protector.

Britain's decision to quit the European Union, along with a migration crisis and Islamic militancy, leaves US President Barack Obama seeking a show of unity at his last alliance summit to fend off accusations that NATO is obsolete and to dampen any Russian perceptions of weakness in the Western camp.

"The NATO summit was not supposed to be about Britain," said Ian Bond at the Centre of European Reform think-tank in London. "But NATO leaders will not be able to ignore the security implications of Britain's vote to leave the EU," he said.

Even with such a proliferation of issues, including a resurgent Taliban in Afghanistan and Iran's ballistic missile arsenal, the two-day summit will be dominated by NATO's response to Russia and a conflict in Ukraine that the West accuses Moscow of fomenting at a cost of more than 9,000 lives.

Russia says it is the alliance, not Moscow, that is increasing the risks of a broader conflict in Europe, citing NATO's biggest modernization since the Cold War and a US missile defence shield as reasons to be worried.

NATO's modernisation is crystallizing around a new force in the Baltics and Poland of up to 4,000 troops to serve as a constant reminder to Moscow that the alliance is back to its founding mandate of defending its territory, after years of missions beyond its borders. "We're in a new relationship with a newly aggressive, newly assertive Russia," said Douglas Lute, Washington's envoy to NATO. "It's brought us back to the primacy of our initial core task: collective defense, our immediate neighbourhood."—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Italian victims tortured in Bangladesh attack, autopsies show

ROME — Islamist militants tortured a group of Italians before killing them during an attack on a restaurant in the Bangladeshi capital of Dhaka last week, a legal source said on Wednesday.

The bodies of the nine Italians, most of whom worked in the clothing industry, were flown back to Rome on Tuesday. Autopsies showed that many of them had been slashed with knives and had suffered slow deaths. Some had been mutilated, the source said.

In all, 20 people died in the Dhaka assault, which started late on Friday night. The victims, mostly foreigners, included Japanese, Indians and Americans as well as the Italians.

Islamic State said it was responsible for one of the most brazen attacks in Bangladesh's history, posting pictures of the five men they said took part in the onslaught.

Officials said most of the militants had attended prestigious schools or universities in Dhaka and Malaysia. One was the son of a politician. The Holey Artisan restaurant in Dhaka where the attack took place is popular with foreigners, and investigators in Rome are looking into whether Italians were specifically targeted, a judicial source said.—*Reuters*

Thai, Lao PMs sign papers to promote skills development

BANGKOK — Visiting Lao Premier Thongloun Sisoulith on Wednesday met with Thai Prime Minister Gen Prayuth Chan-Ocha to discuss ways to promote skills development, employment and protection of Laotian workers residing in Thailand.

The two neighbouring leaders of Thailand and Laos discussed issues including regional connectivity and infrastructure, trade and investment, cross-border tourism, development and labour management. The two premiers also witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Labour Cooperation with the aim to promote skills development, employment and protection of workers.—*Xinhua*

France puts two Paris attack suspects under formal investigation

PARIS — French magistrates on Wednesday put under formal investigation two men suspected of helping the main surviving suspect of the attacks that killed 130 people in Paris last November, a judicial source said.

Mohamed Amri and Ali Oulkadi were extradited earlier in the day from Belgium. Investigators say Amri drove to Paris shortly after the attacks to bring key suspect Salah Abdeslam back to Belgium. Oulkadi, a Frenchman who lived in Brussels, is accused of driving Abdeslam on 14 November.

Abdeslam, a French citizen who was born and raised in Belgium, was captured in Brussels after a four-month manhunt on 18 March and handed over to France on 27 April.

The Paris bomb and shooting attacks were claimed by Islamic State, as were bombings at the Brussels airport and a metro station on 22 March that killed 32 people. —*Reuters*

Trump rejects criticism, vents at news media in campaign speech

WASHINGTON — Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump on Wednesday rejected criticism of his campaign tactics, in a wide-ranging speech defending his team's use of a Jewish star and his own praise of the late Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

At a campaign rally in Cincinnati, Ohio, Trump vented his frustration at a news media he feels is out to derail his candidacy and help Democratic rival Hillary Clinton, deriding CNN, in particular, as the "Clinton News Network."

Trump's hour-long performance was unlikely to reassure those Republicans who would like to see the New York businessman focus his message on attacking Clinton to rally the party behind him at the Cleveland convention from 18 to 21 July where he is to be formally nominated.

He was particularly animated in defending his campaign's use of what was seen to be a Jewish star in a tweet last week that described Clinton as corrupt. The star was replaced with a round emblem after the criticism, but the incident has generated days of controversy.

Trump said he thought the star was more the shape of a sheriff's badge. He described as "sick people" those in the news media who called it a Jewish Star of David.—*Reuters*

Syrian army, rebels agree to 72-hour Eid truce, but fighting continues

BEIRUT — A Syrian rebel alliance agreed to a three-day nationwide ceasefire announced by the Syrian army on Wednesday and the United States voiced hope a more significant truce could be achieved, though fighting and air attacks continued.

The truce was the first to be declared across the whole country since one brokered by foreign powers in February to facilitate talks to end the five-year-old civil war. That truce has mostly unraveled, and the escalating violence caused talks to break down.

Wednesday's ceasefire covers the three-day Eid al-Fitr holiday celebrated by Muslims to mark the end of the fasting month of Ramadan. But opposition groups and a monitoring organisation said little had actually changed on the ground.

"The regime announced the ceasefire, but they did not commit to it. There has been a lot of shelling and bombing on Douma and Daraya (rebel-held towns near Damascus)," a spokeswoman for the Syrian opposition delegation to Geneva peace talks said.

Syria's military high command said in a statement that "a regime of calm will be implemented across all territory of the Syrian Arab Republic for a period of 72 hours from 1am on 6 July until 2400 on 8 July, 2016".

The Syrian government uses the term "regime of calm" to denote a temporary ceasefire.

The Free Syrian Army (FSA) rebel alliance later said it would respect the Eid holiday ceasefire, but only if government forces also abided by it.

"We, the armed revolutionary groups in Syria, welcome any effort towards a ceasefire for the happy Eid al-Fitr period. We declare we will abide by it so long as the other side does the same," an FSA statement said.

"Until now, (the government) has not abided by what it has announced, in that it has launched a number of attacks in various areas today," the statement added.

It said the rebel bloc welcomed international efforts that had yielded the announcement from the government of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, but attacks had not ceased as a result.

Islam Alloush, spokesman for the powerful Jaish al Islam rebel faction, said in a telegram message to journalists: "The regime has made this announcement purely to escape international pressure. On the ground, I don't think anything has changed."

Jaish al Islam is represented on the official Syrian opposition High Negotiations Committee (HNC).

Children walk past the rubble of damaged buildings on the first day of the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan, in the rebel held Douma neighbourhood of Damascus, Syria, on 6 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Jaish al Islam said in a separate statement that, despite the announced truce, government and allied forces had attacked the town of Maydaa, in the Eastern Ghouta area east of Damascus. Maydaa has been held by Jaish al Islam.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said on Wednesday that government and allied forces had taken almost complete control of Maydaa and that fighting continued. Syrian state media said the army and its allies had taken ground from "terrorists" in the area. The Syrian government describes all groups fighting against it as terrorists.

The Britain-based Observatory, which monitors the Syrian conflict, also said there had been rebel and government shelling in areas around the northern city of Aleppo, and air strikes had hit towns in the northern Aleppo countryside on Wednesday.

The Observatory said five air strikes hit the town of Jisr al-Shughour in rebel-held Idlib province, killing two children who were brothers, and injuring a number of others.

Syrian state media also reported army operations against Islamic State militants across the country on Wednesday.

US Secretary of State John Kerry welcomed the Syrian army's announcement, adding that discussions were under way to try to extend the truce.

"We are trying very hard to grow these current discussions into a longer-lasting ... enforceable, accountable cessation of hostilities that could change the dynamics on the ground," Kerry told a news conference in Tbilisi, Georgia.

The open-ended February "cessation of hostilities" truce, which was intended to smooth talks to end the war, was agreed with many opposition militias, but did not include the al Qaeda-affiliated Nusra Front or Islamic State.

The truce has mostly collapsed and the Syrian army and the Russian military, which backs Assad, have periodically announced a number of temporary local truces in areas of intense fighting, for example in the city of Aleppo or near the capital Damascus.—*Reuters*

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Las Vegas police lead Michael Steven Sandford from Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump's campaign rally at the Treasure Island Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada on 18 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Briton pleads not guilty to weapons charges over Trump rally incident

SAN FRANCISCO — A British man pleaded not guilty on Wednesday to weapons charges stemming from an incident where he was accused of trying to steal a gun from a policeman during a Las Vegas rally for Donald Trump, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee.

Michael Steven Sandford, 20, of Britain, was charged with two felony counts of being an illegal alien in possession of a firearm and one felony count of impeding and disrupting the orderly conduct of government business, according to the US Attorney's Office in Las Vegas.

Brenda Weksler, one of Sandford's federal public defenders, declined to comment when reached by email on Wednesday evening. Sandford's trial is set to begin on 22 August, said US Attorney's Office spokeswoman Natalie Collins.

Sandford was initially charged in a complaint filed in federal court on 20 June with an act of violence on restricted grounds over the 18 June incident at the Treasure Island casino hotel. The complaint said Sandford told a US Secret Service agent he had driven to Las Vegas from California with the goal of shooting Trump.

The indictment does not accuse Sandford of plotting to kill Trump.

According to the 20 June complaint, Sandford said he had been in the United States for a year and a half. Court records said he had lived in Hoboken, New Jersey.

Court records said Sandford went to the Battlefield Vegas gun range to practice shooting a day before the rally, and said he had never fired a gun before. While there, he fired 20 rounds from a Glock 9mm handgun, the complaint said.—*Reuters*

Brazil's Rousseff gives impassioned defence against impeachment

BRASILIA — Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff presented her written defence to a Senate impeachment trial on Wednesday, denouncing the proceedings as a farce and saying her alleged crimes were no more than "routine acts of budgetary management."

"Everybody knows that you are judging an honest woman, a public servant dedicated to just causes," the suspended leftist leader said in a document read aloud by her lawyer and former Attorney General Jose Eduardo Cardozo. "I've honoured those who voted for me."

Rousseff's removal would mark an end to 13 years of leftist rule over Latin America's largest economy by the Workers Party that began in 2003 under her mentor, former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

Her defence made clear she is sticking to the strategy of refuting the impeachment process as a soft "coup" led by her one-time Vice President Michel Temer, a conservative who has taken over since mid-May when the Senate voted to try Rousseff.

Rousseff has repeatedly said her impeachment is an attempt by Temer and other right-leaning members of her one-time governing coalition partner, the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB), to remove her because she did not impede a sweeping probe of corruption at state-run oil company Petrobras.

That investigation has ensnared dozens of top politicians, including the former speaker of the lower house of Brazil's Congress, who led the impeachment campaign against Rousseff.

Rousseff herself is not directly accused of corruption. But Brazil's chief prosecutor has asked for her to be investigated for obstructing justice in the Petrobras case. She has denied any wrongdoing.

Her impeachment is technically focused on accusations that she broke fiscal laws by disguising the size of the budget deficit to make the economy look healthier in the run-up to her 2014 re-election.

Rousseff has said her budget manoeuvring was no different than under previous presidents. But critics have said Rousseff borrowed far more money from state banks than her predecessors to plug budget gaps and hide the real state of Brazil's economy.

Rousseff's suspension in May had ample political support because her popularity had plunged amid Brazil's worst recession since the 1930s and public outrage over a string of corruption scandals involving her government. A recent poll showed interim President Temer is also highly unpopular.

"What most hurts right now is the injustice,"

Suspended Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff. PHOTO: REUTERS

Rousseff said in her written defence on Wednesday. "What hurts most is to perceive that I am the victim of a judicial and political farce."

Rousseff said she believes she is being targeted because she "never gave in to blackmail. I never accepted ... the backroom deals so well known in the traditional politics of our country."

Rousseff warned that should the Senate vote to find her guilty, as it is widely expected to do next month, her permanent removal would result in a Temer government that would shift Brazil's politics to the right without a win at the ballot box.

She said that would turn back democratic gains made during the fight against the nation's long dictatorship, during which Rousseff herself was arrested and tortured while spending three years in prison.—*Reuters*

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(9 /2016)

Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars and Myanmar Kyats.

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-021(16-17)	Electrical Spares for USS Oil Well Rig (13) Items	US$
(2)	IFB-022(16-17)	Spares for 3rd Stage & 4th Stage Atlas Copco Compressor (Intermech) (178) Items	US$
(3)	IFB-023(16-17)	2 7/8" & 2 3/8" EUE Tubing (2) Items	US$
(4)	IFB-024(16-17)	2", 3" & 4" Flow Line Pipes (3) Items	US$
(5)	IFB-025(16-17)	Spares for P & H Crawler Crane (19) Items	US$
(6)	IFB-026(16-17)	Handling and Lifting Accessories (62) Items	US$
(7)	IFB-027(16-17)	Spares for L-Type & ZW-Type Compressor (54) Items	US$
(8)	IFB-028(16-17)	Spares for Clean Energy Mother & Daughter Compressors (IMW) (77) Items	US$
(9)	IFB-029(16-17)	Rig Floor Handling & Lifting Accessories (20) Items	US$
(10)	IFB-030(16-17)	Electrical Spares for ZJ 70L Rigs (22) Items	US$
(11)	DMP/L-010(16-17)	1" Ø Reinforcement Hose Pipe and 1" Ø Union (2) Items	Ks

Tender Closing Date & Time - 28-7-2016, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 5TH July, 2016 at the Finance Department , Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph . +95 67 - 411097 / 411206

Zimbabweans stay at home in protest against economic hardships

HARARE — Zimbabweans stayed at home on Wednesday and foreign banks and most businesses in the capital shut down, in one of the biggest protests against high unemployment, an acute cash shortage and corruption for nearly a decade.

Evan Mawarire, a pastor whose social media movement #ThisFlag organised the "stay-away", demanded that President Robert Mugabe fire corrupt cabinet ministers and scrap plans to introduce local bank notes or face a two-day shutdown next week.

Wednesday's protest followed violent clashes between taxi drivers and police on Monday that led to the arrest of 95 people. It also coincided with a strike by doctors, teachers and nurses whose salaries had been delayed.

A devastating drought has compounded economic hardships including high joblessness while an acute cash shortage has angered Zimbabwe's citizens.

In a story quoting John Mangudya, the governor of Zimbabwe's central bank, the *Financial Times* reported on Wednesday that the African Export-Import Bank was arranging a seven-year loan of $986 million so Zimbabwe could pay back arrears to the World Bank.

The FT quoted Mangudya as saying Zimbabwe hoped to pay off its arrears before the September board meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Bank, paving the way for IMF assistance to alleviate its cash crunch. Afreximbank and IMF officials could not immediately be reached for comment.

The 39-year-old Mawarire started the #ThisFlag campaign in April to protest against corruption, injustice and poverty.

The campaign has attracted thousands of followers who have been speaking out against government excesses. Wednesday's protest was organised via Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp.

Mawarire's campaign includes a series of demands: for Mugabe to fire and prosecute "known" corrupt ministers, for government salaries to be paid on time and for police to remove roadblocks which most people say are posts for bribe taking officers.—*Reuters*

Protests and US probe after Louisiana police shoot black man

BATON ROUGE, (La) — The US Justice Department said on Wednesday it would investigate the killing of a black man pinned to the ground and shot in the chest by two white police officers outside a convenience store in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Graphic video images of Tuesday's shooting of Alton Sterling, 37, unleashed protests and social media outcry over the latest alleged police brutality against African-Americans in cities from Ferguson, Missouri, to Baltimore and New York.

One officer shot Sterling five times at close range, and the other took something from his pants pocket as he was dying, according to images recorded by Abdullah Muflahi, owner of the Triple S Food Mart where Sterling was killed in the parking lot.

"I'm heartbroken. It's outrageous. It's crazy," said Muflahi, who considered Sterling a friend and allowed him to sell CDs outside his store. He provided a copy of the video to Reuters and said police took a gun from Sterling's pocket.

Several hundred people gathered for a prayer vigil near the spot where Sterling was killed, with speakers urging peaceful protests, justice and unity in the face of "excessive force" used by police against black residents.

"If we stand divided, we are already defeated," Bishop Gregory Cooper of Baton Rouge told the crowd, including families with children, that filled the parking lot and nearby streets. Police stayed on the fringes of the gathering.

Many people stayed hours after the service and a brass band joined a large, peaceful nighttime march circling the store. A local artist had painted a mural of Sterling on the wall just feet from where he was shot.—*Reuters*

Floods in China kill almost 130, wipe out crops

SHANGHAI — Severe flooding across central and southern China over the past week has killed almost 130 people, damaged more than 1.9 million hectares of crops and led to direct economic losses of more than 38 billion yuan ($5.70 billion), state media said on Tuesday.

Premier Li Keqiang traveled on Tuesday to Anhui, one of the hardest-hit provinces, where he met residents and encouraged officials to do everything they could to protect lives and livelihoods. Li was also to visit Hunan province.

Heavy rainfall had killed 128 people across 11 provinces and regions and 42 people are missing, state news agency Xinhua reported.

More than 1.3 million people have been forced out of their homes, it said.

Weather forecasts predicted more downpours during what is traditionally China's flood season.

Xinhua said more than 1.9 million hectares (4.7 million acres) of cropland had been damaged and another 295,000 hectares had been destroyed, resulting in direct economic losses of 38.2 billion yuan.

Rescuers save a resident from a flooded building in Chongqing, China. Flooding, an annual problem in China, has been exacerbated by urban sprawl and poor drainage infrastructure in many cities. PHOTO: REUTERS

More than 40,000 buildings have also collapsed, it added.

It was not clear how that would affect the summer grain harvest, which was expected to reach 140 million tonnes this year.

The stormy weather also took a toll on farm animals.

In Anhui, the flooding killed some 7,100 hogs, 215 bulls and 5.14 million fowl, the China News Service reported.

In the southern province of Hunan, torrential rain and flooding had forced more than 100 trains to stop or take detours since midnight on Sunday, Xinhua reported.

In one city, about 3 tonnes of gasoline and diesel leaked from a petrol station on Monday, contaminating floodwater that flowed into a river, it said.

Water in 43 rivers in the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River had exceeded warning levels and patrols were monitoring dykes, Xinhua quoted Chen Guiya, an official with the Yangtze River Water Resources Commission, as saying.—*Reuters*

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
ELECTRIC POWER GENERATION ENTERPRISE

Date: July 4 , 2016

Invitation for Private Power Generation Plant thru Rental Power Basis in Yangon Region

1. Electric Power Generation Enterprise (EPGE) seeks to invite tender for the purchasing electricity of 300 MW by Rental power plant system in Yangon Region.
2. The concession period for the power plant shall be **5 (five)** years from commercial operation date (COD).
3. The Tender Form fees is K.500, 000/- (Kyat five hundred thousand only) and can be purchased at Procurement Department, Electric Power Generation Enterprise, Building 27, Nay Pyi Taw, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
4. The bidders shall send the technical and commercial proposal addressed to
   Tender Evaluation Committee
   Electric Power Generation Enterprise,
   Ministry of Electricity and Energy
   Building 27, Nay Pyi Taw
   The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
5. The bid submission date is August 18, 2016 at 16:00 hr. Myanmar Standard Time.
6. Bidding Proposal must be submitted at the address in time. Any late proposal shall be rejected.
7. The bidders shall make the proposals in accordance with the Invitation **for Invitation for Power Generation Rental Basis**
8. The necessary information of this project tender can be inquired within office hour.
   Attention to
   Tender Evaluation Committee,
   Electric Power Generation Enterprise
   Ph +95 9 8601033, + 95 67 8104281, +95 96 8104282
   Fax +95 67 8104280
   epgethermal@gmail.com

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV SEIYO HARMONY VOY NO (006)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SEIYO HARMONY VOY NO (006) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8.7.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P.L where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NYK BULK & PROJECTS CARRIERS LTD. JAPAN
Phone No: 2301191, 2301178

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV WEST SCENT VOY NO (118N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV WEST SCENT VOY NO (118N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8.7.2016 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 INTERASIA LINES
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV TAN BINH 123 VOY NO (07/2016)

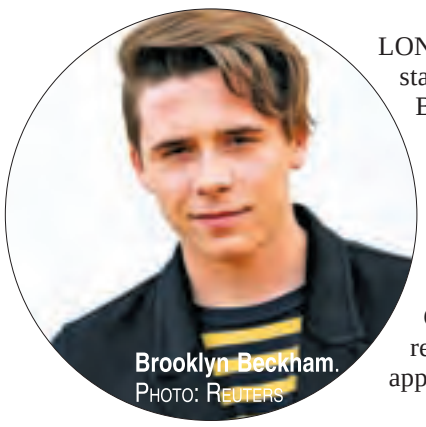
Consignees of cargo carried on MV TAN BINH 123 VOY NO (07/2016) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8.7.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.I.P.T.2 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of 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 G-LINK EXPRESS PTE LTD.
Phone No: 2301928

Brooklyn Beckham lands 100,000 pounds job with Huawei



Brooklyn Beckham. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Former football star David Beckham's son, Brooklyn has reportedly landed himself a 100,000 pounds job appearing in an advertisement for Chinese phone company Huawei.

Brooklyn, who is currently dating actress Chloe Grace Moretz, is said to be receiving the massive sum for appearing in the advert, which was filmed on Tuesday, reported Digital Spy.

This comes after the news that the 17-year-old is also set to rap on The Vamps' new album.

The band's lead singer Brad Simpson explained: "We want to get him involved. He can spit bars. He's going to be rapping on the album." Brooklyn previously appeared in The Vamps' music video for 'Wake Up'.—*PTI*

New Iron Man to be a Black girl

LONDON — Comic book maker Marvel has revealed a 15-year-old black girl will be donning the famous armour of Iron Man in an upcoming episode of the series.

Civil War II sees Tony Stark hang up his boots to be replaced by Riri Williams, the company said, reported BBC.

The character is a Chicago-born science genius studying at MIT and made her debut earlier this year. The news has prompted a huge reaction online, with many welcoming it as a step forward for diversity.

"Iron Man" writer Brian Michael Bendis said he came up with Williams' character after being struck by the "chaos and violence" of Chicago while working in the city.

"And this story of this brilliant, young woman whose life was marred by tragedy that could have easily ended her life, just random street violence, and went off to college was very inspiring to me. I thought that was the most modern version of a superhero or superheroine story I had ever heard."

The Iron Man character first appeared in 1963. The series focuses on billionaire weapons inventor Tony Stark.—*PTI*

Michael Caine rehearses his script 1000 times

Veteran actor Michael Caine. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Veteran actor Michael Caine rehearses every line of his scripts 1000 times.

The 83-year-old actor, who has appeared in over 115 films, makes sure he is perfect before stepping on to set, reported Femalefirst. "I rehearse on my own and by the time I have come on to a set I have said the line to myself a minimum of 1000 times. I've never used a mirror — I just do it anywhere. I just sit there talking," Caine said.

But the "Kingsman: The Secret Service" star says he takes "twice as long" to learn his scripts now than it used to.

"You know what happens when you get older; in my case I don't forget the lines but it takes me twice as long to learn the bloody things. It takes forever.—*PTI*

Blink-182 return with new album and line-up

LONDON — American punk rock band Blink-182 are back with a new album "California" and a new member.

The group, which first formed in California in 1992, now features regular members Mark Hoppus and Travis Barker but former mainstay Tom DeLonge has been replaced by Alkaline Trio member Matt Skiba.

"California", the band's seventh studio album, has seen lead single "Bored to Death" top Billboard's Alternative Songs chart, becoming the band's first number one in more than 12 years.

"We never set out to write a love letter to California but while we were recording it we just kept finding ourselves referencing very specific California things," Hoppus told Reuters. "California has this endless energy and opportunity and hope and ambition but there's also a dark, twisted side underneath it and that's how the record feels."—*Reuters*

James Norton emerges as new favourite to play James Bond?

LONDON — "War & Peace" star James Norton has rapidly emerged as the favourite to play the next James Bond, overtaking Tom Hiddleston, Tom Hardy and Aidan Turner.

The 30-year-old actor is now considered as the overwhelming favourite to land the coveted licence to kill now that Daniel Craig has quit the role after four movies, reported Daily Mirror.

"Poldark" star Turner had recently risen to the top of many bookies' lists, but the BBC announced on Wednesday that he was on board for a third series of the historical drama, effectively removing him from the running.

While Norton may not be the biggest name in the running and his few film credits include "Mr Turner" and "An Education", as well as a number of TV roles in "War & Peace" and "Happy Valley". Reportedly, Hiddleston, who is in the news a lot over the last couple of weeks for dating Taylor Swift, has ruined his chances of landing the role of 007 by dating the American pop star. Idris Elba's odds also appear to be lengthening, even though he has been touted as Craig's replacement for nearly a year.—*PTI*

Adele. PHOTO: REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — Singer Adele has hinted a tour to Australia during her US tour opener in Minnesota on 5 July.

The 28-year-old singer opened the US leg of her "25" tour in St Paul, Minnesota on Tuesday, where one of her fans flew all the way from Australia to see her.

The "Hello" hitmaker got down off the stage to hug the woman, reported Entertainment Weekly.

"I am planning an Australian tour now," she hugged her and said.

"Why don't we get your info and when the Sydney show happens you can come, on us. Well, if the tour happens, I always announce things when I am not supposed to!," the singer quickly added.—*PTI*

Disappointing to be highest-grossing actress: Scarlett

LOS ANGELES — Actress Scarlett Johansson said it was disappointing to be the top-earning actress of all time in Hollywood.

The 31-year-old "Avengers" star said she was sad by the fact that she was the only woman in the category, reported Extra.

"It's exciting to be the only woman in this category. It's kind of disappointing actually to be the only woman in this category. That was a little bit of a surprise to me," Johansson said.

The actress has become the biggest female moneymaker in movie industry with USD 3.33 billion. She landed on the tenth position in the overall list led by Harrison Ford and Samuel L Jackson. At 31, she also became the youngest on the list. At least seven other women made it to the top 50 with Cameron Diaz as the second top-earning actress. She was placed at 19th.—*PTI*

Bull-running enthusiasts mark start of Pamplona fiestas

Revellers celebrate during the start of the San Fermin festival in Pamplona, Spain on 6 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

PAMPLONA (Spain) — Jubilant crowds filled Pamplona's main square on Wednesday as the traditional "Chupinazo", a firecracker in the shape of a rocket, burst into the sky, marking the beginning of the northern Spanish city's week-long San Fermin festival.

The festival, which draws spectators from around the world, features daily morning bull runs where the animals are led by runners through the city's streets.

Revellers in white T-shirts and trousers held up red handkerchiefs, waiting to tie the garment around their necks after organisers fired the "Chupinazo" at midday.—*Reuters*

Ruby Roman grapes fetch record 1.1m yen in season's 1st auction

KANAZAWA (Japan) — A bunch of Ruby Roman table grapes fetched a record-high 1.1 million yen ($10,900) on Thursday in the year's first auction at a wholesale market in the central Japan city of Kanazawa, up from 1 million yen marked last year.

Of the 46 Ruby Roman bunches auctioned off at the market in Ishikawa Prefecture, the highest priced went to a supermarket in Amagasaki, Hyogo Prefecture, which also paid a record 3 million yen for a pair of Yubari melons in Sapporo, Hokkaido, in May. "I am very much honored," said the successful bidder Takamaru Konishi, 37, a buyer at the supermarket, Kurashi Kaientai, adding he hopes it would be heartening news for farmers in Ishikawa Prefecture.

The pricey bunch of grapes will be put on display at the store and given out to shoppers for free, he said. Ruby Roman, a high-end variety of grapes developed by the Ishikawa prefectural government over a period of 14 years, has a high sugar content of at least 18 per cent and would not go on sale at the market unless each grape weighs 20 grams or more, according to the local farmers' cooperative.

In the ninth year since the variety entered the market, the cooperative plans to ship 20,000 bunches by late September. —*Kyodo News*

Mongolian child contortionists stretch for international success

ULAANBAATAR — Nine-year-old Mongolian schoolgirl Suvd-Erdene spends four hours a day perfecting the art of doing a head-stand on a pole clenched with her teeth and push-ups without her feet touching the ground.

She and about a dozen team mates are training in a basement in the capital, Ulaanbaatar, to be contortionists, a revered art that Mongolians say was developed in the palace of 13th century warlord and national hero Genghis Khan. Usually performed by females, the discipline involves twisting and stretching the body to the extreme.

The diminutive Suvd-Erdene makes the moves look easy having completed years of grueling training that began with intensive stretching exercises when she was six.

"I cried when my teacher made me do the stretching exercises, at that time I felt really discouraged," she told Reuters.

The girls are given time off school to train down a drab Ulaanbaatar back street under the guidance of 22-year-old Urangoo, a third generation contortionist.

Urangoo took up training young contortionists after her own hopes of hitting the big time and performing abroad ended when she suffered an injury at the age of 12.

Mongolian contortionists are in high demand and performers may be vaulted into an international career if they are lucky enough to be spotted by scouts from theatrical producers like Cirque du Soleil. For Suvd-Erdene's team mate Shinezul, becoming a contortionist is also a matter of national pride.

"It's the Mongolian people's dream to introduce Mongolian national culture and art to the whole world, so that's why I want to be the best contortionist in the world," she said. —*Reuters*

Young contortionists practice at a training school in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, on 4 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Charleston replaces Kyoto as most popular city in US magazine poll

KYOTO — Charleston has been ranked first in an annual readers' poll of US magazine Travel and Leisure for world's most popular city, replacing Kyoto, the winner in 2014 and 2015.

The US city in South Carolina scored 91.66 points in the 2016 popularity poll, moving up from second place in the previous survey, while the former capital of Japan fell to sixth with a total score of 89.75 points, according to the website of the travel magazine.

The magazine asks readers every year to share their opinions on top cities based on travel experiences and they ranked cities based on sights and landmarks, culture, cuisine, friendliness, shopping and overall value.

An official of Kyoto said, "The results appear to have been affected by congestion at well-known tourist spots and transportation systems in the city," adding that the city aims to become a tourist destination admired around the world. Chiang Mai in Thailand and San Miguel de Allende in Mexico came second and third in this year's poll.—*Kyodo News*

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(8-7-2016, Friday)

06 : 00 pm
- Weather Report
- Cartoon Programme "Open Season Scared Silly (Part-1)"

07 : 10 pm
- International Drama Series

07 : 50 pm
- International Drama Series

08 : 50 pm
- MRTV Entertainment Music

09 : 00 pm
- Pyi Thu Ni Ti

09 : 30 pm
- International Movie Songs

09 : 40 pm
- The 110th Anniversary of Yangon Zoological Garden

9 : 50 pm
- Music Programme

10 : 00 pm
- Myanmar Video

From 8-7-2016 (Friday) 6:00 pm
To 9-7-2016 (Saturday) 6:00 pm

mitv Myanmar International

(8-7-2016 07:00am ~ 9-7-2016 07:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Discovering Tribes "Lisu: Their Life and Customs" (Part- II)
07:49	Am	Grow Back for Posterity "The dawn of development"
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Shrinking Footprints
08:50	Am	Orchid Lover
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Natural Lake: Fish Breeding Business
09:38	Am	Oboist and His Life
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Enterpreneur "Soe Nyi Nyi"
10:36	Am	19 Hours

(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
07:25	Pm	Travelogue to the coastal region (Myeik - Kawthoung) (Part-2)
07:41	Pm	Civic Duty
07:54	Pm	Human Right Human Dignity "International Film Festival"
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Writer, Philanthropist: Daw Than Myint Aung (Part - I)
08:53	Pm	Myanmar Masterclass "Still Life (Fruit)"

(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

4th Waxing of Waso 1378 ME

Friday, 8 July, 2016

Ronaldo delivers as Portugal end dream Wales run

Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates scoring their first goal during the EURO 2016 Semi Final at Stade de Lyon, Lyon, France, on 6 July.
PHOTO: REUTERS

LYON (France) — Cristiano Ronaldo scored one goal and inadvertently set up the other as Portugal ground out a 2-0 win over Wales on Wednesday to march into the Euro 2016 final.

The Portuguese superstar, who has had to soak up a lot of criticism for a lacklustre tournament by his high standards, majestically powered in a 50th-minute header to put his side in front.

The goal, his third in the tournament, equalled Michel Platini's record of nine in European Championship finals.

Ronaldo also saw his shot turned in by Nani for a second goal in the 53rd minute, ending Wales' remarkable run at their first major finals since 1958.

Portugal, who had not won a single game in the tournament over 90 minutes, next meet hosts France or Germany who play their semi-final on Thursday.

"I hope that after the final we will be smiling and that it will be tears of joy in the end," said Ronaldo who wept after his team lost to surprise packages Greece in the 2004 final.

"I have always said my dream was to win a trophy with Portugal. We are closer to doing it and I believe we will win," he told reporters after coming out on top in his battle with Real Madrid team mate Gareth Bale.

Wales kept their opponents quiet in the first half but could not recover the two-goal deficit, ending a scintillating run that has captivated millions back home and turned their players into heroes.

The Welsh, with midfielder Aaron Ramsey suspended and replaced by Leicester City's Premier League winner Andy King, had an early spell of possession but a tight Portugal defence kept them at bay.

Portugal, bidding to reach their first Euro final since losing on home soil 12 years ago, had their first chance after a quarter of an hour following a low drive by Joao Mario.

Wales responded as Joe Ledley found Bale with a low corner and the forward fired over the bar.

The Welsh, playing their first major tournament semi-final, did not suffer from stage fright with their back line, supported by midfielders Ledley and Joe Allen, disciplined and compact.

In a cagey first half Portugal struggled to find Ronaldo, opting for long crosses into the box that were easy pickings for central defender James Collins.

Portugal injected some urgency after the break, pressing high up the field.

It paid off instantly with a corner in the 50th minute that Raphael Guerreiro floated in towards the far post where Ronaldo climbed high above two defenders to score.

Portugal doubled the lead when Nani slid in to connect with Ronaldo's mishit shot, netting his own third goal of Euro 2016.

Wales were lucky not to concede more goals late in the game as Portugal, now unbeaten in 13 competitive matches, continued to dream of a maiden top-notch trophy.

"We are massively disappointed obviously but we have given everything on and off the pitch," said Wales talisman Bale. "We tried our hardest to get back in the game, they shut up shop well but we have no regrets.

"We are very proud. We will pick ourselves up. Nobody expected us to get this far but we did."—*Reuters*

Murray survives Tsonga comeback to reach semis

LONDON — Second seed Andy Murray survived a ferocious Jo-Wilfried Tsonga fightback to reach the Wimbledon semi-finals for the seventh time, winning the Wednesday's second Centre Court blockbuster 7-6(10), 6-1, 3-6, 4-6, 6-1.

After Roger Federer's miraculous earlier escape act against Marin Cilic, when he recovered from two sets down to win, 12th seeded Frenchman Tsonga threatened something equally improbable as dusk settled at the All England Club.

When the maverick Frenchman blazed away, firing winners from here, there and everywhere, to take the third and fourth sets Murray was wobbling. The crowd could barely believe their eyes.

But just when the match appeared to be spiralling out of control for the agitated Scot, the 2013 champion rediscovered his early authority to dominate the decider and set up a semi-final with Czech 10th seed Tomas Berdych.

"It was a tough match. At the end of the fourth set it was really tough," Murray, who had not dropped a set to reach the quarter-finals, said in a courtside interview. "To lose that set 6-4 was hard but I tried to use all my energy at the start of the fifth to get myself pumped up, and the crowd, and thankfully got the break and managed to hang on."

After the memorable Federer exploits there was a danger that Murray's match against Tsonga might prove a mere footnote.

Those fears vanished in a high-quality opening set in which Murray was dragged into an epic 22-point tiebreak despite forging ahead with an early break of serve.—*Reuters*

Great Britain's Andy Murray.
PHOTO: REUTERS

Mkhitaryan signs for Man United on four-year deal

LONDON — Midfielder Henrikh Mkhitaryan has joined Manchester United from German club Borussia Dortmund on a four-year contract, the Premier League club announced on Wednesday.

The 27-year-old scored 41 goals in 140 appearances during his three-year spell at Dortmund.

"I am very proud to join Manchester United, this move is a dream come true for me. I am excited to play for a club with such an illustrious history and hope to be part of it for a long time," Mkhitaryan told the club's website (www.manutd.com). After defender Eric Bailly and forward Zlatan Ibrahimovic, Mkhitaryan becomes new manager Jose Mourinho's third signing as the Portuguese looks to build on last season's FA Cup win.—*Reuters*

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