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STEPPING UP FOR RAKHINE

Central Committee for Implementation of Peace, Stability and Development in Rakhine State meets

THE second work coordination meeting of the Central Committee for the Implementation of Peace, Stability and Development in Rakhine State was held at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday with an address by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who chairs the central committee.

First, Maj-Gen Than Htut, secretary of the central committee, elaborated on the previous work coordination meeting's minutes.

Next, Union Minister Lt-Gen Ye Aung, vice chairman of the central committee, reported on works to be done and requirements to be fulfilled

for developmental undertakings in Rakhine State; Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu spoke on matters related to security and regional requirements for development; Union Minister Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe on the security of Rakhine State; Union Minister U Thein Swe on ongoing works to do with

the citizenship verification process; Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye on regional development and socio-economic development matters and Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe on continued coordination and cooperation with international organizations.

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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. PHOTO: MNA

PHOTO: WIN KYINE
(KYAUNGKON IPRD)



Floods force 45 schools to shut in Kyaungkon Tsp, more than 300,000 people in Ayeyawady Region affected

FLOODING has forced 45 schools in Kyaungkon Township, Ayeyawady Region, to be closed, water also inundated more than 8,500 acres of rice paddy.

More than 8,000 people in the township have

been moved to shelters while more than 2,070 homes from 36 villages are submerged by floodwater.

There are over 300,000 people affected by flooding in Ayeyarwady Region.

The flooding has sub-

merged a total of 703 villages, forcing 38,000 people to take refuge in over 180 local shelters, while those villagers unaccounted for are reportedly fending for themselves.

"All those concerned

have been instructed to reinforce all embankments with bamboo and bags of sand to help counteract the floodwaters." said U Mann Johnny, Chief Minister of Ayeyawady Region.

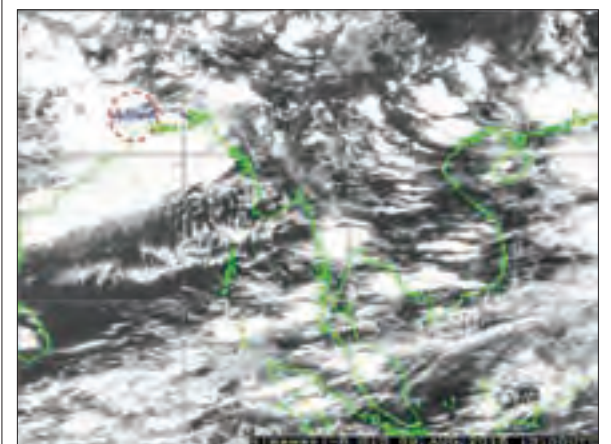
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Low-pressure in Bay of Bengal intensifies into depression

A low-pressure at north-west part of the Bay of Bengal has intensified into a depression and the system is likely to move towards west, the Department of Meteorology and Hydeology said.

The 7 pm bulletin stated that the rain or

thunder showers are likely to fall on most places in regions and states and Yangon, Ayeyarwady and Taninthayi regions and Chin, Rakhine and Mon states are expected to see heavy rainfall today with a hundred per cent degree certainty.—GNLM



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Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

P&F Ministry seeks parliamentary approval for \$100m loan from World Bank

THE Ministry of Planning and Finance explained the government request to take a US\$100 million interest-free loan from the World Bank for the financial sector development in Myanmar during a Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session yesterday.

Deputy Minister U Maung Maung Win said that the loan would be spent on the country's banking sector development, upgrading of infrastructure of financial institutions and helping people access financial services.

He pointed out that only 30 per cent of Myanmar's adults have access to formal financial services and the country has limitations in the financial services including availability of loans for poverty alleviation in rural areas and agriculture sector

development.

Financial sector development in Myanmar would help the country improve its economic performance and develop a market-based competitive banking sector, thereby contributing towards ensuring economic stability and sustainability and inclusive financial services.

Under the terms and conditions, the interest-free loan has a 38-year term with payments deferred for six years. A service fee which is equal to 0.75 per cent of the loan amount is charged once a year.

\$75 million of the loan will be disbursed to The Ministry of Planning and Finance and the remaining \$25 million to the Central Bank of Myanmar.

The deputy minister told

the Parliament that the ministry would set \$60 million as a budget support for civil servants' salaries, expenditures, allowances and pensions and use \$7 million for reforms in State-owned banks, \$5 million for upgrading the microfinance sector and insurance services and installation of IT system and \$3 million for capacity-building programmes for the ministry's staff.

According to the deputy minister, the \$60 million loan will be disbursed over a four-year period with the first \$20 million tranche of the \$60 million loan in 2017, the second \$15 million tranche of the loan in 2018, the third \$10 million tranche of the loan in 2019 and the fourth \$15 million tranche of the loan in 2020.

Vice-Governor of the Cen-



Daw Khin Saw Oo. PHOTO: MNA



Deputy Minister U Maung Maung Win. PHOTO: MNA

tral Bank of Myanmar Daw Khin Saw Oo said that the CMB proposed to spend \$6 million on supporting banking sector development and opening a training school of monetary studies, \$2 million on IT system and human resources development and developing financial management program, \$15 million on improving the payment system and \$2 million on training programmes

for the CBM's staff. During yesterday's Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session, Deputy Minister U Maung Maung Win also submitted a draft law revising the income tax law to the parliament and the Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw announced that the President nominated U Bo Bo Nge as a member of the Board of Directors of the Central Bank of Myanmar.—*Myanmar News Agency*

DM asks for proposal for flood mitigation and water scarcity plan to be recorded

DEPUTY Minister Dr Tun Win called on the Amyotha Hluttaw to record a proposal to develop a comprehensive plan for flood mitigation and water scarcity alleviation following continued debate on the proposal yesterday.

In his response to the proposal the deputy minister pledged a continued coordination with the ministries concerned to implement short-term and long-term plans for reducing flooding risks in delta and coastal regions.

Regarding measures against water shortages and dredging operations to restore rivers and streams, the deputy minister said that efforts were being made under short-term and long-term plans that involve effective utilisation

of water resources by repairing dams and lakes and tapping underground water in dry zones and areas adjacent to the sea.

According to the deputy minister, there will be repairs made to 94 drinking water lakes in eight regions and states this fiscal year and the government is implementing water supply projects in 298 townships across the country.

During the 11th day session of the Amyotha Hluttaw lawmakers continued debate on a proposal calling for a comprehensive plan for flooding that occurs annually in delta and coastal regions and nationwide water shortages during dry season. The proposal also called for the restoring of rivers that once benefited the people.

U J Yaw Wu of Kachin State Constituency 1 called for a special plan to maintain the country's major rivers and immediate actions for putting an end to illegal logging and a ban on sand mining along coastlines.

U Kyaw Toke of Mandalay Region Constituency 7 disagreed with the deputy minister's call for putting the proposal on record, suggesting realisation of the proposal over the prescribed periods and demanding an immediate stop to excessive logging and exploitation of natural resources.

But, U Than Soe (a) Than Soe (Economics) of Yangon Region Constituency 4 expressed his support for documenting the proposal, saying that realisation



Dr Tun Win. PHOTO: MNA



U J Yaw Wu. PHOTO: MNA

of the proposal needs a national policy that should be sought at a national convention involving all stakeholders.

U Myint Naing of Rakhine State Constituency 5 emphasised

the need for river dredging operations to prevent floods in the country's disaster-prone Rakhine State, pointing out that flooding leads to water stress in the region.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Flooding forces Pathein trains to terminate at Athoke



A train stops at Athoke on its way to Pathein. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

WATER on the lines in Ayeyawady Region forced temporary cut backs to the Kyangin - Pathein rapid train and Hinthada - Pathein freight train services on 6 August, stopping short of

the region's capital and running just half of the line as far as the town of Athoke, according to the region's department of the state-owned transport enterprise, Myanma Railways.

The Athoke - Pathein line has reportedly been submerged by between 1-3 feet of flood water, forcing train services to terminate at Athoke Station. "We've suspended train services because water has flooded the line between Gonemin village and the town of Daka. Inspections on the lines will be carried out once water levels have subsided. Only then will trains return to their normal schedule," said U San Thar Aung, director of the department. Myanma Railway's officials closed the Gonemin - Daka section of track on the morning of 6 August, before doing the same to parts of the line between Yodayartat - Gonemin and Daka - Behkayet the following day.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Pyithu Hluttaw

Pyithu Hluttaw representatives donate daily allowance to flood victims

PYITHU Hluttaw representatives donated their daily allowance for one day to flood victims during its 11th day session yesterday.

During a Q & A session, Deputy Minister for Transport and Communications U Kyaw Myo replied to a question regarding the adding of one more train service on the Mandalay-Myitkyina railroad, saying that there was no recent plan to provide an express train service as the route has a line capacity limit and crowded trains on its road sections can lead to delays and congestion. Next, parliamentarians debated a motion calling on the Union government to combat fraud and corruption across the nation submitted by

Dr Than Win of North Okkalapa Constituency. U Nay Myo Tun of Htatabin Constituency expressed his support for the motion, pointing out that the laws are ineffective if law enforcers fail to respect and obey the laws.

U Myint Tun of Tantse Constituency also said that whatever reforms were initiated, the public trust in the government will be at a low level if there is no fight against corruption.

Likewise, Dr Daw Thet Thet Khine of Dagon Constituency and U Myint Oo of Magway Constituency also expressed their support for the anti-corruption motion during the parliamentary debate on it.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Government's work performance for first 100 days press conference to be held on Friday

A PRESS conference on the government's work performance for the first 100 days will take place at the Ministry of Information at 1 pm this Friday with four ministries—the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Border Affairs, Ministry of Electricity and Energy and Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement—giving briefings and answering media questions.

Media persons wishing to attend the press briefing are invited to register by email, informing the ministry's Inter-

nal and External Relations and Information Branch (e-mail: ir.pos.moi2015@gmail.com) of the name of the correspondent and his or her identity card number, the name of the news agency, contact phone number and email address not later than 10 am tomorrow.

Further information about the upcoming weekly press conferences including the date and the ministries which call the press conferences will be announced later.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Central Committee for Implementation of Peace, . . .

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Those present made suggestions for the implementation of future programmes through cooperation among ministries concerned, local authorities and civil society organisations including problems and requirements.

The State Counsellor coordinated matters and stressed the need for having a priority list of implementation and improving cooperation between the ministries concerned and the regional government to overcome challenges through collaborative efforts.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Floods force 45 schools to shut in Kyaungkong Tsp, more than 300,000 people . . .

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The government has assisted the three flood-affected districts by providing each with K20 million - to repair their man-made embankments, originally built to act as flood defenses - and 1,000 bags of rice for the flood victims. Twenty healthcare groups have also been dispatched to the affected townships to provide help.

"It's problematic to cook food in the flood shelters; donations of cooked meals are more

convenient for us. We need food, drinking water and medicine," said Aung Ko Oo, a flood victim currently residing in a shelter opened up in Patheingyi.

The General Administration Department of Ayeyawady Region reportedly informed residents from villages and wards in Patheingyi district that, as of Monday, river water-levels in the townships of Hinthada district had subsided by a few inches.—*GNLM with Myitmakha News Agency*

Chinese PLA hands over medical vehicles, equipment to Myanmar Tatmadaw



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing checks a medical vehicle donated by Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). PHOTO: MNA

THE Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) donated medical vehicles and their equipment to Myanmar Tatmadaw with a ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

In his address, Commander-in-Chief of Defense Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing said that the medical vehicles and

equipment can directly benefit Myanmar Tatmadaw as well as the people, noting the fruitful results of cooperation between the two armed forces.

Before the donation ceremony, the Senior General held talks with Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Hong Liang on further relations and cooperation be-

tween the two Defense Services and exchange of visit of military delegations.

The PLA handed over 30 Ford Transit ambulances, three Mercedes-Benz dental clinic vans and 15 digital X-ray machines to Myanmar Tatmadaw at the ceremony.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Registration cards to be issued to Myanmar domestic helpers in foreign countries

Thein Ko Lwin

REGISTRATION cards will be issued to Myanmar migrants who are illegally working as domestic helpers in neighbouring countries and others according to the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population.

Union Minister U Thein Swe said that the issuance of registration cards to Myanmar domestic workers is aimed at enabling them to enjoy legal protection of the countries where they work in.

Despite Myanmar banning maid work in foreign countries

since 2014, there has been an increase in the number of Myanmar domestic workers who have gone to foreign countries via illegal channels year after year.

According to figures released by the countries where there are Myanmar domestic helpers, there are 28,000 in Thailand and about 40,000 in Singapore. Under the registration card issuance program, Myanmar embassies in the countries will collect data through the Labour Ministries there and Myanmar domestic workers will be given registration cards.

The Ministry of Labour, Im-

migration and Population said that it is a pilot program to help Myanmar migrant workers in foreign countries.

Realisation of the program is due to reports of women's rights groups regarding Myanmar domestic workers who have suffered abuse and exploitation. Those reports were presented during the State Counsellor's visit to Thailand recently, added the ministry.

Myanmar ended the sending of domestic workers to foreign countries following the dispatch of 300 to Singapore and 170 to Hong Kong in 2014.



Myanma Railway announces that those who throw stones at trains will get five-to-ten-year imprisonments. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

Serious action for stone-throwing at MR trains promised by authorities

STONE-throwing at Yangon circular and suburban trains will have serious action taken according to an announcement released by Myanmar Railway under the Ministry of Transport and Communication.

If people are caught throwing stones at the trains, they will be given five-to-ten-year imprisonment terms and will also be fined under sections 79/B and 84 of the Myanmar Railway law.

There were seven cases of

stone-throwing at trains across Myanmar including the Yangon circular and suburban trains in 2015. Over this year stone-throwing occurred at Thamine Myothit station on 9 January, between Thiri Myaing station and Kamayut station on 24 March, at Pazundaung station on 30 March, at Mahlwagon station on 22 April and Paywetseikkon station on 5 July respectively, according to the announcement.

Myanma Railway authori-

ties met on 2 August in the living room of Thingangyun station to discuss how to mitigate stone-throwing cases so that the authorities could ensure the security of the passengers on board. U Kyaw Soe Lin, operation department manager of Myanmar Railway, township authorities and locals attended this meeting.

Locals suggested posting warning signs at ward administration offices, said U Kyaw Soe Lin.—*Soe Win (MLA)*

Ayeyawady Region provided with K 100-million fund for disaster preparedness by BFM



Ayeyawady Region Government receiving K 100-million fund for disaster preparedness. PHOTO: BFM

AYEYAWADY Region, which is currently affected by flooding, was provided with K 100 million yesterday to allow for a quick response to disasters. The donation was made by KBZ's Brighter Future Myanmar Foundation- the BFM.

Ayeyawady Region is reportedly the tenth region in the country to receive such a donation from the foundation.

"The donation is aimed at quickly responding to disasters and the country is facing disasters currently," said U Bo Bo

Wai Maung, a representative of the BFM, at a ceremony held at the Ayeyawady Region Government office.

Ayeyawady Region Chief Minister U Mahn Jonny accepted the donation and expressed thanks. "Learning from delays in sending relief aid to some areas due to poor infrastructure when the country was hit badly by disasters last year, BFM's Chairperson Daw Nang Lang Kham decided to establish the fund nationwide with the aim of assisting local authorities in car-

rying out relief and rehabilitation efforts in a timely manner," said U Bo Bo Wai Maung.

More than 310,000 people within the Ayeyawady Region districts of Patheingyi, Hinthada and Maubin have been affected by recent flooding as of Monday, according to regional government. The flooding has submerged a total of 703 villages, forcing 38,000 people to take refuge in over 180 local shelters, while those villagers unaccounted for are reportedly fending for themselves. — *Thura Lwin (Eco)*

Combined medical team performed kidney transplant operation successfully at Nay Pyi Taw Military Hospital

A COMBINED medical team including specialists from the Myanmar Military Medical Services Corps successfully transplanted a kidney into a female patient, Daw Cho Thae Oo, at the Nay Pyi Taw Military Hospital on Monday.

The kidney was taken from donor Daw Khine Nyein Oo, an elder sister of Daw Cho Thae Oo.

The Tatmadaw Medical team, together with foreign experts, carried out kidney transplants 25 times between 1997 and 2010 at

the Mingaladon Military Hospital. From 2010 to now, specialists from the Myanmar Military Medical Services Corps, without foreign experts, have undertaken kidney transplant operations 122 times at the Mingaladon Military Hospital and 8 times at the Tatmadaw Hospital in Pyin Oo Lwin.

The Tatmadaw Medical team performed another kidney transplant yesterday. — *Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services*



Kidney transplant operation in progress. PHOTO: C-IN-C'S OFFICE

Temporary shelters will be built for the Taung Pyone festival visitors

TEMPORARY shelters will be built for Taung Pyone festival visitors to stay conveniently during the festival, it is learned.

We will build 15 temporary shelters for the visitors. Currently, four shelters have already been built. We will also arrange

for the visitors to stay at the monasteries and the houses close to the festival site. We've also arranged to supply water for the guests, said the U Maung Maung Lin, the person in charge of the construction group.

"Every year, I went to the

Taung Pyone festival to pray for prosperous business. For the first time visitors, they can find it difficult to get a place to stay at, but for the other visitors who visit every year, they are not very difficult to find a guest house to stay at. Building new guesthouses

and shelters make more convenient the visitor, said a visitor Daw Aye Ngwe.

Buddha Pujaniya festival and Taung Pyone Brothers (Spirits) festival will be celebrated from 11 to 18 August at Taung Pyone village, Madaya township,

Mandalay region. The shops and the stages are being built for the festival.

Those visitors who believe in the Spirits will visit Taung Pyone festival, which is crowded with the pilgrims and the spirit worshippers. — *Zar Zar*

Crime NEWS

Yaba seized in Phakant

AUTHORITIES seized Yaba pills at a house in Kaung San village, Phakant township, on 7 August. Acting on a tip-off, the police searched a house belonging to one Ye Lwin and found 63,400 Yaba pills. Maw Kyin Hone was found together with the host.

Similarly, a joint task force, including officials from the Kengtung township seized 4,924 Yaba tablets from the house owned by one Nan Hla in Wam Pon village, Kengtung township. Ma Nan Ww Hong, Sai Un, Sai Norm Kyauk, Sai Long Shan were found together with the host.

And, member of the police



Sai Norm Kyauk and Sai Long Shan. PHOTO: MPF

seized 2,500 Yaba pills from a sawmill of Chit Thae at Kama Maung town, Papum township. Local police have filed charges

against all suspects under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — *Myanmar Police Force*

A man died in accident

A motorbike collided head on with a 12-wheel vehicle on Lin Gataw- Yesagyo road, Myine township, on 7 August.

According to the investigation, the motorbike being driven by U Aye Kyaing, 63, crashed into the 12-wheel vehicle driven

by Aung Soe Lin, 29, from Kalay town.

The accident killed U Aye Kyaing who succumbed to the injuries on the spot. Both of the reckless drivers have been charged by the police station. — *Kyaw Zayar*

Woman arrested for mortgaging of fake gold

A woman has been convicted for mortgaging of fake gold near Yan Pae market, Magwe town on 6 August.

According to the investigation, the police arrested a woman suspicious of selling and mortgaging of fake gold in the market. The police identified the woman as Ma San Yu alias Ma San Su

alias Daw Hla Hla alias Daw Tin Myint alias Daw Thuzar alias Daw Khin Thadar Tun alias Daw Mya Mya, 67, from North Okkalapa township. The police found Ks 529100, gold materials, gold sale vouchers and a mobile phone from her. The police have filed charges against her. — *Kyaw Zayar*

LOCAL Business

Consortiums prepare to reach eventual inking of construction project

PROJECT consortium companies are preparing to reach an eventual inking of the construction project of Hanthawaddy International Airport in December, it has been learned from the Department of Civil Aviation.

Hanthawaddy International Airport will become the largest and main international gateway into Myanmar once it is operational. It will be built on over 9,600 acres of land in Bago. This airport is located over 50 miles away from Yangon. The consortiums, led by JGC Corporation from Japan, Singapore based Changi Airports International (CAI) and Yongnam Holdings Limited will build the airport. The whole projects will be implemented with Official Development Assistance (ODA) fund

loans from the Japanese government. The consortiums plan to enter into the final stage of the agreement in December.

JGC Corporation and other companies conducted a feasibility study of the project in June, said an official from the department.

The first phase of the Hanthawaddy International Airport project will cost about US\$1.5 billion. The construction of Hanthawaddy International Airport is slated to be completed in 2020. After the first phase of the project is completed, about 12 million travellers are expected to use the airport each year. The airport is expected to have a capacity of 50 million travelers per year after total completion.—200



A conceptual design of Hanthawaddy International Airport by Yongnam CAPE-JGC Consortium.

PHOTO SUPPLIED BY DCA

Sesame growers faced with difficulties at harvest time

CONTINUOUS torrential rainfall and flooding is harming sesame growers in Magwe Region, it has been learned from locals in Chauk and Yenanchaung townships.

Sesame growers are faced with a shortage of labour even when they offer K5,000 per day to harvest rain crops which cultivated in May.

Since growers simultaneously harvest sesames in the township they have reportedly been faced with a scarcity of labour.

Sesame farms have also been damaged by torrential rains, causing losses.

“Only half of my sesame plantation has been harvested,” said a grower who owns 10 acres of sesame plantation in Chauk Township. Flooding from the Ayeyawady hit about 80 per cent of green gram crops in Meinma Hla Kyun village, Yenanchaung Township. There is a total of around 57,637 acres of sesame plantation in Yenanchaung Township.—200



A farmer ties sesame plants at a farm in Mandalay. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG

MPT sim card holders must register at sales centres under new rules

THE Myanmar Post and Telecommunication (MPT) company has issued an announcement to operators that phone sim cards have to be registered at sales centres.

Phone sim cards which have not been registered will be suspended starting from March 2017.

Mobile users have been instructed to register their sim before the cutoff date to avoid being denied phone service. Although this method of purchasing is easy for customers, we find it difficult to solve problems, said a responsible person from Telenor.

Apparently, the new rules

have been instated to halt mobile users from exchanging sim cards with one another, depriving mobile operators of customer's accurate personal information. To register a sim card, a national registration card (NRC) or other documentation needs to be presented at a sales centre.—200

Eighty per cent of Myanmar rubber exported to China

THE Myanmar rubber market is heavily dependent on China because about 80 per cent of the raw materials of Myanmar rubber are being exported to China, it has been learnt.

Myanmar also exports rubber to India and Japan. Some rubber growers who can afford to cultivate new, high-yield rubber varieties fell their old trees, which cannot result in a high yield, said the rubber growers.

“We replaced old rubber trees with high-yield rubber varieties. Currently, we have to invest both time and money in rubber cultivation. China is the main buyer. To penetrate into the world market, Myanmar's rubber is required to systematically produce from farm to producing latex. Besides, some rubber trees are forced to cut down to be used

as firewood,” said U Aung Min, a rubber farm owner.

The old rubber trees can produce about 700 pounds per acre a year whereas the high-yield rubber trees can produce about 2,000 pounds per acre a year. The high-yield rubber trees can produce latex after seven years of cultivation.

There are over 1.5 million acres of rubber plantations in Myanmar. Over 80,000 tonnes of rubber are yearly manufactured as an industrial crop. The rubber growers are always faced with difficulties when the rubber prices decline because of the world economic climate, said the rubber farm owners from Beelin Township.

There are rubber farms which do not produce latex because of the decreased price in the rainy season, said one grower.—Zar Zar

Ferries to run along Pan Hlaing River and Ngamoeyeik creek in November

FERRIES will run along Pan Hlaing River and Ngamoeyeik creek in November, said Dr. Maung Aung, secretary of the Yangon Transport Authority.

The Yangon Transport Authority had previously made known its plans to upgrade the water transportation system as part of a joint venture project with local and foreign companies. The regional government will draw up rules and regulations and retain control of ferry operations. A final deal on the joint venture is yet to be reached.—200

Japan warns China of worsening ties over East China Sea dispute

TOKYO—Japan warned China on Tuesday that ties were “deteriorating markedly” over disputed East China Sea islets, and China’s envoy in Tokyo reiterated Beijing’s stance that the specks of land were its territory and called for talks to resolve the row.

Tensions between Asia’s two largest economies have risen since Japan saw an increasing number of Chinese coast-guard and other government ships sailing near the disputed islets, called Senkaku in Japan and Diaoyu in China, over the past few days.

Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida called in Chinese ambassador Cheng Yonghua for the second time since Friday and told him that China was trying to change the status quo unilaterally, a Japanese foreign ministry statement said.

It also said Kishida told Cheng that the environment surrounding Sino-Japanese ties was deteriorating markedly.

Cheng said after

the meeting that he told Kishida the islands were an integral part of China’s territory and that the dispute should be resolved through diplomacy and dialogue.

“I told him that ... it is natural that Chinese ships conduct activity in the waters in question,” he told reporters.

“I also told him both countries need to work on dialogue through diplomatic channels so as not to make things more complicated and escalated,” Cheng said.

Kishida summoned Cheng after the latest flare-up in tensions over dozens of Chinese vessels that sailed near the islands at the weekend. Cheng was also called in by Japanese Vice Foreign Minister Shinsuke Sugiyama on Friday. The flurry of Chinese incursions into the waters follows a period of sustained pressure on China about its activities in the South China Sea, and Chinese criticism of what it saw as Japanese interference in that dispute.—*Reuters*

Philippines envoy ‘optimistic’ about ice breaking China trip



Former Philippine President Fidel Ramos speaks to journalists during a trip to Hong Kong, China after the Hague court’s ruling over the maritime dispute in South China Sea, on 9 August 2016. PHOTO : REUTERS

HONG KONG — Former Philippines President Fidel Ramos on Tuesday named the head of a Chinese government think-tank among the experts and officials he hoped to meet on a trip to rekindle ties with China soured by a maritime dispute in the South China Sea.

On 12 July, an arbitration court in the Hague ruled that China had no historic title over the

busy waterway and had breached the Philippines’ sovereign rights there, infuriating China, which had dismissed the case.

“I’ve always been a very optimistic person, always looking for the best results,” Ramos told reporters in Hong Kong. “But of course that also depends on the attitude of the Chinese officials.”

Ramos gave no details of his itinerary or of

those he planned to meet, except for Wu Shicun, who heads the National Institute for South China Sea Studies think-tank, based on China’s southern island of Hainan.

Asked about others, such as China’s former deputy minister for Foreign Affairs Fu Ying, Ramos said he did not know yet.

“They all have links with Beijing, because some of them are already retired but elevated to the parliament as chairman of this and that committee.”

Ramos said he sought to improve economic and tourism links, such as by allowing “more fishing in the common fishing ground” of the Scarborough shoal in the Philippines’ exclusive economic zone.

“The idea is to use the South China Sea as a place to save lives, but not to kill people or to destroy lives,” he added.

China’s 2012 seizure of the Scarborough Shoal, denying Philippine fishermen access, was among the factors that prompted

Manila to seek arbitration.

But China has ignored the court’s ruling that none of its reefs and holdings in the Spratly Islands entitled it to a 200-mile exclusive economic zone.

China claims almost the entire South China Sea, through which more than \$5 trillion of trade moves annually. Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Viet Nam also have claims in the sea, believed to be rich in energy deposits.

Ramos, 88, who described his role as an “ice-breaker”, is known for an impromptu duet of Elvis Presley’s ‘Love Me Tender’ with former Chinese president Jiang Zemin at a 1996 banquet.

His trip represents “the first concrete step” in engagement for both sides and “could open a new chapter in settling disputes”, China’s state news agency, Xinhua, said in a commentary.

Ramos was Philippines president from 1992 to 1998, when China occupied the submerged Mischief Reef.—*Reuters*

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Thai junta chief Prayuth reiterates election in 2017

BANGKOK — Thailand will hold a general election in 2017, Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha said on Tuesday, seeking to allay concerns his military government might delay plans for a return to democracy, days after the country endorsed a military-backed constitution.

The vote in favour of the constitution in Sunday’s referendum, the biggest test of public opinion since then army chief Prayuth seized power in a 2014 coup, is generally seen as a boost for the legitimacy of the government and its plans.

Under the junta’s “roadmap” to restore democratic rule, Prayuth had previously said a general election would be held in 2017.

His confirmation of that plan, in his first public comments since the referendum, came after the US State Department on

Monday urged Thailand to take steps to restore an elected, civilian government as soon as possible.

“Please have confidence in the roadmap,” Prayuth told reporters at Government House, his official offices, before a cabinet meeting.

“An election will take place in 2017, I have never said anything different to this.”

The government says the constitution will restore stable, clean politics after a decade of turmoil stemming from confrontation between populist political forces and the military-royalist establishment.

Two military take-overs and outbreaks of deadly civil unrest over the years have stunted growth in Southeast Asia’s second-biggest economy. Analysts say a desire for political stability drove the “yes” vote,



Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha arrives at a cabinet meeting at government house in Bangkok, Thailand, on 9 August 2016. PHOTO : REUTERS

with 61 per cent in favour, preliminary results based on a count of 94 per cent of votes show.

Critics, including major political parties, had denounced the constitution before the vote, saying it would stifle democracy by giving unelected lawmakers, including those

appointed by the military, veto power over elected governments.

The European Union also urged a quick return to democracy, calling on authorities to lift restrictions on freedom of expression that have been in place since the 2014 coup. —*Reuters*

China drafts new rules to curb mining pollution

SHANGHAI — China plans to raise environmental standards in its highly-polluting mining sector, according to a policy draft circulated by the Ministry of Environmental Protection.

Amid rising concerns about the state of its environment, China has declared war on polluters and has drawn up new laws, standards and punishments aimed at forcing firms and local governments to toe the line.

The mining sector has been a crucial part of China's rapid economic expansion in the last three decades, but poor regulation and weak enforcement of standards has contaminated much of the country's soil and left parts of its land and water supplies unfit for human use, threatening public health.

According to draft rules published on the website of the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) (www.mep.gov.cn) late last week, miners will be forced to treat more than 85 per cent of their wastewater, and they must put systems in place to achieve the "comprehensive utilisation" of tailings and other solid waste.

Firms will also be forced to implement measures to remediate land and minimise emissions while mines are still in operation, rather than treating soil and water long after it has been contaminated.

Mining firms will also be pressured to implement measures to protect or even relocate valuable ecosystems. Producers of toxic



A general view of a white polluted stream in Dongchuan District of Kunming, Yunnan Province in 2013. PHOTO: REUTERS

heavy metals like lead or cadmium also need to make use of biological or chemical technologies to remediate contaminated soil.

The new rules will cover metals such as tin, copper, lead and rare earths, as well as minerals like calcium carbonate, though they do not apply to the coal industry,

which has separate guidelines.

Other government bodies and state-owned mining firms like Jixiangxi Copper and Yunnan Tin have been invited to submit their opinions on the draft rules before 25 August.

As much as 16 per cent of China's soil exceeds state pol-

lution limits, according to environment ministry data published in 2015, and farming on 3.3 million hectares (8.15 million acres) of contaminated land across the country has been banned indefinitely.

China published an action plan to treat soil pollution earlier

this year, saying that it aimed to bring the problem under control by 2020.

However, the cost of making China's contaminated land fit for crops or livestock could reach around 5 trillion yuan (\$750 billion), according to Reuters calculations.—Reuters

Australia sets up specialist cyber unit to trace terrorism payments

SYDNEY — Australia has set up a cyber-intelligence unit to identify terrorism financing, money laundering and financial fraud online, the government said on Tuesday, because of "unprecedented" threats to national security.

The measure expands on a major platform of conservative Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, who narrowly won re-election last month after promising to improve Australia's cybersecurity and transform the economy into a

tech-savvy business hub. Justice Minister Michael Keenan said the new unit, set up under money-tracking agency the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC), would investigate online payment platforms and financial cybercrime to crack down on money-laundering and criminal networks. "We know that the use of fraudulent identities continues to be a key enabler of serious and organized crime and terrorism," Keenan said in a statement. The statement said the

new AUSTRAC unit would work with the Australian and New Zealand government-funded identity support service, ID Care, to target job recruitment scams that crime syndicates used to recruit innocent people to traffic money between jurisdictions.

The new unit would also work with the Australian Cybercrime Online Reporting Network to identify patterns and trends that could indicate large-scale financial scams or their methodology, Keenan said.—Reuters



A delegate at the FireEye Cyber Security Summit uses his laptop during a break in sessions at a venue in Sydney, Australia, on 17 March, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Australian voter turnout in July election lowest in 90 years

CANBERRA — Australia recorded its lowest voter turnout at last month's Federal Election since compulsory voting was introduced in 1925.

According to a report in Fairfax Media publications on Tuesday, 1.4 million eligible Australians, representing 9 per cent of voters, failed to cast a vote on 2 July for the lower house of Australian parliament, the House of Representatives election.

In what became one of the

closest elections in Australia's history, the turnout was the worst since only 59 per cent of the population voted in the 1922 general election, prompting the introduction of compulsory voting from 1925 onwards. Voting in the Senate, the upper house of parliament, was slightly better than the House of Representatives with 8.1 per cent of people failing to lodge a vote in the July election.

A spokesperson from the Australian Electoral Commis-

sion (AEC) told Fairfax that the election coinciding with school holidays and being in the middle of winter could be responsible for the poor turnout.

The spokesperson also said that voters casting absentee votes (a vote cast by someone who is unable to attend a polling station in the electorate where they live), incorrectly identifying which electorate they were enrolled and thus casting a vote in an electorate in which they are ineligible to do

so could account for the turnout.

Those votes cast by absentee voters would not have counted as a formal vote for the lower house but their Senate ballots would have been valid, possibly accounting for the discrepancy.

Pre-eminent election analyst Antony Green said the AEC enrolling people using information from other government agencies without notifying the people could have contributed to the low turnout.

"You end up enrolling people who tried to avoid voting for years," Green told Fairfax.

The incumbent center-right Liberal National Party (LNP) led by Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull won the election by a narrow margin, securing the bare minimum 76 lower house seats required to form government.

First time non-voters will be charged a 15 US dollar penalty while repeat offenders have to pay 38 dollars.—Xinhua

Opinion

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People tend to be corrupt

Khin Maung Aye

BRIBERY, corruption and graft pose a dramatic threat to economic development, good governance and popular support for the government. In fact, cases of graft are not uncommon in all parts of the world with the only difference being the level of corruption. The reason is that people tend to be corrupt out of love or hatred, anger, ignorance and fear. This being so, people's action must be monitored and controlled by a proper system. As long as the performance of duties and/or implementation

of plans, programmes and projects are entirely dependent upon the implementers, who are ordinary human beings with ordinary suggestions not being saints, cases of bribery and corruption will prevail more or less. Such being the case, it can be concluded that performance of duties and implementation of plans, programmes and projects should be carried out with the human beings' involvement made the best. The solution is the introduction of the e-government, which employs application soft wares in all gov-

ernment departments, enterprises, boards and committees.

At a time like now when the government is not ready yet to turn itself into an e-government for lack of financial resources, technical knowhow and qualified human resources, it is of utmost importance for having a proper monitoring and controlling system to prevent the service personnel from commitment of graft and corruption. In this regard, it is equally important to prevent the entrepreneurs from giving bribes to get things done faster

and to avoid having to present the necessary documents and certificates.

Nevertheless, there is also an important question as to whether the service personnel can live a life of quality with salary. This is an important human factor to be pondered over because there is a saying, "Hungry people find it difficult to observe the Five Precepts". Such being the case, the State Counsellor is very often heard to make comments on low salary when meeting with the lowly paid public service personnel.

Skills Training, Assessment and Certification of Workers Based on Occupational Competency Standards

Kyaw Win (Labour)(Retd.)

IN 2002, the "Enhancing Skills Recognition Systems in ASEAN Project" relating to 'sub-professional level occupations' was undertaken by ASEAN and AADCP (ASEAN-Australia Development Cooperation Program) in line with the decisions of the ASEAN Labour Ministers aimed at increasing skilled labour mobility within ASEAN.

The Ministry of Labour, Myanmar participated in the project as the focal ministry for Myanmar. The project though initially was to be from 2002 to 2004 was extended specifically for CLMV/T countries up to 2006.

The Ministry of Labour formed a Working Group, headed by the Director General of Labour and comprising of representatives of organizations under the concerned Ministries and Non-Governmental Organizations to participate in the implementation of the project.

The aim of the project was to identify skills recognition systems of the ASEAN countries relating to 'sub-professional level occupations' and to recommend measures to be taken for recognition of skills across ASEAN.

The project's initial phase outcome revealed that some ASEAN countries are practicing system of skills training based on Occupational Competency Standards. It was surmised that conducting skills training and certification based on comparable

occupational competency standards by all the ASEAN countries would facilitate mobility of skilled labour within ASEAN.

For some of the CLMV/T countries that had no Occupational Competency Standards or were in various stages of developing such standards, extension of the project was called for, with outcome focused on developing occupational competency standards. The extension project also included actual development of occupational competency standards for selected occupations on a trial basis. Five occupations were selected namely Air Conditioning Mechanic, Poultry Farm Worker, Tour Guide, Concreter and Welder for the competency standards development exercise.

During the term of the extension project, National and Regional Workshops were held in some of the CLMV/T countries and the five Occupational Standards were developed with inputs by the occupational experts of the participating countries and with the help of occupational experts from ASEAN Member Countries that had already developed such standards. *The structure and template of the Occupational Standards were adopted by consensus among the CLMV/T participants.*

After the completion of the extension project and based on its recommendations, the Ministry of Labour in 2007, with the approval of the Cabinet, formed the 'National Skills Standards Authority' to develop occupational skills standards in priority

occupations to facilitate the training, assessment and certification of skilled workers, including those currently seeking jobs in the labour market and existing skilled workers who had no skills recognition certificates.

The NSSA was headed by the Deputy Minister for Labour and comprised of representatives of the various concerned Ministries and NGOs as representing the private sector. The Director General of the Department of Labour was appointed to be the Secretary of the NSSA.

The NSSA formed (14) Sectorial committees, each representing an industrial/service sector, headed by the Director Generals/ Managing Directors of the Governmental Organizations concerned, to draw up occupational skills standards at (4) levels namely Semi-skilled Worker (level 1), Skilled Worker (level 2), Advanced Skilled Worker (level 3), and Supervisor (level 4). Some 173 Occupational Skills Standards were developed based on international and ASEAN Member States' standards.

After the 2010 multiparty elections and the forming of the Hluttaws and the Government in 2011, among the laws enacted by the Hluttaws was the 'Employment and Skills Development Law' to replace the historic but outdated 1950, 'Employment and Training Law' that was administered by the Department of Labour under the Ministry of Labour.

The NSSA functions are em-

bedded in the new ESD Law as 'Skills Development Body/Committee,' to replace the NSSA. Pending the formation of the 'Skills Development Body/Committee' and drawing up of Rules under the new ESD law, the NSSA had continued to function.

Starting 2013, the NSSA, with the technical and financial assistance of GIZ and to an extent Swisscontact, undertook a pilot project to assess existing skilled workers against the occupational skills standards of (11) chosen occupations and award Competency Certificates to those declared 'Competent'. It was decided to assess existing skilled workers at levels (1) to start with.

One important feature of the ESD law, is the separation of the functions of *standards development and training from assessment and certification*. The assessment process is to be supervised by the Assessment and Certification Committee of the NSSA. It is the usual process in countries awarding national level skills certificates to task assessment to a separate body.

Prior to the assessments the relevant Occupational Competency Standards were reviewed by a team of experts nominated by the Sectorial Committees concerned assisted by national and international consultants tasked by GIZ. *The reviewed standards are in the structure and template approved by the NSSA.*

The Assessment and Certification Committee under the

NSSA was renewed and tasked with implementation of the assessment of existing skilled workers. The assessments were conducted in line with provisions of the ESD Law on skills assessment and using the reviewed standards. Some 700 workers have thus far been assessed and certified in the (11) selected occupations at levels (1)

As of now (14) more occupational competency standards at level (1) have been reviewed following the procedure mentioned above making a total of (25) occupational standards having been reviewed. Standards for levels (2) of the 25 occupations are also to be reviewed following which assessment and certification at level (2) will be undertaken.

GIZ has also been rendering technical and financial assistance to the NSSA for developing curricula guidelines based on the reviewed standards. The development of curricular based on competency standards will ensure the quality of training of workers by the employers (both in the public and private sectors), as well as by private training providers.

The Employment and Skills Development Law has paved the way for systematic skills training, assessment and certification of workers based on Occupational Competency Standards. This will contribute in no small way to enhancing the skills and productivity of the Myanmar workforce.

Indian cold pills pour over remote border to fuel Myanmar narcotics boom

TAMU, Myanmar Five years ago, when cold pills first trickled across Myanmar's untamed border with India, many local officials were baffled. Where was this medicine going, and why were smugglers so interested in it?

Today, the cross-border trickle has become a torrent and everyone knows why the Indian-made pills are so valuable: they are bound for secret laboratories in lawless eastern Myanmar that churn out most of mainland South-east Asia's methamphetamine, or "meth".

Cold pills contain pseudoephedrine, the main ingredient of meth, a highly addictive drug whose ever-soaring popularity is rattling governments across Asia.

In recent months the Philippines has elected a president on a platform of harsh action against drug dealers, Indonesia has resumed executions of drug traffickers after a year-long hiatus and Thailand is wrestling with a soaring prison population.

Myanmar's current boom in meth production would be impossible without a recent surge in pseudoephedrine smuggled from India's huge and ill-regulated pharmaceuticals sector, say police and narcotics experts.

The uninterrupted flow of the drug is highlighting a disconnect between countries in tackling a meth epidemic that the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) calls Asia's "number one drug threat".

"It's big, big business," said Ye Htut, a former advisor to Myanmar's ex-President Thein Sein. He attributed a property boom in Kalay, the largest town in this otherwise impoverished region, to the profits made from smuggling pseudoephedrine.

Meth is sold in pill form as "ya ba", a Thai name meaning "crazy medicine", or as a more potent, crystalline substance known as "crystal meth", "ice" or "sha-bu".

Each Indian cold pill can make one "ya ba" and costs only a few cents to produce. By the time it has crossed the border



Police in Myanmar's Tamu district show a test kit used to identify pseudoephedrine in Myanmar's Chin State, near the border with India where huge quantities of Indian-made pseudoephedrine, the main ingredient for the highly addictive drug methamphetamine, or "meth," is smuggled over the border into Myanmar May 11, 2016. Picture taken May 11, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

and reached Mandalay - Myanmar's northern capital and a major smuggling hub - the pill's value has increased roughly tenfold.

Across mainland Southeast Asia, the UNODC estimates the meth trade was worth about \$15 billion in 2013.

The rugged and ethnically diverse region straddling the Indian border ranks among Myanmar's poorest, with no industry and modest infrastructure. Its main road is a two-lane highway linked by rickety bridges and plied by ox carts.

It is here that Myanmar police have been finding thousands of the cold pills, hidden in rice sacks, packed into truck chassis or spilling from the luggage of cross-border bus passengers.

In one bust here in mid-June, police intercepted a car carrying more than 60 kg (130 lbs) of Indian pseudoephedrine - enough to make more than a million "ya ba" pills.

Global demand for methamphetamine has created "new precursor chemical entrepreneurs

in India", said the U.S. State Department in a 2015 report. Experts believe many criminals who once smuggled drugs now prefer precursors, which offer high profits but much lighter penalties.

Myanmar police say China is also a major supplier of pseudoephedrine. But with tighter controls there, and with greater demand for the chemical as meth use booms, drug producers have increasingly turned to India.

Pseudoephedrine is a controlled substance in India requiring all handlers to register with the authorities. In practice, the trade is poorly monitored, with Indian officials complaining of weak intelligence-sharing between government agencies and rare prosecutions of offenders.

Raw pseudoephedrine is made in a handful of Indian factories, then moved through a network of wholesalers, drug makers, distributors and drugstores. It gets pilfered at every point along the way, say experts.

In a statement to Reuters, India's Narcotics Control Bureau

(NCB) said seizures had dropped after the country's narcotics laws were changed in 2013 to define pseudoephedrine as controlled.

And indeed, police in Kalay and Tamu, Myanmar's two main districts bordering India, seized only 400 kg of pseudoephedrine last year, down from more than 3.5 tons in 2013.

But that may well be because smugglers have found novel ways to avoid detection.

"It's highly likely that traffickers have just shifted approach," said Jeremy Douglas, the UNODC's Asia-Pacific head.

Tamu district alone had more than 80 unofficial crossing points along its 125-km (80-mile) border with India, said Douglas, making it almost impossible to monitor.

The Indian Embassy in Yangon did not respond to a request for comment on the problem.

Already the world's second-largest producer, after Afghanistan, of opium and its derivative heroin, Myanmar is now also reporting record-breaking seizures of meth. In May, police

intercepted a truck in northern Myanmar carrying 21 million ya ba pills worth an estimated \$35 million.

The booming drugs trade poses a challenge to the fledgling government of Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi.

Rapid urbanization in the commercial capital Yangon is creating the kind of slums that have fuelled the increase in meth abuse in countries such as Thailand and the Philippines. Health experts are braced for an explosion in domestic meth use.

Meanwhile, police in Mandalay, a transit point between the western frontier with India and the rebel-dominated eastern borderlands, say they are still making record seizures of Indian-made pseudoephedrine.

Greater regional integration, aided by Indian and Myanmar road-building programmes, promised to boost both trade and trafficking, said the UNODC's Douglas.

"India and Myanmar are cooperating to some extent but they're not doing a lot of joint operations or intelligence-sharing," he said.

Myanmar police said most large drug and precursor shipments were smuggled through Moreh, the Indian border town opposite Tamu. They have arrested scores of couriers or "mules", but said they needed India's help to arrest the ringleaders.

An Indian man suspected of arranging a large pseudoephedrine shipment in 2013 sought refuge on the other side of the border, said Tamu police chief Major Soe Naing. "Cooperation with India is quite weak so we haven't been able to catch him," he said.

The NCB said Myanmar had not presented evidence that smuggling kingpins were hiding in India, or even that the pseudoephedrine it had seized was Indian-made.

"It is coming from other countries too," said a top NCB official, who asked not to be named because he wasn't authorised to speak to journalists.—Reuters

BBC Burmese programmes coming to Myanmar Radio



BBC Burmese radio programmes will be rebroadcast by Myanmar's state broadcaster Myanmar Radio, it has been learned.

Three programmes are set to be picked up by Myanmar Radio including the BBC Burmese youth show Mobigeno, the technology and digital inno-

ventions programme Cool Tech and the farming programme San Thit Tehtwin Lai Myay Ta Kwin. The programmes will be aired on FM, medium and short-wave signals.

The BBC's Burmese Editor Tin Htar Swe said of the development "Our collaboration with Myanmar Radio means that

now, for the first time for BBC Burmese in Myanmar, our content will be available via a state broadcaster.

In addition to medium and shortwave availability, airing these programmes on FM will help us capture a new radio audience which will include a lot of young people who listen

to FM on their mobile phones. This is great news for the BBC in Myanmar, further reinforcing our multiplatform presence in Myanmar."

The BBC Burmese 10-minute bi-weekly programmes will be re-broadcast by Myanmar Radio and repeated the following week.—GNLM

Republican national security experts: Trump would be 'dangerous' president



Republican US presidential nominee Donald Trump speaks to the Detroit Economic Club at the Cobo Center in Detroit, Michigan, on 8 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

WASHINGTON — Fifty prominent Republican national security officials, including a former CIA director, on Monday called party nominee Donald Trump unqualified to lead the country and said he would be “the most reckless president in American history.”

The statement was the latest repudiation of Trump’s candidacy by veteran Republican national security specialists, and was remarkable for the harshness of its language.

“Mr. Trump lacks the character, values, and experience to be president. He weakens US moral authority as the leader of the free world. He appears to lack basic knowledge about and belief in the US Constitution, US laws and US institutions, including religious tolerance, freedom of the press, and an independent judiciary,” the statement said.

“None of us will vote for Donald Trump,” said the statement, which noted that some sig-

natories also have doubts about Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton.

“From a foreign policy perspective, Donald Trump is not qualified to be president and commander in chief,” said the statement, which was first reported in the *New York Times*. “Indeed, we are convinced that he would be a dangerous president and would put at risk our country’s national security and well-being.”

The signatories, some of whom worked for more than one Republican president, included former Central Intelligence Agency Director Michael Hayden, who also headed the National Security Agency; former Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff; former Director of National Intelligence John Negroponte; and two former US trade representatives, Carla Hills and Robert Zoellick.

Other signatories included former senior State Department,

Pentagon and National Security Council officials who helped plan and oversee the 2003 US invasion of Iraq. Trump has harshly criticised the Iraq operation, although when radio host Howard Stern asked him in 2002 if he favoured invading Iraq, Trump said he guessed he did.

The statement was organised by Philip Zelickow, who served as a top adviser to former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Trump responded with a statement deriding the signatories as members of “the failed Washington elite” who “deserve the blame for making the world such a dangerous place.”

“These insiders – along with Hillary Clinton – are the owners of the disastrous decisions to invade Iraq, allow Americans to die in Benghazi, and they are the ones who allowed the rise of ISIS,” he continued, using an acronym for the Islamic State militant group.—*Reuters*

United Nations chief urges large nations to ratify Paris climate accord

BUENOS AIRES — UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged Argentina and other large nations to ratify the Paris climate accord at a Buenos Aires conference on Monday, and Argentina’s foreign minister said she hoped the country would do so by the end of the year.

In December 2015, some 195 countries reached an agreement in Paris that obligates states to take concrete measures to curb emissions that contribute to climate change. But the pact will not go into force until it is ratified by 55 countries representing 55 per cent of global greenhouse emissions.

As of now, only 22 coun-

tries have done so, many of them small, vulnerable island nations that account for a negligible percentage of emissions.

Ban urged China and the United States, the world’s top two greenhouse gas emitters, to ratify the deal, and also pushed Argentina, Latin America’s third largest economy, to do the same.

“When we add up the two countries’ greenhouse gas emissions, it comes to almost 40 per cent” of global emissions, Ban said of the United States and China.

“So 55 per cent may not be difficult to achieve, and I urge Argentina to ratify as soon

as possible.”

In response, Argentina’s foreign minister, Susana Malcorra, who is running to replace Ban as UN secretary-general, said the accord has already been approved by one chamber of Congress and she hopes Argentina will have it ratified by the next major UN climate summit in December.

At the event in Buenos Aires, Ban also thanked Argentina for a recent commitment to take in 3,000 refugees from various war-torn locations.

“This kind of solidarity, sign of humanity, should be emulated by many people around the world,” Ban said.—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Japan’s Prince Akishino to visit Thailand to receive honorary degree

TOKYO — Prince Akishino, the younger son of Japanese Emperor Akihito, will pay a four-day visit to Thailand from 18 August to receive an honorary doctorate degree for his research into giant catfish, the Imperial Household Agency said on Tuesday.

The prince will attend an award ceremony to accept his degree in biology from Mahasarakham University, the agency said.

He will also take part in a joint Japan-Thailand symposium on the domestication of poultry and visit another university in Bangkok. He will return to Japan on 21 August. The prince has visited Thailand many times to study the country’s bird and fish species, especially the giant catfish.—*Kyodo News*

Clinton says she will participate in the three presidential debates

WASHINGTON — US Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton will participate in the three debates set by a debate commission, her campaign said in a statement on Monday.

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump has complained that the commission scheduled several of the debates during NFL games, possibly hurting television viewership of the debates.—*Reuters*

American University in Kabul to reopen after kidnappings

KABUL — The American University of Afghanistan is expected to reopen on Wednesday, days after being closed in the wake of the kidnapping of two teachers, administrators said.

The two faculty members, one Australian and one American, were abducted at gunpoint from a road near the university in Kabul on Sunday evening, Afghan officials said.

Since then, the campus has been closed while senior management reviewed the security situation, the university said in a statement online on Tuesday.

“We are devastated by the news and will remain vigilant to ensure the safety of all university personnel and students,” university president Mark English said in the statement.

University officials are in “close contact” with Afghan security agencies and foreign embassies, the university said.—*Reuters*

230 terror suspects detained in Malaysia over past 3 years

PUTRAJAYA — A total of 230 terror suspects were detained in Malaysia over the past three years, of whom 84 have been charged, 18 banished and 62 freed, according to the home affairs ministry on Tuesday.

The ministry made the announcement during a special briefing to foreign diplomats based in Malaysia, detailing its strategies to address terrorism threats in the country.

The ministry said it has enhanced security personnel presence, information sharing with other countries, joint patrol by the police and military, and installation of mobile police booths.

Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the briefing is to prevent possible misconception regarding the security situation in Malaysia, especially after the country suffered its first attack linked to the Islamic State (IS) in late June and police in Indonesia foiled a bomb attack on Singapore last week.—*Xinhua*

Thai woman cleared of murdering elderly Japanese partner

BANGKOK — A Thai woman charged in relation to the killing of her Japanese domestic partner in Thailand in 2015 was acquitted by a court for lack of evidence on Tuesday.

Poranee Napadol, 49, was arrested in October after her brother-in-law told police he had killed 84-year-old Kazuo Yoshioka at her request, a charge she strongly denied.

Yoshioka was found with his throat slit at the house the couple shared in Thailand’s central Ang Thong province on 13 October. Police found bloody footprints at the scene and bloodstains in front of an adjacent house where Poranee’s brother in law, 46-year-old Sampan Chamchaeng, lived.—*Kyodo News*

Pakistani lawyers go on strike after dozens killed in attack

ISLAMABAD/QUETTA (Pakistan) — Pakistani lawyers staged a nationwide strike on Tuesday after dozens of colleagues were slain in a suicide bombing that killed at least 70 people at a hospital in the southwestern city of Quetta.

Medical staff said up to 60 of those slain in the bombing at a government hospital were lawyers who had gathered to mourn the assassination earlier on Monday of the president of the Baluchistan Bar Association, Bilal Anwar Kasi.

Islamic State was one of two Islamist militant groups to claim responsibility for the atrocity, although officials and analysts said they had doubts over whether the Middle East-based movement was behind the blast.

It was the latest, and deadliest, in a string of attacks against lawyers in Pakistan, seen by some militants as an extension of the government and so legitimate targets.

“How weak and pathetic are these people who target hospitals, where women and children, where patients, go to get treatment?” Ashtar Ausaf Ali, Pakistan’s attorney general, said on Tuesday at a protest outside the Supreme Court in the capital Is-



Lawyers speak with the media after protesting against the suicide bomb attack at a hospital in Quetta on Monday, outside the Supreme Court in Islamabad, Pakistan, on 9 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

lamabad. Supreme Court Bar President Ali Zafar called for the government to do more to protect lawyers.

“Lawyers are relatively more vocal against militancy and they are fighting cases against people accused of terrorism, so it would make sense that they are being targeted,” said Ali Malik, a Lahore-based lawyer.

“An attack on lawyers makes a mockery of the law enforce-

ment agencies, it undermines the promises of the state against terrorists and breeds fear among vulnerable citizens.”

The bombing in Quetta, the provincial capital of Baluchistan province, was initially claimed by Jamaat-ur-Ahrar, a faction of the Pakistani Taliban that is fighting to overthrow the government and impose strict Islamic law.

Later, however, Islamic State said one of its fighters carried out

the attack, in what would mark an escalation in the ability of the group, or its regional offshoots, to strike in Pakistan.

“A martyr from the Islamic State detonated his explosive belt at a gathering of justice ministry employees and Pakistani policemen in the city of Quetta,” Islamic State’s Amaq news agency reported. Some Pakistani analysts were sceptical.

“The ISIS claim seems very

unconvincing,” said Imtiaz Gul, director of the Center for Research and Security Studies in Islamabad.

“The claim of responsibility by Jamaat-ur-Ahrar is more credible,” said Muhammad Amir Rana, head of the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies.

He noted that Jamaat had sworn loyalty to Islamic State’s Middle East leadership in 2014, but later switched back to the Taliban.

“Every time they have carried out an attack, they have taken responsibility independently (of Islamic State),” Rana said.

It remains unclear what ties, if any, Jamaat has to Islamic State, whose leadership is a rival to both the Taliban and al Qaeda over claims to represent the true Islamist Caliphate.

In September 2014, Jamaat-ur-Ahrar rejected the Pakistani Taliban during a leadership struggle and swore allegiance to Islamic State, also known as Daesh.

By March 2015, the group was again swearing loyalty to the main Pakistani Taliban. The reason for its return to the fold remains murky, but Jamaat also never specifically disavowed Islamic State.—Reuters

UN calls for urgent humanitarian pause in Aleppo fighting

GENEVA — The United Nations on Tuesday called for an urgent humanitarian ceasefire in the Syrian city of Aleppo, in which it said two million residents were left without access to running water or electricity after attacks hit civilian infrastructure last week.

“The UN is extremely concerned that the consequences will be dire for millions of civilians if the electricity and water networks are not immediate-

ly repaired,” a statement from Yacoub El Hillo, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria, and Kevin Kennedy, UN regional humanitarian coordinator for the Syria crisis, said.

The United Nations children’s agency (UNICEF) warned of risks for children in particular. “These cuts are coming amid a heat wave, putting children at a grave risk of waterborne diseases,” UNICEF said.—Reuters

Turkey formally arrested 16,000 people in coup probe

ISTANBUL — Turkish Justice Minister Bekir Bozdag said on Tuesday 16,000 people have been formally arrested and remanded in custody in connection with last month’s failed coup attempt, while another 6,000 detainees were still being processed.

Another 7,668 people were under investigation but were not currently detained, he said in an interview with state-run Anadolu Agency, broadcast live on Turkish television channels. Turkey has detained, removed or suspended tens of thousands of people in the judiciary, military, police, public service and elsewhere over alleged links with the abortive 15 July putsch, when a faction of the military tried to oust President Tayyip

Erdogan and the government.

More than 240 people were killed and nearly 2,200 people were wounded when a faction of the military commandeered fighter jets, military helicopters and tanks, opening fire on civilians as they attempted to overthrow the government.

Since the coup bid, soldiers, police, judges, journalists, medics and civil servants are among those who have been removed or arrested, prompting concern among Western allies that Erdogan is using the events to tighten his grip on power. Turkey blames followers of US-based exiled Muslim cleric Fethullah Gulen for the attempted coup. Gulen, whose followers in the security forces, judiciary and

civil service Erdogan accuses of orchestrating the attempted power grab, denies any connection to the plot. Turkish authorities say Gulen’s followers used several smartphone messaging apps to communicate with each other in the years ahead of the coup attempt and that Turkey’s national intelligence agency, cracking the programme, was able to trace tens of thousands of people from the group. A senior Turkish official said Turkey’s intelligence agency has identified at least 56,000 operatives of Gulen’s network as they cracked the little-known smartphone messaging app called ByLock, that the group began using in 2014. By this year, Turkish intelligence were able to map their network.—Reuters



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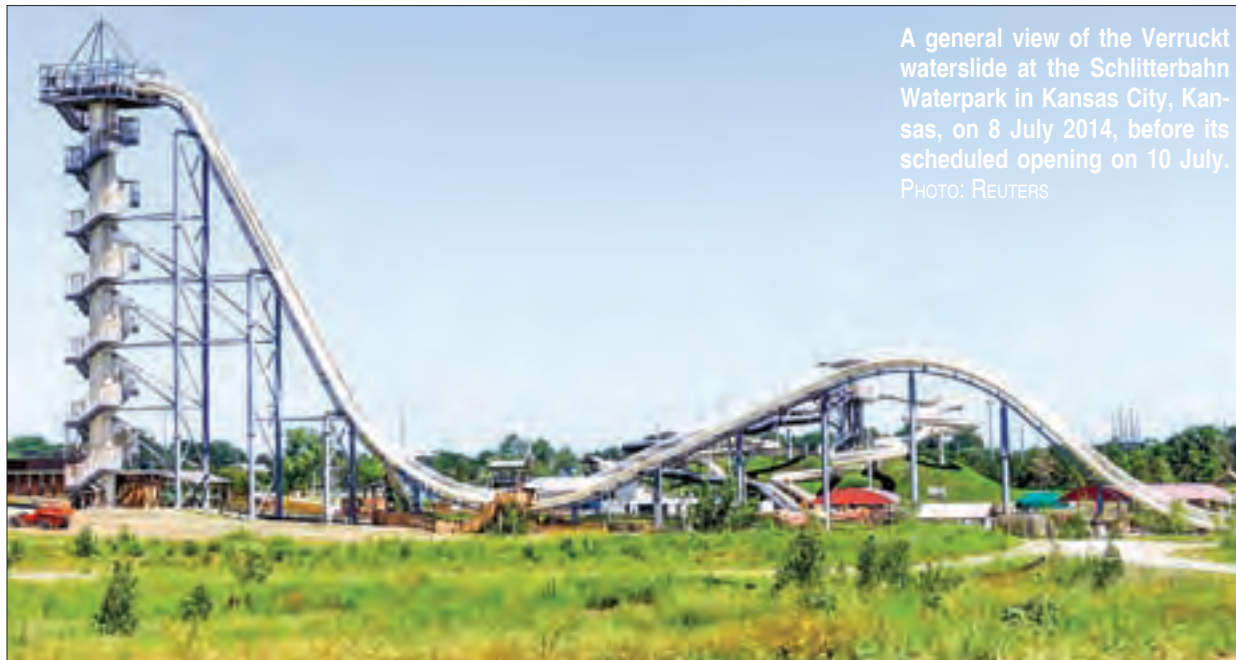
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A general view of the Verrückt waterslide at the Schlitterbahn Waterpark in Kansas City, Kansas, on 8 July 2014, before its scheduled opening on 10 July. PHOTO: REUTERS

Ten-year-old boy on Kansas City waterslide died of neck injury — police

KANSAS CITY — The 10-year-old son of a state lawmaker died of a neck injury while riding the world's tallest water slide in Kansas City, Kansas, police said on Monday.

Caleb Thomas Schwab died on Sunday at the Schlitterbahn waterpark on the Verrückt waterslide, which sends riders plunging down 17 stories at up to 50 miles an hour (80 kph).

He was riding with two women on a raft, Kansas City police said in a statement.

Police and fire officials rushed to the scene after a report of an emergency and found the boy "dead from a fatal neck injury at the end of the ride, in the pool," the

statement said.

The two women on the raft suffered minor injuries to their faces and were hospitalized, it said.

The ride is more than 168 feet (51.4 metres) high, making it taller than the Statue of Liberty from torch to the top of its pedestal. The ride's name means "insane" in German.

Park officials said in a statement that Schlitterbahn Kansas City would remain closed at least until Wednesday, while the slide would be shut down during the course of the investigation. Police and a park spokeswoman declined to give additional details about the child's death, including whether the child met the ride's

height requirement of 54 inches (1.37 metres) or whether the three riders and the raft met the weight requirement.

Schwab was the son of Kansas State Representative Scott Schwab, who said in a statement the family was devastated.

"Caleb was an incredible young man," the family's pastor, Clint Sprague, told a news conference. He was "full of life, loved baseball, basketball, soccer. He was always doing something."

The Verrückt water slide is the tallest in the world, according to Guinness World Records. The park postponed the 2014 opening of the slide three times to ensure safety.

Kansas state Senator

Pat Pettey said the tragedy occurred during the park's "elected officials day" and that she was at the site.

Pettey said in a telephone interview she left the park before the incident that led to the boy's death. She said relatives of hers who stayed at the park had seen blood on the slide.

Under Kansas law, the state Department of Labour has jurisdiction over amusement parks, which must inspect their rides every 12 months with state officials authorized to conduct random inspections.

The incident will likely lead to a discussion in the state legislature about how water parks are regulated, she said.—Reuters

UN agency voices concerns about rise of sexual violence in South Sudan

UNITED NATIONS — The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) said on Monday that it was concerned about the reported increase in sexual violence in South Sudan, calling for stronger support for women and girls to protect their safety, health and rights.

As fighting continued in South Sudan, women and girls faced increased risk of sexual violence, including being attacked while they sought firewood and food, Farhan Haq, the deputy UN spokesman told reporters here.

Also, they resorted to desperate measures, such as survival sex, to feed themselves and their fam-

ilies, Haq said.

Sexual violence and rape were plaguing Juba, the capital of South Sudan, following the latest outbreak of violence, with at least 120 cases reported since fighting restarted on 7 July, the United Nations said late last month.

The UNFPA was working to scale up efforts to meet the immediate needs of survivors, including post-rape care, and to reduce the risk of sexual violence.

The UNFPA estimated that 300,000 people in Juba required life-saving services within the next three months for sexual and reproductive health,

including safe birth, and to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.

Urgent action was needed to protect the health of mothers and newborns, given that 3,000 births were expected in Juba in the next three months, the UN agency said.

In addition, about 600 pregnant women were likely to face pregnancy complications that needed comprehensive emergency obstetric care and quality health services to save their lives.

Even before the recent fighting, the situation was dire in South Sudan, which has one of the highest maternal and infant death

rates in the world.

Due to lack of required infrastructure and capacity, only 11 per cent of births were attended by skilled workers, the UNFPA said, adding that it was working with partners to provide life-saving midwifery services throughout the war-torn country.

Another UNFPA priority was the delivery of much-needed reproductive health supplies and equipment, it said. The UN agency was providing a steady supply of emergency reproductive health kits to protect the right to sexual and reproductive health services across the country.—Xinhua

Ukrainian security forces foil string of terror attacks on railways

KIEV— Ukrainian security forces have arrested a group of people suspected of plotting to blow up three sites on the railroad in the country's western Lviv city, the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) said on Monday.

"Our investigators have found and detained five members of the terrorist group that planned to simultaneously blow up the railway tracks in three different directions from the regional centre," the SBU said in a statement on its website. The SBU said one of the suspects was detained while attaching an explosive device to a bridge

near the village of Dublyany, about 10 km northeast of Lviv city.

The planned attacks have targeted the sections of the railroad lying on the international railway routes, the statement said.

During the searches in the houses of the detainees, the security forces have found an arsenal of weapons, including grenade launchers, grenades, five kg of explosives, 600 grams of TNT, three handguns and various kinds of ammunition, the SBU said. Further search operations and investigation into the case are underway, it said.—Xinhua

Javier swirls toward Mexico, no hurricane seen



Cars travel through a flooded street as Mexico's Baja California peninsula braced for tropical storm Javier in Mazatlan, Mexico, on 8 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

MEXICO CITY — Tropical Storm Javier lost a little strength on Monday evening as it travelled towards the southern part of Mexico's Baja California peninsula, the US National Hurricane Center (NHC) said.

The storm was moving northwest at 5 mph (8 kph) and had maximum sustained winds of 60 mph (97 kph), the NHC said. "A weakening trend is forecast to begin by Tuesday afternoon," it said, adding that Javier was about 30 miles (48 km)

south-southeast of Cabo San Lucas, a popular getaway for US visitors on the peninsula. The NHC had earlier reported that the Mexican government discontinued a hurricane warning for Baja California, after the storm failed to pick up strength on its path northward. In eastern Mexico, mudslides triggered by intense rainfall in the wake of Tropical Storm Earl killed 40 people over the weekend as saturated hillsides collapsed onto homes.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV TRANG AN 07 VOY. NO (02-2016)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV TRANG AN 07 VOY NO (02-2016) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 10.8.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AIPT-1 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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Passengers disembark a Southern train at Victoria Station in London, Britain on 8 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Travel misery for London commuters as union begins five-day strike

LONDON — Hundreds of thousands of train commuters in London and southern England were facing misery on Monday as rail staff began a five-day strike in a safety row over who opens and closes the doors.

Southern, which runs trains from destinations such as Brighton and Gatwick Airport, has said only 60 per cent of its services would operate during the week-long stoppage, the longest British rail walk-out for almost 50 years, and no trains would operate at all on some routes.

The strike adds to the problems of weary passengers who have suffered months of cancellations and delays because of high levels of staff sickness, while in July Southern axed 341 trains, about 15 per cent, to provide what it said would be a more regular service.

The dispute centres on the role of conductors, staff who currently have responsibility for opening and closing the carriage doors. The RMT union, one of Britain’s most militant, says Southern wants to extend the use of driver-only operated trains and so reduce the safety role the conductors play.

Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) (GOG.L), Britain’s largest train operator which owns Southern, says the changes would lead to fewer train cancellations as services would no longer require both drivers and conductors. “Our fight is with the company and the government who have dragged this franchise into total meltdown,” said RMT General Secretary Mick Cash. “We share the anger and frustration of passengers and we cannot sit back while jobs and safety

are compromised on these dangerously overcrowded trains.” During mediation talks last week, the union said it had offered to call off the strike if GTR promised there would be a second staff member on trains while negotiations continued. However, the talks failed as GTR said in times of disruption, there might be occasions when they would let trains run with just a driver.

The company’s Chief Executive Charles Horton said their planned changes would improve services for passengers and had provided guarantees about the future role of conductors but the RMT had refused to negotiate.

“The RMT union is letting everyone down and the action they are taking this week is unnecessary, unacceptable and unjustified,” he told BBC radio.—*Reuters*

Heavy storm causes casualties in Ukraine’s Black Sea resort

KIEV — A heavy storm battered Ukraine’s southern Black Sea resort of Zatoka in Odessa region on Sunday, causing human casualties, local media said on Monday.

A 24-year-old man was killed by a lightning strike at about 6 p.m. local time (GMT 1500) during a sports and music festival in Zatoka, local emergency services said in a statement.

At least three other people participating in the event were injured during the storm, said entertainment operator The Z-Games, which organised the festival.

“The strength of the wind was so powerful that it uprooted trees and tossed tents and catamarans into the air,” said a statement on the Z-Games website.

Meanwhile, several Odessa regional media, citing their own sources, said that one person went missing during the storm in Zatoka after being swept into the sea. The Ukrainian authorities have not yet confirmed or denied these reports.

Zatoka, which sprawls for 20 km along the shore of the Black Sea, is one of the most popular beach tourism sites in Ukraine. It receives some 600,000 visitors from inside the country and abroad every year.—*Xinhua*

Colombia expands land restitution to war-torn south amid peace efforts

BOGOTA — Colombia is expanding its land restitution programme into former no-go areas in the country’s war-torn south aiming to return land stolen from farmers by illegal armed groups, the government has said as peace talks advance.

Between 6.5 and 10 million hectares (38,610 square miles) of land — up to 15 per cent of Colombian territory — has been abandoned or illegally acquired through violence and fraud by leftist rebels and paramilitary groups during Colombia’s five-decade war, according to the government.

Following a historic ceasefire signed in June with rebels from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), new areas once considered too dangerous for officials to enter, have now opened up, allowing the government to step up its land restitution programme and enabling more displaced families to return home.

“We announce we are entering those municipalities hardest hit by violence,” Ricardo Sabogal, who heads the government entity charged with overseeing land restitution, told reporters last week.

“It’s a huge challenge in terms of restitution and we will do justice in the heart of areas where people were forced to abandon their lands and were dispossessed of their lands by the FARC.”

He said the government’s land restitution programme, which started in 2011, would now target six provinces in Colombia’s south including former guerrilla strongholds and jungle areas it has previously been unable to enter. — *Reuters*

Giant panda cub born in Vienna after zoo sets the right mood

VIENNA — A naturally conceived giant panda cub has been born in Vienna, the city’s main zoo announced on Monday, a rare event that it said is unique in Europe to the Austrian capital.

Getting the shy, bamboo-eating mammals to mate is a famously difficult task, so much so that breeding centres usually turn to artificial insemination instead.

“As far as giant pandas are concerned, Vienna is obviously fertile ground,” Vienna’s Schoenbrunn Zoo, set in the landscaped gardens of a former imperial summer residence, said in a statement.

Pictures and video footage released by the zoo showed the tiny pink newborn clinging to its mother Yang Yang, who has given birth to three other naturally conceived cubs before, all of which are now in China.

The latest arrival, born on Sunday at 5:05am local time (0305 GMT), is just 10 cm (four inches) long and weighs 100 grams (3.5 ounces), so small that zookeepers have been unable to determine its gender. — *Reuters*



Giant Panda Yang Yang and her newborn cub are seen in this still frame taken from a surveillance camera footage dated on 7 August 2016, released on 8 August 2016, in a breeding box inside their enclosure at Schoenbrunn Zoo in Vienna, Austria. PHOTO: REUTERS

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR

MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY

MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE

(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)

(10 / 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-031(16-17)	Wild CAT 330(AMC) (4000) Litres	US\$
(2)	IFB-032(16-17)	Spares for KB-150 Well Servicing Unit (1) Item	US\$
(3)	IFB-033(16-17)	Spares for FLC 504 Derrick Shaker Units (6) Items	US\$
(4)	IFB-034(16-17)	Spares for S-250 Series Shaker Screen Ex ZJ 70L SR I & II (6) Items	US\$
(5)	IFB-035(16-17)	Spares for Derrick Shaker Units (Derrick FLC 2000) Ex ZJ 50D SR I & II (6) Items	US\$
(6)	IFB-036(16-17)	2" & 3" ERW Steel Line Pipe, API 5L Grade A (2) Items	US\$
(7)	IFB-037(16-17)	Spares for F-1600 Pump Ex ZJ 70L Drilling Rig (2) Items	US\$
(8)	IFB-038(16-17)	Spares for EMSCO Rotating Equipment (6) Items	US\$
(9)	DMP/L-011(16-17)	Mud Testing Equipments (7) Items	Ks

Tender Closing Date & Time - 1-9-2016, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 8TH August, 2016 at the Finance Department , Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No (44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

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Robert De Niro to open Sarajevo Film Festival

SARAJEVO — The Sarajevo Film Festival will honour two-time Oscar-winning US actor and producer Robert De Niro with a lifetime achievement award for his contribution to film on its opening night on Friday.

"We are honoured to have Robert De Niro as the first recipient of the Honorary Heart of Sarajevo - Lifetime Achievement Award," director Mirsad Purivatra said in a statement on Monday.

De Niro will present Martin Scorsese's digitally restored movie "Taxi Driver" in which he starred, in honor of its 40th anni-



US actor Robert De Niro.
PHOTO: REUTERS

versary, the statement said.

British film director Stephen Frears, who will be awarded for extraordinary contribution to the art of film, will present his latest film "Florence Foster Jenkins".

The Sarajevo Film Festival, founded as an act of defiance

towards the end of the 1992-95 siege during the Bosnian war, will show 222 films from 61 countries to an audience of about 100,000. Its main award is the Heart of Sarajevo. An international jury will be chaired by Palestinian film-maker Elia Suleiman.—Reuters

Priyanka Chopra joins 'Project Runway' season 15

LOS ANGELES — Actress Priyanka Chopra's next international show is "Project Runway".

The 34-year-old actress, who made her foray into Hollywood with TV series "Quantico," will be one of the guest judges on the season 15 of the popular fashion reality show.

Priyanka took to Instagram to share a picture from the set of the show. "Namaste!! On @pro-

jectrunway Coming soon...Project Runway Season 15, September 15th! @ninagarcia @zacposen @heidiklum @georginachapman-marchesa #projectrunway," she captioned the photo featuring model Heidi Klum and designer Zac Posen.

They are also joined by Marchesa founder Georgina Chapman. Klum and Posen are returning as judges alongside vet-

eran Nina Garcia and designer mentor Tim Gunn.

Priyanka is currently filming the second season of her TV series "Quantico" and will also be seen in upcoming Hollywood film "Baywatch," where she plays antagonist Victoria Leeds opposite Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson.

The actress has not announced her next Bollywood project yet.—PTI

'Game of Thrones' author's 'Wild Cards' to become sci-fi TV series

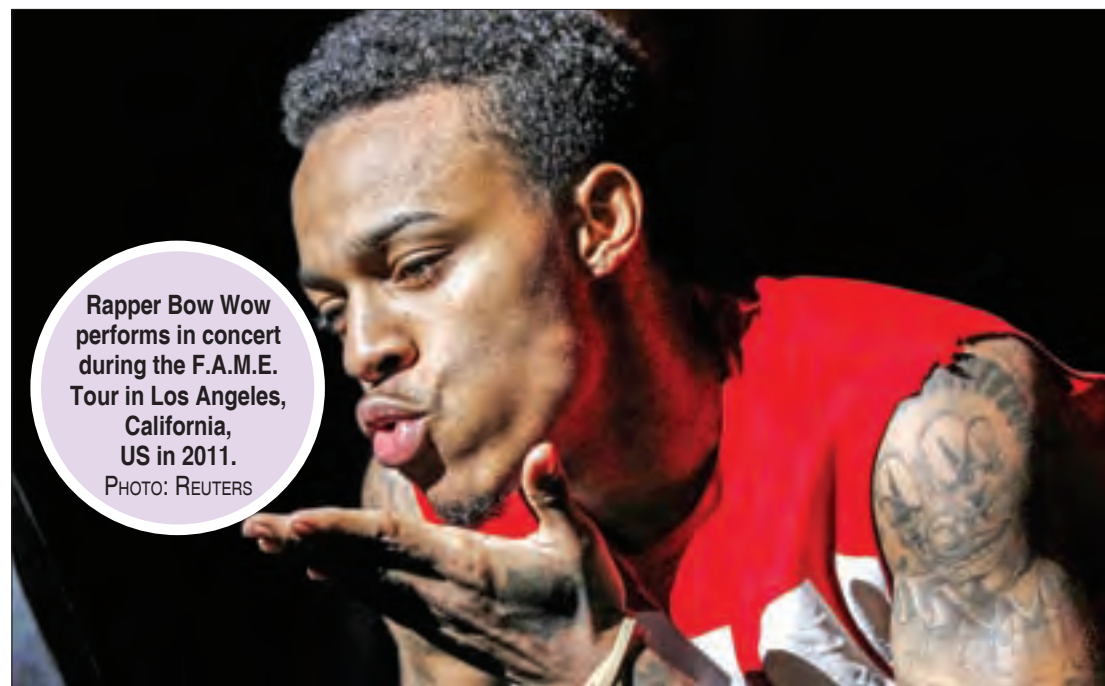
LOS ANGELES — As HBO's hit "Game of Thrones" heads towards its concluding seasons, George R. R. Martin, the author behind the medieval fantasy series, has already lined up his next TV project, a new anthology series called "Wild Cards."

The new sci-fi series was announced by Martin over the weekend and will be based on the "Wild Cards" novels and stories written by numerous authors and curated by Martin and Melinda Snodgrass. The "Wild Cards," first released in 1987, refer to a small percentage of the population that survived an alien attack and obtained super powers, with characters such as Croyd Crenson, Jet-

and Dr. Tachyon. Universal Cable Productions, the network behind shows such as cyber hacking drama "Mr. Robot," confirmed that it is working to develop a prospective series on "Wild Cards." No further details were given. Martin said he won't be working on the series himself as he has an exclusive development deal with HBO, and is writing "The Winds of Winter," the highly anticipated sixth book in his "A Song of Ice and Fire" novels that "Game of Thrones" is based on. "Of course, Hollywood is Hollywood, and nothing is ever certain in development... but I think I hope I cross my fingers that the Wild Cards will be coming to your home screens in the next year or two," Martin said on his website.—Reuters



PHOTO: REUTERS



Rapper Bow Wow performs in concert during the F.A.M.E. Tour in Los Angeles, California, US in 2011.
PHOTO: REUTERS

Too old to rap, Bow Wow announces retirement at age 29

NEW YORK — US rapper Bow Wow has announced he is retiring from music, saying he has made over \$20 million and doesn't see himself rapping as a 30-year-old.

Bow Wow, 29, who found fame at the age of 13 as Lil' Bow Wow, said in a series of Twitter messages on Sunday and Monday that his final album will be the upcoming "NYLTH." He

did not give a date for the release.

"I always said I'd retire from music before 30," the musician tweeted. "I just can't see myself at 30 years old rapping."

"Made over 20 million off rap. Why be greedy? Im good with everything I accomplished. I made it to the white house," added the Ohio-born rapper, whose real name is Shad Moss.

As Lil' Bow Wow, the musician released his first album "Beware of the Dog" in 2000. He has also launched a career as an actor appearing in movies such as "Madea's Big Happy Family" and the TV crime series "CSI: Cyber."

He said on Twitter he planned to focus on acting in the future and is also producing two TV shows.—Reuters

DJ Khaled

ousts Drake for first No. 1 on Billboard 200 chart

LOS ANGELES — Music producer and social media star DJ Khaled scored his first chart-topping album on the weekly US Billboard 200 album chart on Monday, ousting Canadian R&B artist Drake.

DJ Khaled's "Major Key" album sold 59,000 albums, 80,000 songs and was streamed nearly 42 million times in the past week, totaling 95,000 album units, according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan.

The album features songs with artists including Drake, Jay Z and Nicki Minaj. DJ Khaled is popular on social media, dropping daily snippets of wisdom on Snapchat.

After 12 nonconsecutive weeks at No. 1, Drake's "Views" was pushed to No. 2 this week with 80,000 album units sold.

The Billboard 200 album chart tallies units from album sales, song sales (10 songs equal one album) and streaming activity (1,500 streams equal one album).

Other new

entries in the top 10 of the Billboard 200 chart include country singer Jake Owen's "American Love" at No. 4, R&B singer Fantasia's "Definition Of..." at No. 6 and country singer Hillary Scott and The Scott Family's "Love Remains" at No. 7. On the Digital Songs chart, which measures online single download sales, pop track "Closer" by The Chainsmokers featuring Halsey debuted at No. 1 with 103,000 copies sold.—Reuters



PHOTO: REUTERS

Sailing: Britain, France lead RS:X, Croatia, Holland top Laser

RIO DE JANEIRO — Fluky winds, moderate currents and crowded upwind fleet racing challenged sailors on the Olympic regatta's opening day as Britain's Nick Dempsey and France's Charlie Picon took impressive leads in the men's and women's RS:X windsurf class.

Winds on the Escola Naval course were steady and to rising between 11 and 14 knots only to later shift direction and weaken in a day which also saw action in the men's Laser and women's Laser Radial single-person dinghy competitions.

In the tougher and more inconsistent later conditions, Croatia's Tonci Stepanovic and the Netherlands Marti Bouwmeester led their respective classes after defending gold medalist Xu Lijia was disqualified from the second Laser Radial race on Monday after a right-of-way protest.

Both Dempsey and Picon picked up two firsts and a second in their three RS:X races. Dempsey's strong starts allowed him to lead all three races from the beginning, taking the first two with barely a challenge. There are seven races and a medal round left.

"Today was absolutely perfect," Dempsey said. "In the first two races the wind was pretty sta-

ble, and that's as good as it gets in Rio."

"In the third race we got hit by some wind bombs. Lots of people got caught out."

Picon didn't start well, but used dominant downwind sailing to overtake her competitors from behind.

"I was reassured on my speed today," said Picon, the world number nine. "I'm comfortable on this course."

The men's Laser and women's Laser Radial classes faced tougher and more inconsistent conditions than the RS:X on the Pao de Acucar course. Stipanovic leads the Laser with six points after finishing first and fifth in Monday's two races.

Argentina's Julio Alsogaray is second, also with six points, after fourth and second place finishes. Russia's Sergei Komissarov is third with 11 points after finishing second and ninth.

Stepanovic and others were challenged by a sharp wind shift and in-course mark change in the

second race.

"In the first race there was more pressure on the right hand side of the start, but I went with my tactics people and went left," he said. "I tried that in the second race and it didn't work so good."

Bouwmeester leads the Laser Radial after Xu's second-race disqualification with 10 points after a sixth- and a fourth-

place finish. Ann-Marie Rindom of Denmark is in second with 13 points after finishing fifth and a eighth, and Ireland's Annalise Murphy is third with 14 points after a first and 13th.

Xu's disqualification, which added 38 points to her total, pushed her down to 23rd out of 37 boats. She finished third in the first race and now has 41 points.—Reuters



Nick Dempsey (GBR) of United Kingdom competes during the third race at Marina de Gloria, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 8 August. PHOTO: REUTERS

Russia vs. USA — a tense race, a strained aftermath

RIO DE JANEIRO — The women's 100 metres breaststroke final at the Rio de Janeiro Olympics on Monday had already crackled with tension in a tight finish but it was nothing compared to what transpired afterwards.

American Lilly King held off fast-finishing Russian Yulia Efimova to clinch the title, with fellow American Katie Meili winning bronze. King broke the Olympic record to win.

If the race itself was nail-biting, the aftermath was excruciating given King had stoked the flames beforehand, speaking out against the inclusion of Efimova after she successfully appealed a ban imposed for past doping suspensions.

After the victory ceremony, the two Americans wrapped themselves together in the Stars and Stripes. Efimova, who had broken down in tears, stood awkwardly to one side. The three were then obliged to attend a joint media conference that was dominated by the issue of doping, especially since King had criticised the Russian for raising her finger in victory after winning her semi-final.—Reuters

Gymnastics: Japan end China's reign as team champions

RIO DE JANEIRO — Not even the curse of the pommel horse could halt Japan's march to the men's team gymnastics title at the Rio Olympics on Monday as China's eight-year reign as champions came to an end after a day of slips, trips and stumbled landings.

Four years after Uchimura's botched dismount from the pommel horse almost denied Japan a team medal in London, it looked as if the same apparatus would be their undoing again when Koji Yamamuro lost his grip and rolled off.

But unlike in 2012, when they ended up with silver behind China, Yamamuro's score of

13.900 was their only blip in Rio as they put in a command performance on the remaining five apparatus to capture gold with a total of 274.094.

In a sport where tenths of a point can mean the difference between a gold medal and no medal at all, their total was 2.641 points more than surprise silver medalists Russia.

The Chinese team of Lin Chaopan, Deng Shudi, Zhang Chenglong, Liu Yang and You Hao sat back dejectedly in their chairs after Russia pipped them by 0.331 points to silver, with Zhang breaking down in tears afterwards backstage.

For all Uchimura's past suc-

cess, the men's Olympic team gold was the one major medal missing from his vast collection, which includes the 2012 all around title, a record six successive world all around golds and the 2015 world team crown.

On Monday, he stood side-by-side with teary-eyed 2012 London Games survivors Yamamuro, Ryohei Kato and Yusuke Tanaka and new kid on the block Kenzo Shirai in triumph, their index fingers raised to confirm their standing in men's gymnastics.

"This was the event I really wanted to win gold in," Uchimura said after Japan returned to the top of the Olympic podium for the first time since 2004.



Japan gymnasts pose with their gold medals after winning the men's team final. PHOTO: REUTERS

"You really have to work on yourself to become number one."

"We came to Brazil to do what we are meant to do. Because we were able to do so, we won the gold. The next Olympics will be in Tokyo and I believe we can

win again."

Japan's gold medal winning performance came just two days after an error-filled display in qualifying, which included Uchimura falling off the horizontal bar.—Reuters



Entertainment Channel

(10-8-2016, Wednesday)

06 : 00 pm	Music
• Weather Report	08 : 35 pm
• Music Programme	• Taung Byone Nat Festival (Part-3)
06 : 15 pm	09 : 25 pm
• Lisu New Year Festival	• Sayit-Wine Girls
06 : 25 pm	09 : 50 pm
• Cartoon Programme "Scooby-Doo! Camp Scare" (Part-1)	• MRTV Entertainment
07 : 00 pm	Music
• Innovation of Traditional Design	10 : 00 pm
07 : 45 pm	• The Chef Kyi Soe
• International Drama Series	10 : 15 pm
08 : 20 pm	• Myanmar Video
• MRTV Entertainment	Midnight
	• Close Down.

From 10-8-2016 (Wednesday) 6:00 pm
To 11-8-2016 (Thursday) 6:00 pm



Myanmar International

(10-8-2016 07:00am ~ 11-8-2016 07:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	History of Kyaik Wyne Pagoda
07:44	Am	Living Myanmar Glazed Ceramics
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Travelogue: A Tour in Korea (Part-3)
08:37	Am	19 Hours
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Hive Hunter
09:45	Am	Irrawaddy Dolphin (Part- 1)
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	The Richly Blessed Gem Land

10:52 Am Yoghurt Vendor

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Tuesday 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
07:27	Pm	Myanmar Invites You
07:43	Pm	Products of Myanmar - Shin Ma Taung Thanakhar
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Myanmar Delicate Artistic Handy Creations-Lac quareware Making
08:51	Pm	Chaung Tha Souvenir Business

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

Silva wins first gold for host country Brazil

RIO DE JANEIRO — Brazilians celebrated in the stands after Rafaela Silva won gold in women's judo at the Rio Games on Monday, claiming the first Olympic gold medal for the host country and capping a journey to the podium that began in one of the city's most notorious slums.

Silva raised her arms in triumph as she overcame top seed Sumiya Dorjsuren of Mongolia, following a pulsating semi-finals victory that went into extra time against London silver medallist Corina Caprioriu of Romania.

Gold for Silva marks a fairytale ascent to the Olympic podium from a childhood in Rio's Cidade de Deus favela, made famous in the film "City of God."

Following early years of trouble that saw her getting into fights in the neighbourhood, Silva found structure to her life through judo and went on to attend the Instituto Reacao, founded by Olympic bronze medallist Flavio Canto.

"The fans have always encouraged me, especially the kids from my own community in the City of God," Silva told reporters following her victory.

"If I can set an example for the kids in the City of God, if they can believe in their dreams and find their dreams through sport, then do it. I hope to be an example for them and I think I can be."

Silva's medal, in the -57kg weight class, was

also Brazil's first in judo at Rio after strong contenders from its team were eliminated in the first two days of action.

Brazil is placing high hopes on its judo team to boost its medal haul in Rio after it took home four in the sport at the 2012 London Games.

"Of course we would have liked to have won more medals but out there on the mat, everybody who goes out there is a worthy contestant and we hope that my medal will be adored and will open the

way for Brazil to win more medals," Silva said.

The Carioca Arena 2 was rocking on Monday as her

supporters went into a frenzy each time she took the tatami, stomping their feet and chanting "Rafa" as tossed aside one competitor after another.

At the winners' ceremony, she earned a huge roar of approval as she held up her medal for the crowd before bursting into tears as the Brazilian national anthem played.

"It's amazing. We're a country that's had some problems. So it makes us so happy to see our flag up high," said Gustavo Lima, a 42-year-old IT worker who was posing for a photo with his young son and cousin. The women's -57kg was among the toughest judo categories at Rio, featuring all four medal winners from the London Games, and there were several notable upsets.

Japan's Kaori Matsumoto, world champion and London gold medallist, was stunned in the semi-finals and went on to settle for bronze. France's judo medal drought in Rio continued as London bronze winner Autumne Pavia lost in the bronze medal match, while another London bronze medallist, Marti Malloy of the United States, suffered a shock early exit in the round of 16.—Reuters



Sumiya Dorjsuren (MGL) of Mongolia and Rafaela Silva (BRA) of Brazil compete at Carioca Arena 2, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 8 August. PHOTO: REUTERS

Have faith, it's getting cleaner, says Bolt

RIO DE JANEIRO — Usain Bolt waltzed in to sprinkle a bucket of stardust over Rio on Monday, and while there were Samba smiles and dancing girls, the biggest name at the Olympics could not escape the ever-present spectre of doping.

Bolt is seeking to secure a "triple-triple" in the 100 metres, 200 metres and 4x100m relay and was his usual show-stopping self as top billing in an eye-catching Jamaican team news conference at Barra's massive Cicada des Arts theatre.

But he also had to face up to questions about how and why fans could have any faith in athletics after the battering it has taken on the doping front in the last 18 months.

"I think we are going in the right direction. People should have faith," said Bolt, who won 100m, 200m and 4x100m golds at the last two Olympics.

"We are weeding out the bad ones and I personally think we are on the right track. We have had to go through a rough time before the good times. But in a few years, the sport should be clean and I look forward to that." Last year, Bolt edged out American Justin Gatlin to win the world championship 100 metres final in a race widely billed as "good v evil", with the Jamaican 'saving' the sport from an athlete back in action after two doping bans.—Reuters

Pogba joins United from Juventus for world record fee

LONDON — France midfielder Paul Pogba has rejoined Manchester United from Italian champions Juventus on a five-year contract, with the option to extend for a further year, the Premier League club said in a statement on Monday.

British media said United

splashed out a world record fee of 89 million pounds on the 23-year-old, eclipsing the 100 million euros (\$110.84 million) Real Madrid paid for Welshman Gareth Bale from Tottenham Hotspur in 2013.

"I am delighted to rejoin United. It has always been a club with a special place in my heart and I am really looking forward to working with (manager) Jose Mourinho," Pogba said in a statement on United's official website (www.manutd.com).

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at Juventus and have some

fantastic memories of a great club with players that I count as friends. But I feel the time is right to go back to Old Trafford.

"I always enjoyed playing in front of the fans and can't wait to make my contribution to the team. This is the right club for me to achieve everything I hope to in the game."

Pogba is the latest of Mourinho's new signings following defender Eric Bailly, striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic and midfielder Henrikh Mkhitaryan as the Portuguese coach revamps the under-performing squad he inherited from Louis van Gaal.

"Paul is one of the best players in the world and will be a key part of the United team I want to build here for the future," added Mourinho. "He is quick, strong, scores goals and reads the game better than many players much older than he is."—Reuters

PHOTO: REUTERS



RIO 2016 Olympic

Archery Women's individual Round of 16



San Yu Htwe



Myanmar



Ki Bo-Bae



South Korea

Thursday, 11 August, 7:22 PM

Men's 50m pistol Shooting Qualification



Myanmar

Wednesday, 10 August, 6:30 PM