

C-in-C inspects
quake-hit mud
volcano in Minbu

PAGE 9



Government urged
to build homes
for teachers in
rural areas

PAGE 2



Ministries clarify
undertakings in
first 100 days

PAGE 2

ZONING FOR RESTORATION

33 QUAKE-DAMAGED PAGODAS HAVE SECTIONS SEALED OFF

Aung Thant Khaing

AUTHORITIES in Bagan have sealed off dangerous areas at 33 quake-damaged ancient pagodas in Bagan, only allowing visitors to visit areas deemed to be safe from falling rubble.

"We did not totally seal off the pagodas, visitors can still go the safe areas," said U Soe Tint, Nyaung U District General Administration Department.

Police are providing security in and around damaged pagodas along with officials of the General Administration Department and firemen in order to assist the inspectors of the Archaeological Department in evaluation of the damages and in order to protect against any further damage.

The number of pagodas noted as damaged by the powerful 6.8 magnitude earthquake has reached 187, according to local authorities.

Meanwhile, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko pledged that the government would restore the damaged pagodas giving priority to the most popularly visited.

The pagodas will be inspected by experts of the Ministry of Construction, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture and the world heritage Centre of the United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organisation-UNESCO.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has warned against haphazard repair of the toppled spires of the pagodas, urging the ministries concerned to draw up a project plan with the technical assistance of the UNESCO.

A day after at least 187 pagodas were damaged in the powerful earthquake, President U Htin Kyaw went on an inspection tour of the Bagan archaeological zone to assess the damage.—GNLM



People walk as the top of a collapsed pagoda is seen in the background after an earthquake in Bagan on 25 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

First Myanmar Phone Money

Transfer Deposit Withdrawal Shopping Pay Salary Top up from mobile

Be Proud using mobile money service on MPT, MEETel Sim Cards

Myanmar MOBILE MONEY anywhere anytime

Send SMS "Join" to 1666 to start using Myanmar Mobile Money!

Office- No.517, Boyarmyint Street, Dagon Township, Yangon. Ph: 09-31001520, 0931001521, 09-31001530, 09-31001531

Call Center- 0519, 0518 Hot Line: 8636, 8939

Safe Simple Swift

- Want to Top up other phones?
- Want to shop at Gamone Pwint?
- Want to transfer money?
- Want to pay salary to your employees?
- Want to transfer withdrawal anytime?

Pyithu Hluttaw

Government urged to build homes for teachers in rural areas

THE Pyithu Hluttaw continued for its 21st day with a parliamentary discussion on a proposal calling on the Union government to build housing for education staff and a question and answer session yesterday.

Parliamentarians held discussion on the proposal calling on the government to build homes for teachers in rural areas, especially the areas lagging behind others in development, with the use of the Union budget.

Daw Aye Mya Mya Myo of Kyauktan Constituency suggested that priority should also be given to the areas where there are education staff quarters in the most urgent need of reconstruction.

Likewise, U Nay Lin Tun of Bokepyin Constituency expressed his support for the proposal, stressing the need to spend the Union budget on construction of housing for education staff to improve their living standards.

Then, Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi responded to the parliamentary discussion on the proposal, saying that the proposal should only be recorded.

While seeking parliamentary approval the Pyithu Hluttaw decided to put the proposal on record and wait and see what the government can do for accommodation for education staff.



Daw Aye Mya Mya Myo.
PHOTO: MNA

In his address the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker highlighted the importance of education in national development and called for the laying of great emphasis on the discussions of lawmakers on the proposal.

During a Q & A session Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Aung Soe responded to a call for the reopening of the Shwepyithar Youth Rehabilitation Centre, saying that there is no plan to reopen the centre.

The deputy minister replied that community-based rehabilitation and treatment activities for drug addicts in the environs of Pekkha Township will be carried out, if necessary, in cooperation with local authorities, the Ministry of Health and Sports

(treatment working group) and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (rehabilitation working group).

Next, the deputy minister responded to a question regarding the reformation of Kyauktu town into the township level, saying that is no plan to upgrade the town into Kyauktu Township.

If the town under Saw Township is reformed into the township level, there will be a need to reform another 145 towns into the township level, requiring a larger budgets to establish more government offices that need to be staffed with more service personnel, added the deputy minister.

He pointed out that there may be matters of constitutional controversy regarding the extended formation of more townships.

On a call for the formation of committees to help inmates by the government, the deputy minister replied that no weaknesses were found in prison regulations and the implementation of rules and regulations was going well.

It is not necessary to form the proposed committees as suggestions that came from the visits of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission, Judges of Supreme Court, local authorities and ICRC to prisons were being realised, he added.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Amyotha Hluttaw



Maj-Gen Myint Nwe.
PHOTO: MNA



Daw Kyein Ngike Man.
PHOTO: MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw passes maritime territory and sea boundaries law

THE Amyotha Hluttaw passed the law of the sea yesterday after its speaker sought approval from representatives.

Daw Kyein Ngike Man of the Chin State's seventh constituency, who is also a member of the Bill Committee, read out the committee's report of findings on 'the country's maritime territory and sea boundaries law' to the parliament, with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin speaking in support of the proposed law.

U Pe Chit of the Yangon Region's ninth constituency inquired as to the possibility of the government signing the Mine Ban Treaty and conducting anti-personnel mine clearance and disposal projects in a bid to save local villagers from mine hazards.

In response to the query,

Deputy Minister of Defence Maj-Gen Myint Nwe said the signing of the treaty would involve a search and clearance of mine-planted areas within a set period of time and a preparation of a report for submission to the UN Secretary General in 180 days. The existence of internal armed conflicts remains an obstacle to the execution of the treaty requirements, the deputy minister added.

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement have been conducting workshops and training programmes in relation to the banning of mines in partnership with international organisations, he said, stressing that mine clearance is under way in some parts of Kayah State.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Ministries clarify undertakings in first 100 days

A PRESS conference took place in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday in connection with the government's undertakings in its 100-day plan.

Deputy Director General U Zaw Htay of the Ministry of the State Counsellor's Office responded to queries relating to the appointment of former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan as head of an advisory commission for the human rights situation in Rakhine State.

The establishment of the commission with foreign experts has drawn criticism from the media, prompting some political parties to issue statements expressing concern over national security.

According to U Zaw Htay, the said commission is one step away from becoming official. The signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of the State Counsellor's Office and the Kofi Annan Foundation will make the advisory commission official, with the official saying that the MOU is now in the hands of the Office of the Attorney General.

The deputy director general stressed the need to consider what kind of person the former

UN chief was. Kofi Annan initiated the Millennium Development Goal as UN Secretary General and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2001. He headed the UN for two consecutive terms. U Zaw Htay said the Nobel Peace laureate had nothing to do with the Syrian issue and the destruction of religious structures in Afghanistan, which he described as the consequences of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The Advisory Commission will be formed with nine members- six local experts and three foreign experts. The members of the commission are selected according to the four criteria, which include impartiality, respectability, know-how and reputation.

Works are underway to review disaster mitigation and response measures, increase immunisation coverage and provide new vaccines to children under five.

In connection with the inclusion of foreign experts in the commission, U Zaw Htay stressed the depth, sensitivity and broadness of the Rakhine issue, adding that this required a review of what and how the international community would assess the matter.

The commission will have a mandate to submit their findings and suggestions to the government through the State Counsellor.

The government formed a Committee for Peace, Stability and Development in Rakhine State chaired by the State Counsellor herself, with the official saying that the developmental undertakings in the region cannot avoid the involvement of international organisations, including the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

The Advisory Commission will have the responsibility to guarantee the safety and basic human rights of the Rakhine people, provide humanitarian aid and development services, take preventive measures against conflict,



Officials of the ministries hold the press conference. PHOTO: MNA

initiate reconciliation, undertake humanitarian infrastructure projects, and review the backgrounds of overseas refugees and their countries of origin.

Regarding the commission's possible push for the government to accept the sometimes called 'Bengali' community against the Citizenship Law of 1982, U Zaw Htay said the government is to work in line with the State Constitution and existing laws.

The government has not the divine right to grant citizenship to

the community in question with no regard for the Citizenship Law of 1982, he said, adding that the advisory commission has no mandate to force the government to undertake all of its suggestions.

According to him, the Rakhine State Conflict Investigation Commission under the previous government came up with 59 suggestions in significant areas, including economy, health, education and peaceful coexistence between the two communities.

See page 3 >>

Japan plans to offer Myanmar 100 billion yen in loans

TOKYO — Japan plans to provide 100 billion yen (\$995 million) in loans to Myanmar for infrastructure development, a Japanese government source said Friday, the first such offer by Tokyo since the longtime opposition party led by Aung San Suu Kyi took office in March.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe plans to make the announcement during his attendance at a series of regional meetings involving the Association of Southeast Asian Nations early next month, the source said. Myanmar is a member of the 10-nation bloc.

Japan is eager to give assistance to Myanmar as a way to counter China's influence in the fast-growing and resource-rich country.

The yen loans are set to be used for projects such as to repair railways connecting Myanmar's two largest cities of Yangon and Mandalay, the source said.

Other countries are also vying to strengthen ties with Myanmar's first democratically elected government in more than 50 years. Chinese President Xi Jinping last week held talks with Suu Kyi during which he touched on Myanmar's infrastructure development.

The democracy icon, who holds the offices of foreign minister and state counselor, chose China for her first overseas destination outside of Southeast Asia since the launch of the government in late March.—*Kyodo News*

Working committee on organising Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong meets



Working committee on organising the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong holds the meeting in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

THE second meeting of the working committee on organising the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong was held at the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe, vice-chairman of the central

committee on organising the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong, delivered an opening address. Next, respective working committees reported on work progress and ongoing works for the successful holding of the Union Peace Conference and works to be done. Also present at the

meeting were Union Minister Dr Pe Myint, chairman of information working committee, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin, chairman of invitation working committee, Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Tin, secretary of the central committee and officials.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Ministries clarify undertakings in first 100 days

>> From page 2

In respect to the Myitsone dam, Deputy Director General U Zaw Htay said the commission was still engaged in the compilation of a report on the hydropower project. He hinted that some terms of the contract considered fit for public observation would be released on completion of the report.

During a press conference, Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htway said that 72 per cent of 31 projects set to be completed under the ministry's 100-day plan were completed, adding that 37 of 68 projects set by the ministry will be carried out after the plan.

The ministry sought the government's approval on the proposed appointment of 1,768 fresher doctors and 84 dentists, provided primary healthcare to rural people through the opening of community clinics and launched a school health program in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, said the Union minister.

He added that works are underway to review disaster mitigation and response measures, increase immunisation coverage and provide new vaccines to children under five.

Moreover, the ministry drafted a five-year plan to improve health information systems, organised occupational health and worksite safety courses, carried out workplace inspections, preventive measures against hospital infection and curriculum revision and development for undergraduate and postgraduate students of medical schools and established

an ambulance system for emergency care on Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay expressway and a reception service at 100-bedded hospitals and above.

Next, Deputy Director-General U Zaw Htay of the State Counsellor's Office said that 83 political prisoners were granted amnesty and courts across the country dropped charges against those facing trials over cases in connection with politics.

In accordance with the guidance given by the State Counsellor, arrangements are being made to draft a law to curb hate speech by the Ministry of Religious and Cultural Affairs.

Regarding internal peace, the Myanmar Peace Centre was transformed into the National Reconciliation and Peace Center and a Central Committee on Implementation of Peace and Stability and Development in Rakhine State was formed.

In accordance with the guidance given by the State Counsellor, arrangements are being made to draft a law to curb hate speech by the Ministry of Religious and Cultural Affairs and a political dialogue framework was reviewed to enable NCA non-signatory groups to join the

country's peace process.

Moreover, a commission to review hydropower projects on Ayeyawady River was formed, added the deputy director-general.

He added that the State Counsellor held talks with donor community to create a donor co-ordination mechanism last week and works are underway to establish joint mechanism involving donors, stakeholders and the government.

Then, Director-General U Tint Thwin of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism elaborated on the country's tourism sector including human resources development programmes, issuance of hotel and tour guide licenses, relaxation of restriction on license fee and e-license application.

The ministry recently launched a Facebook page to heighten public awareness of disasters in the aftermath of earthquake in Bagan, he added.

Next, Deputy Director-General U L Too Main Gaung of the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs said that the ministry is committed to ensuring protection of rights of ethnic people.

Formation of the new ministry was about 90 per cent complete and is slated for completion on 16 September, said the deputy director-general, adding that the minister's office and head offices of the ministry's two departments are expected to be completed this fiscal year while region/state offices of the two departments next fiscal year and the 2016-2017 budget was approved by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.—*Myanmar News Agency*

MNHRC hails upcoming Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong

THE Myanmar National Human Rights Commission released a statement extending its support for the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong scheduled to be held on 31 August.

The statement said that the

commission hails the upcoming Union Peace Conference involving representatives from the government, Parliament, Defence Services, ethnic armed organisations, political forces and civil service organisations.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Over 100 drug addicts from Myiek Archipelago to be given rehab

IN the lead up to the opening of a drug rehabilitation centre in the region, the Tanintharyi Region Police Department has revealed that they have compiled a list of over a hundred names of drug users within Myiek district and the archipelagic Kyunsu Township that desire to quit their addiction.

"A list of over a hundred drug users from Kyunsu Township, that wish to be weaned off their addictions, has been compiled in light of the soon-to-be implemented rehabilitation program; we don't want people to blame the police for not doing anything. It's upsetting how the integrity of those living in the region is inflicted upon with some people referring to Kyunsu Township as the 'second' Hpa Kant," U Nay Myo, Police Chief of Tanintharyi Region, told Myitmakha News Agency.

The police chief added how Kyunsu Township is a part of

Myeik district where the majority of those arrested are drug users, highlighting his dismay over reports from some members of the general public in the region questioning whether licenses should be granted for consumption of narcotics in a similar vein as alcohol licenses are currently issued.

U Nay Myo also mentioned police units are carrying out crime-reduction initiatives to the best of their ability in Kyunsu Township's Yekandaung village, an area of prolific drug usage, with police guard posts setup and arrests being made against those involved in the consumption and trade of narcotics in the area.

On top of the current arrests and legal action being taken against drug users, drug awareness, treatment and employment opportunity initiatives will also reportedly be drawn up and implemented.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Over 40,000 to be vaccinated against Japanese encephalitis



Vaccine for encephalitis are seen. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

THE Public Health Department has announced they will start to administer vaccinations against Japanese encephalitis on August 28 in areas of northern Shan State where the virus has recently broken out.

The first cases of the virus were reported in northern Shan State this July. By 24 August, a total of 46 individuals are believed to have suffered from the disease. Of this figure, 19 were sufferers of the Japanese encephalitis strain, of which the virus proved fatal for four. Three others have also died, although doctors are stumped on the cause of death as they should no signs of the virus by suffered from the swelling of their brain - an indicative and primary symptom of

encephalitis. But a lacking budget has reportedly put limitations on the numbers of people which can be administered with the Japanese encephalitis vaccinations.

"Vaccinations can't be administered to everyone. We're not administering everyone in a village where cases of the virus have been reported. Vaccinations will be administered to those show symptoms of the disease and those believed to be most vulnerable to it," said a doctor from the Department of Health for Shan State.

Local residents, however, have expressed favor over the vaccinations being prioritized for those most at risk from catching the virus. "Leave the adults be.

Things will be okay if just the vaccinations are just administered to the children. Rather than all these organizations in northern Shan State holding events to collect donations, I think it would be much better if they could fulfill the desires of every family rocked by this virus by vaccinating their children," said a resident of Lashio, northern Shan State's primary urban center.

Costing K1,200 million, the region's department of health will administer vaccinations to over 40,000 people in regions of northern Shan State where the Japanese encephalitis virus is currently circulating. —Myitmakha News Agency

Crime NEWS

Large yaba cache seized in Tachilek and Lashio

A COMBINED team comprising officers and staff from Tachilek police station seized drug related items from a house in Wam Kyauk Lon village, Tachilek township on Thursday.

Acting on a tip-off police raided the home which belongs to One Sai Wam. They discovered drug-related equipment including three machines, ice weighing 7.6 kilograms, 94,290 yaba pills, yaba powder weighing 40.75 kilograms, caffeine weighing 68 kilograms and two firearms. The police also arrested Aik Ti and Aik Mon who were found together with the host.

On the same day a combined team comprising officers and staff from Lashio station seized 200,000 yaba pills from two bus passengers identified as Than Manung Htet and Phu Thi near Oriental toll gate, Theinni township.

Similarly, police from Lashio station seized 400 yaba pills and a cache of several weapons including a pistol and ammunition from a vehicle being driven by one Tin Ohon on Lashilo- Tangyan road.

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



One Sai Wam, Aik Ti and Aik Mon. PHOTO: POLICE

Yaba seized in Pinlaung

AN anti-narcotics suppression squad comprising policemen from Loilem seized yaba pills and a cache of weapons from a truck on Pinlaung — Laikha road on Thursday.

Acting on a tip-off police stopped and searched the truck was being driven by one Sai Aung Kay, 31, with Sai Kwin Kham, 19, on board and discovered 50,000 yaba pills and a cache of weapons including a pistol and ammunition. Both suspects have been charged under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. —Ko Ye



Sai Aung Kay and Sai Kwin Kham. PHOTO: POLICE

Community Based Tourism(CBT) to be implemented in Twantay

THE Yangon region government is planning to implement Community Based Tourism (CBT) in Twantay town of Yangon region, said Daw Pan Thinzar Myo, Kay-in Ethnic Affairs Minister, Yangon Region

"Some tourists are not staying in Yangon overnight and they

directly go to Bagan and Mandalay. So, we will guide the process and offer suggestions to stay in Yangon for one or two days. For implementing CBT, We have to make efforts toward a detail program. Currently, CBT is planning to start the pilot project in Twantay." She added.

More CBT villages are planned in other regions depending on its success in Yangon.

According to the Old Heritage Conservation Committee of Twintay, there are many old cities and over 100 heritage pagodas which have not been renovated in Twintay township. —200

Motorcycle collision kills man

A MOTORCYCLE collided head on with another motorcycle on Kalay-Gangaw road, Myauksi village, Kalay township on Tuesday, leaving one man dead.

According to an investigation the motorcycle, being driven by one Aung Ko Tun, 20, with Zay

Nyi Soe, 17 on board, from Kon-toe Myothar village crashed into the other motorcycle which was being driven by one U Naung Po, 53, from Kyaw village. The reason for the accident is not know yet.

U Naung Po succumbed to his injuries at the scene while

two others were seriously injured in the accident. The injured are undergoing medical treatment at Thantlang general hospital. Both of the drivers have been charged under section 304(A)/338/337 of the Penal Code. —Myanmar Police Force

Five dead, one injured in car accident

FIVE people including one child died and one was injured when a vehicle overturned on Yangon-Mandalay road, near Taunggontae village, Bago region on Thursday.

According to an investigation the vehicle was en route to Yangon from Mandalay and being driven

by one Win Lwin Oo, 35, with five passengers on board. The vehicle overturned when the driver lost control.

The accident killed four people including the driver on the spot while U Myo Win, 50 succumbed to his injuries at the hospital. May

Myat Noe, 6, is in a serious condition and undergoing medical treatment at Yangon general hospital. The police have opened a case. —Phyu- Myint Oo

Illegal logs confiscated in Sagaing

AUTHORITIES confiscated

a shipment of illegal logs weighing 18,524 tonnes in Sagaing region on Tuesday. Acting on a tip-off a combined investigation team comprising officers and staff from the marine police searched a Myattar Moe water vessel heading for Mandalay being driven by one Soe

Moe Lwin alias Pho Thar, 42, from Mawlaik town and discovered 15 Tanmalan logs stored inside. Pho Thar is being charged under section 6(1) of the Public Property Protection Act by the Sagaing police station. —Myanmar Police Force

LOCAL Business

Efforts to be made to abate discrepancy gap of domestic fuel prices

IN a bid to abate the discrepancy gap of fuel prices in Myanmar, negotiations will reportedly be held with fuel stations which sell their fuel for more than stipulated prices, according to the Myanmar Fuel Entrepreneurs Association (MFEA).

“When global fuel prices appreciate, the price of fuel domestically tends to follow-suit. But, there are fuel stations who keep their high prices even when global fuel prices have fallen. It’s such fuel station owners who keep selling fuel at highly inflated prices with whom negotiations will be held. We’ll encourage, and suggest [they lower their prices],” said Dr Win Myint, secretary of the MFEA.

Fuel sold domestically

which is imported from abroad is traded through a dual market: a wholesale market of fuel bought from docked oil tankers, and a retail market of fuel sold at refilling stations.

The fuel markets in mid-August have seen the global price of fuel appreciate, but domestic fuel prices have reportedly yet to increase.

“Discrepancies between wholesale and retail fuel prices could be abated with a weekly pricing update system employed by wholesalers and retailers. We would then monitor to assess whether fuel dealers were adhering to the suitable price or not,” said Daw Mu Mu Shein, a representative of the Fuel Price Control Committee.



Vehicles line up for fuel at Myanmar International Terminals Thilawa (MITT) outside Yangon. PHOTO: REUTERS

Back in 2014, independent fuel dealers were granted permission to import fuel from abroad, with that initial year seeing fuel imported into Myanmar by tank-

ers with capacities to hold 5,000 tons of fuel.

However, this year has seen the size of tankers docking at the country’s ports increase to those

with a capacity of 15,000 tons of fuel, allowing for a vast reduction in importation expenses by about US\$4.5 million a month.—Myitmakha News Agency

Investment policy to be instituted soon

An investment policy will be instituted soon to help economic development and foreign investments, it is learnt from a meeting held by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

A draft policy has been submitted to the President’s office. As soon as the policy is approved by the Union government, it will go into practice, it is learnt. The amendment of the investment law is virtually finished and has been written in accordance with the current culture and technology.

The government will give priority to certain investments in each sector, according to policy. Some enterprises will enjoy the benefits of exemption on in-

come tax and imported goods.

Currently, Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) permits 45 countries to invest in Myanmar. There are a total of 1,125 foreign investment firms that have entered Myanmar between 1989 and 19th August 2016, with investments of over 63 billion, it is learnt.

The company registration fees are also fixed to develop local and foreign investments and to bolster the country’s trade volume. There are currently over 200 public companies compared to only 21 public companies before 2011. The public companies are given priority in seeking approval from MIC, it is learnt from the statistics of DICA.—GNLM

Myanmar earns \$180m from fishery exports

MYANMAR received over US\$180 million from the private exporting of fishery products between April and the third week of August this fiscal year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Although fishery exports have steadily declined year by year on average the export value of fishery products this year

has reached over \$30 million more than during the same period last year.

The country exported fishery products worth over \$150 million in the first four months of 2015. Fishery exports have been in decline since the 2013-2014 FY. Myanmar mainly exports varieties of carp to partner countries.—GNLM

Three high-rise condos to be built in Zone C of Thanlyin Star City Project by 2018

UNDER the first phase of the Zone C Thanlyin Star City Project, Yoma Strategic Holdings, a Singapore-listed, Myanmar-focused company, will build six high-rise luxury condos, three of which are planned to be finalised by 2018, its spokesperson said.

This part of the Star City project, in Thanlyin Township, is situated in eastern part of Yan-

gon, about 15 minutes from the Thilawa Special Economic Zone.

It is planned for each building to be 20 stories high. After completion of the initial project the towers will hold around 1,000 units.

Apartment units will be sold at a price of US\$210 per square foot. Lower-down apartments will be cheaper than units

on high floors. These units will include two bedrooms at a minimum and four-bedrooms at a maximum.

Five towers emerged in Zone A and B of Star City Project, producing 928 units in Zone A and over 1,000 units in Zone B. Almost all apartments in both zones have already been sold.—200

DICA to open branches throughout the country

THE Directorate of Investment and Companies Administration (DICA) has announced they will be opening up branches of their department in states and regions throughout the country.

The directorate branches will reportedly be established to facilitate negotiations with regional governments on the types of industry into which investment can be permitted, along with the extent of such financial injections.

“Talks will be held [at the branches] with state and regional governments on the types of industry which can be implemented in their regions, together with the amount of investment in such a industry they would be willing to permit. But such permits can only be given once investment laws and bylaws have been passed,” U Than Aung Kyaw, director gener-

al of the DICA.

Draft legislation, comprised of current foreign and local investment laws, has reportedly been presented to the office of government. A new policy on investment is also expected to be released.

“I think [the branches] will act as service providers. The more [branches] that are opened, the better it will be [for us]. As well as that, a lot of support needs to be given to pushing up of the independent business sector. Everywhere you look at the moment, business enterprises are going through a dearth in trade,” said U Kyaw Min, chair of the Sein Hnit Mya Mwayyar Paribawga Company.

In order to attract more foreign investment into Myanmar, the price of registering the founding of a public company was in-

creased from K1 million to K1.5 million, while such fees for registering a private company were abated by half, from K1 million to K500,000.

The DICA currently boasts 8 branches across Myanmar, with more to be established in the regions of Bago and Magway, together with Kayin State.

There are presently over 200 public companies in Myanmar, while the number of private companies is reportedly over 10,000.

Until mid-August, from the time in which the new National League for Democracy-led government took up office, the new government has permitted US\$55.22 million’s worth of local investment in 14 enterprises and US\$166.23 million in foreign investment in 17 enterprises.—Myitmakha News Agency

Smoke from Indonesian fires hits 'unhealthy' level in Singapore

SINGAPORE — Air pollution in Singapore rose to the “unhealthy” level on Friday as acrid smoke drifted over the island from fires on Indonesia’s Sumatra island, the city-state’s National Environment Agency (NEA) said, in a repeat of an annual crisis.

Every dry season, smoke from fires set to clear land for palm oil and pulp and paper plantations in Indonesia clouds the skies over much of the region, raising concern about public health and worrying tourist operators and airlines.

The 24-hour Pollution Standards Index (PSI), which the NEA uses as a benchmark, rose as high as 105 in the afternoon. A level above 100 is considered “unhealthy”.

The NEA said it planned a “daily haze advisory” as “a burning smell and slight haze were experienced over many areas” in Singapore.

Indonesia repeatedly vows to stop the fires but each year they return. This year, Indonesia has arrested 454 people in connection with the smoke pollution.

When heavy, the chok-



Women cover their faces with masks as haze shrouds Singapore’s central business district, on 26 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

ing smog closes airports and schools and prompts warnings to residents to stay indoors.

Pollution levels in neighbouring Malaysia were normal on Friday.

Singapore has pushed Indonesia for information on companies suspected of causing pollution, some of which are listed on Singapore’s stock exchange.

A forest campaigner for the environmental group Greenpeace Indonesia, Yuyun Indradi, said the government was struggling to enforce laws to prevent the drainage of peatland for plantations and the setting of fires to clear land.

“It has become a challenge for the government to enforce accountability among concession holders,

to enforce its directives on blocking canals, and push companies to take part in efforts to restore peatland and prevent fires,” Indradi said.

“Now is the time for the government to answer this challenge. It is in the law,” Greenpeace said, according to its satellite information, there were 138 fires across Indonesia on Friday. —Reuters

Philippine government, communist rebels to sign ceasefire deal

OSLO — The Philippine government and Maoist-led rebels will sign an indefinite ceasefire agreement on Friday as part of efforts to end a conflict that has lasted almost five decades and killed at least 40,000 people, Norway said.

Norway’s Foreign Ministry, hosting the talks, said the ceasefire would be signed at a ceremony at 0900 GMT in Oslo, extending a truce in place since last weekend for the Oslo meeting which began on Monday.

Representatives of both the government and communist guerrillas would sign a joint declaration committing “to unilateral ceasefires with no time limit”, it said. The talks in Norway are the first formal meeting in five years.

“The joint decla-

ration, which has been negotiated in Oslo in recent days, marks the resumption of formal negotiations between the new government in the Philippines and the (rebel) National Democratic Front of the Philippines,” it said.

Norway has had a role as facilitator for the peace process since 2001. Fitful peace talks have been going on since 1986.

New President Rodrigo Duterte says he wants to end guerrilla wars with both communist and Muslim rebels that have been hampering economic development.

The 3,000-strong New People’s Army, the armed wing of the communist party, operates mainly in the east and south of the Philippines.—Reuters

GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Chief Executive Officer - Nakagawa Kiyoshi

ceo@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Chief Editor - Khin Maung Aye

ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Deputy Chief Editor - Aye Min Soe

dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Chief Proof Reader & Translator - Ye Myint

Expatriate Consultant Editors

Alec Wilmot

counsultanteditor2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Mark Angeles

markangeles@gmail.com

Chief Translator & Editor

Kyaw Thura,

editor2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Editor

Ye Htut Tin (Local News)

editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

International Editors

Tun Tun Naing (Editor)

intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor)

Translators

Khaing Thanda Lwin,

reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Hay Mar Tin Win,

translator@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Ei Myat Mon, Tin Nwe Lynn

Chief Reporter

Tun Aung Kyaw, reporter2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Reporters

Thein Ko Lwin (Nay Pyi Taw Bureau),

Khin Mg Win (Mandalay Bureau)

Computer Team

Tun Zaw (Chief of Computer Team), Thein Ngwe,

Zaw Zaw Aung, Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,

Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win, Sanda Hnin, Zu Zin Hnin

Circulation & Advertising

San Lwin (+95) (01) 8604532

Ads and subscription enquiries:

subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Second victim of Thai coastal town bombings dies

BANGKOK — A second person has died from injuries sustained when two bombs exploded earlier this week at a hotel in Thailand’s southern coastal town of Pattani, officials said on Friday.

The attack late on Tuesday at a hotel in Pattani, one of three Muslim-dominated provinces in the country’s south, fol-

lowed a string of bombings and arson attacks across seven provinces in Thailand’s central south that killed four people and targeted tourist spots.

Police and Thailand’s ruling junta have ruled out links between Tuesday’s attack and the tourist-town bombings.

“Last night another victim, a male age 64,

died from head injuries sustained in the Pattani attack,” Colonel Yuthanam Petchmuang, a spokesman for the Internal Security Operations Command, told Reuters.

The victim was a shop-owner who was caught in the second explosion at the entrance to the hotel.

So far, no arrests have been made in connection

to the hotel bombings on Tuesday. Police have issued warrants for three suspects in connection with the tourist town attacks but have given few details on the suspects.

The Muslim-dominated provinces of Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat were annexed by Thailand a century ago, and resistance to Buddhist rule in the south spilled over in 2004.

Since then, more than 6,500 people — most of them civilians — have died in violence, including shootings and bomb attacks. Successive governments have failed to quell the separatist trouble.

Talks between the government and a handful of shadowy insurgent groups began in 2013 under the civilian government of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, but have stalled since the military overthrew her in 2014. No group has claimed responsibility for Tuesday’s attack but experts say the attacks would appear to reflect frustration over the stalled negotiations.—Reuters



People stand at the scene after a blast outside a hotel in the southern province of Pattani, Thailand, on 24 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Hong Kong confirms first Zika case in woman who went to Caribbean

HONG KONG — Hong Kong has confirmed its first case of Zika in a woman who had travelled to the Caribbean, putting the Asian financial hub on high alert for any spread of the mosquito-borne virus that has wreaked havoc in Latin America, the Caribbean and beyond.

Leung Ting-hung, Controller of the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health, told a media conference late on Thursday that relevant measures had been taken to prevent the virus from spreading.

He said the government's priority was controlling the mosquito population in Hong Kong.

"The patient is a 38-year-old woman with good past health. She has developed joint pain and red eyes since 20 August," the department of health said in a statement. The unidentified woman had been in the Caribbean from 6-20 August and returned to Hong Kong on Monday, the department said. It said it would report the case to the World Health Organisation.



Workers from the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department kill mosquitoes outside a construction site near a residential area in Hong Kong, China, on 26 August 2016, after the first case of Zika was confirmed in the city. PHOTO: REUTERS

In February, a mainland Chinese man who flew into Hong Kong was diagnosed as having the Zika virus, according to broadcaster RTHK, citing officials as saying there was little chance he could have caused an outbreak during his brief stay.

Zika was detected in Brazil last year and has since spread across the Americas. The virus poses a risk to pregnant women because it can cause severe birth defects. It has been linked to more than 1,800 cases of microcephaly in Brazil.—Reuters

North Korean military put on highest alert level

SEOUL — North Korea's military was put on its highest alert level earlier this week in response to the South Korea-US joint exercise that began on Monday, South Korea's Yonhap News Agency reported on Friday.

A South Korean government source was quoted as saying North Korea issued the order for alert level No. 1 in response to the exercise.

The source said that North Korea's military alert level was "special alert No. 2" when the Ulchi Freedom Guardian annual exercise took place last year.

North Korea's military and Cabinet have been holding exercises to simulate a wartime situation, including occupying artillery positions at the foremost frontline, the source said.

About 25,000 US troops have been mobilized for the joint exercise with South Korea that runs through 2 September, with about 2,500 coming from outside the Korean Peninsula, while about 50,000 South Ko-

rean troops will participate in the event, according to a statement from the joint command and South Korea's Defence Ministry.

Earlier Monday, North Korea issued a warning stating that its military is "ready to mount a preemptive retaliatory strike at all enemy attack groups involved in Ulji (sic) Freedom Guardian."

"The nuclear warmonsters should bear in mind that if they show the slightest sign of aggression on the inviolable land, seas and air where the sovereignty of the DPRK is exercised, it would turn the stronghold of provocation into a heap of ashes through Korean-style preemptive nuclear strike," a spokesman for the General Staff of the Korean People's Army said in a statement carried by the state-run Korean Central News Agency. The DPRK is an acronym for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, North Korea's official name.—Kyodo News

Australia pulse crops racing to record to fill Indian plates

SYDNEY — Australian farmers are set to churn out record harvests of pulses such as chickpeas and lentils after they rushed to take advantage of surging prices due to shortages in world No.1 producer and consumer India.

Prices of the key pulses, long-used to make dishes such as curries and growing in popularity globally due to their high-protein content, soared above A\$1,200 (\$915) per tonne earlier this year, according to National Australia Bank.

Although markets have since pulled back to around A\$700 per tonne, they are still well above longer term averages of A\$300 to A\$500, said Nick Goddard, chief executive of industry body Pulse Australia.

The rise, largely driven by production shortfalls in India due to back-to-back droughts and irrigation problems, prompted Australian farmers to plant more pulse crops, with a total harvest of around 4 million tonnes expected this year compared to 2.2 million last season, according to Pulse Australia.

That should help cement Australia's position as a top five global exporter of pulses alongside nations such as Canada and China at a time when it is looking to rebalance its economy

as a mining investment boom fades.

"(Prices) were double where they normally were," said Phil Christie, a farmer in southeast Australia, explaining why he chose to plant 20-per cent more chickpeas this season.

Australia typically exports two-thirds of its chickpea output to India, with most of the remainder sold to Bangladesh and Pakistan. Very little is consumed locally.

As well as chickpeas and lentils, pulse crops include field peas, lupins and fava beans.

Prices are expected to ease towards year-end as the Indian growing season gets off to a strong start and as producers such as Canada and Russia ramp up exports.

But Pulse Australia has forecast export earnings from this year's harvest would likely hit a record A\$2 billion, up from \$1.2 billion in 2015.

Goddard cautioned some farms in the state of New South Wales had recently had crops ruined by excessive rainfall, although he said the overall outlook remained strong.

"Even if we lose a bit because of the rain, it's still going to be a very good year," he said.—Reuters

Indonesia's most-wanted awakens new generation of jihadis

SOLO, (Indonesia) — During a May 2011 shootout, Indonesia's counter-terrorism forces killed the leader of a militant group thought to be behind a series of failed bomb attempts around the city of Solo in Central Java.

The death of "Team Hisbah" founder Sigit Qurdowi caused the group to splinter. Some formed an anti-vice squad in the city; many others became associated with a former Solo resident called Bahrin Naim, who authorities believe is a leading Indonesian coordinator for Islamic State (IS).

Now, five years later, Naim, based in IS's stronghold of Raqqa, Syria, is building an ever-more sophisticated network of militants from his former hometown, according to police, self-proclaimed radicals and people who work with the militants in Solo.

Solo, which has a long history of schools and mosques associated with radical Islamists, is a breeding ground for Naim's recruits, counter-terrorism officials say, and many of his lieutenants in Indonesia have come from Team Hisbah.

As a result, authorities fear the

risk of a major attack in Indonesia is growing.

Islamist militancy in the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation has been contained since a crackdown on Jemaah Islamiyah — al Qaeda's franchise in the region — put hundreds of its leaders and followers behind bars in the mid-2000s.

But like al Qaeda before it, IS is reviving a fragmented radical Islamist movement in Indonesia that has endured in various incarnations for the past century, authorities say.—Reuters



Anti-terrorism policemen carry an envelope after a raid at the house of suspect Nur Rohman at Sukoharjo District near Solo, Indonesia, on 19 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Opinion

Write for us

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

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

Still further to go on landmines

Aye Min Soe

DEADLY landmine explosions continue, especially in Kayah and Kayah states, killing and injuring more than 600 people every year, according to the Peace Myanmar Foundation, which is lending assistance to landmine victims in Myanmar.

No maps or guides are available for the location of these landmines, which is posing a hindrance to the clear-

ance of landmines in armed conflict areas.

Landmines have not yet been removed in 45 townships across the country. It is encouraging, however, to know that the government is planning to clear landmines in co-operation with international agencies.

Besides, Dr Win Myat Aye, the Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettle-

ment, said the ministry is committed to eradication of landmines. Currently, around 60,000 people have been rendered disabled, with amputated legs and arms, with many others still awaiting surgery to remove their mangled appendages.

Landmines can be found in seven out of 10 of ethnic areas, and it can take up to 10 years to get rid of the landmines. The country is ranked third in the world for

landmine danger, according to the Norwegian People's Aid organisation.

To start the work, rules and regulations are urgently needed and MPs are obliged to quickly enact such directives.

For the safety of the people in the high-risk areas, the government should give priority to landmine clearance. The MPs should bring the issue to the parliament as quickly as possible.

India should seize the opportunity

Dr. Nehginpao Kipgen

MYANMAR President Htin Kyaw begins a four-day trip to India beginning August 27. This is the president's first State visit to India and will be accompanied by his wife, Daw Su Su Lwin, several key ministers and senior officials.

President Kyaw comes to India at the invitation of the Indian President, Pranab Mukherjee, who will be hosting a banquet in honor of the visiting leader and his delegation.

During his visit, President Kyaw will have official engagements in New Delhi and also visit places of historical and cultural importance across India. The visit is expected to strengthen and expand ties between the two countries.

The visit comes three days after External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj paid a one-day visit to the Southeast Asian nation on August 22. It was the first high-level visit to the neighboring country since the National League for Democracy (NLD) came to power.

During the visit, leaders of the Myanmar government told Swaraj that they would not allow any insurgent group to use Myanmar's territory against India. Swaraj offered all possible help to the new Myanmar government.

Swaraj's visit happened just days after the Indian Army had an encounter with the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang (NSCN-K) militants in Nagaland who were trying to enter the country from Myanmar. There were reports that the Indian army had crossed over to Myanmar to pursue the militants but it was officially denied by New Delhi.

President Kyaw's visit is important for the Indian leadership to engage in substantive talks on

cross-border security issue and others.

The timing of the visit is good for both New Delhi and Nay Pyi Taw as the NLD government currently engages in holding talks with several ethnic armed groups of the country.

One major goal of President Kyaw's government is to end decades of armed conflicts in Myanmar, which is considered the longest in the world, by holding the 21st Panglong Conference starting August 31.

Though the NSCN-K is currently not engaged in talks with the Myanmar government, the Modi government could use this visit to talk about the group.

President Kyaw's visit also comes six days after Aung San Suu Kyi, Myanmar's state counselor and de-facto leader, paid a four-day visit to China.

Besides the cross-border security issues, the three specific areas where India needs to focus are the education sector, institution-building and people-to-people relations.

During the visit, the two countries signed agreements on economic and technological cooperation, among others, that will result in the building of two new hospitals and a strategic bridge in Kunlong, 32 kilometers from the Chinese border in northeastern Myanmar.

Another important issue of bilateral talk was on trade and investment. China is Myanmar's largest trading partner with total two-way trade amounting to \$15.6 billion in 2015. In an effort to improve bilateral ties, Myanmar has agreed to review the several dam projects invested by China and find a mutually agreeable solution.

The Chinese leadership assured the state counselor that Bei-

jing would continue to play a constructive role in promoting a peaceful settlement to the decades-old armed conflicts in Myanmar.

In light of these developments, India, which is the world's largest democracy, should seize the opportunity of President Kyaw's visit to strengthen and enhance bilateral

relations.

Besides the cross-border security issues, the three specific areas where India needs to focus are the education sector, institution-building and people-to-people relations.

First, the Indian government has taken initiatives such as the establishment of Language Laboratories and Resource Centre, the Myanmar Institute of Information Technology, and the Agricultural Research and Educational Centre, and the enhancement of the India-Myanmar Centre for Enhancement of IT Skills.

But few students from Myanmar, if any, attend Indian universities. The Indian government and educational institutions across India should do more to attract stu-

dents from Myanmar, perhaps by offering scholarships or through exchange programs. Additionally, civil society organizations and the private sector should offer vocational trainings for short-term results.

Second is institution building which can be done in a number of ways. For example, the Indian government should invite Myanmar politicians who are new to democracy to give them first-hand experience as to how democracy works in a diverse and pluralistic society.

Myanmar politicians should be allowed to observe parliamentary proceedings, or attend courses offered by Indian universities and think-tanks on the theory and practice of democracy and federalism.

Third is improving people-to-people relations. Not only do India and Myanmar have a shared border but the two countries are also home to millions of people from the same ethnic community, separated during the creation of India and Myanmar in 1947 and 1948 respectively. Examples are the Kachin, the Kuki, the Naga and the Shan, who live side by side along the India-Myanmar border.

Moreover, the two countries also share about 1624-kilometre boundary in four Northeast Indian states — Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland. But despite this geographical proximity, cross-border contacts among

ordinary people are insignificant. During Prime Minister Modi's visit to Myanmar in 2014, India agreed to build 71 bridges along the roads used by Indian buses.

Bus service between Imphal and Mandalay, a distance of about 580 kilometers, was originally planned to start in 2012-2013 but Manipur Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh launched it only on December 9, 2015 as a trial run, which has not been resumed.

Similarly, the first flight service between Myanmar and Manipur was introduced in November 2013, but never followed up because of immigration and other questions. Though weekly direct Air India flights on the Delhi-Gaya-Yangon route and Golden Myanmar charter flights to India were launched in November 2014, the connectivity between the two countries still remain very poor.

Reliable road links, bus and train services, the introduction of visa-on-arrival facilities at the border, regular flights and the improvement of people-to-people relations are some key areas the Indian government should prioritize for the success of its Act East Policy.

Dr. Nehginpao Kipgen is Assistant Professor and Executive Director of the Center for South-east Asian Studies, Jindal School of International Affairs, O.P. Jindal Global University.



Commander-in-Chief inspects quake-hit mud volcano in Minbu

COMMANDER-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing went on an inspection tour of a mud volcano in Minbu, Magway Region to assess the earthquake damage yesterday.

The Commander-in-Chief gave instructions on cleanup works and renovation and recon-

struction of the damaged buildings in the area.

The Senior General presented cash donations from the Defence Services for all-round renovation of the mud volcano to the board of trustees.

According to sources, a retaining wall, a stairway, a pagoda, ceiling of the prayer hall

and walls were damaged during Wednesday's earthquake.

The Senior General and party visited Myathalun Pagoda in Magway where they made cash donations and paid homage to a duplicate sacred tooth relic kept at the Maha Atulayanthi Prayer Hall of the pagoda.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects quake-hit mud volcano. PHOTO: MNA

Data collected by Ayeyarwady project to aid Myitsone Commission

THE National Water Resources Committee (NWRC) reportedly told the Myitmakha News Agency that information researched by the Ayeyarwady Integrated River Basin Management Project - a three country partnership of Myanmar, the Netherlands and Australia - can be used to support the newly founded commission tasked with studying and analyzing hydro-power projects along the Ayeyarwady River.

"Data from our current project will be forwarded to the Myitsone Commission - it could support their work. They will need information concerning the confluence of the [Ayeyarwady] river," said Daw Khin Ni Ni

Thein, member of the NWRC's consultant body and expert of the aforementioned project.

The commission to study and analyse hydro-power projects along the upper-reaches of the Ayeyarwady, it's confluence and basin, was formed by the new government on 12 August with 20 members comprised of central government ministers. The commission's chair is U Ti Khun Myat, deputy speaker of the Pyithu Hluttaw.

The controversial Chinese-backed Myitsone Hydro-electric-dam Project was one ratified by the erstwhile government, but it was temporarily suspended by the U Thein Sein administration after it

provoked fervent public objection.

"The current project will allow us to understand what kind of benefits economic projects along the [Ayeyarwady] river will have. The current state of play of the river and its currents will be scrutinised, and vital conservation efforts will be considered. Our findings will support the drawing up of a master plan for the river," said Dr U Win Hlaing of the Ayeyarwady Basin Development Project.

Initial findings of the project will be released this coming December while subsequent data to be made public in March and June next year.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

U Thet Naing Oo appointed as D-G of Farmland Management and Statistics Department

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed Deputy Permanent Secretary U Thet Naing Oo of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation as Director-Gener-

al of the Farmland Management and Statistics Department under the same ministry on probation from the date he assumes charges of his duties. —*Myanmar News Agency*

As fishing ban impacts livelihoods, Rakhine fishermen seek government loans

RAKHINE fisherman have voiced their desire for government loans, in the same manner as their agricultural counterparts are currently privy to, in order to revive the state's sinking fishing industry.

Fishermen from Myanmar's western state have also verbally requested central and state governments systematically stipulate what constitutes fresh water, close-shore and off-shore fishing; include the opinions of fishermen in the drawing up of ocean fishing laws; and for there to be transparency in the collection of fishing industry taxes.

"[The government] have forbidden us from fishing during the fishes' breeding season, and they've carried out initiatives to educate fishermen as to why. But, how are families supposed to eat during this season when they aren't allowed to catch fish? The state needs to provide alternative forms of livelihood, or provide loans like they do to farmers," said U Saw Hla Aung, a fish trader from Myebon Township.

The capacity of fish production in Rakhine State has seen a visible decline in the last decade, which has subsequently seen a depreciation in the incomes of those involved in the industry, according to a statement released by collusion organisation concerned with Rakhine fisheries.

"Fishermen want access to

credit loans, and our department has a tradition of providing such services. But, fishermen don't act themselves when it's time to make repayments; there are those which don't repay their loans at all. It causes us difficulties. We want to do a lot for them, but it's a two way street," said Dr Nyunt Wai, head of the Department of Fisheries for Rakhine State.

Whole swathes of households along the Rakhine coastline depend upon catching fish, trading it, or activities linked to the industry, in order to make a living in the absence of any alternatives from a dearth of agricultural farming opportunities.

"The Freshwater Fisheries Law has been passed in Rakhine State. As such, there's an onus on fishermen to comply with regulations. The development of the fishing industry needs to come from the concerted efforts of central and state governments, regional civil society organisations, NGOs and INGOs and fishermen themselves," said U Aye Thar Aung, deputy speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw.

According to the Department of Fisheries for Rakhine State, INGOs were invited to a workshop held in the state's capital, Sittwe between August 1-6 on the development of state's fishing industry and the lives of those working within it.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Back to school: Over 1,500 schools reopen across Ayeyarwady Region

A TOTAL of 1,517 schools within Ayeyarwady Region, from 1,755 which were forced to close their doors after the region was stuck by extensive flooding, have reportedly reopened in the wake of subsiding floodwaters, according to the Office of the Head of Education for Ayeyarwady Region.

"In order to mitigate children falling behind with their studies, they will be taught in their spare time. Schools in other districts have all since been reopened," said Daw Hnin Nu Win, a teacher from the office.

Schools in Ayeyarwady Region's Hinthada Township were

first to close on 2 August while 238 schools are yet to reopen their doors, according to records of the office of the head of education for the region.

On top of the closures, floodwaters also completely destroyed a total of 11 schools across the region.

"It's good that schools are closed at times of flooding; we'd be fearful over the safety of the children if they weren't. Now, with the reopening of the schools, children will be taught in time outside of school hours so they can catch up," said Daw Hpu Nong, a teacher from Kyangin

Township.

Ayeyarwady Region boasts a majority of primary schools, totaling over 4,600, while the number of high-schools numbers just 218. Over 700,000 children within the region are currently getting a state education.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Hungary to build second fence on Serbian border to keep out migrants

BUDAPEST — Hungary plans to build a second fence on its southern border with Serbia that would enable it to keep out any major new wave of migrants, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said on Friday.

Orban said the new barrier, to be built alongside the existing one, would strengthen defences to respond if Turkey's policy on migration changed. If that happened, hundreds of thousands could appear at Hungary's border, he told public radio.

"Technical planning is under way to erect a more massive defence system next to the existing line of defence which was built quickly (last year)," Orban said.

Orban said Hungary had to prepare for the eventuality of a deal between Turkey and the European Union to clamp down on migration into Europe via the Balkans unravelling.

"Then if it does not work with nice words, we will have to stop them with force, and we will do so," Orban said.

A razor-wire fence built along Hungary's southern border with Serbia and Croatia has sharply reduced flows.

Last year hundreds of thousands of migrants moved up from the Balkans towards northern Europe. That flow has since been reduced to no more than a steady trickle. Orban said Hungary would also boost its police presence to 47,000 from 44,000, of which 3,000 will be constantly deployed on the southern border.

He also said it was Europe's interest to work with Turkey and to agree on the issues that serve Europe's security.

Under the existing deal, Turkey has agreed to help stem the tide of illegal migrants into the bloc in exchange for aid and vi-

sa-free travel for Turks. Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has repeatedly said that European leaders are not living up to their side of the pact.

Later on Friday, Orban and other prime ministers of Central European EU member states — the Visegrad countries — will meet in Warsaw with German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Orban said the task for politicians was to change a decision by the EU to let in migrants and distribute them based on quotas among member states.

"The question is whether Angela Merkel will be willing to change this flawed Brussels decision together with us. Whether she is willing to fight with us for this, or not, Orban said." Hungary will hold a referendum on 2 October on whether to accept any future EU quota system for resettling migrants.—*Reuters*



Hungarian army soldiers stand guard at the Serbian-Hungarian border fence at a makeshift camp near the village of Horgos, Serbia, on 14 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Clinton, Trump clash over who is best for US minorities

RENO (Nevada) — Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton accused Donald Trump on Thursday of fuelling America's "radical fringe" with racist rhetoric, even as her Republican rival sought to soften his image with an appeal to minorities.

Clinton needs to retain support from black and Latino voters to win the 8 November election, the same coalition that helped propel Democrat Barack Obama to the White House in 2008. Trump, whose support comes mainly from whites, is unlikely to be victorious unless he can cut into that support.

"Donald Trump has built his campaign on prejudice and paranoia," Clinton said in a scathing speech in Nevada. "He's taking hate groups mainstream and helping a radical fringe take over one of America's two major political parties."

"This is a moment of reckoning for every Republican dismayed that the Party of Lincoln has become the Party of Trump," Clinton said, referring to Abraham Lincoln, the first Republican president, who issued the Emancipation Proclamation and championed the 13th Amendment to the US Constitution during the Civil War that led to the abolition of slavery in 1865.

Trump, who trails Clinton in national opinion polls, has polled poorly with minorities and has been criticized for his proposals on immigration, which include deporting millions of undocumented foreigners, building a wall along the Mexican border, and suspending Muslim immigration to shore up national security.

He described some Mexican immigrants as "criminals and rapists" in a 2015 speech launching

his candidacy and more recently questioned the impartiality of an American-born judge of Mexican heritage.

On Thursday, the New York real estate mogul-turned-politician criticized Clinton before her speech, saying she and her party had let black Americans down with failed economic policies and were falsely labelling Republicans as bigoted.

"When Democratic policies fail, they are left with only this one tired argument: You're racist, you're racist, you're racist," Trump told a crowd in Manchester, New Hampshire. "It's a tired, disgusted argument and is so totally predictable."

At a Mississippi rally on Wednesday, Trump called Clinton a "bigot who sees people of colour only as votes, not as human beings."—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Chinese man arrested in Hong Kong over FACC cyber attack in Austria

VIENNA — A Chinese citizen has been arrested in Hong Kong in connection with a cyber attack that cost Austrian aerospace parts maker FACC (FACC.VI) 42 million euros (\$47.39 million), Austrian police said on Friday.

FACC fired its chief executive and chief financial officer after the attack, which involved hoax emails asking an employee to transfer money for a fake acquisition project — a kind of scam known as a "fake president incident". FACC's customers include Airbus (AIR.PA) and Boeing (BA.N). A 32-year-old man, who was an authorized signatory of a Hong Kong-based firm that received around 4 million euros from FACC, was arrested on 1 July on suspicion of money laundering, a spokesman for Austria's Federal Office for Crime said.—*Reuters*

One dead, dozens missing as ferry sinks on Bangladesh river

DHAKA — At least one female is dead and dozens of people are missing after a ferry capsized in the river of Kumar in Bangladesh's central Madaripur district, some 63 km south of capital Dhaka, on Thursday night.

A fire service official told Xinhua that the ferry carrying some 100 passengers sank at about 8:00 pm local time Thursday when it collided head-on with a vessel. "The female, one of scores of people who swam to shore when the ferry sank, died later in the hospital," said the official. He said rescue efforts and a search for the missing are under way by the Fire Service and Civil Defence authorities.—*Xinhua*

Migrant influx pushes German population growth to highest since 1992

BERLIN — Germany's population registered its biggest increase in more than 20 years in 2015, data showed on Friday, as record numbers of migrants entered the country.

More than a million people fleeing war and poverty in the Middle East, Africa and beyond flocked to Europe's most populous nation last year, drawn by Germany's strong economy, relatively liberal asylum laws and generous system of benefits.

Net migration reached a record high of 1,139,000, more than doubling from 2014, the Federal Statistics Office said. A domestic debate about the benefits and drawbacks of migration has been raised a notch by a recent spate of violent attacks on civilians, some of which were claimed by Islamic militants.—*Reuters*

Russian long-range bombers to get new cruise missiles

MOSCOW — Russian Tu-22M3 Backfire long-range bombers will be armed with the newest Kh-32 cruise missile, Russian news agency Sputnik reported on Friday.

The newest missile will be aimed at "destroying enemy warships, radar stations and targets that seriously distort radar signals for bombers," military expert Dmitry Kornev was quoted as saying. A Kh-32 missile can reach an altitude of 40 km and fly horizontally before striking the target from above.

The cruise missile, developed by the Raduga Military Design Bureau, part of the Tactical Missiles Corporation, is almost invincible to enemy air defenses and interceptor jets, the report said.—*Xinhua*

Bus plunges into river in Nepal killing 20

KATHMANDU — A passenger bus veered off a highway and fell into a river in central Nepal Friday morning, killing 20 people, police said.

The bus, travelling from Rautahat district in south-central Nepal to Pokhara city in western Nepal, met with the accident in Chitwan district, about 100 kilometres west of Kathmandu, at 4 am local time.

Basanta Kunwar, police chief of Chitwan district, said nine people were rescued alive and are receiving treatment for injuries at local hospitals. Four of them have sustained critical injuries.

Several passengers are feared missing in the Trishuli River, about 200 metres below the highway, where the bus fell and was completely submerged. Police and locals are continuing to carry out search and rescue operations. There was no immediate clear cause for the accident.—*Kyodo News*

Russia backs 48-hour Aleppo truce, UN wants other sides to commit

GENEVA — Russia has agreed to a 48-hour humanitarian ceasefire in the divided Syrian city of Aleppo to allow aid deliveries, but security guarantees are awaited from other parties on the ground, UN officials said on Thursday.

The United Nations has pushed for a weekly 48-hour pause in fighting in Aleppo to alleviate suffering for about 2 million people, but major powers back opposing sides in Syria's five-year-old civil war, complicating its implementation.

"We have ... agreement now from the Russian Federation for the 48-hour pause, we're waiting (for) it from the other actors on the ground. That has taken more time frankly than I thought was needed," Jan Egeland, who chairs the UN humanitarian task force, told reporters.

Egeland's boss, UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura, echoed his comments, saying Russia was on board but they were waiting for others parties to agree: "... we are ready, trucks are ready and they can leave any time we get that message."

Russia is the main external supporter of the government of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Rebel groups opposing Assad are supported by Western and Gulf powers.

The White House on Thursday said it supported UN efforts to bring all sides together to deliver humanitarian relief to Aleppo and would welcome Russia's constructive engagement.

The US State Department said while Washington backed the 48-hour Aleppo cease-fire it was focused on achieving a broader country-wide cessation of hostilities, which would be the focus of talks in Geneva on Friday.

"If the UN says they need 48 hours, of course we support the UN. But ... our focus is on a nationwide sustainable cessation of hostilities," said State Department spokeswoman Elizabeth Trudeau. She said that would let all Syrians have access to aid and provide a basis for a political transition.

On 19 August, the main umbrella group for the Syrian opposition cautiously welcomed a proposal for a weekly truce in Aleppo, provided this would be monitored by the United Nations.

De Mistura has been trying to bring government and opposition representatives back to the negotiating table this month to revive a shattered broader ceasefire.

He said he awaited Friday's meeting between US Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in Geneva before commenting further on his "political initiatives" to relaunch the political process.



Civil defence members sit amid the rubble of damaged buildings after an airstrike in the rebel held Bab al-Narab neighborhood of Aleppo, Syria, on 25 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

ly pause to have two convoys, of 20 trucks each, that would carry enough food for 80,000 people in eastern Aleppo," he said.

Western Aleppo, where needs have "increased dramatically", would be supplied via Damascus, he said.

There would also be repairs of the electrical system in the "disputed south" that powers water

ly pause to have two convoys, of 20 trucks each, that would carry enough food for 80,000 people in eastern Aleppo," he said.

Western Aleppo, where needs have "increased dramatically", would be supplied via Damascus, he said.

There would also be repairs of the electrical system in the "disputed south" that powers water

pumping stations serving 1.8 million people. Civilians in other encircled towns were also malnourished, Egeland said, singling out rebel-besieged Foua and Kefraya in Idlib and government-besieged Madaya near Damascus, which have not had UN food deliveries in 116 days. "Starvation is just around the corner," he warned. —Reuters

American university attack hits at heart of Afghan liberal learning

KABUL — With its spacious, leafy campus, foreign professors and English-language MBAs, the American University in Kabul offers young Afghan students the kind of Western-style education unimaginable for most of their peers.

The image of an island of liberalism and learning in a country plagued by militant violence has been shattered.

On Wednesday evening, at least two gunmen stormed classrooms after a suspected car bomb was used to get into the walled complex, and killed seven students and a professor.

The death toll could have been far higher, with most students managing to barricade themselves in classrooms or flee to safety, even if it meant breaking bones as they jumped from the second floor of a building.

As security forces patrolled the 5-acre campus on Thursday and university staff visited the wounded in hospital, students weighed up the risks of returning to their education.

"Now my parents say I should stop studying there if it reopens, but I want to continue, because is there another institution like it in the whole country?" said Farooq,

an international relations student.

Opened in 2006 and partly funded by US aid, the not-for-profit American University of Afghanistan (AUAF) had grown to accommodate 1,700 students, offering some of the country's most respected degrees craved by young people restless for opportunities.

A slick promotion video on the university's website shows smiling Afghan men and women in traditional Western robes and mortar boards preparing to graduate.

Pupils range from poorer Afghans on scholarships to the sons

and daughters of the country's elite.

The university also offers overseas exchange programmes to the United States and Germany, a further incentive to those deciding whether to go back.

"When the university reopens, I will be the first to enter and continue my education. The terrorists can never stop us from learning," said Wahida Faizi.

There has been no claim of responsibility for the raid, which ended after security forces cleared buildings early on Thursday.

Islamist militants have increasingly targeted educational institutions in countries including neighbouring Pakistan, in an effort to frighten the public and damage centres of learning they deem out of place in their vision of an Islamic society.

Taliban insurgents who control swathes of rural Afghanistan and want to topple the Western-backed government of President Ashraf Ghani also frequently attack places where foreigners live or gather, leaving the American University even more vulnerable.

Two teachers from the university, an American and an Australian, were abducted at gunpoint from a road near the campus on 7 August. They are still missing.

Among the wounded in Wednesday's attack was a Ugandan professor, according to the Kabul emergency hospital where he was being treated. —Reuters

US, Saudi plan to revive Yemeni talks

RIYADH — US Secretary of State John Kerry revealed on Thursday in Jeddah a new US-Saudi initiative to revive the standstill Yemeni talks, local news channel Al Arabiya reported.

The initiative aims to convince the Yemeni militias to hand over their weapons and form a national unity government, according to Kerry.

He said the initiative will be implemented following a negotiation between UN Envoy to Yemen Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed and all Yemeni political parties.

Kerry urged the Yemeni minority Houthis to accept the new initiative, saying both political and military solutions to the Yemeni crisis are possible options by Gulf countries.

The US official said more efforts could be made to battle the Islamic State (IS) militants and al-Qaida only if the conflicts in Yemen are ended.

Meanwhile, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir said his country rejected any civil putsches in Yemen and the crisis should be solved peacefully. —Xinhua



Students walk toward a police vehicle after they were rescued from the site of an attack at the American University of Afghanistan in Kabul, Afghanistan, on 25 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

US Navy ship fires warning shots at Iranian vessel

WASHINGTON — A US Navy ship fired warning shots toward an Iranian fast-attack craft that approached two US ships, a Pentagon spokesman said on Thursday, in the most serious of a number of incidents in the Gulf area this week.

"They did feel compelled ultimately to fire three warning shots and the reason for that is... they had taken steps already to try and de-escalate this situation," spokesman Peter Cook told reporters.

Tensions have increased in the Gulf in recent days despite an improvement in relations between Iran and the United States.

Years of mutual animosity eased when Washington lifted sanctions on Tehran in January after a deal to curb Iran's nuclear ambitions but serious differences still remain over Iran's ballistic missile program, Syria and Iraq.

A US defence official, speaking on the condition of an-



Footage taken aboard the USS Nitze shows of Islamic Revolutionary Guard vessels. PHOTO: REUTERS

onymity, said the USS Squall patrol craft fired three warning shots from a .50 caliber gun in the northern Gulf on Wednesday after warning flares did not work.

The incident started with

three Iranian vessels, but there was only one around by the time the warning shots were fired, the official said. He described the Iranian behavior as "unsafe, unprofessional, and not routine."

At one point, the Iranian vessel came within 200 yards (193 meters) of a US ship, the official said. Another interaction took place between an Iranian and US ship on Wednesday, the defence

official said but gave few more details.

The Pentagon earlier this week accused Iranian vessels of harassing a US warship near the Strait of Hormuz on Tuesday.

On Thursday, Iran's defense minister said those Iranian vessels were just doing their job. "If an American ship enters Iran's maritime region, it will definitely get a warning. We will monitor them and, if they violate our waters, we will confront them," Defence Minister Hossein Dehghan said in a statement reported by the Iranian Students' News Agency.

A State Department spokeswoman said it was not clear what the intentions of the Iranian ships were, but the behavior was unacceptable. "We believe that these type of actions are of concern, they unnecessarily escalate tensions," State Department spokeswoman Elizabeth Trudeau told a briefing.—Reuters

Lactalis talks with French milk producers end with no deal

PARIS — A meeting between Europe's largest dairy group Lactalis and French milk producers requesting a rise in prices ended in a deadlock after 10 hours of negotiations, sources close to the talks said.

European milk farmers are struggling with a slump in prices caused by oversupply after the scrapping of the European Union quotas last year, Russia's ban on Western food imports and weak Chinese dairy imports.

Family-owned Lactalis had agreed to renegotiate the price paid to its suppliers on Tuesday after hundreds of milk producers protested around its headquarters in northwestern France blaming the company for paying less than its competitors.

Protests intensified on Thursday night with a total of 200 to 300 tractors and hundreds of farmers awaiting the results of the talks in Laval, where Lactalis has its headquarters. They said they were ready to continue the protests in case no concrete deal was found.

The meeting had started in the early afternoon on Thursday and was held under the auspices of the farm minister's mediator.

Lactalis mainly produces cheese, milk and butter with brands including Président, Bridel, Galbani and Lactel.

Producers were asking for an average price of some 290 euros per 1,000 litres over 2016, compared to 265 euros offered by Lactalis several weeks ago, the head of a producers group supplying Lactalis said.—Reuters

Chilean Navy sailing ship makes port call in Tokyo



The Esmeralda, the Chilean Navy's training ship, is docked at Harumi Pier in Tokyo port, on 26 August 2016. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

TOKYO — The Chilean Navy's training ship Esmeralda arrived for a port call in Tokyo on Friday morning as part of its nearly seven-month tour of the Pacific, marking its first stop in Japan since 2007.

The Esmeralda, with more than 300 crew members and some international guests, including a female cadet from Japan's Maritime Self-Defence Force, serves as a cultural envoy to nations friendly to the Andean country.

The sailing ship, built in Spain in 1954 and featuring four masts and 29 sails, is docked at Harumi Pier and will be open to the public between 2pm and 4pm on Saturday and Sunday. It will leave Tokyo next Tuesday.

Among the attendees at a welcoming reception was Rear Adm. Takayuki Sugimoto of the MSDF, who referred to the long history between the maritime forces of the two countries in his remarks.

The Esmeralda left Valparaiso, Chile, on 12 June and arrived in Tokyo after stopping at Chile's Easter Island and Hawaii. It will sail to South Korea, China, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand and French Polynesia before returning to the Chilean port on 8 January in 2017.

The 113-meter-long sailing ship is the world's largest of its kind, according to its commanding officer Capt. Carlos Schnaidt. It has visited 200 ports in 78 countries.—Kyodo News

Three die in crossbow attack in Toronto, man in custody: police

TORONTO — Three people were killed in an attack involving a crossbow in Toronto's East End on Thursday and a man was taken into custody, a police spokesman said.

In a related incident, police evacuated a building in the Downtown Core area of the city later in the day due to a suspicious package, Detective Mike Carbone told a news conference. He gave no details on how it was related or what the package contained.

All of the victims were adults, while one other person was taken to hospital, Carbone said.

The National Post newspaper reported that the three victims were shot with a crossbow in the garage of a Toronto home and left to bleed out onto the driveway. Drone footage

appeared to show at least one body covered by a tarp in the driveway.

In the initial incident, police responding to a call about a stabbing found three people who appeared to have been wounded by crossbow bolts, said another police spokesman David Hopkinson. The two men and a woman were pronounced dead.

An unidentified man, 35, was taken into custody, police said.

"We don't have any idea with regards to why this may have happened," said Hopkinson. According to the Post, one of the victims made a 911 call, and the suspect was also seriously wounded.

Television footage showed police tape surrounding part of a residential street in Scarbor-

ough, a suburban area east of the city's downtown area.

In 2010, a man shot his father in the back with a crossbow in a Toronto public library be-

fore smashing his skull with a hammer. Zhou Fang, who had suffered domestic abuse, was convicted of a lesser charge of second-degree murder.—Reuters



People watch from their front door as police stand at a crime scene where three people have died in an incident involving a crossbow, according to local media reports in the Scarborough suburb of Toronto, on 25 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Italy quake death toll hits 267, state funeral planned

PESCARA DEL TRONTO, (Italy) — Hopes of finding more survivors faded on Friday three days after a powerful earthquake hit central Italy, with the death toll rising to 267 and the rescue operation in some of the stricken areas called off.

Sniffer dogs and emergency crews continued to scour piles of rubble in Amatrice, a picturesque town popular with tourists which was levelled by Wednesday's quake and where 207 bodies have been retrieved so far.

Mayor Sergio Pirozzi said around 15 people, including some children and the local baker, had not been accounted for. "Only a miracle can bring our friends back alive from the rubble, but we are still digging because many are missing," he told reporters.

In nearby villages, such as Pescara del Tronto, rescuers pulled out after all the missing had been accounted for.

Italy plans to hold a state funeral for around 40 of the victims on Saturday, which will be held in the nearby city of Ascoli Piceno.

A day of national mourning was announced, with flags due to fly at half mast around the country for the dead, who include a number of foreigners.

The civil protection department in Rome said nearly 400 people were being treated for injuries in hospitals, and 40 of them were in critical condition. An estimated 2,500 people were left homeless by the most deadly quake in Italy since 2009. Survivors with nowhere else to go are sleeping in neat rows of blue tents set up by emergency services close to their flattened communities. The government has promised to rebuild the region, but some local people feared that would never happen.

"I'm afraid our village and others like it will just die. Most



Rescue workers work at a collapsed house at night, following an earthquake in Amatrice, central Italy, on 25 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

people don't live here year round anyway. In the winter time the towns are virtually empty," said Salvatore Petrucci, 77, who lived in the nearby small village of Trisunga.

"We may be the last ones to have lived in Trisunga," he said.

More than 920 aftershocks have hit the area since the original 6.2 magnitude quake struck early Wednesday. By Friday, most of the outlying communities were quiet and empty, buildings lying in crumpled mounds, the innards of private homes exposed to the skies and belongings scattered in the debris.

"We have removed the last bodies that we knew about," said Paolo Cortelli, a member of the Alpine Rescue national service who helped to recover about 30 bodies from Pescara del Tronto.

"We don't know, and we might never know, if the number of missing that we knew about actually corresponds to the people who were actually under the rubble."

The foreigners who died in the disaster included six Romanians, a Spanish woman, a Canadian and an Albanian. The British embassy in Rome declined to comment on reports that three Britons, including a 14-year-old boy had died.

The area is popular with holidaymakers and local authorities were struggling to pin down how many visitors were present when the quake hit.

The Romanian Foreign Ministry said 17 Romanians were still missing. Italy has a large Romanian community, and some of the victims were resident in the country. The first funeral of a victim was held in Rome on Friday, for

Marco Santarelli, the 28-year-old son of a senior state official, who died in the family's holiday home in Amatrice. "I cannot find the words to describe the grief of a father who outlives his own children. Perhaps there are no words," Marco's father, Filippo Santarelli, told Corriere della Sera newspaper.

Hardly a single building was left unscathed in Amatrice, which was last year voted one of the most beautiful old towns in Italy and is famous for its local cuisine.

"Amatrice will have to be razed to the ground," said mayor Pirozzi, who urged youngsters not to leave the area, saying that would mean the end of their community. "No night can last so long that the sun never rises again. I am convinced that Amatrice will rise again. We owe it to the 207 people who died here." —Reuters

Cuba confirms start of direct commercial flights from US

HAVANA — Cuba confirmed on Thursday that direct commercial flights with the United States would resume on 31 August after more than 50 years of interruption, following thawing ties between the two former Cold War enemies.

"The start of regular commercial flights from the United States is a positive step and a major contribution to better relations between the two countries," Eduardo Rodriguez, Cuba's deputy minister of transportation, said at a press conference.

According to official media outlets, Rodriguez said Jet-Blue Airways, a low-cost US airline, will fly the first of the commercial flights from Miami to the central city of Santa Clara on 31 August.

JetBlue will fly three times a week to this destination until 29 October before switching to a daily flight. Other carriers like American Airlines, Frontier Airlines, Silver Airways, Southwest Airlines and Sun Country Airlines will begin their flights in September and beyond to other major cities.

Cuban and the United States agreed in February to reestablish commercial flights, including 20 daily round-trip flights to Havana, which are awaiting final approval from the US Department of Transportation.

"The delay on the approval of direct commercial flights to Havana is that airlines applied for three times as many daily flights as the agreement allows," Rodriguez said.

The Cuban official added that US citizens still cannot freely travel to the island and that those who come on these direct commercial flights must qualify for one of 12 categories for people-to-people travel.

The deputy transportation minister said Cuban airports are ready for US travelers and airlines and that measures are taken for expected levels of operations and security. —Xinhua

Australia, New Zealand announce joint funding for Pacific

SYDNEY — Australia and New Zealand on Friday announced a joint funding package of A\$7.7 million (£4.45 million) to help Pacific Island countries benefit economically from a soon-to-be completed landmark trade and development deal.

Senior representatives from 16 countries met in Christchurch, New Zealand on Friday to negotiate the final terms of the 'Pacific

Agreement on Closer Economic Relations Plus' (PACER Plus) agreement which aims to create jobs and raise standards of living in the Pacific region.

The ministers agreed to conclude negotiations by the end of October and seal the agreement by December, NZ minister of trade Todd McClay said in a statement.

Opportunities for economic development in Pacific Island

countries are limited because of their small size and the difficulty achieving the economies of scale needed to compete in international markets. A regional trade and economic integration agreement, expected to facilitate trade in the countries, is likely to help create jobs and wealth in the Pacific.

The Pacific Islands economy grew at 3.4 percent to \$8.63 billion in 2015, according to World

Bank data from eleven member countries that have a combined population of about 2.3 million. The negotiations include all members of the Pacific Islands Forum: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu. —Reuters

Peace much cheaper than war, Colombia tells critics of FARC deal

HAVANA — Colombia's government peace negotiators hit back on Thursday at critics of a deal to end half a century of war with leftist FARC guerrillas, saying the cost of bringing the rebel fighters into society was much lower than spending on the conflict.

The government and the FARC, or Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, said on

Wednesday that they had reached an agreement that effectively ends a 52-year conflict that led to the deaths of more than 220,000 people and left millions displaced.

Opponents of the deal, led by former President Alvaro Uribe, say it gives rebels amnesty for too many crimes and is unfair to law-abiding citizens because it calls for subsidizing fighters as

they leave jungle and mountain hideouts to look for work.

The agreement must now be approved by Colombians in an 2 October referendum, and the government must win support from many who would prefer to have defeated the guerrillas through military force to avenge years of kidnappings and attacks.

The team that spent nearly four years negotiating with the

FARC in Havana held a news conference to defend the deal, saying the government and society must help integrate the fighters, some who have spent decades in camps.

"This is for Colombia, so that what happened in Central America does not happen here — that we abandon them after they lay down their weapons and they end up in criminal groups or

taking up weapons again," said Senator Roy Barreras, one of the negotiators.

Violent crime has increased sharply in Central American countries such as El Salvador and Guatemala since guerrillas and other armed groups were demobilized in the 1990s, a crisis some blame on the failure to help fighters adjust to civilian life. —Reuters

Home, studio of late US rocker Prince to be opened to public

MINNEAPOLIS — Paisley Park, the suburban Minneapolis estate and studio of late rock musician Prince, will be opened for public tours starting on 6 October, the administrator of the singer's estate said.

Prince, 57, collapsed and died at the 65,000-square-foot (6,040-square-meter) estate in April after an accidental overdose of the powerful opioid fentanyl.

"Opening Paisley Park is something that Prince always wanted to do and was actively working on," Tyka Nelson, his sister, said in a statement on Wednesday from Bremer Trust, which is administering his unresolved multi-million-dollar estate.

"Only a few hundred people have had the rare opportunity to tour the estate during his lifetime. Now, fans from around the world will be able to experience Prince's world for the first time as we open the doors to this incredible place."—Reuters

Dwayne Johnson dethrones Robert Downey Jr. as highest paid actor

NEW YORK — Wrestler-turned-actor Dwayne Johnson topped a *Forbes* magazine list of the world's highest paid actors on Thursday with an estimated 2016 payday of \$64.5 million.

Johnson, 44, knocked Robert Downey Jr. off the top spot and more than doubled his 2015 earnings, largely thanks to his action comedy "Central Intelligence." Johnson, known as "The Rock" during his wrestling career, also collected advance fees from the eighth installment of the popular "Fast and Furious" racing movie franchise.

The *Forbes* annual list again highlighted the pay gap between men and women in Hollywood. Earlier this week the magazine named "Hunger Games" star Jennifer Lawrence the world's highest paid actress for a second straight year, with an estimated 2016 take of \$46 million.

Forbes said 18 actors banked more than \$20 million in its June 2015-June 2016 scoring period, compared with four actresses.

Jackie Chan, who has not had a big US box office hit for years but is a prolific actor and producer in the burgeoning Chinese entertainment market, was second on the list with \$61 million. Matt Damon came in third with \$55 million, largely due to the success of his 2015 space film "The Martian."

"Iron Man" Downey fell from top spot, de-

spite reprising his comic book hero role in "Captain America: Civil War." He ranked eighth, tied with Bollywood star Shah Rukh Khan, with \$33 million.

Harrison Ford crept onto the list for the first time since 2009 thanks to his return as Han Solo in the blockbuster new "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" movie and video game. Ford, who also is to reprise his role as adventurer Indiana Jones in 2019, ranked 20th with earnings of about \$15 million. *Forbes* estimates earnings, before taxes and management fees, from movies, TV and commercial endorsements.

The rest of the Top 10 were:

4. Tom Cruise \$53 million
5. Johnny Depp \$48 million
6. Ben Affleck \$43 million
7. Vin Diesel \$35 million
8. Shah Rukh Khan \$33 million
8. Robert Downey Jr. \$33 million
10. Kumar Akshay \$31 million

—Reuters



Hong Kong actor Jackie Chan is second with \$61 million.
PHOTO: REUTERS



PHOTO: REUTERS

Rihanna, Ariana Grande set to perform at MTV Video Music awards

NEW YORK — It's empty now, but in four days New York's Madison Square Garden will be filled with some of the world's biggest music stars for the annual MTV Video Music Awards show.

Beyonce leads the nominations with a career-high 11 nods, Adele has notched seven and Rihanna has multiple nods for her collaborations with DJ Calvin Harris on "This is What You Came For," and with Drake on "Work."

One of the most anticipated moments on Sunday will be Rihanna receiving the Michael Jackson Video Vanguard Award — the equivalent of a lifetime achievement award — and performing live on stage.

"I think everyone wants to tune in for Rihanna ... What she's doing with the Video Vanguard

moment is like no one has ever done," executive producer Jesse Ignjatovic said on Thursday.

Other confirmed performers include Britney Spears, Ariana Grande, Nicki Minaj and Nick Jonas.

The always unpredictable rapper Kanye West will attend and be seated in the front row with his reality star wife, Kim Kardashian. Producers will not say whether he will perform.

"We were happy to have him coming and I'm excited to hear what he's going to do," Ignjatovic said. Other celebrity presenters include US Olympic champion swimmer Michael Phelps and the Rio gold medal-winning women's gymnastics team.

The show will air live on MTV on 28 August.—Reuters

Our music style is different from One Direction: The Vamps

NEW DELHI — They rose to fame in late 2012 with cover songs, leading to comparisons with One Direction, but British group The Vamps says its style of music is quite different from the English-Irish pop boy band.

The Vamps, which consists of Bradley Simpson on vocals, lead guitarist James McVey, bass guitarist Connor Ball and drummer Tristan, said it appreciates One Direction's sense of music but its compositions have been really different from them.

"It was nice when there was still a band we were fans of and we appreciated their (One Direction) music but we are quite different in terms of style and

style of music from them. So, we do not want to be compared," Simpson told PTI during a visit here.

The British boy band, which released its debut album "Meet the Vamps" in April 2014, said their music has been influenced by artistes like Taylor Swift and American rock band Imagine Dragons and it has been very different by far.

"We quite like the idea of challenging ourselves for our albums. Our first album was influenced by folk music. Whereas, our second one was more of hip-hop music and influenced by Taylor Swift, Imagine Dragons and few other bands like that,"

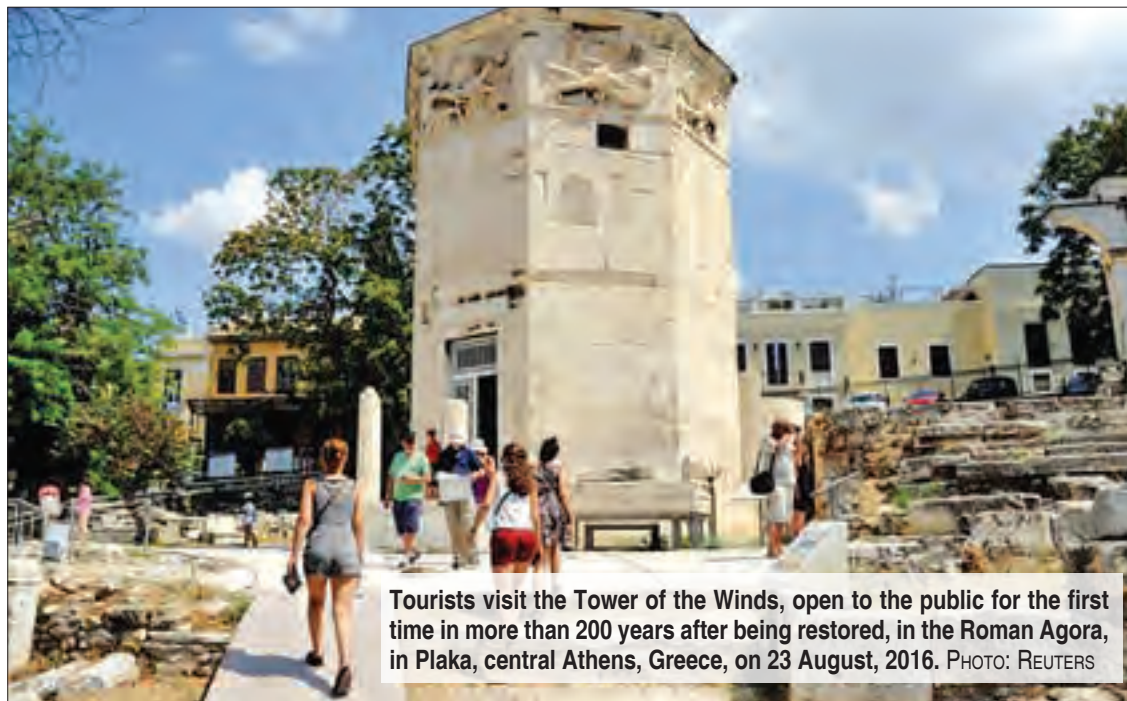
they said. Recently, English singer Olly Murs said it has become extremely tough for the UK artistes to have their song at number position.

When asked about this, The Vamps frontman Simpson said, "The most important thing is to make music, obviously being at number one is nice and nice fame but that is all secondary."

"We enjoy playing at shows and meeting fans so as long as we can do it and enjoy our lives that is great." Simpson, 21, calls himself lucky to have The Vamps in his life and says the members help each other to stay grounded from fame at such a young age.—PTI



PHOTO: PTI



Tourists visit the Tower of the Winds, open to the public for the first time in more than 200 years after being restored, in the Roman Agora, in Plaka, central Athens, Greece, on 23 August, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Ancient Greece's restored Tower of Winds keeps its secrets

ATHENS — It is said to be the world's first weather station, to date back more than 2,000 years, and to have been used by merchants to tell the time — even in darkness.

The Tower of the Winds, still standing on a slope on Athens's ancient Acropolis hill despite attempts by Lord Elgin to move it to Britain, has been restored and re-opened to the public for the first time in nearly 200 years.

No one knows who funded its lavish construction — the octagonal monument is made almost entirely of Pentelic marble, the same used for the Parthenon and rarely found in buildings other than tem-

ples. At nearly 14 meters (46 ft) tall, it is credited to the architect and astronomer Andronikos of Cyrrhus, but all these years later no one knows exactly how it worked.

"It is, we believe, the world's first weather station," Stelios Daskalakis, head of conservation, told Reuters. "It's located in the Roman Agora (market place) as it was of great value for the merchants to read the weather and also tell the time their goods would arrive," he said. Atop its fully-preserved roof, made of 24 marble slabs, rests a Corinthian capital which possibly served as the base of a bronze wind vane in the form of sea god Triton, Daskalakis said. Beneath it is

a frieze of eight Anemoi — wind gods of Greek mythology — each facing a different direction. And beneath that, lines of a sundial. The greatest mystery remains how the clock worked at night. Based on the most prominent theory, a hydraulic mechanism powered a water clock device with water flowing from a stream on the Acropolis hill.

"It's unique in that such an important work was not a temple but had a utilitarian use, Daskalakis said. "We don't know who funded it, whether it was private or a high-ranking official. The only thing justifying such a high cost is Athens wanting to upgrade the Roman Agora." —Reuters

Egypt's economic crisis weighs heavily on heritage: minister

CAIRO — Egypt cannot afford to keep its museums open let alone search for ancient buried treasures because of the economic crisis, the antiquities minister says.

Tourism, a mainstay of the economy, has been hit hard since the 2011 revolution that overthrew veteran ruler Hosni Mubarak, with many of Egypt's renowned historical sites, from the pyramids at Giza to the Valley of the Kings in Luxor, suffering a decline in foreign visitors.

"We have over 20 museums that have been closed down since the 25 January Revolution and we do not have the resources to run them," Khaled al-Anani told Reuters in an interview.

His ministry is meant to be self-sufficient and not supposed to receive funds from the state budget. In 2010 the ministry made 1.3 billion Egyptian pounds (\$146.40 million) a year; in 2015 income was down to 275 million pounds.

"That's a little over 20 million pounds a month. I have to pay 80 million a month in salaries alone."

Anani says that without a revival in tourism none of his new projects, such as the introduction of year-long museums and heritage site passes or extending

opening hours will have the desired effect.

Neither will reopening Pyramid Complex of Unas, built for Pharaoh Unas, the ninth and final king of the Fifth Dynasty in the mid 24th century B.C., which has been closed since 1998 for fear of overcrowding and which Anani reopened in May.

Still, Egypt plans to partially open the Grand Egyptian Museum, an ambitious planned museum of Ancient Egyptian artifacts that will be the world's largest archaeological museum, in 2017, said Anani, bringing forward the scheduled opening date by a year.

This is only possible because the \$248 million needed came from a Japanese loan years ago.

Financial woes also affect excavation attempts, which have seen a steep decline since 2011, he said. Other issues include a lack of international law experts at the ministry to help claim back Egyptian artifacts that were smuggled to other countries or claimed by the country's former colonial masters as well as the need to create a centralized database of antiquities to combat smuggling, efforts for which had stalled since the year 2000. —Reuters

First driverless taxi hits the streets of Singapore

SINGAPORE — The first driverless taxi began work on Thursday in a limited public trial on the streets of Singapore.

Developer nuTonomy invited a select group of people to download their app and ride for free in its "robo-taxi" in a western Singapore hi-tech business district, hoping to get feedback ahead of a planned full launch of the service in 2018.

"This is really a moment in history that's going to change how cities are built, how we real-

ly look at our surroundings," nuTonomy executive Doug Parker told Reuters.

The trial rides took place in a Mitsubishi i-MiEv electric vehicle, with an engineer sitting behind the steering wheel to monitor the system and take control if necessary.

The trial is on an on-going basis, nuTonomy said, and follows private testing that began in April.

Parker, whose company has partnered with the Singapore

government on the project, said he hoped to have 100 taxis working commercially in the Southeast Asian citystate by 2018.

NuTonomy is one of several companies racing to launch self-driving vehicles, with automakers and technology firms striking new alliances.

Swedish automaker Volvo AB said last week it had agreed to a \$300 million alliance with ride-hailing service Uber [UBER.UL] to develop a driverless vehicle. —Reuters



A nuTonomy self-driving taxi drives on the road in its public trial in Singapore, on 25 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Entertainment Channel

(27-8-2016, Saturday)

<p>06 : 00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weather Report Next Generation: Nyan Kyal Say <p>06 : 25 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cartoon "Corpse Bride" (Part-2) <p>07 : 10 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cassette Recordings <p>08 : 35 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bogalay Tint Aung: A Man of 	<p>Versatility (Part- 1)</p> <p>9 : 05 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Movie Songs <p>09 : 15 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travelogue: "Anyar Myay" or Upcountry (Part- I) <p>09 : 45 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Myanmar Movie
--	--

* **02 : 00 Pm** Live: "SMM" 2016 Yangon Aerodrome Asian Men's Club Volleyball Championship, NPT

* **07 : 00 Pm** Live: Thai Philharmonic Orchestra Concert

* **08 : 20 Pm** Live: Premier League " Southampton Vs Sunderland "

From 27-8-2016 (Saturday) 6:00 pm
To 28-8-2016 (Sunday) 6:00 pm

Myanmar International

(27-8-2016 07:00am ~ 28-8-2016 07:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Great Shwedagon- The Architectural Heritage
07:53	Am	Art Students: Sculpture
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Ananda Temple Festival (Pyarho Pwe)
08:40	Am	The Golden Triangle
08:53	Am	Writer
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Welcome To Naga Land

10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Next Generation "Thin Wai Khaing (Golfer)"
10:34	Am	Family of Toys
10:53	Am	Sticky Shan Snack

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

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

Prime Time

07:00	Pm	Live: Thai Philharmonic Orchestra Concert
-------	----	---

(10:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (10:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

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

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

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

Guardiola returning to Barca in Champions League

MONACO — Pep Guardiola will return to the Nou Camp in the Champions League group stage after his new club Manchester City were drawn against his former Barcelona team on Thursday in one of the toughest of the eight groups.

Bayern Munich were given a quick chance to avenge last season's semi-final defeat by Atletico Madrid after they were drawn together while English Premier League winners Leicester City will face Porto, Club Bruges and Copenhagen on their debut.

Elsewhere, holders and 11-times champions Real Madrid renew their recent rivalry with Borussia Dortmund.

Barca and City were drawn in Group C alongside Borussia Moenchengladbach and former European champions Celtic, with recent history clearly favouring the Catalans. Spanish coach Guardiola, who won the Champions League twice with Barca, suffered a 5-3 aggregate defeat when he faced his old team with Bayern in the semi-finals two seasons ago.

City, who visit the Nou Camp on Oct. 19, met Barca in the round of 16 in 2013-14 and 2014-15 and lost both legs on each occasion.

Bayern, now under triple Champions League winner Carlo Ancelotti, and Atletico are clear favourites to progress from Group D which also features PSV Eindhoven and Russian league runners-up Rostov who are also group-stage debutants.

Ancelotti was cautious, however, pointing out that Atletico needed a penalty shootout to beat PSV last season and that Rostov eliminated Ajax Amsterdam in the playoffs this week. "It's a difficult draw and we have to be careful," he said.

Real and Dortmund should go through from Group F at the expense of Sporting and Legia Warsaw, who are back in the group stage after a 20-year absence.

Dortmund knocked out Real in the semi-finals in 2013 but the Spanish giants came out on top the

following season in the last eight.

"It's difficult but attractive. Matches against Real are becoming classics for Dortmund. We are looking forward to meeting the holders," said Dortmund coach Thomas Tuchel.

Apart from the odd heavy-weight clash, many of the groups look predictable, a criticism that

the competition. Paris St Germain and Arsenal, who are attempting to reach the round of 16 for the 17th time in a row, are the favourites in Group A against Basel and rank Bulgarian outsiders Ludogorets although the Swiss have caused upsets in the past.

Juventus, Serie A winners for the last

five seasons, face Sevilla, Olympique Lyonnais and Dinamo Zagreb in Group H with the first three likely to battle for the top two places. —Reuters



Manchester City manager
Pep Guardiola. PHOTO: REUTERS

Wenger '99 per cent' certain of Arsenal's new signings

LONDON — Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger is "99 per cent" certain of completing new signings before the transfer window closes on Wednesday amid talks of imminent acquisition of striker Lucas Perez and defender Shkodran Mustafi.

Arsenal have endured a frustrating close season so far, snubbed by striker Jamie Vardy, who extended his contract with champions Leicester City instead, while Olympique Lyonnais rejected their bid for forward Alexandre Lacazette.

Injuries to captain Per Mertesacker and defender Gabriel have left the Gunners with only one experienced centre back in Laurent Koscielny.

According to media reports, Wenger is closing in on a 50 million pound (\$66.02 million) double deal for Deportivo La Coruna's Perez and Valencia's Mustafi.

"We are working on the deals, we are not close enough to announce

today. Will we sign anyone before the window closes? I'm 99 per cent confident," Wenger told reporters on Friday.

"I'm more optimistic than before but I can't announce anything yet."

With the Premier League's 5.14-billion-pound domestic television rights deal kicking in this campaign, Wenger said he expected an easier close season. —Reuters

Ronaldo voted UEFA's 2015-16 Best Player in Europe

MADRID — Cristiano Ronaldo has been voted UEFA's 2015-16 Best Player in Europe ahead of Real Madrid team mate Gareth Bale and Atletico Madrid's Antoine Griezmann.

"We are really happy because two Real players were among the best in Europe," said club president Florentino Perez.

Ronaldo scored 51 goals in 48 games in all competitions for Real who won the Champions League and finished runners-up to Barcelona in La Liga.

The Portugal marksman also played a key role in his country's triumph at Euro 2016. —Reuters



PHOTO: REUTERS

UEFA keeps it in the family as Champions League changed

MONACO — UEFA announced significant changes to their flagship Champions League on Friday, saying they had managed to "keep it in the family" after staving off the threat of a breakaway league by Europe's top clubs.

From 2018/19 season, the top four European leagues — currently Spain, Germany, England and Italy — will each be guaranteed four places in the group stage, UEFA competitions director Giorgio Marchetti told reporters.

Stung by criticism that the competition has become too predictable, UEFA emphasised that it would continue to be open for teams from Europe's smaller national leagues although the number of places set aside for them would drop from five to four.

Europe's top clubs had discussed the possibility of forming a breakaway Super League but UEFA's acting general secretary Theodor Theodoridis played down the threat.

"From the very beginning, the feeling was the ideal solution for everybody would be a solution in the family," he told reporters. "We spoke to everyone...the feeling we had was that

they always wanted to stay."

UEFA also stopped short of guaranteeing captive places for certain big clubs, another possibility which sources said had been discussed privately in meetings over the past few months.

Under the present system, the top three leagues have three places each while their fourth-placed teams must play off over two legs for a place in the group stage.

The fourth ranked league, currently Italy, have only two guaranteed places plus one in the playoff round.

UEFA uses a complicated coefficient to determine the rankings of the national leagues.

Marchetti said the format itself would remain the same with a qualifying stage, followed by a 32-team group stage and then a knockout contest.

The champions and runners-up of the fifth and sixth-ranked leagues, at present France and Russia, will continue to have two places while the champions of the seventh to 10th ranked leagues, currently Portugal, Ukraine, Belgium and Turkey, will also qualify automatically.

The biggest losers were the 11th and 12th ranked leagues, currently Switzerland and the Czech Republic, who will lose their guaranteed places in the group stage. —Reuters