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Vice President U Nyan Tun attends US-ASEAN Leaders Summit's second retreat session

VICE-President U Nyan Tun attended the US-ASEAN Leaders Summit's second retreat session on "Protecting Peace, Prosperity and Security in the Asia-Pacific" in California, the United States of America on Tuesday.

Upon arrival at the historic residence that hosted the summit's retreat 2 the Vice-President was greeted by US State Secretary Mr. John Kerry.

Also present at the retreat session were US President Barack Obama, heads of state/government of ASEAN countries, ministers, the ASEAN secretary-general and officials.

In his address, Vice-President U Nyan Tun elaborated on Myanmar's stance and its implementation of issues such as maritime security, transboundary challenges and the fight against terrorism.

After the meeting, the US President, heads of state/government of ASEAN countries and the ASEAN secretary-general posed for photos.—*Myanmar News Agency*



ASEAN leaders meet with President Obama. PHOTO: REUTERS

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NOT AGAINST AMENDMENT

Union Information Minister U Ye Htut advises Suu Kyi's sons to apply for Myanmar citizenship

WASHINGTON should lift economic sanctions unconditionally as Myanmar has now reached a stage to hand over the responsibilities of the State to the NLD government, said U Ye Htut, Union Minister for Information, to VoA while attending the US-ASEAN Summit in Sunnylands in California State.

Asked what Myanmar would discuss at the summit, the Union Minister said he would call on the Obama government to continue to help the next government and that he would discuss prompt lifting of US economic sanctions.

"We've exerted our utmost effort to effectuate national economic development, but they haven't lifted all the sanctions. Some are not yet lifted at all, they've just suspended the sanctions. As the election results have lifted Myanmar's democratic transition up to a higher stage, what would be most helpful is unconditional lifting of all economic sanctions," noted the Union Minister for Information.

Regarding the transfer of presidency, they should have no doubt at all as the top-level US officials have visited Myanmar before and during the election

period, he added.

When asked why president U Thein Sein cancelled this US visit, Minister U Ye Htut replied that now is the time to effectuate a transition which requires thorough preparations, that to ensure stability and prevalence of law and order, the president decided to be within the country to monitor these circumstances.

"We believe ASEAN should go beyond the region to ensure regional stability and development and that both US and China are required to be involved
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Union Minister for Information U Ye Htut. PHOTO: U YE HTUT'S FB

Pyithu Hluttaw

Pyithu Hluttaw approves emergency motion, formation of three committees

THE second Pyithu Hluttaw's first regular session continued for its sixth day with discussions on an emergency motion and the approval process for the formation of three committees yesterday.

On their discussions on the motion calling for an immediate end to fighting in Shan State and prompt measures to be taken to aid war-affected local people, parliamentarians including Defense Services personnel representatives stressed the need of ensuring national reconciliation for building a genuine federal

Union and moving towards lasting peace through cooperation of all including ethnic armed organisations.

On discussions, Union Minister U Aung Min and Deputy Ministers Maj-Gen Aung Soe, Rear Admiral Myint Nwe and U Phone Swe made clarifications.

Union Minister U Aung Min said that RCSS has been urged through the Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee to adhere to the terms and conditions of the nationwide ceasefire agreement that it signed while dealing with

civilians.

Regarding TNLA that has no state-level agreement with the government and did not ink the NCA, the Union Minister called for resolving conflicts through negotiations.

In his clarification, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Soe said that affected people have been accommodated at 17 relief camps with the provision of food, clean water and health care services. Teachers and students who fled the clashes between RCSS and TNLA have



Maj-Gen Aung Soe. PHOTO: MNA



U Phone Swe. PHOTO: MNA

been kept at a monastery to continue learning and teaching there.

The motion was approved, and an approval process for formation of three committees—the International Relations Commit-

tee, the Farmers, Workers and Youth Affairs Committee and the Ethnic Affairs and Internal Peace-making Committee—with 15 members each was carried out. —*Myanmar News Agency*

Amyotha Hluttaw

Second Amyotha Hluttaw session continues for sixth day

THE second Amyotha Hluttaw's first regular session continued for its sixth day, approving the formation of three parliamentary committees and proposing to create three more yesterday.

Following the parliamentary approval, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than announced that the International Relations, Interparliamentary Relations and Cooperation Committee was formed with 15 members led by chairman U Zon Hlyan Htan of Chin State Constituency 4 and Daw Htu May of Rakhine State Constituency 11.

Likewise, U Min Oo of Bago Region Constituency 6 will lead the Committee on Local and International Non-governmental Organisation formed with 15 members including Dr Pyae Phyo of Ayeyawady Region Constituency 7 as secretary.

Moreover, Dr Than Win of Mandalay Region Constituency 1 will serve as chairman of the 15-member Committee on



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than. PHOTO: MNA

Health, Sports and Culture, with Dr Zaw Lin Htut of Mon State Constituency 9 as secretary.

Next, the Speaker proposed the formation of the Ethnic Affairs Committee with 15 members, naming Daw Shila Nan Taung alias M Nan Taung of Kachin State Constituency 2 chairperson of the committee and U Khun Thein Pe of Shan State Constituency 9 the committee's secretary. Likewise, U Ba Myo Thein of Yangon Re-

gion Constituency 5 and U Soe Win of Rakhine State Constituency 12 were proposed as chairman and secretary of the Farmers Affairs Committee while Dr Mya Thaug of Bago Region Constituency 7 and Naw Hla Hla Soe of Yangon Region Constituency 10 were also named as chairman and secretary of Women and Children's Rights Committee. The Amyotha Hluttaw session continues today. —*Myanmar News Agency*

Japan announces \$10.8 million in aid for recovery of flood-affected schools in Myanmar



Japanese Ambassador Mr Tateshi Higuchi and Deputy Minister Daw Lei Lei Thein signed an MoU on US\$ 10.8 million aid package. PHOTO: MNA

THE Japanese government yesterday announced a US\$10.8 million donation in a grant aid package for the reconstruction of flood-affected schools in Myanmar with the signing of a memorandum of understanding in Nay Pyi Taw. Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Tateshi Higuchi and the Deputy Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Daw Lei Lei Thein signed the MoU and exchanged notes at the ceremony.

According to a statement released by the Embassy of Japan, the grant aid will contribute to the reconstruction and rehabilitation of schools in areas affected by the floods and landslides of July last year. —*GNLM*

Yangon Region Hluttaw forms two committees

THE Yangon Region Hluttaw yesterday won parliamentary approval to form two committees on its third day session.

The Bill Committee and the Finance, Planning and Economic Committee were formed as proposed by the speaker, with

11 members each.

The Bill Committee will be chaired by U Thein Myint of the Tamwe constituency and the Finance, Planning and Economic Committee by Daw Sanda Min of the Seikkyi-Khanaungto constituency. —*Ko Moe*

Deputy speakers of two Houses receive former East Timor counterpart



Parliaments of Myanmar and East Timor eye to strengthen and boost bilateral cooperation. PHOTO: MNA

DEPUTY Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Aye Thar Aung and Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Ti Khun Myat received former deputy Speaker of East Timor parliament Mr Aderito Hugo de Costa in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters on strength-

ening bilateral relations and cooperation between the two parliaments.

They also exchanged views over parliamentary works.

Also present at the meeting were Chairperson of Pyithu Hluttaw International Relations Committee Daw Su Su Lwin.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Mariners' reminder issued for watercrafts

THE Fisheries Department issued a reminder for small and large vessels including cargo boats and fishing boats to stay 4 km away from AD-7 block from 10 March to 30 April 2016 as a 3D seismic survey would

be conducted by MV Polarcus Naila.

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and Daewoo International Corporation (Myanmar E & P) is jointly carrying out exploration of oil at the block.—*MNA*



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing shakes hands with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi upon the latter's arrival to hold talks with him. PHOTO: MYAWADY

SG Min Aung Hlaing holds talks with NLD Chair Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

COMMANDER-in-Chief of Defense Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Chair of the National League for Democracy, held talks on matters related to the rule of law and the further implementation of ensuring lasting peace in the country yesterday.

The meeting began at 1.30

pm at a hall of Paung Laung Ye-iktha in Nay Pyi Taw and it lasted until 2.40 pm.

Also present at the meeting were Lt-Gen Mya Tun Oo and Lt-Gen Ye Aung of Commander-in-Chief (Army) Office and U Zaw Myint Maung and Dr Tin Myo Win of the National League for Democracy.—*Myawaddy*

Army will support law-abiding government: Senior General Min Aung Hlaing

THE armed forces will support any government that leads the country according to the law, while helping the country maintain a good balance in its democratic path, the commander-in-chief of the defence services told the Italian ambassador to Myanmar.

“The army plays a central role in eliminating armed conflict,” Senior General Min Aung Hlaing told Mr Pier Giorgio, adding that the armed struggle is unacceptable in a democratic system.

The commander-in-chief expressed his belief that obeying the law will ensure national stability

and reflect public consent.

When asked about the political situation under the incoming government, he responded that the army would strengthen the multiparty democratic system as chosen by the people and make it more systematic.

In connection with queries of ongoing peace talks, he stressed the importance of the total elimination of armed conflict in exchange for lasting peace.

The commander-in-chief and the Italian ambassador discussed ways to promote tourism, relations between the two armed forces, and talks on defense and border guards.—*Myawaddy*

ASEAN-U.S. Special Leaders' Summit: Sunnylands Declaration

AT the end of the 15-16 February Special ASEAN-US Leaders Summit in Sunnylands, California, Heads of State/Government of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the United States of America released the Joint Statement of the summit: The Sunnylands Declaration, reaffirming the key principles that will guide cooperation between ASEAN and the US going forward.

Following the salient points of the Joint Statement of the ASEAN-US Special leaders' Summit: Sunnylands Declaration.

1. Mutual respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, equality and political independence of all nations by firmly upholding the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, the ASEAN Charter and international law;

3. Mutual recognition of the importance of pursuing policies that lead to dynamic, open, and competitive economies that foster economic growth, job creation, innovation, entrepreneurship and connectivity, and that support SMEs and narrow the development gap;

4. Our commitment to ensure opportunities for all of our peoples, through strengthening democracy, enhancing good govern-

ance and adherence to the rule of law, promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, encouraging the promotion of tolerance and moderation, and protecting the environment;

7. Shared commitment to peaceful resolution of disputes, including full respect for legal and diplomatic processes, without resorting to the threat or use of force in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law and the 1982 United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS);

10. Strong resolve to lead on global issues such as terrorism and violent extremism, trafficking in persons, drug trafficking, and illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, as well as illicit trafficking of wildlife and timber;

12. Shared commitment to promote security and stability in cyberspace consistent with norms of responsible state behavior;

14. Shared commitment to strengthen people-to-people connectivity through programs that engage ASEAN and American citizens, particularly young people, and that promote opportunities for all our peoples, particularly the most vulnerable, to fulfil the vision of the ASEAN Community.

The full text of the statement is available at www.whitehouse.gov and www.asean.org

Union Information Minister U Ye Htut advises Suu Kyi's sons to apply for Myanmar citizenship

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deeply in the regional affairs. But we would not allow the US-ASEAN relation to be exploited to contain a country in East Asia,” said the Union Information Minister when asked if Washington had a motive to take pre-emptive measures to be ahead of China in terms of trade activities in southeast Asia region.

Responding to a question

about Article 59(f) of the constitution, the minister said “we are not against the constitutional amendment. They can amend whatever article from the constitution they want, but they must do so according to the amendment procedures enshrined in the constitution. What I am talking about is that we're against the suspension of Article 59(f). There is no such provision as suspension

in the constitution. In the case of 1959, too, the 1947 constitution was not suspended in its literal sense. Actually, 59(f) needn't be suspended or amended. If the two sons want their mother to become the president, they and their wives can apply for Myanmar citizenship according to the 1982 Immigration Law. This is in fact their family matter.”—*Myanmar News Agency*

Myanmar lab prepared to test for Zika virus

THE National Health Laboratory (NHL) has announced that it meets the standards required for the testing of the Zika virus.

A BSL-2 level is required of laboratories for the testing of the Zika virus, while equipment for the testing will arrive in the third week of February from the World Health Organization (WHO) and other healthcare organisations, according to the health department.

“The Zika virus is unlike other transmittable diseases such as Ebola or SARS. Myanmar is ready to test people for the Zika virus,” said NHL director Professor Htay Htay Tin.

The Zika virus can be con-

tracted by humans through bites from the aedes aegypti mosquito, a carrier of dengue fever. Those who contract the Zika virus are expected to immediately feel feverish; develop red patches and spots on the skin and red swelling of the face; feel cramps and aching joints; and experience nausea and headaches over a period between two days and one week.

“Since the Zika virus is still not treatable, protection [against contracting the virus] is the main priority. In terms of what we require in cooperation from the general public, they need to carry out activities to reduce contact with mosquitoes and

to seek treatment at the nearest medical facility should one experience symptoms of the virus,” explained H.E. Dr. Thein Thein Htay, the Deputy Minister for Health.

The Zika virus does usually exhibit severe symptoms; its symptoms are similar to those of the more common influenza virus.

Medical experts are currently attempting to show proof of the connection between the effects of the virus on pregnant mothers and birth defects in children, such as microcephaly, where a child is born with an abnormally small head.—*Myit-makha News Agency*

Myanmar Red Cross Society aids Palaw fire victims

THE Myanmar Red Cross Society plans to improve its humanitarian assistance for fire victims in Palaw Township, Myeik District, its spokesperson said.

A fire broke out in Kyauk-ka Village, located on an island 40 nautical miles from Myeik Township, on 13 February, destroying 294 homes and two schools, and leaving 415 families homeless.

According to the authorities, the damage from the blaze has been valued at over K175 million (US\$142,910).

The MRCS delivered relief supplies to the victims on the same day using military aircrafts. The provisions include

450 family kits, hygiene kits, blankets, tarpaulins, water storage containers and 60 shelter tool kits.

Volunteers from the society's medical team have also provided healthcare services to those victims every day since the fire.

"Among the victims, families with children under 18 years old, elderly people and disabled persons were high on the MRCS's list of priorities," an MRCS volunteer said.

The Myanmar Red Cross Society was established in 1937 to give voluntary humanitarian services to people in need.—*Kyaw Soe Oo*



Massive fire engulfs the houses. PHOTO: KYAW SOE OO

Crime News

Accident destroyed five motorcycles

AN undisciplined motorcycle collided with a vehicle driven at a high speed at Theitpan-69 Junction, Chanmyatharzi, Mandalay. The collision damaged five motorbikes, it is learnt.

The accident occurred when a motorcycle (46 ya/.....) driven from South to North on 68 Road by Min Htet Paing, 20, with Chit Win behind collided with Toyota Hilux Surf (7G/.....) driven from East to West on Theikpan Road by U Moe Zaw Tun, 44, it is reported. Min Htet Paing is reported to have disobeyed the traffic police order for stop at the junction.

The collision has damaged four more motorcycles when Hilux Surf slammed into a Super Cup motorcycle driven by Ma Mon Myat Thu, Cyclone cycle



An official investigating at the site of the incidence.

PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG (MANKOPWAR)

by Ko Than Soe Htet, Hyunda Click cycle by U Tun Tun Win and Sanbo Star cycle by Ko Zaw Htet while cycles are queuing at the traffic lights.

Traffic police filed the lawsuits against the careless drivers Min Htet Paing and U Moe Zaw Tun.—*Min Htet Aung (Mankopwar)*

Forest fire breaks out in Myittha

A FOREST fire broke out in Simitaing forest near Nyaung Wun village, Kyan Taw, Myittha township, Mandalay on Monday.

The fire broke out amongst dry leaves before quickly getting out of control.

The fire was put out by firemen with the help of lo-

cal residents. No one was injured in the blaze which was brought under control after a few minutes.—*Ye Win Tun (Myatthar)*



Smoke billows from the forest where fire broke out. PHOTO: YE WIN TUN (MYATTHAR)

Yabba pills seized in Mabein

POLICE from Mabein Police Station seized yabba tablets on a motorbike in Mabein township, Moemeik District in Shan State.

Acting on a tip-off, local police investigated a motorbike which was being driven by Ko

Sai (a) Nyi Kham heading from Nampong ward to Konekha Ward in Mabein township. They discovered 1600 yabba pills and

seized them. The police have filed a case against Ko Sai according to the law.—*District IPRD*

Break failure damages truck



A damaged truck seen at the incidence. PHOTO: MPF

AN ISUZU truck heading from Mandalay to Kalay driven by one Win Naing Soe, 32, plowed off the road and into a field following break failure near Htee

Hsaung word, Myinmu township.

The driver of the vehicle was not injured it has been ascertained.—*Myanmar Police Force*

Head-on collision kills one

AN air-con bus collided head on with a motorbike between mile post Nos. 49/7 and 50/0 on Monywa-Mandalay Road, leaving one dead.

gion, killed motorbike rider Win Naing Oo, 35, from Aung Zeya Ward.

The collision which occurred on Tuesday at around 10am in Myinmu Township, Sagaing Re-

Myinmu Police took action against the bus driver Than Hteik Win, 40, from Nandawun Ward, Monywa according to the law.—*Kyemon (624)*

LOCAL Business

Myanmar National Airlines celebrates third 737-800 NG delivery

MYANMAR National Airlines (MNA) has received its third Boeing 737-800 NG. A welcoming ceremony was held at Yangon International Airport yesterday.

The newly-arrived aircraft XY-ALF was the third delivery to the airline which plans to expand its network inside and outside Myanmar with better services and new destinations.

New arrivals of airplanes will ensure benefits to the airline as well as the country, said MNA.—GNLM



Boeing 737-800 NG arrives at Yangon International Airport.
PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Korea-Myanmar friendship bridge (Dala) project launched

A CEREMONY to launch the Korea-Myanmar Friendship Bridge (Dala) project was held in conjunction with a cash assistance presentation for households in the project area, Dala Township, Yangon yesterday.

Union Minister U Kyaw Lwin, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe and Mr. Lee Baek-soon, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Myanmar, formally opened the

launching ceremony.

Next, they spoke on the occasion, hoping people in Dala and Yangon enjoy better living standards with the emergence of the friendship bridge and calling for participation of all in the implementation of the project.

Then, the Union Minister, the Chief Minister and Deputy Minister Dr Win Myint presented cash assistance for households in the project area through

representatives.

The Korea-Myanmar Friendship Bridge (Dala) is set to be built over the Hline River and will link Yangon with Dala.

Upon completion, the bridge will ensure local people in the townships of Yangon Region and Ayeyawady Region can travel smoothly and quickly in and out of their own regions, helping to relieve Yangon's traffic jams.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Dala Bridge construction project launches. PHOTO: MNA

Blacksmiths replace charcoal with electric power

BLACKSMITHS from Gwaypinle village in Myaing Township have replaced traditional charcoal furnace with electric fans and equipment.

There are around 150 households in Gwaypinle village where local villagers began replacing traditional blacksmithing methods using open fires with electricity in 2014. A typical blacksmith business is operated by a total of five workers. There are ten blacksmiths in the village, it has been learned.

In the past, a workshop would employ a worker to hand pump the charcoal furnace, for

which they would earn K4,000 a day. This job has now been filled by electrical equipment like fans.

Workers typically make 40 or 50 knives a day which are sold for K4000 to K5000, said an owner of a forge. A smithy manufactures at least 20 knives a day.

Previously, blacksmiths had to use at least 150 visses (a viss is approximately 1.6 kilos) of charcoal a day. As the businesses have come to replace the furnace worker with an electric fan motor they can not only save money on wages but also mitigate environmental pollution.—*Sein Myaing (Myaing)*

Thabyay sees handsome prices

THE sprig of the Eugenia plant (Shwe Thabyay plant) is gaining good prices in Thaton, Mon State, enabling local cultivators to do well.

Thabyay has seen higher demand and better prices as orders have risen this open season. A handful of Thabyay sells for K800, said Daw Hla Win, a Thabyay grower.

It has been around two months that the Thabyay market has been doing well. It generally sees lower demand in the rainy season, though the supply of Thabyay decreases in summer, and thus, Thabyay is selling well, she added.

The growing of Thabyay costs around K1.5 million for 1,500 trees. However, growers can see a return on their investment within a year. If growers invest more, they will see profits up to K7000 a day, said the owner of a Thabyay farm with 1500 trees.

As the yield becomes lower in summer, the purchaser has to pay as high a price as the suppliers ask because growers will sell to those who offer the best price, said Ko Tun Aung, a reseller.

Thabyay farm owners sell Thabyay sprigs not only in Thaton but also in Mawlamyaing and Hpa-an, said some farm owners.—*Thet Oo (Thaton)*

US, ASEAN agree on freedom of navigation principle despite split



US President Barack Obama.

PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

PALM SPRINGS — The United States and Southeast Asian countries agreed on the principle of freedom of navigation Tuesday in discussions of maritime security during their summit, but failed to bridge gaps over China's moves to claim disputed areas in the South China Sea.

US President Barack Obama

and leaders from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations shared a commitment to "peaceful resolution" of disputes and "the rights of freedom of navigation and overflight," a joint statement said.

The United States was hosting the summit for the first time in a bid to promote unity with the 10 ASEAN countries, some of which are irked by Chinese behaviour in the South China Sea, including the creation of artificial islands in contested areas.

"One of my main messages over the past two days has been the commitment of the United States to ASEAN and its people," Obama told a press conference at the close of the two-day summit through Tuesday at the Sunnylands estate in California.

"That commitment is and will remain strong and enduring," Obama said.

During their summit, the United States and ASEAN discussed whether to name the South China Sea as the area

where territorial disputes are taking place in the joint statement, according to ASEAN sources.

"We discussed the need for tangible steps in the South China Sea to lower tensions, including a halt to further reclamation, new construction and militarization of disputed areas," Obama said.

Obama urged his ASEAN partners to work together to make sure Beijing keeps a promise that it will not make the artificial islands military posts, according to a diplomatic source. But the final version of the statement does not name the sea. Some ASEAN members who are close to China such as Laos, which currently holds the rotating ASEAN presidency, were opposed to the idea of naming the sea, according to the ASEAN sources.

The United States and ASEAN agreed on the importance of "a rules-based regional and international order that upholds and protects the rights and priv-

ileges of all states."

ASEAN groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore and Viet Nam.

The United States has criticised China for creating islands on submerged reefs in the disputed Spratly Islands in the South China Sea and constructing facilities such as airstrips on them despite objections by other claimants, including ASEAN countries.

The US military sent a destroyer within what China claims to be territorial sea near one of the artificial islands to demonstrate Washington does not recognise China's position around submerged reefs in line with a UN convention.

"I reiterated that the United States will continue to fly, sail and operate wherever international law allows," Obama said, repeating his administration's intention to continue with the so-called freedom of navigation operations.—*Kyodo News*

Indonesia to ban 477 websites over adult-rated contents

JAKARTA — Indonesia is blocking 477 websites, including social network and microblog Tumblr, over alleged "pornographic contents," a top official said yesterday.

"I have signed off the letter and sent it to the Internet Service Provider. These websites should be blocked in the next two or three days," said Azhar Hasyim, e-business director at the Communication and Information Ministry in Jakarta.

He noted that these websites have violated the country's information and electronic law which prohibits sharing posts that contain vulgarity. Azhar said that his office had not warned the owners of the websites in advance, but would communicate later on.

"Once they have agreed to clean up their websites from pornographic content, then we will immediately reopen the access," said Azhar.

The Indonesian government has in the past banned access to websites with adult-rated and pro-terrorism content.—*Xinhua*

Asia watches as GMO legal challenge threatens Philippines food supply

MANILA — A legal challenge to the Philippines' rules on genetically modified organisms is threatening to spark a food crisis in the country and could cloud the outlook for GM technology around Asia.

Government agencies are scrambling to set new regulations on GMOs by 23 February, after the Southeast Asian nation's top court late last year demanded an overhaul of existing rules, halting GM planting and issuance of new GM import permits until that was done.

The Supreme Court was acting on a petition by environmental activists led by Greenpeace, with the move likely to be closely watched by governments elsewhere as the Philippines is seen as a trailblazer for GMO.

The country was the first in the region to allow planting and commercialisation of GM corn, which it did in 2002, and has permitted GM crop imports for more than a decade.

"Our framework has served as a model for GMO regulatory policy to other countries like Viet Nam, Indonesia and even some Latin American countries," said Merle Palacpac, chief of the plant quarantine service at the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI).

"We have the first functioning regulatory framework in Asia. So I am sure whatever happens here, they are closely watching."

With some current import permits starting to expire from March and corn farmers set to begin sowing in May, five government agencies are pushing to sign new rules by next Tuesday to avoid disrupting food supply in a year when voters will choose the country's next leader.

"We need (new rules) to be in place as soon as possible. Otherwise there will be chaos," Palacpac added.

Global agribusiness giants Monsanto Co and Syngenta AG are major suppliers of transgenic seeds to the Philippines. They did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The government said the new rules are expected to tighten environmental scrutiny before biosafety permits are issued, addressing one of the loopholes the Supreme Court cited when it voided the old rules, in place since 2002.

They will also require more documentation from suppliers of GM products, according to an importer who participated in past public hearings on the issue. GMO's critics argue the technol-

ogy poses risks to public health, while advocates say such fears have not been scientifically proven and that high-yielding genetically altered crops would help ensure food security as the world's population grows.

Around 70 per cent of the Philippines' corn output, which stood at 7.5 million tonnes last year, is GM. The country's top GM import is soybean meal. Both are mainly used as animal feed and any supply disruption could spell disaster for the livestock sector.

The Supreme Court's December ruling is "anti-nationalistic when you look at it from the perspective of the country's food security", said Roger Navarro, president of Philippine Maize Federation.

Corn farmers are worried they might not be able to plant in May. "The livelihood of almost 1 million farmers nationwide will be threatened," said Romualdo Elvira Jr., a farmer from the northern province of Bicol. Using non-GM seeds, a hectare yields around 3 tonnes of corn, said Oliver Aldovino, part of a farmer cooperative on the southern island of Mindanao. Aldovino, who switched to GM seven years ago, said output doubled with GM corn.—*Reuters*

Nissan to start car production for 1st time in Myanmar in 2016

TOKYO — Nissan Motor Co. said yesterday it will start assembling cars for the first time in Myanmar this year, as the automaker expects vehicle demand to grow following political and economic reforms in the Southeast Asian country. Japan's second-largest automaker by sales said it will cooperate with the Malaysian-based Tan Chong Group and use its existing facility in Myanmar to assemble the Sunny compact sedan before transferring production to a new facility being built in the Bago region.

The new plant will have a workforce of approximately 300 and an annual production capacity of 10,000 units. "Nissan's expansion in Myanmar forms part of the company's wider growth in emerging markets, which includes production in countries such as India, Brazil, Russia and Nigeria," the Japanese automaker said in a statement. Nissan began vehicle sales in Myanmar in 2013 and its lineup includes the X-Trail sport utility vehicle and Altima sedan. Tan Chong has been the exclusive distributor of Nissan cars in various Southeast Asian countries like Malaysia and Singapore.—*Kyodo News*

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North Korea could conduct 5th nuke test without warning: US institute

WASHINGTON — North Korea has made it even harder for intelligence authorities to detect its preparations to carry out a nuclear test and could now conduct its fifth nuclear test “with little or no warning,” a US institute that monitors the test site said Tuesday.

The US-Korea Institute of Johns Hopkins University in Washington said on its 38 North website that the fourth and latest test by North Korea on 6 January indicated that Pyongyang “appears to have altered its past test preparation practices” and test preparations can no longer be detected simply by analysing satellite imagery.

North Korea said last month it successfully conducted its first hydrogen bomb test, in defiance of repeated international warnings. Many countries are skeptical of North Korea’s claim that it detonated a hydrogen bomb.

The institute released commercial satellite images dated 1 February and 7 February showing the Punggye-ri nuclear test site in North Hamgyong Province. The institute said the images show “unidentified objects in various locations” near the test tunnel, which could be a survey team making an assessment of the 6 January nuclear test, preparing for another test, or sealing the tunnel to prevent radiation

leakage.

“While detecting nuclear test preparations is, under the best of circumstances, an inexact art, in the North Korean case it may be the result of careful planning to avoid detection by commercial satellites as they pass overhead or by instituting a practice of gradual, low-key preparations that take place over months — activity almost indistinguishable from construction, tunnel excavation and maintenance,” the institute said.

The institute also warned that North Korea “may have tunnels already completed and ready for a test should it decide to move forward.”—*Kyodo News*

US flies F-22 fighters over South Korea after North’s rocket launch



US F-22 stealth fighter jets fly over Osan Air Base in Pyeongtaek, South Korea, on 17 February 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

OSAN — The United States flew four F-22 stealth fighter jets over South Korea yesterday in a show of force following North Korea’s recent rocket launch and ahead of the allies’ joint military drills next month aimed at deterring Pyongyang’s threat.

The flight of the radar-evading F-22s, based in Okinawa, Japan, is the latest deployment of key US strategic military assets to the South after the North defied warnings from world powers and conducted a fourth nuclear test last month.

South Korea and the United States said the North’s rocket launch on 7 February was a long-range missile test and violated UN Security Council resolutions

that ban the use of ballistic missile technology by the isolated state.

The US military said at the weekend that it had deployed an additional Patriot high-velocity missile interceptor unit to South Korea in response to recent North Korean provocations.

The allies were also expected to begin discussions on the deployment of the advanced Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) missile defence system.

Last month, the United States flew a B-52 bomber capable of carrying nuclear weapons on a low-level flight over the South following the North’s 6 January nuclear test.

The joint military drills scheduled to start in March, which in most years last eight weeks and involve hundreds of thousands of South Korean and US troops, will be the largest ever, according to South Korean officials.

There are 28,500 US troops stationed in the South as part of combined defence with the South’s military of more than 600,000.

The North has an army of 1.2 million. North Korea claims the annual drills are war preparations. South Korea and the United States say the exercises, which have been conducted for years without major incident, are defensive.—*Reuters*

China installs missile system on South China Sea island: US report

WASHINGTON — China has deployed an advanced surface-to-air missile system on one of the disputed islands in the South China Sea, Fox News said Tuesday, with Taiwan authorities also confirming the deployment.

Civilian satellite imagery Fox News obtained shows that China has installed the missile launchers and a radar system on the Chinese-controlled Yongxing Island in the Paracel Islands, according to the broadcaster.

Viet Nam and Taiwan also claim the island, which is also known as Woody Island.

The broadcaster said the deployment is “more evidence that China is increasingly ‘militarizing’ its islands in the South China Sea and ramping up tensions in the region.”

A US official confirmed the accuracy of the photos and that the imagery appears to show the HQ-9 air defence system, which has a range of about 125 miles (200 kilometres), according to Fox News.

The system would pose a threat to any airplanes, civilian or military, flying close by, the broadcaster said.

The report comes as US President Barack Obama suggested his administration will continue with military operations to counter China’s maritime activities in the sea after a summit with leaders from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in California.

China is also constructing

large-scale facilities, including airstrips, on artificial islands it created in the Spratly Islands, another contested area in the sea, prompting the United States and other countries to worry the move could lead Beijing to declare an air defence identification zone over the sea.

US Defence Department spokesman Bill Urban said, “While I cannot comment on matters related to intelligence, we do watch these matters very closely.”

The US Navy last month sailed a destroyer near another disputed island in the Paracels to protest at China’s unilateral activities to claim sovereignty, and to defend US interests in the sea.

The Chinese-controlled Zhongjian Island, also called Triton Island, is claimed by Taiwan and Viet Nam.

In October the US Navy also sent a destroyer within what China claimed to be territorial waters near the artificial island Beijing built on Subi Reef in the Spratlys.

In Taiwan, a National Defence Ministry spokesman said authorities have confirmed the missile deployment and that Taiwan will “closely watch developments hereafter.”

He also warned that interested countries should refrain from “taking any unilateral steps that will intensify tensions” in the South China Sea region to maintain peace and stability, without directly naming China.—*Kyodo News*

China says missile deployment reports are creations of some Western media

BEIJING — Reports that China has deployed an advanced surface-to-air missile system to one of the disputed islands it controls in the South China Sea have been created by certain Western media, the country’s foreign minister said yesterday.

Foreign Minister Wang Yi also told reporters he hoped Western media would pay more attention to the lighthouses China is building in the region. Taiwan and US officials told Reuters and other media outlets yesterday that China had deployed

the missile system.

At the same news conference, Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, who is visiting China, urged restraint in the region and called on all sides to settle disputes peacefully, adding that Australia does not take sides on South China Sea claims.

China claims most of the South China Sea, through which more than \$5 trillion in global trade passes every year, and has been building runways and other infrastructure on artificial islands to bolster its claims.—*Reuters*

OPINION

Time for a brilliant feat of nation building

Kyaw Thura

STRANGE as it may seem, international economic analysts are unanimous in their description of our country as an underdeveloped economy with promising prospects for businesses and investment given its abundant natural resources and its geographical location to the world's two most populous countries, whose combined populations exceed 2.5 billion.

The McKinsey Global Institute expected a June 2013 report that Myanmar had the poten-

tial to multiply its GDP by four, from US\$45 billion in 2010 to \$200 billion in 2030, if the government were to foster the growth of non-agricultural employment opportunities in an effort to unlock high economic growth. The institute suggested a diversified economy to boost labour productivity, pointing out that exclusive reliance on energy and mining would not enable the country to reach its potential.

McKinsey also presented four challenges that have "so far received little attention but can underpin growth and productivity". According to the report, harnessing digital technology, supporting a structural shift from agriculture to manufacturing, preparing for urbanisation and connecting to the world will require the government to maintain political stability, strong macroeconomic policy, human capital and opportunities for local companies to penetrate overseas markets.

It is time for all of the stakeholders engaged in Myanmar's process of nation-building to bring the highest degree of energy and enthusiasm to the project of developing political stability and human capital, which are the keys to realizing the country's economic development goals.

Write for us

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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.

"Rights and Responsibility"

Dr. Khine Khine Win

THIS article briefly introduces the linkage between rights and responsibility. I believe rights and responsibility plays a significant role for the promotion and protection of human rights in any society.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights declared that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Being a human being, you have rights. Human rights are entitled to every human being no matter who you are, where you live, what you do, where you are from, what religious you worship, what skin color you have, disable or not, child or adult, women or men- you all have rights. However, until today the definition of the term human rights is controversial and the UN has no internationally-agreed definition of human

rights.

There is no doubt that State has the prime responsibility to protect, promote and implement all human rights and fundamental freedoms, inter alia, by adopting such steps as may be necessary to create all conditions necessary in the social, economic, political and other fields, as well as the legal guarantees required to ensure that all citizens under its jurisdiction. At the same time individuals have the duties and responsibilities to enjoy their rights and rights of others too.

Article 29 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes that the individuals have duties and responsibilities towards their community. We all have basic fundamental rights and freedom. It is important to exercise our rights, not just for our own sake, but for the future sake of others. Here are the some of our rights: we have the rights to live, right to safety, right to

education, right to health, right to freedom of speech, right to worship, right to food, right to settle and reside in any place within your country... etc. Also we have responsibilities to follow the rules at home, at school and in the community, to respect the rights of others, to be the best person that we can be, to respect and obey the existing laws...etc. Let me give you example, although we have the freedom to express our beliefs and views, we have duty to behave responsibly and to respect other's people rights.

If people do not accept their responsibilities or if they fail to take their responsibility, people would bully, treated unfairly or abused and feel unsafe or unhappy. Whatever the reason, if people fail to take responsibility, they will fail in their jobs, they will fail their teams, and they will fail to grow as individuals also.

When we look at the Con-

stitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (2008), we will notice that there is Citizen, Fundamental Rights and Duties of the Citizens in Chapter VIII. Being a citizen of Myanmar, we must know what our rights and duties are.

If you feel your fundamental rights in the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar are violated, you can send a complaint letter to the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission. If the Commission concludes that the alleged violations of the fundamental rights in the Constitution against a citizen are true, it will take steps in accordance with complaint procedures to promote and safeguard the fundamental rights.

Preamble in Declaration of Human Duties and Responsibilities states that the effective enjoyment and implementation of human rights and fundamental freedom is inextricably linked to

the assumption of the duties and responsibilities implicit in those rights. Human rights will be better protected or ensured when people assume their duties to the each other and to the local, regional, national and global community. Rights cannot exist without people acting responsibly towards each other. Regardless of this push back to protect the enshrinement of human rights, evidence abounds for the need to foster a dialogue about the link between responsibilities and rights.

Remember: there can be no rights without responsibilities. If you invoke a right, you imply a responsibility.

Dr. Khine Khine Win
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Basic agricultural course 3/2016 held in Tatkon

A BASIC agricultural course organised by the Department of Rural Development was held in Kyauksarit Village, Tatkon Township, in Nay Pyi Taw on 15 February with the aim of promoting agricultural knowledge and improving living standards of rural people,

U Ko Ko Naing, the

Head of the Department of Rural Development for Nay Pyi Taw, made an opening speech and explained the aims of the course, after which trainers elaborated on the agenda.

The course will be last for seven days from 15 to 21 February.—*Tin Soe Lwin*

Insured workers covered at new hospital

A NEW Workers' Hospital was opened in Htantabin Township beside the Yangon-Pathein Road on Tuesday, with Union Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security U Aye Myint in attendance at the ceremony.

"The newly-opened 100-bed hospital with a staff of 59 will receive patients at the outpatient department within the next three weeks," said Dr Aye Aung, the medical superintendent of the new hospital.

The New Social Security Law

2012, which took effect on April 1, 2014, includes six kinds of workers' insurance.

As a result, workers from Hlaingthayar, Shwepyithar and Mingaladon industrial zones and Insein, Hmawby and Mayangon townships who have purchased health insurance can receive treatment at the hospital.

In addition, workers from Ayeyawady Region may also be able to receive treatment at the hospital.

More than 200,000 workers

have health insurance policies in these townships and industrial zones.

The new hospital is located on a 50-acre plot, with authorities planning to upgrade the current hospital to include 100 beds in order to treat workers with head and neck problems.

The ministry has carried out healthcare services for insurance policy holders through three workers' hospitals, traditional hospitals and nearly 100 clinics in 100 townships.—*Than Htike*

Sunflower growers in Sagaing turn to peanuts

AFTER drawing very low demand for sunflower seeds this season, farmers in Indaw Township, Sagaing Region, are shifting toward cultivating peanuts, farmers say.

“Farmers in Kyauksin Village largely established commercial sunflower plantations in past years as they can produce a bumper harvest,” Farmer U Soe Myint said.

“We were able to get good prices from the plantations. We got the highest demand for sunflowers in 2012, receiving between K10,000 (US\$8) and K12,000 (\$10) per basket. However, since 2013, we have traded the crop at around K5,000 (\$4) per basket.”

“Farmers just about broke even last year,” he added.

He said the lower demand and the decline in price of sunflowers are the main reasons for farmers turning to peanuts.



A female farmer works at a peanut plantation. PHOTO: MAUNG CHIT LIN

Farmers in the area have developed peanut plantations since 2014. Each plantation produces around 60 baskets per season.

Last year, growers sold peanuts for about K11,000 (\$9) per basket.

Farmers from Letpadan,

Thetkaikyin, Htantaw and Kyauksin villages mainly cultivate winter crops.—*Maung Chit Lin*

Myananda Earth Dam filled for summer use

THE authorities have renewed their efforts to solve water shortage problems in the country's dry zones, including Mandalay Region.

Currently, authorities in Ngathayauk Township, Mandalay Region, are trying to raise the water level of the Myananda Earth Dam in the township's No. 2 Zaygyo Ward.

Residents of the township depend on the dam for drinking water. Although a lot of water remains in the dam, the authorities have begun pumping water from the Tabya Dam, located near Pyinpin Ward, into the Myananda Earth Dam. There are 100 tube-wells in the township, some of which produce insufficient supply of water in the summer, said U Zaw Lwin, a resident of Zaygone Ward.—*Ye Win Naing*

Promoting Use of Local Currency in International Trade Settlement: An Assessment on Asian Experiences

Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt,
Senior Economist

(Continued from yesterday)

Findings under firm-level survey are as follows:

- (i) The same currency was largely used for price setting, invoicing and settlement of exports to third parties;
- (ii) All firms used the same currency for price setting and invoicing for all their export revenues from third parties;
- (iii) Invoicing currency could differ from the price setting currency because of a “request from the customer”;
- (iv) The U.S. Dollar was the main alternative for exports;
- (v) Currency choice was similar for exports of the intra-firm and inter-firm.
- (vi) The increase in the use of the Euro stemmed from both increased trade with EU member countries, but also as a vehicle currency. As a vehicle currency, the use of the U.S. Dollar has been greater than the Euro since 2001;
- (vii) Firms changed price in 3.5 times per year on average;
- (viii) Negotiations were important in setting choice of invoicing currency;

- (ix) Use of the customer's currency did not depend on large markets or large orders;
- (x) To minimize the risk of price deviations across countries a limited set of currencies was used for setting prices;
- (xi) An objective of risk management was to minimize the variability of cash flow.

Lessons Learned

The same currency is used to a very large extent in pricing, invoicing and settling payment simplifying international comparisons of the currency denomination in international trade. The finding that average prices changed frequently, points to macroeconomic implications indicating domestic price and interest rate effects. If the invoicing currency is also the pricing currency, there is a clear link between invoicing and exchange rate pass-through.

The findings clearly show the trend towards less use of dollar to reduce the FX risk, especially for exports, but also for imports. This implication is potentially important; if both exports and imports have similar currency denominations, changes in net exports will lead to changes in demand for the local (domestic) currency, especially if domestic firms do not immediately (or ever) convert foreign currency payments to the domestic currency. It points to the

importance of the liquidity of the local currency. This increase has come at the expense of local currency. The use of the U.S. dollar as a vehicle currency is larger than the use of the Euro. One possibility could be that international payments in Euro can be conducted at less cost than international payments in other currencies in the absence of the Eurozone crisis.

This implies that the choice of invoicing currency constitutes an important strategic pricing decision of a firm. In addition, exporters also performed effectively price-discriminate between markets, and took into account destination-specific market conditions when setting prices. Moreover, promoting use of local currencies of ASEAN countries in the intra-ASEAN or ASEAN+5 trade in a certain extent would increase substantially the regional trade.

In conclusion, the costs of the dependence on currencies outside of the region for the settlement of trade in the region results in cost for converting currencies for trade settlement; the instability in export prices in response to exchange rate changes and costs of hedging exchange rate risks. In contrast, the merits of using the local currencies for trade settlement reveals encouraging efficiency in trade and investment transactions; lowering the above mentioned transaction costs of a currency; enhancing export competitiveness arising from cost effectiveness; and promoting trade and investment at the firm,

country and regional levels.

The policy recommendations can be drawn as follows: removal of the restrictions on capital flow so as to establish a secure trade settlement system; development of strategic trade policy for market diversification, in particular, in the European market in the framework of use of euro as vehicle currency; encouragement of bilateral and regional trade and investment under ASEAN+5 and Closer Economic Relations (CER) countries adoption of foreign exchange regulation policy and regulations to foster the use of local and regional currencies in trade and investment; introduction of new trade settlement systems to facilitate more use of local currencies at firm, national and regional levels; development of sound financial markets; promotion of strategic intra-regional production and trade networks in major export industries and engaging in financial cooperation programs and monetary coordination in the region. With respect to coordination of exchange rate policy within Asian countries, ‘easing the foreign exchange regulation and capital control’ was considered as an important policy, in comparison, ‘the local currencies denominated Asian bond market’ as a priority option in policy coordination. At the country level, improving the factors affecting choice of invoice currency outlined above are crucial.

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Charities urge European leaders to keep aid for poorest, not refugees



Migrants walk towards a makeshift camp close to the Austrian border town of Spielfeld in the village of Sentilj, Slovenia, on 16 February 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Hundreds of millions of people in developing countries will lose out if European governments raid their aid budgets to cover the costs of hosting refugees and tightening border security, a coalition of charities said on Tuesday.

They issued their warning as the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), a group of the world's major donors that defines and oversees what spending can be counted as aid, meets in Paris this week to discuss the refugee crisis and the rules shaping aid spending for the next 15 years.

Faced with the substantial cost of looking after a record one million migrants who arrived in Europe last year, several governments have already diverted money from their development aid budgets to pay for hosting the new arrivals.

The coalition — which includes Oxfam International, the international development network Bond, the ONE campaign, the European Network on Debt and Development and Save the Children — called on European leaders to ensure that aid does not include defence, security or in-country refugee costs.

“European leaders have the responsibility to meet the needs for refugees escaping insecurity, but it is important that this does not come at the cost of the world's poorest,” Tamira Gunzburg, director of ONE Brus-

sels, said.

During its two-day meeting starting on Thursday, the DAC, which is part of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development think-tank, will try to agree how peace and security spending will be measured as part of development aid, according to its website.

DAC Chairman Erik Solheim said the group's 28 member countries, like all governments, face the challenge of implementing a new global development goal by 2030 to promote peace, justice and strong institutions in their own countries as well.

“We are close to a compromise with the idea simply to make the system a bit clearer and making it easier to achieve (this) sustainable development goal...” Solheim told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Solheim said the current accounting rules were not always the most practical or cost effective, citing as an example how delivering a field hospital to an Ebola-stricken country by private or commercial cargo plane would count as aid but by military aircraft it would not.

This should not, however, mean that military expenditure or the cost of policing borders and erecting fences to keep out migrants are to be funded from aid budgets, he said.

“That should never come from the aid budget,” Solheim said. Under current rules, DAC

member countries are allowed to count as aid some of the costs of hosting refugees, such as health, education and housing, but only for the first 12 months. “We are advising our members to keep this as low as possible because we don't money to be diverted from aid to Africa and other poor parts of the world,” Solheim said.

Hungary, Spain and Malta were cited as examples of countries diverting money from aid budgets in a report last year by Concord, a European confederation of relief and development agencies.

Campaigners are concerned that such a diversion of funds comes against a backdrop of cuts in aid to the poorest nations. Official development assistance (ODA) reached a record high of \$137.2 billion in 2014, up 1.2 per cent from 2013, but the poorest countries' share dropped by 9.3 per cent, leaving them with less than a third of overall aid.

Solheim said European governments concerned about pressure on their budgets from a growing flow of migrants needed to support the migrants' countries of origin so that they could provide better living standards for their citizens.

“That's a particular challenge for those ...most opposed to migration. They should be at the forefront of increasing spending outside Europe,” he said.—Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

Russia will send first S-300 missile system to Iran on Thursday

MOSCOW — Russia will send the first S-300 air defence missile system to Iran on Thursday, Russia's RIA state news agency reported yesterday quoting an unidentified source. The missile system will be delivered under the terms of an earlier contract.

Russia will sign this year a contract with Iran to supply a batch of its Sukhoi Su-30SM multi-role fighter jets to the Islamic Republic, RIA news agency yesterday quoted a senior official at Russia's arms export agency as saying.

Iranian Defence Minister Hossein Dehghan is visiting Moscow this week. He met the Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday, the Kremlin said, giving no further detail.—Reuters

China says any deployment of missiles on own territory would be legitimate

BEIJING — Any deployment of missiles on China's own territory would be legitimate, a spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry said yesterday, asked about reports that China has deployed an advanced surface-to-air missile system on one of the disputed islands it controls in the South China Sea.

Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said he was unaware of the specifics of the situation, but added that any facilities built have to do with national defence, not militarization. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said earlier that reports of the missile deployment had been created by “certain Western media”. Taiwan and US officials told Reuters and other media outlets on Wednesday that China had deployed the missile system.—Reuters

Djuric: We expect new investigation into all crimes against Serbs

BELGRADE — Director of the Serbian government's Office for Kosovo-Metohija (KiM) Marko Djuric said on Tuesday, 15 years since an attack on a Nis Express bus near Podujevo, in which 12 Serbs were killed and 43 wounded, that it was unacceptable to see the crime not getting a court epilogue to offer the victims and their families at least some kind of consolation.

“Even today, after fifteen years have passed, the perpetrators of this grave crime have not been found, just as those who killed the Serb children in Gorazdevac, the 14 reapers in Staro Gracko, the Stolic family in Obilic have remained unknown, and just as nobody knows who sets fire to and destroys Serb homes and desecrates churches and monasteries in Kosovo almost every day,” Djuric said.—Reuters

Apple CEO opposes court order to help FBI unlock iPhone

WASHINGTON — Apple Inc Chief Executive Tim Cook said his company opposed a demand from a US judge to help the FBI break into an iPhone recovered from one of the San Bernardino shooters.

Cook said that the demand threatened the security of Apple's customers and had “implications far beyond the legal case at hand.”

Judge Sheri Pym of US District Court in Los Angeles said on Tuesday that Apple must provide “reasonable technical assistance” to investigators seeking to unlock data on an iPhone 5C that had been owned by Syed Rizwan Farook.

In a letter to Apple's customers, Cook said the FBI had asked the company to build “a backdoor to the iPhone.”

“The government is asking Apple to hack our own users and undermine decades of security advancements that protect our customers — including tens of millions of American citizens — from sophisticated hackers and cybercriminals,” he said. “We can find no precedent for an American company being forced to expose its customers to a greater risk of attack.” —Reuters

Texas executes man for murder of liquor store clerk

HUNTSVILLE — Texas on Tuesday executed a man who was convicted of fatally shooting a liquor store clerk in a robbery outside of Dallas in 1990.

Gustavo Garcia, 43, who has spent more than half of his life on death row, was put to death by lethal injection at the state's execution chamber in Huntsville. He was pronounced dead at 6:26 p.m., a prisons official said. —Reuters

UN envoy wins Syria govt green light for aid convoys—UN

GENEVA — The Syrian government has approved access to seven besieged areas and UN convoys are expected to set off in days, the United Nations said on Tuesday after crisis talks in Damascus.

UN Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura, who won the green light at talks with Foreign Minister Walid al-Moualem, said the world body would test the government commitment to allow access yesterday but gave no details.

Their meeting in Damascus came at a time when government forces have been advancing rapidly with the aid of Russian air strikes, and just days before an internationally agreed pause in fighting is due to take effect.

De Mistura said they had discussed the issue of humanitarian access to areas besieged by all sides in the five-year war.

“It is clear it is the duty of the government of Syria to want to reach every Syrian person wherever they are and allow the UN to bring humanitarian aid,” de Mistura said in a statement. “To-



A civil defence member works at a site after airstrikes by pro-Syrian government forces in the rebel held Douma neighbourhood of Damascus, Syria, on 14 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

morrow we test this.”

The Syrian government hit back at de Mistura’s comment, saying his own credibility needed testing, Syrian state media said.

It quoted a Syrian foreign ministry source as saying that Damascus would not allow de Mistura to talk about testing its seriousness.

“The truth is Syria needs to test the credibility of De Mistura who has been contradicting what happened

during the meeting with the Syrian government,” the foreign ministry source was quoted as saying.

“Delivering aid to areas besieged by terrorists has been the government’s commitment towards its people for years.”

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said that Syria had approved access to Deir al-Zor; Foua and Kafaraya in Idlib; and Madaya,

Zabadani, Kafr Batna and Mouadamiya al-Sham in rural Damascus.

“Humanitarian agencies and partners are preparing convoys for these areas, to depart as soon as possible in the coming days,” the OCHA said. It was not immediately clear whether the convoys would begin on Wednesday, as de Mistura had indicated.

Nor was there any indication of a breakthrough on

access to areas besieged by armed opposition groups.

UN-backed peace talks are scheduled to resume in Geneva on 25 February, after de Mistura suspended a first round earlier this month.

Last Friday global powers meeting in Munich agreed to the pause in fighting in the hope that this could allow the talks to resume, but the deal does not take effect until the end of this week and was not signed by the Syrian warring parties.

“We are witnessing a degradation on the ground that cannot wait,” UN spokesman Ahmad Fawzi told a news briefing. “The reason (de Mistura) suspended (the talks) was, as you know, that cities were still being bombed, people were still being starved on the ground.”

The Syrian government is meanwhile advancing in the north of the country with Russian air support. Damascus says its main objectives are to recapture Aleppo — Syria’s biggest city before the war — and seal the Turkish border, lifeline of rebel-held territory for years.

Those would be the

biggest victories for Damascus of the war so far, and would all but end rebel hopes of overthrowing President Bashar al-Assad, the goal they have pursued since 2011 with the support of the West, Arab states and Turkey.

Syria’s ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, Hussam Aala, said in an interview in the daily Tribune de Geneve: “We have done all we could to facilitate the passage of aid convoys in January and February.”

“The advance of the Syrian army in this region has allowed us to break the siege imposed against two towns, Nubul and al-Zahra. It opened the way for the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to deliver aid to 70,000 residents. Our objective was to cut all the supply routes for arms and for men to the terrorist groups armed by Turkey.”

The United Nations has reported that hospitals have been struck in northern Syria in areas where Russian and Syrian warplanes are launching air strikes as part of their advance.—Reuters

UN asks Congo to investigate new Central African Republic child sex abuse allegations

UNITED NATIONS — The United Nations said on Tuesday it has asked Democratic Republic of Congo to investigate four new allegations that its troops had sexually abused children in Central African Republic while deployed as UN peacekeepers.

UN spokesman Farhan Haq said the latest four victims were “residents of the Ngakobo camp for internally displaced persons in Ouaka prefecture and were allegedly sexually exploited and abused by peacekeepers between 2014 and 2015.”

He said the UN mission in Central African Republic was working to ensure the

victims have “access to appropriate medical and psycho-social assistance.”

Haq said Democratic Republic of Congo has 10 days to notify the United Nations if it intends to investigate the accusations. If it does not the world body will conduct its own inquiry.

The UN mission in Central African Republic announced in January that the Congolese contingent would be sent home after failing an internal assessment. The UN review of Congolese troops assessed the equipment, the vetting procedures and overall preparedness of the contingent. Haq said

the repatriation of some 800 Congolese troops was due to start on 25 February.

There have now been dozens of abuse accusations against UN peacekeepers, French and European troops. The world body has pledged to crack down on allegations of misconduct and abuse to avoid a repeat of past mistakes. An independent review panel accused the United Nations and its agencies of grossly mishandling allegations of child sexual abuse by foreign troops in Central African Republic in 2013 and 2014.

The previous head of the UN mission in Central

African Republic, Babacar Gaye, resigned last August.

Foreign troops were deployed in Central African Republic after mainly Muslim rebels seized power in the majority Christian country in 2013, provoking reprisals and fuelling religious and inter-communal violence that has killed thousands. French troops have been in the country since December 2013. European Union troops were there from April 2014 to March 2015. A United Nations peacekeeping mission assumed authority from African Union troops in September 2014.—Reuters



Women walk by a United Nations peacekeeping armoured vehicle guarding the outer perimeter of a compound of a school used as an electoral centre at the end of the presidential and legislative elections, in the mostly muslim PK5 neighbourhood of Bangui, Central African Republic, on 14 February 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Suicide bomber kills at least 10 recruits at Yemeni army camp — medics

ADEN — A suicide bomber killed at least 10 recruits at a Yemeni army camp run by President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi’s government in the southern port city of Aden yesterday, medical sources and an official said.

They said several other recruits were also wounded in the explosion at the gate of Abbas camp in Burai-

qa, a district of the city of Aden, which had been recently set up to absorb new conscripts to a new army being set up by Hadi’s government.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack, the latest in a series of bombings that had rattled the city since Saudi-backed forces captured Yemen’s second largest

city from the Iran-allied Houthis in July last year.

Hundreds of new recruits were at the gate trying to register their names to join the Yemeni army, they said.

Residents said ambulances were seen transporting casualties out to hospitals as troops surrounded the area to keep onlookers away.—Reuters

ADVERTISEMENT FOR A-6 3D MARINE SEISMIC SURVEY IEE REPORT

Woodside Energy (Myanmar) Pte. Ltd. on behalf of the joint venture participants, proposes to undertake a three-dimensional (3D) marine seismic survey in Block A-6 located in the Rakhine Basin, Myanmar. This is scheduled to commence in April 2016 and take up to 50 days to complete. An Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) has been prepared by Woodside (the Operator for matters other than government liaison), AECOM Malaysia and E Guard for the proposed activity. The report can be viewed at:

- Woodside’s webpage: woodside.com.au/myanmar-consultation;
- Woodside’s office in Yangon: 70/LA-2, Golden Valley Road, Bahan Township, Yangon;
- EGuard’s office in Yangon: No. 99, Mya Kan Thar Lane, Nyein Chan Yay Street, 10 Miles, Pyay Road, Saw Bwar Gyi Gone Qr., Insein Township, Yangon;
- Township General Administration Department, Quarter 3, Yone Paung Sone Road, Thar Baung;
- Environmental Conservation Department, Ayeyarwady Regional Office, No 13 Saw Mill, Shwe Myint Tin Village, Patheingyi;
- Department of Fisheries, Ayeyarwady Region, Regional Office, Tae Gyi Kone, Patheingyi;
- Myanmar Fisheries Federation, Ayeyarwady Regional Office, Near BEHS No. 2, No. 2 Qr, Patheingyi.

Feedback on the report can be provided in writing to feedback@woodside.com.au, info@eguardservices.com or directly to staff at Woodside’s and EGuard’s offices in Yangon by 4 March 2016.

Cuba's organic honey exports create buzz as bees die off elsewhere

SAN ANTONIO DE LOS BANOS — Long known for its cigars and rum, Cuba has added organic honey to its list of key agricultural exports, creating a buzz among farmers as pesticide use has been linked to declining bee populations elsewhere.

Organic honey has become Cuba's fourth most valuable agricultural export behind fish products, tobacco and drinks, but ahead of the Caribbean island's more famous sugar and coffee, said Theodor Friedrich, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's (FAO) representative for Cuba.

"All of (Cuba's) honey can be certified as organic," Friedrich told the Thomson

Reuters Foundation. "Its honey has a very specific, typical taste; in monetary value, it's a high ranking product."

After the collapse in 1991 of the Soviet Union, Cuba's main trading partner, the island was unable to afford pesticides due to a lack of foreign currency, coupled with the US trade embargo. By necessity, the government embraced organic agriculture, and the policies have largely stuck.

Now that the United States is easing its embargo following the restoration of diplomatic ties last year, Cuba's organic honey exporters could see significant growth if the government supports the industry,

bee keepers said. Cuba produced more than 7,200 tonnes of organic honey in 2014, worth about \$23.3 million, according to government statistics cited by the FAO.

The country's industry is still tiny compared with honey heavyweights such as China, Turkey and Argentina. But with a commodity worth more per liter than oil, Cuban honey producers believe they could be on the cusp of a lucrative era.

With 80 boxes swarming with bees, each producing 45 kg (100 lb) of honey per year, farm manager Javier Alfonso believes Cuba's exports could grow markedly in the coming years. His apiary, down a



dirt track in San Antonio de los Banos, a farming town an hour's drive from the capital Havana, was built from scratch by employees, Alfonso said. "There is just a bit of production now, but it can get bigger," he said, looking at the rows of colourful wooden boxes.

Like other Cuban bee farmers, he sells honey

exclusively to the government, which pays him according to the world market price and then takes responsibility for marketing the product overseas. Most of Cuba's honey exports go to Europe, he said. He would like to be able to borrow money to expand production, but getting credit is difficult, he said, so for now

his team of farmers build their own infrastructure for the bees.

"It's a very natural environment here," said Raul Vasquez, a farm employee. "The government is not allowed to sell us chemicals - this could be the reason why the bees aren't dying here" as they have been in other places.—Reuters

Weather-weary Indian farmers resort to new cash crop: blood

JHANSI — Karna, a farmer from Badgaon village in northern India, has few options but to sell his blood for money, after persistent drought left him unable to live off his land.

The farmer, now 60, began commuting an hour and a half from his village to Jhansi town in Uttar Pradesh state for a job that paid little money.

"I was working as a labourer in Jhansi for survival," said Karna, who goes by one name. "When my son fell ill, I had no other option but to sell my blood for his treatment."

The hospital took almost two bottles of his blood and gave him 1,200 rupees (\$17.50).

For many farmers in this part of Bundelkhand,

blood is the new cash crop — a source of guaranteed income as they exhaust other ways of making ends meet. In India, blood donors are not usually paid. But some hospitals buy blood, even though it is against the law.

Bundelkhand, a hilly region divided between the states of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, has struggled with extreme weather in the past few years. Drought, hailstorms, unseasonal rainfall and most recently an unusually warm winter have played havoc with crop yields, making farming unviable for many.

Unemployment has soared, and locals are leaving the rural belt to work as unskilled labour in nearby

urban areas.

Financial assistance provided by the authorities has failed to achieve much on the ground, as it is far lower than farmers' losses.

Farmer Lakhan Ahirwar, 61, relies on intermittent labouring jobs to get through dry spells. But when work is scarce, selling his blood is the most reliable source of income.

"I could not find any work for almost five days," he said. "What should I do? I had to feed my children."

Rajendra Singh, a prominent water conservationist and winner of the Stockholm Water Prize, said it was "a matter of grave concern that farmers from many areas in Bundelkhand (have) sold their blood due to successive

droughts".

Ahirwar, who once earned enough by selling tomatoes, potatoes and chillies grown on his 7 acres (3 hectares), is no longer in a position to provide two meals a day for his family. His only son migrated to New Delhi with his pregnant wife. "Even during the eighth month of her pregnancy she had to work as a labourer in Delhi, as they had no other source of income for survival," said the farmer.

Tourists from all over the world who flock to Bundelkhand to visit Khajuraho, a world heritage site famous for its temples adorned with erotic carvings, are largely unaware of the plight of local farmers.

The region has re-

ceived below-average rains since 2007, and is now facing its third successive year of drought. Agricultural production has declined substantially and livestock are suffering too.

Crops in nearly half the districts of Madhya Pradesh have been hit by insufficient rainfall, the state government says.

In neighbouring Uttar Pradesh, the situation is even worse, with 69 out of 71 districts receiving below-average rains in 2015, according to the India Meteorological Department.

Last year, unseasonably heavy rains and hailstorms devastated crops at the ripening stage in April and May in Bundelkhand. That was followed by drought in August and Sep-

tember, and a warm winter.

The freak winter badly affected the rabi crop, sown during the winter months, on around 40 per cent of India's farmland.

The negative effects have pushed some farmers to commit suicide, even as state governments scramble to ease the agrarian crisis. More than 3,200 farmers in Bundelkhand alone have killed themselves in the last five years, according to official records. Crop losses and worries over debt are the main reasons. Local leader Shivnarain Singh Parihar of the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh (Indian Farmers' Union) said around two farmers per day, on average, are committing suicide in Bundelkhand.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV TAI BINH 89 VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV TAI BINH 89 VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18.2.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T-2 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S BAY LINE SHIPPING PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV THAI BINH 039 VOY NO (01/2016)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV THAI BINH 039 VOY NO (01/2016) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18.2.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of B.S.W-3 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S G-LINK EXPRESS PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA HASIL VOY NO (147)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA HASIL VOY NO (147) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18.2.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T./A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

Japanese calligrapher spreads healing power of the brush

TOKYO — The keyboard has all but supplanted the handwritten message as the communication mode of choice, but Japanese calligrapher Souun Takeda believes the pen — or more precisely, the brush — is a mightier tool for tapping into something more visceral.

Although Takeda recognises the practical applications of today's social networking, he suggests Japanese calligraphy, which can be traced back to the origins of Chinese civilization, offers an insight into beauty, depth, and positive energy that transcends language.

The deeper the message, he says, the more important it is to express oneself in writing.

"I use social networking sites for speed and convenience. I write by hand to add depth and weight to my messages. I take the best of both worlds," Takeda, one of the most celebrated Japanese calligraphers today, said in a recent interview with Kyodo News.

"The deeper the message, the more I will rely on the latter. There's the option of using text emoticons but I'll definitely write out a letter, for example, if I want to apologise to someone. It's more sincere," he said.

The 40-year-old Kumamoto native, whose name Souun is a stage name given to him by his mother Souyou Takeda, feels the technological revolution has only served to elevate his social status as a professional calligrapher.

Writing by hand has become increasingly rare these days, but Takeda feels that in the computer age there is a yearning for the ancient art as a form of healing.

"I look on the bright side of things. Since computers appeared, more Japanese people have been craving a spark that can melt hearts that have become cold. Japanese calligraphy has become a healing method much like yoga," he said.

Takeda, along with his two younger brothers, was first exposed to Japanese calligraphy at the age of 3 through his mother, and all three siblings eventually became teachers. After studying information science at the Tokyo University of Science, he worked for Japan's largest telecom company, NTT, for nearly three years.

But he realised the pow-



Japanese calligrapher Souun Takeda poses for a photo at his atelier, where he teaches 300 students, in Fujisawa, near Tokyo, on 8 February. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

er his calligraphy can have on others one day when a colleague became overwhelmed by tears after seeing him write her name with a brush. She told him it was the first time in her life she liked her own name.

"It was such an eye-opening experience. I realised how important a single name can be. It's like a logo you carry on your back your entire life. I imagined how wonderful it would be if I could express the beauty in a name through my calligraphy," he said.

Takeda never thought twice about replacing his business suit with a samue, the traditional work garb of Zen monks and writers of his craft. He resigned from his company the next day.

After performing on streets in his 20s and developing his own network, Takeda opened a calligraphy school in the Shonan beach area in Kanagawa Prefecture in 2006, where he currently teaches 300 students with hundreds more waiting in the wings for instruction.

His youngest student is a kindergartener and oldest 77, proof that age is no barrier. Reading, writing and soroban (Japanese abacus) were traditionally taught in terakoya, or temple schools attended by the elementary school children of commoners during the Edo Period (1603-1868).

To this day, many Japanese, especially children, attend calligraphy schools because penmanship is believed to reflect a person's character.

"You'd be surprised

how many parents in Japan have an inferiority complex about their poor handwriting. They don't mind if their kids never learn to play the piano or wear a kimono, but they really do care that their kids have neat handwriting," Takeda said.

The main instruments used for shodo, translated as "the way of writing," include a brush (fude), an inkstick (sumi), inkstone (suzuri) to grind the inkstick against, standard-size paper (hanshi) and paper weight (bunchin). Calligraphy is taught in most Japanese elementary schools, and all students have their own set of shodo tools.

Aside from calligraphy lessons, Takeda has published over 40 books, many of them of the self-help variety, as well as lectured and provided custom calligraphy services. He has designed logos for name cards, doorplates, T-shirts, umbrellas, beach sandals, wall stickers, sake bottle labels, and even gravestones. One customer recently paid 3 million yen (about \$26,500) for a signed artwork of Takeda's consisting of a single kanji character, measuring seven metres in height.

Last June, Takeda made his overseas debut with an exhibition in Ojai, a small city in California located northwest of Los Angeles.

He has been invited back this summer and is also scheduled to hold an event in Houston, Texas, in June.

"I want to work more overseas, but I don't care where I go. I believe we are all governed by a universal

law, so anyone can relate to shodo and what it can do — lift spirits, bridge communication gaps, simplify life challenges, bring people together."

As for the challenge of overcoming language boundaries through a calligraphy brush, Takeda said, "It's like playing rock music with a shamisen. If I write in kanji and people don't understand what it means, they will still see its beauty."

Learning Japanese calligraphy, he says, is like picking up a sport. Good players have good coaches, and if you practice long enough you can reach an above-average level of proficiency. But unlike sports, shodo is not about competing. The ritual of meditative breathing begins and ends at your own pace, he says.

"I see eternity in a single line. Your breath, your posture, and all the emotion you put into writing that line — they all become part of that line," Takeda says.

When Takeda finds difficulty maintaining his physical and mental balance, he kneels on the floor in seiza style, takes a deep breath, and focuses on each brush stroke. It's a way for him to have fun and reduce stress at the same time. "Your body is like a guitar. It needs regular tuning and maintenance," he says. "I'm always trying to find the perfect balance between relaxation and enjoyment. I have to be in a good state, and my classroom has to be filled with good energy if I'm trying to teach people to relax and enjoy."—Kyodo News

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department Developing Scalable Smallholder Livestock Models in Myanmar

Assignment Title: Project Implementation Chief
Technical Advisor (1 position)

Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department (LBVD) is implementing the project "Developing Scalable Smallholder Livestock Models in Myanmar" by the financial assistance of IFAD.

LBVD intends to apply part of the proceeds for the hiring of Project Implementation Chief Technical Advisor (CTA). The advisor services in shortlisting are:

- Provide in writing for project implementation manual (PIM) and operational manual for procurement procedures (OMPP);
- Prepare the periodic project reports for the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and IFAD;
- Provide advice as needed to the Project Implementation Committee (PIC) and Project Implementation Unit (PIU) at the national, regional, township and village levels in the implementing the project activities;
- Carry out any other duty as requested by Project Implementation Committee (PIC), Project Coordinator and Field Operation Officer.

LBVD now invites expression of interest from qualified and experienced Project Implementation CTA to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Individual Advisors should provide personal information indicating that they have qualifications and experiences to perform the Services (CV with academic background, experiences in similar assignment, knowledge of local conditions (if any) etc.). Personal interview may be invited if necessary.

The assignment period will be for 3 months and it will be extended based on the advisor's performances and project needs.

Further information and a copy of detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) can be available at the address below during office hours (from 09:30 to 16:00) Monday through Friday except public holidays.

Expressions of Interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax, or by e-mail), **no later than February 26, 2016**.

Attention

Dr. Than Naing Tun (Director) (or) Dr. Khin Ohnmar Lwin (Deputy Director)

Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department
Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development
Office Building No. (36), Yaza Thingaha Road, Ottaya Thiri Township,
Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, PO Box: 15011
Fax: +95 67 408342; Tel: +95 67 418356/408262; Hotline: +95 95177918

Email address: lbvd@mptmail.net.mm;
tblbvd@gmail.com; irplanninglbvd@gmail.com;
ohmar06@gmail.com

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV AERO STAR VOY NO (008)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV AERO STAR VOY NO (008) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on ETA - 18.2.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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Lady Gaga is tied with a rope as she performs a medley of songs as a tribute to the late David Bowie at the 58th Grammy Awards in Los Angeles, California on 15 February 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Lady Gaga makes psychedelic Grammy tribute to kindred spirit David Bowie

LOS ANGELES — Lady Gaga paid psychedelic tribute on the Grammys stage on Monday to the late British rock visionary David Bowie with a multimedia song-and-dance performance that sought to capture the boundary-pushing essence of a kindred pop music spirit.

Bowie, a forerunner of Gaga's brand of provocative, gender-bending performance imagery, died of cancer at age 69 on 10 January, just two days after the release of what became his critically acclaimed final studio album, "Blackstar."

Gaga, 29, a six-time Grammy laureate who, like Bowie, is known for frequent self-reinvention, arrived on the red carpet dressed in an outfit that channeled Bowie's signature androgynous look, sporting a bright, blue embellished jacket-dress and bright orange hair.

On stage she charted Bow-

ie's half-century career with a medley touching on 10 of his hits — "Space Oddity," "Changes," "Ziggy Stardust," "Suffragette City," "Rebel Rebel," "Fashion," "Fame," "Under Pressure," "Let's Dance" and "Heroes."

The song-dance number was punctuated by a torrent of flashing multi-colored lights and images projected on a large screen behind her, including a closeup of her face adorned in Aladdin Sane makeup — a nod to one of Bowie's personas — with a spider crawling over her nose.

Bowie's work also garnered posthumous Grammy award recognition on Monday as a new version of his composition "Sue (Or In a Season of Crime)," re-recorded for his 26th and final studio album, "Blackstar," earned the prize for best arrangement for instrument and vocals.

That Grammy went to big-

poser Maria Schneider, who said she had no idea at the time she was collaborating with Bowie on what would be his final project.

"It was the greatest privilege to work with David Bowie and to experience his creativity," she told reporters backstage.

"Sue" was originally included as a fresh track for Bowie's 2014 compilation album "Nothing Has Changed." The album "Blackstar" was released two days before his death. Earlier in the show, another late pop talent, Eagles co-founder, guitarist and songwriter Glenn Frey, was saluted by surviving members of his band who joined Jackson Browne for a performance of one of the Eagles' biggest hits, "Take It Easy."

Frey, who co-founded the Eagles with Don Henley in 1971 in Los Angeles, died at age 67 in January of complications from a number of ailments, including pneumonia.—Reuters

Director Lee says ruckus over diversity changed Oscars

BERLIN — American director Spike Lee said on Tuesday the Academy Awards organisers would not have pledged to diversify their membership had it not been for the debate about the lack of black actors among nominees for the best actor award this year.

Lee was speaking at the Berlin International Film Festival where his film "Chi-Raq" is being shown out of competition.

"If a ruckus had not been raised, I believe the Academy would not have made those changes," Lee told a news conference.

"So it was worth it. A week later they changed everything up. "That would not have hap-

pened if people kept quiet, not just me, Will and Jada," he said, referring to actor Will Smith and his wife Jada Pinkett Smith. "A whole bunch of people, it wasn't just myself."

Lee originally was quoted in January as having said he would boycott the Academy Awards ceremony because of the lack of diversity but later clarified his position to say that he and his wife Tonya would not be attending.

The Academy, which hands out the Oscar honors, announced in short order after Lee registered his protest that it would double the number of women and ethnic minority members by 2020.—Reuters



Director Spike Lee attends a news conference to promote the movie 'Chi-Raq' at the 66th Berlinale International Film Festival in Berlin, Germany on 16 February 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Bieber wants to cover up the tattoo tribute to Selena Gomez

LONDON — Pop star Justin Bieber says he is keen to cover up the tattoo he got as a tribute to ex-girlfriend Selena Gomez on his arm.

The 21-year-old "What Do You Mean?" hitmaker said he has tried to conceal it with some "shading," reported Female First. "This is my ex-girlfriend,

I kinda tried to cover her face up with some shading, but people still know," Bieber said.

The singer is currently being linked to Hailey Baldwin. The rumours of them having a romantic relationship started doing the rounds after they posted pictures full of PDA on Instagram.—PTI

Eagles of Death Metal to give Paris concert for attack survivors



Members of Eagles of Death Metal perform at the Olympia concert hall in Paris, France, on 16 February 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

PARIS — US band Eagles of Death Metal, on stage when Islamic State attacked their venue and killed 89 people in Paris last November, expressed sympathy with those too traumatized to attend their concert at another Paris hall on Tuesday.

With armed police on guard, workers hung the band's name in big red letters outside the Olympia concert hall in Paris. The Bataclan hall, where they were playing to a crowd of about 1,500 people on the evening of the attack on 13 November, is still closed.

The three militants who attacked the crowd at the Bataclan were part of a co-ordinated as-

sault in which 130 people died in the French capital. It was claimed by Islamic State. The Californian band offered survivors free tickets, and psychologists were on duty to help those attending Tuesday's concert. Any proceeds will go to a victims' support association.

But many are still recovering from wounds or staying away, not wanting to revive the memories of 13 November. "I understand why they can't come if they don't. But I wish they would," the band's frontman Jesse Hughes said. Others welcomed the concert as a way to move on. "I didn't come here to cry, I came here to have a good time," said survivor Cedric Rizzo,

42. "It's hard, because you think of the people who aren't here."

Hughes told France's i<TELE on Monday that he felt a "sacred duty" to complete the concert. "I can't let the bad guys win," he said. He also said the killings had not changed his pro-gun views, saying tougher gun controls in France compared to the United States had not limited the killings. Until nobody had guns, perhaps "everyone should have one," he said.

In December, Eagles of Death Metal appeared on stage at a U2 concert in Paris for their first return to the city since the attacks. Tuesday will be their first full concert.—Reuters

New York City to get streetcar line after more than 50 years



A man skips rocks along the East River in the Brooklyn Borough of New York, on 22 July 2012. PHOTO: REUTERS

NEW YORK — New York City has plans to build its first streetcar line in more than 50 years, and it will run along the Brooklyn and Queens waterfront where public transportation is not easily accessible.

Groundbreaking on the 16-mile route of the Brooklyn-Queens Connector, or BQX, is scheduled for 2019, and the first passengers are expected to board several years later, said Wiley Norvell, a spokesman for New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio. He said it has been better than half a century since the last streetcar ran in the city.

“Anyone can see the enormous growth happening here. It’s time we brought new transit to these neighbourhoods for all those

people and jobs,” de Blasio said in a statement.

The system is expected to serve almost 50,000 passengers per day, making it one of the biggest urban streetcar systems in the United States, the mayor said. About 28,000 jobs and more than \$25 billion in wages and economic activity would be created by the streetcar line, which would stretch from Astoria in Queens to Sunset Park in Brooklyn, de Blasio said.

Wending through neighbourhoods long underserved by public transit, the streetcar will bring commuters closer to ferry service into Manhattan and onto Roosevelt Island, where Cornell University’s tech campus is due to open in 2017. Riders will shave, on

average, at least 15 minutes off their commute compared to current transit options, the mayor said. The cost will be the same as a subway ride.

The project is estimated to cost about \$2.5 billion, which will be raised through the creation of a non-profit with the authority to issue tax-exempt bonds, the mayor said.

To pay off the debt, he said the city would capture “a percentage of the increase in values of existing and new development along the corridor.”

Operating costs will be covered by rider fares and possible additional revenue streams such as advertising, he said. The city did not name the companies that would be involved in building the line.—Reuters

Lawsuit accuses actress Jessica Alba’s website fraudulent labeling

NEW YORK — Honest Co, the shopping website cofounded by actress Jessica Alba, has been accused of fraudulently labeling dozens of home and personal care products as natural, plant-based or chemical-free, causing consumers to overpay.

A lawsuit filed on Friday by Brad and Manon Buonasera in US District Court in Manhattan targets Honest’s marketing of at least 41 items such as floor cleaners, laundry detergent, children’s toothpaste, soap and bubble bath.

While the products were labeled “natural,” “all natural,” “naturally derived,” “plant-based” and “no harsh chemicals (ever!),” they contained “a spectacular array of synthetic and toxic ingredients,” such as the toxins phenoxyethanol and

methylisothiazolinone, the Buonaseras said.

“Honest’s products are a chemical soup,” the complaint said.

The plaintiffs are seeking damages that could top \$5 million and be tripled. They also want class-action status for New Yorkers who bought Honest’s products.

Honest has already discontinued or changed ingredients and labels for some of the 41 products, the complaint said.

In a statement, Honest said: “The Honest Company takes its responsibility to our consumers seriously and strongly stands behind our products. These allegations are without merit and we will vigorously defend this baseless lawsuit.”

Alba was not named as a defendant. The Buonaseras’ lawyers did not immediately

respond to requests for comment.

A similar lawsuit over five Honest products is pending in a federal court in Los Angeles. Honest wants the lawsuit dismissed.

The Buonaseras said they sued after buying Honest’s Conditioning Detangler and Shampoo & Body Wash at a Costco store in Manhattan’s Harlem neighbourhood. They said they contacted Honest in mid-September, and sued after the Santa Monica, California-based company failed to correct its advertising.

Honest raised \$100 million in an August funding round, and, according to a published report, has worked with Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley on a possible initial public offering. The Buonaseras’ complaint refers to that plan.—Reuters



A tourist is seen through a soap bubble as she takes a picture at Comercio square in downtown Lisbon on 18 November 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

Overseas tourists visiting Portugal hit record in 2015

LISBON — A record number of foreign tourists stayed in Portuguese hotels last year, with the number surpassing 10 million visitors for the first time and boosting hotel revenues to nearly 2.5 billion euros (\$2.8 billion), official data showed on Tuesday.

Tourist arrivals and all travel-related revenues, which account for around

10 per cent of Portugal’s gross domestic product, have been growing since 2011, helping the Atlantic coastal country overcome its economic and debt crisis.

The National Statistics Institute said the number of foreign tourists reached 10.18 million in 2015, a rise of 10 per cent on the previous year.

As economic growth accelerated to 1.5 per cent last year from 0.9 per cent in 2014, the number of local travellers rose by 7 per cent to 7.3 million.

Hotel revenues rose by more than 13 per cent, outpacing the tourist arrivals growth, as hotels were able to increase prices thanks to strong demand.—Reuters

Myanmar International

(18-2-2016 07:00am ~ 19-2-2016 7:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Myanmar Social & Charitable Association (EP-3) (Part-1)
07:50	Am	Myanmar Social & Charitable Association (EP-3) (Part-2)
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Director: Thiha Kyaw Soe
08:40	Am	Family of Toys
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Products Of Myanmar - Seashells Products
09:44	Am	A Nun’s Creation in Fruit Carving
09:51	Am	School for the Blind
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	A Bike Ride in pursuit of Mural Art (Ep-1)
10:44	Am	Natural Mineral Water

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	Travelogue: A Tour in Korea (Ep- II)
07:40	Pm	Sagaing: Youth Leader
07:50	Pm	Mt. Naw Bu Baw
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Myanmar Traditional Identity (EP- 2) Myanmar Chinthe (Myanmar Lion)
08:40	Pm	Kyauk Phyu Township
08:48	Pm	Kayin Child Boxer

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Wednesday Repeat (07:00 Am~11:00 Am)
 (03:00 Pm ~ 04:26 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 08:26 Am)

04:30 Pm Asian Tour Highlights: Leo palace (Myanmar Open 2016)

(05:26 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (09:26 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

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

Entertainment Channel

(18-2-2016, Thursday)

6:00 pm	7:50 pm
• The Mirror Images of The Musical Oldies	• TV Drama Series
6:15 pm	8:40 pm
• Fashion Show	• Musical Programme
6:30 pm	8:55 pm
• Nay Ma Win Ah Hla Myar	• Pyi Thu Ni Ti
7:00 pm	9:20 pm
• TV Drama Series	• Myanmar Video
	Midnight
	• Close Down

From 17.2.2016 (Thursday) 06:00 Pm
 To 18.2.2016 (Friday) 06:00 Pm
This schedule will be repeated four times in 24 hours.

Ronaldo riled by questions about Barca trio, away goals

ROME — Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo was riled by comments about Barcelona's forwards and reacted angrily when asked at a news conference on Tuesday about his away goals drought ahead of the Champions League tie at AS Roma.

The Portugal international was asked if Barca's free-scoring attacking trio of Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Neymar had the edge over Real's strikers because they get on so well together.

"How do we know that (their relationship) is that way? It is only because that is what is written," he said.

"I don't have to go to dinner with (Karim) Benzema, or for (Gareth) Bale to come to my house. What we need is to get on the field. We don't have to give each other kisses.

"This thing about the little meals,

the little hugs, the little kisses. To me that doesn't mean anything."

Ronaldo later walked out of the news conference after replying sharply to a question about his recent lack of away goals on the eve of Real's last 16 first-leg clash in Rome.

Ronaldo broke the competition's record for the most goals scored in the group stage earlier this season when he hit 11, and is also the Champions League's all-time top scorer with 88 goals in 121 appearances.

But he was unhappy when asked why he had not scored away since Real Madrid's 2-0 La Liga victory at Eibar on 29 November. "Who else has scored more goals away from home than me since I arrived in Spain?"

said Ronaldo. "Name one player who has scored more than me? "No answer? Ok. Thank you everyone," he added, before excusing himself from the news conference.

Ronaldo has netted



Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo attends a news conference prior to their Champions League soccer match against AS Roma at the Olympic stadium in Rome, Italy, on 16 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

32 goals in all competitions so far this season — 21 at home and 11 away. He has featured in four away games for Real since his goal against Eibar without finding the net, struggling to shine in recent La Liga matches against Real Betis and Granada.

"It's understandable that people have doubts," Ronaldo had said earlier. "It's like with a son when

you give him everything and then when you take it away, he cries.

"I hope that I can keep this 'bad form' up until the season's end."

Real coach Zinedine Zidane reaffirmed Ronaldo's importance to the team this week after the forward scored twice in a 4-2 win over Athletic Bilbao at the Bernabeu on Saturday.—Reuters

Serena withdraws from Qatar Open with flu

SERENA WILLIAMS will miss next week's Qatar Open because of the flu, she said on Tuesday, marking the second consecutive tournament the world number one misses due to illness.

Williams, a finalist at the 2013 tournament where she lost in three sets to Victoria Azarenka, was the top seed at the 21-27 February tournament in Doha. "I unfortunately have to withdraw from the Qatar Total Open as I have come down with the flu and do not feel 100 per cent," Williams said in a statement released by tournament organisers.

"I need to take this time to recover but I do look forward to returning to Doha and seeing my fans soon". The 34-year-old American announced last week that she would miss the ongoing Dubai Championships with the flu.

Williams has not played a competitive match since she was stunned in the Australian Open final by German Angelique Kerber.

The world number one's withdrawal comes as another blow to tournament organisers after Maria Sharapova pulled out with an arm injury.—Reuters

PSG's Cavani shows his worth with winner against Chelsea

PARIS — Paris St Germain substitute Edinson Cavani, criticised by French media lacking composure in front of goal, responded in style to earn a 2-1 home win over Chelsea in their Champions League last-16 first leg on Tuesday.

The Uruguay forward, who has scored only once in Ligue 1 this year, fired a low angled shot past goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois in the 78th minute after John Obi Mikel had cancelled out Zlatan Ibrahimovic's opener at the end of the first half. That did not surprise PSG coach Laurent Blanc, who

brought Cavani on for Lucas four minutes before he got the winner. "I'm not just saying it because he scored tonight, I always say it, Eddy is a player who can score," Blanc told a news conference. "He was going through a tough period so I hope it will give him his confidence back."

PSG knocked Chelsea out on away goals at the same stage last year after the Blues had prevailed the previous season in the quarter-finals and have the edge going into the second leg.

It was Chelsea's first defeat in 13 games since Dutchman Guus Hiddink took over from the sacked Jose Mourinho but they will fancy their chances at Stamford Bridge on 9 March.

With Chelsea's inspirational captain John Terry ruled out with a hamstring injury, Branislav Ivanovic moved from full back to central defence and wore the skipper's armband. Marco Verratti started for PSG having only just recovered from a groin injury, while Blanc chose to field Marquinhos on the right side of

defence in place of the Serge Aurier, who has been suspended for insulting Blanc and several team mates.

Chelsea had the best chance midway through the first half when striker Diego Costa's point-blank header was instinctively palmed on to the bar by PSG keeper Kevin Trapp. Ibrahimovic, who was sent off in London last year and picked up a yellow card on Tuesday, broke the deadlock six minutes before halftime with a low free kick deflected past Courtois by the heel of Obi Mikel, who had fouled Brazilian Lucas.

But Chelsea hit back just before the interval when Costa deflected a corner into the path of Mikel, who controlled the ball before firing home his first goal in 14 months.

Lucas was replaced in the 74th minute by Cavani who had an immediate impact, collecting Angel Di Maria's perfect pass on the right and scoring with a low shot through Courtois's legs.—Reuters



PHOTO: REUTERS