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NEW CITY ON THE WAY

Amarapura urban development plan to be released

Aung Thant Khaing

THE Mandalay Business Capital City Development Company is planning to publicise its urban development project, according to its managing director U San Phone Tint.

The company will undertake the urban development project in Shankalay Kyun, located in Amarapura Township, Mandalay Region, said U San Phone Tint, adding that the project will follow the model of the urban development in other ASEAN countries.

The project includes the reclamation of fertile lands from swampy areas near the Ayeyawady River. The managing director pledged arrangements for better shelters for people residing in the villages in the project area.

“The [villagers] don’t have to leave their homes because they

will be provided better homes in their original places,” he said.

The project area is reported to have absorbed croplands and marshlands, exclusive of existing farmlands. The company will have its information centres responsible for reimbursing compensation in exchange of plots of land after the completion of the project.

The urban development project will bring residential apartments, hospitals, hotels and shopping malls to over 2,000 acres of land, according to joint secretary U Thet Naing Tun of the Mandalay City Development Committee.

The Mandalay Business Capital Development Company entered an agreement with the Mandalay City Development Committee at the office of the Mandalay Region Government on 1 March.



An aerial view of the site where a new town would be established. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Tourists visiting Sri Kestra rise in previous years



Sri Kestra city. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

OVER 6,000 foreign tourists visited the ancient Sri Kestra city, listed as a World Heritage site, up until the end of February of the 2015-16 fiscal year, while the start of 2016 saw a rise in visitor numbers.

It is known that 3,548 foreign travellers visited the World Heritage site between April and December of 2015, with the first two months of this year seeing 2,598 foreign visitors.

“There are more foreign tourists visiting at the moment.

Provisions have been made for foreign guests to get about the ancient city in the form of cattle driven carts, cars and motorcycles. Tourist police have also been stationed within the site for those tourists visiting around alone or in a group of two.” said Daw Aye Mya Thein, curator of the Sri Ksetra museum.

It is known that the numbers of foreign tourists that visited the ancient city during the 2014-15 fiscal year accounted for 8,768 while Myanmar visitors account-

ed for nearly 30,000.

“There has been an increase in tourists during the tourist season,” said U Kyaw Myo Win, deputy director of the Sri Kestra based Department of Archaeology and Museum.

The trend of a rise in foreign tourists to Sri Kestra is also evident in the numbers of local tourists to the site, although pricing discrimination remains in place with foreigners being charged K5,000 entry fees to access either

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Workshop seeks to set up referral mechanism for trafficking victims

A WORKSHOP on Developing a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for Providing Direct Assistance to Victims of Trafficking was held at the Grand Amara Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

In her address, Dr Daw Sann Aye, deputy director-general of the Social Welfare Department, elaborated on works being carried out for the protection of victims of trafficking in Myanmar, including the recruitment of a task force and the reintegration and re-

habilitation of victims. Next, Ms Sharon Dimanche, the Migrants Protection Programme Manager for the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), addressed the workshop. Officials of Social Welfare Department, police officers led by Police Brig-Gen Win Naing Tun, IOM staff and members of other civil society organisations held discussions on the establishment of a national referral mechanism to support trafficked persons.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Experts and officials team up to develop a National Referral Mechanism for Providing Direct Assistance to Victims of Trafficking. PHOTO: MNA

Deputy Education Minister visits Popa scout camp



Minister for Education Dr Zaw Min visits camp of scouts at Mt Popa. PHOTO: TIN MAUNG LATT

DEPUTY Minister for Education Dr Zaw Min Aung visited a scout camp opened at a school in Popa, Kyaukpadaung Township, Mandalay Region yesterday.

On his tour of the scout camp, the deputy minister met with scouts and responsible persons of the camp.

According to the agenda

of the scouting activities of the camp, 271 boy scouts visited Htupayon Pagoda at Mt. Popa, and received the knowledge of scout camping delivered by senior scouts.

Likewise, 249 girl scouts visited Mt. Popa and performed scouting activities.—*Ko Latt (MNA)*

Maungmagan fire struggle as rebuilding banned by authorities

FAMILIES whose shops were burned by a recent fire at Maungmagan Beach have experienced hardships as authorities have not allowed them to rebuild their shops, according to the fire victims.

“Now we have a difficult life as we are not allowed to rebuild our shops and revive our businesses,” said U Aung Htwe, owner of Aung San restaurant.

“I was told not to reconstruct my shop by authorities. They did not explain why,” he said.

The root cause of the fire has not yet been identified, said the restaurant owner. But he also quoted witnesses as saying that sparks from power lines touching each other are believed

to have caused the fire.

The fire victims received no assistance from the government, whereas other fire victims around the country have been targeted for relief aid by the government and members of the public.

“The donation centre for fire victims was closed a week ago, and I received K200,000,” said U Aung Htwe.

The Maungmagan fire devastated seven large shops and five small ones, forcing victims to relocate to bungalows near the site of the fire.

“They eventually moved to the homes of their relatives,” said Maungmagan resident U Myint Maung.—*Ko Moe*

Low-cost flats offered Shwelinban Industrial Zone workers

UNITS in four recently completed apartment buildings will be sold to workers in the Shwelinban Industrial Zone following the completion of power supply installation, according to the zone’s development committee.

The construction of 18 low-cost buildings for workers is being implemented on government property within the zone in Hlaingthaya Township, Yangon Region, through the collective contributions of factory owners.

Upon completion of the project, a total of 1,080 flats will be

sold to workers in the zone, who will be able to pay in instalments, said U Aye Thaug, chairman of Shwelinban Industrial Zone Development Committee.

Each building has 60 units fitted with water and electricity supplies, added the chairman.

“The price per apartment is set at K6.2 million, but the prices of the flats can vary depending on what floors they are on,” he said.

According to the chairman, workers at any of the zone’s factories are eligible to apply to buy

the low-cost flats.

“The sale of apartments will be carried out with transparency,” the chairman added.

“I am very interested in these apartments, as rental prices are very high elsewhere,” said U Myint Kyaw, a security guard at a bottled water factory in the industrial zone.

The Shwelinban Industrial Zone was established on an area of 1,100 acres in Hlaingthaya Township and is home to around operational and planned 180 factories.—*Thein Ko Lwin*

Union Attorney-General meets Chinese Ambassador



Attorney-General of the Union Dr Tun Shin holds talks with Ambassador Mr. Hong Liang. PHOTO: MNA

Attorney-General of the Union Dr Tun Shin received Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Hong Liang and party in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, both sides held discussions on bilateral legal relations, further cooperation between the Union Attorney-General’s Office

and the prosecution body of the Republic of China and legal matters between the two countries.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Photo exhibition aims to turn out talented young photographers

WITH the aim of turning out new generations in photographic industry, Myanmar Photographic Society will organize an exhibition this month in Yangon.

The event is scheduled to be opened for the public from 11 to 13 March at yangon Gal-

lery, which is located within the compound of People’s Park near Planetarium on Alone Road.

The society is planning to feature works by winners of its 52nd annual photo contest plus 50 creations by its members during the event, inviting enthusiasts to come to the event and

attend the seminar named Japanese Rall Road by a Japanese photographer.

Mr Robert Collins, a British photographer, will share his knowledge and experience to local photographers, with 30 enthusiasts registered to attend the seminar.—*Bawgathwe*

Commander-in-Chief meets outgoing North Korean ambassador



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing shakes hands with Ambassador Mr Kim Sok Chol. PHOTO: MYAWADY

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Defense Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received Ambassador Mr Kim Sok Chol of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to Myanmar at Bayintnaung Yeiktha Hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. The North Korean diplomat recently

completed his tour of duty of the country.

During the meeting, the two held discussions on the Tatmadaw's cooperative involvement in Myanmar's reforms and implementation of the peace process, bilateral relations between Myanmar and North Korea and se-

curity and peace on the Korean peninsula.

Also present were Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defense Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win and Lt-Gen Mya Tun Oo from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army).—*Myawady*

Tourists come on bicycles, motorbikes

ARRIVALS of tourists traveling by motorbike and bicycle have increased in the current peak tourism season, according to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

Many German and American tourist entered Myanmar on bicycle and motorbike tours via Muse and Tachilek last month, said the ministry.

Under the arrangement of

7 Days Travels and Tour Co. Ltd, a convoy of nine German tourists arrived in Myanmar via Muse by bicycle on 3 February and visited Muse, Lashio, Hsipaw, Kyaukme, Pyin Oo Lwin, Mandalay, Monywa, Bagan, Meiktila, Kalaw, Inle, Taunggyi and Heho during their 20-day stay in the country.

Asian Discovery Travels

and Tours Co. Ltd arranged a tour for 10 American tourists on nine motorbikes for a 10-day visit in Myanmar. They arrived in Myanmar via Tachilek on 9 February and toured Kengtung, Inle, Mandalay, Bagan, Pyay, Bago and Hpa-An before leaving for Thailand via Myawady on 18 February.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Tourists on motorbikes traveling in Myanmar. PHOTO: SUPPLIED BY MINISTRY OF HOTELS AND TOURISM

Appointment of Dutch Ambassador agreed on

THE Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a press release on the appointment of Mr. Wouter Robert Marie Jurgens as Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Myanmar yesterday.

According to the ministry's press release, the Dutch ambassador was born in Doetinchem, the Netherlands on 18th June, 1971. He obtained Bachelor of Business Administration in 1992 and Master of Political Science and Master of Economics in 1997. He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands in 1997 and served in

various capacities at the ministry as well as Royal Netherlands Embassies in Rwanda, United States and South Africa. He also served as senior policy analyst seconded to the US Department of State in 2005. Then, he served as Head of Counter Terrorism, Organized Crime and Cyber Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands from 2012 to 2013. Since 2013, he has been serving as Head of Task Force International Cyber Policies of the ministry. He is married with three children.—*GNLM*

Community level personal protection crucial for malaria elimination in Myanmar: Malaria Consortium

MYANMAR had 152,195 reported malaria cases in 2015. The actual number is likely to be much higher, according to the World Health Organization.

However, recent scale-up in prevention and control by the National Malaria Control Programme (NMCP) has helped achieve a significant decline, and malaria in Myanmar is now largely concentrated among high-risk and hard-to-reach groups, the statement released yesterday by Malaria Consortium Organization quoting the WHO.

These include forest-dwellers, people residing in forest-fringe villages, armed forces, and migrants working in logging or mining in forested areas, palm oil and rubber plantations or construction sites. They are exposed to mosquitoes through high-risk night-time work in the forest or on construction sites, and have limited access to health services.

"Scaling up insecticide-treated clothing and targeting migrant and mobile populations in Myanmar is crucial. Treated clothing partly fills a gap in personal protection of vulnerable populations who are exposed to bites during the night when malaria mosquitoes are most active. The method could help contribute to the success of the expanded malaria control and elimination programme in Myanmar."

Dr Jeffrey Hii, Malaria Consortium's regional Senior Vector Control Specialist, was addressing an audience of health and other

government sectors, public and private sector representatives, donors and non-governmental organisations at a workshop in Yangon today on the role that could be played by insecticide-treated clothing in contributing to malaria elimination in Myanmar. Dr Hii's assertion follows the findings of a recent study by Malaria Consortium.

The insecticide-treated clothing (ITC) project was set up to determine the acceptability of ITC for malaria prevention among the key risk group of rubber tappers. Malaria Consortium is the first organisation to reach out to this key risk group in rural malaria-endemic areas to understand their perceptions of ITC. Previously, the use of ITC has mostly been limited to military and recreational markets and has not reached the community level.

The project fills a gap in personal protection. Mosquitoes that transmit malaria act in various ways. Some rest and feed indoors, while others are more active outdoors. Current malaria control methods mostly focus on mosquitoes that feed indoors through indoor residual spraying of houses and the use of mosquito nets. People who are outdoors during the night are, therefore, not covered by typical measures and lack personal protection. "Addressing this residual transmission of malaria is increasingly important as Myanmar responds to drug resistance and moves towards malaria elimination," explained Dr Hii.—*GNLM*

Tourists visiting Sri Kestra . . .

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the ancient city site or the museum, while Myanmar nationals can enter both free-of-charge.

The Minister of Culture has made it known that both foreign and domestic tourist numbers increased in the wake of the ancient Pyu cities of Hanlin, Beikthano

and Sri Kestra, which were once the centres of Pyu culture in Myanmar and located along a stretch of the Ayeyawaddy river that runs through Myanmar's central plains, were recognized as UNESCO World Heritage sites in June, 2014.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Migrants settlement programme carried out in Myitkyina tsp



migrant people seen moving into new settlement.

PHOTO: STATE IPRD

LOCAL migrant people recently moved from temporary shelters in Myitkyina Township to Ngwepyaw Modern Village under the arrangement of local authorities.

As part of its migrant and refugee settlement services, the

state government in cooperation with NGOs and INGOs has carried out settlement for those migrants who have fled from their residences as their lives and safety have been threatened.

Nearly 60 families with

about 300 populations from seven shelters in the township were settled in the modern village established by the state government.

Kachin State Chief Minister U La John Ngan Hsai encouraged those migrants and clarified the government's supports and arrangements for them on that day.

The local authorities provided nearly K15 million, food and rehabilitation supplies donated by the government departments, well-wishers and charitable organisations for migrants

With around K10 million funded by the local government from 2014-2015 budget, 11KVA power lines, two transformers and meter boxes were successfully installed across the region to have access of electricity for all households, one of officials said.—*State IPRD*

Reclining Buddha images attract great crowds of people from far and near



Two Buddha statues. PHOTO: MAWGYUN MYINT AUNG

THE two Buddha images emerged in a village in Mawlamyaingyun Township in Ayeyawady Region when workers dug the earth for paving at the front of the square on 16 February.

The lying images were found at a shrine near Yazudaing River in Kyaungdaung Village. It is estimated that

these images were made of alabaster or hard-paste porcelain, according to a villager.

Currently, locals put the two images for public observation near the shrine.

Since then, the village is always crowded with people from far and near, who pay homage to the images.—*Mawgyun Myint Aung*

Crime NEWS

65 acres of poppy fields destroyed in Hopong



Poppy fields being destroyed. PHOTO: NAN OO KHAN

SIXTY-FIVE acres of poppy fields were destroyed by police in Hopong on 23 February.

Police have destroyed 3,877 acres of poppy cultivations in the area this fiscal year.

"All we want is to eliminate

opium production once and for all so that young people can be saved", said local resident.

The campaign aims to destroy opium plants and declare the district a drug-free zone in the near future.—*Nan Oo Khan*

Illegal logs seized in Kyaukdaga

AUTHORITIES seized 94 illegal logs in the Ai Ton Kon forest reserve in Kyaukdaga Township, Bago Region, on 28 February. Acting on a tip off, a combined team of officers and staff from the Forest Department searched a six-wheel vehicle in the forest

reserve and discovered the logs.

On 29 February, the same team discovered 85 illegal logs, 55 bags of coal and a chainsaw from the Ye Nwe forest reserve.

All of logs have been handed over to the Myo Chaung Bi forest office.—*Khin Ko*

Stimulants, heroin seized

AN anti-drug squad seized 1,479 yabba tablets from Kyaw Min Tun in Room 207 of the Royal Land Hotel on 56th Street in Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay, on Tuesday.

On the same day, police discovered 102 grams of heroin on a motorbike driven by Win Swe and carrying passenger Ma Htu Mai at milepost 22/1 on the Mong Naung-Lon Ton road in Moe Mohyin Township.

Police have filed charges against them under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—*Myanmar Police Force*



Win Swe and Ma Htu Mai. PHOTO: MPF

Man threatening toll gate staff with gun arrested

A MAN wanted by police for threatening people with a gun at the Naung Lon toll gate along the road from Hpa-An to Myawady in Hpa-An Township, Kayin State, was arrested on 2 March.

According to a subsequent investigation, a vehicle heading for Eindu from Hpa-An crashed into the barrier at the toll gate on 29 February. Saw Pone Pone, the driver stopped the car and exited, then fired a gun into the air. After that, he got into a quarrel with three

gatekeepers.

Police from Eindu arrived on the scene and found bullet shells. They later found the suspect with the help of CCTV records. Police raided a hut in Naunglon Village where the suspect was hiding, and arrested him along arms and ammunition. Police also discovered stimulant tablets from his home in another search and arrested his wife.—*Tun Tun Htway*



Saw Pone Pone seen firing on CCTV. PHOTO: TUN TUN HTWAY

LOCAL Business



Merchants evaluate jade stones at Myanmar Jade Fair at the Maniyadana Emporium in Nay Pyi Taw, in December 2015. PHOTO: MNA

Myanmar jade market hit hard by halting of Chinese government loans

THE Myanmar jade market has taken a huge hit as the Chinese government has stopped the provision of loans to Chinese jade traders, it is known from the market.

“The [Chinese] government has pushed back the handing out of loans to [Chinese] jade buyers. Those big businessmen [Chinese jade buyers] have partnerships with [Chinese] banks. As such, the Myanmar jade market has completely shut up shop.” said U Soe Naing, central executive

of the Myanmar Gems and Jewellery Entrepreneurs Association (MGJEA) and speaker of the Gems and Jewellery Entrepreneurs Association of Mandalay.

The Chinese government began the ceasing of its loans to Chinese jade traders back in the last months of 2015, having a fatal impact on commerce within the Myanmar jade market.

“Expenses are so high here as there are few experts. On top of that, the [Chinese] government stopping loans to [Chi-

nese] jade buyers has completely closed up the market.” said gem dealer U Zaw Zaw.

The domestic jade market used to comprise roughly 700 hundred companies, but those involved in the jade business say that figure has fallen to a mere 50 companies.

Uncut Myanmar jade is the primary form bought by China, with 2,500 tonnes being officially mined every month, according to the MGJEA.—*Myitmakah News Agency*

Carlsberg ‘disappointed’ at demands to recall ‘tu-poh’ beer

CARLSBERG announced yesterday that the company is disappointed that the family of the late composer Myoma Nyein still feels it is necessary to pursue legal action against its use of the phrase ‘tu-poh’ in its branding.

The statement comes after the announcement from a family of the well-known Myanmar composer that they will sue the Carlsberg Group for the latter’s failure to set a date for recalling its products bearing the phrase on its branding material for Tuborg beer in Myanmar.

“The phrase ‘tu-poh’ was used in good faith by Carls-

berg, whose creative intent was to convey a message of fun and music, which is what Tuborg stands for globally,” said the statement.

In the statement, the Denmark-based Carlsberg Group operating in Myanmar said it hoped that the family would reconsider and choose to continue the dialogue with them to find a satisfactory resolution to the dispute.

Carlsberg has already announced that it will discontinue the use of the phrase in its branding material for Tuborg beer in Myanmar following an announcement from a grandson

of Myoma Nyein that he will sue the Carlsberg Group for using the phrase.

The family of the late composer held its second press conference in Mandalay yesterday to make the announcement.

Myoma Nyein coined the phrase ‘tu-poh’ to represent Myanmar’s traditional Thingyan Festival. The Denmark-based Carlsberg Group operates in Myanmar through a joint venture with local partner Myanmar Golden Star. It officially opened its factory in Bago last year, where it brews Tuborg beer and its flagship product Carlsberg beer.—*Aung Thant Khaing*

Trade deficit hit \$450.87 million in January

THE Central Statistical Organisation announced Thursday that Myanmar’s trade deficit for the 2015-2016 fiscal year hit US\$450.87 million in January 2016.

The total value of Myanmar’s exports amounted to \$859.39 million, including \$412.64 million in overland

exports, while imports were valued at \$1.31 billion, including \$211.79 million in overland imports.

According to the organisation, Myanmar had a trade deficit of \$4.81 billion during the period from April to January of this fiscal year.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Huawei’s HAINA programmes launched in Myanmar

HAINA programme (Huawei Authorized Information and Network Academy) has been launched at Thanlyin Technological University organised by the Ministry of Science and Technology and Huawei, a Chinese smart phone manufacturing company.

The programme is mainly aimed at developing Myanmar’s ICT sector by providing mobile technology trainings and certification courses to ICT students.

HAINA is a not for profit partnership program that authorizes universities and colleges to deliver Huawei Certification courses to their students. The

students who graduate from the HAINA program are encouraged to attain Huawei Certification in support of a subsequent career in the ICT industry.

This is part of the ICT development scheme contained in the agreement signed by the Chinese mobile manufacturer and the ministry on 14 November 2014.

As part of the programme, Huawei provided both its special curricula and electronic devices to fully support the learners.

This is the 147th time Huawei has conducted the programme in 20 countries and has held over 5,000 students worldwide.—*Thon Wathan*

River rock depreciates in value by fifty per cent as construction enterprises stopped

THE halting of government funded construction enterprises in Rakhine State has caused the price of river rock used for road building to fall in value by as much as fifty per cent.

A hundred cubic feet of rock sourced from the Lay river and delivered to the side of the Yangon – Sittwe highway during 2015 would cost between K65,000-K75,000, while the price in the month of January this year saw the same volume fetch just K50,000, according to Mrauk U district dredgers.

“The regional government isn’t handing out further contracts to construction contractors as the government budget is in a period of transition. Contractors will only be issued with work once the new government officially begins. The halting of current construction enterprises on roads, bridges and buildings, which use rock from the Lay river has caused the depreciation in its value,” said U San Htway Aung, the

owner of a dredging machine on the Lay river.

Local dredgers have made it known that the price of a hundred cubic feet of rock loaded on to a motorboat on the Lay river fetched a meagre K8,000 in February, down from K15,000 for the same quantity a month prior in January.

“We’re having to continue our trade because we don’t want business to come to an end. With worker and engine fuel expenses to consider, we aren’t left with any profit. Construction enterprise could return to life once the next government comes to office.” continued U San Htway Aung.

Since the geological topography of mountain terrain in Rakhine State is composed of soft sedimentary rock and soil, the main types of matured rock used in construction are primarily sourced from the rivers of Myaybon and Kan Htauk Gyi townships as well as the edge of the Lay river.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Aftershocks rock Indonesia after massive quake, calls for calm



A civil service police officer walks on the roof of a building used as tsunami evacuation centre, a day after a 7.8 magnitude quake struck far out at sea near Padang, West Sumatra Province, Indonesia on 3 March 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

PADANG, (Indonesia) — Strong aftershocks rocked Indonesia early yesterday after a massive undersea earthquake sparked fears of a region-wide disaster similar to the 2004 Indian Ocean quake and tsunami that killed more than 200,000 people.

There were no reports of deaths or damage to buildings from Wednesday night's 7.8 magnitude quake, which caused panic in the Sumatran island port of Padang as people tried to reach higher ground when a tsunami warning was issued. No tsunami occurred.

Daily life resumed as normal

at daybreak in Padang, a city of around 1 million people, and there were few visible signs of damage.

The National Meteorological Agency said there were six aftershocks during the night, but called for calm as they were diminishing in strength.

"We do not believe that there will be an earthquake of greater strength," it said on its Twitter account. "And so residents are urged to keep calm and not be taken in by rumours."

Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, spokesman for the National Disaster Mitigation Agency said there

had been no tsunami, casualties or damage along the coast, and people had returned to their homes.

Fears ran high on Wednesday evening when it was reported that the tremor had measured 8.2 and authorities issued evacuation alerts on loudspeakers, radio and TV. Patients at hospitals in Padang were evacuated and there were traffic jams as panicking residents tried to leave.

However, the US Geological Survey (USGS) revised the magnitude down to 7.8 and within two hours of the quake striking the tsunami warnings were cancelled. USGS said the epicentre was 808 km (502 miles) southwest of Padang.

"The traffic jams were caused by the fact that there are not enough evacuation routes or shelters at this point," said Zulfitri, the head of disaster management agency in Padang, adding that shelters could only hold around 200,000 people in a city of nearly 1 million.

"But the situation has improved from previous years. People have started to understand how to evacuate safely." Indonesia, especially Aceh on the northwest tip of Sumatra, was badly hit by the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004.—Reuters

Australia to test debris found two years after Malaysian jet disappeared

SYDNEY — A piece of debris found off the southeast African coast that could be from a missing Malaysia Airlines flight is being sent to Australia for testing, officials said yesterday, two years after the plane carrying 239 people disappeared.

A white, meter-long chunk of metal was found off the coast of Mozambique in southeast Africa earlier this week by a US adventurer who has been carrying out an independent search for Malaysia Airlines flight MH370.

The debris will be tested by officials in Australia, with help from Malaysian authorities and representatives of manufacturer Boeing Co (BA.N).

"It is too early to speculate on the origin of the debris at this stage," Australian Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Darren Chester told parliament.

However, the piece was found in "a location consistent with drift modeling commissioned by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau", he said.

Chester's comments added to a fresh sense of optimism after Malaysia's transport minister, Liow Tiong Lai, said on Wednesday there was a "high

possibility" the metal chunk found off Mozambique belonged to a 777 jet, the same type of aircraft as MH370.

Flight MH370 disappeared on 8 March 2014, with 239 passengers and crew on board shortly after taking off from Kuala Lumpur bound for Beijing.

It is believed to have crashed in the Indian Ocean and an initial search of a 60,000 sq km (23,000 sq miles) area of sea floor has been extended to another 60,000 sq km.

A piece of the plane's wing washed up on the French Indian Ocean island of Reunion, on the other side of Madagascar, in July 2015 but no further trace has been found since. That piece is being held by French authorities.

The analysis of the piece found between Mozambique and Madagascar would be the first carried out by Australian-led crash investigators.

The Joint Agency Coordination Centre, set up in Australia to coordinate the search, "will examine the characteristics of the debris to confirm that it comes from an aircraft and to establish its origin", the agency said in an email.—Reuters

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North Korea fires projectiles after new UN sanctions



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (2nd R) visits Taeseung machinery factory in this undated photo released by North Korea's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) in Pyongyang on 2 March 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

SEOUL — North Korea fired several short-range projectiles into the sea yesterday, hours after the United Nations' Security Council voted to impose tough new sanctions on the isolated state and South Korean President Park Geun-hye vowed to "end tyranny" by the North's leader. The firing escalated tensions on the Korean peninsula, which have been high since

the North's January nuclear test and February long-range rocket launch, and set the South's military on a heightened alert.

South Korea's Defence Ministry said it was trying to determine if the projectiles, launched at 10am (0100 GMT) from the North's east coast, were short-range missiles or artillery fire.

Park has been tough in her re-

sponse to the North's recent actions, moving from her earlier self-described "trustpolitik" approach, and yesterday welcomed the move by the Security Council and repeated her call for the North to change its behaviour.

"We will cooperate with the world to make the North Korean regime abandon its reckless nuclear development and end tyranny

that oppresses freedom and human rights of our brethren in the North," Park said at a Christian prayer meeting yesterday. Also yesterday, South Korea adopted a long-delayed security law to set up an anti-espionage unit that was passed by parliament late on Wednesday, and another law aimed at improving human rights in North Korea.

Last month, Seoul suspended the operation of a jointly run factory project with the North that had been the rivals' last remaining venue for regular interaction.

In its latest barrage of insults against the South's leader, the North's official media carried a commentary on Wednesday likening Park to an "ugly female bat", fated to "die in the dreary cave, its body hanging down". North Korea faces harsh new sanctions for its nuclear weapons programme under the resolution passed unanimously by the Security Council on Wednesday, drafted by the United States and backed by the North's main ally China. The resolution, which dramatically expands existing sanctions, follows the North's fourth nuclear test on 6 January and a long-range rocket launch on 7 February, which the United States and South Korea said violated existing Security Council resolutions.—Reuters

Call for government unity as Australian PM faces critical budget, election

SYDNEY — Australia's deputy leader called for government unity yesterday as Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull's polls plummet amid party divisions and ahead of a critical budget and looming election later this year.

Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce said the honeymoon was over for Turnbull, who became leader in a party room coup in late 2015 and is now under pressure on several policy fronts and facing party instability blamed on the man he toppled, former prime minister Tony Abbott.

"I think we've got to all get to get together as one, we've got to go to the election unified there will be an election this year," Joyce told reporters in Canberra.

"Quite obviously honeymoons don't go on forever," Joyce said of Turnbull's leadership.

Turnbull's conservative Liberal government was on course

to for an easy election victory, but polls have tightened in early 2016 and a tie with opposition Labor is a now possibility according to a Newspoll last week.

Turnbull's ascension last September was seen as possibly ending an era of political instability in Australia, with five prime ministers in eight years.

But political analysts say the multi-millionaire former tech entrepreneur needs a decisive election victory to quell ongoing disension within his Liberal party.

An election is due by January 2017, but Turnbull who does not control the upper house Senate has hinted he may go to the polls early, within five months, in the hope a new Senate will present an easier path for legislation.

Critical for an election victory is Turnbull's first budget due in May, but the end of a decades-plus mining boom in resource-rich Australia and plum-

meting commodity prices has left the government struggling to raise revenue.

In December, Australia forecast its budget deficit would swell to A\$37.4 billion (\$27.32 billion) in the year to June.

Government spending has increasingly become an area of division within Turnbull's Liberal party. He has been forced to rule out changes to several revenue raising policies, including negative gearing, which allows property investors to write off losses against taxable income, and a rise in a consumption tax.

The right wing of Turnbull's government, with rival Abbott as its de facto leader, maintains a need to reduce spending, amid a so-called "budget emergency".

"Abbott seems intent on undermining Turnbull," said John Uhr, Director, Centre for the Study of Australian Politics, Australian National University. —Reuters

New US blacklist targets North Korea leader Kim Jong Un's No 2

SEOUL — The United States blacklisted North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's right-hand man yesterday, after UN Security Council voted unanimously to impose harsh new sanctions on the isolated state over its nuclear weapons programme.

Hwang Pyong So, vice chairman of the North's powerful National Defence Commission headed by Kim, was one of several officials added to a list of Specially Designated Nationals by the US Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control.

Hwang, who holds the rank of Vice-Marshal in the North Korean army, heads its General Political Bureau, often seen as the most powerful position in the military after Kim, who is the supreme commander.

North Korea faces tough new sanctions for its nuclear weapons programme under the resolution passed unanimous-

ly by the Security Council on Wednesday, drafted by the United States and backed by the North's main ally China.

The US Treasury added Hwang to its list along with 16 individuals who are now subject to a travel ban and asset freeze. The measures are also designed to block US nationals from dealing with them.

It also added O Kuk Ryol, one of a geriatric trio said to be behind North Korea's nuclear weapons programme.

Hwang, who is in his mid-60s, is a close confidant of Kim Jong Un and has had an unprecedented rise to the top rungs of North Korea's leadership in the space of a few years.

He was associated with Kim in the late 2000s when the young man was first named in state media reports announcing his party and military credentials.—Reuters

Japan's nuclear refugees face bleak return five years after Fukushima



Tokuo Hayakawa, a 76-year-old Buddhist priest who returned to his 600-year-old family temple in Naraha in September 2015 when the evacuation order was lifted, shows photos of his grandson as he speaks to Reuters at his temple in Naraha, Fukushima prefecture, Japan, on 11 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

NARAH A — Tokuo Hayakawa carries a dosimeter around with him at his 600-year-old temple in Naraha, the first town in the Fukushima "exclusion zone" to fully reopen since Japan's March 2011 catastrophe. Badges declaring "No to nuclear power" adorn his black Buddhist robe.

Hayakawa is one of the few residents to return to this agricultural town since it began welcoming back nuclear refugees five months ago.

The town, at the edge of a 20-km (12.5 mile) evacuation zone around the crippled Fukushima Daiichi plant, was supposed to be a model of reconstruction.

Five years ago, one of the biggest earthquakes in history shook the country's northeast. The 10-metre (33-foot) tsunami it spawned smashed into the power plant on the Fukushima coastline

triggering a meltdown and forcing nearby towns to evacuate. The disaster killed over 19,000 people across Japan and caused an estimated 16.9 trillion yen (£105.7 billion) in damages.

Only 440 of Naraha's pre-disaster population 8,042 have returned — nearly 70 per cent of them over 60.

"This region will definitely go extinct," said the 76-year-old Hayakawa. He says he can't grow food because he fears the rice paddies are still contaminated. Large plastic bags filled with radioactive topsoil and detritus dot the abandoned fields.

With few rituals to perform at the temple, Hayakawa devotes his energies campaigning against nuclear power in Japan. Its 54 reactors supplied over 30 per cent of the nation's energy needs before the disaster. Today, only three

units are back in operation after a long shutdown following the nuclear meltdown in Fukushima. Others are looking to restart.

"I can't tell my grandson to be my heir," said Hayakawa, pointing at a photo of his now-teenaged grandson entering the temple in a full protective suit after the disaster.

"Reviving this town is impossible," he said. "I came back to see it to its death."

That is bound to disappoint Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Rebuilding Naraha and other towns in the devastated northeast, he says, is crucial to reviving Japan.

Tokyo pledged 26.3 trillion yen over five years to rebuild the disaster area and will allocate another 6 trillion for the next five years.

More than 160,000 people were evacuated from towns around the Daiichi nuclear plant. Around 10 per cent still live in temporary housing across Fukushima prefecture. Most have settled outside their hometowns and have begun new lives.

In Naraha, two restaurants, a supermarket and a post office, housed in prefabricated shacks, make up the town's main shopping centre. The restaurants close at 3pm.

No children were in sight at Naraha's main park overlooking the Pacific Ocean on a recent morning. Several elderly residents were at the boardwalk gazing at hundreds of bags stuffed with radioactive waste.—Reuters



North Korea's Hwang Pyong So (L), a senior aide North Korea's supreme leader Kim Jong Un, attends the closing ceremony of the 17th Asian Games at the Incheon Asiad Main Stadium, in 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

Rahul Gandhi says Indian gov't to take call on release of former PM Rajiv Gandhi's killers

NEW DELHI — India's main opposition Congress party's second-in-command and Nehru-Gandhi scion Rahul Gandhi yesterday said that the country's government has to decide on whether to release from jail the killers of his father and former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

"The ball is in the central government's court. The government has to decide," Gandhi said in the wake of the government of the southern state of Tamil Nadu's decision to release all seven convicts in the case, who are currently serving life terms in a jail there.

The Tamil Nadu government has recently written to the central government for their release and the Congress party has already said it would oppose the decision to release their for-

mer leader's killers from jail. "They should not be released," Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge told the media on the issue of Rajiv Gandhi's killers release.

The seven convicted killers — V Sriharan, T Suthendraraja, AG Perarivalan, Jayakumar, Robert Payas, Ravichandran and Nalini — have already spent over 24 years in jail and they have petitioned the High Court in state capital Chennai as well as the Tamil Nadu government for their release.

Rajiv Gandhi, who became youngest Prime Minister after her mother Indira Gandhi's assassination, was killed by suicide bombers of erstwhile Sri Lanka-based Tamil Tigers at a public meeting in May 1991 at Sriperumbudur, a village some 40 km from Chennai.—Xinhua

OPINION

Look no further

Kyaw Thura

A CONSTITUTION is regarded as the life-blood and the foundation of a country, former Chief Justice U Aung Toe said in the foreword for his book “Comparative Studies: the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar 2008”, published in August 2009.

The chief justice warned that a constitution has the potential to guarantee full democratic rights to individual citizens as well as fetter their freedom.

He also encouraged public involvement in the process of constitutional amendment together with elected representatives in the parliament, stressing that nobody has a divine right to exclude the public's will, suggestions or submissions from the constitution. The writing of the constitution should maintain its focus on the needs and interests of all communities, he wrote in his foreword, calling on the entire people to take bold steps in deciding the destiny of the nation.

True to the former chief justice's words, no constitution that goes against the public will has ever survived, according to a group of researchers who conducted comparative studies on the country's successive constitutions. An unpopular constitution is liable to harm national solidarity and leave the people on incomes below the poverty line, the researchers posit.

Despite constitutional setbacks, there are oppor-

tunities for all of us to further deepen our understanding of the true political nature of the country and adopt policies that are best suited to our traditions and cultures. Only then will we be able to enjoy peace and prosperity. With our destination in sight, we need look no further.

Write for us

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

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

The Brief History of the Urittaw-dhat Sutaungpyi Ceti (The Buddha's Skull Relic Wish-fulfilled Pagoda)

Dr. Saw Mra Aung

THE Urittaw-dhat Sutaungpyi Ceti, better known as the Warittawdhat Ceti in Rakhine State, is situated gracefully on a hill on the western bank of the Kalandan River in Ponnargyun Township some twenty miles to the north of Sit-twe. This gilded pagoda with a panoramic view of grey mountain ranges rolling far in the distance as the background and Siberian-geese, seasonal migratory birds and wild ducks hovering over the wide expanse of blue water flapping their wings and uninterrupted fresh air coming from the direction of the Bay of Bengal as the fore-ground will offer inexpressible freshness and happiness to a holiday-makers cruising down the Kaladan River. Surely, he will be lost in the breath-taking beauty of the scenery! Here, I am reminded of a piece of an ancient Rakhine lullaby.....

“Warittaw Ceti round and shapely

Its top gilded so beautifully
And when does my sonny visit it
on which day of the week?”

The origin of this ancient pagoda is closely associated with

the visit of the Gotama Buddha to Dhannavati Rakhine Kingdom over 2500 years ago. The following account, it is hoped, will vividly give a nostalgic history of the pagoda.

While King Candasuriya was ruling over Dhannavati Rakhine Kingdom, the Buddha was enlightened in Majjhimadesa and preached the Dhamma to human beings, Devas and Brahmas. When the king heard that news, he was filled with a burning desire to pay homage to the Buddha. So, making the devotional offering of incense, oil-lamps, pennants, umbrellas, bent bamboo-sticks tied to flag-staffs, pure cold water and pop-corns at a holy place in the golden palace, he, through mind, invited the Buddha respectfully to visit Dhannavati personally.

When the Buddha, from the Jetavana Monastery, surveyed the world through Sabbannutanana (Knowledge of Seeing Everything), saw thus, “If I do not visit Dhannavati, the king will die to no purpose. If, however, the king and the people have a chance to see me, welfare and auspiciousness will accrue to them. The Sasana (Dispensation) I am to leave behind in this land

on my behalf will endure for a long time. Many people from different walks of life will take refuge in the Triple Gem.” For these three reasons, the Buddha, accompanied by 500 disciples, journeyed to Dhannavati through the sky in 500 celestial chariots decorated with a tiered roof in the year 123 Maha Era (554 B.C). He came down and took his stand at the top of the Selagiri Kyauk Taw Hill located to the west of Dhannavati city and on the eastern bank of the Gacchapanadi River. Standing there, he prophesied the places where his bodily relics were to be enshrined in the future. In doing so, he prophesied that his skull relic would be enshrined in a pagoda at the top of Selapitthi Urittaw Hill and that it would become known as Urittaw Ceti (the Buddha's Skull Relic Pagoda) later.

After the Buddha's Parinibbana (Demise), King Siridhammasoka, ruler of Pataliputta in Majjhimadesa, entreated two Arahats Ven. Mahatissa and Ven. Bakula to offer the bodily relics of the Buddha to Rakhine King Suriyasakka. King Suriyasakka and his consort Rucita, on the 1st waning day of Tazaungmon, in the year 222 Sasana Era, built at

the top of Selapitthi Hill a pagoda which had a bull's height (six cubits) and 20 fathoms in circumference at the base.

Then, while Rakhine King Min Phalaung on his march to the West Bengal, was staying the night near the mouth of Kim Creek, he saw mysteriously brilliant rays radiating and moving to and fro between Selapitthi Hill and Salamaya Hill. Deeply impressed with this miracle, he vowed that if he won a victory during the march to the west, he would reconstruct and renovate the pagoda and serve as the donor. Therefore, when he returned victorious, he, in the year 941 Rakhine Era, built at the top of Selapitthi Hill a pagoda entirely of brown rock which had the height of 153 feet (100 cubits) and was 401 feet (80 fathoms) in circumference at the base for twelve years. The construction work of the pagoda was completed in the year 953 Rakhine Era (1591 A.D)

In this pagoda were enshrined the Buddha's skull relic, slabs on which the Tipitakas were inscribed, relics of Chief Disciples (Aggasavakas), Great Disciples (Mahasavakas) and Ordinary Disciples (Pakatisavakas)

and a ruby worth a country held dear as her own off-spring by consort Soe -Me Kyi. Then, the King Min Phalaung vowed thus, “If I would definitely become the Buddha, let holy water come out from underneath the earth. Instantly did the holy water roll out. Until now, the monks and lay people who come to this pagoda on a pilgrimage can drink the holy water from this Adhitthana well (the well resulted in by the resolution of King Min Phalaung).

Rakhine kings of successive periods had restored and renovated this pagoda from generation to generation. Currently, the responsible personnel from the State, Buddhist monks and lay people continue the renovation work, lavishing generous donations. The current trustee is conducting such works as gluing golden leaves to the pagoda from the top to the bottom, reconstructing prayer-halls on the terrace, building miniature surrounding stupas, paving the entire terrace with Nepukhan limestone slabs and constructing and maintaining the Uritmangala Belay Bridge linking the Urittaw Pagoda with Ponnargyun Township on the self-reliant base.

Ensure birth-defects free life for all new-born babies

Dr. Poonam

WORLD Birth Defects Day on 3 March comes amid the global spotlight on Zika virus disease and its strongly suspected causal relation with clusters of microcephaly and other neurological abnormalities. Microcephaly is one of many birth defects. Globally, 1 in 33 new-borns have birth defects and an estimated 276 000 babies die within the first month as a result of them. Yet, birth defects remain under-recognized.

The most common birth defects in WHO South-East Asia Region are heart defects, neural tube

defects and Down's syndrome, with the most severe defects occurring in middle and low resource settings. Birth defects are a major cause of still-births and neonatal mortality. Those who survive birth defects often suffer long-term disability. These deaths and life-long sufferings cause untold miseries to individuals and families, and have negative socio-economic consequences.

Birth defects can be genetic, infectious, nutritional or environmental in origin. Creating awareness among the public on the causes of birth defects and empowering them to take preventive measures

is an important step to reducing their prevalence. Many birth defects can be prevented by taking appropriate measures before and during pregnancy. Timely and cost effective measures can help prevent deaths and cure or minimize the effects of birth defects. Rubella vaccination, adequate intake of folic acid, iodine through fortification of staple foods and salt or supplements, and adequate antenatal care are keys steps for prevention of birth defects.

Simultaneously, making quality health care services available to provide early care for children born with birth defects can go a long

way in reducing their burden.

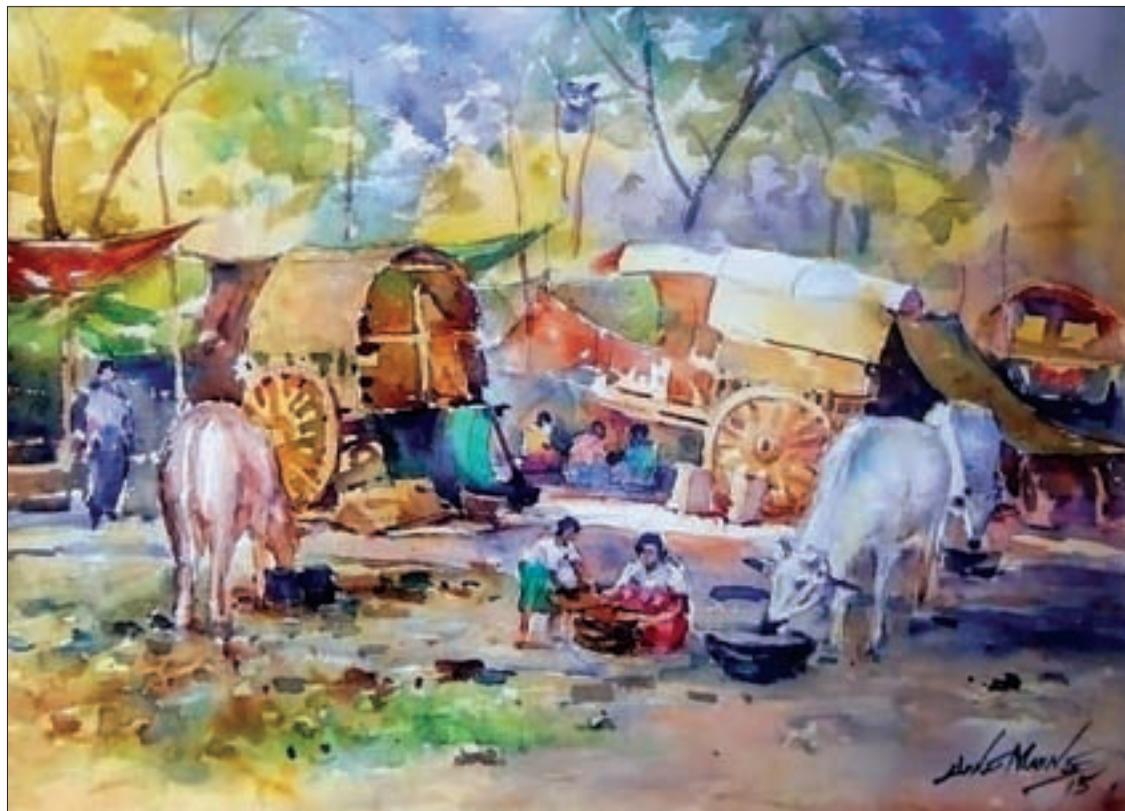
In 2010, the World Health Assembly adopted a resolution on birth defects calling all countries to promote primary prevention and improve the health of children with congenital anomalies.

Focusing efforts in this area in the South-East Asia Region, WHO has established a web-based new-born and birth defect (NBBDD) surveillance network in 150 hospitals in 8 countries with the support of the CDC-USA. In view of WHO declaring clusters of microcephaly in Latin America as Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 1 February, an online sys-

tem has been added to the NBBDD network to report on head circumference in all births. This is to monitor the occurrence of microcephaly in the South-East Asia Region.

The World Birth Defects Day, initiated by global health organizations last year, is aimed at creating awareness on birth defects which continues to be an important cause of childhood death, chronic illness and disability in many countries. The day is a reminder to all of us to further commit our efforts towards ensuring a healthy and birth-defects free life for every new-born.

Solo event aims to promote public interest in transparent watercolour



A painting from Chindwin Yaykyi artist's exhibition seen. PHOTO: MYO WIN TUN

A SOLO art exhibition of Chindwin Yaykyi artist Aung Maung will be held in Mandalay in mid-March with the aim of promoting public interest in transparent watercolour paints.

The event will run from 13 to 17 March at the Mandalay Hill Art Gallery, featuring 50 original artworks created by the artist after his last solo show in Mandalay last March.

This is will be the 14th solo exhibition for the Monywa-based artist, who entered the art world in 1973.

The subject matter of his work includes natural landscapes and the lifestyles of people living in Myanmar's central dry zone, including Monywa, Mandalay and Bagan.

In cooperation with around a dozen other members of the

Chindwin Yaykyi Transparent Watercolour Group, Aung Maung is known for his depictions of Buddhist temples, including Moehnyin Thanbokeday, Bawditahtaung and Phowintaung, natural landscapes and cultures and customs of rural communities.

The group produces outdoor paintings every Sunday.—*Myo Win Tun*

Vietnamese owned Anawyahta Cruise to sail along Ayeyawady, Chindwin rivers



Anawyahta Cruise seen anchored at a jetty. PHOTO: MIN THIT

ANAWYAHTA Cruise owned by Vietnam-based Heritage Line Co will sail along Ayeyawady River and Chindwin River, the largest tributary of Ayeyarwady, visiting culturally rich destinations that reflect the country's traditions customs and lifestyles of rural people along those rivers.

The cruise will operate its first-ever Yangon-Bagan trip on March 4.

There are numerous cul-

ture-rich zones along Ayeyawady and Chindwin rivers that may attract greater interest from international tourists. That is the main reason for the company making investment in the country's tourism industry, said Maarten Perdok, managing director of Heritage Line Co.

Since 2014, the four-storey cruise named "Anawyahta" has been built in Vietnam. It is 213 feet long and has 23 rooms which

can allow up to 46 passengers per trip. The cruise arrived Myanmar in last July in order to expand its luxury cruise service business within the country, planning to operate Yangon-Bagan-Yangon trip, Yangon-Mandalay-Yangon trip, Bagan-Mandalay-Bagan, Mandalay-Homalin-Bagan and Mandalay-Katha trip.

The heritage Line Co initiated its cruise services in 2009 along Megkong River.—*Thi Thi Min*

YUDE seeks to join OU6

A PROFESSOR from the Yangon University of Distance Education (YUDE) read out a paper at the university yesterday, sharing her experiences on making efforts for the university to join the Five Open Universities (OU5) in five ASEAN nations.

Professor Dr Thazin Lwin of the YUDE, who participated in the meeting of the OU5 in Indonesia recently, clarified her achievements at the meeting, including signing agreements for teaching and research cooperation between the YUDE and the OU5, eyeing to join the group, making

it the OU6. The OU5 is comprises the Universitas Terbuka (UT) in Indonesia, the Philippines Open University (UPOU), Sukhothai University (UPOU) in Thailand, the Open University of Malaysia and Hanoi Open University in Vietnam.

"Working together with the OU5 will promote cooperation in teaching and research among distance universities in ASEAN countries and will assist in promoting the distance education system in Myanmar," Prof Dr Thazin Lwin said.—*Saw Thein Win*



Prof Dr Thazin Lwin. PHOTO: SAW THEIN WIN

Blood donors receive free Hepatitis B vaccinations

MORE than 1,000 blood donors in Thaton Township, Mon State, recently joined the hepatitis B immunisation programme organised by Thaton-based Ahniemae Myitta Blood and Oxygen Services Organisation.

The philanthropic organisation injected around 1,200 people with hepatitis B vaccines with the aim of protecting them from the infectious diseases as well as promoting blood dona-

tions in the region.

Hepatitis B is the most common causes of liver disease in the world. One in 12 people are infected with viral hepatitis, which kills nearly 4,000 people each day worldwide.

Infection with the Hepatitis B virus can lead to chronic liver infections that can be transmitted through contact with the blood or bodily fluids of an infected person.—*Thet Oo*



Blood donors receiving Hepatitis B vaccinations. PHOTO: THET OO



US presidential candidate former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton addresses Hillary for America rally in New York, on 2 March. PHOTO: REUTERS

US gives immunity to State Department staffer who set up Clinton email server

WASHINGTON — The US Justice Department has given immunity from prosecution to a State Department employee who helped set up and manage the private email server Hillary Clinton used for her work as secretary of state, the *Washington Post* reported on Wednesday.

A senior US law enforcement official said the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) had secured the cooperation of Bryan Pagliano, who worked on Clinton's 2008 presidential campaign before joining the State Department with her and setting up the server in her New York home in 2009, the newspaper reported.

The *Post* described the investigation as a criminal inquiry, a label Clinton and her staff have resisted as they seek to reassure voters that the frontrunner to become the Democratic Party's nominee in November's presidential election is not in legal jeopardy.

Clinton has said she did nothing wrong and that she be-

lieves the US government will vindicate her. She has also apologised for what she said was poor judgement.

In 2014, Clinton returned about 30,000 emails to the State Department, but said she "chose not to keep" thousands of others her staff deemed not to be work-related. Her staff have acknowledged that other work emails were not handed over, without explaining why.

More than 2,000 of Clinton's work emails contain classified information that could harm national security if exposed, according to the State Department, including 22 classified as 'top secret', the highest level. The government forbids sending or storing classified emails through unsecured, non-government channels, and has prosecuted people for breaches. Brian Fallon, a Clinton spokesman, said in a statement that Clinton's campaign was "pleased" that Pagliano was cooperating.

The Justice Department and

FBI declined to comment on whether Pagliano had been granted immunity, and his lawyer did not respond to questions.

Last month, a federal judge overseeing a civil lawsuit against the State Department ruled that department officials and aides to Clinton could be questioned under oath about whether her use of a private email system was an effort to skirt open records laws.

The FBI is likely to ask Clinton and her aides in coming months how the server was set up and whether they knew they were sending classified information in emails, the *Post* reported.

Pagliano has declined to testify to lawmakers, citing a constitutional right against self-incrimination. Republicans have called for Clinton's prosecution. "This terrible error in judgement coupled with Clinton's arrogant and dishonest claims shows she can't be trusted with the presidency," Reince Priebus, the Republican National Committee's chairman, said in a statement.—*Reuters*

EU launches emergency refugee aid scheme for Greece

BRUSSELS — The European Union, faced with a growing refugee crisis in Greece, launched a new aid programme on Wednesday worth an initial 700 million euros that mirrors the kind of disaster relief it offers developing nations.

European states have tightened border controls following the arrival of more than a million migrants by sea last year and the Athens government has appealed for help to house and care for tens of thousands still arriving and now stranded in Greece.

"We are ... really worried," European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said of the build-up of migrants on the now-closed Macedonian border, adding that the new plan had been prompted by fears of "a huge humanitarian crisis in Greece".

The Commission's proposal, if approved, will channel 300 million euros (\$325 million) this year from its 155 billion euro annual budget to the new emergency assistance scheme and 200 million euros both next year and in 2018.

Officials stress that the program will not divert funds from the EU's 1.1 billion euro annual budget allocated to helping the world's poorest. Relieving the suffering of refugees closer to their homes is a key part of an EU strategy to deter people from making dangerous journeys to Europe, they say. More than 400 people have died or gone missing in the Mediterranean this year as they tried to reach Europe, most of them on the short but perilous crossing from Turkey to Greece.

Turkey is at the heart of the

EU's efforts to slow the influx of refugees and migrants and the bloc wants Ankara to ensure that daily arrivals fall below 1,000 from 2,000-3,000 at present.

Two officials told Reuters that Germany, the principal destination for those arriving in Europe, is looking for flows to be "in the realm of three digits, not four" per day. Should that happen, Berlin would start taking refugees directly from Turkey for resettlement - an attempt to promote legal migration rather than continuing the chaotic influx of 2015.

The new EU money, to be spent in conjunction with the United Nations and charities working in Greece and other EU states, will help to fund shelter, medical aid and other basic services.—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

If Britain leaves EU, France will let migrants go to Britain

EDINBURGH — If Britain votes to leave the European Union in a June referendum, France will allow migrants to move to Britain by ending border controls and roll out a red carpet for bankers fleeing London, French Economy Minister Emmanuel Macron said.

"The day this relationship unravels, migrants will no longer be in Calais and the financial passport would work less well," Macron told the *Financial Times* ahead of an Anglo-French security summit.

Macron added that obstacles to bilateral trade could also be created, while an agreement which allows Britain to carry out border controls to withhold unwanted migrants on the French side of the Channel could also dissolve.—*Reuters*

Dozens died, missing in Angolan flash-flood

LUANDA — At least 24 people, many of them children, died and dozens were missing in Angola after a flash-flood swept through a market in the southern city of Lubango, state media said yesterday.

The Angop news agency said flood-waters from the Capitaio river, swollen by nearly 24 hours of torrential rain in the area, washed through the market, where many young Angolans congregated to wash cars and bicycles.

More than 30 people were believed to be missing, Angop said.

As with much of southern Africa, southern Angola has been suffering one of its worst droughts in memory caused by a strong El Niño weather pattern in the Pacific Ocean.—*Reuters*

Armed women attack police headquarters in Istanbul

ISTANBUL — Two armed women attacked a riot police headquarters in Istanbul yesterday with hand grenades, Turkish media reported.

According to Haberturk daily, the attackers threw hand grenades at police officers who were patrolling outside the headquarters in the district of Bayrampasa.

One attacker was reportedly wounded, the Haberturk said, adding the police have chased them into a building.—*Xinhua*

UN official says at least 50,000 died in South Sudan war

UNITED NATIONS — At least 50,000 people have been killed in South Sudan's two-year civil war, a senior United Nations official said on Wednesday, a five-fold increase in the death toll given by humanitarian agencies in the early months of the conflict.

A political dispute between President Salva Kiir and his former deputy, Riek Machar, sparked the war in December 2013, which has reopened ethnic fault lines between Kiir's Dinka and Machar's Nuer people.

"Fifty thousand killed, maybe more, 2.2 million refugees and displaced, famine coming and looming in just a few months," the senior official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told a small group of reporters. He added that he saw little prospect of implementing an August peace deal.—*Reuters*

49 Indian fishermen released by Iran reach home

NEW DELHI — Some 49 Indian fishermen released by Iran reached this country yesterday, a senior official said.

"The fishermen, arrested by the Iranian Coast Guard last year for venturing into the Islamic Republic's territorial waters, were released, following intervention of the Indian government," he said, on condition of anonymity.

He added: "The 44 fishermen reached the southern state of Tamil Nadu's capital Chennai in the morning and were greeted by their family."

One of the released fishermen thanked both the central government and state government of Tamil Nadu for their efforts.

"We were arrested and kept in jail for months. Now that we have been released, we feel very happy about this. We thank both the central and the state governments for their efforts to get us out," Jegan Joseph told the media.—*Xinhua*

Syrian opposition casts doubt on UN peace talk plan

BEIRUT — Syrian rebels said on Wednesday they were under fierce government attack near the Turkish border despite a cessation of hostilities agreement and a representative cast doubt on whether UN-backed peace talks would go ahead on 9 March as planned.

The agreement drawn up by the United States and Russia came into effect on Saturday and has slowed but not entirely stopped a conflict that has been going on for almost five years. Both the government and rebels have accused each other of violations.

The agreement does not include Islamic State or al Qaeda's Nusra Front, which is widely deployed in opposition areas.

The United Nations said on Tuesday a new attempt at peace talks would begin on 9 March in Geneva, urging warring sides to ensure the cessation agreement take hold to allow them to come to the table.

But opposition official George Sabra said the date for

a resumption of talks remained "hypothetical" as long as the truce did not fulfil humanitarian demands including a release of detainees held by the government.

"What is the value of a truce if its overseers — meaning America and Russia — do not push all sides to abide by it?" Sabra told Arabic news channel Arabiya al-Hadath on Wednesday.

The White House said it had seen a reduction in air strikes against the opposition and civilians in Syria in recent days but was concerned by some reported tank and artillery attacks.

Washington was also aware of reports of possible chemical weapons use by the Syrian government, the State Department said, adding that it could not confirm them but that they were being investigated. Israel said on Tuesday Syrian forces had been dropping chlorine barrels on civilians over the past few days.

There was no immediate comment from Damascus, which



A damaged vehicle is seen in the rebel-controlled area of Jobar, a suburb of Damascus, Syria on 2 March. PHOTO: REUTERS

has denied breaching the terms of the truce.

The opposition is pressing for full humanitarian access to rebel-held areas and for detainees to be released — terms set out in a UN Security Council resolution passed in December. Opposition officials say an increase in aid access has fallen short of what is required. A senior US official said Washington was working with Moscow to improve access to besieged areas and the World Health Organisation said it had delivered medical supplies to the

besieged town of Mouadamiya on Wednesday, after reporting some medicines had been removed from a previous aid delivery.

President Bashar al-Assad said in an interview broadcast on Tuesday that insurgents had breached the deal from day one, and the Syrian army was refraining from responding to give a chance for the agreement to last, warning that there "are limits".

Five months of Russian air strikes have turned the momentum Assad's way in the war that has killed more than 250,000 people

and created refugee crises in neighboring states and Europe.

Antony Blinken, deputy US Secretary of State, said in Geneva that major and regional powers were monitoring the cessation of hostilities to "prevent any escalation" but it was a "challenging process".

"The best possible thing that could happen is for the cessation of hostilities to really take root, and to be sustained, for the humanitarian assistance to flow and then for the negotiations to start," he said. —Reuters

Nanny who beheaded Russian child says it was revenge for Putin's Syria strikes

MOSCOW — A woman suspected of beheading a child in her care before brandishing the severed head outside a Moscow metro station has said she acted to avenge Muslims killed in the Kremlin's campaign of air strikes in Syria.

In video footage posted online yesterday and circulated by several prominent bloggers, the woman, 38-year-old Gulchekhra Bobokulova of Muslim-majority Uzbekistan, gave her first detailed explanation of an incident which state TV channels chose not to report.

"I took revenge against those who spilled blood," Bobokulova told someone asking her questions off camera. "Putin spilled blood, planes carried out bombings. Why are Muslims being killed? They also want to live."

It was not clear when the video was filmed, but Bobokulova was wearing the same clothes as during a court appearance on Wednesday.

The Kremlin launched its campaign of air strikes in Syria on 30 September in support of President Bashar al-Assad, an intervention that altered the course of the conflict there.

A Russian passenger plane was blown out of the skies above Egypt on 31 October killing all 224 people onboard. Islamic State said it had carried out the attack in revenge for Russia's Syria campaign.

Police on Monday wrestled to the ground Bobokulova, who had been working as a nanny for a Moscow family, after she wandered around a Moscow street holding the infant's severed head in the air and shouting Islamist slogans.

The child she is suspected of murdering was a 4-year-old girl.

Investigators in what the Russian media have dubbed the case of "the bloody nanny" quickly raised the possibility that Bobokulova was mentally ill. They have not made any mention of suspecting her of any terrorism-related offence.

On Wednesday, she told reporters Allah had ordered her to commit the grisly crime.

In the same video, she said she had wanted to relocate to Syria but had lacked the money to do so.

Russia's Investigative Committee was not immediately available to comment.—Reuters

Gloom deepens over Ukraine peace deal before Paris meeting

BERLIN/PARIS — For months, as progress in implementing the Minsk peace deal for eastern Ukraine stalled, its architects, Germany and France, held out hope that with time and carefully calibrated pressure on Kiev and Moscow, the agreement could be pushed back on track.

But since a joint visit by the German and French foreign ministers to Ukraine's capital last week, a gloomier view has taken hold: that political dysfunction in Kiev has all but doomed the chances of it delivering on its own commitments under the peace agreement.

Against that backdrop and a rise in ceasefire violations in the east, where Ukrainian government forces are faced off against pro-Russian rebels, ministers from Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine meet in Paris yesterday to discuss Minsk.

One of the meeting's main goals is to tackle what is now seen in many European capitals as the biggest hurdle to the peace deal — Kiev's failure to push through an election law for the Donbass region of eastern Ukraine that would set the stage for a vote there by mid-year.

After barely surviving a no-confidence motion last month, Prime Minister Arseny Yatseni-

uk is seen as too weak to deliver. And yet there are few viable alternatives to Yatseniuk.

"At some point you have to ask yourself, how can it go on like this?" a senior German official said of Minsk, which was hammered out a year ago in marathon talks in the Belarus capital between Germany's Angela Merkel, France's Francois Hollande, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The election law was always going to be a tough sell domestically. There is little appetite in Ukraine to give Donbass more autonomy and hold elections there while its soldiers are being killed every week.

"It's all extremely fragile," a senior French official added, stressing the importance of the Paris meeting yesterday.

For now, officials say, the goal is to keep Minsk on life support even if it looks dead.

Were they to openly admit failure, a second German official said, violence could spiral, with pro-Russian separatists running amok and renewing their push for Mariupol, a strategic port city in the east that, if captured by the rebels, could help them carve out a land corridor to Russia-annexed Crimea. "It's a chaotic picture,"

the second German official acknowledged. "From a sequencing point of view you can't get around the fact that the election law needs to be passed. Kiev points to the security situation in the east as an excuse but we have told them it can't be. They need to deliver."

The other big concern is a breakdown of the European Union's consensus on sanctions imposed on Russia over the Ukraine crisis amid an increasingly poisonous atmosphere in the bloc, aggravated by divisions over the refugee crisis. The commander of US troops in Europe, Air-Force General Philip Breedlove, pointed a finger at Russia when he said on Tuesday violence in eastern Ukraine had increased significantly, with 71 attacks in 24 hours and 450 attacks over the past week.

"I believe that Russia will dial up and down the pressure along the line of contact to keep Kiev under pressure to meet their parts of the (Minsk) agreements first," he said. Russia says it is not backing the rebels militarily while the rebels themselves blame Kiev for the violations. The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe says neither side has pulled heavy weapons back as required.—Reuters

US plans naval exercises with India and Japan in Philippine Sea

NEW DELHI — India, the United States and Japan will hold naval exercises in waters off the northern Philippines near the South China Sea this year, the US military said on Wednesday, a move likely to further raise tensions with China.

The announcement comes a day after the United States warned China against militarisation of the South China Sea, where Beijing is locked in a territorial dispute with several countries, saying there would be consequences.

Last year, India and the United States expanded their annual naval drills in the Bay of Bengal to include Japan after a gap of eight years, in a move seen as a response to China's growing assertiveness in the region.

Admiral Harry B. Harris, head of the US Pacific Command, said the naval exercise will be held in the northern Philippine Sea and that Japan will take part.

Freedom of the seas was a fundamental right of all nations, he told a security conference in New Delhi, adding some thinly veiled criticism of Beijing.

"While some countries seek



US Navy and Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force ships steam in formation during their military manoeuvre known as Keen Sword 15 in the sea south of Japan, in 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

to bully smaller nations through intimidation and coercion, I note with admiration India's example of peaceful resolution of disputes with your neighbours in the waters of the Indian Ocean," he said.

Asked about the drills, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said: "We hope

the cooperation of relevant countries will benefit regional peace and security, and not harm the interests of third parties".

Tensions in the South China Sea have risen recently, with the United States and others protesting against Beijing's land reclamations in the Spratly islands, along with the recent

deployment of surface-to-air missiles and fighter jets in the Paracel Islands.

Along with China and the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Viet Nam also have claims on the waters, through which about \$5 trillion in trade is shipped every year.—Reuters

Mexican drug lord Guzman seeks to speed up extradition to US

MEXICO CITY — Captive Mexican drug lord Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman is attempting to accelerate his extradition to the United States in the hope that he will be treated better in prison there, his lawyers said on Wednesday.

Guzman, who has twice escaped from Mexican maximum security prisons, was captured in Mexico in January, six months after his last jailbreak. The Mexican government quickly said it would initiate extradition proceedings for him to the United States.

The world's most notorious drug kingpin undertook legal steps to block his extradition, but his lawyers said he was so fed up with his treatment in Mexico that he was looking to move.

"He asked me to do whatever we could to put a stop to the situation he's in, 'I just want them to let me sleep,' he kept saying and told me 'try to get the quickest extradition possible for me, try and see about speaking to the US government,'" one of the lawyers, Jose Refugio Rodriguez, told local radio.

Guzman has also complained about the amount of communication he is allowed with his family, being excessively cooped up in his cell, and that his cell is too cold, the lawyers said.

A second lawyer, Juan Pablo Badillo, told Reuters by telephone that the process would still take time.

"Since I was able to speak to (Guzman) from 15 February, he said he would analyse how we could start this process. It would definitely need to be subject to an agreement with the United States," Badillo said.—Reuters

UN mulls new measures to combat peacekeeper crimes

UNITED NATIONS — The United Nations is considering new measures to crack down on sexual abuse by peacekeepers, including local prosecutions and registering personal details on blue helmets to make it easier to identify perpetrators, a UN official said on Wednesday.

Over the past year the world body has been hit with numerous allegations of peacekeeper abuse, above all in the Central African

Republic (CAR).

In December an independent review panel accused the United Nations and its agencies of grossly mishandling allegations of child sexual abuse by foreign troops in CAR in 2013 and 2014.

One of the problems, human rights groups say, is that it is up to UN troop-contributing countries to prosecute their soldiers accused of abuse. When such prosecutions happen, the groups say, they often

take place quietly and it is difficult to follow up on the results and punishments, if any.

Speaking to a small group of reporters, a senior UN official said the United Nations wanted to tackle that problem.

One idea is that "whenever there is a case that is established, that there be a court-martial that is in theatre, not back home in a sort of confidential context ... (but) publicly in the country where the

actions were perpetrated," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

He added: "We might think about DNA registering of peacekeepers when they come to a mission."

He declined to provide details and noted that both ideas were only at early stages as the United Nations worked to improve the performance of blue helmets in the field.—Reuters

US launches probe of alleged civil rights violations at Boston school

BOSTON — Federal prosecutors in Massachusetts yesterday launched a civil rights investigation into the elite Boston Latin School after black students charged that its administration ignored incidents of racism on campus.

The oldest US high school has been under a harsh spotlight for the past few weeks after black students reported that school officials failed to investigate alleged instances of racial insults, including one case in which a student threatened to lynch a black classmate.

Eight civil rights organisations including the American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts and the Boston branch

of the NAACP last week called on US Attorney Carmen Ortiz to open a probe into the alleged instances of racism.

"We will conduct a thorough investigation into the recent complaints about racism at BLS and will go where the facts lead us," Ortiz said yesterday.

The probe comes at a time of increased racial tensions across the United States. A series of high-profile police killings of black men in Baltimore, New York and Ferguson, Missouri, over the past two years have sparked months of peaceful protests punctuated with days of violence, and gave rise to the "Black Lives Matter" movement.

The school's headmaster,

Lynne Mooney Teta, has rebuffed calls by some black leaders in the city to resign over her handling of the matter.

Mooney Teta vowed to improve the racial climate at the school, which has 2,439 students in grades seven through 12, in an open letter to students and parents in January.

"If we are falling short for some of our students, then we are falling short for all of our students," she wrote. "There is work to be done." Boston Latin was founded in 1635, a year before Harvard University in nearby Cambridge, Massachusetts, and well over a century before the United States broke away from Great Britain.—Reuters



Teacher Elizabeth Moguel poses for a photograph with her seventh grade Latin class at Boston Latin School in Boston, Massachusetts in 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

Rights group decries 'crisis of violence and impunity' in Mexico



A relative holds up a picture of one of the 43 missing students of Ayotzinapa College Raul Isidro Burgos, as he takes part in a demonstration to mark the 17-month anniversary of the disappearance of the students, outside the Supreme Court building in Mexico City, Mexico, on 26 February 2016. The words under the picture read, "Where are they".

PHOTO: REUTERS

MEXICO CITY — Too many crimes, including torture, disappearances and killings, go uninvestigated in Mexico, which is suffering a "serious crisis of violence and impunity," the Inter-American Human Rights Commission (IACHR) said on Wednesday.

In a new report, the IACHR highlighted repeated failures to get to the bottom of some 27,000 disappearances registered in Mexico as of 2015, as well as abuses of power by police and the armed forces in the fight against the country's drug gangs.

The report, which also acknowledged that Mexico has made progress on judicial reforms, followed a government announcement this week about the deaths of five young Mexicans targeted by suspected gang henchmen. Their remains were ground up after they were mistaken for members of a rival cartel in the eastern state of Veracruz.

The Mexican government criticised the IACHR report, arguing it did not reflect the "general situation" in the country.

IACHR experts last year condemned the gov-

ernment's account of the 2014 disappearance of 43 trainee teachers in the southwestern city of Iguala, a crime that sparked outrage and battered President Enrique Peña Nieto's reputation.

Peña Nieto has pledged to tackle long-standing failings of the Mexican justice system, but the IACHR report said "the state's response is still insufficient to deal with this serious crisis of violence and impunity."

"Unfortunately, there's a gap between what the law says and the reality.

Somebody needs to take responsibility for changing the practices," said IACHR commissioner James Cavallaro, adding the commission was shocked by the impunity it found in Mexico.

"It's like there was no interest in looking for the perpetrators and solving the crimes," he said.

In a statement, the government denied there was a "human rights crisis" in Mexico. It said the report was based on premises and assessments the administration did not agree with.—Reuters

Italian mafia earnings from drugs rival Fiat with cars

ROME — Italian mobsters make as much money trafficking narcotics in Italy as Fiat does selling cars, but without having to pay taxes, the anti-mafia prosecutors office said on Wednesday.

Citing estimates by the United Nations Office on Narcotics and Crime, anti-mafia prosecutors said that the narcotics trade earns more than 32 billion euros (\$34.70 billion) annually for organised crime, which controls Italy's drug trade.

"It's as if the main national carmaker together with its suppliers, service providers and dealerships paid all their salaries and produced

everything completely off the books and without any regulation, and then sold and reinvested everything without paying any taxes," the annual report by the anti-mafia prosecutor's office said.

"The small difference is that the profit margin for the drug traffickers is at least 10 times higher than any industrial manufacturer."

It said the Calabrian mafia, known as the 'Ndrangheta, had become Europe's top supplier of South American cocaine.

Thanks to "privileged" ties with South American criminal groups that "recognise the full trustworthiness of the Cal-



Italian Guardia di Finanza police inspect a cocaine refining laboratory, which was raided on Wednesday, in a town on the slopes of the Vesuvius volcano south of Naples, in this still image taken from a Guardia di Finanza video, on 17 February 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

abrian clans", the 'Ndrangheta has also set itself up as the main supplier of cocaine to other mafia groups in Italy, it said.

From July 2014 to June 2015, Italy seized almost 4 tonnes of cocaine, a decrease of more than 8 per cent from the previous

period. In the port of Gioia Tauro in Calabria, 3 tonnes of cocaine have been seized by police in the past three years.

The report was comparing earnings to Fiat in Italy, not the work of the wider Fiat Chrysler group worldwide.—Reuters

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The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Date 4 March 2016

yma@kcyangon.com

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV BC SANFRANCISCO VOY NO (026W)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BC SANFRANCISCO VOY NO (026W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.3.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P 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 ORIENT OVERSEA
CONTAINER LINES

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Adv Hot line: 09 250107962, 09 251022355

Bob Dylan sells treasure trove of archive material

LOS ANGELES — Bob Dylan has sold his personal archive of notes, draft lyrics, poems, artwork and photographs to the University of Tulsa, where they will be made available to scholars and curated for public exhibitions, the school said on Wednesday.

The 6,000 item collection spans nearly the entire length of Dylan's 55 year-long career, and many have never been seen before. The collection was acquired by the George Kaiser Foundation and the University of Tulsa in Oklahoma.

The collection also includes master recording tapes of Dylan's entire music catalog, along with hundreds of hours of film video.

The Foundation and the university did not say how much the Bob Dylan

Archive cost, but the *New York Times*, which was given an exclusive preview, said it was sold for \$15 million to \$20 million.

Tulsa is also the home of a museum dedicated to folk singer Woody Guthrie, one of Dylan's early influences.

"I'm glad that my archives, which have been collected all these years, have finally found a home and are to be included with the works of Woody Guthrie... To me, it makes a lot of sense and it's a great honour," Dylan said in a statement. Despite being regarded as "the voice of a generation" for his influential songs of the 1960s and 1970s, Dylan, now 74, has mostly kept his items out of the public eye, resulting in high prices when they occasionally come up for auction.

A handwritten copy of the song "Like a Rolling Stone" sold for a record \$2 million at a New York auction in 2014, while the

electric guitar he played at 1965 Newport Folk Festival sold for nearly \$1 million in 2013. The archives handed over to the University of Tulsa include two notebooks with lyrics from the 1975 album "Blood on the Tracks," and Dylan's handwritten lyrics to his 1964 song "Chimes of Freedom" scrawled on hotel notepaper dotted with cigarette burns. There is also correspondence between Dylan and the late beat poet Allen Ginsberg.—*Reuters*



PHOTO: REUTERS

Justin Bieber celebrated birthday in ice cave

LONDON — Pop star Justin Bieber celebrated his 22nd birthday in an ice cave with a few friends.

The "Love Yourself" singer enjoyed acting like "a little kid" while on a snowy break with friends to a mystery location, which he flew out to via private jet, reported *Female First*.

The musician took to Instagram to post a video of him tobogganing down a snowy slope, which he titled, "This is a little kid smile." The "Sorry" hitmaker posted numerous other uncaptioned pictures of his birthday outing on the social media site — which received over one million likes — including one showing his five friends sipping beers at the frozen grotto.—*PTI*



PHOTO: REUTERS

Few Hollywood opportunities for women of colour: Geena

LONDON — Actress Geena Davis says Hollywood is doing a bad job with women and a "horrible" job with women of colour in terms of opportunities.

Following the controversy surrounding the lack of diversity in the nominations at this year's Academy Awards, the 60-year-old actress has called out the film industry in America for not creating worthwhile roles for non-white actresses, reported *The Guardian*.

"There are so few opportunities for women of colour that they barely register in the research

(into the numbers of women in film and TV). We are doing a bad job with women and a horrible job with women of colour," she said. "There are female actors nominated for the Oscars because we divide by gender — if it were one category for best performance, we would have a really hard time. But the Oscars are emblematic of a deep-seated problem — really, it's about the product being put out by Hollywood. Most profoundly, it's what is made that needs to change. People are unaware of the extent of their bias- it's unconscious.—*PTI*



PHOTO: REUTERS

I don't use computers: Britney Spears

LONDON — Pop star Britney Spears barely uses her computer because she says modern technology is not her thing.

The 34-year-old pop star wants little to do with machines despite many people are addicted to their smartphones and cannot live without email, reported *Contact-music*.

"Honestly, I still don't use my computer," she said, noting her sons Sean, 10, and Jayden, nine, are more adept with technology than she is.

"My kids use the computer more than I do! I understand that a lot of people are into it, and I have days where I write and stuff, but



PHOTO: REUTERS

it's really not for me. It's not my thing."

Spears is currently working on her ninth studio album after releasing her last record, *Britney Jean*, in 2013.—*PTI*

Adele visits terminally-ill fan in Belfast

LOS ANGELES — Oscar-winning singer Adele made a surprise visit to her 12-year-old terminally-ill fan's home in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

The "Hello" hitmaker took time out to drop by Rebecca Gibney's house before her second concert in Belfast, reported *Aceshowbiz*.

Following online campaigns by Rebecca's mother, the singer made a visit to young girl's home and sat by her bed with the family.

The star offered the family tickets to her second show on Tuesday at the Short Strand area.

Before Adele's first show, Rebecca's mom, Tracy,

launched a petition on Change.Org to get the "Hello" hitmaker to meet her "very sick daughter who's cerebral palsy, epilepsy, can't walk or talk and is tube fed, she has recently become bed bound." "She listens to Adele from she gets up in the morning until her bed time, all I am asking for is for Adele to FaceTime we Rebecca or send her a video message, it would be her dream come true, please please help for my beautiful sick little daughter," Tracy wrote.

She also tweeted, "I am going to see Adele tomorrow night can anybody help me to get to meet her back stage and tell her all about wee Rebecca thanks" and several other similar pleas along with pictures of her

daughter.

According to Tracy, she hadn't got any reply from Adele's team so she was shocked to find the star show up on her doorstep.

"It happened!!! Thank you so much for liking and sharing everyone, I'm overwhelmed and couldn't be any happier for my baby, still in shock! Adele is just amazing," she wrote on Facebook.—*PTI*

Will Smith, Joel Edgerton to star in thriller 'Bright'

LOS ANGELES — Actors Will Smith and Joel Edgerton are set to star in a cop thriller "Bright", which will be directed by David Ayer.

The script is written by Max Landis, said *The Hollywood Reporter*.

Smith, 47, and Ayer recently teamed on Warner Bros' "Suicide Squad", and "Bright" will have to wait until shooting wraps on David Frankel's "Collateral Beauty", which Smith toplines.

Edgerton, 41, is familiar with cop narratives, having recently co-starred as a corrupt FBI agent in "Black Mass".—*PTI*

Palestinians teach blind students English via music

HEBRON (West Bank) — Palestinian students at an elementary school for the blind in the West Bank are learning English through song.

For the youngsters, it's a welcome departure from the usual braille textbooks and memorising the

rules of grammar.

"In specific subjects, I like to motivate them (to learn) so I teach them grammar or vocabulary by creating a song, because they feel better and they keep repeating it," said Hind Al-Tamimi.

"We are dealing with

students with special needs, they are blind or visually impaired, so we urge them to depend on their hearing sense more than their sense of touch that they use in braille."

But while students said they were delighted with the new curricu-

lum, some parents in the religiously conservative town of Hebron are concerned the use of music in the classroom is not in harmony with Islamic tradition. Rashid Rashid, English-language studies supervisor at the Palestinian Ministry of Education, said he has been assuring families that music can be a positive learning tool.

"The people think that the musical methods and singing may lead to dancing, so they may not accept it," he said. "Before we adopted this method at all of the schools, we chose 25 schools and made it clear to the headmasters that the musical method is not taboo and not shameful."

Scientific studies have shown that musical sounds enhance neuroplasticity, or the brain's ability to adapt and change as a result of training and experience, making learning easier. —Reuters



Blind and visually impaired Palestinian students attend a class, where they are taught English through song and music, at a school in the West Bank city of Hebron, on 2 March. PHOTO: REUTERS

Former British chief rabbi wins \$1.5 million Templeton Prize



Britain's former Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks (L) speaks during a news conference after being awarded the 2016 Templeton Prize, as Jennifer Templeton Simpson, grand daughter of John Templeton, watches in London, Britain, on 2 March. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Britain's former Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks has won the 2016 Templeton Prize, worth 1.1 million pounds, for his efforts to help steer young people away from the message of extremists by encouraging religions to connect with them.

The US-based John Templeton Foundation said Sacks, 67, was ahead of his time with his central message of respect for all faiths and his argument that only by recognising the values of each of them could violence and terrorism be countered.

The prize, awarded to an individual who has made "exceptional contributions to affirming life's spiritual dimension", is one of the world's richest. Sacks said he was "absolutely knocked sideways" to have won.

"It just felt very thrilling and so my wife and I did a little dance together," he told Reuters Television in an interview earlier this week. "Not something we do that often, but it was lovely." As Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, Sacks was the leading spokesman for

British Jews from 1991 until 2013, leading what many considered to be the revitalisation of Britain's Jewish community.

The Templeton Foundation praised his work tackling the spread of religious violence which he argued had been sparked by Western secularisation that had failed to address young people's search for meaning, belonging and identity. "Today the most powerful religious voices are coming from the extremes and I think that is terribly dangerous. They are speaking to young idealistic kids and turning them really into murderers and we can't sit still and just let that happen," Sacks told Reuters.

"I think religious leaders have to give the same power and passion to the forces of reconciliation, compassion, forgiveness, love, friendship across the boundaries between faiths. "We really need to connect young people to the sources of positive idealism and I am afraid those voices have tended to be screened out by what I see as quite a self-indulgent secular culture of the west right now." —Reuters

Madonna, Ritchie urged to settle custody battle over son

NEW YORK — A New York judge on Wednesday urged Madonna and her ex-husband Guy Ritchie to work together to resolve a custody dispute over their 15 year-old son, Rocco, who has refused to return to his mother's New York home.

Manhattan Supreme Court Justice Deborah Kaplan set a 1 June date for Madonna and Ritchie to come back to court following a conference call with attorneys for all three parties. Kaplan said she wanted to encourage the parents, along with their lawyers, to resolve the matter in the best interests of their son. She said she may wish to meet at some point with

Rocco, who has been living in London with his film director father.

In December, the teen ignored a court order to fly back to New York to reside with his mother. The pop star and Ritchie divorced in 2008 and agreed Rocco would live with the "Material Girl" singer.

None of the trio appeared in person on Wednesday. Attorney Ellen Sigal, representing Rocco, told the judge the teen was enjoying school in London but was having "a very difficult time."

"Having this order over his head has been very stressful for him," Sigal said by conference call.

No details were giv-

en on why Rocco wished to live with his father. According to recent celebrity media reports, Madonna's strict parenting style is thought to be at the heart of the dispute. The singer, 57, is currently on the Asian leg

of her "Rebel Heart" world tour, with her next show set for New Zealand on 5 March. Rocco had joined her for the initial stages of the tour, working backstage. He also went on tour with her in 2012. —Reuters



Director Guy Ritchie and wife Madonna arrive for the world premiere of "RocknRolla" in London, in 2008. PHOTO: REUTERS

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(4-3-2016 07:00am ~ 5-3-2016 7:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
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07:42	Am	Lucrative Myanma Rattan Industry
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Myanmar Classic Cars Rally 2015 (Ep-III)
08:37	Am	Let's perform a buffalo dance
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09:26	Am	A Happy Visit to Zoological Garden (Nay Pyi Taw)
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09:50	Am	Kayah Style
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10:56	Am	Dances of Myanmar "Muun Traditional Dance"
(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm)-Thursday Repeat(07:00 Am~11:00 Am) (03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)		
Prime Time		
07:03	Pm	News
07:27	Pm	A Journey To Southern Shan State (Ep-2)
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08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	The Stories Of The Great Souls (Daw Saw Mone Nyin - A Living Literary Legend Of Myanmar)
08:52	Pm	Myanmar Masterclass "Contemporary Art"
(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm)- Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am) (11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am)-Thursday Repeat(07:00 Am~11:00 Am) (03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am)-Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)		
(For Detailed Schedule - www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)		

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(4-3-2016, Friday)

6:00 pm	• Music Programme	8:40 pm	• Cartoon Programme
6:20 pm	• Pyi Thu Ni Ti	9:00 pm	• Music Programme
6:35 pm	• Music Programme	9:15 pm	• Myanmar Traditional Instruments (MYANMAR OBOE)
7:00 pm	• Korea TV Drama Series	9:40 pm	• Sea Games Song
7:50 pm	• Korea TV Drama Series	10:00 pm	• Myanmar Video

From 4.3.2016 (Friday) 06:00 Pm
To 5.3.2016 (Saturday) 06:00 Pm

This schedule will be repeated four times in 24 hours.



West Ham's Mark Noble in action with Tottenham's Ryan Mason, Tom Carroll and Ben Davies during Barclays Premier League at Upton Park on 2 March. PHOTO: REUTERS

Leicester in dreamland as Spurs, Arsenal, City lose

LONDON — Leicester City's Premier League title dream moved closer to reality after a Wednesday wipe-out brought defeats for their nearest challengers Tottenham Hotspur, Arsenal and Manchester City.

Tottenham were primed to take advantage of Leicester's 2-2 home draw with West Bromwich Albion on Tuesday and would have gone top on goal difference with victory at West Ham United but they went down 1-0 to end a six-match winning run.

Michail Antonio's early headed goal proved decisive at Upton Park and if Leicester fans thought that was good their night got even better as third-placed Arsenal slumped 2-1 at home to Swansea City and fourth-placed City were thrashed 3-0 at Liverpool, three days after beating them in the League Cup final.

With 10 matches remaining,

Leicester have 57 points, Tottenham 54, Arsenal 51 and City, who have a game in hand, 47, ahead of Manchester United only on goal difference after Juan Mata's late strike earned them a 1-0 win over Watford.

West Ham, on 46 points, are also in the mix for Champions League qualification after putting the brakes on Tottenham's title charge in a typically tense derby in east London. Antonio struck the game's only goal in the seventh minute, heading in Dimitri Payet's corner, and West Ham could have been further ahead before Tottenham improved in the second half. Harry Kane wasted Tottenham's best chance, scuffing a close-range rebound after West Ham keeper Adrian saved a low 25-metre drive from Toby Alderweireld. "We need to be positive and it is important to be ready for Saturday," Tottenham manager

Mauricio Pochettino, whose side host Arsenal on Saturday, told the BBC. "When you lose you can blame it on the players being tired or whatever, the reality is that it was just a bad night."

Arsenal were hoping to bounce back from Sunday's defeat at Manchester United and Joel Campbell firing them ahead but goals from Wayne Routledge and Ashley Williams gave Swansea three vital points in their bid to move away from trouble.

Manager Arsene Wenger said his side were unlucky but Arsenal's fans made their feelings clear, booing the side off after a dismal second-half display.

"They had two shots on target and scored two goals," said Wenger, who added that keeper Petr Cech had picked up an injury that will rule him out against Tottenham. "We need to bounce back very quickly now." Manchester

City's third consecutive league defeat left them looking over their shoulders.

Adam Lallana, who missed one of Liverpool's penalties in Sunday's Wembley shootout, and James Milner scored before half-time and Roberto Firmino sealed the points after the break.

With City's league form disintegrating, Louis van Gaal's United side are now back in the frame for a top-four spot, even if they were poor against Watford before Mata's winner. The Spaniard's sublime 83rd-minute free kick was harsh on Watford who wasted a flurry of chances at Old Trafford. At the other end of the table, Newcastle United's plight worsened as a 1-0 defeat at Stoke City left them second from bottom with 24 points, the same total as Norwich City and Sunderland who are directly above them.—Reuters

Late Mata strike lifts toothless Man United

LONDON — A late free kick by midfielder Juan Mata earned Manchester United a laboured 1-0 home win over Watford after the visitors missed a flurry of chances in their Premier League clash on Wednesday.

The 27-year-old Spaniard curled a superb shot from 25 metres into the top right corner in the 83rd minute, much to the relief of his manager Louis van Gaal, whose decision to play two strikers almost backfired.

"It was a good night for us but we have to keep going," Mata told reporters.

"We didn't feel comfortable, but in the end we won and I am happy I scored a good goal.

"We are Manchester United, we don't give up and we have to keep going until the end."

The result put fifth-placed United level on points with cross-town rivals City, who are fourth and have a game in hand

after losing 3-0 at Liverpool.

An array of forwards in the starting line-up left United's central midfielders Morgan Schneiderlin and Ander Herrera with too much to do while also giving Watford space to exploit.

Fit-again Anthony Martial was deployed up front alongside 18-year-old Marcus Rashford, who made a dream start to his United career by scoring four goals in two games, but the pair looked toothless.

Watford's Nigerian striker Odion Ighalo missed three gilt-edged chances in the first half and Austrian defender Sebastian Proedl had a header cleared off the line by Rashford before United sprung to life.

Several darting runs by Rashford down the right flank swung the balance and keeper Heurelio Gomez saved two stinging shots by Mata before United's playmaker finally broke the deadlock.—Reuters

Real put derby defeat behind them by winning at Levante

MADRID — Cristiano Ronaldo netted a first-half penalty as injury-depleted Real Madrid recovered from their derby defeat by Atletico Madrid at the weekend with a 3-1 win at Levante on Wednesday.

An own goal by goalkeeper Diego Marino and a stoppage-time strike by substitute Isco ensured Real kept a firm grip on third place in La Liga.

Barcelona, who visit Rayo Vallecano on Thursday, hold a five-point lead over second-placed Atletico who triumphed 3-0 at home to Real Sociedad on Tuesday.

Real, nine points off the pace, are four points in front of fourth-placed Villarreal who drew 0-0 at Celta Vigo on Wednesday. Zinedine Zidane's Real were missing Sergio Ramos and Marcelo in defence, although Pepe returned after a long injury layoff, midfielder Luka Modric and striker Karim Benzema, replaced by teenager Borja Mayoral making his first start.—Reuters

Nishikori plays down Murray's recent absence ahead of Davis Cup tie

BIRMINGHAM — World No 6 Kei Nishikori insists Andy Murray's lack of recent playing time will not give Japan the edge when it faces defending Davis Cup champions Britain in this week's Davis Cup World Group first round. Second-ranked Murray, who led Britain to its first Davis Cup title in 79 years last year, will be playing his first competitive tennis since the 7 February birth of his daughter as well as his defeat to world No 1 Novak Djokovic in the final of the Australian Open.

"He (Murray) did great in Australia so it's not like he hasn't played in a long time. It's not going to change much," Nishikori, who went out in the second round at the Alerio Mexicano Telcel last week after winning the Memphis Open for the fourth time in a row in mid-February, told a press conference on Wednesday. "But I also have been playing well, I played indoor in Memphis too so I'm getting used to this condition. I have to practice well in these couple of days, but I'm feeling pretty good so it's going to be an exciting tie."—Kyodo News