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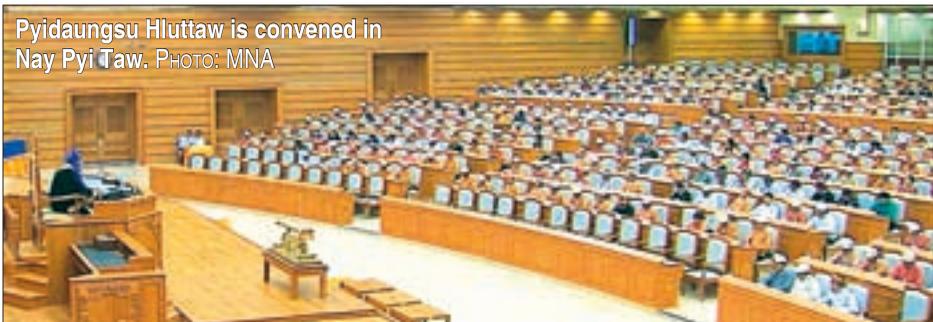


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SUU KYI LISTED FOR SEAT

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw announces 18-member cabinet list

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is convened in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA



THE names of the 18 Union ministerial nominees submitted by the President-elect were announced at the eleventh day session of the second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw yesterday.

The list of cabinet nominations include Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Dr Aung Thu, U Thant Sin Maung, Thura U Aung Ko, U Ohn Win, U Thein Swe, U Kyaw Win, U Khin Maung Cho, Dr Myint Ht-way, U Win Khaing, Dr Win Myat Aye,

U Ohn Maung, Dr Than Myint, Nai Thet Lwin, Dr Pe Myint, Lt-Gen Sein Win, Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe and Lt-Gen Ye Aung.

During the parliamentary session the Speaker invited representatives who wish to remonstrate against the Union minister nominees to submit their names to register their remonstration.

The second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw will continue for its 12th day session this Thursday.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Fire hits Mingalar Market in Mandalay

Aung Thant Khaing

A FIRE broke out at a major market in downtown Mandalay yesterday evening, destroying a number of shops and apartments.

The fire started around 5.30 pm and was brought under control around 8.15 pm.

Some firemen were reportedly injured while fighting the fire which threatened a neighbouring school, a hospital and other nearby buildings.

The firemen had to break open the doors to put out the blaze as the fire broke out while the market was closed.

The cause of the fire has not yet been released by the local fire services department.—*GNLM*

Firemen putting out blaze at Mingalar Market in Mandalay.

PHOTO: MANDALY SUB PRINTING HOUSE



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Government, NLD hold fifth meeting on handover of Head of State duties
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Water transported to Shwesettaw wildlife sanctuary for dehydrated Shwe Thamins

Min Thit

MEASURES are being taken to provide water to dehydrated Shwe Thamins, Eld's deers, in Shwesettaw wildlife sanctuary as lakes are dry up there, according

to an official from the Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division yesterday.

"We filled water into three lakes from six bowsers that were transported to the region. The Shwe Thamins did not run when

the bowsers arrived as they were thirsty," said U Aye Cho, assistant director of the division.

The 114,000-acre Shwesettaw wildlife sanctuary located in Minbu, Magwe Region is home to Shwe Thamins and other spe-

cies of small animals including star tortoises.

Around 1,483 Shwe Thamins are listed in the sanctuary, said the assistant director, adding that water is now available for them.

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Dry ration offered to monks at Shwedagon Pagoda

A DRY RATION offering ceremony was held at Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon yesterday. Well-wishers offered dry ration to 98 monks and 27 nuns.

The ceremony was part of the 2604th Buddha Pujaniya Tabauing Festival of Shwedagon Pagoda. The festival is annually held for 10 days from 14 to 23 March. — *Ko Ko Zaw*



Devotees throng to a procession of Buddhist monks to donate dry ration. PHOTO: MNA

Vehicle purchase plan needs review: Yangon Region parliamentarian

A PROPOSED plan to purchase vehicles for office use needs to be reviewed said U Kyaw Zeya, secretary of Yangon Region Hluttaw's finance, planning and economic committee yesterday.

I would like to call on the region government to scrutinise the purchasing of vehicles for office use, said the committee secretary.

He pointed out the K64 million was set aside for the purchase of a saloon car, a van, a light truck and a minibus proposed by Department of Human Settlement and Housing Development in Yangon and the K89.50 million for a Suzuki pickup, two Hijet pickups and two station wagons by the Yangon City Development Committee at the yesterday's parliamentary session in Yangon Region Hluttaw.

The secretary also called for funds for flyover construction be allocated to construction of village- to-town roads in the municipal area of the YCDC.

According to the Yangon Region government, K32.2 billion is set for the construction of two flyovers on Kaba-Aye Pagoda Road and at North Okkalapa junction during this fiscal year. The region government proposed a regional budget of K336.2 billion for 2016-2017 FY. — *Ko Moe*

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker meets Israeli Ambassador to Myanmar



Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than receives Israeli Ambassador Mr. Daniel Zonshine. PHOTO: MNA

SPEAKER of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) Mahn Win Khaing Than received Israeli Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Daniel Zonshine in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the call, the Israeli ambassador donated copies of "Start Up Nation" written by Dan Senor and Saul Singer, translated by Writer U Hein Latt for the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw representatives through the Speaker.

Also present were Deputy Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker U Aye Tha Aung and officials of the Amyotha Hluttaw Office. — *Myanmar News Agency*

Projects in 2016-2017 Budget Bill are 'too costly', says Yangon region parliamentarian

MEMBER of the Yangon Region Parliament Daw Sandar Min called for a review of the region's budget for the fiscal year 2016-2017 during the fourth day session of the Parliamentary yesterday, saying that some projects are too costly.

I called on the Parliament to review some projects as they are too expensive, said Daw Sandar Min who is also the chairperson of the Yangon Region Hluttaw Finance, Planning and Economic Committee.

The committee chair pointed out a K210 million project to upgrade Bagaya road from Pyay Road to Baho Road in Sangyaung Township and K1, 500 million for construction of seven sluice gates for Padauk Creek in Hline Township.

According to her committee's report, K 39.52 million has been requested for six concrete roads including San Pya 8th

street in Thingangyun Township and the upgrading of Parami road in Hline Township which is set to be undertaken this fiscal year but has been completed.

Moreover, the report found that some other construction works set to be implemented with funding from the 2016-2017 budget were already completed.

Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun announced that discussions will be held on the report of the committee regarding expensive projects and works that have been completed.

The 11-member committee was formed on the third day session of the second Yangon Region Hluttaw on 17 February.

Yangon Region government's Finance Minister Daw San San Nwe presented the 2016-2017 Budget Bill to the regional parliament on 15 February. — *Ko Moe*

Implementation of Maingwa hydropower plant project signed

A CONTRACT signing ceremony concerning the implementation of the Maingwa hydropower plant in Mongla, Shan State (East) was held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The Ministry of Electric Power and Shan State East Development Company Limited inked the deal to implement the project for electricity generation of 66 megawatts under the Built, Operate, Transfer (BOT) scheme. The hydropower plant is set to be built across Nantlaw creek in Mongla, Shan State (East).

During the ceremony, Director-General U Aye Hsan of Hydropower Implementation Department and U Kyi Myint, director of the company, signed the contract in the presence of Union Minister for Electric Power U Khin Maung Soe and officials. In his address, the



Director-General U Aye Hsan of Hydropower Implementation Department and U Kyi Myint, Director of Shan State East Development Co exchange notes. PHOTO: MNA

Union minister stressed the need for providing local people in the region with the necessary assistance and making sure of strict adherence to the Environmental

Conservation Law. He further spoke on taking steps in minimizing the environmental and social impacts of hydroelectric power. — *Myanmar News Agency*

President U Thein Sein felicitates Pakistani President

U THEIN SEIN, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr. Mamnoon Hussain, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, on the occasion of the Pakistan Day, which falls on 23 March, 2016.—*Myanmar News Agency*

President U Thein Sein felicitates Pakistani Prime Minister

U THEIN SEIN, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, on the occasion of the Pakistan Day, which falls on 23 March, 2016.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Government, NLD hold fifth meeting on handover of Head of State duties

THE fifth coordination meeting between the government's supporting committee for the handover of the duties of the Head of State and the transition team of the National League for Democracy was held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, both sides discussed the handover ceremony, cabinet members to be assigned to ministries following the parliamentary approval of nominations and matters related to residences of new Union ministers.

Present at the meeting were Union Minister U Hla Tun, chairman of the government's supporting committee, and members Union Minister U Ye Htut, Director-General U Hla Tun of the President's Office, Deputy Director-General U Maung Maung Ohn of the Ministry of Construction, Deputy Director-General U Zaw Htay of the President's Office, CEC member U Win Htein who led the transition team of the NLD, and members Dr Myo Aung and Dr Aung Thu.—*Myanmar News Agency*



A meeting on handover of Head of State duties between the incumbent government and National League for Democracy is held. PHOTO: MNA.



Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham poses for photo together with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and leaders of the Mekong River countries. PHOTO: MNA

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham attends Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Summit, Boao Forum for Asia in China

VICE-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham left for China to attend the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Summit and Boao Forum for Asia yesterday.

The Vice-President and party were seen off at Yangon International Airport by Vice-President U Nyan Tun, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defense Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Union Ministers Dr Kan Zaw and Dr Than Aung, deputy ministers and the

Charge d' Affaires of the Chinese Embassy in Myanmar.

Together with the Vice-President Deputy Ministers Brig-Gen Kyaw Zan Myint, U Thant Kyaw, U Khin Zaw, U Zin Yaw, Dr Pwint Sann and officials also left for China on the same flight.

On his arrival at Sanya Airport in Hainan province the Vice-President was welcomed by the Myanmar Ambassador to China U Thit Lin Ohn and Chinese officials.

In the evening, the Vice-Pres-

ident attended a dinner hosted by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang in honour of the leaders of the Mekong River countries.

The first Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Summit is set to be held under the theme "Shared River, Shared Future". The Summit will be chaired by the Chinese Premier and Thai Prime Minister.

The Boao Forum for Asia is scheduled to run for four days from 22 to 25 March in Boao, the People's Republic of China.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Water transported to Shwesettaw wildlife . . .

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According to the assistant director there was a water scarcity problem in the region last year and locals from nearby villages filled the lake with water brought from home. The division had built 15 salt pits for Shwe Thamins to lick, using 30 visses (approx. 1.6 kilograms) of salt, he added.

Moreover, patrols are being conducted for the protection of Shwe Thamins in the sanctuary, including public awareness talks.

Shwesettaw wildlife sanctuary is one of 39 wildlife sanctuaries in Myanmar.



Golden deers (Eld's deers) are seen in Shwesettaw wildlife sanctuary. PHOTO: KYEMON

Myanmar, Japan look to implement Vocational Training Institute Aung San Project

THE Pyithu Hluttaw Transport, Communication and Construction Committee held a meeting with a delegation from the Japan-based Asia Environmental Technology Promotion Institute in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, the Pyithu Hluttaw committee led by Chairman U Tin Maung Win and the Japanese delegation led by Director Mr. Akio

Kawakami of the Institute held discussions on the implementation of Japan-Myanmar Vocational Training Institute Aung San Project for human resources development in Myanmar, exchange of visits by Japan and Myanmar parliamentarians and further bilateral cooperation between the two governments and the two peoples.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Yangon Police Force to increase public security activities for Thingyan 2016



Authorities inspecting a pharmaceutical store of it is sell the forbidden drugs. PHOTO:YPF

THE Yangon Police Force (YPF) were successful in implementing their public safety works agenda over the 2015 Thingyan Festival (the country's New Year Water Festival), according to Yangon Police.

In 2016 the Yangon Police Force is preparing to carry out, with increased momentum, their public security and prevention measures against criminal during the coming Thingyan festival. To reduce the outbreak of crime

over the festival the YPF, together with Organisations from respective townships, have designated an educative programme to run from 7 to 20 March. The aim is to carry out public awareness activities such as giving educative talks on prevention against narcotic drug use to the public, lecturing on abiding by traffic rules and the enforcement of the law including the banning of the use and selling of what was termed 'sexual stimulant tablets'.—Yangon Police Force



Members of Police Force looking into a car.Photo: YPF

Crime NEWS

Fire destroys petrol station in Ngwe Hsaung

A FIRE destroyed a petrol station in Thalat Khwar village, Ngwe Hsaung Sub-township, Patheingyi on Monday. According to an investigation the fire broke out at around 2:00 pm when U Thein Lwin, 42 was moving petrol in his shop.

The fire was put out within ten minutes by fifty firemen with ten fire engines and with the help of local residents.

The fire destroyed the petrol station and two motorbikes. The police have taken action against U Thein Lwin.—Patheingyi Hla Kyi



Damaged houses destroyed by fire seen at the scene

PHOTO: PATHEINGYI HLA KYI

Yaba pills sized in Aungmyethazan

A COMBINED team comprising local authorities and members of an anti-drug unit searched room 11 of the Thiri

Mandalar Guest house in Aungmyethazan township on 20 March and seized 96,000 Yaba pills from one Kya Hae who

stayed at the hotel. According to the investigation, the police also arrested Saw Ja Law and Ma Nar Mhwe Bo from Room 10 and Ma Kahlyar Moe from Room 15, all of whom are suspected of being involved in selling of the drugs.

Similarly, polices confiscated 470 yaba pills from a house owned by one Win Hlaing Htoo in ward 3, Seikmu village, Hpakant town on 18 March.

On that same day police discovered 186 yaba pills inside a house owned by one Win Zaw Oo from Ar Yu Taung village, Yae township.

Charges have been filed against the suspects under the Narcotic Drugs and psychotropic Substances Law.—Myanmar Police Force



Kya Hae, Saw Ja Law, Ma Nar Mhwe Bo and Ma Kahlyar Moe. PHOTO:MPF

Police seize sawn timber

A VEHICLE en route to Yangon from Nay Pyi Taw crashed into concrete blocks when the driver lost control between mileposts 85/3 and 85/4, Myo Chaung highway, Kyauktaga township, Bago region, on Monday.

When the police arrived at the scene they discovered ille-

gal sawn timber weighing 1.9 tonnes onboard the vehicle. The driver left the vehicle and fled the scene. Police from Myo Chaung handed over the illegal sawn timber and the vehicle to the Forestry Department in Kyauktaga township. Police are still investigating the case.—Khin Ko (Kyauktaga)



A vehicle loaded with illegal sawn timber.

PHOTO: KHIN KO (KYAUKTAGA)

Lashio car accident kills one woman

A WOMAN was killed in a car accident on Sunday near Mansue Pagoda, Hsenwi road, ward 8/, Lashio in Shan State. According to an investigation the vehicle hit Ma Zin Mar Soe, 21, from ward 1 before driving away without stopping. The accident seriously injured Ma Zin

Mar Soe who received medical treatment at Lashio general hospital. She succumbed to her injuries while being treated. The police determined that the reckless driver had fled the scene of accident intentionally. The police are searching for the vehicle.—200

LOCAL Business



PHOTO: GE

GE Capital Aviation Services Delivers Three New Boeing 737-800 to MNA

GE Capital Aviation Services Limited (GECAS), has delivered three new leased Boeing 737-800 aircrafts to Myanmar National Airlines (MNA).

"These three new aircrafts are the first of ten aircrafts to come

from GECAS' existing order book with Boeing. The remaining seven aircrafts will be delivered to MNA by 2020," said Mr. Wouter Van Wersch, President & CEO of GE ASEAN.

Seven more Boeing aircrafts

will be delivered through 2020. • Myanmar's aviation market has huge potential with a fast growing number of foreign travelers according to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. In 2015 about 4.68 million tourists visited Myanmar,

an increase of 52% in comparison with 2014. The contract of these 10 leased aircrafts was signed by GECAS and MNA in February 2014, including for models Boeing 737-800 and 737 MAX aircraft.—GNLM

Japanese businessmen buy Myanmar breadfruit

BREADFRUIT (*Artocarpus altilis*) is gaining popularity among Japanese businessmen because of its alleged medicinal properties. Some believe it brings prosperity to those who eat it.

"Japanese buyers buy tonnes of breadfruit powder because they believe it can alleviate obesity. The fruit can also be cooked with pork to make a delicious dish. This fruit is similar to jackfruit, but it is more delicious than jackfruit. Japanese businessmen came to the farm and advised the farmers to grow more," said U Han Zaw Myint, a breadfruit researcher.

Breadfruits with seeds, which are rarer, are said to have greater medicinal properties than those without. Breadfruit trees tend to grow less than 2,000 feet above the sea level in places with high rainfall. They grow well in equatorial climates. It originated in the South Pacific before spreading to the rest of Oceania and beyond.

Some foreign-owned hotels grow breadfruit trees as decorations. They have been cultivated in Myanmar just in the last three years. The fruit can be used as an animal feed and grows on shady trees.—200

Fishermen in Pauk Inn seeing handsome profits

FISHERMEN in Pauk Inn, Sagaing Region, are earning handsome profits from fishing due to the rising river level.

The river level is rising much beyond what we expected. This year we are catching bountiful supplies of fish.

"We are seeing a good income because the rise brings a lot of fish. We also make dried fish

to prevent losses", said U Than Lwin, a local fisherman.

"We are earning roughly K20,000 to K30,000 per day", said U Maung Win, a local fisherman.

As September to April is the fishing season, local fishermen and retail dealers are fetching a high income as Pauk Inn is on the Chindwin River route.—200

Chinese motorbikes sell well in Lashio, northern Shan State

CHINESE-MADE JJ-XY motorbikes with power exhaust installed are selling well in Lashio, northern Shan State.

Motorbike prices range between K285,000 and K620,000 per motorbike, depending on the brand.

The JJ-XY-125 model is selling best at the moment. Its

LED headlight attracts young people in the city.

"Market prices do not drop too low, though Chinese currency is unstable, because local traders manipulate the market price," said a motorbike dealer in Lashio.

JJ-XY and NANO motorbikes are popular Chinese brands.—200

Roho labeo reaches 200,000 metric tonnes exported over 2015-2016 FY

ROHO labeo exports reached nearly 200,000 metric tonnes this fiscal year, said U Han Tun, vice chairman of Myanmar Fishery Federation (MFF).

There are two types of export on the market; fish bodies and scraped fish. Myanmar exported

70,000 metric tonnes of roho labeo to the Asia region market and around 30,000 metric tonnes to the Europe market making a total of 100,000 metric tonnes last year. A total of 200,000 metric tonnes have been exported this year.

"We have managed to double

the export this year due to higher demand on the foreign market. We mainly import into the European market which prefers scraped fish than fish bodies", he added. The MFF is also planning to expand to fish farming up to 2000 acres of farm for roho labeo this year.—200

Consumer protection rules yet to be realised

THE Myanmar Consumer Protection Association (CPA) has stated it will continue to strive for the passing of rules, which protect food and beverage consumers, during the term of the new government.

The Consumer Protection Law was enacted in 2014, but a year and a half later and rules have yet to be passed.

"Consumer protection laws have been enacted but the rights of consumers have been left completely out of the equation, with nothing to show for them as yet.

The law was passed eighteen months ago now, but no rules have yet to be enacted. As such, we will continue to persevere to ensure rules are passed during the office of the new government," said U Ba Oak Khaing, chair of the Myanmar CPA.

Despite the passing of consumer protection laws, general knowledge among the public of their rights as consumers is still weak.

"Every time a new law is passed, rules are required to be drawn up. We will draw up parts

of the rules, if deemed necessary for implementation.

For the time being though, investigations for the drawing up of such rules are still underway," said U Maung Maung, deputy director from the office of the Central Committee for Consumer Protection.

According to the aforementioned committee, directives have been issued to business entrepreneurs in a bid to mitigate against harm towards consumers in the absence of consumer protection rules.—Myitmakha News Agency

Britain's Prince Harry meets survivors of Nepal earthquake

KATHMANDU — Britain's Prince Harry, on a four-day tour of Nepal, visited centuries-old heritage sites on Sunday devastated by earthquakes last year and met some survivors, many of whom are still living in makeshift shelters.

Nearly 9,000 people were killed, 22,000 injured and close to a million homes were destroyed in the tiny Himalayan country in two earthquakes in April and May last year.

Tens of thousands of survivors are still living in huts made

from tin sheets and tarpaulin as reconstruction has been delayed by political bickering over a new constitution.

"I pay my respects to those who perished and hope to do what I can to shine a spotlight on the resolve and resilience of the Nep-

alese people," Harry said at a government reception celebrating 200 years of ties with Britain.

The 31-year-old prince, who is fifth in line to the British throne, visited the Patan Durbar Square, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, near capital Kathmandu, to see damage to an ancient royal palace and surrounding temples due to the magnitude 7.8 earthquake on 25 April. The second, 7.3 magnitude quake struck on 12 May.

The restoration of monuments is going on with traditional craft skills like wood-carving and gilding. He also visited some artisans working at the site.

Later Harry travelled to the temple town of Bhaktapur, east of Kathmandu, and visited a pre-positioning site for quake emergency supplies — shelter kits, water and sanitation equipment — and met survivors at a camp for displaced families.

Since arriving in Nepal on Saturday, Harry has met with Nepal's first woman president, Vidhya Devi Bhandari, and Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli.

During the tour that ends on Wednesday, he will also meet families of Gurkha soldiers with whom he had served in Afghanistan at the lake city of Pokhara, 125 km (79 miles) west of Kathmandu.—Reuters



Britain's Prince Harry interacts with a group of local women while he visits Golden temple in Patan Durbar in Patan, Nepal on 20 March. Patan Square, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, was damaged during the 2015 earthquake. The Prince is on a five-day trip to Nepal. PHOTO: REUTERS

Bangladesh confirms first case of Zika virus

DHAKA — Bangladesh confirmed yesterday its first case of the Zika virus in an old sample of blood from a 67-year old man who had not been overseas, health ministry officials said.

The man lives in south-eastern port city of Chittagong and was well, junior health minister Zahid Maleque told a news conference. None of his relatives had tested positive, he said.

Mahmudur Rahman, director of the ministry's Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research, said the man had never travelled outside Bangladesh.

"The virus was found in the man as we tested old blood samples of nearly 1,000 people afflicted with fever in 2014 and 2015," Rahman told Reuters.

The Zika outbreak is affecting large parts of Latin America and the Caribbean, with Brazil the hardest hit.—Reuters

South Korea confirms first case of Zika virus

SEOUL — South Korea reported its first confirmed case of the Zika virus on Tuesday in a 43-year old male who had travelled to Brazil, its centre for disease control said.

The World Health Organisation on 1 February declared the Zika virus outbreak to be a global public health emergency, citing a "strongly suspected" relationship between Zika infection in pregnancy and microcephaly.

Zika has not been proven to cause microcephaly in babies, but there is growing evidence that suggests a link. The condition is defined by unusually small heads that can result in developmental problems. Brazil said it has confirmed more than 860 cases of microcephaly, and considers most of them to be related to Zika infections in the mothers.

Brazil is investigating more than 4,200 additional suspected cases of microcephaly.—Reuters

Singapore marks first anniversary of Lee Kuan Yew's death

SINGAPORE — Singapore commemorates the first anniversary of the death of its founding father Lee Kuan Yew this week even as the legacy of his authoritarian leadership style and economic success lives on.

About 100 events have been planned in the wealthy city-state including candlelight vigils, photo exhibitions of his contributions to the country, the planting of trees and solemn reflections on his contribution to Singapore.

One year after his death on 23 March last year in a state hospital at the age of 91, the system and the style of government that Lee initiated as Singapore's first prime minister for three decades until 1990 remains very much entrenched.

Professor James Chin, director of the Asia Institute of the University of Tasmania, said, "the world expects Singapore to carry on without much changes in the post-Lee Kuan Yew era and this is exactly what happened."

"Singapore is now so stable, especially after the general election, that most people are of the opinion that Lee Kuan Yew's political structure will survive for quite a while," Chin said, referring to the 2015 general election in which Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's People's Action Party was returned to power with

nearly 70 per cent of the valid votes, up from about 60 per cent in the 2011 general election.

"PAP will keep to Lee Kuan Yew's ideology — soft authoritarian government, rational economic policies, meritocracy based on PAP, Chinese cultural norms of leadership," Chin added.

"He's already gone, but I think he will always be remembered in our hearts for what he has contributed to Singapore. Without him Singapore will not be what it is today," said Elizabeth Wong, 40, a computer programmer who was passing by the photo exhibition on Lee on Tuesday.

Coordinating Minister for Infrastructure Khaw Boon Wan reminded party cadres at a remembrance ceremony at PAP headquarters last week of "the ideals which Comrade Lee Kuan Yew brought to the party, and his selfless dedication to improving the lives of Singaporeans".

The government still maintains a semblance of Lee's authoritarian style, although with a softer stance.

Health worker and blogger Roy Ngerng was convicted last year of defaming Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong in a blog post, while a Singaporean and his Australian wife have been charged

with sedition over their socio-political website The Real Singapore.

Singapore is now struggling with an economic slowdown, with the economy expected to grow only 1-3 percent this year amid the current global slump, economic restructuring and soaring business costs and job losses.

In addition, unlike his father, Lee Kuan Yew, who had planned ahead for the leadership succession after he stepped down in 1990 when he was in his 60s, it is still not clear who will succeed Prime Minister Lee, who is now 64.

When asked in 2012 if he saw himself continuing as prime minister beyond 70, Lee said "I hope not."

This week's commemorative events also come at a time when a by-election is expected to be called soon and with the elections for the mainly ceremonial presidency supposed to be held by August 2017.

"The fact that so many people turned up really shows the closeness of the bond that Mr. Lee had with the people...there are very few leaders who, even after death, command that kind of affection, that kind of respect," said Indranee Rajah, Senior Minister of State in the finance and law ministries.—Kyodo News

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China state firms seen boosting green energy investment in Australia

MELBOURNE — Chinese state-owned companies are expected to boost their investment in Australia's expanding renewable energy sector, attracted by a national leadership that is more favorable to the industry than its forerunner.

With six to eight state-owned enterprises already involved in or looking closely at Australian energy assets, Melbourne-based financial advisors SILC Group said more deals were on the cards, with so-called green power coming under particular focus.

They would follow State Power Investment Corp's (SPIC) [CNPOW.UL] A\$300 million (\$230 million) buyout of a wind farm in New South Wales last week, as well as its \$2.5 billion purchase in December of Pacific Hydro, a company which has wind farms in Australia, Brazil and Chile. "There was always interest, but now there's increased

interest from the Chinese," said Peter Munns, an executive director at SILC, which works with China state-backed firms.

"Chinese companies always like our rule of law, our currency risk and stable economy. They like renewables, they also like poles and wires because the revenue is underpinned by regulation." After coming to power last year, the government led by Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull in December reversed a decision by the previous administration banning the country's clean energy fund from investing in wind power projects, opening the door to more deals in the sector. Former prime minister Tony Abbott had described wind farms as "ugly" and "noisy".

Munns told Reuters in an interview last week that Chinese firms were looking for projects with long term offtake agreements that would get them a foot



Sheep graze in front of wind turbines that are part of the Infigen Energy's Capital Windfarm located on the hills surrounding Lake George, near the Australian capital city of Canberra, Australia, in 2015.

PHOTO: REUTERS

in the door in Australian markets, as well as local expertise that would help them grow.

"They don't just want to have one wind farm here, they want to have a portfolio," said Munns. "Most want to do solar as well. But they probably think that's a couple of years down the track before it's as economic and as viable as wind is."

A unit of China Shenhua is

already part operator of several wind farms in Tasmania, while Beijing Jingneng Power has a stake in the Gullen Range wind farm in New South Wales. Other Chinese state-owned companies that have said they are looking at Australian energy assets include Shanghai Electric Power Co Ltd and Cecep Wind-power Corp.

Wind farms are Australia's No. 2 renewable energy source,

behind hydropower but ahead of solar, providing around 4 per cent of its total energy demand.

Meanwhile, a tender for New South Wales poles and wire firm Ausgrid, to be decided by mid-2016, has attracted the attention of China State Grid [STGRD.UL] and Southern Power [CNPOW.UL]. State Grid already has a 41 per cent stake in South Australia's electricity grid.—Reuters

UN lifts North Korea sanctions on four ships at China's request

UNITED NATIONS/SEOUL — The UN Security Council agreed on Monday to a Chinese request to remove sanctions on four ships the United Nations had blacklisted for ties to Pyongyang's arms trade. The agreement came after China secured assurances the vessels would not use North Korean crews, a US official said.

China asked the United States on 16 March for help re-

moving the ships from the UN blacklist, according to a diplomatic cable sent the same day from the US permanent mission at the United Nations to a group of other US embassies.

The cable, reviewed by Reuters, showed wrangling between top diplomats from the United States and China over the tough new North Korea sanctions, weeks after Washington had presented a united

front with Beijing, Pyongyang's main ally and trade partner.

The US mission at the United Nations declined to comment on the cable or make its ambassador, Samantha Power, available for an interview about the cable. The US Treasury Department, which administers US economic and financial sanctions, also declined to comment.

The removal of the four ships was confirmed in a press release, which was seen by Reuters and will soon be issued by the Security Council, according to UN diplomats.

While Washington has been the driving force behind the toughening international sanctions regime, China conducts 90 per cent of the trade with North Korea and is the key to enforcing them.—Reuters

Australia strikes threatening to choke Easter weekend air travel

SYDNEY — Australia's Department of Immigration and Border Protection on Tuesday joined other public sector workers in a growing strike that threatens to paralyse air travel at the nation's biggest international airports ahead of a holiday weekend. Any significant disruptions could play into the hands of Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull as he heads into an early election announced yesterday that will be fought largely on industrial relations and reigning in powerful unions.

Their workers will strike for several hours at five regional airports on Tuesday, a spokesman for the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU) said, before expanding to state capitals such as Sydney and Melbourne on Thursday.

The strike could severely inconvenience international and domestic travellers as the nation heads into a four-day weekend for the Easter holiday, one of the busiest times of year for air travel. "Our goal is to put pressure on the agency and on the government to actually talk with us. That's entirely the reason why this is being held, and the timing is because that's the timing that will apply the most pressure," a CPSU spokesman told Reuters.—Reuters

Ship likely to carry plutonium departs for US

TOKAIMURA — A ship believed to be carrying plutonium and other nuclear materials left a port in Tokaimura, northeast of Tokyo, on Tuesday in line with a 2014 Japan-US agreement to return them to the United States.

The plutonium had been provided to Japan in the 1970s by Britain and France as well as the United States for research purposes. It was being stored at a facility of the Japan Atomic Energy Agency in Tokaimura, Ibaraki Prefecture.

On Tuesday afternoon, the British transport ship, called Pacific Egret, left the port for the United States amid heightened security after it finished loading several containers onto the ship in the morning. Under the bilateral agreement, 331 kilograms of plutonium will be transported to the US government-run Savannah River Site nuclear facility in South

Carolina for final disposal. Highly enriched uranium will also be sent to the United States. At the Nuclear Security Summit in the Netherlands in March 2014, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe agreed to return the materials upon request from the administration of U.S. President Barack Obama, which is seeking to strengthen control of nuclear materials.

The port in Ibaraki was on heightened alert as the Pacific Egret arrived on Monday morning, with Japan Coast Guard patrol boats in position nearby.

The plutonium in question was intended for use at the Fast Critical Assembly, a research facility of the JAEA. Of the 331 kg of plutonium, 93 kg had come from the United States, 236 kg from Britain and 2 kg from France. The total amount is enough to create 40 to 50 atomic bombs.—Kyodo News



Photo taken on 22 March, 2016, from a Kyodo News helicopter shows the Pacific Egret docking at a port in Tokaimura, northeast of Tokyo. The British-flagged ship is believed to transport the plutonium which Japan agreed to return to the United States to South Carolina, where the U.S. government-run Savannah River Site nuclear facility is located. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

OPINION

Citizenship across time and space

Khin Maung Aye

CITIZENSHIP has historically been a contested concept and involved a wide range of meaning depending upon the types of political community in which it is placed. What kind of relationship should govern a political community internally and externally or the nature of its membership along with rights and duties are debated among social scientists from an-

cient times. This being so, this is not a new phenomenon but has been the case of all political communities across time and space. The issue of citizenship is not devoid of institutional mechanism and the governance process, which a particular community adopts. Accordingly, it needs to be analysed in congruence with the evolution of state-system and its governing process.

In this juncture, it is worth recalling that the form and substance of citizenship in each historical period highlights the socio-economic and political forces operating at that particular time. Nevertheless, a deeper investigation poses many more questions such as who the citizens are, what constitutes citizenship, who are excluded from or included in citizenship on what basis, whether it is only a legal or political status, or whether it has something to do with the social-economic or religious cultural circumstance in which it is placed upon etc. These questions provide a highly involved set of answers which have to be interpreted from a historical perspective.

In this regard, it would be appropriate to quote Rogers M Smith, who has provided four different means of citizenship. According to the first meaning of citizenship, a citizen is a person with political

rights, which include participation in self-governing process, rights to vote, to hold elective governmental offices, to serve on various sorts of juries and to participate as equal members in political debates and deliberations. The second meaning considers citizenship as a legal status whereas the third refers to those who belong to almost any human association. Fourthly, citizenship signifies more than just membership in some groups—it includes contribution to the well-being of their political community. Such being the case, what constitutes citizenship remains complex and confusing, making it more interesting and provides ample opportunity to explore its various dimensions and reflect upon the manners in which it suits a particular society.

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@gmail.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 great grand Religious Title-Presentation Ceremony of 2016

Ba Sein (Religious Affairs)

IN order to carefully preserve the noblest task for purification, perpetuation, propagation and promotion of the Buddha Sasana (the Teachings of the Omniscient Buddha) at home and abroad, the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar always attaches great importance to the implementation of this noblest task.

In this regard, we all Buddhists throughout the country are very pleased and greatly honored to learn that the President's Office of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar issued the Notification 1/2016 on the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar which falls on the 4th January 2016, regarding religious titles presented by the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

According to the Notification No. 1/2016 of the republic of the Union of Myanmar, the respective religious titles have been presented as follows to internal and international outstanding Buddhist monks, Buddhist nuns and laypersons who earnestly carried out this noblest task for purification, perpetuation, propagation and promotion of the Buddha Sasana at home and abroad.

Religious titles for distinctively fulfilling two Dhuras (duties), Gantha Dhura (duty of

learning and teaching of the Pitaka Scriptures) and Vipassana Dhura (duty of engaging in meditation)

- Abhidhajamharatthaguru title to five eminent Mahatheras (Chief Buddhist monks)
- Tipitakadhara Dhammabhandagarika to one eminent Mahathera
- Aggamahapandita title to fifteen eminent Mahatheras including two Mahatheras from abroad, Thailand
- Mahadhammakahtika Bahujanahitadhara title to one eminent Mahathera.
- Dhammakahtika Bahujanahitadhara title to one eminent monk.
- Aggamahagantavacakapandita title to fourteen eminent monks and one eminent nun.
- Mahaganthavacakapandita title to fourteen eminent monks and two eminent nuns.
- Ganthavacakapandita title to twenty-two eminent monks and one eminent nun.

Religious titles for excellent missionary works on Buddhism

Both internal and international outstanding Buddhist monks, nuns and laypersons who distinctively carried out

this noblest task of the excellent missionary works on Buddhism at home and abroad have been presented these religious titles as follows.

- Abhidhaja-aggamahadhammajotika title to six eminent Mahatheras (Chief Buddhist monks) including two eminent Mahatheras from abroad, India.
- Aggamahasaddhammajotikadhaja title to twenty-five eminent monks including two eminent monks from abroad, one from Thailand, and one from France.
- Mahasaddhammajotikadhaja title to sixteen monks including two eminent monks from abroad, one from the People's republic of China and one from the United States of America, two eminent nuns including one from abroad, Nepal and two male laypersons.
- Sadhammajotikadhaja title to twenty-three eminent monks including three eminent monks from abroad, one from Laos, one from Bangladesh and one from India and one eminent nun and two male laypersons.
- Aggamahakammathan-

acariya title to two eminent monks

- Mahakammathanacariya title to three eminent monks
- Kammathanacariya title to five eminent monks.

Religious titles for excellent missionary works on Buddhism (only for laypersons)

The outstanding laypersons who generously donated and provided the four requisites for this noblest task of excellent works on Buddhism at home and abroad have been presented the respective religious titles as follows. It is learnt that these religious titles have been presented since 1990.

For male

- Aggamahasirisuddhammanijotadhara title to one male layperson
- Sirisuddhammanijotadhara title to two male laypersons
- Sihassuddhammanijotadhara title to one male layperson
- Suddhammanijotadhara title to ten male laypersons

For Female

- Aggamahasirisuddhamma Theingi title to one female layperson
- Sirisuddhamma Theingi title to three female laypersons

- Sihassuddhamma Theingi title to fourteen female laypersons.
- Suddhamma Theingi title to nineteen female laypersons

The great grand religious titles presentation ceremony for presenting those religious titles to the above-mentioned title recipients will be held at the precinct of the Uppatasanti Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw, the capital of republic of the Union of Myanmar on the Full-moon day of Tabaung 1377 ME (on 23rd march 2016). It is learnt that the State Ovadacariya of the State Central Working Committee of the Sangha of All Orders and all title recipients have already been invited to attend this very auspicious ceremony.

It is further learnt that the auspicious ceremony for offering of provisions and various articles to the title-recipient members of the Sangha including the invited members of the Sangha and title-recipient elder nuns, will be held on a large scale at the precinct of the Uppatasanti Pagoda in the late afternoon on the day.

All Buddhists, donors and well-wishers are cordially invited to attend this very auspicious ceremony for paying profound respect to the members of the Sangha and sharing merits of good deeds.

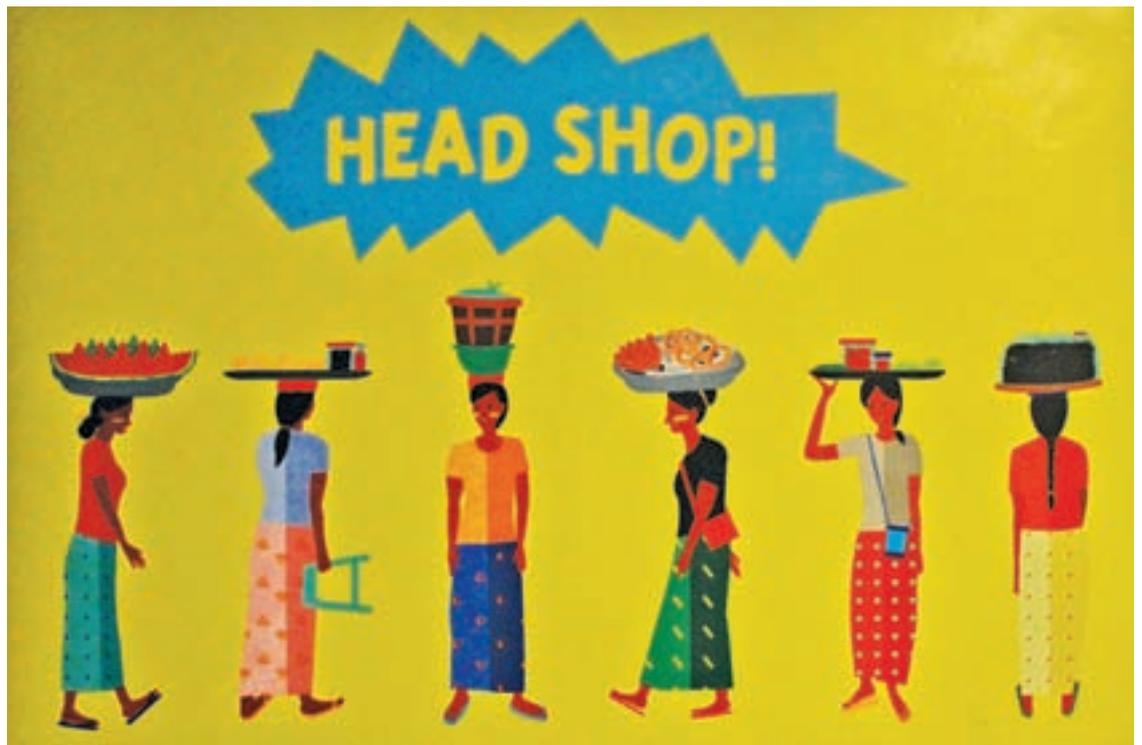
HEAD SHOP! STREET FOOD ON PAPER

Alec Wilmot

If you hadn't heard the news you'd perhaps never find it. Tucked very much out of the way behind Dagon Centre II on the corner of Pyay Road and Kyaung Road, Sanchaung, is the headquarters of Nex Designs, a locally run mobile app company. On Thursday night, however, it was host to a visual and interactive artistic showing of a new and exciting kind - Head Shop! The commercial-artistic venture of Maggie Prendergast and Monika Trakov aims to bring together the distinct minimalist style of Ms. Trakov's

graphic design project Yangon Redesigned, the artistic stylings of Maggie, a New York designer and artist and Myanmar street food culture - particularly the women on the street who sell snacks from atop their heads, singing as they work.

"Not being from Myanmar, to walk around the city and see women selling food off the top of their heads was amazing. We wanted to celebrate the women in Yangon selling food in this manner, I found myself attracted by their melodic calls, their excellent sense of balance, their lovely colourful clothing and thanaka makeup. To see these women walk down the street



yelling "Kyaw sone!" (fried dough) is an everyday occurrence here but to us, as outsiders, it seemed very special. I'm in awe of their abilities and hard work, going out every day in the hot sun," Maggie told the GNLM.

The process itself was an unlikely meeting of two international professional artists - Maggie, so enthralled by the dough women, drew up an image evoking the humble dress, traditional thanaka makeup and the recognisable steel plate on which glutinous treats wrapped in banana leaf, coconuts, fried dough rings and a selection of sauces sit. Monika, with a background in graphic design and poster art, was happy to come aboard and enhance Maggie's work with some sleek modern poster design and appealing fonts.

The partnership seemed almost destined to happen considering that Ms. Trakov presented her design project - Yangon Redesigned - only last December to some acclaim. That launch,

themed around her team's attempts to marry traditional Myanmar culture and design with modern design aesthetics has proven its versatility and appeal by incorporating Ms. Prendergast's artwork and passion for the relatively unknown Myanmar arts and common street culture. Ms. Trakov expressed a keen interest in collaboration and what was shown at the event was very much the product of two artists thinking alike about the wealth of inspiration within the country.

"Part of selling something off of your head means they can't really carry a sign and therefore they have to shout. That is something that should be highlighted and celebrated. It's quite unique to Myanmar and has a sort of culture of its own - the well trained melodic call heard all over the city" said Ms. Trakov.

To complete the affair, the ladies invited a real street seller to demonstrate her food stylings and provide snacks for attendees. Khine Khine Oo spent the

evening cutting up her fried dough and glutinous snacks before decorating them with a handful of freshly shaved coconut and serving it out in cups. She was reportedly impressed and pleased with the event but not quite sure what to do with all the attention. Of the sales and interest generated at the night, both Monika and Maggie expressed satisfaction.

"Yes, we were very pleased with how it all went. Obviously we were glad to see some press and to sell posters but it was also thrilling to bring the street sellers into the limelight through art and design. Yangon has a lot to offer in terms of vibrant colours, both of the food and in the common dress you see in the street every day. It's really deserving of artistic representation and celebration."

The Head Shop! posters as well as Yangon Redesigned prints are available for purchase from the Nex head office in Sanchaung.

Riding of motorcycles banned during Yangon Thingyan festival

THE riding of motorcycles during the Thingyan water festival has been prohibited in all townships of Yangon including some of the townships previously allowed to ride motorcycles according to No 2 Traffic Police Force. They announced that those who violate the traffic rule will get jail sentences. The po-

lice are apparently acting to raise awareness of accidents.

"We do not allow anyone to ride motorbikes for any reason during Thingyan Festival. We will strictly enforce this law and take action against motorcyclists during the festival", said Aung Ko Oo, Deputy Superintendent of the Traffic Police Force office.

"We will arrest those who ride motorcycles in the Yangon area. We will confiscate their licences" he added.

The prohibited days for riding motorcycles in Yangon are from Thingyan Akyo day (the welcoming day of the water festival) to Thingyan Atet day (last day of the water festival).—200

Art and photography exhibition being held in Mandalay

AN Art and photo exhibition is being held at Kuthodaw Gallery, Aungmyaythazan Township of Mandalay from 9 am to 5 pm between 21 and 25 March. This gallery is to be jointly opened by the Myanmar watercolour painting association and Phonkan University of Thailand.

We are so excited to show our fine arts and to cooperate with Myanmar artists. Thanks to the artists of Mandalay and others who featured in it, we have plans to exchange culture and make a workshop between the two countries to mark the friend-

ship of Thailand and Myanmar, said Dr. Kavaid Silsat, associate professor of Photography Department at Phonkan University.

A total of 52 photographs are to be displayed at the exhibition including 47 photos by 15 Thai photographers and five photos by five Myanmar photographers. There are a total of 62 paintings at the exhibition by Thai artists and famous Myanmar artists like Dr Lun Kywe, Alinkakyawswar Artist Soe Moe and others from Mandalay, Bagan, Taunggyi and Monywa. - Tin Maung (Mankopwar)

Attacks on Brussels airport, metro kill 26



Injured people are seen at the scene of explosions at Zaventem airport near Brussels, Belgium, 22 March, 2016, in this handout courtesy of David Crunelle via Twitter. PHOTO: REUTERS

BRUSSELS — At least 26 people were killed in twin attacks on Brussels airport and a rush-hour metro train in the Belgian capital yesterday, triggering security alerts across western Europe and bringing some cross-border transport to a halt.

A witness said he heard shouts in Arabic shortly before two blasts struck a packed airport departure lounge at Brussels airport. The federal prosecutor said one of the blasts was probably triggered by a suicide bomber.

The Belgian health minister said 11 people were killed in the airport bombing and 81 wounded.

The blasts at the airport and metro station occurred four days after the arrest in Brussels of a suspected participant in November militant attacks in Paris that killed 130 people.

Belgian police and combat troops on the streets had been on alert for any reprisal action but the attacks took place in crowded public areas where people and bags are not searched.

Video showed devastation in the hall with ceiling tiles and glass scattered across the floor. Some passengers emerged from the terminal with blood spattered over their clothes. Smoke rose from the building through shattered windows and passengers fled down a slipway, some still hauling their bags.

Many of the dead and wounded were badly injured in the legs, one airport told Reuters, suggesting at least one bomb in a bag.

Britain, Germany, France and the Netherlands, all wary of spillover from conflict in Syria, were among states announcing extra security measures.

All public transport in Brussels was shut down, as it was in London during 2005 Islamist militant attacks there that killed 52. Authorities appealed to citizens not to use overloaded telephone networks, extra troops were sent into the city and the Belgian Crisis Centre, clearly wary of a further incident, appealed to the population: "Stay where you are".

British Sky News television's Alex Rossi, at the airport, said he heard two "very, very loud explosions".

"I could feel the building move. There was also dust and smoke as well...I went towards where the explosion came from and there were people coming out looking very dazed and shocked."

Alphonse Youla, 40, who works at the airport, told Reuters he heard a man shouting out in Arabic before the first explosion. "Then the glass ceiling of the airport collapsed."

"I helped carry out five people dead, their legs destroyed," he said, his hands covered in blood.

A witness said the blasts occurred at a check-in desk.

Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel spoke of "a black time for our country".

"What we feared has come to pass. Our country has been struck by attacks which are blind, violent and cowardly."

The STIB public transport operator said 15 were killed on board the metro train and 55 injured. Belga news agency cited the fire brigade as saying 11 were killed at the airport, but there was still some uncertainty about casualties.

The blast hit the train as it left Maelbeek station, close to European Union institutions, heading to the city centre.

The VRT public broadcaster carried a photograph of a metro carriage at a platform with doors and windows completely blown out, its structure deformed and the interior mangled and charred.

A local journalist tweeted a photograph of a person lying covered in blood among smoke outside Maelbeek metro station, on the main Rue de la Loi avenue which connects central Brussels with the EU institutions. Ambulances were ferrying the wounded away and sirens rang out across the area.

The federal prosecutor told a news conference one of the two explosions at the airport was likely to have been caused by a suicide bomber. Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel told the news conference: "What we had feared has come to pass. Our country has been struck by attacks that are blind, violent and cowardly."

British Prime Minister David Cameron, whose country is also on a high security alert, expressed shock over the attack. "We will do everything we can to help." —Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

Panama canal sets depth limit on ships due to drought

PANAMA CITY — The Panama Canal will next month impose new draft restrictions on ships due to falling water levels at nearby lakes that form part of the waterway, the authority that administers the canal said in a statement on Monday.

Ships seeking to cross the waterway must comply with a maximum depth limit of 39 feet (11.89 metres) beginning on 18 April, but the Panama Canal Authority (APC) said the impact on operations would be minimal.

The "temporary and preventive measures" are connected to local climate impacts of El Niño, the seasonal weather phenomenon that has caused a drought in the canal's watershed, and will be implemented in 6-inch (15-cm) decrements that will be announced at least four weeks in advance. The APC added that ships loaded after March 21 will need to comply with the new restrictions. —Reuters

Flight attendant flees L.A. airport, cocaine found in bags

LOS ANGELES — A flight attendant fled when she was selected for a random screening at Los Angeles International Airport, prompting a search that turned up 66 pounds (30 kg) of cocaine in her carry-on bags, a Drug Enforcement Administration spokesman said on Monday.

The woman, who had arrived at the terminal on Friday for a flight, abandoned her belongings before escaping on foot, Special Agent Timothy Massino said. The DEA declined further comment on the case while an investigation was under way.

A law enforcement source said that the flight attendant had been identified by investigators but not apprehended as of Monday evening.

Authorities did not say which airline she worked for and there were conflicting media reports. —Reuters

India to hold BRICS summit in October in Goa

NEW DELHI — India's External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj yesterday said the upcoming BRICS summit will be held in its western state of Goa in October. "The 8th BRICS summit would be organised in Goa on 15-16 October this year," Swaraj said.

A statement issued by India's foreign ministry said India assumed BRICS chairmanship from the Russian Federation for the year 2016.

"Over fifty meetings and events, at the ministerial, senior officials, working groups, technical, and track-II levels, are proposed to be organised during India's BRICS chairmanship through the year," the statement said. Swaraj unveiled the BRICS logo for the duration of India's BRICS chairmanship and launched India's BRICS website.

The last BRICS summit was held in the Russian city of Ufa in July 2015. BRICS is an association of five countries - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. —Xinhua

President Ghani beats school bell, vows to boost education in Afghanistan

KABUL — Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani yesterday vowed to boost education and literacy rate in the militancy-plagued Afghanistan.

"The government is determined to utilize all ways and means to boot education, improve education system and increase the rate of literacy in Afghanistan," said President Ghani in his address to inaugurate new educational year. Both the government entities and citizens should work in harmony to support education in the country, the president said.

He also called upon parents to help government in boosting education and increasing literacy rate in the country by sending their children to school. The government would bolster the professionalism of teachers to provide qualitative teaching to students in school, the president stressed. President Ghani after expressing gratitude to international community for supporting Afghanistan over the past more than a decade, beat the school bell and formally opened new educational year in his country. —Xinhua

Britain's crisis response committee to meet after Brussels blasts — Cameron

LONDON — Prime Minister David Cameron said he would chair a crisis response meeting following explosions in Brussels on Tuesday.

"I am shocked and concerned by the events in Brussels. We will do everything we can to help," Cameron said on Twitter, adding that he would chair a meeting of the COBRA response committee.

"I will be chairing a COBRA meeting on the events in Brussels later this morning," Cameron added. —Reuters

Australia arrests two over alleged Islamic State financing — police

SYDNEY — Australian police said on Tuesday they had arrested two people, including a 16-year-old girl, on suspicion of raising funds to support the operations of the Islamic State militant group.

The arrest in a Sydney suburb of the schoolgirl and a man, aged 20, were part of counter-terrorism operations aimed at thwarting attacks by domestic radicals at home and disrupting the flow of funds to foreign fighters overseas.

“We anticipate that both these people will be charged later today and attend court and the charge that we anticipate they will have is one of financing terrorism,” New South Wales state police Deputy Commissioner Catherine Burn told reporters.

“We will be alleging that they were involved in obtaining money to send offshore to assist the Islamic State in its activities,” she said. Australia’s anti-money laundering agency said in November that reports of suspected financing for militant groups had tripled in the past year, with more than A\$50 million (\$38 million) that could be used to support Islamist militants being investigated.

Authorities believe dozens of Australian citizens have travelled to Syria and Iraq to fight alongside Islamic State militants.

Australia, a staunch ally of the United States and its battle against Islamist militants in Iraq and Syria, has been on heightened alert for attacks by home-grown radicals since 2014.—*Reuters*

Syrian government refuses to discuss Assad’s future

GENEVA/BEIRUT — The fate of President Bashar al-Assad will play no part in talks to end the Syrian war, the head of the government’s delegation said, leading the U.N. peace envoy to warn that lack of progress on the issue could threaten a fragile cessation of hostilities.

Damascus delegate Bashar Ja’afari said Assad’s future had “nothing to do” with the negotiations, which entered their second week on Monday, insisting that counter-terrorism efforts remained the priority for the government.

“The (terms of) reference of our talks do not give any indication whatsoever with regard to the issue of the President of the Syrian Arab Republic,” he said when asked about the willingness of the government delegation to engage in serious talks on political transition. “This is something already excluded.”

UN envoy Staffan de Mistura — who describes Syria’s political transition as “the mother of all issues” — responded by saying the government delegation’s refusal to discuss it could lead to a deterioration of the situation on the ground.

“Everyone more or less agrees, the cessation of hostilities is still holding,” he said. “The same ... more or less for the movement on humanitarian aid. But neither of them can be sustained if we don’t get progress on the political transition.”

The fragility of the three-week-old cessation, which was backed by the United States and Russia, was highlighted on Monday when Moscow said it had recorded six violations in the last 24 hours.

The Syrian opposition accused the government delegation of wasting time by refusing to discuss the future of Assad. “It is not possible to wait like this, while the regime delegation wastes time without



Members of the Syrian government’s delegation talk before a news conference after a meeting on Syria at the European headquarters of the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, on 21 March, 2016.

PHOTO: REUTERS

achieving anything,” said Salim al-Muslat, spokesman for the opposition High Negotiations Committee.

Arguments over Assad’s fate were a major cause of the failure of previous UN peace efforts in 2012 and 2014 to end a civil war that has killed more than 250,000 people and caused a refugee crisis.

The five-year-old conflict between the government and insurgents has also allowed Islamic State to take advantage of the chaos and take control of areas in the east of the country.

Fighters from the jihadist group — which is excluded from the ceasefire deal — killed 26 Syrian soldiers on Monday west of Palmyra, a monitoring group

said, after days of advances by government forces backed by Syrian and Russian air cover.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said last week that the Syrian army would soon recapture Palmyra from Islamic State, which has held the desert city for nearly a year.

Palmyra has both symbolic and military value as the site of ancient Roman-era ruins — mostly destroyed by Islamic State — and because of its location on a highway linking mainly government-held western Syria to Islamic State’s eastern stronghold.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the fighting took place about 4 km (2 miles) west of Palmyra.

It was not possible to independently verify the death toll. Syria’s state news agency SANA said the army and allied forces, backed by the Syrian air force, carried out “concentrated operations” against Islamic State around Palmyra and the Islamic State-held town of al-Qaryatayn, about 100 km further west.

After more than five months of air strikes in support of Assad, which turned the course of the civil war in the government’s favour, Putin announced the withdrawal last week of most Russian forces. But Russian planes have continued to support army operations near Palmyra, according to the Observatory and regional media.—*Reuters*

Gunmen attack EU military mission HQ in Mali; one attacker killed

BAMAKO — Gunmen on Monday attacked a hotel in Mali’s capital, Bamako, that had been converted into the headquarters of a European Union military training operation, but there no casualties among the mission’s personnel. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, which began at around 6:30 p.m. local time (1830 GMT), but Mali and neighbouring West African countries have increasingly been the target of Islamist militants, some of them affiliated with al Qaeda.

One of the assailants was killed and two suspects were arrested and were being interrogated, the country’s internal security minister said.

A witness said the attack targeted Bamako’s Nord-Sud Hotel, headquarters for the mission of nearly 600 EU personnel deployed to Mali to train its security forces.

“The attackers tried to force through the entry and the guards posted in front of the entrance opened fire. One attacker was killed,” he said.

Sekou Tamboura was also near the hotel when the shooting erupted.

“We were next to the Hamdallaye Cemetery when the first shot rang out, then there was a second and a third. There were a few seconds of pause, then it kicked off and did not stop. It was every man for himself,” Tamboura said.

The mission confirmed the

attack on its official Twitter feed.

“EUTM-MALI HQ has been attacked. No EUTM-Mali personnel has been hurt ... during the attack,” it said.

Azalai Hotels, which runs the Nord-Sud Hotel, later posted on Twitter that the assailants had been repelled and the building had been secured.

“One of the assailants was killed. We are examining the sack he was carrying, which could contain explosives,” Interior Security Minister Colonel Salif Traoré said on state television. “Two suspects were arrested and are being interrogated.”

He added that security forces were carrying out operations around the EU headquarters and

seeking to secure another building nearby.

A photo taken of the dead gunman seen by Reuters showed a man who appeared to be in his 20s, possibly from northern Mali, dressed stylishly in jeans, a brown shirt and Nike trainers, lying on his back in a pool of blood beside a Kalashnikov assault rifle.

A Reuters reporter at the scene of the attack said security forces, including Malian army special forces, had cordoned off the area while a cleanup operation was carried out. Vehicles from Mali’s United Nations peacekeeping mission were also visible.

The EU mission was deployed as part of efforts to stabilise Mali, which saw Islamist

militants, some of them linked to al Qaeda, seize its desert north in 2012. France led an intervention a year later to drive back the Islamists, fearing that the lawless zone could be used as a base for attacks against targets in Europe.

However, violence is again on the rise. Dozens of people were killed in a November raid on Bamako’s Radisson Blu hotel claimed by al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the group’s North African branch. A similar assault on a hotel in Burkina Faso’s capital, Ouagadougou, followed in January. AQIM also claimed responsibility for another attack that killed 19 people a beach resort town in Ivory Coast earlier this month.—*Reuters*

Obama ends Cuba trip with dissident meeting, baseball and hope

HAVANA — President Barack Obama will meet with Cuban dissidents yesterday and watch a baseball game with the communist country's president after delivering a speech that will conclude his historic trip with a hopeful vision for future relations.

After a day spent tussling verbally with President Raul Castro over human rights, Obama will address the Cuban people in a speech from the Grand Theater of Havana that will be broadcast live by state media across the Caribbean island.

Obama, whose White House tenure ends in January, also will meet with civil society leaders at the US Embassy to back up his warning to Castro that a failure to improve Cuba's human rights record would hinder momentum towards ending the decades-old US embargo.

The White House has not released a list of the activist leaders Obama plans to meet.

Castro bristled at a rare news conference on Mon-



US first lady Michelle Obama smiles with Cuban President Raul Castro as she and President Barack Obama (C) sit with Castro as his guests for a state dinner at the Palacio de la Revolucion in Havana, on 21 March. PHOTO: REUTERS

day when asked by a US journalist about detention of political opponents. He denied such practices and demanded a list of examples. The White House said it had shared many such lists with the Cuban gov-

ernment before.

Obama's meeting with dissidents underscores lingering tensions between the former Cold War foes despite the rapprochement in 2014 that led to Sunday's one-time unthinkable arriv-

al of Air Force One on Cuban soil.

It also reflects Obama's need to convince critics at home that his visit, the first by a U.S. president in nearly 90 years, would not be used to prop up the Cas-

tro government.

Obama often visits with civil society leaders on foreign trips, particularly in countries such as China, where Washington has raised human rights concerns as well.

Beyond that meeting, aides said Obama planned to use his speech to offer a vision for warmer relations extending beyond his own time in office.

"It's the one point to step back and talk to the Cuban people, and I mean all of the Cuban people," White House deputy national security adviser Ben Rhodes said on Monday.

"He'll pull together all of these themes he's been discussing ... to say why he believes we should be hopeful for the future."

Obama wraps up his trip with a baseball game. He and his family, who accompanied him on the trip, will join Castro at a Major League Baseball exhibition game between the Tampa Bay Rays and the Cuban National Team.

The White House wants the event to highlight common bonds between Cubans and Americans. It will create a picture of the two leaders enjoying a favourite pastime to cap the trip. Obama leaves for a two-day trip to Argentina after the game. —Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV WEST SCENT VOY NO (108N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV WEST SCENT VOY NO (108N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.3.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S INTERASIA LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA HASIL VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA HASIL VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.3.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T./A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV NINOS VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV NINOS VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.3.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S CHINA SHIPPING LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV VEGA LUNA VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV VEGA LUNA VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.3.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P/M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT
(S'PORE) PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV YANGON STAR VOY NO (054 7JR)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV YANGON STAR VOY NO (054 7JR) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.3.2016 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 CMA CGM LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV CAPE FLORES VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV CAPE FLORES VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.3.2016 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.

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

Phone No: 2301185

Brazil's arabica crop: bigger and better after drought

GUAXUPE, (Brazil) — Whichever of the many forecasts for Brazil's maturing arabica coffee crop end up on the mark, there is no doubt the harvest will be large and have more big screen beans. It will also likely to be of excellent quality as La Niña kicks in.

On a recent trip by Reuters through the heart of Brazil's main arabica belt along the border between Sao Paulo and Minas Gerais, the country's two leading growing states, agronomists said farms were fully recovered from two years of drought.

Trees were laden with large, dense and ripening fruit with low incidence of disease and pests.

"The volume of the crop is no longer at risk. It's big and the weather is not going to change the size much," Carlos Fidelis, an economist at Brazil's biggest coffee cooperative Cooxupe, said while touring



Workers unload 60-kg jute bags of coffee beans for export in a coffee warehouse in Santos, Brazil in 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

ing farms in the region.

Factbox of coffee forecasts:

Fidelis said trees in Guaxupe, a hilly region in southern Minas Gerais, a state that produces 75 per cent of Brazil's arabica, were holding a normal distribution of large beans, typically classified by screen sizes of 17 or greater

and preferred by roasters in Italy and Germany.

Over the past two harvests, damage from drought and hot weather caused the crop to produce smaller beans.

"This will be the first year in the past three where larger beans will be over 30 percent of the harvest," said Ezelino Tessarini, an

engineer at the Coopinhal cooperative.

Yields on the 10,000 hectares around the co-op will improve by 23 per cent from last year to 28-to-30 bags a hectare, Tessarini said from a receiving warehouse in Espirito Santo do Pinhal, in Sao Paulo.

Meteorologists forecast the coffee belt to shift

to the dry season ahead of harvest, which is still a month away as beans finish filling out and maturing.

Warming Pacific waters along the equator, known as El Niño conditions, contributed to the rainy weather in southeast Brazil in recent months. But meteorologist Marco Antonio dos Santos at forecaster Somar, said the Pacific was cooling quickly, which would lead to drier La Niña weather as soon as April.

If sunny skies during harvest are confirmed, it bodes well for the eventual taste of beans. Moist weather when beans are cured taints them with an undesirable bitter taste.

"When the Pacific was warming, we saw lots of rain, but not this year," Santos said, forecasting rains this week over the coffee belt but then increasingly drier weather ahead.—Reuters

We can't pay: Zimbabwe farmers resist compensating evicted white landowners

HARARE — Zimbabwe's plan to win back international funding by paying compensation to white farmers forced off their land faces a major snag: the black farmers expected to stump up the cash say they don't have it.

The new occupants working the land, many of who had few farming skills when they were resettled, say they can barely make ends meet, let alone pay an extra levy.

Their agricultural output is a fraction of the level seen before 2000, when President Robert Mugabe — saying he sought to correct colonial injustices — introduced land reforms which led to thousands of experienced white farmers being evicted.

They are also being hammered by Zimbabwe's worst drought in a quarter of a century and toiling under a stagnating economy that has seen banks reluctant to lend and cheaper food imports from the likes of South Africa undermining their businesses.

"Are farmers able to pay? I will say no. Is the land being productive? I will say no again," said Victor Matemadanda, secretary general of a group representing war veterans who led the land seizure drive in 2000 and are now farmers.

He told Reuters that many farmers could not even meet water and electricity bills and that it was the government's obligation — not theirs — to pay the compensation.

Zimbabwe Commercial Farmers Union President Abdul Nyathi also said his members would not be able to pay compensation. "Most of the farmers face viability issues, the government will have to look at other ways of raising money," he added.

Mugabe's land reforms have led to about 5,000 white farmers being evicted from their land by his supporters and war veterans over the past 16 years, often violently. More than a dozen farmers have been killed.—Reuters

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

(4/2016)

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

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-091(15-16)	Skid Mounted Crude Transfer Pump (300GPM x 500PSI) with Engine (1) Set	US\$
(2)	IFB-092(15-16)	Skid Mounted Crude Transfer Pump (200GPM x 150FT HD) with Engine (1) Set	US\$
(3)	IFB-093(15-16)	Spares for NKK Compressor KJB2 with Waukesha L7042 Gas Engine (24) Items	US\$
(4)	IFB-094(15-16)	Spares for NKK Compressor KB2 with Waukesha H2475 Gas Engine (21) Items	US\$
(5)	IFB-095(15-16)	CNG Filling Dispenser (2) Units	US\$
(6)	IFB-096(15-16)	Spares for P9390GL Waukesha Engine / Cooper MH64 Compressor and Ariel JGk4 Compressor (26) Items	US\$
(7)	IFB-097(15-16)	Spares for Ajax DPC600 Compressor (20) Items	US\$
(8)	IFB-098(15-16)	Spares for Waukesha 12VAT 27GL Engine (42) Items	US\$
(9)	IFB-099(15-16)	Spares for Waukesha L 7042 GSI Engine and Ariel JGK4 Compressor (9) Items	US\$
(10)	IFB-100(15-16)	Spares for Waukesha F2895 Engine and Ariel JGE2 Compressor (53) Items	US\$
(11)	IFB-101(15-16)	Spares for FLC504 Derrick Shaker Unit (7) Items	US\$
(12)	IFB-102(15-16)	Coalescing Gas Filters (Horizontal Type) (2) Nos	US\$
(13)	IFB-103(15-16)	Maintenance and Inspection Requirements for Ywama Gas Distribution Station (1) Lot	US\$
(14)	IFB-104(15-16)	Maintenance and Inspection Requirements for PLC (Daw Nyein) (1) Lot	US\$
(15)	DMP/L-018(15-16)	HP Ao Copier / Plotter and Digital Multi Function Colour Copier (A3) for Geological Use (2) Items	KS
(16)	DMP/L-019(15-16)	M.S Plate, M.S Rod & Angle Iron for Craft Boats (6) Nos Repairing Job	KS
(17)	DMP/L-020(15-16)	M.S Plate, M.S Pipe, M.S Rod & Angle Iron for River Craft MTB-5 Repairing Job	KS
(18)	DMP/L-021(15-16)	Air Compressor (4" x 4" Reciprocating with 12-13HP Diesel Engine) (4) Sets	KS
(19)	DMP/L-022(15-16)	Water Transfer Pump with Motor and Water Transfer Pump with Engine (2) Items	KS

Tender Closing Date & Time - 28-4-2016, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 21st March, 2016 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

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

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV ANAN BHUM VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ANAN BHUM VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.3.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S COSCO CONTAINER LINES**
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV EVER ABLE VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV EVER ABLE VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.3.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S EVERGREEN SHIPPING
LINE**

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Phone: 09 250107962, 09 251022355



Rihanna arrives at the BRIT Awards at the O2 arena in London, February 24, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Rihanna's 'Anti' reclaims Billboard 200 top spot

LOS ANGELES — R&B star Rihanna reclaimed the top spot on the weekly US Billboard 200 album chart on Monday, holding off Adele and Justin Bieber in a slow sales week.

"Anti," the eighth album by Rihanna, moved to No. 1 from No. 3 with sales of 54,000 units from albums, songs and streaming activity, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

"Anti" has sold nearly 300,000 albums in the United States since its February release. Apart from sales, a million copies given to fans who signed up for music streaming platform Tidal.

Rihanna's "Anti" world tour kicked off last week and will play in Europe this summer.

In a week where no album came close to 100,000 units, British singer Adele's "25" album held onto No. 2 with another 51,000 units sold. Canadian pop star Justin Bieber's "Purpose" climbed two spots to No. 3 with 48,000 units.

The only new entries in the Billboard 200 top 10 this week were metalcore band Killswitch Engage's latest album "Incar-nate" at No. 6 and Brooklyn hip hop ground Flatbush Zombies' debut album "3001: A Laced Odyssey" at No. 10.

On the Digital Songs chart, which measures online single sales, Danish artist Lukas Graham held onto the top spot with "7 Years" selling 125,000 downloads.—Reuters



Filmmaker Rian Johnson has been accused of cutting his former agent out of negotiations for his new "Star Wars" movie. PHOTO: PTI

'Star Wars' director Rian Johnson sued by former agent

LOS ANGELES — Filmmaker Rian Johnson has been accused of cutting his former agent out of negotiations for his new "Star Wars" movie.

Brian Dreyfuss has filed suit in Los Angeles Superior Court, claiming he should be entitled to 10 per cent of the "Looper" director's earnings for "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" sequel Episode VIII, which is currently in production, said the Hollywood Reporter.

In his legal papers, Dreyfuss alleges he helped to set up the

initial meeting between Johnson and "Star Wars" producer, Lucasfilm President Kathleen Kennedy, in 2012, but the filmmaker subsequently insisted he wasn't interested in pursuing negotiations.

Johnson then dumped Dreyfuss as his talent agent in March, 2014, a year before the 42-year-old was announced as the new director of "Star Wars: Episode VIII". Johnson is yet to comment on the dispute. "Star Wars: Episode VIII" is set for release in December, 2017.—PTI

Cuban cover band teases Rolling Stones fans before concert

HAVANA — Cuban cover band Los Kent teased Havana tourists and residents with a tribute to the Rolling Stones at the weekend ahead of the rock group's historic concert.

Performing "Satisfaction", music fans gathered around the band, which usually plays in clubs, at Havana's Central Park.

"It's the first time ... a rock

and roll band plays in this park, an emblematic park for us that means so much," singer Isan told the crowd. "So thank you very much for being here and we will continue."

The Rolling Stones, who have been performing across Latin America, will take to the stage in Havana on 25 March.—Reuters

British judge urges Madonna, Ritchie to end son custody dispute

LONDON — A British judge made a fresh plea on Monday to pop star Madonna and her film director ex-husband Guy Ritchie to work out an amicable solution to their custody battle over their teenage son. The "Material Girl" singer and "Sherlock Holmes" director, whose litigation over 15-year old Rocco has been taking place in New York and London, divorced in 2008 and agreed their son would live with the songstress.

But since late last year Rocco has been in London living with Ritchie and in December ignored a New York court order to return to the United States to stay with his mother. Madonna, 57, issued legal proceedings in the British capital last December but later sought to withdraw them. At Monday's hearing — which neither Madonna nor Ritchie attended — judge Justice Alistair MacDonald granted



Madonna performs during her Rebel Heart Tour concert at Studio City in Macau, China on 20 February, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

ed the singer permission to end the proceedings in Britain and appealed to both sides to settle the matter, according to a transcript of his judgement. "... At the root of these proceedings ... is a temporary

breakdown in trust. For all the media coverage, comment and analysis, this is a case born out of circumstances that arise for countless separated parents the world over," he said.—Reuters

Taylor Swift performs at Reese Witherspoon's 40th birthday party

LOS ANGELES — Actress Reese Witherspoon celebrated her 40th birthday on Saturday with a private performance by Taylor Swift and a duet with Keith Urban.

The "Legally Blonde" star marked the age milestone on Tuesday, but her family helped her get into the party spirit a little early by throwing a big bash in Hollywood this weekend, with a string of celebrity friends in attendance. Guests at the event, held at the Warwick, included Kate Hudson, Matthew McConaughey, Robert Downey, Jr, Courteney Cox, Tobey Maguire, Jason Bateman, and Jennifer Aniston and her husband Justin Theroux, reported Hollywood Life. Nicole Kidman was also spotted at the party, where her husband Keith was part of the night's entertainment, alongside surprise performer Taylor. Witherspoon, who arrived with

husband Jim Toth, shared her excitement as she headed to the bash in a Snapchat video with her mother Betty, who was featured nodding as the actress asked, "Are you gonna get crazy on the dance floor, Mum?". She captioned the brief clip, "Crazy on the dance floor? #BirthdayWeekend #MomsInTown".

Meanwhile, her friend Hudson also used social media to document the night's celebrations, including the moment when Swift was introduced to the stage for her unexpected appearance, singing an acoustic version of "Shake It Off". Witherspoon, who wore a sparkly silver dress, also got in on the fun by hopping onstage to join country star Keith, who played guitar for a rendition of Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Sweet Home Alabama", which featured on the soundtrack to her 2002 romantic comedy of the same name.—PTI

Hello Kitty-themed train departs from Taiwan station

TAIPEI — Lucky fans of Hello Kitty were among the first to ride a train themed after the iconic fictional character on its inaugural run in Taiwan on Monday.

The Hello Kitty-themed Taroko Express train, the first in Taiwan, set off from the Shulin train station and will travel to Taitung on the east coast route.

The Taiwan Railway Administration, which will introduce Hello Kitty merchandise, said it plans to add more themed trains to its fleet.—Reuters



A performer dressed as a Hello Kitty poses inside a Hello Kitty-themed Taroko Express train in Taipei, Taiwan 21 March. PHOTO: REUTERS

NY's Times Square sets stage for World Puppetry Day

NEW YORK — Dinosaurs, monsters and Muppets transformed Times Square into a big puppet show on Monday to celebrate World Puppetry Day.

Puppet-versions of US presidential candidates Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders were also on hand to mark the day at the event hosted by the Broadway musical "Avenue Q." "I think a lot of times people think puppetry is just for children," said Ben Durocher, one of the stars of "Avenue Q." "But really puppetry is an art form that can be appreciated by all audiences, adults and children alike."

Iranian puppet artist Javad Zolfaghari created World Puppetry Day, which was first celebrated in 2003. It is marked around the globe on 21 March.—Reuters

Artist Emin unveils first solo exhibition in China

HONG KONG — British artist Tracey Emin showcased on Monday her "I Cried Because I Love You" exhibition, taking place in two Hong Kong galleries, marking her first solo presentation in Greater China.

The display features paintings, embroidery, neon and a bronze sculpture, many of them depicting Emin's naked body. The artist, who came to prominence in

the 1990s, said she got the name from an old watercolour she found in her studio in France.

"And then I kept playing with it and then I realized 'I Cried Because I Love You' is really positive, it is really good. And I think almost everybody's loved someone so much that it hurts," she said

"You just feel like if you don't see them you'll implode ... It's more about that feeling, that

feeling of love and understanding love. But it's not unrequited love. It's an impossible love and that's what I am talking about."

Emin said she worked from photographs of herself to convey the physicality of her body for her latest work and added that she thought her honesty did not always go down well with everyone in the art world.

"I don't think it becomes eas-

ier, it becomes harder. And also ... being an artist and being well known and being recognized is not good. It's not good for my career," she said.

"I'm not taken seriously, I never have been taken seriously on certain echelons of the art world because I'm like this ... I think art ... should be for everybody and it should be accessible."—Reuters



(23-3-2016, Wednesday)

<p>6:00 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paritta by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw <p>7:35 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money Talk Myanmar (Part-1) <p>8:35 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People's Talks <p>9:35 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science and Technology Programme <p>10:35 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet The Successful <p>11:35 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRTV Education <p>12:50 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TV Drama Series <p>2:35 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myanmar Traditional Boxing 	<p>4:35 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Football Magazine (Yangon United FC) <p>5:35 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentary (Water as agift and Water in Disaster) <p>6:35 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentary <p>7:15 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TV Drama Series <p>8:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News / International News/ Weather Report <p>9:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News • TV Drama Series • Fine Atrs- Bosom of Dramatic Performance
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Note/ Hourly News Bulletins (Local + International)

Jimmy Choo says Asia growth to help it outperform luxury market

LONDON — British shoemaker Jimmy Choo (CHOO.L) said strong demand in Asia would help it grow faster than the overall luxury market this year, after it posted a 7.2 per cent rise in underlying revenue in 2015.

"Jimmy Choo continues to outpace the sector despite the challenging competitive environment," said Chairman Peter Harf in a statement on Tuesday.

"The company successfully reversed the first half decline in wholesale revenues and remains

on track with growth forecasts in Asia and Japan where brand awareness continues to grow strongly." Jimmy Choo said Asian revenues, excluding Japan, grew 20.1 percent at constant currencies last year, helped by new store openings in China and Hong Kong. Japanese revenues were up 29 percent, driven by domestic demand as well as an influx of tourists from mainland China.

Growth in the luxury goods market has slowed, particularly in the second half of 2015 after

the attacks in Paris put tourists off travelling to Europe, where many luxury brands make a significant proportion of their sales.

Jimmy Choo said a weaker euro had helped its sales in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, partly offsetting the loss of Russian visitors to the region and geopolitical uncertainty.

The company reported adjusted core earnings of 51 million pounds (\$73 million) for the year ended Dec. 31, up 1.5 percent from 2014's figure of 50.2 million pounds.—Reuters



(23-3-2016 07:00am ~ 24-3-2016 7:00am) MST

Today Fresh

<p>07:03 Am News</p> <p>07:26 Am Sitagu International Buddhist Academy (Part-1)</p> <p>07:49 Am Yangon Markets: Da Nyein Gone Market</p> <p>08:03 Am News</p> <p>08:26 Am Myanmar HR Conference 2015 (Part- IV)</p> <p>08:49 Am Temple Stalls</p> <p>09:03 Am News</p> <p>09:26 Am Living in Off-Season</p> <p>09:39 Am International Dances in Myanmar</p> <p>10:03 Am News</p> <p>10:26 Am Orchidologist Dr. Saw Lwin</p> <p>10:49 Am ABU Song Festival</p>	<p>(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Tuesday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)</p> <p>(03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)</p> <p>Prime Time</p> <p>07:03 Pm News</p> <p>07:26 Pm A Trip To The City Of Rakkhita, Rakhine</p> <p>07:46 Pm Dhamma School</p> <p>08:03 Pm News</p> <p>08:26 Pm Myanmar Traditional Identity (EP- 3) The Sphinx Of Egypt And The Manousiha Of Myanmar</p> <p>08:40 Pm Bollywood Actress "Laila Khan" (Born & Raised in Myanmar) (Part-I)</p> <p>(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm)-Today Repeat(09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)</p> <p>(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am)-Tuesday Repeat(07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)</p> <p>(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am)-Today Repeat(07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)</p> <p>(For Detailed Schedule – www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)</p>
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(23-3-2016, Wednesday)

<p>6:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather Report • Music Programme <p>6:30 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pyi Thu Ni Ti <p>6:50 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music Programme <p>7:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Drama Series <p>7:50 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Drama Series <p>8:30 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cartoon Programme "BEN 10 ALIEN FORCE (Part- XVII)" 	<p>9:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music Programme <p>9:10 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Premier League Review (Part-1) <p>9:30 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Movie Songs <p>9:50 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music Programme <p>10:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life In NightArt In Life (Ep-1) <p>10:40 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myanmar Video <p>Midnight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close Down.
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From 23-3-2016 (Wednesday) 6:00 Pm To 24-3-2016(Thursday) 6:00 Pm

This schedule will be repeated four times in 24 hours.

Fantasy becoming reality in Premier League shakeup

LONDON — With two months of a gripping Premier League season left Leicester City are closing on the title and it is not fanciful to suggest that Tottenham Hotspur, West Ham United and Southampton could complete the top four.

The idea of Chelsea, Arsenal, Manchester United, Manchester City and Liverpool, or even just two of them, finishing fifth or lower, would have been laughed off as absurd before a ball was kicked in August.

But fantasy has become the new reality in the world's richest football league.

Leicester, 5000-1 shots to win the title at the start of the season, need six wins from their last seven matches to guarantee becoming champions of England for the first time.

Tottenham, without a title since 1961, are their nearest challengers and West Ham United, in fifth place level on points with sixth-placed Manchester United, are sniffing a first-ever qualification for the Champions League.

Southampton, who came from two goals down to beat Liverpool on Sunday, are just four points behind fourth-placed Manchester City who are caught in a downward spiral.

Jose Mourinho knows only too well that reputations no longer count for anything in the Premier League.

The man who led Chelsea to the title last season was sacked in December after losing nine of their first 16 games.

"Every club has very good players so I think it's difficult for the top teams in England because of the competitive nature," he had predicted in August after watching the likes of Crystal Palace, Stoke City and West Ham sign world class players.

One statistic sums the shift in power this season.

Chelsea, Arsenal, Manchester City, Manchester United, and Liverpool have a lower combined points total so far than Leicester, West Ham, Southampton, Stoke and West Bromwich Albion (241 to 248).

Many expect normal service to resume next season when Man City will be buoyed by the arrival of Pep Guardiola, Chelsea re-group under a new manager and United could possibly have Mourinho at the Old Trafford helm.

But according to Stoke's manager Mark Hughes, the days when the establishment dominated the top five or six places is over.

"This year isn't a one-off, it will be more prevalent in years to come and

I think maybe there has been a changing of the guard somewhat," Hughes, whose side are on course for their highest Premier League finish, was quoted as saying in *The Telegraph*.

"The middle group have got stronger, there are only so many players that top clubs can really bring into their squad to make them better. You can only fill so many places. There is a lot of talent out there that will want to come to the Premier League."

With a new eye-watering domestic TV contract kicking in next season, a three-year deal with Sky and BT worth 5.13 billion pounds (\$7.38 billion), 71 per cent higher than the current one, the quality gap is likely to shrink again next season.

Fans around Europe where title races rarely feature more than two clubs, or in France's case these days one, can only watch on in envy at the unpredictability of the Premier League.

No wonder Spanish league president Javier Tebas said recently the Premier League will soon be the 'NBA of football.'

West Ham manager Slaven Bilic, whose 10 million pounds plus signing Dimitri Payet would be a guaranteed starter for any of the traditional elite, agrees.

"Now, it's definitely the place to be. Every single club is in a situation to buy good players."—Reuters



Leicester City fans celebrate winning after the game at Selhurst Park, London, on 19 March. PHOTO: REUTERS

Grosjean wins F1's first Driver of the Day award

MELBOURNE — Frenchman Romain Grosjean has won Formula One's first Driver of the Day award after finishing sixth for the new US-owned Haas team in Sunday's season-opening Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne.

The official formula1.com website announced the result on Monday after fans were invited to vote online after the race.

It did not say how many votes were cast for each driver but noted "in the interests of fairness

multiple votes identified as originating from the same source were not counted."

Formula One introduced the Driver of the Day award, the equivalent to football's 'Man of the Match', this year with the aim of increasing fan engagement in the sport.

Formula One media and other insiders had expressed fears that voting would reflect drivers' popularity on social media more than race-day perfor-

mances. Triple world champion Lewis Hamilton, who finished second behind team mate Nico Rosberg in a Mercedes one-two at Albert Park after starting on pole position, has over 3.2 million followers on Twitter.

Grosjean has 549,000 while Manor's Indonesian rookie Rio Haryanto, the first Formula One driver from the nation of 250 million people, has acquired 423,000 in a matter of months. Haryanto failed to finish on Sunday.

"This is a win for us, this is a win," an emotional Grosjean had said on the team radio on Sunday after taking the chequered flag at the end of the team's debut race. "It feels like standing on the top step of the podium for us."

—Reuters



Haas F1 driver Romain Grosjean drives during the Australian Formula One Grand Prix in Melbourne on 20 March. PHOTO: REUTERS

Struggling Argentina relieved to have Messi back — Aguero

BUENOS AIRES — Argentina were relieved to have Lionel Messi back from injury having made a troubled start to their South American 2018 World Cup qualifiers without their best player, striker Sergio Aguero said on Monday.

Messi missed the first four rounds last year and Argentina, 2014 World Cup finalists in Brazil, got only five points after a defeat by Ecuador, draws with Paraguay and Brazil and a win over Colombia, leaving them sixth in the 10-nation group. "It's total relief to play with Messi," Aguero said on his arrival in Buenos Aires from Manchester to prepare for matches away to Chile in Santiago on Thursday and at home to Bolivia five days later.

"Leo is always important for us and it's obvious we're happy when he's here because it's really nice to play with him," Aguero told reporters after flying in with Manchester City team mate Pablo Zabaleta and Manchester United's Marcos Rojo.

Aguero said he was shocked by pictures showing the state of

the pitch at the Mario Kempes stadium in Cordoba, where Argentina will host Bolivia, after it was damaged by recent rock concerts, including an Iron Maiden gig. Groundsmen are working against the clock to get the pitch into shape although the Argentine FA's (AFA) decision to take the team around the country rather than play all home matches at River Plate stadium in the capital was made over a month ago.

"When you see that you are shocked because we're not accustomed to it. We'll have to see how it is and think we're playing in the juniors," Aguero said.

"It's nice to play in different places for the fans but when you look at the photo you think, 'What happened here?' It leaves an impression on you, it's a pitch where everyone knows the national team is going to play."

The top four teams in the South American qualifiers after 18 rounds are completed at the end of 2017 qualify for the finals in Russia while the fifth goes into an intercontinental playoff.—Reuters