

President U Htin Kyaw receives medical check-up at Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital

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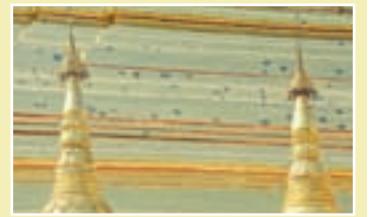
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SPEEDY SHUFFLE

Cabinet reform to be completed earlier than expected



Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds talk with union ministers over reformation of ministries. PHOTO: MNA

UNION Minister at the President's Office Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said yesterday that the reformation of government ministries is expected to be completed earlier than expected, calling for speedy efforts to complete the process.

"Though the outline of the new government's ministerial reformation plan was estimated to take one or two months, it has been encouraging to see that the reformation process has reached a certain extent," said the Union minister.

The quick reorganisation will work fast, she added.

Speaking at the coordination meeting on the reorganisation of ministries at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw, The Satat Counsellor also urged Union ministers to make suggestions and pool ideas

and to coordinate with ministries that were not present at the meeting, stressing that it is necessary to be flexible in the reformation.

President U Htin Kyaw formed the new government with 21 ministries, slimming it down from the 36 ministries of the pre-

vious government.

The reformed ministries includes a new Ministry of Ethnic Affairs. According to the constitution, the ministries of Home Affairs, Border Affairs and Defence are run by the Myanmar Defence Services.—GNLM

Govt working to neutralise risk posed by Chin State landslide dam

Aye Min Soe

THE Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is taking prompt actions steps to neutralise the risks posed by a natural dam that formed in Chin State during a landslide last year.

Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye pledged to take preparedness measures within two weeks to reduce the risk of the dam collapsing.

The ministry plans to build a dyke dam under the natural dam

in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation.

At a meeting with local authorities in Kalay, which experienced the worst flood in a century in 2015, the Union minister stressed the need for transparency in taking the risk-reduction measures.

The dam was formed in the upper reaches of Twille Creek in Tongzon Township, Chin State, last year due amid torrential rains.

To prevent its collapse, experts from the Ministry of Ag-

riculture, Livestock and Irrigation recommended three options : to build a dyke near the dam, to release water from the dam through outlets on both sides of the dam, or to build a silt-trap dam on the Nayinzaya River.

Meanwhile, the experts also clarified that there will be no possibility of danger to the residents of Kalay, even if the dam collapses, as the dam's 26,750 acre-feet of water would flow into the Yazagyo Dam, which has a storage capacity of 140,000 acre-feet.

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Restricted movement leads to deadly boat accident in Sittwe

A passenger boat capsized at sea one mile off the coast of Sittwe, Rakhine State, on 19 April, leaving 18 people dead and 20 reported missing.

The boat was on its way from Pauktaw Township to Thechaung Village, Sittwe, with 49 passengers on board, of whom 11 were rescued. The passengers were residents of an internally displaced persons' camp in Pauktaw, where they have been forced to live since

communal violence erupted between Buddhists and Muslims in Rakhine State in 2012.

Prohibited from traveling over land and stripped of access to goods and services by local law enforcement authorities, the Muslim passengers sought to visit a market in Sittwe by boat, for which they had reportedly received special permission.

The search is ongoing to find the missing passengers.—*Myanmar News Agency*

New Year gift of media company to be used for lake dredging

THE Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement yesterday announced that K5 million, a New Year gift presented to the personal assistant to a very important person by a media company, will be used to fund lake dredging in five villages of Tanatpin Township, Bago Region.

The President's Office issued an announcement regarding the K50 million on Wednesday, saying that the K50 million in cash will be handed over to the SWRR Ministry to be spent on building water facilities in water-scarce areas.

The ministry said that old lakes, the sources of drinking water for 25 villages in the township, cannot be used for drinking water

as seawater seeps into the lakes.

Among the villages, five villages—Ahtet Kyonpar, Nataykan, Khalatsu, Thanattan and Kyeebinsu—will be prioritised for the installment of a drinking water supply method, the ministry added.

According to the ministry, there will be available drinking water in the villages within two weeks following the lake dredging operations. On completion, a total of 12,795 people living in 2,945 households will have access to drinking water as a result of the lake dredging operation.

The dredging of each lake is set to cost K1 million, according to the ministry.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Moehnyin CSOs to protest against Myitsone dam project resumption



Parliamentarians and activists discuss Myitsone dam project.

PHOTO: MANG NGAI

CIVIL Society Organisations (CSOs) meet in Kachin State will oppose any plans to implement the Myitsone dam project if the present government resumes the project that was suspended under the tenure of the previous government, according to a CSO spokesperson.

U Tin Wai, environmental conservation activist, said CSOs will protest against resumption of the work on the dam by the incumbent government at a meeting with Hluttaw representatives in Moehnyin, Kachin State on

Wednesday. In his discussion at the meeting, the activist called on the Hluttaw representatives to strive to pass a community forest law as locals who wish to establish community forests on vacant lands outside reserve forests are facing difficulties in dealing with office procedures to procure land forms (105/106) from the Land Record Department.

The meeting was attended by parliamentarians representing Moehnyin Township and responsible persons from 13 CSOs in the township.—*Mang Ngai*



The landslide dam in Chin State. PHOTO: SUPPLIED BY MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE, RELIEF AND RESETTLEMENT

Govt working to neutralise risk posed by Chin State ...

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The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement plans to establish an early warning system and rapid-respond teams to carry out emergency drills in Kalay. Torrential rain in 2015 triggered massive landslides in Chin State, forming the natural dam,

sparking worries among locals about the possibility of it bursting in future.

The landslide dam is located nearly 5 kilometres west of Hangin Village in Tunzan Township, covering about 84 acres, according to satellite images. Four states and regions—Chin, Magwe, Sagaing

and Rakhine regions—were hit by flood in the rainy season last year.

The flooding inundated more than 1 million acres of farmland nationwide, damaging more than 426,000 acres and destroying more than 56,000 acres nationwide, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation.

Lawyer working on farmers' rights released

U ZAW Win, a lawyer who was representing farmers involved in land-grab disputes, walked out of Obo prison in Mandalay yesterday.

The Supreme Court advocate was arrested in 2014 and charged with six counts of cases including Section 505 (b) of the Criminal Law (making statements conducting to public mischief) and Section 18 of the peaceful protest law. The lawyer gave free legal advice to



U Zaw Win walks out of Obo prison. PHOTO: KHINE HSET WAI

farmers in PyinOoLwin, Madaya, Patheingyi and Singaing Townships in Mandalay Region who

were charged for engaging in protests over land disputes.—*Khine Hset Wai*

Bird flu touches poultry farms in Monywa, no reports of human infection

A poultry farm in upper Myanmar experienced unusual deaths of its chickens in four days, with the Ministry of Health saying that the farm lost 123 of 550 chickens



Director General Dr Ye Tun Win.

PHOTO: THANT ZIN WIN

from 31 March to 3 April.

As part of the strict bio security measures to prevent infection to humans, the ministry sent a team to the affected area in Monywa on 5 April to coordinate the culling of over 26,000 chickens with 33 local farmers.

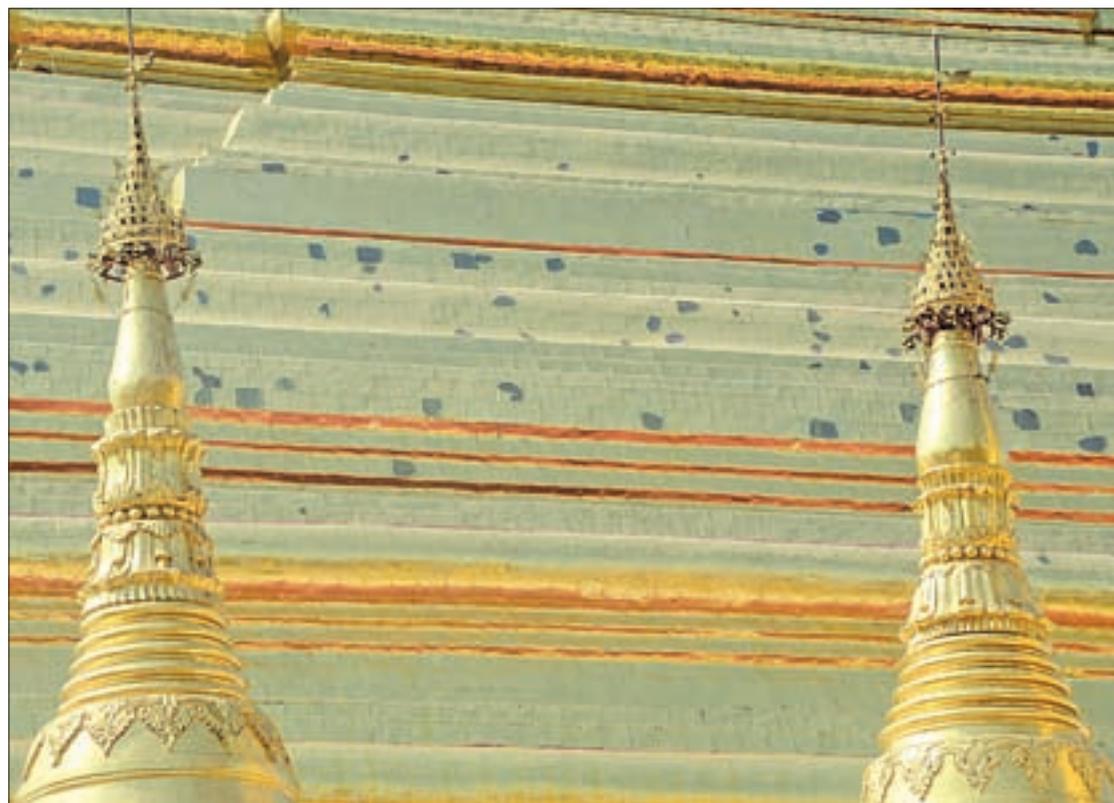
The team confirmed the outbreak of bird flu to be H5 and H9 viruses. Some samples of the viruses were sent to laboratories in Australia for analysis in order to confirm that it was the 'N' type of the virus.

Director General Dr Ye Tun Win of the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department expected the result to come in seven to ten days, warning that the bird

flu is quick to transmit to people through air. No human infection is reported as yet to this day. Nor is there a report of human deaths in the country.

Explaining the reason, the doctor said that the people in the country were in the habit of eating well-cooked fish and meat.

The country recorded the first outbreak of bird flu in Mandalay Region in 2006. Yangon Region, Sagaing Region and Rakhine State underwent the outbreaks of bird flu from 2010 to 2015. According to official statistics, Monywa has encountered the outbreak of bird flu three times, including this one.—*Pho Thant and Shin Min*



Golf foil facelift are seen at the Shwedagon Pagoda. PHOTO: ZAWGYI (PANITA)

Shwedagon Pagoda to undergo gold foil facelift on south side

MEASURES are being taken to urgently put new gold foil into places where gold leaves that were installed about a year ago have begun to peel on Shwedagon Pagoda, said a member of the board of trustees of the pagoda.

The previous gold foil was thought to have fallen off due to a sealing failure while coating the surface of the pagoda with resin before the gold foil gilding said U Tun Aung Ngwe, chief of staff of the board, adding that the incident may be due to birds which struck at the gold foil with their beaks.

According to sources the in-

cident is unfolding to the south side of the pagoda where a team called Shwe Ngagyin won a K26 million contract to put gold foil on the structure last year.

The gilding of Shwedagon Pagoda, that gets new layers of gold leaf every five years, was assigned to four teams for the 2014-2015 fiscal year through a bidding system.

Under the terms and conditions of the contract, Shwe Ngagyin team shall take responsibility for the failure of the installation as the gold foil comes under a five-year warranty offered by the team.

According to the board

of trustees of the pagoda, gold foil began falling off last month.

U Than Win, leader of the Shwe Ngagyin gilding team, said that it is difficult to apply resin to the surface of the structure as the excessive heat during this time of year can melt resin away, adding that a request was made to start the work this October or November.

Despite the team's request, gilding works are set to start as soon as possible following negotiations between the two sides, said the board of trustees.

A similar incident occurred in 2010 due to natural disaster, said the team leader.—*Ko Moe*

FPPS calls on Myanmar tycoons to support new government

THE Former Political Prisoners Society (FPPS) has called on Myanmar business tycoons to rally in support of the country's new government in the effort to create a prosperous, new state.

The FPPS has urged Myanmar tycoons to invest in industries that offer long-term public benefit and to donate to nation-building initiatives.

The FPPS urged business leaders to do their utmost to resolve issues related to farmland confiscation, worker's salaries and labour rights in order to gain the confidence and respect of the public.

"For the sake of the nation, the new civilian govern-

ment needs to cooperate with workers and farmers on the grounds of mutual respect. Let everything that was done at one time [by those tycoons] together with the authorities be buried and forgotten. We are sincerely calling for [Myanmar business leaders] to exhibit moral consciousness in order to gain the trust of the people," said U Htun Kyi, a member of the FPPS.

The FPPS also told local tycoons to learn from the tensions that prevailed under the previous government in order to realise the people's high hopes for the country.

In its statement, the organ-

isation asserted that no individual or single entity can liberate the country from its problems, stressing that the new government needs the support of the business community and the public.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, in her first New Year's Day address as State Counsellor, said unity is essential to national development.

She said the new civilian government would, in its push toward national reconciliation, cooperate without discrimination with the expectation that all citizens will play their part in the process.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

President U Htin Kyaw receives medical check-up at Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw has undergone a complete medical check-up at Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital yesterday, emerging with a clean bill of health, it has been learned from hospital sources.

The President also underwent a cardio-vascular check-up, carried out by specialists while at the hospital to undergo a routine health check and rounds of medical tests, said a cardiologist from the hospital.

"His medical examination revealed that he is in good health. The President visited the hospital for a routine, regular medical check-up, not to undergo eye surgery," said the cardiologist, one of doctors who provided the President

with the general health check-up.

The President's visit to the hospital for his medical check-up comes two days after State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visited the centre and comforted patients.

Daw Su Su Lwin, wife of the President, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint and Union Minister for Health Dr Myint Htway accompanied the President to the hospital.

According to the Ministry of Health, the State Counsellor underwent surgery on both eyes at the Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Hospital in Ottathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw on 9 and 16 April respectively.—*Thein Ko Lwin*

Union Information Minister holds MRTV reform talks with officials



Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint visits MRTV. PHOTO: MNA

UNION Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint held talks with officials concerned from Myanmar Radio and Television concerning reforms to MRTV. The meeting was held in Tatkon, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday.

The Union minister held discussions focusing on potential MRTV reform measures with officials and staff of MRTV led by Director-General U My-

int Htwe.

The minister held separate meetings with staff from different branches of MRTV and coordinated with officials concerned regarding the reports of the staff.

During his tour of MRTV, the Union minister observed news broadcasting and inspected the central equipment room.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Mandalay residents remember late journalist U Win Tin

WRITERS, poets and journalists held a ceremony in memory of the late veteran journalist U Win Tin in Mandalay.

U Win Tin, a member of the panel of patrons of the National League for Democracy, died of kidney failure two years ago in Yangon. The writers and poets gathered at Taung Lay Lone

Monastery in Amarapura yesterday, recounting their memories of the late veteran journalist from the time he lived in Mandalay.

"He was not born in Mandalay, but he brought pride to Mandalay by writing criticisms in the Hanthawady newspaper," said Ko Lay, a well-known poet.—*Aung Thant Khaing*

Crime NEWS

Strong wind hits Banmauk

A STRONG wind recently hit Banmauk Township in Katha District of Sagaing Region, blowing the roofs of houses, monastery and schools, according to locals.

Some villages suffered a little damage during the natural disaster; however, there have been no reported injuries to people and animals.

About 50 houses, two primary schools, a monastery and staff housings in Narnanthtun, Magyigone and Mingone villages as well as Naungput gold mine have been partially damaged by powerful wind.

The authorities are now



Strong wind hits a house in Banmauk. PHOTO: DISTRICT IPRD

making arrangement for replacing new roofs on those houses as quickly as possible.—District IPRD

Bullets prove one man's trash, another man's treasure

ACTING on tip-off, members of the Hlaingthayar Myoma Police Station found a cache of bullets under a rubbish tip in the Hteinpin Cemetery compound in

Hlaingthayar Township on April 18. After examination of witnesses, police discovered that a worker of Environmental Conservation and Cleaning Department under

the Yangon City Development Committee first found the bullets under a heap of rubbish at the site. The police reported the case to the No. 532 Light Infantry Regiment which conducted checks on the ammunition. According to the confirmation of the No. 532 Light Infantry Regiment, the bullets were 40 bullets of 7.62 G3, 2 of 7.62 AK47, 19 of 5.56M16 Series, 23 bullets of 5.56M16, 48 bullets of 9MM, 11 bullets of 30 Carbine, 2 cartridges for .303 mm, a 91 hand bomb (without fuse), three fuses for hand bomb, a magazine box for 9mm BA 94 Stin, two carbine magazine boxes, a 5.56 magazine box with a bullet capacity of 35 and a 5.56 magazine box with a bullet capacity of 20.—Yangon Police Force



Seized bullets and cartridges. PHOTO: YPF

Traffic accident injures one man

A TRUCK collided head on with a 12-wheel vehicle between mileposts 265/5 and 265 /6 near Nam Paw creek bridge, Tar Lon village, Muse township, Shan State on Tuesday, leaving one man injured.

The truck, heading for Lashio from Muse, was carrying sand. The driver, one Aik Mann, 31,

collided with the 12-wheel vehicle which was being driven by one Ngwe Htoo, 30, when the former driver's breaks failed and he lost control. The accident seriously injured Aik Mann and he was later sent to Muse General Hospital for emergency medical treatment. Police are still investigating the case.—Thant Zin (Muse)



Man charged with motorcycle theft

LOCAL police have filed charges against a man on suspicion of motorbike theft as the suspect failed to identify a motorcycle found in his possession. The police arrested one Kan Char, alias Myint Oo, 28, on the Yangon-Mandalay highway in Dagundaing ward, Mandalay, on Monday. Local police have filed charges against him.

On the same day police arrested one Myo Kyaw Lwin, alias Pho Kan Kaung, 18, with a motorcycle in Ohn Pin village, Pyawbwe town, Mandalay. When the police stopped to interview the suspect he failed to provide proof that the vehicle was registered to him. Police have filed charges against him.—The mirror

Body of 17 y/o recovered from Sittaung River

THE body of a young man who drowned in the Sittaung River in Yadashe town, Bago region on 17 April has been recovered by authorities. According to an investigation, Tin Kyaw Htoo, 17, from Bodawgone village

fatally drowned while showing in the river together with a group of friends. The police located his body on Monday in the river. Local police have not yet closed their investigation.—Ko Lwin (Swar)

Boiler explosion kills man in Monywa



AN overheated steam boiler exploded in a Shan restaurant belonging to one Thein Naing in Yong Gyi ward, Bogyoke Aung San road, Monywa on Wednesday.

According to an investigation, the accident occurred around 9:00am when the restaurant owner began cooking rice using the steam boiler which sat at 5 feet high. The boiler, it was later revealed, became dangerously hot and exploded.

U Thein Naing was seriously injured and succumbed to his injuries at the scene of the explosion. Deputy Superintendent of Police U Pyone Lwin from Monywa police station said that it was not a gas explosion. The accident killed the restaurant owner while another man was injured. The explosion shattered the glass windows of a gymnasium nearby. Local police are still investigating the case.—Myo Win Tun (Monywa)

Mini-bus overturns on Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw Highway



Mini-bus overturns on Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw Highway.

PHOTO: KHIN KO (KYAUKTAGA)

A MINI-BUS en route to Yangon from Nay Pyi Taw being driven by one Tun Zaw, 24, with a number of passengers on board turned over on Tuesday between mileposts 77/3-4 on the Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw highway near Kyauktaga township, Bagon region when the

vehicle's breaks failed. Nine passengers were seriously injured in the accident. The injured are currently receiving medical treatment at the Myo Chaung highway's clinic. The driver of the vehicle has been charged by police.—Khin Ko (Kyauktaga)

LOCAL Business



New Hyundai 2016 model sell cars being seen. PHOTO: IBTIME.COM

New Hyundai model to sell with instalment payment

MOTORING company Hyundai's new 2016 model cars will be sold under a payment instalment plan without any interest at the Hyundai car center in Yangon, it has been learned.

Customers will need to make

a down payment of 20 per cent of the car value with the remaining money will be paid in installments over three years. Only the car value is required to be paid without any interest.

There is a plan to extend

the instalment period from three years to five for those who cannot afford to pay over that period.

Hyundai brand cars will be sold for K22 million at the minimum price while the maximum price is K68 million.—200

Residents in Myeik Economic Zone receive one-storey houses

RESIDENTS of the Myeik Economic Zone have received small replacement one-storey houses, said U Aung Myo Lat, representative of the Myeik Future Development Public Co Ltd.

The residents of 39 households from Kanthayar village situated in the Myeik Economic Zone will now have the option of moving to a small one-storey brick house with corrugated iron roof around first week of May. A house costs K15 million at the

current market price, he added.

"We are satisfied with the replacement housing complex. However, there might be a problem in regard to making fish paste because of a lack of space to dry fish", said some villagers from Kanthaya.

Infrastructure will be built at the site where needed, said the representative of the company.

Two concrete bridges in the zone and a Thingyan pandal were opened on 12 April with an of-

ficial ceremony to hand over the houses to the villagers.

Myeik Economic Zone project includes the port zone, economic and trade zone, office buildings, low-cost and fair price housing zones, industrial zone, sport and recreation park zone and extended road areas.

There are 700 acres of land in the project which was launched in 2014-2015 and is expected to complete within ten years.—DW/Union Daily

Motor vehicle law crackdown in Mawlamyine

A TOTAL of 673 motorcycle drivers have had legal action taken against them in accordance with the Motor Vehicle law in Mawlamyine from 25 February to 10 March, reportedly because they violated the motor vehicle law enacted in 2015.

The motorcyclists broke the law by riding their vehicles with open exhaust, carrying too many

passengers or drove without helmets and or without a license.

72 motorcycle riders had action taken against them by police for driving with open exhausts, causing a public nuisance. Those riders were sent to court by No 12 Traffic Police Unit (Mon State) yesterday.

The motorcyclists will have action taken against them under

the motor vehicle law and probably be fined.

The motorcycles will be returned to their owners after the installation of proper exhausts and after the motorcyclists have paid their fines according to U Htay Shwe, Deputy Superintendent of Traffic Police from No 12 Traffic Police Unit of Mon State.—NN/Union Daily

Asian Blue airline to invest US\$ 70 million in Myanmar

THE Asian Blue Airline Company, jointly established by ANA Japanese Company and Shwe Than Lwin, a local company, has received approval from the authorities to invest in Myanmar. The Asian Blue International Airline Company will invest US\$70.8 million in Myanmar, it has been learned.

Airline services plays a vital role in providing transport to the increasing number of foreign tourists entering Myanmar. The massive influx of tourists has reached up to 1.2 million people,

a sizable increase from over eight hundred thousand tourist visitors in 2013. ANA company possess 49 per cent of the companies' shares while Shwe Than Lwin owns 51 per cent of shares in the airline. The Japanese airline company firstly planned to co-operate with International airline Asain Wings but failed to ink an agreement. There are already a number of Myanmar-Japan airlines; Air Asia, Air China, Bangkok Airline, Thailand Airline, Malaysian Airline, Vietnamese Airline and Japanese airlines.—200

Japanese Yakult Company to open Yogurt Company in Thilawa SEZ

THE Japanese owned Yakult Company is set to invest in Myanmar by establishing a Yogurt Company in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone (SEZ), with an initial capital investment of US\$11 million.

The company currently distributes yogurt to seven countries within the ASEAN region and will extend its market to Myanmar,

Laos and Cambodia in the near future. The company is planning to distribute its yogurt across the country of Myanmar in 2017 or 2018.

The Thilawa SEZ was constructed with the assistance of Japan. Furthermore, most of the companies making direct investments in the zone are Japanese owned or backed.—200

Japan and Pakistan demand Myanmar macadamia seeds



JAPAN and Pakistan have offered to purchase Myanmar macadamia seeds. However, there is concern that low supply will not meet foreign demand and so exports are currently on hold, it has been learned.

Macadamia seeds are cultivated mostly in Northern Shan State on a commercial scale because the produce is marketable in both the local and international market allowing growers to reap handsome profits.

Macadamia is also grown in Chin and Kachin states. "Macadamia nuts has gained the interest of Japan and Pakistan", said a

responsible person of Macadamia Association. "Macadamia seeds are used in chocolate, cosmetics and other foodstuff. They are not confirmed for export yet because there is a mismatch between supply and demand. They (farmers and merchants) are afraid that profits will decline", he added.

The macadamia tree is perennial with around one thousand acres of macadamia trees in Myanmar currently. Macadamia nuts are transported to shopping malls in Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw. Macadamia seeds are expected to widely penetrate the market.—200

For Thailand, a portrait is crucial to preparations for succession

BANGKOK — Look around anywhere in Thailand and chances are you will see a portrait of King Bhumibol Adulyadej displayed in offices, schools, banks or on the front of government buildings.

Recently, though, portraits of the king's son, Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn, have increased as the kingdom of Thailand prepares the groundwork for its first royal succession in nearly 70 years.

In the capital, Bangkok, city authorities have erected gold-framed portraits showing the Crown Prince as a child with King Bhumibol, the pair wearing matching suit and ties. Others show him as an adult standing next to his father.

"There are more portraits of the Crown Prince now than a few years ago," said a palace source. "This is not by chance, but it is a way to try to pre-empt any future instability." The source declined to be named citing the sensitivity of referring to the succession and the death of a venerated king.

The evening news on state television channels, which has a daily segment



A picture showing Thailand's King Bhumibol Adulyadej and his son Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn as a child is seen along a street in Bangkok, Thailand, on 17 April.

PHOTO: REUTERS

on Thailand's royal family, also has increasingly featured the prince and his family, including coverage of their trips abroad and attendance at seminars, sporting events and fashion shows.

The thrice-married prince and his family — two daughters from his first and second marriages, and a son from his third — are seen more frequently on state television and in

glossy magazines.

King Bhumibol, who assumed the throne in June 1946, is in failing health and has been confined to a Bangkok hospital since last May. He was recently treated for hydrocephalus, or 'water on the brain', according to the Bureau of the Royal Household, and is recovering from a fever and infection.

Most Thais have known no other king. Bhu-

mibol's succession has prompted worries about instability in a country that has witnessed 19 coups or attempted ones and at least 19 constitutions since a constitutional monarchy replaced an absolute one in 1932.

The current military government, which took power after a May 2014 coup following a decade of political conflict, has unveiled yet another draft con-

stitution that allows it to keep extensive political powers during a transition period to follow a general election scheduled for mid-2017.

An opaque and secretive public relations machine is helping to prepare for the succession. It includes the Bureau of the Royal Household, which handles some of the monarchy's public relations, the Office of His Majesty's Principal Private Secretary, and both public and private institutions.

The Office of His Majesty's Principal Private Secretary, which coordinates between the monarch and the government, must approve all public displays of the royal family, including the portraits of the prince adorning buildings and lamp posts in the capital. The office, which is part of the royal household, turned down a request from Reuters to interview its staff and observe its work.

"Even though what we do is no secret, we have no policy that allows this," the office told Reuters in a statement.

King Bhumibol has endeared himself to Thai-

land's 68 million people through his well-publicised efforts in rural development and conservation.

He is often referred to as 'father' and his birthday, 5 December, is celebrated as father's day. Daily news coverage of the royal family and standing up at the cinema for the king's anthem are all part of Thai life.

The military government has significantly increased the budget for "upholding, protecting and preserving the monarchy" to 18 billion baht (\$513.70 million) in the 2016 fiscal year that began in April, a 28 per cent increase from two years ago when it took over. Some of the money is earmarked for community and rural development projects.

The junta has also been cracking down on critics of the monarchy using Thailand's strict lese-majeste law — a French term for the crime of offending the dignity of a sovereign. Last year, there was international condemnation when two people received jail sentences of 25 years and 30 years on lese-majeste charges for Facebook posts about the king.—Reuters

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Rain forces suspension of search operations in southwest Japan

KUMAMOTO (Japan) — Heavy rain forced search operations in Kyushu to be suspended on Thursday, a week after the first of a series of strong quakes hit southwestern Japan.

Ikuo Kabashima, governor of Kumamoto Prefecture which was hit most severely by the disaster, pledged Thursday to step up efforts to secure public housing, hotels and ships to accommodate evacuees currently taking shelter in schools and elsewhere and consider constructing temporary housing if necessary.

The Kumamoto town of Mashiki, which has suffered the most, began accepting volunteers the same day to help residents at shelters and sort out relief goods.

About 200 volunteers from in and outside the prefecture arrived in the rain and headed to shelters in groups after receiving instructions.

Ranko Saeki, 74, who joined her grandchild, said, "I hope for early reconstruction so that they can



Evacuees line up in heavy rain to receive lunch in Ozu, Kumamoto Prefecture on 21 April 2016, a week after the first of a series of strong quakes hit the southwestern Japanese prefecture. The rain forced the suspension of search operations for two people still missing since the disaster. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

recover an ordinary life."

The city of Kumamoto plans to accept volunteers on Friday. The village of Minamiaso has already begun accepting volunteers from within the prefecture.

The quakes centering on Kumamoto and adjacent Oita prefectures have left 48 people dead in Kumamoto Prefecture, with two others still missing in Minamiaso.

The Japan Meteorological Agency warned that northern Kyushu, including

Kumamoto and Oita prefectures, could be hit by thunderstorms, landslides and flooding, with possible rainfall of 40 to 70 millimetres per hour in Kumamoto and Oita prefectures.

With more than 10,000 homes and other buildings flattened or damaged mainly in Kumamoto Prefecture, local governments in five other prefectures in Kyushu said they are ready to provide at least 2,340 units of public housing to quake survivors.

Of these units, 595 are in Miyazaki, 563 in Nagasaki, 533 in Fukuoka, 501 in Kagoshima and 148 in Saga.

Many of the units are being offered free of charge and some evacuees have already begun living there, the local government said.

They told Kyodo News of the plans amid concerns about the health of survivors who have evacuated from their homes and taken refuge at shelters or in their vehicles.—Kyodo News



Young girls carry containers filled with drinking water beside the railway station in Agartala, India, on 20 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

More than 100 feared dead in heat wave

BHUBANESWAR, (India)/KARACHI, (Pakistan) — More than 100 people are feared dead in India in an early-summer heat wave which forced schools to close and halted outdoor work like construction, government officials said on Thursday.

Neighbouring Pakistan, which suffered its hottest spell in decades last year, plans to open 500 response centres to provide shelter and cold water to people if a heat-wave warning is issued, a government official said. No heat deaths have yet been reported.

India's hottest months are

May and June, but some states have already registered temperatures in excess of 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit), forcing authorities to take emergency steps. In Telangana, 45 people have died from heat exposure, and another 17 in Andhra Pradesh, officials said. Some 43 were believed to have died in neighbouring Odisha, although an official there said each of the deaths was being investigated.

Y.K. Reddy, a director at the Indian Meteorological Department, said Telangana has recorded its highest April temperatures

since at least 2006. Reddy said there were worries the death toll in Telangana could rise and his department was issuing heat-wave warnings to advise people to stay indoors.

Schools in Telangana were shut last week two weeks ahead of their summer holidays. As an emergency measure, Odisha has ordered schools to remain closed until 26 April and banned construction work during the hottest times of day.

Some small-scale businesses were already suffering.

"I am closing my shop before

noon because it is too hot," said Tulu Sahu, a small grocery seller in Bhubaneswar city in Odisha. "You cannot stay in the shop."

Pakistan, where extreme heat killed more than 1,000 people during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan last year, has started gearing up to tackle any sudden rise of patients who report heat-related illnesses.

"We have enough supplies and staff to meet the possible situation," said Seemin Jamali, head of the accident and emergency department at Karachi's Jinnah Hospital.—Reuters

Thai junta chief accuses former PM Thaksin of stirring protests

BANGKOK — The leader of Thailand's junta on Thursday accused fugitive former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra of being behind a series of small anti-junta protests that have flared in the capital this week.

Rivalry between the former telecommunications tycoon and the military-dominated establishment has been at the heart of a decade of fractious politics and any suggestion Thaksin is stirring dissent is likely to raise concern about stability.

The military seized power in May 2014, overthrowing an elected government led by Thaksin's sister, Yingluck Shinawatra, saying it had to maintain order after months of anti-government protests organised by allies of the establishment.

The military government has banned protests and stifled criticism and anti-junta activity is rare.

But since Monday, activists have gathered at various places in Bangkok to show opposition to a military-backed draft constitution and to protest against the detention of a former minister who spoke

out against it. Asked by reporters who was behind the protests, junta chief Prayuth Chan-ocha replied: "Lobbyists living overseas and Thaksin." The army ousted Thaksin in a 2006 coup. He has lived in self-imposed exile since being sentenced to a prison term in 2008 on corruption charges he said were politically motivated.

He remains hugely popular among his legions of poor, rural supporters and is still highly influential. With his huge wealth, he is seen as capable of supporting more active opposition to the government, if he chose to.

Thaksin was not immediately available for comment but Noppadon Pattama, a former legal adviser to Thaksin, said in a statement that Thaksin was not behind the protests.

"Thaksin Shinawatra has not employed any lobbyists overseas," he said. "He is not behind any government in exile."

Several people have been detained at the protests but there has been no violence.

Opponents of the military government, including Thaksin's sup-



Former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra looks on as he speaks to Reuters during an interview in Singapore on 23 February 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

porters, object to the constitution that will be put to a referendum on 7 August, saying it would give the military sweeping powers.

The military denies seeking indefinite power saying the constitution should heal divisions and usher in stable, clean politics.

Watana Muangsook, who was a minister of social development in a Thaksin government, was taken into military custody on Monday over criticism of the

constitution he posted on Facebook.

Watana's lawyer, Narinpong Jinpak, told Reuters by telephone that he was with his client but he declined to comment.

The government said this week campaigns, either for or against, would not be allowed in the run-up to the referendum.

The military has promised an election by the middle of next year.—Reuters

Abe makes offering to Yasukuni Shrine but does not visit

TOKYO — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe made a ritual offering on Thursday to the war-linked Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo but did not deliver it in person, in an apparent effort to avoid friction with China and South Korea.

The government particularly wants to avoid angering the neighbouring countries, as well as the United States, before Japan hosts a Group of Seven summit in May, government sources said earlier.

Seiichi Eto, a special adviser to Abe, visited the shrine Thursday, the first day of its spring festival.

The prime minister dedicated a "masakaki" tree offering, according to the shrine. Some other politicians also did the same, including Health, Labour and Welfare Minister Yasuhisa Shiozaki, House of Representatives Speaker Tadamori Oshima and House of Councillors President Masaaki Yamazaki.

There have been signs of improving relations between Japan and the two neighbours despite rows over some historical and territorial issues. China and South Korea, among other Asian nations, see the shrine as a symbol of Japan's past militarism as it honors convicted war criminals along with millions of war dead.

Abe last visited Yasukuni in December 2013, not only upsetting those neighbours but also causing the United States, Japan's key ally, to express disappointment with Tokyo's exacerbation of tensions in the region.

The premier has offered the masakaki trees during the spring and autumn festivals of the shrine since he took office in late 2012, presumably to appease his conservative supporters without damaging relations with other countries.

Japan plans to join a trilateral summit with China and South Korea later this year, while hosting the G-7 Ise-Shima summit, slated for 26 to 27 May in Mie Prefecture, central Japan, to bring together the leaders of Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States.—Kyodo News

OPINION

The essential ingredient to successful education reform

Kyaw Thura

IT is safe to say that the advent of the Information Age has had a deep impact on education, propelling institutions to use data technologies to monitor their progress and performance in the processes of teaching and learning.

Successive governments set high expectations by spouting empty slogans. Chants about educational improvement in the absence of ac-

tion plans are pleasing to the ear, but they are, in fact, a sheer waste of time. Furthermore, the assessment systems now in place are no more than memory tests. We have all witnessed how the country's narrow education has, for generations, failed to empower students to meet the needs of a competitive workforce.

Frankly speaking, our country is not yet attuned to the practices of education management and education leadership. Despite higher pass rates, the learning needs of students in schools across the country are still acute. There is solid evidence that effective management and leadership in education makes a difference in improving learning and teaching.

Before reforming the education system, policymakers and educators need to do their homework and set a clear agenda. They should keep in mind that putting good teachers into a bad system is as wasteful as putting bad teachers into

a good system. They must also realise that establishing favourable conditions that enable teachers to enhance their professional development is critical to the successful learning of students.

On the whole, the success of Myanmar's education reform will remain a remote dream unless teachers play a central role in the process.

Write for us

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

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

AVIATION

U Than Zaw

AVIATION means the science of flying air-craft. Flying an air-craft up in the air is very scientific and risky also. So, systematic modifications have been made to the basic designs of air-craft. It started from playing the sport of flying gliders. A glider is an air-craft without engine. The stage of an airplane is step by step improved nowadays. A air-plane has one, two or four engines with propellers. Moreover, jet engines were invented for about six decades ago. In the olden days, passenger liners air-craft were propeller driven, low level flying air-craft. In those days, speed of the air-craft were double or treble than the fastest vehicles on land. eg, spid-fire B29, B52 bombers in Viet Nam war.

Now, in our modern world jet engine driven air-crafts are introduced, Likewise, the speed of the jet planes are terribly faster than

the former planes of low level air-craft. They are known as super sonic jet plane, eg: MIG series (Russia) Air-bus(France) fighter plane F27, F28, Boeing 747 (USA) for examples :U2 jet plane and latest B I (invisible) Father more, in this present world today, the scientific progress is tremendous that we have already invented satellites and which were made used of communication — satellites (ie: for sending back to the earth telephone messages, radio TV signal, data singles for navigational purposes and so on.

On the other hand, a missile which is a powerful weapon is sent through the air towards a distant target. To there PADS should have been launched PADS. A PAD is a base or plat-form from which space-crafts etc are launched.

By the way, travel through space to other planets, today, spacecrafts, space capsules, space-vehicles are used for travel beyond the earth's atmosphere.

Today's new world has been changed to a global village for all human beings. Ways of communication, transportation, weapons, such as nuclear are missiles to destroy the target, too, very terrifying us nowadays.

A glimpse of an International Air-port, Mingaladon, Yangon, Myanmar Air-Craft Run-way

Construction of Run-way comprises suitable length and width running straight line in parallel together with a taxi-way.

Air-craft Maneuvering Area is an area between Taxi-way and air-craft parking area, in front of Airport Terminal Building.

Air-port Terminal Building is a very large spacious building comprising wide waiting-halls for Pax from air-craft Arrival/ Departure and X'sit Air-craft.

Room for registered Air liners Co;

Room for Immigration Custom and Health Dept;

Room for Information svc and money changer;

Room for shopping varieties; Room for Airport hotel and restaurants;

Expanded land space for flower garden for pax recreation.

Expanded Building : for Radio

Communication Centre providing Radio facilities to ground to ground , teleprinters, Radio Beacons for air-craft in flt and A.T.O (Air traffic control) on request by approach and tower controls for ARR/DEP/ o'flying air-craft. There exist a briefing office for air-craft at Area control Tower. Air pilot or personal concerned from Air-line have to come and prepare DEP-Plan prior to Air-craft Departure (Local or External) Attached to it is Metrological office to provide WX-aid (present wx/fore-cast) to air-craft as required, and Area Controls. Airport Fire-brigade keeps on alert for 24 huors in case of occasional air-craft on fire, air crash etc to render putting out fire and for emergency rescue and survival of air crew and pax in distress. A military base 502 wing of (B.A.F) also kept there in Mingalardon Airport for communication with B.A.F Air-craft and for necessary measures to be taken in Military affairs.

Just as there is scientific im-

provement in this world, it is also, necessary to lay down rules and regulations by the International Civil Aviation organizations concerned so as to enable operation in occurance with the Laws, Rules and regulations.

So far, existing Quardrantal flight Rules for all air-craft (civil and military alike) still are obeyed strictly to get rid of unnecessary mortality, and also to survive longer life in this lovely and modern world. We all air and ground crew to co-operate hand in hand for the safe travel in-the air, and all our customers travelling by airplane owe the debt of gratitude to whom once made a sport of flying like birds in the sky, in EUROPE, in the past century, and compilers of Aviation Rules and regulations for our safe journeys by planes or satellite to outer world (planet) crossing atmosphere.

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Paper Reading on study of Birds habitation in Myanmar and India to hold

PAPER Reading and discussion on study of Birds habitation in Myanmar and India will be held at the Shine Hope Hall in Aungmyethasan Township in Mandalay at 1:00pm on 23 April.

At the ceremony, U Zay

Maung Thein (Mandalay) will be reading a paper on a result of his research for comparison of bird habitations in Myanmar and India.

Those who are interested in may attend the ceremony.—

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)



A mixed group of shorebirds feeding.
PHOTO:THIHA Ko Ko

Scorching temperatures dry up Bagan tourist

EXTREMELY high temperatures this summer, the result of the infamous El Niño weather front, have caused shrinking numbers of foreign tourists to visit Bagan during the Thingyan holiday period, according to the Bagan Region Development Association (BRDA).

Last April, temperatures ranged between 41-42 degrees centigrade, on average, while temperatures this April have peaked at unbearable heights of between 44 and 45 degrees.

“Travellers to Bagan during Thingyan this year have been thin on the ground. The weather has been ever so hot, even hotter than last year. We haven’t seen a complete nosedive in the tourism market though; April is peak tourist season, after all,” said U Khin Maung Nu, chair of the BRDA.

Foreign tourists annually visit the region during the Thingyan holiday and participate in

Bagan traditional customs of water throwing and dancing.

“Destinations in Myanmar such as Bagan see fewer tourists during the Thingyan period than other parts of the country. Now is a good time to visit areas like Bagan as they are less crowded with other tourists. The presence of pilgrims in Bagan during Thingyan gives the place a certain feel, too,” said Huge Schleicher, managing director of Jovage Myanmar.

Scorching temperatures this Thingyan period have seen the majority of both local and foreign tourists opt for coastal destinations such as Ngwe Saung and Chaung Tha beaches, together with the southern Myanmar towns of Dawei and Myeik.

Over 240,000 tourists visited Bagan in 2015, while this year has seen a drop in the numbers of package tours and trips to the region via river vessels.— *Myit-makha News Agency*



Pagodas being seen without tourists. PHOTO: GNLM

Koh Tao murder suspects' appeal postponed for a month

THE appeal of two Burmese migrant workers who were sentenced to death for their alleged murder of British backpackers Hannah Witheridge and David Miller on the popular southern Thai island of Koh Tao, has been pushed back by a month.

The request by the Thai Law-

yers Council to extend the deadline for the submission of an appeal, as the defence was not ready to submit the appeal on 22 April, was granted by the Thai court on 19 April. “We requested additional days to prepare the appeal for the case of the two young Myanmar men. We’re working together with

seasoned experts in examining testimonies and admissions of the trial. There’s a great deal of paper work related to the case, and we’re carefully scrutinising it all,” stated U Kyaw Thaung, a diplomat at the Myanmar Embassy in Thailand.

Attempts are being made to grant the release of the two Myanmar nationals, Ko Zaw Lin and Ko Win Zaw Htun, after they were handed down the death penalty by the Koh Samui court for the murder of the two British Nationals. The appeal will not be submitted on 23 May. The investigation received international criticism for the unprofessional manner in which it was conducted, with forensic experts denying involvement and the Thai police’s failure to test all of evidence for DNA or match the DNA of the suspects with any found on the murder weapon. From the offset, the Thai police were adamant that the murders could not have been committed by Thai nationals, shifting blame to the large Burmese migrant community, which makes up a large proportion of the workforce on the island.

“The two [Myanmar nationals] are currently incarcerated at Bang Kwang Prison in [Bangkok’s] Nonthaburi District. They are in good health. The body of representatives for the two men regularly visits them once every two weeks. We’re not going to abandon these two lads,” added U Kyaw Thaung. The case began back 2014 after the bodies of the victims were found on 15 September of that year. A guilty verdict was handed down on 24 December 2015, which sparked widespread protests across Myanmar.— *Myit-makha News Agency*



Zaw Lin (front) and Win Zaw Htun. PHOTO: REUTERS

Nationwide survey on out-of-school children to soon be performed

AS PART of its literacy promotion for children without access to education, Myanmar Literacy Resource Center (LRC) will conduct a survey on out-of-school children wishing to pursue middle level education nationwide.

The programme will allow children under 13 years of age children from poor families who cannot afford to pursue formal education.

“The local authorities erupted the bill boards across every township to inform people about the program and how to join it after making several discussions with the LRC members, township education officers and administrative bodies,” said U Tin Nyo, vice chairman of the LRC.

New syllabus have already been designed by the LRC to teach out-of-school children

from six townships—Hlingthaya and Dala townships in Yangon, Myitkyina of Kachin State, Sit-twe of Rakhine State, Kyaikhto of Mon State and Loikaw of Kayah State—planning to provide free education services in coming June.

Although the Ministry of Education implemented free compulsory education system in 2012-2013 academic year, many children remain outside the schools.

Currently, literacy promotion activities are being carried out by the LRC’s in 94 townships through 571 centres. Last year, the LRC provided its non-formal education services to 10,000 students with 1,000 teachers.

Since its establishment, the LRC has helped 56,000 children with the assistance of the Education Ministry, UNICEF and well-wishers.—200

Ooredoo to help rural Myanmar community get access to clean water

OOREDOO Myanmar has joined a nationwide clean water programme implemented by Myanmar Red Cross Society so as to help rural people get access to clean water, its Chief Executive Officer Rene Meza said.

The Qatar-based telecom operator plans to use over 30 million kyats for the project. As the first phase, water facilities will be established in three villages—Maldaw, Paepokegone and Magyi—in Thazi Township in Sagaing Region, one of central dry areas in Myanmar.

The programme will bene-

fit about 3,000 people from 617 households there. It also helps improve the health status of rural residents.

According to a survey, 48 per cent of the country’s population lives without access to clean and safe drinking water.

The safety and accessibility of drinking water are major concerns throughout the world. According to the World Health Organization, there have been 4,600 million diarrhoea cases annually and 2.2 million deaths accounted for drinking unsafe water.— *MPK/Union Daily*

Obama heads to London on mission to persuade UK voters to stay in EU

WASHINGTON — US President Barack Obama flies to London on Thursday with a mission: to persuade wavering British voters not to ditch membership of the European Union in a 23 June referendum that Washington fears could weaken the West.

His visit is a welcome one for Prime Minister David Cameron, leading the “In” campaign, but has drawn scorn from those arguing Britain should leave the EU.

Obama is likely to suggest Britons should vote to stay in the bloc to preserve Britain’s wealth, its “special relationship” with the United States and the cohesion of the West.

“As the president has said, we support a strong United Kingdom in the European Union,” Ben Rhodes, Obama’s deputy national security adviser, told reporters in Washington ahead of the trip.

After a visit to Saudi Arabia, including talks with King Salman, Obama flies to London on Thursday evening.

The US government — and many US banks and companies — fear a “Brexit” would unleash market turmoil, torpedo British clout, undermine London’s status as a global financial capital, cripple the EU and undermine Western security.

Polls on Wednesday showed British voters leaning towards the “In” camp, but many remain undecided.

Asked about Obama’s views, Cameron told the British parliament:

“Personally I believe we should listen to advice from friends and other countries and I struggle to find the leader of any friendly country who thinks we should leave.”

Cameron has said that in the face of what he terms Russian



US President Barack Obama delivers remarks to start the final plenary session as he sits with British Prime Minister David Cameron (R) at the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, on 1 April 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

President Vladimir Putin’s aggression, this is no time to drop out of the club Britain joined in 1973.

“The UK economy will be better off within the Union than if it leaves,” Charles Kupchan, the senior White House director for European affairs, said ahead of the trip. “And as a key economic partner, that’s an issue of interest to the United States.”

Opponents of the EU — many of whom laud the US alliance — say that membership has shackled Britain to the corpse of a failed German-dominated experiment in European integration and that Britain, if freed, could prosper as a sole trader.

New York-born Boris Johnson, the London mayor who heads the “Out” campaign, said he did not want to be lectured by Americans about EU membership.

“President Obama should butt out,” Nigel Farage, another prominent opponent of EU membership, told Reuters in an

emailed statement.

“This is an unwelcome interference from the most anti-British American president there has ever been. Mercifully, he won’t be in office for much longer.”

“Out” campaigners have said the United States would never agree to dilute its own national sovereignty in the way the EU requires of its member states.

Obama’s term in office ends next 20 January. On Friday he will have lunch at Windsor Castle with Queen Elizabeth, who celebrates her 90th birthday on Thursday, and her husband Prince Philip.

After lunch, Obama will hold talks with Cameron followed by a briefing with reporters and dinner with Prince William, his wife Kate and Prince Harry at Kensington Palace.

Obama, who will be joined by his wife Michelle in London, will hold a discussion meeting with young people on Saturday before departing for Germany. —Reuters

International business leaders to propose growth steps ahead of G-7 summit

TOKYO — Business leaders from the Group of Seven developed nations discussed on Thursday how to address the challenges facing the global economy, including slowing growth as well as the need to boost innovation through investment.

The so-called B-7 summit began in Tokyo, with representatives from business organisations in Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States working together to draw up proposals to be submitted to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the chair of the G-7 summit to be held next month in the

Ise-Shima region in central Japan.

The business summit, first held in 2007, is being conducted amid a gloomy outlook for the world economy due to slower growth in China and other emerging economies, a development that has rattled markets.

In addition to discussing the state of the global economy, participants will also canvass measures to encourage free trade.

“We, the business representatives of the G-7 countries, need to send a clear message about where we should be headed,” Sadayuki Sakakibara, chairman of

the Japan Business Federation, or Keidanren, said at the outset of the one-day meeting.

Sakakibara expressed hope the G-7 countries will deploy all policy steps available, including fiscal stimulus, to support the global economy.

Abe, who delivered a speech at the meeting, called for more business investment to help spur innovation and growth. “Through coordination and action by the G-7 members, I believe we have a responsibility to remove various risks to the global economy... and create a stable growth path,” Abe said. —Kyodo News

NEWS IN BRIEF

Seven policemen shot dead in Karachi while protecting polio workers

ISLAMABAD — Seven policemen protecting polio vaccination workers were shot dead in two attacks in Karachi on Wednesday morning, police and hospital officials said.

Feroz Shah, deputy inspector general of police in western Karachi, said that eight attackers on four motorcycles targeted the police escorting the polio teams.

Shah said three policemen escorting a polio team on foot in the Disco Mor area of the Pakistan’s most populous city were killed first, after the revolver-wielding assailants drove to nearby Banlga Bazar and shot four officers sitting inside a police van. All seven policemen were on duty to protect the polio workers. —Kyodo News

China confirms another test of new long-rang missile

BEIJING — China’s Defence Ministry on Thursday indirectly confirmed a report it had carried out another test of a new intercontinental missile.

The Washington Free Beacon on Tuesday reported that China had on 12 April again tested a new long-range missile called the DF-41.

It did not say where the test took place but noted it came ahead of a visit by US Defence Secretary Ash Carter to the aircraft carrier USS Stennis in the South China Sea.

The Chinese Defence Ministry in a statement on its website in response to the report said that routine research tests on Chinese territory were normal.

“These tests are not aimed at any set country or target,” it said.

The Washington Free Beacon said it did not know where the test happened, though the Defence Ministry said reports said it had happened in the vicinity of the South China Sea. —Reuters

Japan defence minister cancels India trip to oversee quake mission

TOKYO — Defence Minister Gen Nakatani has given up his plan to visit India at the end of this month to supervise the Self-Defence Forces’ search and support activities as earthquakes continue to batter southwestern Japan, a defence ministry source said on Thursday.

Powerful quakes struck areas centering on Kumamoto Prefecture and neighbouring Oita Prefecture last week, killing dozens of people and injuring more than 1,000. More than 100,000 people remained evacuated amid ongoing aftershocks. —Kyodo News

At least eight dead in Houston-area floods, more rain falls

HOUSTON — At least eight people have died and some 1,150 homes have been damaged in flooding triggered by torrential downpours in the Houston area this week as more rain fell in the region on Wednesday adding to vast pools of standing water.

All of those who died were found in or near vehicles that had been in flooded areas, the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences and a local sheriff said.

The National Weather Service said about an inch or less had fallen in the area as of Wednesday afternoon, keeping water high in parts of the country’s fourth largest city where some roads have been turned into lakes. The Houston region had a record-setting drenching that dumped as much as 18 inches (45 cm) on some places on Monday. —Reuters

Turkey freezes assets of Yemeni ex-president Saleh

ANKARA — Turkey has frozen the assets of former Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh, in line with a decision by the UN Security Council, the government said in its Official Gazette on Thursday.

All of Saleh’s assets in Turkish banks and other financial institutions were frozen, it said. It did not say how much money Saleh was believed to hold in Turkey.

UN-appointed investigators have told the Security Council they suspect Saleh of amassing as much as \$60 billion, equivalent to Yemen’s annual GDP, during his long rule, and colluding in a takeover by the Houthi militia in 2014.

Most of this wealth was believed to have been transferred abroad under false names or the names of others holding the assets on his behalf, the investigators have said. —Reuters

Syrian peace talks in quagmire as rebels prepare for more war

GENEVA/BEIRUT — Syria's fragile peace talks might not resume for at least a year if they are abandoned now, a senior Western diplomat warned on Wednesday, as the opposition urged more military support for rebels after declaring a truce was over.

Intense fighting has left Syria's partial ceasefire in tatters. The truce was brokered by the United States and Russia to pave the way for the first peace talks attended by rebel factions since the crisis began five years ago.

Those talks, taking place under UN auspices in Geneva, also appear to have collapsed this week. The opposition says it has called a "pause" to negotiations, although it is reluctant to accept blame for the collapse by walking out altogether.

"If this ends now, it will be over for at least a year ... The Russians will steamroll — taking advantage of a US vacuum," the Western diplomat said, referring to fears Washington will be preoccupied by November's US presidential election.

"There will be three million more refugees and thousands more dead," said the diplomat,

who declined to be identified while describing a scenario world powers still hope to avoid. "If we all leave Geneva, I don't see the process continuing."

Damascus negotiators say the presidency of Bashar al-Assad is non-negotiable while the opposition sees removal of the president as a prerequisite and complains of no progress on an end to violence, humanitarian access and political detainees.

The Geneva talks aim to end a war that has killed more than 250,000 people, created the world's worst refugee crisis, allowed for the rise of the Islamic State group and drawn in regional and major powers. Russia's intervention in the conflict beginning late last year has swayed the war in Assad's favour.

The already widely violated truce began fraying more quickly some two weeks ago near Aleppo, where the Syrian army accused rebel groups of taking part in assaults by Islamists who are not covered by the ceasefire. Rebels say they were defending themselves from attacks by the army and its Shi'ite militia allies.

A total collapse of the Gene-



Fighters from a coalition of rebel groups called "Army of Fatah" and members of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent stand near buses and ambulances on the outskirts of Idlib city, preparing to enter the two besieged Shi'ite towns of al-Foua and Kefraya to evacuate people, Syria on 20 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

va talks would leave a diplomatic vacuum that could allow a further escalation of the war that is being fueled by rivalries between foreign powers including oil producers Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Seeking to ease that rivalry,

US President Barack Obama met Saudi Arabia's King Salman on a visit to Riyadh on Wednesday and discussed the need to reinforce the partial truce in Syria and support a transition from Assad's rule.

France said it would consider with other European powers and the United States on Monday the idea of convening a ministerial meeting of major powers in the next two weeks to work out the next steps for Syria.—Reuters

Up to 500 migrants may have drowned in Mediterranean tragedy

GENEVA — Up to 500 migrants might have drowned in the Mediterranean last week when human traffickers crammed people onto an already overcrowded ship, causing it to sink, the UN refugee agency said on Wednesday.

If confirmed, it would be the worst such tragedy in 12 months and bring the total number of migrant drownings in the southern Mediterranean to nearly 800 so far this year.

The UNHCR agency said 37 men, three women and a three-year-old child had survived the disaster after being rescued by a merchant ship. The group, which was brought to Greece on 16 April, included Somalis, Ethio-

pians, Egyptians and one Sudanese. The survivors recounted that they had been among 100 to 200 people who had set sail from Libya last week headed for Italy. After several hours at sea, the traffickers tried to move them onto a bigger ship that was already packed with migrants.

This ship sank before the survivors could board it.

An Ethiopian man named Mohamed told the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) that his wife, two-month-old child and brother-in-law had died in the sinking.

"The boat was going down, down. All the people died in a matter of minutes. After the shipwreck we were drifted at

sea for a few days, without food, without anything," the IOM quoted him as saying.

UNHCR spokesperson William Spindler said the eyewitnesses estimated that up to 500 people might have perished.

"We don't know exactly how many were there on that boat and they have now disappeared from the face of the earth," he told Reuters television said. "This is another example of what is happening almost in a daily basis in the Mediterranean." The Somali government said on Monday that it believed that some 200 of the dead were from Somalia. It also said that the capsized boat had originally set sail from Egypt.—Reuters



Migrants sit in a rubber dinghy during a rescue operation by SOS Mediterranee ship Aquarius off the coast of the Italian island of Lampedusa on 18 April 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Palestinian wounded in Jerusalem bus bombing dies, Hamas claims him



Israeli police forensic experts work at the scene after an explosion tore through a bus in Jerusalem on Monday and set a second bus on fire, in what an Israeli official said was a bombing, on 18 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

JERUSALEM — A Palestinian militant from the occupied West Bank who was wounded when his bomb exploded on an Israeli commuter bus in Jerusalem on Monday has died, an Israeli hospital spokeswoman and a pro-Hamas website said on Wednesday.

A spokeswoman for the Jerusalem hospital where the wounded man was treated confirmed he had succumbed to his injuries. Israeli authorities have placed a gag order on the investigation and declined to release any details.

The pro-Hamas Palestinian Information Centre identified him as Abdel-Hamid Abu

Srou from the Ayda refugee camp near Bethlehem and said he was a member of the Izz el-Deen Al-Qassam brigades, the armed wing of the Hamas militant Islamist group.

The explosion blew up a bus, wounding 16 people, and caused a fire on a nearby bus. In a speech hours afterwards, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu linked the attack to a six-month-old wave of Palestinian street violence.

Israeli medical sources said six people wounded by the blast were still being treated in hospital, the rest had been released by late Wednesday.—Reuters

Ecuador to hike taxes, sell assets to fund quake rebuilding

PEDERNALES/QUITO — Ecuador will temporarily increase some taxes, sell assets, and may issue new bonds on the international market to fund a multi-billion dollar reconstruction after a devastating 7.8 magnitude quake, a somber President Rafael Correa said on Wednesday.

The death toll from Ecuador's weekend earthquake neared 600 and rescue missions ebbed as the traumatized Andean nation braced itself for long and costly rebuilding.

"It's hard to imagine the magnitude of the tragedy. Every time we visit a place, there are more problems," Correa said, fresh from touring the disaster zone.

The leftist leader estimated the disaster had inflicted \$2 billion to \$3 billion of damage and could knock 2 to 3 percentage points off growth, meaning the economy will almost certainly shrink this year. Lower oil revenue had already left the poor nation of 16 million people facing near-zero growth and lower



Firefighters do rescue work in Pedernales, after an earthquake struck off Ecuador's Pacific coast, on 20 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

investment.

In addition to \$600 million in credit from multilateral lenders, Correa, an economist, announced a raft of measures to help repair homes, roads, and

bridges along the devastated Pacific Coast.

"We're looking at the possibility of issuing bonds on the international market," he said on Wednesday afternoon, without providing

details.

Ecuador had been saying before the quake that current high yields would make it too expensive to issue debt. Yields on its bonds are close to 11 percentage

points higher than comparable US Treasury debt, according to JPMorgan data, and creditors are likely to be wary after the quake.

Correa's government in 2008 defaulted on debt

with a similar yield, calling the value unfair. His government has since returned to Wall Street and Ecuador currently has some \$3.5 billion worth of bonds in circulation.

In a nationally televised address later on Wednesday, Correa also announced the OPEC nation was poised to shed assets.

"The country has many assets thanks to investment over all these years and we will seek to sell some of them to overcome these difficult moments," he said.

He also unveiled several short-term tax changes, including a 2-point increase in the Valued Added Tax for a year, as well as a "one-off 3 per cent additional contribution on profits," although the fine print was not immediately clear.

The VAT tax is currently 12 per cent.

Additionally, a one-off tax of 0.9 per cent will be imposed on people with wealth of over \$1 million. Ecuadoreans will also be asked to contribute one day of salary, calculated on a sliding scale based on income.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV WEST SCENT VOY NO (111N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV WEST SCENT VOY NO (111N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20.4.2016 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 EVER ABLE VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV EVER ABLE VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.4.2016 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 EVERGREEN SHIPPING
LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV JI XIANG SONG VOY NO (25)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV JI XIANG SONG VOY NO (25) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22.4.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T-5 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 COSCO SHIPPING CO LTD.

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV ANAN BHUM VOY NO (157N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ANAN BHUM VOY NO (157N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.4.2016 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 COSCO CONTAINER 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 16.4.2016 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 MCC TRANSPORT
(S'PORE) PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV THAI BINH-688 VOY NO (02/2016)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV THAI BINH-688 VOY NO (02/2016) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20.4.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-3 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301928

Spain's Rajoy, Catalan leader seek to thaw strained relations

MADRID — Spain's acting Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy sought to ease a stand-off with pro-separatist leaders in Catalonia on Wednesday with a promise of further dialogue over issues such as financing.

Pro-secession parties swept to power in the Catalan regional assembly last September and vowed to pave the way for a split from Spain within 18 months, a stance firmly opposed by the central government in Madrid.

Rajoy, whose centre-right People's Party (PP) lost its majority in parliament in an inconclusive December general election, met new Catalan President

Carles Puigdemont on Wednesday for the first time since the pro-separatist regional leader was sworn in more than three months ago.

The talks had not been expected to yield a major breakthrough after tensions between Catalonia and the central government were exacerbated following recent spat over the amount of financing that flows to the region.

Rajoy and Puigdemont said in separate news conferences they had agreed to keep up talks, adding that meetings between senior officials to discuss a range of issues, including energy policy and the response to Europe's refugee crisis, were

scheduled for the coming days. But the leaders clashed over Catalonia's demand to hold a binding referendum on secession. The idea of a plebiscite is supported by a majority in the region, polls show, even by some who oppose secession.

Separatist parties won a majority of seats in the Catalan election last year, though they only scored 47 per cent of the vote, leaving them without the clear mandate they had sought to bring the independence push to a head. Puigdemont said there were "big discrepancies" between himself and Rajoy over the independence question, adding the acting prime minister had rejected hold-

ing a referendum. "We will continue to defend Spanish unity," Rajoy said.

Rajoy had last held a formal meeting with Puigdemont's predecessor, Artur Mas, in July 2014. Rival political parties have criticised Rajoy's reluctance to try and foster dialogue.

Northeastern Catalonia, whose beaches and capital city Barcelona are major draws for tourists, accounts for about a fifth of Spain's economy.

The region of 7.5 million people, with its own language, has long harboured an independence movement, though the separatist push grew strongly in recent years amid a deep recession.



Spanish acting Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy (L) and Catalan President Carles Puigdemont gesture while posing for the media at the Moncloa Palace in Madrid, Spain, on 20 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

The question over how to deal with Catalonia has played an increasingly important role in national politics since an inconclusive national election in December left parties unable to

agree on forming a coalition government.

Disagreements over the referendum issue are one of the reasons some natural allies on the left have so far failed to team up.—Reuters

Russia warns US over naval incident as NATO tensions laid bare

BRUSSELS — Russia accused the United States on Wednesday of intimidation by sailing a US naval destroyer close to Russia's border in the Baltics and warned that the Russian military would respond with "all necessary measures" to any future incidents.

Speaking after a meeting between NATO envoys and Russia, their first in almost two years, Moscow's ambassador to NATO said the 11 April maritime incident showed there could be no improvement in ties until the US-led alliance withdrew from Russia's borders.

"This is about attempts to exercise military pressure on Russia," the envoy, Alexander Grushko, said. "We will take all necessary measures, precautions, to compensate for these attempts to use military force," he told reporters.



A US Navy picture shows what appears to be a Russian Sukhoi SU-24 attack aircraft flying over the USS Donald Cook in the Baltic Sea. PHOTO: REUTERS

US Ambassador to NATO Douglas Lute pressed Russia about the incident, warning it had been dangerous.

The United States has said the guided missile destroyer USS Cook was on routine business near Poland when it was harassed by Russian jets.

"We were in international waters," a NATO diplomat reported Lute as telling Grushko during the NATO-Russia council meeting.

Despite what officials said was a calm and professional meeting, the public comments highlighted the state of tension that persists

between the sides since Moscow's annexation of Ukraine's Crimea in March 2014 and its support for separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said the NATO member states had, during the meeting, rejected Grushko's account of the crisis in eastern Ukraine, where 9,000 people have died since April 2014.

Stoltenberg said while there were "profound disagreements" over how to handle Europe's security, each side urgently needed to talk more and to use existing rules to reduce military risk.

Stoltenberg suggested revamping a Cold War-era treaty known as the Vienna document, which sets out the rules for large-scale exercises and other military activity, as well as tele-

phone hotlines and other military communication channels.

"We have to use our lines of communication," he said. Russia's chief concern is NATO's biggest modernisation since the Cold War, which is likely to include a military build-up in eastern Europe with a rotating, multinational force in Poland and the Baltics.

NATO says the plans are a proportionate response to Russian aggression following Moscow's annexation of Crimea, and the alliance had no forces in eastern Europe before the Ukraine crisis. Poland and other NATO members in the Baltics worry about an increase in the Russian military presence in its Kaliningrad enclave, where Russia is positioning longer-range surface-to-air missiles.—Reuters

At least 13 killed in blast at southeast Mexico petrochemical plant

COATZACOALCOS, (Mexico) — At least 13 people were killed in a blast at a major petrochemical plant of Mexican oil company Pemex, its chief executive said on Thursday, in the latest deadly accident to hit the oil producer. The explosion, which sent a huge, dark plume of smoke billowing upwards just after 3pm (2000 GMT) on Wednesday at the facility's chlorinate 3 plant in the Gulf state of Veracruz, injured 136 people.

Gonzalez, who travelled to the site of the blast, near the port of Coatzacoalcos, one of Pemex's top oil export hubs, told local television that the death toll could rise. He said it was unclear what caused the leak that prompted the blast.

The explosion was the latest in a string of safety disasters that have plagued the state oil giant, which has vowed cost cuts to cope with the rout in oil prices.

In 2013, at least 37 people were killed by a blast at its Mexico City headquarters, and 26 people died in a fire at a Pemex natural gas facility in northern Mexico in September 2012.—Reuters

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ELECTRIC POWER AND ENERGY MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE (INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER) (5 / 2016)

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

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-001(16-17)	Spares for Well Surveying Tool (1) Item	US\$
(2)	IFB-002(16-17)	Mud Chemicals (7) Items	US\$
(3)	IFB-003(16-17)	4" ERW Steel Line Pipe (16,100) MTR	US\$
(4)	IFB-004(16-17)	10" ERW Steel Line Pipe (37,030) MTR	US\$
(5)	IFB-005(16-17)	20" LSAW Steel Line Pipe (11,270) MTR	US\$

Tender Closing Date & Time - 19-5-2016, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 21ST April, 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 PHUONG NAM-68 VOY NO (03/2016)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PHUONG NAM-68 VOY NO (03/2016) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.4.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T-2 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S RK SHIPPING & TRADING
PTE LTD.

Phone No: 2301928

Adele tops young musicians' Rich List after success of '25' album

LOS ANGELES — Adele's best-selling album "25" added 30 million pounds (\$43 million) to the London-born singer's fortune, putting her top of the *Sunday Times* newspaper's Young Musicians 2016 rich list for performers under 30.

The worldwide hit released last November boosted the 27-year-old singer's fortune to 85 million pounds and lifted her to 30th place in the paper's overall 2016 list of the wealthiest performers and composers in Britain and Ireland.

Paul McCartney tops the musicians' rich list for a second year in a

row. The former Beatle and his wife Nancy Shevell have a combined fortune of 760 million pounds, according to the *Sunday Times* on Thursday, a rise of 30 million on last year.

McCartney is followed by composer Andrew Lloyd Webber, with 715 million pounds while the Rolling Stones are Britain and Ireland's wealthiest band with the fortunes of its four members totaling 630 million pounds. Irish band U2, whose fortune jumped to 500 million from 431 million, was the highest-grossing rock act last year selling 1.29 million tickets worth 66 million pounds for 76 concerts. Singer/songwriter Ed Sheeran has jumped five places making him the second-richest young performer after Adele and propelling him into the main music list for the first time.

The late David Bowie's family, who inherited 70 million pounds from his will, are also a new addition to the list with a combined fortune of 90 million pounds. Although many musicians climbed the wealthy ranks over the past year, a few dropped including Cliff Richard, who fell four places despite a 3 million-pound addition to his bank account.

Former Oasis band members Noel and Liam Gallagher were the only performers whose fortune showed a marked decline, the paper said, with a loss of 12 million pounds, dropping them seven places.

The list ranks Britain and Ireland's richest musicians and performers and is published ahead of the annual *Sunday Times Rich List* this weekend.—*Reuters*



PHOTO: REUTERS

Eva Longoria to launch fashion line

LONDON — Actress Eva Longoria is launching her own fashion line.

The 41-year-old actress, who will release her capsule collection at The Limited in August, said she has been sewing since she was a child, reported *Femalefirst*.

"I learned to sew as a kid. All I wanted for Christmas was a Singer (sewing machine). At first, all I could sew was straight lines — curtains, pillows, duvets. That's why I started my JCPenney home line. If it had a sleeve or arm or leg, I was like, 'No,'" she said.

"But when I was in high school, I would go to Jo-Ann Fabrics and get scrap fabric and patterns on sale to work with. That's how I learned to cut on the bias."

And Longoria has been praised for designing outfits that perfectly complement women.

Diane Ellis, CEO of The Limited said, "Because she's a sewer, Eva is astute with aspects of fit; she knows what's complementary to the body. We did some research on our client, who's a sophisticated professional, and we were amazed at her response to how much she saw Eva as a strong woman-an activist who leads in all aspects."—*PTI*



Actress Eva Longoria. PHOTO: REUTERS

Missy Elliott hints at collaboration with Bruno Mars

LOS ANGELES — Rapper Missy Elliott has shared a photo on Twitter of her hitting the studio with Hawaii singer Bruno Mars, hinting an upcoming collaboration.

In the picture, 44-year-old Elliott, clad in all-black, seemed to be enjoying the studio session with Mars, reported *Aceshowbiz*.

They're all smiles in the pictures, which came with a caption that read, "Had a blast vibing wit my fam @BrunoMars @ the studio! GoodVibes He got some [fire emoji]! He such a rare gem! Big up Sunny."

Elliott and Mars are currently readying their respective new album. Following her much-talked-

about appearance at the 2015 Super Bowl, the "Work It" hit-maker has been working hard on what would be her first LP since 2005's "The Cookbook".

Mars, meanwhile, is reportedly planning to drop a follow-up to 2012's "Unorthodox Jukebox" later this year.—*PTI*

Jennifer Aniston named People's 'most beautiful' woman

LOS ANGELES — Jennifer Aniston was named *People* magazine's most beautiful woman of 2016 on Wednesday, 12 years after she first won the honour.

Aniston, 47, said she was "very, very flattered" to be named again, telling the magazine she had a "sort of very excited, teenage-y kind of moment" when she heard the news.

People also named the "Friends" star the most beautiful woman in 2004 when the TV comedy series was in its final season.

Recent winners of the honour include Sandra Bull-

ock, Jennifer Lopez and Lupita Nyong'o.

Aniston, who last year married her second husband, actor Justin Theroux, said she started paying attention to her looks and her body early in her career after an agent told her she failed to get a part because she was "too chubby."

"I was like, 'What?!' But my diet was terrible," she said. "Milk shakes and French fries with gravy. It was a good thing to start paying attention."

Aniston now works out at least six days a week but says she is not as strict as she once was when indulging in some of her favourite foods.—*Reuters*



PHOTO: REUTERS

Rice sculpture: Taiwan artist gets granular with president elect

TAIPEI — A Taiwan artist has refused to see the big picture and instead captured the likeness of president-elect Tsai Ing-wen, to celebrate her inauguration next month, on a single grain of rice.

Chen Forng-Shean, who has also sculpted the face of China's late Chairman Mao Zedong on rice, said the staple was a fitting medium for his work because it met the basic needs of ethnic Chinese.

"Rice gives nourishment to the proverbial belly of the

ethnic Chinese people. I used rice (as a medium) to encourage Taiwan's leader, Tsai Ing-wen, hoping that she can take care of the common people, so they don't need to endure hunger, and improve their financial situation," he said.

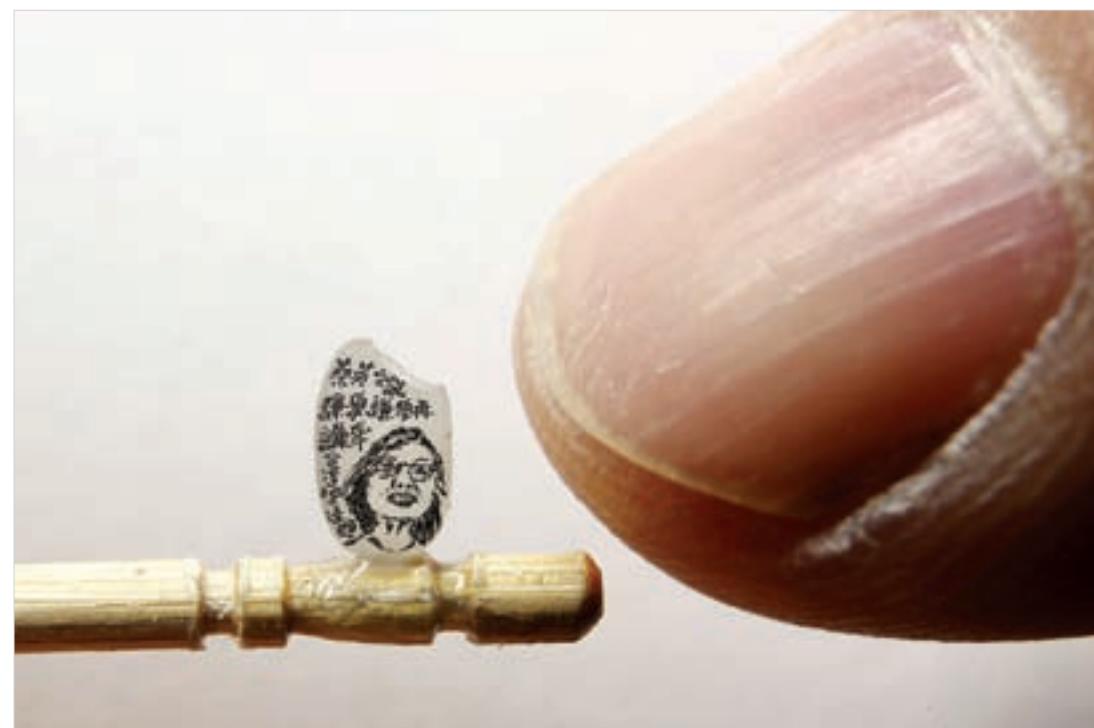
He outlined the facial features and accompanying Chinese characters with a needle-point pen on to the surface before carving and then dabbing black paint into the grooves.

It took three months and

more than 10 tries to get the sculpture to Chen's satisfaction. Visitors to his cluttered workshop near the capital Taipei can view more than 150 of his works using a magnifying glass.

Chen reminded Tsai, who takes office on 20 May, that she pledged in her acceptance speech in January to work for the people of Taiwan.

"'(Be) modest, modest and even more modest.' I wrote this sentence of hers on to this grain of rice."—Reuters



Miniature artist Chen Forng-Shean poses with his latest work, a miniature portrait of Taiwanese president-elect Tsai Ing-wen on a grain of rice, in Taipei, Taiwan on 18 April 2016. The Chinese characters read, 'Modest, modest and even more modest.' PHOTO: REUTERS

Scottish royal wardrobe exhibit marks Queen's birthday



Queen Elizabeth II arrives at the Queen Elizabeth II delivery office in Windsor with Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh on 20 April 2016 in Windsor, Britain. The visit marks the 500th Anniversary of the Royal Mail delivery service. The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh are carrying out engagements in Windsor ahead of the Queen's 90th Birthday on Thursday. PHOTO: REUTERS

SCOTLAND — An exhibition of spectacular gowns and jewels worn by Britain's Queen Elizabeth, who turns 90 on Thursday, opened in Scotland, charting the monarch's public appearances since childhood to date.

The exhibition at Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh includes a pink coat and bonnet worn by Elizabeth as a child in 1937, with the matching version worn by her late sister Margaret.

A ruby, gold and diamond cluster brooch given to the Queen by her husband, The Duke of Edinburgh, in 1966 is also on display. The exhibition includes several stunning gem-encrusted

evening gowns by late British designer Norman Hartnell, a royal favourite.

Visitors can also see a dark-green velvet cape and matching hat featuring a plume of white ostrich feathers.

Scotland is known to hold a special place in Elizabeth's heart, and she spends her summers at Balmoral Castle, in the Cairngorms National Park.

The feeling is mutual: Scots nationalists wanted her to continue as Queen of Scotland as part of their proposal for independence from the United Kingdom that was defeated in a 2014 referendum.—Reuters

Drones flown to capture cherry blossoms' beauty from the air

AKITA (Japan) — A city in northeastern Japan renowned for its blooming cherry trees is teaming up with a software developer to film the blossoms using drones, aiming to promote tourism and the upkeep of the trees, the city government said Wednesday.

Semboku in Akita Prefecture, which boasts the cherry trees in its

Kakunodate district, is one of the several areas nationwide designated as special zones where the use of drones for public purposes is promoted in order to encourage economic revitalization.

Infoteria Corp. will provide the technology and donate 1 million yen (\$9,160) toward the care of the trees.

Technicians flew a drone along a river bank in the city Wednesday, shooting an aerial view of cherry trees in the early stages of blooming.

City authorities plan to put together drone footage of the blossoms optimized for smartphones to promote tourism, and use the drones to guide arborists when

they prune the trees. "We're using cutting-edge technology to take care of the cherry trees, and hope people around the world will see the footage as well," Semboku Mayor Mitsuhiro Kadowaki said.

Starting in the current fiscal year, the city plans to apply to receive tax contributions from corporations around the country

through the "furusato nozei" or hometown tax donation system.

Drone flights are more restricted in many other areas of Japan, after an amendment to the aviation law in December banned the flying of the devices over crowded residential areas or near airports without government permission.—Kyodo News



Entertainment Channel

(22- 4-2016, Friday)

<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>7:10 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 	<p>"Epic" (Part-2)</p> <p>9:10 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Music Programme <p>9:20 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Premier League (Review) (Part-3) <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"> Impressionist Myanmar Master Artist - U Lun Kywe <p>10:10 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Myanmar Video
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**From 22-4-2016 (Friday) 6:00 Pm
To 23-4-2016 (Saturday) 6:00 Pm**



mitv Myanmar International

(22-4-2016 07:00am ~ 23-4-2016 7:00am) MST

<p>Today Fresh</p> <p>07:03 Am News</p> <p>07:26 Am To The Land of Countless Temples - Bagan Trip (EP-1)</p> <p>07:51 Am Mt. Naw Bu Baw</p> <p>08:03 Am News</p> <p>08:26 Am Living in Off-Season</p> <p>08:38 Am A May Yay Yin Nat Festival (Episode-2)</p> <p>08:54 Am Kyeikhteyoe: Welcome All</p> <p>09:03 Am News</p> <p>09:26 Am Nay Pyi Taw Zoological Garden "Well-Trained Elephants"</p>	<p>09:36 Am Shwe U Min Natural Cave In Kalaw</p> <p>09:52 Am Beach Food Delivery</p> <p>10:03 Am News</p> <p>10:26 Am A Lucky Boy</p> <p>10:42 Am A bike in pursuit of Mural Art (Episode-1)</p> <p>(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Thursday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am) (03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) -Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)</p> <p>Prime Time</p> <p>07:03 Pm News</p> <p>07:26 Pm A Visit To Today's Along-Daw-Katthapha</p> <p>07:43 Pm The Eel Business (Fisherman the eel culture)</p> <p>08:03 Pm News</p> <p>08:26 Pm The Writer: Chit Oo Nyo (Part II)</p> <p>(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm)- Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am) (11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Thursday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am) (03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) -Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(For Detailed Schedule - www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)</p>
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Darmian shines as Manchester United beat Palace 2-0

LONDON — An inspired Matteo Darmian scored his first goal for Manchester United and set up another as Louis van Gaal's side kept alive their hopes of a top-four finish with a 2-0 home win over Crystal Palace on Wednesday.

Darmian unleashed a screaming volley with his weaker left foot early in the second half, after Palace defender Damien Delaney turned the Italy full-back's sharp low cross into his own net in the fourth minute. The result left United in fifth place, a point behind Arsenal who have a game in hand, and two adrift of Manchester City, as the battle for Champions League spots appears set to go down to the wire.

"I was very happy for Matteo, two times he was involved in the goals," Van Gaal told Manchester United television (MUTV).

"I was very happy with the performance and I think it was a four or five to zero game. We should have finished it much earlier and scored much more goals."

Playing in an adventurous formation with Wayne Rooney deployed in a deeper role behind the front four, United were denied a bigger win by a string of superb saves from visiting goalkeeper Julian Speroni.

The 36-year-old Argentine kept out a barrage of stinging shots from Anthony Martial,



Manchester United's Marcus Rashford shoots at goal during Barclays Premier League at Old Trafford on 20 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

Juan Mata and Jesse Lingard after Delaney's own goal.

He was powerless to stop Darmian's thunderbolt, however, after the Italian chested down a poor clearance by Palace on

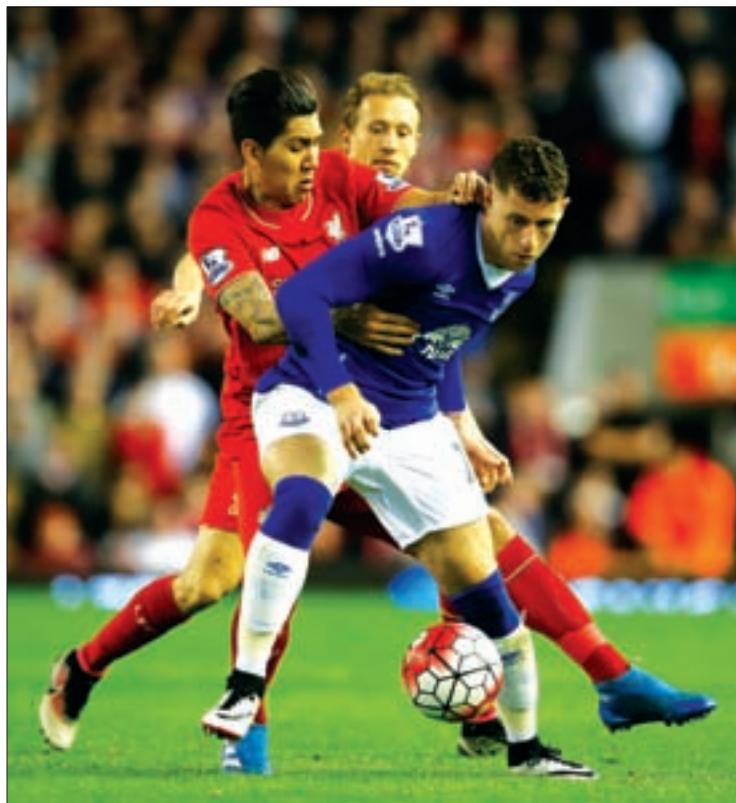
the edge of the area and let fly, with the ball cannoning in off the post.

The result put Van Gaal in a positive mood for Saturday's FA Cup semi-final against Everton

at Wembley.

"I came to England to win titles and now we are very close, but first we have to beat Everton and that is not easy," he said.—Reuters

Liverpool hit 10-man Everton for four



Liverpool's Roberto Firmino in action with Everton's Ross Barkley during Barclays Premier League at Anfield on 20 April 2016.

PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Liverpool maintained their stranglehold over Everton in the Merseyside derby with a one-sided stroll against their local rivals who had Ramiro Funes Mori sent off for a horror-tackle in the second half.

Liverpool were never under any serious or sustained pressure and scored twice late in the first half through Divock Origi and Mamadou Sakho, both from James Milner crosses, before Daniel Sturridge came off the bench to make it 3-0 and Philippe Coutinho finished off the rout.

Sturridge was introduced in place of Origi, who was taken off on a stretcher after Funes Mori planted his studs into the Belgian striker's ankle, which earned the Argentine a straight red card despite his protestations of innocence to the referee.

Liverpool, who are now unbeaten in the last 11 top-flight Merseyside derbies, stay seventh in the table, but riding a wave of recent momentum and finding

form at a good time ahead of their Europa League semi-final against Villarreal.

The victory came at a cost, however, with Liverpool manager Juergen Klopp later confirming that Origi had suffered a twisted ankle.

"I would like to say yes, I am delighted, but the injury to Divock Origi has cost me some joy," he said.

"They say it is disgusting, awful pictures. But it's not broken, it is a twisted ankle, he is on crutches walking around so we will have to see."

Everton, who face Manchester United in the FA Cup semi-final on Saturday, are 11th, but morale will be at rock-bottom.

They have not won at Anfield since 1999 and never looked like breaking that hoodoo at any point on Wednesday, while pressure is mounting on manager Roberto Martinez, who did not seek to sugar-coat the defeat.

"It is a really hurtful experi-

ence," he said.

"At the moment we are facing strong adversity but we have to switch attention to the big game at the weekend."

Liverpool had to wait until the 43rd minute to take the lead when Milner floated a cross to the far post for Origi to outjump John Stones and plant his header into the net.

The second goal was remarkably similar with Milner again the architect, picking out Sakho unmarked to head home from close range in first-half stoppage time.

The second half was only five minutes old when Funes Mori saw red and Sturridge swiftly capitalised, receiving a pass from Lucas and coolly firing home for his fifth goal in his past six Premier League appearances.

He wanted to claim Coutinho's fourth as the Brazilian's curling finish brushed the striker's shorts on its way into the net.—Reuters

Ronaldo needs more rest after injury scare — Zidane

BARCELONA — Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo needed to take time off and even miss games if he is to see out an arduous season after he limped off before the end of Real Madrid's 3-0 victory over Villarreal on Wednesday, according to manager Zinedine Zidane.

The French coach said Ronaldo did not appear to have a seri-

ous injury despite walking off the pitch holding the back of his thigh before the final whistle went.

Zidane had already used his three substitutions and could not replace him with another player, leaving his team with 10 men for the remaining seconds of the game.

The Portuguese forward has played every minute of Real Ma-

drid's 34 league games this season and started all 10 games in the Champions League, only being substituted in the 89th minute of the Round of 16 first leg at AS Roma.

"Once in a while he needs to be substituted so he can rest," Zidane said. "It's necessary for him not to finish one game or to miss one game occasionally."

"But he's a player who always wants to play and give everything he has. It's difficult for me at times."

Spanish newspaper AS reported Ronaldo was suffering from cramp. He is expected to have medical tests on Thursday.

Zidane said he was not worried that Ronaldo had a serious injury, as Madrid prepare for a

La Liga game at Rayo Vallecano on Saturday and their Champions League semi-final first leg with Manchester City on Tuesday.

"He is more a team player than people think, he is working very well and defending a lot," Zidane added. "Everyone recognises his work. He doesn't just score goals, he's another member of the team."—Reuters