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WORKER APPRECIATION

Govt vows to protect labour rights, end forced labour

THE Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population issued a statement yesterday in coincidence with International Workers' Day, expressing its commitment to promoting and protecting labour rights, including ending forced labour and stronger enforcement of child labour laws in Myanmar.

In its statement, the ministry invited all interested partners to join with the government in its efforts to promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen dialogue on labour-related issues.

Meanwhile, the ministry joined hands with labour organisations to celebrate International Workers' Day at the Hlaingthaya Industrial Zone yesterday.

Speaking on the occasion, Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe called on the country's employers to respect the rights of workers in accordance with the Labour Law while pursuing their own interests.

He has also urged the workers to prepare to maximise their workplace efficiency and hone their skills in their chosen areas of work, stressing the need for an increase in productivity, efficiency and competitiveness in the workplace.

The Union minister also called on the labour organizations which are being involved in labour issues in the country for helping



More than 1,500 workers march in honour of International Workers' Day in the Hlaingthaya Industrial Zone. PHOTO: ZAW GYI (PANITA)

the workers in line with the law.

The Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population discussed the government's cooperation with private business institutions in conducting in-house efficiency enhancement trainings.

Plans are underway to guarantee workers international workplace standards, including

in-house training, social security, healthcare, good labour relations and fair hearings on labour disputes.

The event drew some 2,000 workers from labour unions in various townships, with participants discussing issues related to the protection of women against violence, women's healthcare, forced

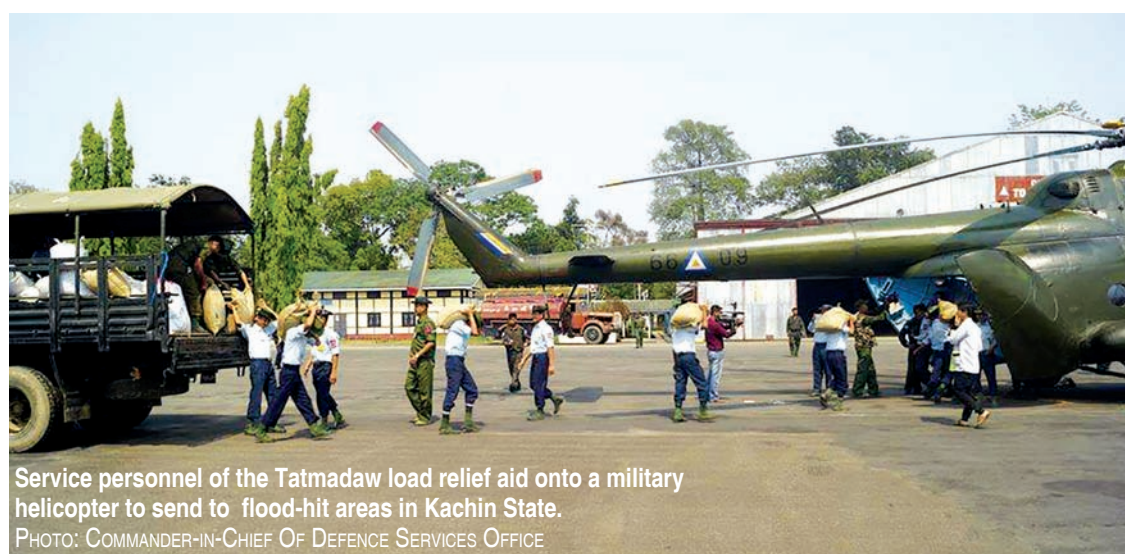
labour and social security.

The government has been reviewing domestic laws related to labour rights to be in line with international norms and labour rights practices. Myanmar's parliament recently amended the country's labour laws and passed new ones.

With the cooperation of the International Labour Organisation

(ILO) and other partners, Myanmar has made significant achievements in the areas of eliminating forced labour and promoting freedom of association, according to the ministry.

Moreover, the Decent Work Country Programme has been implemented in Myanmar. —*Ko Moe*



Service personnel of the Tatmadaw load relief aid onto a military helicopter to send to flood-hit areas in Kachin State.

PHOTO: COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES OFFICE

Fierce rain leaves hundreds homeless in Kachin

A WEEK of fierce rain in Chibwe Township, Kachin State, swelled local creeks, causing floods that washed away 95 homes. No casualties have been reported, but the victims are reportedly running out of food.

In Myitkyina District, the rain fell on two village-tracts in the early morning of 24 April, triggering a flash flood and leaving more than 450 people homeless.

Military personnel, team-

ing with local officials and civil society organisations, rushed to the affected areas to conduct rescue operations. The soldiers, Red Cross members and volunteers helped the residents clear piles of fallen earth from roads and build makeshift bridges to ensure easy access to the villages. The commander of Northern Command used military helicopters to distribute supplies to flood victims.

—*Myanmar News Agency*



Police, fire fighters and volunteers clear havoc in Wundwin. PHOTO: HTAY HLAING (WUNDWIN)

Strong winds hit Upper Myanmar

STRONG winds hit some parts of Upper Myanmar yesterday, destroying homes and pagodas and toppling trees.

The strong winds hit 32 villages in Kawlin Township, causing property damage valued at K36 million (US\$30,638).

More than 340 houses, 11 religious edifices, 10 schools and

37 other buildings were damaged by the wind.

Meanwhile, the same severe weather lashed some villages in Natmauk, Singaing and Wundwin.

A twister touched down in Toungoo on Saturday, damaging the roof of a three-storeyed building at Toungoo University and

destroying lamp posts and trees in the university compound.

The strong wind tends to follow heavy rainfall.

Local authorities and volunteers have cleaned the stricken areas in the aftermath of the wind storms.

No human casualties have been reported.—GNLM

Hunting depletes monkey population in Rakhine State

THE hunting and selling of primates in the Kyauktaw Nature Reserve, Rakhine State, has caused a drop in the population of the species, according to a local pagoda trustees board.

The one square mile area in the vicinity of the pagoda trustees board has been designated as

a nature reserve for the last decade, with the number of primates in the nature reserve estimated at around 1,000.

“There are some cases of monkeys being killed by hunters, but [their dropping numbers] are also caused by a scarcity of food and forest migration. It can

be estimated that there’s only going to be about 600 monkeys left in the environment surrounding the stairways of the pagoda. The hunting of monkeys should be effectively prohibited,” said U Maung Win, the head of the pagoda trustees board.

Difficulties arise in the prosecuting of hunting monkeys within the nature reserve as it has not been officially recognised by the government, only demarcated by the local pagoda trustee board. As such, no legal action has been taken to date.

Over 30 animal species rely upon the nature reserve as their natural habitat, while hunters prey on rarer animals, which are then sold to restaurants and alcohol shops in local villages and those further afield, said U Saw Maung Thein, a local resident of Lammadaw Village.

Various species of monkey living in the area live on bananas and other snack fed to them by visitors to the pagoda.—Myitmakha News Agency



A boy feeds a monkey. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

Dawei municipal receives over K300 million in revenue licence auction fees

MUNICIPAL authorities in Dawei, located in Myanmar’s southern Tanintharyi Region, have announced that they have received over K300 million (US\$255,319) for the 2016-17 fiscal year from the auctioning of revenue licenses.

A total of 25 revenue licences were sold in Dawei for the 2016-17 fiscal year, generating K320 million in revenue.

“We also received close to K320 million for revenue licenses last year. This year, though, there was virtually no auctioning of licences—people just extended their current licenses. We conducted these activities in accordance with a permit from the government office. The auction price was also not high,” said U Aung Kyaw Myo, an assistant director within the Dawei municipal authority.

The 25 licences include four market licenses; four licences for the collection of ve-

hicle taxes upon entering the town; four slaughter licences; four licences for the collection of money at public toilets; two licences for the collection of money at carpark entrances; two licences for the collection of money for the parking of bicycles and tri-shaws at markets; and seven licences for credit lender shops.

“In addition to auction fees for revenue licenses, the municipal authority also receives money from other activities. The municipal committee, together with township and ward administrative bodies, recalculate the budget with this extra monetary income and use it for regional developments projects,” added U Aung Kyaw Myo.

The Dawei municipal authority received a total of K315 million in the 2015-16 fiscal year from revenue licence auction fees.—Myitmakha News Agency

New kindergarten system coming this academic year



Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi talks to education officials at a seminar on education policy in southern Yangon.

PHOTO: EDUCATION

A NEW kindergarten system will be introduced to the country’s primary education system as of this academic year, Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi said yesterday in a speech to a seminar on education policy in southern Yangon.

The kindergarten system will focus on activities that will enable children to learn with joy, the Union minister said, explaining his ministry’s efforts

to provide all primary students with sets of school textbooks and exercise books free of charge.

He urged teachers to help children of primary school age finish kindergarten through the acquisition of academic proficiency, stressing the need to develop a new generation of teachers to guarantee quality education.—Ministry of Education

Interview of H.E. Fumio Kishida, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan

Q: Myanmar and Japan have enjoyed a longstanding friendship. How do you evaluate the current status of the relationship, and how do you think your visit will contribute to the further strengthening of the bilateral relationship?

A: This is my third visit to Myanmar as Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan. During each visit, I feel the very warm hearts of the people of Myanmar, towards the people of Japan as true friends. The Japanese people also feel an affinity towards the country, the people and the diverse culture of Myanmar. The historical friendship between our two countries is the foundation of such feelings of mutual intimacy.

We welcome the inauguration of the new administration in Myanmar which has garnered the support of the majority of its people. The general elections which were held last November marked a historic significance as the first step towards the true democratization of Myanmar. I heard that it became popular for Myanmar voters to upload on Facebook selfies of themselves with their fingers marked with the “indelible ink” that Japan supported together with other donors. We feel that development would not be achievable if the country does not have a safe and stable society in which the people can participate in free and fair elections.

The “Japan Myanmar Pwe Taw” was first held in 2014 to mark the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Myanmar. We held the second of such Pwe Taw in February this year, and as many as 17,000 Myanmar

people came to the venue to enjoy Japanese culture through pop music, Japanese taiko drum performances, food stalls and company exhibition booths. We feel that knowing each other’s cultures deepens our mutual understanding. I hope you will all take part in the next Pwe Taw.

On this visit, I would like to convey that Japan is supporting Myanmar both from the public sector and the private sector as a trusted development partner for Myanmar. I firmly believe that such cooperation will fortify even more our amicable bilateral relations for the further democratization and prosperity of Myanmar.

Q: Japan has provided assistance to the development of Myanmar through the implementation of many ODA projects. How do you evaluate the past and current projects through Japanese ODA and what are the Government of Japan’s plans for future ODA assistance towards Myanmar?

A: In support of Myanmar’s efforts towards reform across various fields towards democratization, national reconciliation and sustainable development, Japan reviewed the economic cooperation guideline for Myanmar in 2012. In the years following the review, Japan has provided debt relief of approximately 300 billion Japanese Yen in 2013, as well as has provided a total of 377 billion Japanese Yen worth of assistance towards livelihood improvement, human resources and institution development, and infrastructure development.

A good example of Japanese assistance is the opening of the



Mr Fumio Kishida

Thilawa Special Economic Zone (SEZ). This project was realized through the cooperation between the Governments and the private sectors of both Japan and Myanmar. Japan not only provided support for the development of the industrial zone, but also the development of the port and roads in the vicinity. Also, the three ferries provided to Yangon are now busily supporting daily commuters. During last year’s flood and landslide disaster, many regions in Myanmar suffered serious damage. In light of the disaster, Japan decided to provide a maximum of 5 billion Japanese yen for relief support, and the school reconstruction assistance utilizing the funding is well underway.

Japan, as a true friend of Myanmar, will continue to provide high-quality assistance conforming to international standards including environmental and social considerations. Especially, we will provide an all-out support for sectors which Myanmar’s new administration is especially emphasizing, such as creation of employment opportunities, health, education, agriculture, infrastructure, fiscal and finance sectors.—GNLM

Rubberwood furniture manufacturers require connections to tap into foreign markets

RUBBERWOOD furniture manufacturers in the Mon State capital of Mawlamyine say they lack the business connections to break into foreign markets.

“We built [this wood processing plant] with the objective of exporting finished wooden products abroad. We have processed wood at our disposal, which we can create to the tailor one’s design. But which countries can purchase our wooden products? We need companies to place orders. We also need third parties who can connect us to those companies,” said U ThuraAung, the managing director of Grand Than Lwin Co Ltd, a wood mill in Mawlamyine. There are currently three factories in Mawlamyine that mill rubber trees left over after latex harvesting. The milled wood is then fashioned into

finished wooden products. Two of the factories produce furniture with the rubberwood, which is then exported abroad, while construction on the third factory has only recently been completed.

“On top of being able to break into foreign markets, we need to first work toward a more comprehensive domestic market. There’s a need for those linked to domestic rubber industries to connect with the rubber producers’ association,” said U Khaing-Myint, general secretary of the Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association.

Rubber woodlogs range in price between K50,000 and K60,000 per log, while a tonne of processed rubber wood can fetch around K600,000 when resold back into the domestic market.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Poland eyes renewed investment in Myanmar

POLAND has expressed interest in financial investments in Myanmar’s energy sector and food and beverage industry in order to increase bilateral trade.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between the two countries at the headquarters of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) in Yangon on 28 April.

“We are still here on this initial study visit to allow for financial investment. We must first meet and hold discussion with Myanmar entrepreneurs for economic cooperation,” said Filip Hewelke, a Polish entrepreneur.

Poland is interested in investing in several Myanmar in-

dustries, including agriculture; food and beverages; metal; medicines and medical equipment; and renewable energy.

“We will work together for Myanmar’s economic development. To be honest though, there’s still quite a distance between entrepreneurs of both countries,” said U Zaw Min Win, vice chair of the UMFCCI.

Poland will dispatch various exports to Myanmar, while Myanmar will work to export those products desired by people in Poland. Prior to 2010, before bilateral trade between the two countries halted, bilateral trade between Poland and Myanmar amounted to over US\$1 million.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

New government should re-evaluate logging policy: environmental expert

U WIN MYO THU, an environmental expert, has said policies concerning the selling of Myanmar timber should be reassessed during the term of the new government.

He said a reduction in deforestation from the logging will only come about through logging purely from tree plantations, not original, pristine forests.

“The new government must make more of an investment into tree plantations. Only trees from these plantations should be logged. It will allow for a reduction in logging of natural forests,” said U Win Myo Thu.

Approximately 1.5 million hectares of forest were de-

stroyed in Myanmar between 2002-2014, with an average yearly deforestation rate of 0.30 per cent, according to studies conducted by Advancing Life and Regenerating Motherland (ALARM), and environmental NGO.

“Initial studies on Myanmar’s forests were conducted by satellite. We then handpicked locations from these results and conducted field studies. The quantity of demarcated natural forests recorded on maps has declined in the years between 2002 and 2014,” said Katie Lajeunesse Connerte, a mapping programme coordinator for ALARM.—*Myitmakha News Agency*



The aerial view of areas in Chibwe Township, Kachin State, which was hit by floods caused by heavy rains. PHOTO: COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES OFFICE (News on Page 1)



Respect paying ceremony of English Department in Dagon University. PHOTO: HTIN AUNG

Dagon University alumni honour faculty

ALUMNI of the Dagon University English Department held their 10th respect-paying ceremony for faculty members at university's stadium yesterday.

After paying their respects, the alumni presented gifts to the faculty members.

Retired professor Daw Sein Sein Myint, English professor

Daw Swe Swe Pwint and SEMEO Regional centre for History and Tradition (SEMEO CHAT) member professor, offered words of advice to the alumni.

Daw Lei Lei Win Than spoke words of thanks on behalf of the alumni. Later, the attendees enjoyed musical entertainment.—GNLM

Crime NEWS

Ownerless timber seized in Bago



Forest department officials found nearly one tonne of logs in an abandoned vehicle in Bago Region.

A CACHE of illegal timber weighing nearly one tonne was confiscated by local authorities from an abandoned vehicle in Nyaunglaybin Township, Bago Region, on Saturday.

Acting on a tip-off, members of the township forest department led by department head U

Tin Soe searched a car that was stopped near mile post No 107/2 on the Yangon-Mandalay road, near the Peinzaloke Township toll gate. They discovered 138 wooden planks, weighing a total of 0.71 tonnes. Local police are still searching for the owner of the car.—Nay Lin

Male elephant found dead in Chaungtha forest reserve

THE carcass of a wild elephant was recently found within the Chauntha forest reserve in Ayeyawady Region by members of the township forest department.

According to forester U Lay Aung, the elephant was 7.6 feet tall and about 25 years old.

The male elephant, which had no tusks, was found with serious wounds on its right buttock. The elephant's head was found removed from its body. The animal's trunk was found about 20 feet from the rest of the body.

Local police are searching for the poachers and will charge them under the Wildlife Protection Law.—200



Indaw Township police seized nearly one tonne of Tamalan wood from three smugglers.

Men charged for smuggling hardwood in Sagaing

THREE people are facing smuggling charges in Indaw Township, Sagaing Region, after they were found with nearly one tonne of Tamalan wood last Friday.

According to an investigation, a combined team including local police searched a light truck driven by Nay Thu Aung

Maung with two others on board near Sakapin Village. They found three square logs weighing 0.6798 tonnes of hardwood, valued at K135,960. Nay Thu Aung Maung, 29, Zin Maung Maung, 32, and Maung Maung Chit, 25, have been charged under the Penal Code by police.—Maung Chit Lin

Fire breaks out in Mandalay, none injured

A FIRE broke out in Madaya Township, Mandalay Region, on Saturday morning, destroying a wooden building.

No people and animals were injured in the fire, according to the local fire services department.

The fire started at an open-air cattle feed warehouse located within the compound of a livestock farm owned by U Lin Lin, who resides in Lakaungchaung Village.

According to witnesses, the blaze started when high temperatures set fire to straw piled in the warehouse.

With the assistance of villagers, firefighters put the blaze under control within five minutes.

The farm owner has been charged by local police under the law.—Sow Kyaw Thu Htwe



Firefighters bringing under control a warehouse in Mandalay within five minutes. PHOTO:

Married man sued under monogamy law

POLICE in Kyaukse District recently charged a 30-year-old married man named Ngwe Htwe (aka Sel Paing Aye) under Section 13 of the Monogamy Law, which was enacted last year by the previous parliament as part of a broader legislative initiative to protect race and religion.

Daw Myint Myint Kyi, 30,

of Zechaung Village in Tada U Township, filed charges against her husband after he allegedly left her on 24 April and started living with another young woman in Shartawlay Village, Amarapura Township.

The married man currently works as farmer in his village and has two daughters.—Ye Tint

Man suffocates in well

A MAN named U Tun Aye suffocated on Friday while he was collecting garbage in a well in his neighbourhood in Thaton, Mon State, according to a police report.

"We pulled the rope attached to his body after he

shouted that he could not breathe, but the rope was cut off, and he was drowned in the well, which is 24 feet deep," said Daw Pale, the elder sister of U Tun Aye.

Police are still investigating the case.—200



Workers march on the International Labour Day in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 1 May 2016. PHOTO: XINHUA

Cambodian workers march in capital on Int’l Labour Day

PHNOM PENH — Approximately 1,000 Cambodian workers came to streets here on Sunday to mark the 130th International Labour Day, calling for pay rise and better working conditions, a union representative said.

Marchers, mostly from garment and footwear indus-

try, held banners and walked to the National Assembly in order to submit a petition.

“Our petition is to call for the government to raise the minimum wage for garment and footwear workers to 207 US dollars per month,” said Ath Thorn, president of the Cambodian

Labour Confederation, who led the rally.

Currently, the minimum wage for garment workers is 140 US dollars.

The 7-billion-US-dollars garment and footwear industry is the kingdom’s largest foreign currency earner. The sector is comprised of 1,007 factories with some 754,000 workers.

To mark the day, Prime Minister Hun Sen on Sunday made a visit to the Sihanoukville Autonomous Port in coastal Preah Sihanouk province where he met with more than 1,300 port staff and workers.—Xinhua

Bangladesh Hindu tailor hacked to death in attack claimed by Islamic State

DHAKA — Three assailants sped up to a Bangladeshi tailor’s shop by motorcycle on Saturday, dragged out the Hindu owner and hacked him to death, police said, in an attack claimed by Islamic State.

Police official Abdul Jalil, quoting witnesses, said the attackers fled the scene after killing 50-year-old Nikhil Chandra Joardar outside his shop in the town of Tangail, 80 km (50 miles) northwest of the capital Dhaka.

Islamic State militants claimed responsibility for the killing, saying the tailor had blasphemed Prophet Mohammad, the US-based monitoring service SITE said.

The attack came days after a Bangladeshi gay rights campaigner and his friend were killed in a similar manner in a Dhaka apartment.

Islamist militants have targeted atheist bloggers, academics, religious minorities and foreign aid workers in a series of kill-

ings that dates back to February 2015 and has claimed at least 20 lives.

International human rights groups say a climate of intolerance in Bangladeshi politics has both motivated and provided cover for perpetrators of crimes of religious hatred.

Police said they were investigating whether Joardar’s killing was connected to a complaint made against him for making a derogatory comment about Prophet Mohammad.

He was in jail for a few weeks in 2012 but released after the complaint against him was withdrawn, said Jalil.

The Islamic State and a group affiliated to al Qaeda have issued similar claims of responsibility in the past, but the authenticity of Saturday’s statement could not be immediately verified.

Three people, including a local Islamist party leader, have been picked up for questioning, police said on Sunday.—Reuters

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Rare rallies in Viet Nam over mysterious mass fish deaths

HANOI — Hundreds of people demonstrated in Viet Nam on Sunday against a Taiwanese firm they accuse of causing mass fish deaths along the country’s central coast, with some also blaming the government for a sluggish response to a major environmental disaster.

Though an official investigation has found no links between the fish deaths and a \$10.6 billion coastal steel plant run by a unit of Taiwan’s Formosa Plastics (1301.TW), public anger against the company has not abated.

Hundreds gathered in Hanoi holding banners that said: “Formosa destroying the environment is a crime” and “Who poisoned the central region’s waters?”

Others said: “Formosa out of Viet Nam!” and took aim at the government for being aloof in what it now



Demonstrators, holding signs to protest against Taiwanese enterprise Formosa Plastic and environmental-friendly messages, say they are demanding cleaner waters in the central regions after mass fish deaths in recent weeks, in Hanoi, Viet Nam on 1 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

describes as one of its worst environmental disasters.

Demonstrations are rare in Viet Nam and uniformed and plain-clothes police are usually quick to suppress them. On Sunday they cleared traffic to allow demonstrators to do a lap of a big lake in the heart of Hanoi.

Huge numbers of dead fish have appeared at farms and on beaches since 6 April, impacting 200 km (124 miles) of coastline in four provinces, with no known cause. The environment minister has demanded Hung Nghiiep Formosa Ha Tinh dig up its waste pipe at the steel project to enable government to monitor its discharge.

The government’s initial probe said the cause could be “red tide”, when algae blooms and produces toxins, or a release of toxic chemicals by humans.

What has stoked public anger was a comment by a Formosa official who said Viet Nam had to choose between catching fish and shrimp and building a modern steel industry.

“Here is Viet Nam’s territory and there shall never be any case in which a Formosa steel plant has the right to tell the Vietnamese people to choose,” protester Cao Vinh Thinh said.

Several hundred protesters marched in Ho Chi Minh City, the economic hub, according to multiple accounts on Facebook, which is used by 30 millions Vietnamese.

State-controlled media has not reported any of the demonstrations.

Social media and witnesses said protests also took place in central Quang Binh province on Friday, with fishermen throwing fish on the highway after failing to sell their catch. The accounts could not be verified by Reuters.

The government on Saturday ordered the trade and agriculture ministries to help buy seafood caught during deep-sea fishing.—Reuters

Massive forest fire rages in India's Uttarakhand

NEW DELHI — A massive forest fire is raging in the hilly regions of India's northern state of Uttarakhand and has damaged huge stretches of forest, officials said Sunday.

Officials said more than 1,900 hectares of forest land have been affected by the fire in the Kumaoun and Garwal region, east of Dehradun, the capital city of Uttarakhand.

Reports however said the blaze has so far killed seven people and damaged around 3,000 hectares of forest cover in 13 districts of the state.

Indian authorities Sunday pressed in Air Force's MI-17 helicopters in affected areas to spray water and douse flames that are spreading wildly.

The fresh fire triggered Thursday after which three teams of disaster response force and army were deployed in Almora, Gauchar and Pauri and Nainital to contain the inferno and intensify firefighting operations.

Television reports said the smoke has affected visibility in the area. Locals said columns of smoke emanate from the stretches that are under fire and small flames were visible from a distance. Officials said since February, 922 incidents of forest fire incidents were recorded in the state. Though exact reason behind the fire was unknown, officials however suspect the continued dry spell and hand of timber mafia.—Xinhua



BANGKOK — Workers attend a Workers' Day rally jointly held by the Thai Labour Solidarity Committee and the State Enterprises Workers' Relations Confederation at the Dusit Palace Plaza in Bangkok, Thailand, on 1 May 2016. Workers in Thailand made requests over wages and benefits during two rallies held Sunday in Bangkok by the Thai Labour Ministry and independent labour groups respectively. PHOTO: XINHUA

Cambodian PM warns foreign countries not to interfere in internal affairs

PHNOM PENH — Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen on Sunday warned foreign countries not to interfere in the country's internal affairs over recent arrests of opposition politicians and human rights activists.

"Foreign countries must respect Cambodia's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and must not interfere in Cambodia's internal affairs (because) Cambodia has never meddled in their internal affairs," he said during the celebrations of

International Labour Day at the Sihanoukville Autonomous Port in southwestern Preah Sihanouk Province.

"We just take action against the anarchists," the prime minister said. "Lawbreakers must take responsibilities before the law."

Hun Sen also rejected a report by the opposition lawmakers claiming that Cambodia was in chaotic situation after the recent jailing of opposition politicians and human rights defenders.

"It is an untrue report," he

said, referring to the report that some 53 lawmakers from the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) wrote to King Norodom Sihamoni on Wednesday. Hun Sen said Cambodia is now full of peace and stability and does not have any political crisis. "People are living happily because they do not make any mistakes, but you have committed crimes, so you must sleep at the Prey Sar (prison)," he said, referring to those jailed politicians and activists.

Recently, two opposition politicians — a senator and a lawmaker — had been arrested for falsifying a Cambodia-Viet Nam border treaty and accusing the Cambodian government of using fake border map with Viet Nam.

An opposition commune chief and five human rights activists were also arrested this week over claims they convinced the alleged mistress of CNRP vice president and lawmaker Kem Sokha to deny a sexual relationship.—Xinhua

Philippine island rebels free 10 Indonesian hostages

MANILA — Islamist militants in the southern Philippines released 10 Indonesian hostages on Sunday, ending a month-long ordeal during which a kidnapped Canadian held by the same group was beheaded after a ransom deadline passed.

The chief of police on Jolo island said the hostages, who were crew of a Taiwanese-owned tugboat intercepted by Abu Sayyaf rebels, were delivered to the local governor's home at around 0500 GMT then taken to an army base.

"They appeared tired but were in high spirits," said Police Superintendent Junpikar Sitin.

Police and military officials said it was unclear whether or not a ransom was paid for the men. The Philippines rarely publicises

such payments, but it is widely believed no captives are released without them.

The fate of four other hostages from Indonesia held by a different Abu Sayyaf faction is unknown. Indonesia's foreign ministry had no immediate comment on Sunday's release of the 10 detainees.

Abu Sayyaf, a formidable and brutal militia known for amassing tens of millions of dollars from the ransom business, is now holding 13 people, among them four Malaysian seamen and Japanese, Netherlands, Canadian, Norwegian and Filipino citizens.

John Ridsdel, 68, a former mining executive, was executed on Monday by the Abu Sayyaf, which kidnapped him and three

others from a resort last year. His head was found in a bag a few hours after the deadline passed and a torso was discovered two days after.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called it "an act of cold-blooded murder" and has urged countries not to pay ransoms. The price for his life was 300 million pesos (\$6.41 million).

Philippine President Benigno Aquino has vowed to devote all his energy to eliminating the group before he steps down in two months.

But the group's network is deeply entrenched and efforts to flush out its fighters have proved to be a big challenge for the 2,500 Philippine troops engaging them.—Reuters

Iran oil exports to South Korea rise to 400,000 bpd after sanctions lifted

DUBAI — Iran's oil exports to South Korea have more than quadrupled to 400,000 barrels a day since international sanctions were lifted in January, Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh was quoted as saying on Sunday by the Shana news agency.

Iran, whose exports to South Korea were less than 100,000 barrels a day before sanctions were lifted, has since worked to quickly boost its output. It has focused on selling to its traditional customers in Asia, but has also shipped cargoes to Europe.

According to data from En-

ergy Aspects, global imports of Iran's crude rose in March to 1.90 million bpd, from 1.51 million bpd in February.

Zanganeh also said Iran and South Korea were working to resolve difficulties in transferring payments for the oil sales, alluding to the continued reluctance of international banks to enter the Iranian market.

Most international sanctions were lifted in January under last year's nuclear deal, including those targeting the oil sector, but some US sanctions and a US trade embargo remain in place.—Reuters

Germany's Merkel under attack at anti-immigration rally marred by left-wing clashes



Anti-AfD protestor holds a banner reading 'AfD belongs to the right border' during the AfD party congress in Stuttgart, Germany, on 30 April 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

STUTTGART (Germany) — German left-wing demonstrators clashed with police on Saturday as they tried to break up the first full conference of the anti-immigration party Alternative for Germany where Chancellor Angela Merkel's policies came under attack.

Police counted up to 2,000 left-wing protesters, some of whom burnt tyres and hurled stones and fireworks to try to stop the AfD's congress going ahead in Stuttgart. Some 500 were detained, police said.

Two policemen were slightly injured, but there were no reports of injured among the protesters, police spokesman Lambert Maute said.

Buoyed by the migrant crisis, which saw the arrival of more than one million migrants in Germany last year, the AfD has upended German party politics.

After the congress started

late, more than 2,000 AfD members listened to their party leaders' call for an end to Merkel's refugee-friendly politics and a return to Christian values.

"We always wondered when the brave child will finally appear to voice the thoughts of the silent majority and declare that the 'Chancellor of no alternatives' is nothing but naked," said party leader Frauke Petry, 40, in her opening speech.

"And I think, this brave child is us," Petry added.

The violence began around dawn and clashes continued for several hours. Police used pepper spray and threatened to use water cannons to stop protesters, some of whom were masked, from getting onto the grounds of the conference. Some demonstrators still managed to assault several party members, they said.

The AfD has mainly run on an anti-migrant and Islam-critical

agenda, but now struggles to unite its various fractions under one party programme that could put it on a broader footing.

It currently has representatives in half of Germany's sixteen federal state parliaments and the party has its eyes set on next year's federal elections.

Opinion polls see the party coming in at between 10 and 14 per cent, a serious challenge to established party politics, though these have ruled out forming any coalition with the AfD.

The AfD however considers itself in good company on a European level, following election gains by far-right parties across the continent.

Petry used her oratorical skills to denounce what she termed the hypocrisy of the ruling elite whose policies, she said, were directed against the interest of ordinary German citizens.—Reuters

Vucic: I'm not afraid of chaos, people had their say

BELGRADE — Serbian Prime Minister and leader of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) Aleksandar Vucic said Saturday that he was not afraid there would be any chaos after a partial vote recount following recently held parliamentary elections, stressing that things would be the way the law prescribed and the way the citizens wanted.

In an interview with Belgrade-based tabloid daily Informer, Vucic said he would not allow anyone to push Serbia into chaos for the sake of their own petty, selfish political interests, and that he would answer all hatred, directed against him by certain analysts, journalists and their political favourites, by opening factories, renovating

schools and hospitals, increasing GDP and raising salaries and pensions at the end of the year.

Commenting on the current "war for the threshold," in which officials of the Dveri-DSS coalition began to physically attack members of the Republic Electoral Commission (RIK), Vucic says that the question of whether someone has or has not crossed the threshold is not a question of his own or anyone else's wishes.

"The deciding on who crossed the threshold and who hasn't is a job done by RIK, in strict accordance with the votes given by the people.

The people are the bearer of sovereignty.

It is they who gave their votes to us politicians," the prime minister said.—Tanjug



Serbian Prime Minister and leader of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) Aleksandar Vucic.

PHOTO: TANJUG

NEWS IN BRIEF

IEA chief says oil price bottoming depends on global growth

TOKYO — International Energy Agency (IEA) chief Fatih Birol said on Sunday that oil prices may have bottomed but that would depend on global economic growth.

Asked if oil prices had reached a bottom, Birol told Reuters: "It may well be the case, but it depends on economic growth."

He expected global oil demand to grow by 1.2 million barrels per day this year while non-OPEC oil production would fall by more than 700,000 bpd.—Reuters

Police officer killed, 13 people wounded in attack in Turkey's Gaziantep: governor

ISTANBUL — One police officer was killed and 13 people were wounded on Sunday in an attack in front of a police headquarters in Turkey's southeastern city of Gaziantep, the provincial governor was quoted by broadcaster CNN Turk as saying.

Nine of the wounded were police officers, Ali Yerlikaya, governor of Gaziantep province, which borders Islamic State-controlled territory in Syria, said, according to CNN Turk.—Reuters

Suspected Islamic State militant believed to have carried out Gaziantep attack

GAZIANTEP (Turkey) — Turkish police have raided the Gaziantep home of a suspected Islamic State militant believed to have carried out a car bomb attack on Sunday in the southeastern city and have detained his father, security sources said.

A DNA test is expected to determine whether the suspect is the perpetrator of the attack which killed two police officers and wounded 23 people including 19 police.—Reuters

Two car bombs kill at least 32 in southern Iraq

BAGHDAD — Two car bombs in the centre of the southern Iraqi city of Samawa on Sunday killed at least 32 people and wounded about 75 others, two police source said.

The first blast was near the provincial council building and the second one about 60 metres (yards) away at a bus station, a police colonel told Reuters.

He said the death toll was expected to rise due to the gravity of some injuries. Unverified online photographs showed several bodies on the ground, including several children. There was no immediate claim of responsibility.—Reuters

People's Daily justifies regulation of overseas NGOs

BEIJING — The new law on overseas NGOs is necessary to ensure their responsible operation on the Chinese mainland, according to a commentary carried by the People's Daily on Sunday.

While the article claimed that "China has always welcomed overseas NGOs operating and developing friendly exchanges in the country," it also said that the lack of laws covering NGOs has led to problems. The state-published People's Daily said a number of foreign NGOs had engaged in crimes undermining China's national security and interests under the guise of exchanges and cooperation.

Adopted by China's top legislature on Thursday, the new law will take effect on 1 January, 2017.

That has left enough time for overseas NGOs to understand their obligations and for authorities to prepare to smoothly implement the law, according to the article.—Reuters

Brussels airport departure hall reopens after deadly bombings

BRUSSELS — Brussels airport is partially reopening its departure hall on Sunday, about six weeks after Islamic State suicide bombers killed 16 people there in blasts that gutted parts of the building. The two attackers detonated suitcase bombs in the departure hall on 22 March, before a third bomber blew himself up on a metro train in the city. In all, they killed 32 people.

From Monday, 111 check-in counters will be open in the airport departure hall and another 36 in a temporary buildings, according to the airport management company. This brings departure passenger capacity to at least 80 percent of that before the attacks, it said.

"The reopening is an important moment for the entire airport community and Belgium," said Arnaud Feist, CEO of Brussels Airport Company.—Reuters

Opinion

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

Society-centred vs state-centred

Khin Maung Aye

THERE are two approaches by which the concept of governance has been understood—society-centred and state-centred. Both approaches attempt to understand governance through the lenses of importance to each one while arriving at a greater understanding of the complicated relationship between the two. We must study each approach in order to understand the complex relationships involved in the process of governance.

The society-centred approach makes the role of the government ambiguous and marginalised on account of the proliferation of the complex horizontal forms of soci-

etal relations and governance networks. In fact, the sovereign state, under this approach, loses its grip and is replaced with the new idea of pluricentric government based on interdependence, negotiation and trust. There are two parts to this approach. The first part is the shift from government to governance, which has resulted in a wide range of actors getting involved in the governance process.

There is more focus on networks and partnership along with the blurred boundaries between public and private sectors. That being the case, self-organising policy networks are a major proposition of the society-centred

approach in the policy making process.

On the other hand, the state centred relational approach is based on the assumption that the hierarchical control of the state is very much alive.

According to this belief, in some arenas, such as defence, security and finance, policies are required to be made hierarchically by the state, and public consultation does not exist at all or is extremely limited. And when the government chooses to govern in alternative ways, followers of this approach argue that the state usually retains a preeminent position. They further say that the state employs mechanisms to

seek assistance in its function of governing society.

With the help of private firms, the government can purchase expertise and, in the case of controversial decisions, generate a certain amount of political credibility. This gives more legitimacy to policies by the media and the public and elicits endorsements from key stakeholders. This ultimately enhances overall governing capacity because it relies not only on the state but with the broader array of actors involved. It is more likely to bring more capabilities than the state can achieve alone. Nevertheless, this broadening of the array of governance does not mean that the relationship is equal.

The Myanmars and Jealousy

Dr. Saw Mra Aung

I have read in the autobiography of U Chan Tha who was the one of the most eminent I.C.S in Myanmar that when he, during his stay in England for his I.C.S training, questioned an Englishman who had lived in Myanmar on his administrative duty for some years on his opinion about the Myanmars, the latter remarked without hesitation that they were a people of high intelligence but had a lot of jealousy towards others. No doubt, they might have. I also have no objection to his remark. But I want to contend that by nature, all human beings, regardless of race, sex, belief, etc are very kind and lenient towards those who are inferior to them in terms of wealth, social status, governmental position, etc. but when they become their equals or superior to them in any respect, their kindness or leniency turn into jealousy or envy.

Jealousy is the product of the immaturity and instability of mind, like envy, stinginess, conceit, selfishness, arrogance, vanity, inferior complex, sensitivity, etc which are negative emotional qualities, some of which are regarded as unwholesome mental concomitants (ak-

usala cetasikas) in the Abhidhamma. So it should be noted that when we are jealous of others, billions of unwholesome consciousnesses arises in our minds, thus resulting in unwholesome consequences when this mental action is ripe to bear its fruits. According to the teachings of the Buddha, the persons who harbor jealousy towards others must plunge into the hell after death and then have a few friends and retinue in the next existence. We can also find that in our every-day life, the friendship built among close friends for many years, out of jealousy, is wrecked in a jiffy and that they are also on bad terms with each other. So it is obvious that jealousy brings nothing but trouble here and hereafter.

The Abhidhamma explains that jealousy, envy, worry, sensitivity, etc results from hatred or anger (dosa) latent in our minds. The more hatred we have, the more jealous or sensitive we are of or towards others. People who harbor more hatred are subject to quivering or shaking more in face of vicissitudes of life. Hatred can be annihilated totally only when we become Non-returners (Anagami), the third stage of Ariyahood.

However, most of us are just ordinary worldlings (Putthu-

janas). It is, therefore, impossible for us to expunge hatred totally from our mind. But if we practise equanimity (Upekkha) and sympathetic joy (Mudita), two of the Four Noble Sublime Abodes (Brahmavihara), we can, to some extent, eradicate jealousy towards others. The characteristic of Mudita is gladness at the success of others, its function being unenvious of others' success and its manifestation to annihilate aversion, ill-will, anger, irritation, annoyance and animosity. But it is not easy either for us to exercise Mudita. However, we can start to practise it by arousing joy over the success of our bloods first, over that of our relatives and close friends then and over that of even our enemy finally. If it is still difficult to exercise Mudita, we should first practise Upekkha by dispensing equal loving-kindness to all beings and removing partiality or personal bias for them. Then only should we proceed to practise Mudita. This time, we will find it easier to exercise Mudita. It will be found that if Mudita and Upekkha are practised repeatedly and regularly for a considerable length of time, our jealousy towards others will subside gradually, the hatred dormant in our minds will decrease in amount, we will enjoy peace of

mind and all living beings will appear to us as ourselves and our bloods. At the same time, positive emotional qualities such as kindness, sympathy, tolerance, patience, magnanimity, flexibility, forgiveness, etc will arise in our minds.

Here, I am reminded of the thoughtful remark of Dr. Wapola Rahula, the author of the world-famous book titled "What the Buddha Taught", that if a man is endowed with only intelligent qualities having no quality of the heart, he would be a cruel-hearted wise man while if he is possessed of only the qualities of the heart having no intelligent quality, he would be a kind-hearted fool and that only if he is endowed with both types of quality, would he be a perfect man. No doubt, we the Myanmars, as mentioned by the Englishman with whom U Chan Tha met in England, are endowed with high intelligent qualities such as rationality, prudence, thoughtfulness, sensibility, decision-making skill, management skill, etc. So if they, having eradicated jealousy through the constant exercise of Mudita and Upekkha, could cultivate positive emotional qualities or qualities of the heart such as kindness, forgiveness, patience, magnanimity, etc, as by-products, they would be

perfect men.

In fact, eradication of hatred is only the concern of noble persons (Ariyapuggalas). But jealousy stems from hatred. Therefore, we should not let hatred breed freely and give way to jealousy in its own way. We should curb them to our possible extent through the constant practice of some Brahmaviharas. Now is the time for our Myanmar people democratizing the country. So, we the Myanmars should change our mindset which has not been nurtured spiritually for many years. In other words, we should, through the practice of Brahmaviharas, remove negative qualities of the heart such as jealousy, narrow-mindedness, superstition, envy, vanity, arrogance, the spirit of bullying the inferior, partiality, cruelty, etc but adopt positive qualities of heart such as forgiveness, broad-mindedness, tolerance, sympathy, spirit of sacrificing for others, honesty, accountability, transparency, etc. Driven by jealousy, we the Myanmars should not let the intimacy we built among our friends and relatives for many years be ruined. Instead of being jealous of others' success, we should turn it into emulation and impetus and do our best to achieve success.

Myanmar Police Force donate water to communities in respective water shortage areas



Police distributing water bottles. PHOTO: YE ZARNI

Some of the areas in the country are facing scarcity of water as the effect of El Niño.

The members of the Myanmar Police Force continuously donated water for drinking, bathing and washing to the communi-

ties that have been facing a water shortage.

On 30 April, members of Dawei Township and Launglon Township Police Forces in Taninthayi Region supplied 280 drinking water bottles — a bottle

with capacity of 20 litres—and 5100 gallons of water to residents in Dawei Township and Launglon Township.

Similarly, members of Taungtha Township Police Force distributed 4950 gallons of drinking water, and members of Police Forces of Thaton, Kyai-khto, Thanphyuzayat and Bilin Townships in Mon State donated 11375 gallons of water for drinking, bathing and washing, and members of Police Forces from Ngapudaw, Yaygyi, Thabaung, Myaungmya and Mawlamyaingyun Townships supplied 720 drinking water bottles — a bottle with capacity of 1 litre — and 128 drinking water bottles — a bottle with capacity of 20 litres — and 8900 gallons of water for drinking and bathing to the residents who are facing the scarcity of water in respective areas. —Ye Zarni

Sagaing govt fortifies embankments

REGIONAL authorities in Sagaing Region successfully implemented projects to conserve river banks along the Ayeyawady, Chindwin and Myittha rivers and other creeks throughout the last fiscal year.

The projects cost K1.6 billion (US\$1,361,702), which was provided by the government's 2015-2016 budget. The region's water resources and creeks development department carried out 45 development projects that year.

We carried out river bank conservation tasks at 45 designated banks along the main rivers and creeks located within Kalay, Monywa, Mawlaik, Yinmabin and Katha districts of Sagaing Region.—200

Hundreds of doctors to be appointed nationwide

AROUND 1,000 healthcare providers will be hired by government hospitals across the country within the first 100 days of the current government's term, said Dr Win Naing, head of the Mandalay Region Public Health

Department.

The purpose of the new appointments is to keep up with the rising number of patients.

Over 3,000 application forms have been sold to prospective applicants so far, with the ministry

planning to administer oral tests at the beginning of June this year.

The 100-day scheme covers special programmes to enable health staff from all departments to offer better services and care to the public.—200

Senior Citizens get free pilgrimage



Lucky senior citizens posing for a group photo. PHOTO: AUNG THURA

SENIOR citizens over the age of 60 went on a free pilgrimage to Bodh Gaya, India, yesterday under the joint sponsorship of the Myanmar-India International Business Association and the Myanmar-India Association.

The group of Myanmar Buddhist pilgrims included three

monks, five nuns, 25 lay men and 40 lay women. Last year, the two associations introduced the plan to take people over 60 to significant Buddhist sites free of charge, with the organisers saying they would take 200 senior citizens to Bodh Gaya in 2016. Under their programme, a total of 120 senior

citizens have made pilgrimages to Bodh Gaya so far. Applicants are chosen by lottery for the 15-day all-expenses-paid pilgrimage, according to the Myanmar-India International Business Association.

The trip is valued at K1.1 million (US\$940) for each pilgrim.—Aung Thura

Helmet distribution aims to protect motorcyclists from traffic accidents

“WE will continue the distribution of helmets to motorcycle riders along with a wide range of programmes to raise awareness about traffic rules across Thaton District, Mon State, this month,” said Police Lt Col Nanda Win.

Using a lottery system, local authorities distributed 200 helmets to motorcyclists in downtown Thaton after educating around 600 locals about traffic

rules and regulations.

The major aim of the programmes is to promote public understanding on the new Automobile Law, enacted by parliament last year.

The programmes are being carried out by police officers, state hluttaw representatives and members of the township traffic rules enforcement supervisory committee.—200

Bridges in Pyin Oo Lwin District to be renovated within 100 days



Road signs to erect at dangerous bends.

AS part of the new government's 100-day project, 40 bridges will be renovated across Pyin Oo Lwin District in Mandalay Region.

Signboards will soon be erected at toll gates in the township in order to inform the public about traffic rules.

The 40 bridges—six bridg-

es in Singu Township, eight in Mogok, 26 in Pyin Oo Lwin — will be renovated by local authorities to help reduce traffic accidents.

According to a study, most accidents along the Mandalay-Pyin Oo Lwin road are caused by reckless drivers.—200

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

With reference to the news on your Tuesday issue about MADB privatization, MRF is welcome for its timely initiatives with some suggestions to support farmers with more loans, seeds landscaping and enabling laws etc. As a retired banker, I have some comments on bank privatization part..

We already have about 20 private banks and all are allowed to give loans to farmer with Form 7 as collateral. And they can expand their capital base by selling more shares. MRF itself can also establish a private bank. If it is currently problematic for private banks they could be solved through the bank regulators. To privatize MADB is not the issue here and it may not be focal among its 20 suggestions. So your news title may give a wrong message to farmers.. We must not overlook the fact that MADB, like state owned agribanks around the region, was established by our founding fathers 60 years ago as the government's visible hands to assist, and take care of credit needs of our 2 million farmers including protection against losing their land to moneylenders as in colonial days. It had done so since then. Of course MADB need some strengthening and capacity building. The private sector on the other hand, can also support the farming sector in many ways along the value chain and they have been encouraged to do so. Selling off state assets may be fashionable nowadays but not all assets must be discarded at any cost. Certainly not the indispensable one like MADB.

By U Thein Myint

Sadr followers dig in inside Baghdad's Green Zone, political crisis deepens

BAGHDAD — Hundreds of supporters of Shi'ite Muslim cleric Moqtada al-Sadr stormed parliament inside Baghdad's Green Zone on Saturday and camped out nearby after Sadr denounced politicians' failure to reform a political quota system blamed for rampant corruption.

The protesters, who had gathered outside the heavily fortified central district housing government buildings and many foreign embassies, crossed a bridge over the Tigris River chanting: "The cowards ran away!" in apparent reference to departing lawmakers.

The initial breach was mostly peaceful, but around sunset security forces fired teargas and bullets into the air in an effort to stop more protesters from entering. Around a dozen people were wounded, police sources said.

A United Nations spokesman and Western diplomats said their compounds inside the Green Zone were locked down. A US embassy spokesman denied reports of evacuation.

Iraqi security personnel and Sadr's militiamen formed a joint force to control crowds of protesters, most of whom had left parliament, a source in Sadr's office told

Reuters.

All entrances of Baghdad were temporarily shut "as a precautionary measure to maintain the capital's security," another security official said.

As night fell, demonstrators set up tents at a nearby parade ground under triumphal arches made from crossed swords held by hands modelled on those of Saddam Hussein, who was toppled by the US-led invasion in 2003.

Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has warned that the months-long political crisis prompted by his efforts to overhaul the cabinet could hamper the war against Islamic State, which controls vast swathes of northern and western Iraq.

Earlier in the day, the ultra-hardline Sunni militants claimed responsibility for a suicide bomb attack against Shi'ite pilgrims in the southeastern Baghdad suburb of Nahrawan, killing 19 people and wounding 48 others.

Following the breach, Abadi inspected security forces inside the Green Zone, discrediting earlier reports that he had fled.

He called on protesters to return to areas set aside for demon-



Followers of Iraq's Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr are seen in the parliament building as they storm Baghdad's Green Zone after lawmakers failed to convene for a vote on overhauling the government, in Iraq on 30 April 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

strations and not to infringe on public property.

Such a breach is unprecedented, though only a few years ago mortars frequently rained down on the 10-square-kilometre Green Zone, which once housed the headquarters of the US occupation and before that one of Saddam's palaces.

Checkpoints and concrete

barriers have blocked bridges and highways leading to the neighbourhood for years, symbolising the isolation of Iraq's leadership from its people.

Videos showed protesters on Saturday attacking a white, armoured SUV with sticks and beating a man in a grey suit.

The source in Sadr's office said a Sadrist MP had escorted

out several deputies, the last ones holed up in parliament, in his motorcade.

Members of the Peace Brigades, Sadr's paramilitary group, had earlier conducted cursory checks of protesters as government security forces who usually make careful searches with bomb-sniffing dogs stood by the side, a Reuters witness said.—Reuters

Aleppo bombed as Syrian army begins 'calm' plan elsewhere

BEIRUT — Nearly 30 air strikes hit rebel-held areas of Aleppo on Saturday as a temporary "calm" declared by Syria's military took effect around Damascus and in the northwest.

It was the ninth day of deadly bombardments in Aleppo, which has borne the brunt of increased fighting that has all but destroyed a February ceasefire and killed nearly 250 people in the northern city since 22 April, a monitoring group said.

It also contributed to the break up of peace talks in Geneva, which the main opposition walked out of last week.

The Syrian army announced a "regime of calm," or lull in fighting, late on Friday, which Damascus said was designed to salvage the wider ceasefire.

A number of rebel groups appeared to reject the "regime of calm," however. "We won't accept any kind of... regional cease-fires," a statement from a number of groups including Jaysh al-Islam, which controls areas east of Damascus, said.

It said the main armed opposition as a whole reserved the right to respond to attacks on rebel factions in any part of the country, and criticised the United States for not

doing enough to stop government bombardments.

The lull in fighting around the capital and parts of northwest coastal province Latakia, announced by the army, appeared to hold through most of Saturday but the bombing continued in Aleppo which was excluded from the plan.

Anas Al Abde, president of the Turkey-based opposition Syrian National Coalition, accused the government of violating the February truce "daily." The opposition was ready to reinstate the wider truce, but reserved the right to respond with force to attacks, he said.

All sides have accused each other of truce violations.

The United States said it was working on "specific initiatives" to reduce the violence in Syria and sees stopping the bloodshed in Aleppo as a top priority, a US State Department spokesman said on Saturday.

In a statement detailing calls US Secretary of State John Kerry has made over the past two days with UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura and with Riad Hijab, chief coordinator of the main opposition HNC bloc, State Department spokesman John Kirby said Kerry had made clear the United States wanted Russia to ap-

ply pressure to the Assad government to get it to stop "indiscriminate aerial attacks" in Aleppo.

Kerry is travelling to Geneva on 1-2 May to discuss the Syrian conflict with his Jordanian and Saudi counterparts as well as de Mistura, the State Department said on Saturday.

The Syrian army did not explain in any detail what military or non-military action the "regime of calm" would entail. It said it would last for 24 hours in the capital Damascus and its suburb Eastern Ghouta and for 72 hours in rural areas around the northern city of Latakia.

At least five people were killed in Aleppo early on Saturday in air strikes believed to have been carried out by Syrian government warplanes, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

Aleppo, Syria's largest city before the war, has been divided for years between rebel and government-held zones. Full control would be a huge prize for President Bashar al-Assad.

Of the 250 casualties since 22 April, 140 were killed in bombardments by government-aligned forces and 96 by rebel shelling. Forty children were among the dead, according to the Observatory's tally.—Reuters

Yemen's Houthis seize military base, endangering peace talks

SANAA — Yemen's Houthi movement and its armed allies seized a military base north of the capital Sanaa on Sunday, dealing a setback to a shaky ceasefire and peace talks in Kuwait aimed at ending a year-long war. Unlike most of Yemen's soldiers, those at the Umaliqa base had refused to take sides in the civil war between the Iran-allied Houthis and the government, which escalated when a military coalition led by Saudi Arabia intervened in March last year.

The Houthis had tolerated the neutrality until launching a surprise push into the facility in Amran province and seizing its large cache of weapons at dawn, according to local officials.

Several of the soldiers defending the base were killed during the assault, they added.

Abdel-Malek al-Mekhlafi, Yemen's foreign minister and the government's top delegate to UN-backed negotiations with the Houthis in Kuwait, said the move had "torpedoed" the talks. "We will take the appro-

priate position in response to the Houthi crime at the Umaliqa base in Amran for the sake of our people and country," he wrote on his official Twitter account.

Buttressed by a truce which had been largely holding since 10 April, talks in Kuwait had been inching ahead in recent days and the Houthis said Saudi Arabia released 40 Yemeni prisoners it had been holding on Saturday.

For its part, Yemen's Houthi-run state news agency Saba accused the mostly Gulf Arab coalition and Yemeni government forces of violating the truce 4,000 times, saying shelling, bombing raids and warplane overflights had raised tensions.

The war has killed at least 6,200 people and unleashed a humanitarian crisis in the already impoverished country.

Yemen's army has split, and military bases and commanders have mostly either taken the Houthi or government side.—Reuters

Hairstyle choice may increase hair loss risk

WASHINGTON — Certain hairstyles may make people lose their hair faster, according to a new study that has found a strong association between certain scalp-pulling styles and the development of gradual hair loss.

Around one-third of African-American women suffer from traction alopecia, gradual hair loss caused by damage to the hair follicle from prolonged or repeated tension on the hair root, making it the most common form of hair loss among that group, researchers said.

“Hair is a cornerstone of self-esteem and identity for many people, but ironically, some hairstyles meant to improve our self-confidence actually lead to hair and scalp damage,” said Crystal Aguh from Johns Hopkins University in the US.

Traction alopecia is entirely

preventable, and early intervention can stop or reverse it, said Aguh.

Researchers categorised hair practices into low-, moderate- and high-risk styles based on the degree to which follicles are exposed to tension, weight, heat and hair-altering chemicals, such as straighteners.

Moderate-risk styles include some of the same styles noted to be high risk, but because they are performed on natural, unprocessed hair, they are less likely to result in hair loss, researchers said.

Low-risk styles generally included low-tension styles, such as loose buns, and loose-hanging styles, such as wearing the hair down, as well as practices that decrease the amount of friction on the hair and scalp and avoid chemical relaxers, they said.

The highest-risk styles in-

clude braids, dreadlocks, weaves and extensions, especially when applied to chemically straightened hair, researchers said.

These styles are popular among African-Americans because they are low maintenance and chemical-free, but the constant pulling of the hair in one direction, the tight-locking patterns and added weight can result in significant breakage and eventually traction alopecia, they said.

Damage can also be done if extensions are affixed with adhesive glue put directly on the scalp, especially when the glued-on hair is removed. Chemical straightening weakens the hair shaft, causing breakage, researchers said.

In the more moderate risk category are thermal straightening, permanent waving and use of wigs, they said.

Temporary thermal or



A stylist cuts a model's hair. PHOTO: REUTERS

heat-related straightening of the hair, such as the use of flat irons and blow drying the hair — while not by itself significantly associated with traction alopecia — can weaken shafts, leading to ‘significant’ hair loss when traction is applied, researchers said.

Permanent waves made with ammonium thioglycolate to create or alter curl pattern, together with added tension from chemical treatment, do the same. And

wigs attached with clips and adhesives to keep them in place can cause significant breakage, they said.

Untreated and unprocessed hair can withstand greater traction, pulling and brushing, and overall decrease the risk of traction alopecia, regardless of styling, Aguh added.

The findings were published in the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*.—PTI

‘Ginger’ gene may help you look younger



A farmer cultivating ginger uses a hoe to dig a ditch in his field in Nagarally village in the southern state of Karnataka, India. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Scientists have for the first time found that a gene known for producing red hair and pale skin may explain why some people appear more youthful than others.

It appears that variation in the gene, known as MC1R, is also related to differences in how old people look to other people — their perceived age, researchers said.

People carrying particular MC1R variants in their DNA look, on average, almost two years older than they are, researchers said.

“For the first time, a gene has been found that explains in part why some people look older and others younger for their age,” said Manfred Kayser from Erasmus MC University Medical Centre

Rotterdam in the Netherlands.

Earlier studies had shown that a person’s perceived age is influenced by a combination of genetic and environmental factors in roughly equal parts, researchers said.

Perceived age has also been shown to predict a person’s health and mortality, suggesting that the age we perceive a person to be from the appearance of their face might also be related in important ways to a person’s biological age and health, they said.

Researchers searched the genomes of more than 2,600 elderly Dutch Europeans for DNA variants associated with differences in perceived facial age and wrinkling as estimated from digital facial images.

The strongest hits for per-

ceived facial age were for DNA variants in the MC1R gene. This finding was confirmed in two other large European studies, researchers said.

Individuals carrying particular MC1R variants looked almost two years older for their age. The association between these DNA variants and perceived age was not influenced by age, sex, skin colour, or sun damage, they said.

In addition to its role in skin colour, MC1R is also known to play a role in other biological processes, such as inflammation and DNA damage repair, researchers said.

The gene’s influence on these processes might be the reason it links to youthful looks, they said. The findings were published in the journal *Current Biology*.—PTI

World’s largest telescope may be set up in Ladakh

NEW DELHI — Hawaii’s loss may turn out to be Ladakh’s gain.

After protests in Hawaii in the US against the proposed Thirty Metre Telescope (TMT) project, the largest to be built, alternative sites are being explored which includes Hanle in Ladakh.

The project, aimed at exploring the universe, was to come up at Mauna Kea in Hawaii. But protests by the locals and indigenous population has stalled the project.

“The construction was expected to start on Mauna Kea, Hawaii in 2015. However, it is now stalled due to the recent decision of the Supreme court of Hawaii revoking the construction permit on procedural grounds.

“The State of Hawaii agencies are working on the permit process following the prescribed procedure by the court. TMT is pursuing the matter in consultation with the University of Hawaii (land lease holder) and other agencies. It seeks to construct TMT on Mauna Kea which is the preferred choice,” said Bacham Eswar Reddy, Programme Director.

However, given the importance of the project, in terms of finance and its scientific value, the project partners are also looking at alternate sites, both in

the northern and southern hemispheres. These include sites in Chile, Hanle, Ladakh and others which are all being evaluated for technical and logistical suitability.

“It is expected that on-site civil work on the project may be delayed by about 18-24 months. However, work on telescope and observatory subsystems continues across the partnership,” Reddy added.

India is a 10 per cent partner in the TMT project, which includes China, Japan, Canada and the US. On the Indian side, the project is being handled by the Ministry of Science and Technology and Department of Atomic Energy.

If the programme comes to India, it will open several doors.

“The project is expected to improve employment opportunities for the local people besides development of the region. TMT being the largest optical and infrared telescope in the northern hemisphere will strengthen the domestic programme of the country in this field and lead to several discoveries, which will inspire future generations.

“The project will also help develop state-of-the-art high end technologies and expertise in the country,” an official of Ministry of Science and Technology said.—PTI

Obama torches Trump at his final Washington correspondents' dinner



US President Barack Obama speaks with Carol Lee, WHCA president, at the White House Correspondents Association's annual dinner in Washington, US, on 30 April 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

WASHINGTON — US President Barack Obama on Saturday took aim at Democrats and Republicans alike in his final appearance headlining the star-studded White House correspondents' dinner, but saved his sharpest barbs for Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump.

"The Republican establishment is incredulous that he's their most likely nominee," Obama told attendees at the black-tie event, which brought together journalists and media moguls with Hollywood stars and power brokers from Capitol Hill and beyond.

"They say Donald lacks the foreign policy experience to be president. But in fairness he has spent years meeting with leaders from around the world: Miss Sweden, Miss Argentina, Miss Azerbaijan," the president said to howls of laughter, referring to contestants on the Miss Universe pageant that Trump formerly co-owned.

Obama made fun of the angst many in the Republican estab-

lishment have expressed at the prospect that Trump or Tea Party candidate Ted Cruz could win the party's nomination to run in the 8 November presidential election.

"Guests were asked to check whether they wanted steak or fish, but instead a whole bunch of you wrote in Paul Ryan," Obama said, referring to the top Republican in the House of Representatives, who many have hoped could be lured into running for president.

"That's not an option people," Obama said, displaying comedic chops perfected through seven previous appearances at the annual dinner. "You may not like steak or fish, but that's your choice."

In his remarks, Obama looked back on his presidency and jokingly predicted the country may be nearing its doom.

"The end of the republic has never looked better," the tuxedo-clad president said looking out at the well-groomed crowd as he blasted Republican Party Chairman Reince Priebus.

"Congratulations on all your success," Obama told Priebus, while wearing a sarcastic grin. "The Republican party, the nomination process — it's all going great."

Larry Wilmore, the host of a show on cable outlet Comedy Central, took his own shots at Trump when he took the podium after Obama, joking that next year the dinner will be called: "Donald Trump presents a luxurious evening paid for by Mexico."

Trump has famously promised to build a wall between the United States and Mexico to prevent illegal immigration, and he has said he would force Mexico to pay for it.

With a bit of nostalgia, Obama reflected on his more than seven years in office, saying he had been a young man of idealism and vigor before he became president.

"Eight years ago I said it was time to change the tone of our politics," Obama said. "In hindsight, I clearly should have been more specific." —Reuters

Nebojsa Stefanovic: Opposition want to have former power by force

BELGRADE — Vice-President of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) Nebojsa Stefanovic said Saturday that opposition parties, representatives of the former regime and minor independent associations had suffered a debacle at a protest rally they had staged today.

"We are asking them to accept the fact that they suffered a huge defeat, a massive debacle, in the elections," Stefanovic told a press conference at the SNS headquarters.

"It is they who were stealing at elections and behaved that way and so they think everybody will behave like them," said Stefanovic.

In contrast to them, Aleksandar Vucic wants to run the government democratically, while they only want their privileges back.

But we will not allow that, as the people went out and said what they wanted, and that is Serbia to be ruled by honest and responsible people, instead of those who were robbing it and who think that this campaign of theirs will help them get back to power and continue their plundering.

"We have made it possible in this country for anyone to gather together in peace and



Vice-President of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) Nebojsa Stefanovic. PHOTO: TANJUG

dignity."

"This government made it possible for them to behave whichever way they wanted in accordance with the law, but we will not allow anyone to beat women, like they attacked a lady member of RIK (Republic Electoral Commission) two days ago."

"They attacked the woman and tried to influence the work of RIK in the most brutal way. Something like that is not permitted. Violence is not permissible. We will not tolerate violence," said Stefanovic.

Stefanovic also condemned a showering of brutal insults on an RTV Pink woman journalist at the opposition rally today. —Tanjung

Circus lions rescued in South America arrive in new African home

JOHANNESBURG — A group of 33 lions rescued from circuses in Peru and Columbia arrived by plane in Johannesburg on Saturday to begin a new life in the African bush.

The final destination for the animals, which were flown in on a chartered cargo flight, will be the Emoya Big Cat Sanctuary, a 5,000 hectare reserve on a private estate in South Africa's northern Limpopo province.

Cleared by a state vet, the cats grunted and roared as the crates containing them were loaded onto trucks for the last leg of their journey by road several hours north of Johannesburg.

"Everyone travelled pretty well. They only had airline food and they are looking forward to a good meal now," said Jan Creamer, president of Animal Defenders International (ADI), which organised the rescues and the airlift operation.

ADI said 24 of the cats had been taken from circuses in Peru, part of a menagerie of over 100 animals rescued with

the help of Peruvian officials cracking down on illegal wildlife trafficking.

Bears, monkeys and other wildlife scooped up in the operations in Peru have been transferred to sanctuaries in the South American country and a tiger has been flown to Florida. The nine lions from Columbia were voluntarily surrendered from a circus.

ADI said both countries have banned the use of wild animals in circuses.

The lions would not survive in the African wild as many have been declawed or have had teeth smashed or removed, one is almost blind and another is missing an eye.

"At their new home at Emoya Big Cat Sanctuary, the lions will enjoy large natural enclosures situated in pristine African bush, complete with drinking pools, platforms and toys," ADI said in a statement.

"The lion habitats will be steadily expanded over the coming months as the lions become familiar with their new life and are introduced to each other," it said. —Reuters

Joint drills with expanded SDF role postponed until after summer poll

TOKYO — The government has decided to postpone drills with foreign troops, based on security legislation that expanded the activities of Japan's Self-Defence Forces, until after the upper house election in the summer, sources close to the matter said Sunday.

It is feared the joint drills would have an adverse impact on the ruling parties' performance in the election, the sources said. The legislation, which came into effect in March, enables Japan to exercise the right to collective self-defense — or coming to the aid of friendly nations under armed attack even if Japan itself is not attacked.

The sources added that the United States has expressed dissatisfaction after a bilateral command post exercise, called Keen Edge, conducted by the SDF and US forces earlier this year failed to take account of the expansion in SDF activities, even though the security legislation was enacted last September.

Although the US forces requested that Japan expand the range of activities in Keen Edge conducted between 12 January and 2 February at Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo, the SDF refused, saying it was "premature," the sources said.

The landmark defense policy

shift has drawn strong opposition among the public who fear it could erode Japan's postwar pacifism.

In the latest Kyodo News poll conducted Friday and Saturday, 59.5 per cent of respondents said they would decide on which candidate or political party to support in the House of Councillors election based on their stance on the security legislation.

Tokyo has already told Washington that the SDF will not conduct drills reflecting its expanded role at the upcoming Rim of the Pacific Exercise, or RIMPAC, to be organised by the US Navy this summer, the sources said. —Kyodo News

Rescuers search rubble of Nairobi building, at least 12 dead

NAIROBI — Rescue workers raced on Saturday to save more residents from the rubble of a six-storey building in Nairobi after it collapsed overnight following heavy rain. At least 12 people were confirmed dead.

President Uhuru Kenyatta visited the site of Friday night's disaster and ordered the arrest of the owners of the building, which had been condemned by the authorities.

One man was pulled out alive on Saturday afternoon to cheers from the crowd. Earlier, Interior Minister Joseph Ole Nkaisery told reporters at the scene that the cries of a woman and child had been heard. Their fate was not clear.

"We are still hearing some voices from the collapsed building," Kenya National Disaster Operation Centre director Colonel Nathan Kigotho said, in Nairobi's poor Huruma district. "We don't have the exact number of people buried in the rubble."

He said 12 bodies had



Rescue workers search for residents feared trapped in the rubble of a six-storey building that collapsed after days of heavy rain, in Nairobi, Kenya on 30 April 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

been recovered from the building.

After mainly working with hands and power tools, rescue workers moved in two excavator

vehicles to assist in lifting heavy masonry. Residents in the next building were pulled out carrying their packed belongings.

Heavy rains have led

to building collapses in the past in poor neighbourhoods of the Kenyan capital, which residents have usually blamed on shoddy or illegal construction.

The building in Huruma in eastern Nairobi had 198 rooms, Kigotho said. Some residents escaped before the collapse and at least 133 people had been

rescued.

The president told officials "to undertake an immediate survey of all the houses in the area to find out those which are at risk of collapsing", his office said in a statement.

Kigotho said the building's proximity to a nearby swollen river likely damaged the structure. "The water most likely undermined the foundation," he said.

Police said more than 120 people had been taken to hospital.

Lower floors of the building crumpled, leaving some of the top storey still standing. Broken bed frames, mattresses and clothes protruded from the wreckage.

"It is raining, and these houses were built without Nairobi County authorisation," Jonathan Mueke, deputy governor of Nairobi County, told privately-owned QTV station.

"I am asking residents in the area to leave. In the area where this one collapsed there are 189 houses," he said.—Reuters

Kenya burns vast piles of elephant tusks as it seeks ban on trade

NAIROBI — Kenya's president set fire to thousands of elephant tusks and rhino horns on Saturday, destroying a stockpile that would have been worth a fortune to smugglers and sending a message that trade in the animal parts must be stopped.

Plumes of smoke rose as the flames took hold of tusks piled up in a game reserve on the edge of the capital Nairobi, destroying 105 tonnes of ivory from about 8,000 animals, the biggest

ever incineration of its kind.

President Uhuru Kenyatta dismissed those who argued Kenya, which staged its first such burning in 1989, should instead have sold the ivory and the tonne of rhino horn, which by some estimates would have an illegal market value of \$150 million.

"Kenya is making a statement that for us ivory is worthless unless it is on our elephants," he told dignitaries before setting light to the first of almost a dozen pyres.

Kenya is seeking a total world ban on ivory sales when the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) meets in South Africa later this year as poaching poses an increasing risk to the species.

CITES banned commercial trade in African elephant ivory in 1989, but since then has permitted one-off sales.

Kenyatta's call for an ivory trade ban was backed by Ali Bongo, president of

Gabon, home to the forest elephant. "To all the poachers, to all the buyers, to all the traders, your days are numbered," Bongo said at the ceremony. French Environment Minister Segolene Royal announced in Nairobi she would introduce "a ban on any kind of ivory trade in France" after banning export certificates for ivory last year. She said she would encourage other European states to follow. "We need to kill the trade," she said.—Reuters

Putin reshuffles Russia's law enforcement structures

MOSCOW—Russia's President Vladimir Putin fired several high-ranking law enforcement officials on Saturday in one of the biggest overhauls of the country's power structures in recent years.

According to a decree published on the president's official legal portal, Putin fired the Southern transport public prosecutor Seregei Dmitriev, the head of the Federal Penitentiary Service in Moscow Igor Klimenov, and Deputy Interior Minister of the annexed Crimea region Dmitry Neklyudov.

Putin also dismissed, among others, two deputies of Russia's Investigative

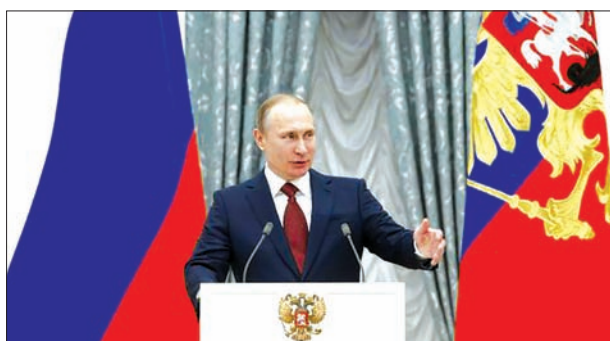
Committee, Yuri Nyrkov and Vasily Piskarev. He raised the rank of the Committee's investigator for special cases case, Lev Gura, to a senior investigator.

Gura took the post of General Major Igor Krasnov, who was appointed a deputy of the Investigative Committee.

Krasnov spent the past decade investigating some of Russia's biggest assassinations and assassination attempts. He has also been known for his work on cases on Russia's ultranationalists. A year ago, he was appointed the chief investigator into the death of the opposition leader Boris Nemtsov, killed

in February 2015. There was no reason given in the president's decree for the personnel changes in the federal agencies, which also included several dismissals and appointments in regional law

enforcement agencies. In a separate decree Putin appointed, as expected, former Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin, deputy chairman of the President's Economic Council.—Reuters



Russian President Vladimir Putin delivers a speech during a ceremony to award the Hero of Labour at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, on 30 April 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER (3/2016) [TENDER NO. MPPE/ HSD / T /1 (2016 — 2017)]

1. Open Tender is invited for the Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise, Ministry of Electricity and Energy for the supply of High Speed Diesel (423.000 ± 10% Barrels)
2. Tender Closing Date & Time - 19 - 5 - 2016, 12:00 Hrs
3. Tender Opening Date & Time - 19 - 5 - 2016, 13:00 Hrs
4. Delivery Time - June 2016 to September 2016
5. Tender documents and details information are available at the Department of Finance, Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise, Nay Pyi Taw, during our office hours commencing 2 - 5 - 2016 on payment of Myanmar Kyat One Hundred Thousand (Kyats 100,000) per set.
6. Only bid from tenderer who has purchased tender document officially from Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise will be accepted for evaluation.

Managing Director
Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise
Ministry of Electricity and Energy
No (6) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw

Contact Phone No.
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Elisabeth Moss set for Hulu drama 'The Handmaid's Tale'

LOS ANGELES — "Mad Men" actress Elisabeth Moss is set to star in a new drama for streaming service Hulu titled "The Handmaid's Tale".

Based on Margaret Atwood's novel of the same name, the series is set to begin production later this year, with the author herself serving as consulting producer, said the

Hollywood Reporter.

The series will be the first collaboration from Hulu and studio MGM. Originally, Hulu purchased the script for the series from writer Ilene Chaiken, however she later became unavailable for the project after becoming showrunner on Fox's "Empire".

Moss, 33, will play Offred, a Handmaiden who is one of

the few remaining fertile women left in Gilead.

Working in the Commander's household she is one of the caste of women forced into sexual servitude in a last attempt to repopulate the world.

Offred must learn to survive in the terrifying regime, while at the same time trying to find the daughter that was taken from her.—PTI

Gaga, Cooper head to dinner together on his motorcycle

LOS ANGELES — Pop sensation Lady Gaga and Hollywood star Bradley Cooper went to dinner together in Santa Monica, California.

The duo showed up to Giorgio Baldi Italian restaurant in black leather biker jackets and helmets.

Gaga, 30, wore faded ripped jeans and spiked black boots, while Cooper, 41, opted for

navy pants and grey sneakers as he drove the Ducati bike, reported *Us* magazine.

Fans previously saw Gaga, who is engaged to longtime partner Taylor Kinney, atop a motorcycle on her 2011 *Born This Way* album cover.

The "American Sniper" actor is currently dating Irina Shayk. The pair, who started dating in April 2015, made their red carpet debut during Paris Fashion Week on 8 March.—PTI

"Mad Men" actress Elisabeth Moss.
PHOTO: REUTERS

Actor Woody Harrelson's application to open pot business in Hawaii fails

LOS ANGELES — Oscar-nominated actor Woody Harrelson's bid to open a medical marijuana dispensary in Hawaii was rejected on Friday, as the state approved eight of more than 60 applicants, officials said.

Harrelson, who is best known for his roles in the film "White Men Can't Jump" and

1980s sitcom "Cheers," had applied for a license on behalf of his company Simple Organic Living LLC.

The actor, who for more than a decade has spoken in favor of pot and is on the advisory board of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, made national headlines earlier this year when his

application became public.

The Hawaii Department of Health on Friday released a list of approved applicants, with three in Honolulu on the island of Oahu, two on the Big Island, two on Maui and one on Kauai.

Harrelson's business was not on the approved list, and a statement from the department did not specifically say why the

actor's application was denied.

The Hawaii legislature last year approved the creation of medical marijuana dispensaries. More than 20 US states and the District of Columbia allow medical marijuana and four of those states also allow recreational pot use, but the drug is banned under federal law.—Reuters

Lionel Richie launching own cosmetic line 'Hello'

LOS ANGELES — Singer Lionel Richie is launching his own cosmetic line inspired by the title of his hit song "Hello".

Richie's company filed a trademark for the beauty line called "Hello by Lionel Richie" last week, reported *Ace Showbiz*.

The copyright covers everything related to beauty including, cosmetics, face masks, body glitter, bath beads, hair bows, nail polish, etc.

However, there's a separate trademark for products like candles and candle accessories.—PTI



Singer Lionel Richie. PHOTO: REUTERS

Beyonce mysteriously cancels Nashville concert

LOS ANGELES — Pop star Beyonce has mysteriously cancelled her upcoming Nashville concert, which was scheduled to take place on 5 May at the Nissan Stadium.

The singer, 34, is yet to give an official reason as to why the show has been rescheduled, but the news has left Beyonce fans in Tennessee devastated, reported *E!Online*.

"Following Wednesday's sold out opening night Formation World Tour concert in Miami, promoters Live Nation announced that the Nashville concert previously scheduled for Thursday, 5 May will be rescheduled," her representative said.

"Details about the rescheduled date will be announced shortly and Nashville tickets holders are advised to retain their tickets which will be honoured at the rescheduled event."

No other changes to her tour schedule have been announced and she's scheduled to perform in Atlanta today.—PTI

Khloe Kardashian suffers knee injury

LOS ANGELES — Reality TV star Khloe Kardashian is going to have an MRI on her sore knee after she fell up the stairs.

The "Keeping Up With The Kardashians" star took to Twitter to complain about her "gross" leg.

In a series of tweets, she wrote: "My leg is still so messed up. I get an MRI tomorrow. I need my workouts 'So gross and freaky. My knee looks like it's growing a brain. Yes I fell going up the stairs. Yes I did! (sic)."

The 31-year-old television personality is hoping for good news as she is desperate to get back to her workouts but whilst she is missing exercising, she recently insisted it is important to learn to love yourself for who you are.—PTI



Khloe Kardashian. PHOTO: REUTERS

Ringling elephants, a famed US circus act, pack up trunks for retirement

NEW YORK — Elephants take a final bow at Ringling Bros and Barnum & Bailey Circus on Sunday, ending a 145-year spectacle that delighted fans but enraged animal activists, who say the highly publicised retirement is not enough.

The last 11 elephants touring with “The Greatest Show on Earth” will leave behind their enormous studded tiaras and begin traveling on Monday to Ringling’s 200-acre (80-hectare) Center for Elephant Conservation in central Florida, said Stephen Payne, spokesman for the circus’ parent company, Feld Entertainment.

Bonnie, Juliette and nine other female Asian elephants are retiring earlier than originally planned, reflecting shifting US attitudes toward animal entertainment. SeaWorld Entertainment Inc (SEAS.N) is phasing out killer whale shows at its amusement parks, halting the breeding of orcas in captivity as of last month and replacing the extravaganzas with what it terms educational encounters by 2019.

But the United States has a long way to go, say animal activist groups including People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, the International Fund for Animal Welfare and The Ele-

phant Sanctuary.

Even after the Ringling elephants perform their last headstands in Sunday shows in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania and Providence, Rhode Island, a total of 69 elephants will still be in the possession of smaller US circuses and traveling acts, with some too crippled to be exhibited and some kept for breeding, said PETA spokeswoman Katie Arth.

Other wild animals continue as circus headliners, including at Ringling Bros, which tours with 28 tigers, six lions, one leopard, two kangaroos and three pythons, Payne said.

At least 17 countries have outlawed circus acts featuring wild animals, but the practice remains largely legal in the United States. Hawaii is poised to be the first state to ban them and more than a dozen municipalities have enacted their own prohibitions.

While glad that the Ringling elephants are leaving their traveling days behind, animal activists are critical of the company’s Polk City, Florida, facility that will serve as their retirement home.

“(It’s) nothing more than a breeding facility, where elephants are chained for approximately 16 hours a day or more in concrete-floored barns and

still beaten with bullhooks,” PETA’s Arth said. “When they’re allowed outside, they’re confined to small, virtually barren paddocks.”

Payne brushed off the criticism as an effort by “animal rights extremists to score cheap publicity” and accused PETA of lacking first-hand knowledge of what it takes to care for an Asian elephant.

The centre focuses on conservation, breeding and research, including studies to determine why elephants face a lower risk of cancer than humans despite their far greater body mass, the centre’s website says.

A Reuters reporter who toured the camp in October saw dozens of elephants corralled in groups of twos and threes in scrub-filled areas about the size of suburban back yards that gave them enough room to walk around and included toys. At night they stay in large barns, with their feet often chained to keep them from stealing each other’s food.

“Free-range sanctuaries that are as large as possible are a much better option,” said Katie Moore, animal rescue program director with the International Fund for Animal Welfare. —Reuters

William and Kate celebrate fifth wedding anniversary



Britain’s Prince William, his wife Kate, and their children George (L) and Charlotte pose in a photo taken in late October 2015, and handed out by Kensington Palace in 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Britain’s Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, Prince William and his wife Catherine, celebrate their fifth wedding anniversary on 29 April.

The pair tied the knot in Westminster Abbey on 29 April

2011 in a televised ceremony watched by millions around the world. The couple have two children, Prince George, born on 22 July 2013 and Princess Charlotte who turns one on 2 May. —Reuters

At least 15,000 elderly people at unauthorised nursing homes in Japan

TOKYO — At least 15,000 elderly people were living in unauthorised nursing homes across Japan in the fiscal year that ended in March, a Kyodo News survey found Sunday.

According to the survey of local governments, many of the facilities fall short of state standards on the size of rooms or fire prevention equipment, but they provide accommodation for low-income or elderly people without relatives for fees lower than authorised facilities.

Authorised care homes usually charge 200,000 yen to 300,000 yen (\$1,880 to \$2,820) a month in addition to admission fees.

The Health, Labour and Wel-

fare Ministry said in late April that the number of such facilities stood at 1,650 in the fiscal year. The Kyodo survey found the number is at 1,627 as some local governments have made corrections.

The facilities have capacity for a total of 22,741 residents and the figures provided by the local governments confirm at least 15,209. The total number is likely higher, however, as some local governments said they do not have the relevant data.

Facilities providing meals, nursing care or health management service to elderly residents are obliged to report to local government under the Act on Social Welfare for the Elderly. —Kyodo News



Elephants perform during Ringling Bros and Barnum & Bailey Circus’ “Circus Extreme” show at the Mohegan Sun Arena at Casey Plaza in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, US, on 29 April 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS



Entertainment Channel

(2- 5-2016, Monday)

6:00 pm

- Weather Report
- Music Programme

6:30 pm

- Pyi Thu Ni Ti

6:50 pm

- Music Programme

7:00 pm

- International Drama Series

7:50 pm

- International Drama Series

8:30 pm

- Cartoon Programme “Scooby Doo Goes Hollywood”(Part-2)

8:50 pm

- Music Programme

9:00 pm

- Writer, Philanthropist: Daw Than Myint Aung (Part - I)

9:30 pm

- International Movie Songs

9:40 pm

- Wonderful Indonesia

10:20 pm

- Myanmar Video

Midnight

- Close Down.

From 2-5-2016 (Monday) 6:00 Pm
To 3-5-2016 (Tuesday) 6:00 Pm



Myanmar International

(2-5-2016 07:00am ~ 3-5-2016 7:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Myanmar Delicate Artistic Handy Creations- The Making Procedure of Goldsmith
07:43	Am	Welcome to the Southern most part of Myanmar
07:53	Am	Art Students: Sculpture
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	A Novitiation Ceremony in a Rural Township
08:51	Am	A Photographer’s Life at Shwedagon Pagoda
09:03	Am	News
09:25	Am	Interview with Shan State Chief Minister
09:44	Am	A Tea Business: Pankwan (Part-1)

10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Home Grown Treasure (Part-1)
10:46	Am	Home Grown Treasure (Part-2)

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

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	Food Trip (EP-4) (Part-2)
07:48	Pm	Creative Costume of Kayah Nationals
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Taste of Myanmar (Papaya Salad)
08:45	Pm	Director: Kyi Phyu Shin

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm)- Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Sunday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) -Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

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

Title rivals Barca, Atletico and Real all win

BARCELONA — La Liga leaders Barcelona moved closer to retaining their crown with a lacklustre 2-0 away win over 10-man Real Betis thanks to goals from Ivan Rakitic and Luis Suarez on Saturday.

Atletico Madrid kept pace as substitute Antoine Griezmann fired them to a 1-0 home win over struggling Rayo Vallecano, while Real Madrid's Gareth Bale scored in a 1-0 victory at Real Sociedad that leaves them still a point behind.

Barcelona remain at the summit on 85 points, level with Atletico but having a superior head-to-head record, while Real are third with 84 points and two games of the season left.

Betis had centre-back Heiko Westermann sent off in the 35th minute for a second booking and Ivan Rakitic pounced on a defensive mishap to put Barca five minutes after the break.

Luis Suarez then scored his 35th goal of the La Liga season to finish Betis off in the 81st, meaning Barca can guarantee a 24th league title with wins at home to Espanyol and away to Granada.

Barcelona struggled to break down Betis even after Westermann was dismissed but a misunderstanding between defender German Pezzella and goalkeeper Antonio Adan al-



Real Madrid's Gareth Bale heads the ball during match against Real Sociedad during Spanish Liga BBVA at Anoeta, San Sebastian, Spain on 30 April 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

lowed Rakitic to tap in from close range and break the deadlock.

Suarez then made up for missing a clear chance earlier in the second half by finishing off Lionel Messi's low pass from inside the area.

Barca manager Luis Enri-

que reacted angrily to suggestions his team had underperformed against Betis.

"What's the problem, if you don't win 8-0 does it not count?" he told a news conference.

"This is a very competitive league with three teams fighting for the title. Looking at the

results I don't think any of the three teams are going to slip up and it's in our own hands."

Bale, who scored twice as Madrid came from two goals down to win 3-2 at Rayo Vallecano last weekend, again delivered when it mattered, nodding in Lucas Vazquez's cross in the

80th minute.

It was the Welshman's ninth headed goal in the league this season, more than any other player in Europe's top five leagues, and earned Madrid the points despite a frustrating afternoon against the side who beat Barcelona earlier this month.

With Cristiano Ronaldo and Karim Benzema injured, it was again up to Bale to lead the line, with coach Zinedine Zidane making five changes after the 0-0 at Manchester City in the Champions League semi-final in midweek.

Bale missed several chances before finally breaking the deadlock with 10 minutes remaining, leaping at the near post to glance Vazquez's cross into the top corner for his 19th goal of the league campaign.

With top scorers Ronaldo and Benzema facing a race against time to be fit for Wednesday's second leg against City, Zidane was pleased Bale delivered again.

"It was great to see a player of his importance score a goal ahead of Wednesday," Zidane told a news conference. "We had to suffer and that's what the players did. We were up against a difficult opponent but I'm happy with the work we did and to pick up the points."—Reuters

Wenger says Arsenal protesters full of 'disappointed love'



Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Arsene Wenger dismissed protests against him as more "disappointed love" than "real aggression" after disenchanted supporters held up banners calling for his resignation in the 1-0 victory over Norwich in the Premier League on Saturday.

A well-trailed campaign saw demonstrations inside and outside the Emirates Stadium with fans, unhappy at the 12-year gap since the club last won the Premier

League, brandishing placards in both the 12th minute and 12 minutes before the end.

Yet afterwards Wenger played down the protests, adding that he intended to carry on seeking to bring success to Arsenal.

"We were in a position for a long time where our fans thought we could win the league," he said. "It's more disappointed love than real aggression."

"It was a strange atmosphere. Some were protesting, yes, but the vast majority were supporting the team. I'm really sorry if I cannot make them all happy. We continue to work hard to achieve it."

The stadium was split between pro and anti-Wenger factions displaying rival posters.

One said "Wenger — 12 years of excuses, Ranieri — 9 months, champions," a reference to Leicester City manager Claudio Ranieri, whose side will win the Premier League if they beat Manchester United on Sunday.

But the majority of supporters appeared to oppose the protest, drowning out the first disruption with a chant of "There's only one Arsene Wenger". Many displayed banners declaring their loyalty,

with one saying: "Proud of Arsene, ashamed of fans".

The stadium mood had not been helped by Wenger's pre-match comments in which he said that his team's title aspirations had been hindered by playing "in a very difficult climate" at home. That angered the faction calling for him to resign. Before the game, fans from the Arsenal Supporters' Trust, Red Action and the Black Scarf Movement handed out posters saying "Time for a change".

Wenger's supporters will point to the success of his tactical substitution in bringing on Danny Welbeck just after the interval.

Within four minutes, the striker got on the end of an Olivier Giroud knock-down to score the game's only goal and lift Arsenal into third place with two games to play. The Gunners could still finish ahead of traditional rivals Tottenham Hotspur, who are two points ahead with a game in hand.

That would go some way to assuaging the anger of those who feel the club are stagnating after almost 20 years under Wenger, who is the longest-serving manager at one club in European football.—Reuters

Mayweather happy in retirement but hints at ring return

NEW DELHI — Floyd Mayweather Jr is happily retired but the 39-year-old unbeaten American hinted in an interview on Saturday that a return to the ring could not be completely ruled out.

Mayweather quit boxing in September after accumulating a 49-0 record during a 19-year career that produced world titles in five weight divisions and earnings in excess of \$800 million.

The American says he is happy with life outside the ring but acknowledged he was in talks with television networks over a possible comeback fight.

"Everyone is asking me 'is Floyd Mayweather coming back?'" he said in an interview with Showtime.

"Right now, I'm happy being on this side but I've been talking with CBS and Showtime and you just never know. But right now, I'm just happy on this side," added Mayweather, who

ended his career in the welterweight division.

"As of right now, some crazy numbers have been thrown my way — upwards, of course, of nine figures."

"But I'm truly blessed beyond belief and I really don't know what we're going to do. But right now, I'm really happy being on this side helping our fighters."

Mayweather beat Manny Pacquiao, who retired last month, in a unanimous decision last year before defeating Andre Berto in September in his last bout.

Many want him to take on undefeated Kazakh middleweight champion Gennady Golovkin but Mayweather was quick to rule out the possibility of agreeing to that match-up.

"How can Floyd Mayweather fight at 160 (pounds) when I can never even make 154?" he said.—Reuters