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# STRONGER TIES WITH INDIA

## State Counsellor holds talks with Indian External Affairs Minister

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi received the Indian External Affairs Minister Ms Sushama Swaraj and her party at the Presidential Palace in Nay PYi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to cooperation in education, health and trade between the two countries.

“The visit by External Affairs Minister to Myanmar which was really the first high-level engagement between India and Myanmar after the new government came to power will serve as a very strong foundation for the further development and diversification of the India-Myanmar ties which are set for a very bright future,” reported by ANI quoting the ministry’s official spokesperson Vikas Swarup.

He further said that both sides discussed the strong possibility of cooperation in the area of agriculture, particularly pulses where there is a possibility of importing large volume of pulses from Myanmar.

Swaraj, who arrived here earlier on the day, came more than two months after the visit to the country of Ajit Doval, Advisor for National Security of India, as special envoy of the Indian Prime Minister in June.

Also present at the call were Minister of State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin and officials.—GNLM with MNA



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds talks with Indian External Affairs Minister Ms Sushama Swaraj. PHOTO: MNA

# BY-ELECTIONS TO BE HELD EARLY NEXT YEAR

BY-elections will be held early next year to fill the seats in constituencies across the country, said a member of the Union Election Commission, responding to media questions after the Amyotha Hluttaw session yesterday.

By-elections will take place for the vacant seats of MPs who were appointed to Union offices in the government, said UEC member U Aung Myint, adding that work is underway to scrutinise the number of constituencies

for by-elections.

“By-election date and the vacancies will be announced. I don’t want to reveal the exact number of vacant constituencies at the moment because more seats are likely to go vacant,” said the UEC member

According to the UEC, there are 10 seats to be filled at Amyotha, Pyithu and Region/State Hluttaws as the elected representatives of the vacant seats were appointed to Union-level offices

after the 2015 general elections.

While responding to a question about Mongshu and Kyaythee townships in Shan State (South), where voting was suspended in the previous general elections, the UEC member said that elections will be held in the suspended constituencies if it is possible to hold free and fair elections at the time when by-elections are held.

Because of the suspension of polling that occurred in the

two townships in Shan State, six seats— four seats at State Hluttaw and one seat each at Amyotha Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw— still remain unrepresented, said the UEC.

During yesterday’s Amyotha Hluttaw session, the Union Minister for Construction U Win Khaing replied to questions about construction works in Rakhine State, Shan State and Ayeyawady Region.

The Union minister said that

Tein Nyo Bridge on Yangon-Sittoung road in MraukU district will be upgraded into a reinforced concrete facility with a two-way road.

Moreover, he pledged implementation of the Muse detour construction in Shan State (North) following coordination between the departments concerned and locals who own land through which the axis of the detour will pass through.

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သဒ္ဓါထက်သန် မြန်မာအားမာန် ကမ္ဘောဇဘဏ်

## Pyithu Hluttaw hears construction, irrigation works in rural areas

PYITHU Hluttaw held its 18th-day session in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, with the Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Tun Win responding to questions on construction and irrigation works in rural areas.

Regarding a question about a town-to-town gravel road in Yenangyoung Township, the deputy minister said that upgrading the dirt road connecting Yenangyoung Township to Nat-

mauk Township into a tarred one would be possible in the next fiscal year in accordance with the ministry's annual priority lists.

Next, he replied to a question on the Hsintat river water-pumping project, saying that efforts were being made to irrigate 2,000 acres of farmland this fiscal year, up from 1,783 acres the previous year.

Despite the proposed fund of K175million for maintenance work of the project, the



MPs leave Pyithu Hluttaw building after the parliamentary meeting on 22 July. PHOTO: MNA

ministry received K114.7million from the Sagaing region government last year, added the deputy minister.

On construction of a bridge in Thayat Township, the deputy minister said that there were

no plans to build a bridge over the Panichaung creek this fiscal year. But he pledged to put the proposed plan in the ministry's annual priority lists.

During yesterday's Pyithu Hluttaw session, Dr Hla Moe of

Aungmyay Thazan Constituency proposed to allow members of election subcommissions who are not service personnel to be entitled to monthly salaries and allowances to the parliament.— *Myanmar News Agency*

## Chief Justice of Myanmar holds talks with UK Supreme Court's President



U Tun Tun Oo welcomes Lord Neuberger. PHOTO: MNA

CHIEF Justice of the Union U Tun Tun Oo received Lord Neuberger, the President of the UK Supreme Court, at his office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they

discussed the judiciary process in the courts, the role of women in the judiciary sector and three-year judiciary strategic action plan.

— *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

## Retired major charged with fraud in K41.5m

A MAN from Toungoo of Bago Region was sued by the Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday over allegations that he took K41.5million from a woman who lives in Myitkyina with a fake promise that he would help her husband, U Thein Win (a) Haji Hassan, who went to trial to be relieved in his case by bribing officials.

U Maung Maung Nyunt, a retired major, was found guilty of lying to Daw Pyu Pyu Win and receiving the cash from her via Kanbawza Bank, a lawsuit

was filed against him by Captain Paing Soe Thu of Military Security Affairs at Toungoo police station on 13 January last year.

Following the suggestion by the Union Attorney-General's Office, the Ministry of Home Affairs transferred the case to the Commission.

U Maung Maung Nyunt was charged under Section 57 of the Anti-Graft Law in Toungoo Township Court, said the commission. — *Myanmar News Agency*

## Koh Tao murder trial appeal to be prolonged for another year

THE two Burmese migrant workers, handed down the death penalty after being found guilty of the Koh Tao murders, will reportedly have to wait in limbo for at least another 12months before a final decision will be made on an appeal submitted by their legal team, according to the Migrant Workers Rights Network (MWRN)—a Thai-based Myanmar migrant worker advocacy group.

The appeal process will reportedly be prolonged in such a manner because the prosecution has also decided to lodge their own appeal regarding the case.

“The prosecution have said they'd appeal. We'll have to wait

and see if they'll actually do so, or if they'll request more time [in which to prepare one]. Both appeals will be reviewed by the appellant court before a decision is made. It would delay the case by about a year,” said U Sein Htay, chair of the MWRN.

Defense lawyers of the two Myanmar migrant workers submitted their appeal back in May of this year, while the Thai appellant court has reportedly given the prosecution until August 25 to submit their appeal.

“The [legal] defense team of the two defendants have submitted an appeal,” added U Sein Htay. “Lawyers of the Thai government have said they will also

appeal. The appellant court has subsequently given them until August 25 to lodge their appeal.”

The two Myanmar migrant workers, Ko Zaw Lin and Ko Wai Phyo, were handed down the death sentence at the Koh Samui Court of Law on 24 December 2015 for the rape and murder of a young British couple on the popular holiday destination island of Koh Tao. Upon her official trip to Thailand on June 25, State Counselor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi convened a meeting at the Myanmar embassy in Bangkok with 13 organizations which work to support Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand.— *Myitmakha News Agency*

## MCDC to organize drawing of lots for temporary shops for fire victims of Mandalay Mingalar market



Temporary shops for Mandalay Mingalar market's fire victims are ready to accommodate the shopkeepers. PHOTO: AUNG THANT KHAING

THE temporary shops for Mandalay Mingalar market's fire victims will be given out through a draw of lots in the second week of September.

Mandalay City Development Committee (MCDC) finished the market building at Mahar Nwesin (Gawyar) stadium, at the corner of 35th and 71th streets, Mahar

Aungmyae township, Mandalay.

“The fire victims and the market agents had already agreed to draw the lots within one or two weeks. And, the authorities will give totally 606 shops to fire victims. Those shops are being built by the following companies named Myanma Kit and Mahar Myat Thaingi and KT,” said an

authority of MCDC. It was noted that the public toilets are clean and modern in the temporary market, with a Daiki Axis wastewater cleaning machine being installed.

The shops of the Mandalay Mingalar temporary market each measure 6thx 8 ft and the cost of the market is over KS 2000 billion. — *Aung Thant Khaing*

## President U Htin Kyaw holds talks with Indian External Affairs Minister

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw received Indian External Affairs Minister Ms Sushma Swaraj at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed promotion of bilateral trade, cooperation in transport, health and energy sectors and the providing of technical assistance to Myanmar peas and pulses farmers.

Also present at the call were Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin.—*Myanmar News Agency*



President U Htin Kyaw welcomes the Indian delegation led by External Affairs Minister Ms Sushma Swaraj. PHOTO: MNA

## UN Chief to address Union Peace Conference—21<sup>st</sup> Century Panglong

Ye Khaung Nyunt

UNITED Nations Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-Moon will give a speech at the planned Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong this month, said a secretary of the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee yesterday.

“He will attend the conference, representing the United Nations, but I cannot confirm the information,” said Sai Kyaw Nyunt, UPDJC secretary, adding that he would address the conference on 31 August or 1 September.

According to sources, all international organizations assisting the country’s peace process, UN agencies and foreign embassies in Myanmar will be invited to attend the Union Peace Conference slated to draw around 1,800 attendees.

The review of the political dialogue framework is set to be held

after the conference, said Khu Oo Reh from the Delegation for Political Negotiation-DPN of United Nationalities Federal Council after tripartite talks on the Framework for Political Dialogue at the National Reconciliation and Peace Center in Yangon yesterday morning. During the afternoon session, a joint central committee on holding the first 21st Century Panglong Union Peace Conference met with discussions on formation of the joint committee, lists of the members of 10 working committees involving ethnic armed organizations and political parties, a panel of chairpersons, a list of the attendees to the conference, approved meeting agendas and general matters.

Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sak-hong, another secretary of UPDJC, said that the two representatives from the DPN will represent secretaries in the central committee and

a working committee receptively but the names of the two secretaries can be approved at a meeting on 28 August.

The joint committee will be chaired by Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe while Dr Tin Myo Win representing the government side, P’doh Saw Kwe Htoo Win representing the EAOs and U Thu Wai representing political parties will serve as vice-chairmen.

According to the yesterday’s meeting, there will be a meeting of officials from 10 sub-committees formed by the government and a 10-member working committee under the joint committee on 27 and 28 August before a plenary meeting of the 48-member joint committee on 29 August.

The NRPC hosts a meeting with responsible persons from 70 political parties that won no seat in the general elections today.

## State Counsellor meets President of the UK Supreme Court

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received Lord Neuberger, the President of the UK Supreme Court, at the Presi-

dential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw at 15:45 hrs on 22 August, 2016, and exchanged views on the promotion of bilateral relations and cooperation between Myanmar and the UK.—*Ministry of Foreign Affairs*



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shakes hands with Lord Neuberger, the President of the UK Supreme Court. PHOTO: MNA

## State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi enjoys music concert in Nay Pyi Taw

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attended a music concert to mark the 50th Anniversary of bilateral relations between Myanmar and Singapore at the Myanmar International Convention Center-II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Also present were Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defense Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi extends greetings to musicians in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

Win, the Union ministers, Singaporean Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Robert Chua, departmental staff, students and guests. During the event, musical artists from Yong Siew Toh music school of Singapore and Attachment of Clouds (AOC) in Yangon per-

formed pieces of classical music and Myanmar and Singaporean songs. After the event, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi presented a flower bouquet to the musical artists of Yong Siew Toh music school of Singapore.—*Myanmar News Agency*

## By-elections to be held . . .

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Regarding the Muse-Namtham road, measures will be taken to scrutinise the prescribed tonnage limit for the 22-wheeled trucks through cooperation between local authorities and all ministries concerned.

Oriental Highway Co., Ltd, under the B.O.T system, will begin the tarmacking of the road in the open season this fiscal year. The company has been tasked with upgrading the road into a four-lane facility not later than 31 March, 2019, said the Union minister, adding that supervision on progress of the work will be done once every three months by the ministry.

Regarding construction of a bridge across the Ayeyawady river that connects Hinthada of Ayeyawady Region to Latpadan of Bago Region, the Union minister replied that a project feasibility study was being made in cooperation with Myanmar Railways to build a rail-cum-road bridge.

The Ayeyawady Bridge (Hinthada) project set to be implemented with the use of a Japanese loan will seek a parliamentary approval following permission granted by the President’s Office.

Next, a bill amending the 1973 Law of Myanmar Board of Examination was submitted to Amyotha Hluttaw.—*Thein Ko Lwin with MNA*

## Works of Mandalay artists to be exhibited in Yangon

AN art exhibition by artists from Mandalay and Yangon will take place this month in Yangon, featuring works with a wide range of style and media.

“Mandalay Hill Art Gallery Group Art Exhibition” is scheduled to be held between 27 and 31 August at Hninsimyaing Art Gallery located at Hninzigone Home for the Aged, Kaba-Aye Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon.

More than 60 watercolour, acrylic and oil artworks by 10 artists from Mandalay and nine others from Yangon will be displayed at the gallery. The artwork is for sale at a reasonable price.

Visitors are invited to the five-day event to see the works of nearly 20 artists—U Zaw Win, U Hla Htun, U Aung Thant, U Lu Maw, U Aung Min, U Naing Myo Wai, U Kyaw Min Win, U Phila, U Moe Myint Tun, Daw San San Thwe, U Hla Tun Aung, U Htay Aung, U myat Kyawt, U Aung NAing Maung, U Pyay Kyaw Han, U Ni Moe Oo, U Than Soe, U Nay Tun, and U Kyaw Min Han.—*Khin Khin Win (Education)*

## Families of Defence Services, well-wishers donate provisions, cash to monasteries, nunneries

FAMILIES of Defence Services (Army, Navy and Air Force) and well-wishers donated ks9.53 million worth of provisions and cash towards the funds of Pariyatti monasteries and Nunneries in Lewe Township of Nay Pyi Taw on Sunday 21 August.

At the ceremony, the families of the Army, Navy and Air Force and well-wishers presented rice, edible oil, iodized salt, beans and medicines and monastic items to Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw of the Paukmying Monastery Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Zineinda and Sayardaws and Nuns.

The well-wishers presented cash towards the fund of Pariyatti Sarthintaiks and Nunneries through Gen. Moe Aung and officials.

Present at the ceremony were Chief of Staff



Gen. Moe Aung, Chief of Staff of the Navy, and officers presenting cash assistance contributed by Families of Defence Services (Army, Navy and Air Force) and well-wishers to the Sayadaws. PHOTO: C-IN-C' OFFICE

(Navy) Gen. Moe Aung, high ranking officers of Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, the Commander

of Nay Pyi Taw Command Gen. Moe Myint Tun, well-wishers, members of social organizations and Wut Thins—association

to recite religious verses together and to carry out certain religious duties regularly.—*C-in-C' Office*

## Crime NEWS

### Five arrested for drug smuggling

FIVE people, including two women, have been arrested in three separate incidents involving the sale of controlled substances in the capital Nay Pyi Taw, the Taninthayi Region and Shan State over the past two days.

Acting on a tip-off, a combined team that included members of the armed forces and police on Saturday searched a passenger bus that was at a check point en route from Loukai to Chinshwehaw. They found 36 grams of heroin, 1,250 yaba pills and 16 grams of ice from Ma Le Xoung Hwe, one of the passengers on board.

A similar case happened on the same day in Taninthayi Township. Police arrested Ma San Nge after she was found in possession of a cache of opium powder weighing 7.6751 kilos. Police inspected three suspected



Nay Lin Aung, Hla Myo Aung and Kyaw Lin Htike. PHOTO: KO YE

traffickers—Nay Lin Aung, Hla Myo Aung and Kyaw Lin Htike — while they were at a restaurant on Padonma Street in Shwek-

yarpin Ward in Zabuthiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw on Friday and discovered in their possession 1,348 yaba tablets.—*Ko Ye*

### Man found dead in creek

A MAN was found dead on Sunday at around 7 a.m. in a creek in Nyaunglaybin, a town in Bago Region, according to a police report.

After receiving a tip-off from a resident, police inspected Kyetuwyay Creek, located in Myoma Ward-2 in Nyaunglaybin Township. U Tin Sein, 46, of Myoma Ward-2, who found the body in the creek, was able to identify the man.

“The name of the victim is U Kyi Win, 48, and resides in the same ward,” U Tin Sein said. “He is a heavy drinker. He used to swim in the creek.”

Local police are still investigating the case.—*Nay Lin (Nyaunglaybin)*

### Two men charged over theft of loose soil containing gold

TWO MEN on Saturday have been arrested in relation to the theft of loose soil containing gold from a local gold mining company in Sagaing Region.

In cooperation with the staff of Htawara Gold Mining Co, police from Htigyaing found two men with four bags of loose soil containing gold when they were performing their patrol duties at around 4 a.m.

Both suspects—Aung Nang Khaing and Zaw Myo Oo—were arrested by police after they were unable to produce documents proving the ownership of the property.—*Lu Aung (Katha)*

### Traffic accidents exceed last year's total

A TOTAL OF 488 reported car accidents occurred along the Yangon-Mandalay highway over the past seven and a half months, killing 106 people and injuring 853 others, according to the Highway Police Department.

The number of cases this year outpaced last year's figure of 453 cases. In 2015, a total of 124 people were killed in road accidents while 1,033 sustained injuries.

The increase of traffic-related cases along the highway is linked to the high number of

motor vehicles that travel the road every day, said a member of the Highway Police in Nay Pyi Taw.

In 2015, approximately 13,000 vehicles used the road between Yangon and Mandalay daily.

This year, between 14,000 and 16,000 cars pass over the road in a single day.

Highway police have accelerated their public awareness activities to educate traffic-related knowledge and traffic-rule enforcement programmes along the road. — 200

### Elder, child killed in fire in Kyaukme

AN EARLY morning blaze in Huhson Village in Kyaukme Township in northern Shan State killed a 66-year-old woman and her five-year-old grandson on Saturday, police reported yesterday.

The fire was caused by lightning during a heavy rainstorm that hit a solar panel installed on the roof of house owned by U San Kham at

around 2.50 a.m. on that day.

Fire soon engulfed U San Kham's house and also his neighbour's house, killing Daw Sein Kha, the wife of U San Kham and their grandson Sai Eike Pi. The blaze was placed under control by villagers at around 3.15 a.m.

Fire victims are currently staying at the village's monastery.—*Distrcit IPRD*

# LOCAL Business

## Container inflow to Yangon ports rises by 20 per cent

YEARLY container inflow to Yangon ports through normal trade rose by 20 per cent over the past four years, it is learnt from the Myanmar Port Authority.

Over 1,000 container ships arrived in Yangon ports in the 2006-2007 fiscal year. During the last fiscal year of 2015-2016, over 2,300 foreign container ships entered Yangon ports whereas there were over 300 container ships as of May in this fiscal year of 2016-2017, it is learnt.

The containers are mostly from Singapore and Malaysia. If the handling of containers is not finished in the daytime, it is continued during the evening with the aim of facilitating

trade. The 24-hour service is convenient, but it is hard to find places to store empty containers, causing port traffic. After this problem is sorted out, the exporting is expected to run more smoothly, said U Min Maw Thant, an exporter.

The Yangon port is faced with a struggle to handle the containers arriving at the port when the owners of the goods fail to withdraw their goods in a timely manner. To prevent the ports from being used as godowns, the authorities increased the fines for those who fail to remove their goods on time. This is an attempt for the ports to be able to move cargo quickly and decrease backlogs.—200



Containers are seen at Asia World Port Terminal in Yangon. PHOTO: ZAW GYI

## Edible bird's nests in high demand from China, Malaysia and Thailand

THE edible bird's nests produced by swiftlets from the Myeik archipelagoes in Taninthayi Region are readily purchased in China, Malaysia and Thailand, it is learnt.

The bird's nests are exported through Ranong to Thailand and are also sent to Yangon. The mer-

chants export these bird's nests to Malaysia and China after the nests are purified, then packaged.

There are two islands on the archipelago where collection of bird's nests are not allowed, in order to prevent the extinction of the swiftlet. The collecting period of edible

bird's nests lasts for three months. A permit allowing collection of bird's nests lasts until the first week of November, said U Ko Lay Win, who is engaged in the swiftlet's bird's nest farming.

Swiftlets are induced into making nests by using bird-noise techniques

at houses along the Strand Road in Myeik. This breeding business has become popular in the region, and many breeders are thriving, said breeders.

There are over 130 houses where the swiftlets dwell in Myeik, Kawthaung and Boat Pyin. The

market prices of bird's nests are from Ks1.6 to 2.2 million per viss, depending on the quality of the nest.

The forestry department grants permission to collect the nests, in keeping with a policy to preserve the bird species. The bird's nests are found

in the islands of Dawei, Myeik archipelagoes and the islands of the western Patheingyi.

The high-quality bird-nests are found in the 32 islands of Taninthayi Region. The edible bird's nests are mostly found in Mali Island in the Myeik archipelagoes.—200

## Thailand, Singapore eye in Myanmar's solar energy sector

TWO companies from Thailand and Singapore have submitted proposals to Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) to implement solar energy power projects in upper Myanmar, U Than Aung Kyaw, Deputy Director General of Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA), told Xinhua at a press conference on Monday when asked.

According to the proposal, Thai company has plan to implement a 297 million US dollars' solar energy power station which can produce 220 Megawatt (MW) of electricity in Minbu township, Magwe region.

The Singaporean company's proposal is also for implementing a solar energy used power station which

can produce 150 MW of electricity in Wantwin township, Mandalay region. The MIC permitted 4 foreign investments in its recent meeting on Aug.19 which are related to industrial, hotel, transportation and communication sectors which amounted to 42.077 million US dollars, according to the official statistics. The new MIC permitted a total of 17 foreign investments worth 166.233 million US dollars after three months of its formation in early June. Foreign investment in Myanmar totaled 63.88 billion US dollars as of Aug.19, 2016 since late 1988. Myanmar has targeted foreign investment to reach 6 billion US dollars for this fiscal year 2016-2017.—Xinhua

## Jade and jewelry exports fetch over US\$57million in four months

THE export of jade and jewelry in four months of this fiscal year (FY) fetched over US\$57million in four months of this fiscal year, it is learnt from the Ministry of Commerce.

The export of raw jade from 1st April to 31st July

in this FY amounted to US\$53.016 million, with an export volume of 475.096 tonnes. Jade jewelry worth US\$4.047 million was also exported. However, the export value of jade and jewelry in this four months of this FY is lower than that of

a similar period last year, it is learnt.

During the previous fiscal year, raw jade worth US\$305.779million and jewelry worth US\$15.514million were exported to China via the Muse border trade camp.

There is a 10 per cent tax levied on finished jewelry products, depending on volume and weight. The special goods tax at 5 per cent and Income tax at 2 per cent is also collected. A 1 per cent service charges is also collected.—200



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## Japanese ambassador to Iran briefly detained at dinner in April

DUBAI — The Japanese Embassy in Tehran said Sunday that Japanese Ambassador Hiroyasu Kobayashi was briefly detained and questioned in a raid by Iranian security forces in April and that a protest has been lodged with the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

While the reason for the raid is unclear, the incident could amount to a violation of diplomatic immunity, which guarantees that foreign diplomats cannot be arrested or detained.

Since last year's landmark nuclear deal between moderate-leaning President Hassan Rouhani and the West, numerous individuals in the country having contacts with the United States and Europe have been detained by hardline opponents of the deal. There are growing fears that foreign nationals living in Iran are now being targeted for

harassment.

According to the embassy, the incident happened on the evening of 28 April when Kobayashi and his wife attended a dinner hosted by a local acquaintance. In total dozens of people including other foreign diplomats attended the event at which alcohol was served. Alcohol consumption is banned in Iran, although its consumption is widespread.

Midway through the dinner, security authorities burst in and prevented attendees from leaving the venue as well as even using their mobile phones.

At that time, Kobayashi was not carrying a photo identification card called a "diplomatic card" issued by the Iranian Foreign Ministry to diplomats. He instead showed his name card but it was ignored and he was subject to questioning.—*Kyodo News*

## US, South Korea begin joint drills amid tension after defection

SEOUL — The United States and South Korea kicked off annual military exercises on Monday, prompting warnings of retaliation from the North, as already-heightened tension on the peninsula has been inflamed by the defection of a Pyongyang diplomat.

North Korea has become further isolated after a January nuclear test, its fourth, and the launch of a long-range rocket in February brought tightened UN Security Council sanctions that Pyongyang defied with several ballistic missile launches.

About 25,000 US troops are joining in the Ulchi Freedom Guardian exercise, which runs until 2 September. The US-led UN Command Military Armistice Commission said it notified the North Korean army the exercises were "non-provocative" in nature.

The North calls the exercises preparations for invasion, and early on Monday threatened a pre-emptive nuclear strike. North Korea frequently makes such threats.

"From this moment, the first-strike combined units of the Ko-



A South Korean army tank takes part in a military exercise near the demilitarized zone separating the two Koreas in Paju, South Korea, on 22 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

rean People's Army keep themselves fully ready to mount a preemptive retaliatory strike at all enemy attack groups involved in Ulchi Freedom Guardian," a KPA spokesman said in a statement carried by the North's state-run KCNA news agency. "The nuclear warmongers should bear in mind that if they show the slightest sign of aggression, it would turn the stronghold of provocation into a heap of ashes through a Korean-style preemptive nuclear strike."

Last week, South Korea announced that Thae

Yong Ho, the North's deputy ambassador in London, had defected and arrived in the South with his family, in an embarrassing blow to the regime of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

High-level defections pointed to cracks in the Kim regime, South Korean President Park Geun-hye said on Monday.

"Recently even North Korea's elite group is collapsing, followed by key figures defecting to foreign countries, showing a sign of serious cracks, with chances of shaking the regime further," she told a National

Security Council meeting.

Thae's defection followed the flight to Seoul this year of 12 waitresses from a North Korean restaurant in China.

On Monday, North Korea's Red Cross sent a letter to its South Korean counterpart asking for the women to be sent back, saying they had been kidnapped by the South, according to KCNA. South Korea denies they were kidnapped.

North and South Korea are technically still at war because their 1950-53 conflict ended in an armistice, not a peace treaty.—*Reuters*

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## Philippines drug war deaths double to 1,800, president spars with UN



Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte shakes hands with Philippine National Police (PNP) Director General Ronald Dela Rosa (R) upon his arrival to address the 115th Police Service Anniversary at the (PNP) headquarters in Quezon city, metro Manila, Philippines, on 17 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

MANILA — The number of drug-related killings since President Rodrigo Duterte took power and declared war on drugs in May has doubled to about 1,800, police said on Monday, a day after Duterte lashed out over United Nations criticism of the wave of deaths.

Duterte said in a bizarre and strongly worded

late-night news conference on Sunday the Philippines might leave the United Nations and invite China and others to form a new global forum, accusing it of failing to fulfil its mandate.

However, Duterte's foreign minister, Perfecto Yasay, said on Monday the Philippines would remain a UN member and

described the president's comments as expressions of "profound disappointment and frustration".

"We are committed to the UN despite our numerous frustrations and disappointments with the international agency," Yasay told a news conference on Monday. Last week, two UN human rights experts urged Manila to stop the extra-judicial executions and killings that have escalated since Duterte won the presidency in May on a promise to wipe out drugs.

As recently as Sunday, the number of suspected drug traffickers killed in Duterte's seven-week war on drugs had been put at about 900 by Philippine officials. However on Monday, Philippine National Police Chief Ronald Dela Rosa told a Senate committee investigating extra-judicial killings that 712 drug traffickers and users had been killed during police operations. Police were

also investigating 1,067 drug-related killings outside normal police work, Dela Rosa said.

The latest figures had been compiled since 1 July, he said. Yasay said Duterte has promised to uphold human rights in the fight against drugs and has ordered the police to investigate and prosecute offenders. He criticised the UN rapporteurs for "jumping to an arbitrary conclusion that we have violated human rights of people".

"It is highly irresponsible on their part to solely rely on such allegations based on information from unnamed sources without proper substantiation," he said of the United Nations.

Senator Leila de Lima, a staunch critic of the president, started a two-day congressional inquiry into the killings on Monday, questioning top police and anti-narcotics officials to explain the "unprecedented" rise in killings.—*Reuters*

## Strong typhoon lands near Tokyo, disrupting traffic

TOKYO — Powerful Typhoon Mindulle made landfall on Monday in Chiba Prefecture east of Tokyo, bringing torrential rain and strong winds to parts of the Japanese archipelago, the Japan Meteorological Agency said.

More than 400 flights were canceled, affecting at least 49,000 people, while train services were also delayed or canceled in the morning in regions including greater Tokyo and the Tokai region around Shizuoka Prefecture.

A landslide occurred in the city of Higashimurayama in western Tokyo, causing a train on the Seibu Tamako line to derail between Seibu-yuenchi and Musashi-Yamato stations,

although none of its six passengers was injured in the incident, according to police.

The city of Izu in Shizuoka Prefecture and Hachijo Island off Tokyo logged a record high rainfall of 86 millimetres per hour for August, with the latter also reporting a wind speed of 183 kilometres per hour.

The weather agency also said the western Tokyo city of Ome and Iruma, Saitama Prefecture, are estimated to have seen rainfall of 100 mmph, a level only seen once every few years.

The typhoon made landfall around Tateyama on the Boso Peninsula around 12:30 pm after

moving near Izu Islands in the Pacific Ocean. It had winds with a maximum velocity of 180 kph and an atmospheric pressure of 975 hectopascals at its centre.

The agency expects the typhoon to move up to the Tohoku area in north-eastern Japan and to Hokkaido in northern Japan by Tuesday.

Precipitation is expected to reach up to 250 mm in the Kanto and Koshin regions in the 24 hours through Tuesday morning, up to 200 mm in the Tokhoku and Hokkaido regions and up to 150 mm in Tokai and Hokuriku.

Typhoon Lionrock was stuck in the Pacific south of western Japan, while a third typhoon

Kompasu was downgraded to a subtropical depression Monday morning in the Sea of Okhotsk after making landfall in Hokkaido the previous evening, according to the agency.

Some rivers swelled in Hokkaido and residents along them were advised to evacuate.

A man's body was found submerged in water on a roadside in the morning near the Tokoro River in Kitami, Hokkaido, in the morning and later identified by local police as Dai Ichinoseki, a 42-year-old local resident.

He may have left his vehicle after it became stranded in the middle of the flooded road, the police said.—Kyodo News



A derailed train on the Seibu Tamako line in Higashimurayama, western Tokyo, on 22 August 2016. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

## Thailand bomb attacks the work of 'at least' 20 people — police



Police Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) official inspects the site of a bomb blast in Hua Hin, south of Bangkok, Thailand, on 12 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

BANGKOK — Thai police on Monday said at least 20 people were involved in carrying out a wave of deadly bombings in the country's south earlier this month.

National police chief Jakthip Chaijinda said that police have not ruled out any motive for the attacks and believe that many of those involved came from Thailand's Muslim-majority southern provinces.

"We know where they came from, where they went. We believe there are at least 20 people involved in this network," Jakthip told reporters, without giving further details.

No group has claimed responsibility for the 11 August and 12 August attacks which took place in seven provinces and targeted high profile beach towns, killing four people

and injuring dozens.

The bombings came days after Thais voted to accept a military-backed constitution in a nation-wide referendum.

Police and the government ruled out any link to foreign militants within hours of the attacks and insisted the perpetrators were home-grown.

Jakthip said that he could not confirm whether the bombings were an extension of an insurgency in the southern provinces that border Malaysia, where Malay-Muslim insurgents are fighting a bloody war that has claimed more than 6,500 lives since 2004.

"We are unwilling to say what their motive is and whether it is related to the referendum, the insurgency or whether they were hired," Jakthip said.

Last week, Thai De-

fence Minister Prawit Wongsuwan said the bombings were "definitely not an extension" of the insurgency.

Security experts told Reuters that official denial of involvement by Malay-Muslim insurgents was unsurprising as admitting southern insurgents could be involved would have serious economic and security implications for Thailand.

A Thai military court issued an arrest warrant last week for a then unidentified suspect for attempting to bomb a beach on the tourist island of Phuket.

Police on Friday identified the man as Ahama Lengha from Narathiwat, one of the Muslim-majority provinces, but said he has not yet been taken into custody.—Reuters

## Japan, China, South Korea foreign ministers to hold talks Wednesday

TOKYO — The foreign ministers of Japan, China and South Korea will meet for talks Wednesday in Tokyo, the Japanese government said Monday, with Tokyo hoping to affirm cooperation with the two countries in dealing with North Korea and economic issues.

It will be the first such meeting in more than five years in Japan. Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung Se and China's Wang Yi will attend the

talks. Wang will be the first Chinese foreign minister to visit Japan under the leadership of Chinese President Xi Jinping.

The gathering is also expected to provide an opportunity for Tokyo to mend bilateral ties with Beijing that have been dogged by a territorial row, setting the stage for a leaders' meeting on the sidelines of a Group of 20 summit next month in China. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Xi have held only two one-on-one meetings since

both took power in 2012.

During the three-way talks, the foreign ministers are expected to discuss coordination in addressing North Korea's nuclear and missile programmes, according to Japanese government sources.

They are also likely to commit to strengthening cooperation in economic areas, including negotiations toward concluding a trilateral free trade agreement. Kishida will host a banquet Tuesday night for the foreign ministers.—Kyodo News

## Singapore's PM Lee to take medical leave until 29 August

SINGAPORE — Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong will be on medical leave until 29 August on the advice of his doctors, his office said on Monday.

Lee took ill while delivering a National Day

rally speech on Sunday but returned to the stage after a break of about an hour.

Lee's illness was brought on by a temporary drop in blood pressure due to prolonged standing, exhaustion and dehydration, the prime minister's office

said in a statement. Doctors had confirmed there were no cardiac abnormalities and no stroke, the office said. Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean will cover the duties of the prime minister in his absence.—Reuters

### MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS MYANMA RAILWAYS INVITATION TO OPEN TENDER

- Open Tender is invited for supply of the following items in Euro:
 

Sr No	Tender No	Description
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2.	12(T)3/MR(MIT)	Taper Bearing Unit (TBU)AAR Class C 5x9 (1300)Sets
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- Tender documents are available at our office starting from 22.8.2016 during office hours and for further detail please contact: Deputy General Manager Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Corner of 51<sup>st</sup> Street and Merchant Street, Botahtaung, Yangon. Phone: 95-1-291985, 291994

# Opinion

## Write for us

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

# Impatience is pricey

Kyaw Thura

**T**HERE is an old maxim popular in our country that goes: "To achieve better things in life, you need to remain patient." There is some truth in that saying. We witnessed how pricey our lack of patience was 28 years ago. We did not listen to the then-President Dr Maung Maung's request for a three-month wait to write a constitution.

As we all know, Rome was not built in a day. This reminds

us that people have been inspired by big dreams throughout history. Driven by our insatiable thirst for constant progress, the world has evolved into a modern industrial and technological society in which everything we need is easily available.

Clearly, there is no such thing as something for nothing. It was not always easy to transform the world into its present form. It is therefore necessary for us to understand that diffi-

culty does not necessarily mean impossibility. In the words of Thomas Fuller, all things are difficult before they are easy. We should keep in mind that nothing in the world comes without difficulty.

When we are faced with strong competition, we tend to lose self-control. In other words, patience seems to be a forgotten virtue in the modern world. We should keep in mind that nothing will last when done in haste.

Although impatience is our innate quality, we need to learn how to stay calm when we feel emotions such as anger and jealousy.

Both patience and impatience have the potential to affect our decisions and actions. But patience allows us to endure a current situation while waiting for better things to happen, even if it takes months or years. It is our level of patience that will determine our future.

# A New Law to Bring Major Reforms to Myanmar Corporate Sector

The DICAN

**M**YANMAR is undergoing significant economic liberalization and reforms designed to promote economic growth and investment. Now is also the time to undertake the legal reforms required to support economic liberalization – reforms in regulation of companies that have occurred in many neighboring countries in our region undergoing significant economic growth. These reforms in company law include simpler company formation, reducing compliance burden on SMEs, improving corporate governance, and more flexible share capital management for companies. They aim to make it easier to start and conduct business, support entrepreneurship and the development of a strong and vibrant private sector.

The Myanmar Companies Act 1914 has been governing company activities in Myanmar for over a hundred years. The current law contains many fundamental principles of company law that are found in other countries in the region such as Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong. However, it also contains many outdated and burdensome requirements designed for the 19th

century business environment. These requirements include requiring companies to seek the approval of the President to change the company name and the approval of the Courts to change the business activity of a company.

Other countries with similar laws to the Myanmar Companies Act have been actively reforming their company laws to better fit with modern business realities. Major overhaul of company laws have gained momentum in the last few years. Singapore introduced a new Companies Act in 2015, Hong Kong introduced a new Companies Ordinance in 2014 and Malaysia has most recently passed its new Companies Act this year. The main changes in these laws are all drawn from experiences and reforms in jurisdictions that share a similar company law framework — such as the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand — and are based on "tried and tested" concepts.

Similarly, Myanmar will now introduce some of these major reforms as it seeks to encourage investment by companies in many sectors of the economy. A draft Myanmar Companies Law has now been prepared which draws on all of the international experiences and reforms in com-

panies laws from Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong. The major reforms in the, draft Myanmar Companies Law include the following:

1. Easier incorporation for private companies which will be allowed to have a single director and single shareholder.
2. Removing requirement for annual general meetings and annual financial statements for small private companies.
3. Allowing written resolutions of shareholders and directors so that companies will no longer be required to hold physical meetings.
4. Removing the requirement for companies to have memoranda and articles of association and allowing a company to adopt a "constitution" with tailored rules for itself and its members.
5. Allowing companies to manage their share capital more flexibly by increasing or reducing share capital with fewer requirements.
6. Setting out legal duties of company directors to ensure that management of companies is in line with in-

ternational corporate governance standards.

These major changes will modernize the management of companies and bring many improvements to the corporate sector. Companies will be able to operate in accordance with clear requirements in the law and enjoy greater freedom to conduct their internal affairs based on the company's situation. It will improve the transparency of companies, increase the accountability of directors and better protect investors in companies. All of these changes are long overdue for companies in Myanmar which have faced years of unclear and burdensome regulation, resulting in poor compliance with the law.

Myanmar has a lot of catching up to do in business regulation. The country currently ranks 167<sup>th</sup> under the World Bank Doing Business rankings which measures how easy it is to set up

a company, and regulations for doing business such as protecting minority shareholders and enforcing contracts. Its neighbours which share the same company law heritage rank much higher - Malaysia ranks 16<sup>th</sup>, Hong Kong ranks 5<sup>th</sup> and Singapore ranks 1<sup>st</sup>. These results hold important lessons for Myanmar. Research studies have shown that greater ease of doing business (high rankings) is related to increased company formation and strong economic growth.

The proposed new Myanmar Companies Law aims to address these issues by supporting company registrations, lowering regulations for small companies, allowing greater flexibility in company affairs, and improving regulation. It will start a new era of company management and regulation in Myanmar and build a modern business environment for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**"They aim to make it easier to start and conduct business, support entrepreneurship and the development of a strong and vibrant private sector".**

# Tatmadaw (Air Force) puts new transport, training aircraft into service



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing sprinkles scented water on the new transport aircraft. PHOTO: MYAWADY

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Defense Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attended a ceremony to put new Air Force aircraft into service at the Flying Training Base in Meiktila Station yesterday. In honour of the ceremony, the Command-

er-in-Chief wore the uniform of the Air Force.

In his address, the Senior General stressed the need for building a standard Air Force to enhance the airpower of Tatmadaw (Air).

According to the Senior

General, six types of 51 aircraft and three types of 10 choppers were put into commission during the period from 2011 to date.

A Y-8F transport aircraft and a Grob flying training aircraft were put into commission at the ceremony. — *Myawady*

# Food rations in short supply at Nam Hpat Kar IDP Camp

YANGON internally displaced persons (IDPs) currently taking refuge the Nam Hpat Kar IDP Camp in northern Shan State's Kutkai Township are reportedly in dire need of food rations, according to members of staff at the camp.

The 269 villagers at the camp which arrived in March earlier this year, fleeing armed conflict in their region, are also confronted with a dearth of housing materials to build sturdy shelters.

"The Myanmar Hnalonethar Group (Heart of Myanmar) has been aiding 200 of the IDPs since July. [People here] need rice to

eat. The MHG have donated a month's worth of rice rations. An extra three bags of rice must be procured every week to feed the 69 people in the camp which MHG hasn't the capacity to support," said U Aung Myat, a member of staff at the Nam Hpat Kar IDP Camp.

The MHG has been aiding villagers in the camp with rice, oil and salt provision since July this year, while the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) has been providing tarpaulins. However, despite these efforts, more donors are being searched for which can provide

enough food rations to meet the needs of everyone in the camp.

"Since groups [like the MNG] can't provide all IDPs with aid, those left out have to rely on being fed by other donors," continued U Aung Myat. "In the past, they were ordered to take shelter in local community religious halls and the homes of local residents in the area. But they had to move to IDP camps after the strain their presence put upon such householders. The camps are built with bamboo poles and tarpaulin, so they lack any sturdiness." — *Myitmakha News Agency*

# New railroad bridge helps reduce travelling time between Yangon, Mandalay

CONSTRUCTION of a new railroad bridge has been completed, said U Myint Zaw of Myanma Railway.

The project was begun on 2 February last year and complete on 14 August.

Located beside the Myitnge Railroad connecting between Myitnge and Paleik railway stations, the new bridge was built at a cost of about 1.2 billion kyats.

Thanks to the completion of the new railroad bridge, at least 45 minutes of travelling time can

be reduced during one round trip between Yangon and Mandalay, U Myint Zaw said.

The new bridge is expected to help attract more customers to the MM by providing better transportation services to the public.

The railroad bridge, which is 721 feet long and 12 feet wide, consists of five posts. It was built with the use of a 682 feet long steel frame weighing 800 tonnes. Concrete railway sleepers have been installed at the bridge.— *Aung Thant Khaing*



Photo shows a train making the first test run on the new railroad bridge. PHOTO: AUNG THANT KHAING

# USDP's second conference kicks off in Nay Pyi Taw

THE second conference of the Union Solidarity and Development Party was held at its headquarters in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

In his address, USDP chairman U Thein Sein elaborated on the reformation of the party with loyal and disciplined members equipped with abilities to lead their respective regions for winning the public's trust and realizing the party's policies and initiatives. The second conference of the party was set to select central-level party officials in the presence of the delegates, added the USDP chairman.

Next, the party chairman and vice-chairmen presented awards

to more than 30 outstanding students who passed the 2015-2016 matriculation examinations.

Then there was submission of the Central Executive Committee's report, which included the basic principles of the party, amendments, membership reforms and rules and regulations.

Afterwards, region/state and Union area party committee members read out reports on work progress.

During yesterday's conference, members of the party's central committee, reserve CEC members and members of the central executive committee were re-appointed. — *Myanmar News Agency*



USDP's second conference in progress. PHOTO: KHAING HTOO

POEM:

## Far And Near Concept

- \* If love is a 'mouse'  
Left click will be you  
Right click, me
- \* If life is a 'night'  
The moon will be you  
The stars, me
- \* When the smell of rain  
Farther and farther  
Fragrance of queen of the night  
Calmly drifts about  
Meaning what 'Turn' is  
Whether one says  
It's just cycle of rebirth  
The world isn't always  
In the darkness.

*Yin Nwe Ko (Linn)*

# Trump campaign signals possible shift on immigration stance

WASHINGTON — A senior aide to US Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump signalled a possible shift in his hardline immigration policies on Sunday, saying his plans to deport 11 million people who are in the country illegally were under review.

Trump has put his vow to toughen the country's immigration policies at the centre of his campaign. He has promised to carry out mass deportations and build a wall on the US-Mexico border, proposals that critics have assailed as inhumane and too costly and unrealistic to achieve.

Trailing Democrat Hillary Clinton in opinion polls for the 8 November election and struggling to broaden his support be-

yond the white working-class voters who have been his base of support, the New York businessman has reached out in recent days to black and Hispanic voters.

On Sunday, his new campaign manager, Kellyanne Conway, told CNN that Trump was committed to a "fair and humane" approach to those living in the country illegally.

"What he supports is to make sure we enforce the law, we are respectful of those Americans who are looking for well-paying jobs and that we are fair and humane to those who live among us in this country," Conway said on "State of the Union."

Pressed on whether Trump's plans would include a "deportation force" that the candidate

previously pledged to set up, she replied: "To be determined."

Republican Senator Jeff Sessions, a close ally of Trump, told CBS's "Face the Nation" that Trump was still working through his plans for deportations should he win the White House.

"He's wrestling with how to do that. People that are here unlawfully, came into the country against our laws, are subject to being removed. That's just plain fact," the Alabama lawmaker said. "He's thinking that through." Trump has also been rebuked by opponents for his proposal to impose a temporary "total and complete shutdown" of Muslims seeking to enter the country, later rolled back to focus on countries with "a proven history of terrorism." —Reuters



German Chancellor Angela Merkel (L), French President Francois Hollande (R) and Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi attend a news conference at the chancellery during discussions on the outcome of the Brexit in Berlin, Germany, on 27 June, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Show of European unity — Merkel, Hollande, Renzi meet to discuss gameplan

NAPLES, (Italy) — The leaders of Germany, France and Italy will meet on Monday to discuss how to keep the European project together in the second set of talks between the premiers of the euro zone's three largest economies since Britain's shock vote to leave the bloc.

Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi hosts German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Francois Hollande on an island off the coast of Naples ahead of September's EU summit called to discuss reverberations from the Brexit vote.

"They will be coming to discuss how to relaunch Europe from the bottom up, there's a big need," Renzi said on Sunday.

"Relaunching Europe is a totally open game but it needs to be played," he said.

Officials in Brussels and Berlin fear the 23 June vote

could lead to a referendum in the Netherlands — a founding member of the union — on whether to also leave the bloc.

"Monday aims to show the unity of Europe's three biggest countries, but not to create a specific club," a French diplomatic source said, noting that the aim was to prepare for the groundwork for the forthcoming Bratislava summit.

Faced with existential risks, Merkel wants to cement "a better Europe" rather than forge ahead with "more Europe". Renzi wants Italy to have a strong voice in how the bloc's future is shaped after Brexit and, according to the French diplomatic source, Hollande wants an EU-wide investment plan to be doubled. The three leaders differ over how to boost economic growth - which slowed across the 28-nation bloc in the second quarter and stagnated in France

and Italy — and cut unemployment.

France supports Renzi's push for expansionary measures and against austerity, Germany is likely to oppose any undermining of Europe's deficit and the debt constraints that Italy and France have struggled to comply with.

Italy is eager for greater European consolidation in the wake of Brexit, but Merkel is more concerned about preserving the integrity of the eventual 27-member bloc.

For her it will be the beginning of a whirlwind week of meetings with other European governments that will see her travel to four countries and receive leaders from another eight.

"The goal must first of all be to preserve the status quo and to prevent a further disintegration of the EU-27," said one EU diplomat. —Reuters

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Two French aid workers killed in Madagascar

PARIS — Two French people working for an environmental organisation in Madagascar have been killed, authorities said.

The French foreign ministry, in a statement late on Sunday, said they were killed "in an odious crime" on the small island of Sainte Marie, off the northeast coast of Madagascar.

Radio France International said the bodies of a young man and a young woman, aged 25 and 23, were found early on Sunday about 150 metres from a night club. Both had injuries to the head. They were volunteers for Cetamada, an environmental NGO that works for the protection of marine mammals.

French police will arrive on Monday to help the local police investigation, local authorities said. —Reuters

#### Italy to hold elections in 2018 whatever referendum outcome

MARINA DI PIETRASANTA, (Italy) — Italians will vote in new general elections in 2018 no matter how a referendum on constitutional reform turns out later this year, Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi said on Sunday.

Renzi, who came to power two years ago by ousting grand coalition-leader Enrico Letta, has staked his political future on winning the referendum which he says is crucial to more stable and stronger government. Asked in an interview before an audience at an outdoor festival in Marina di Pietrasanta in Tuscany whether elections would be held in 2018 whatever the outcome of the popular vote, Renzi said "yes". —Reuters

#### US to deploy 16 F-35 stealth fighters at west Japan base next year

YAMAGUCHI (Japan) — The Japanese government informed the city of Iwakuni in Yamaguchi Prefecture on Monday that the United States plans to deploy 16 F-35 fighters at the US military's base there from January to August next year.

It would be the first time that stealth aircraft have been stationed overseas. High-ranking officials from Japan's defense and foreign ministries visited Iwakuni in western Japan and informed Mayor Yoshihiko Fukuda of the planned deployment. The plan is to first deploy 10 F-35 jets in January and six more in August.

Fukuda told Shunsuke Takei, parliamentary vice foreign minister, and Hiroyuki Miyazawa, parliamentary vice defence minister, that his city was frustrated at the lack of information provided to them by the central government and called for details to be given to them in a "swift" manner. —Kyodo News

#### Britain to create isolation units to counter extremism in jails

LONDON — Britain will isolate Islamist extremists in special units in high security jails to limit their ability to radicalize other inmates, the government said on Monday.

Justice Secretary Liz Truss said she was taking action to reduce the spread of radical ideology within the mainstream prison population, including training officers to disrupt activity that could influence vulnerable prisoners.

"But there are a small number of individuals, very subversive individuals, who do need to be held in separate units," she told BBC radio on Monday.

"We are establishing specialist units in the prison estate to hold those individuals." —Reuters

#### Philippines and communist rebels start peace talks after truce

OSLO — The Philippine government and Maoist-led guerrillas opened peace talks in Oslo on Monday to try and end nearly five decades of conflict that has killed more than 40,000 people.

Both sides, who agreed a truce over the weekend, sat facing each other in the Holmenkollen Park Hotel's "Nobel" room, named after the Nobel Peace Prize, with photographs of former winners including the Dalai Lama on the walls.

"This is a conflict that has been lasting for far too long," Norwegian Foreign Minister Boerge Brende told the meeting, saying there now seemed to be a "historic momentum" building to end the conflict. —Reuters

## Kurdish militia launches assault to evict Syrian army from key city of Hasaka

HASAKA — The Kurdish YPG militia launched a major assault on Monday to seize the last government-controlled parts of the northeastern Syrian city of Hasaka after calling on pro-government militias to surrender, Kurdish forces and residents said.

They said Kurdish forces began the offensive after midnight to take the southeastern district of Nashwa, close to where a security compound is located near the governor's office close to the heart of the city.

The powerful YPG militia had earlier captured Ghwairan, the only major Arab neighbourhood still in government hands.

The fighting this week in Hasaka, which is divided into zones of Kurdish and Syrian government control, marks the most violent confrontation between the Kurdish YPG militia and Damascus in more than five years of civil war.

The Syrian army deployed warplanes against the main armed

Kurdish group for the first time during the war last week, prompting a US-led coalition to scramble aircraft to protect American special operations ground forces.

The YPG is at the heart of a US-led campaign against the Islamic State militant group in Syria and controls swaths of the north, where Kurdish groups associated with the militia have set up their own government since the Syrian war began in 2011.

Syrian state media accused the YPG-affiliated security force known as the Asayish of violating a ceasefire and said its members had torched government buildings in Hasaka.

It accused the Asayish of igniting the violence through escalating "provocations", including the bombing of army positions in Hasaka, and said the Asayish aimed to take control of the city.

The YPG denied it had entered into a truce. It distributed leaflets and made loudspeaker calls across the city asking for



Smoke rises from the northeastern city of Hasaka, Syria, on 21 August, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

army personnel and pro-government militias to hand over their weapons or face death.

"To all the elements of the regime and its militias who are besieged in the city you are targeted by our units," leaflets distributed by the YPG said.

"This battle is decided and we will not retreat ... We call on you to give up your weapons or count yourselves dead."

The YPG, known as the Peo-

ple's Protection Units and which has ties to the Kurdistan Workers Party, appeared intent on leaving a nominal Syrian government presence confined to within a security zone in the heart of the city, where several key government buildings are located, Kurdish sources said.

The complete loss of Hasaka would be a big blow to President Bashar al-Assad's government and would also dent efforts by Moscow, which had sought

through a major military intervention last year to help Damascus regain lost territory and prevent new rebel gains. Kurdish forces have expanded their control of the city despite the bombing of several locations by Syrian jets. Thousands of civilians in the ethnically mixed city, including members of the Christian community, have fled to villages in the countryside as the fighting intensified, residents said.—Reuters

## Iraq hangs 36 people sentenced to death for killing of troops in 2014



Iraqi security forces escort a man (R), sentenced to death over the mass killing of hundreds of mainly Shi'ite soldiers at a camp north of Baghdad two years ago, at Nasiriya prison in the southern Iraqi city of Nasiriya, on 21 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

BAGHDAD — Iraq said on Sunday it had hanged 36 militants sentenced to death over the mass killing of hundreds of mainly Shi'ite soldiers at a camp north of Baghdad two years ago.

It is the highest number of militants executed in one day by the Iraqi government since Islamic State fighters took control of parts of northern and western Iraq in 2014.

The executions were carried out at a prison in the southern Iraqi city of Nasiriya, state television quoted the Justice Ministry as saying.

As many as 1,700 soldiers were killed two years ago after they fled from Camp Speicher, a former US military base just north of Saddam Hussein's home town of Tikrit, when it was overrun by Islamic State, the ultra-hardline

Sunni group.

The government came under increased pressure from local Shi'ite politicians to execute militants sentenced to death after a massive bombing that targeted a shopping street in Baghdad on 3 July, killing at least 324 people.

Claimed by Islamic State, the truck bomb that blew up in the Karrada district was the deadliest since the US-led invasion

that toppled Saddam Hussein in 2003.

Iraq's Justice Ministry announced days later that 45 death sentences had been carried out since the beginning of the year.

The United Nations said on 1 August that Iraq's efforts to speed up the execution of militants could result in innocent people being put to death.

An estimated 1,200 people are on death row in Iraq, including possibly hundreds who have exhausted appeals, the UN statement said.

"Given the weaknesses of the Iraqi justice system, and the current environment in Iraq, I am gravely concerned that innocent people have been and may continue to be convicted and executed, resulting in gross, irreversible miscarriages of justice," UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein said in the statement.

Justice Minister Haidar al-Zamili dismissed the concern, saying each case "was reviewed in detail" before being sent to Iraqi President Fuad Masum, whose approval is needed for a death sentence to be carried out. "There will be more executions," Zamili added, speaking at a ceremony to mark the hangings in Nasiriya, attended by the families of the Speicher victims and broadcast on state TV.—Reuters

## Iran says Russian use of air base for Syria strikes over 'for now'

DUBAI — Iran said on Monday that Russia has stopped using an Iranian air base for strikes in Syria, a week after Moscow announced that its fighter bombers had flown from a base in Iran to hit targets in Syria.

"Russia has no base in Iran and is not stationed here. They did this (operation) and it is finished for now," Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qasemi was quoted as saying by Tasnim news agency.

Long-range Russian Tupolev-22M3 bombers and Sukhoi-34 fighter bombers used Nojeh air base, near the city of Hamedan, in north-west Iran to launch the air strikes last week, in a move which underscored Moscow's increasingly close ties with Tehran. But the deployment — the first time a foreign power has used an Iranian base since World War II — triggered criticism from some Iranian parliamentarians who said it breached the Islamic Republic's constitution.

Iranian Defence Minister Hossein Dehghan dismissed that criticism on Sunday, but also chided Moscow for publicising the move, describing it as showing off and a "betrayal of trust."—Reuters

# Gaza militant rocket hits Israel, Israel responds with air strikes, shells

JERUSALEM — Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip launched a rocket that landed in the Israeli border town of Sderot on Sunday and Israeli aircraft and tanks responded by shelling the Gaza town of Beit Hanoun, the army and police said.

The rocket caused no injuries or damage in Sderot, where it landed in a residential area, police said.

An Israeli shell during an initial retaliation damaged a Beit Hanoun water tower and there were no casualties, local residents said.

Multiple air strikes later in the evening hit at least 30 different sites in the Gaza Strip belonging to Hamas, the smaller Islamic Jihad and other militant groups and two people were lightly hurt, Gaza health officials said.

A music festival in Sderot attended by hundreds of Israelis was temporarily disrupted as people sought shelter, television footage showed.



An Israeli policeman carries part of a rocket which the Israeli army and police said was launched from Gaza, landing next to a residential building in the Israeli southern town of Sderot, Israel, on 21 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

The Israeli military said aircraft had attacked targets in the northern Gaza Strip and added that since the beginning of the year, 14 Gaza rockets had hit Israel.

Israeli army spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Peter Lerner said in a

statement that the military “remains committed to the stability of the region and operated in order to bring quiet to the people of southern Israel.”

“When terrorists in Hamas’ Gaza Strip, driven by a radical agenda based on hatred, attack people in

the middle of the summer vacation, their intentions are clear — to inflict pain, cause fear and to terrorize,” Lerner said.

Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri said: “We hold (Israel) responsible for the escalation in the Gaza Strip and we stress

that its aggression will not succeed in breaking the will of our people and dictate terms to the resistance.”

Hamas controls the Gaza Strip and has observed a de-facto ceasefire with Israel since a 2014 war but some small armed cells of Jihadist Salafis have defied the agreement and have continued to occasionally launch rockets at Israel. Israel has held Hamas responsible for all attacks originating in the coastal enclave.

More than 2,100 Palestinians, mostly civilians, were killed during the 2014 Gaza conflict. Sixty-seven Israeli soldiers and six civilians in Israel were killed by rockets and attacks by Hamas and other militant groups. Despite the ceasefire, Hamas has vowed to continue to dig tunnels intended to infiltrate Israel, and while Hamas leaders stress they do not seek an imminent war, they see tunnels as a strategic weapon in any future armed confrontation.—Reuters

## Germany to tell people to stockpile food and water in case of attacks — FAS

BERLIN — For the first time since the end of the Cold War, the German government plans to tell citizens to stockpile food and water in case of an attack or catastrophe, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung* newspaper reported on Sunday.

Germany is currently on high alert after two Islamist attacks and a shooting rampage by a mentally unstable teenager last month. Berlin announced measures earlier this month to spend considerably more on its police and security forces and to create a special unit to counter cyber crime and terrorism.

“The population will be obliged to hold an individual supply of food for ten days,” the newspaper quoted the government’s “Concept for Civil Defence” — which has been prepared by the Interior Ministry — as saying. The paper said a parliamentary committee had originally commissioned the civil defence strategy in 2012.

A spokesman for the Interior Ministry said the plan would be discussed by the cabinet on Wednesday and presented by the minister that afternoon. He declined to give any details on the content. People will be required to stockpile enough drinking water to last for five days, according to the plan, the paper said.

The 69-page report does not see an attack on Germany’s territory, which would require a conventional style of national defence, as likely.—Reuters

## Kerry, African ministers to meet on South Sudan violence, Somalia

NAIROBI — US Secretary of State John Kerry and counterparts from eight African nations meet in Nairobi on Monday to discuss ways to prevent South Sudan from sliding back into civil war and advance a political transition in Somalia.

Kerry arrived in the Kenyan capital late on Sunday — after a two-week summer break — for his second trip as secretary of state to Nairobi since May 2015.

On Tuesday, he travels to Sokoto, Nigeria, the

historic Muslim city in the remote northwest, followed by talks with Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari in Abuja. “We will ... talk about how we move forward in trying to implement peace in this country,” a senior State Department official said of South Sudan.

“The people of South Sudan have suffered for far too long, and the continued instability there has led almost a million refugees and a humanitarian crisis that is far beyond the abilities of even the international com-

munity to respond to,” the official told a conference call. The international community has poured billions of aid into supporting the world’s youngest nation, which gained independence in 2011. Oil production, by far the biggest source of government revenue, has plummeted. But worsening violence has raised fears of a return to civil war that erupted in late 2013, which broadly ran along ethnic lines, pitting President Salva Kiir, an ethnic Dinka, against his rival and vice

president Riek Machar, a Nuer.

Violence flared when Machar withdrew his forces from the capital Juba in July and was sacked by Kiir as vice president.

Machar was picked up by UN peacekeepers in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo a week ago with a leg injury and was handed over to authorities in Congo. Machar led a two-year rebellion against forces loyal to rival Kiir before the two sides reached a peace deal in August 2015.

Under the deal, Machar returned to Juba in April to resume his role as vice president.

On Monday, Kerry will meet Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta before joining foreign ministers from Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, Sudan, Djibouti, Tanzania, Somalia and Ethiopia to discuss South Sudan and Somalia, where there are concerns that delays in the approval of new election rules could dampen its recovery from conflict.—Reuters

**Invitation of Expression of Interest (EOI) for Cooperation Joint Venture in No.35 Heavy Industry (High Voltage Ceramic Insulator Factory - (Chauk) under No.2 Heavy Industries Enterprise, Ministry of Industry**

No.35 Heavy Industry (High Voltage Ceramic Insulator Factory - (Chauk)) under the No.2 Heavy Industries Enterprise of Ministry of Industry are intended to cooperate with Local and Foreign entrepreneurs as JV in it.

As a first step, Companies who interested in those cooperation are required to submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) not later than 03:00 pm (Myanmar Standard Time), on 22 September 2016 to Technical Development Department, No.2 Heavy Industries Enterprise, Ministry of Industry, Office No.41, Naypyitaw, The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Interested entities can take over the EOI Form and other indications at above office commencing from (23.8.2016) by presenting the document of company profile.

**Document of Company Profile**

- Valid Certificate of Incorporation
- Record and Regulation of Company
- Name of Foreign’s Technical Cooperator

(For more information: 067 408160, 067 408208)

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## EU's Jean-Claude Juncker says Turkey must meet conditions for visa-free travel

BRUSSELS — European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said on Sunday Turks would only be granted visa-free travel to EU countries from October if Ankara meets all the requirements, including reforming anti-terror laws.



European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker. PHOTO: REUTERS

Earlier this month, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said his government could stop helping to stem the flow of refugees and migrants to Europe if the 28-nation bloc failed to relax travel rules for Turks from October.

His comments coincided with increased tensions between Brussels and Ankara following the failed 15 July coup in Turkey. Europe has been alarmed by a crackdown since the coup and has long worried that Turkey's anti-terror-

ism laws are applied too broadly to quash dissenters and critics of President Tayyip Erdogan.

"The question of visa-free travel, which is directly connected to the agreement on handling refugees, can be implemented on 1 October only if all the conditions are met," Juncker told the European Alpbach forum, an annual conference in Austria.

"Anti-terror laws cannot be used to imprison intellectuals, scientists and journalists. That is not the fight against terror that we mean," he added.

Brussels wants Turkey to soften the legislation but Ankara has refused, saying the laws are vital to fighting Islamic State and Kurdish militants.

Turkey, meanwhile, is furious over the EU's cautious response to the failed putsch, in which 240 people were killed.

Since the coup, more than 17,000 people have been placed under formal arrest, and tens of thousands more suspended from their jobs. Turkish authorities blame the failed putsch on US-based Muslim cleric Fethullah Gulen and his followers. Gulen denies involvement and has condemned the coup attempt.—Reuters



Demonstrators take part in a protest against government to demand changes to the national pension system in Santiago, Chile, on 21 August, 2016. The placards reads: "No more AFP" (Pension Fund Administrators). PHOTO: REUTERS

## Chileans step up pension reform demands with nationwide protests

SANTIAGO — Hundreds of thousands of Chileans took to the streets throughout the country on Sunday, seeking to increase pressure on the government to throw out Chile's private pension system in favor of one that would provide better retirement benefits.

Under the current system, which was started in the 1980s during the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, six private pension

funds, known as AFPs, manage some \$160 billion in assets.

Opponents of Chile's private pension system say it forces workers to give their earnings to for-profit funds that do not ensure a dignified old age for all Chileans.

"We expect the president and her government to open a dialogue and listen to the citizens of the country, and not just

the owners of the AFPs," said Luis Mesina, spokesman for a group called No More AFPs, which organized the march.

Organisers of the protest said 350,000 participated in the capital, Santiago, alone. Local police put the number at 80,000.

Some marchers carried signs reading: "Chileans Ripped Off".

President Michelle Bachelet has offered a

plan to hike the pension contribution rate by 5 percentage points. That would cost about \$3.8 billion a year, with the state paying \$1.5 billion, the government said earlier this month.

But the protesters said they wanted the current system dismantled. Any reforms must be passed by Congress, where there is broad support for boosting pensions.—Reuters

## Mexican president Pena Nieto plagiarized law thesis, report says

MEXICO CITY — Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto plagiarized nearly a third of his 1991 undergraduate law thesis, according to a report published on Sunday by one of Mexico's leading investigative journalists.

Of the 682 paragraphs

that made up the 200-page thesis, titled 'Mexican Presidentialism and Alvaro Obregon,' 197, or 28.9 per cent, were found to be plagiarized, the report said.

The article and accompanying video were published on the website of journalist Carmen Aris-

tegui, whose investigative team revealed in 2014 that Pena Nieto's wife was in the process of acquiring a luxury home from a government contractor.

The Casa Blanca scandal, as it came to be known, dealt a major blow to the reputation of Pena Nieto,

whose poll numbers have recently hit all-time lows over perceptions he and his Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) have failed to stamp out rampant crime and corruption.

In a statement, government spokesman Eduardo Sanchez sought to play

down the accusation of plagiarism, instead calling the omissions "style errors." He added that Pena Nieto met all the requirements needed to graduate as a lawyer from Panamerican University.

In 2015, Aristegui was dismissed by her employer,

MVS Radio, after it accused her and her team of offering, without prior authorization, the broadcaster's name and funding for a new platform for investigative journalism called Mexicoleaks.

Aristegui argued her dismissal was politically motivated.—Reuters

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## 'Ben-Hur' Flops With \$11.4 Million, 'Suicide Squad' Still on Top

LOS ANGELES — "Ben-Hur" derailed spectacularly at the multiplexes this weekend, as the latest attempt to revive the chariot racing epic opened to an anemic \$11.4 million. That's a disastrous result for the \$100 million production, putting "Ben-Hur" in the ranks of the summer's biggest flops.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and Paramount co-produced the remake of Lew Wallace's novel "Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ"; the book was the basis for the 1959 blockbuster that followed Charlton Heston into the arena. Here Jack Huston took the reins as a Jewish prince who must exact his revenge after his adopted brother (Toby Kebbell) betrays him.

"This is the bomb of the summer," said Jeff Bock, a box office analyst with Exhibitor Relations. "They went big and they went home."

Although MGM put up roughly 80% of the budget for the film, its failure will be felt at Paramount. The studio has had a bad streak at the box office of late, fielding duds such as "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Out of the Shadows" and "Zoolander 2." That's not the only source of strife. Its parent company, Viacom, has been engulfed in an epic corporate struggle pitting CEO Philippe Dauman over the Redstone family, the media conglomerate's controlling stakeholders. That issue, at least, is moving towards a resolution, as Viacom announced this weekend that Dauman was stepping down from atop the company and will be replaced on an interim basis by COO Thomas Dooley.

"Ben-Hur's" backers aggressively courted



Cast member Sofia Black-D'Elia poses at the premiere for the movie 'Ben-Hur' at TCL Chinese theatre in Hollywood, California US, on 16 August. PHOTO: REUTERS

the Christian community, doing outreach to pastors and holding taste-maker screenings for religious leaders. The studios also hoped that producers Mark Burnett and Roma Downey, who earned devout points with "Son of God" and the mini-series "The Bible," would help them turn out values audiences. Instead, "Ben-Hur" trailed the \$47 million debut of "Noah" and the \$24 million launch of "Exodus: Gods and Kings," two recent Biblical epics that lacked a heavenly touch.

"Ben-Hur" drew a crowd that was 51% female and 94% over the age of 25. It also did well in the South and Southwest, areas that are more religious, but did not do as well in more secular regions of the country such as the Northeast and the West Coast.

The film, it seems, could not expand beyond its core Christian audience. Paramount Vice-Chairman Rob Moore noted that "Ben-Hur" is the latest in a string of remakes and sequels such as "Independence Day: Resurgence" and "Ghostbusters" to have failed

to draw crowds.

"It goes to a general trend," he said. "Audiences are saying, 'remakes or sequels have got to be great or original if you want us to show up.'"

The film could get a lift from overseas' crowds. "Ben-Hur" picked up \$10.7 million in roughly a third of the global markets. Sources believe it could ultimately gross \$100 million in foreign territories, which wouldn't be enough to make its investors whole, but should stop some of the bleeding.

With "Ben-Hur" faltering, "Suicide Squad" managed to snag first place for the third consecutive weekend. The story of a band of super villains netted \$20.7 million, pushing the Warner Bros. release's domestic total to \$262.3 million. Not adjusted for inflation, the film is the second-highest grossing stateside release of Will Smith's career, behind "Independence Day's" \$306.2 million haul.

"We're in great shape," said Jeff Goldstein, Warner Bros. distribution executive vice president. "We're well on our way to \$300 million domestically."

The weekend also marked the launch of "War Dogs," an off-beat comedy about weapons dealers, picked up a modest \$14.3 million for a fourth-place finish. Warner Bros. backed the project, partly as a show of appreciation for all the money director Todd Phillips minted from "The Hangover" trilogy. It cost north of \$45 million to produce, and teams Jonah Hill with Miles Teller. The duo was tapped to star in roles originally intended for Shia LaBeouf and Jesse Eisenberg. Ticket buyers were 56% male and 51% under the age of 35.

"We're proud of Todd Phillips," said Goldstein. "He made a fun, smart movie that will leg out over the next few weeks."—Reuters

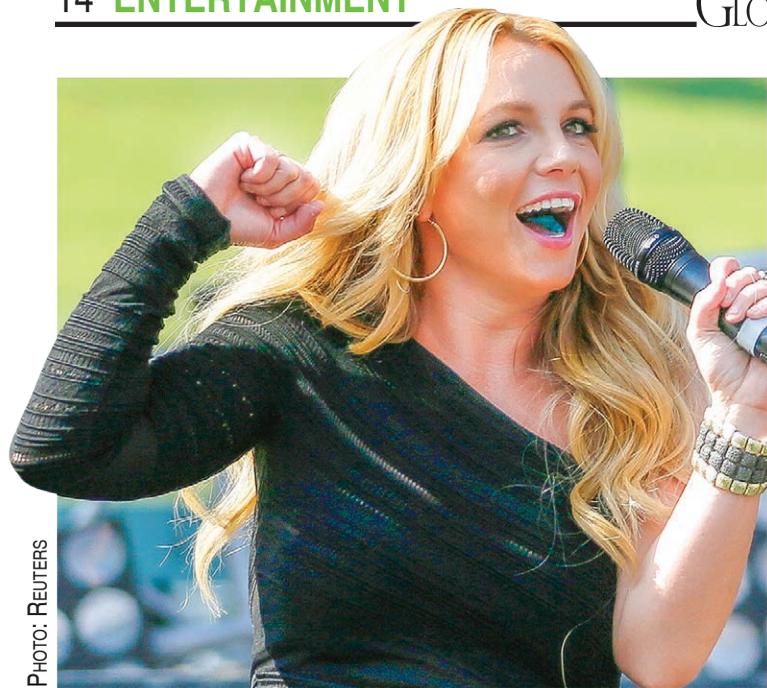


PHOTO: REUTERS

## Britney Spears' new album 'Glory' leaks online

LOS ANGELES — Pop star Britney Spears' forthcoming album "Glory" has surfaced online ahead of its August 26 release.

The record was stocked in a music store in Mexico nearly an entire week before its official release date and fans who got the copies spread them online, reported Ace Showbiz.

A fan shared on Twitter photos of "Glory" which showed collaborators on the set including Justin Tranter, Julia Michaels, Young Fyre, Sterling Fox, Oak, Phoebe Ryan, Burns, Nick Monson, Mattman & Robin, Cashmere Cat, Robopop and

more. "Glory" contains previously released songs "Private Show", "Do You Wanna Come Over?" and "Clumsy", and has the party theme.

"What You Need" is described as a blast of horns and southern flavor, "If I'm Dancing" channels Major Lazer's music while "Just Luv Me" channels Justin Bieber's latest hits.

"Coupure Electrique" reportedly features Spears, 34, singing in French throughout.

Spears' ninth studio album is expected to make its debut at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 chart next week.—PTI

## Leonardo DiCaprio, Nina Agdal involved in car accident



Leonardo DiCaprio. PHOTO: REUTERS

NEW YORK — "The Revenant" actor Leonardo DiCaprio and his model girlfriend Nina Agdal were reportedly involved in a car crash.

The 41-year-old Oscar-winning actor was in the car with Agdal when the accident happened on Saturday afternoon in East Hampton Village, New York, according to New York Post.

A Mini Cooper hit the back of their car. An ambulance was called to the scene "as a precaution," but it was just a minor fender bender.

"Leo and Nina got rear-ended, but everyone is doing fine. It was Leo's friend's car," a source said.

DiCaprio was supposed to host Hillary Clinton fundraiser scheduled for Tuesday in Los Angeles, but now he won't due to a scheduling conflict.

Justin Timberlake and wife Jessica Biel eventually step in to host the event at their own house.—PTI



Model Nina Agdal. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Priyanka Chopra hits 10 million followers on Instagram

NEW YORK — Actress Priyanka Chopra has thanked her fans after she reached the milestone of 10 million followers on Instagram.

Priyanka, who is currently shooting for the second season of "Quantico" in New York, shared her excitement on social media along with a mini clip of herself in which she is donning a glares with the digits 1 and 0 on each of its glass.

"Thankful for

our 10 million family on Instagram.. Lots of love and gratitude! #10MforPriyankaonInsta, Priyanka wrote.

The 34-year-old "Bajirao Mastani" star has become the second most followed Indian film actor on the photo-sharing site after Deepika Padukone, who has a 10.7 million followers.

Alia Bhatt holds the third spot with 8.5 million followers, whereas Sonam Kapoor and Akshay Kumar are on the fourth and fifth positions with 6.8 million and 6.3 million followers, respectively.—PTI



Actress Priyanka Chopra. PHOTO: REUTERS

# Antonio gives West Ham first Premier League win at new ground

LONDON — West Ham United safely negotiated a nervous first Premier League game at their new ground to record their opening win of the season 1-0 against Bournemouth thanks to a late header from Michail Antonio at the London Stadium on Sunday.

As the curtain was prepared to come down on the Olympics in Rio, the venue that memorably hosted the 2012 Games was again festooned with flags and banners to mark its new incarnation as a top-flight English football ground.

But the home supporters endured a nervous wait for the celebrations to begin with Slaven Bilic's side looking hesitant in

the absence of injured forwards Andre Ayew, Andy Carroll and Dimitri Payet, only breaking through in the 85<sup>th</sup> minute.

It was a finely crafted goal, though, as Antonio rose at the far post to head in from close range after a beautiful flighted cross from the left by Turkish international Gokhan Tore. The breakthrough in part stemmed from the space created by the dismissal of Bournemouth's influential midfielder Harry Arter seven minutes earlier for a second bookable offence after bringing down Cheikhou Kouyate. That seemed to unsettle the visitors, who had been well marshalled by Steve Cook in defence.

Bilic was delighted with the win, which ended any doubts about the wisdom of West Ham's move away from Upton Park.

"The lads were brilliant," he said. "It wasn't a good game but I didn't expect to play like Brazil. I didn't want to stay on zero points, even after just two games, because people start to ask questions. Is it a proper home? It is like a snowball." The margin of victory would have been more convincing had West Ham substitute Jonathan Calleri, who has just finished playing for Argentina at the Rio Olympics, not wastefully shot wide after being sent free on goal in added time.—Reuters



West Ham United's Michail Antonio scores their first goal during Premier League at London Stadium, on 21 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Murray dominates in Rio, outsider Puig arrives on big stage

RIO DE JANEIRO — Andy Murray etched his name in history books by winning an unprecedented second singles title at the Rio Games and the Briton now has his sights on the ultimate prize: overhauling Novak Djokovic to become the world no. 1.

The shock winner of the women's tournament, 22-year-old Monica Puig of Puerto Rico, holds equally lofty ambitions and she was not mincing her words in Rio: "I'm letting the world know that I've arrived."

While Puig's gutsy underdog displays captivated fans at Rio, Murray's triumph over Argentina's injury-prone Juan Martin del Potro owed much to brilliant consistency as the Wimbledon winner continued with the hottest streak of his life.

After ending Del Potro's fairytale comeback from injury in the final, Murray showed he has the qualities to displace the 12-time Grand Slam winner Djokovic, who was left in tears after his first round defeat by del

Potro. "Djokovic's consistency — I mean what I've been doing the last four months, he's been doing for the whole year. So I need to find a way to keep that going," Murray said after beating del Potro. The return of 2009 U.S. Open winner del Potro, who had sunk to 141 in the world rankings due to wrist injuries, coincided with the re-emergence of Spain's former singles champion Rafa Nadal after two months off with injury.—Reuters

## Rio 2016 Olympic Games Rio 2016 Medal standings

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1 United States	46	37	38	121
2 Great Britain	27	23	17	67
3 China	26	18	26	70
4 Russia	19	18	19	56
5 Germany	17	10	15	42
6 Japan	12	8	21	41
7 France	10	18	14	42
8 South Korea	9	3	9	21
9 Italy	8	12	8	28
10 Australia	8	11	10	29
11 Netherlands	8	7	4	19
12 Hungary	8	3	4	15
13 Brazil	7	6	6	19
14 Spain	7	4	6	17
15 Kenya	6	6	1	13
16 Jamaica	6	3	2	11
17 Croatia	5	3	2	10
18 Cuba	5	2	4	11
19 New Zealand	4	9	5	18
20 Canada	4	3	15	22
21 Uzbekistan	4	2	7	13
22 Kazakhstan	3	5	9	17
23 Colombia	3	2	3	8
24 Switzerland	3	2	2	7
25 Iran	3	1	4	8
26 Greece	3	1	2	6
27 Argentina	3	1	0	4
28 Denmark	2	6	7	15
29 Sweden	2	6	3	11
30 South Africa	2	6	2	10
31 Ukraine	2	5	4	11
32 Serbia	2	4	2	8
33 Poland	2	3	6	11
34 North Korea	2	3	2	7
35 Belgium	2	2	2	6
35 Thailand	2	2	2	6
37 Slovakia	2	2	0	4
38 Georgia	2	1	4	7
39 Azerbaijan	1	7	10	18
40 Belarus	1	4	4	9
41 Turkey	1	3	4	8
42 Armenia	1	3	0	4
43 Czech Republic	1	2	7	10
44 Ethiopia	1	2	5	8
45 Slovenia	1	2	1	4
46 Indonesia	1	2	0	3
47 Romania	1	1	3	5
48 Bahrain	1	1	0	2
48 Viet Nam	1	1	0	2
50 Chinese Taipei	1	0	2	3
51 Bahamas	1	0	1	2
51 Côte d'Ivoire	1	0	1	2
51 Independent Olympic Athletes	1	0	1	2
54 Fiji	1	0	0	1
54 Jordan	1	0	0	1
54 Kosovo	1	0	0	1
54 Puerto Rico	1	0	0	1
54 Singapore	1	0	0	1
54 Tajikistan	1	0	0	1
60 Malaysia	0	4	1	5
61 Mexico	0	3	2	5
62 Algeria	0	2	0	2
62 Ireland	0	2	0	2
64 Lithuania	0	1	3	4
65 Bulgaria	0	1	2	3
65 Venezuela	0	1	2	3
67 India	0	1	1	2
67 Mongolia	0	1	1	2
69 Burundi	0	1	0	1
69 Grenada	0	1	0	1
69 Niger	0	1	0	1
69 Philippines	0	1	0	1
69 Qatar	0	1	0	1
74 Norway	0	0	4	4
75 Egypt	0	0	3	3
75 Tunisia	0	0	3	3
77 Israel	0	0	2	2
78 Austria	0	0	1	1
78 Dominican Republic	0	0	1	1
78 Estonia	0	0	1	1
78 Finland	0	0	1	1
78 Morocco	0	0	1	1
78 Moldova	0	0	1	1
78 Nigeria	0	0	1	1
78 Portugal	0	0	1	1
78 Trinidad & Tobago	0	0	1	1
78 United Arab Emirates	0	0	1	1

**mitv Myanmar International**

(23-8-2016 07:00am ~ 24-8-2016 07:00am) MST

<p><b>Today Fresh</b></p> <p>07:03 Am News</p> <p>07:26 Am Myanmar Game Changers (Ep-IV)</p> <p>07:52 Am Talented Musicians</p> <p>08:03 Am News</p> <p>08:26 Am Myanmar Traditional Thatched Roofs: Nipa Plam</p> <p>08:41 Am My Life &amp; My Art</p> <p>08:48 Am Today Myanmar "Flood Disaster"</p> <p>09:03 Am News</p> <p>09:26 Am The Strokes of Myanmar</p> <p>09:52 Am The Pride Of Myanmar Traditional Handicraft</p>	<p><b>Prime Time</b></p> <p>07:03 Pm News</p> <p>07:26 Pm A Day Out With Sarah (Ep-3)</p> <p>07:51 Pm Famous Pagodas of Sagaing</p> <p>08:03 Pm News</p> <p>08:25 Pm A Day Life Of Kayan Padaung Tribe</p> <p>08:54 Pm Green Grocer</p> <p>(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)</p> <p>(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Monday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)</p> <p>(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)</p> <p>(For Detailed Schedule - <a href="http://www.myanmaritv.com/schedule">www.myanmaritv.com/schedule</a>)</p>	<p>10:03 Am News</p> <p>10:26 Am Hanlin, A Treasure Trove Of The Ancient Pyu City</p> <p>10:50 Am Culture Shows: Theatrical Art</p> <p>(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Monday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)</p> <p>(03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)</p>
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# More Carnival than clockwork, but Rio pulls it off

RIO DE JANEIRO — In the end, it was a tale of two Games. The yin and yang Olympics, one of stark contrasts between the feats on the field of play, and regrettable actions off it.

Staged despite a lack of funds, deep recession and social turmoil, Rio de Janeiro unfurled South America's first Olympic Games hoping against hope that the power of sport would eclipse a seemingly endless list of problems.

Arguably, it did.

Try telling one of the 80,000 Brazilians crammed into the Maracana stadium, who roared deliriously as Neymar won Brazil football gold with a crisp last-kick penalty, that this Olympics was anything but a success.

Or the residents of a notorious Rio slum who watched one of their own win Brazil's first gold, in the judo arena.

Or try telling any one of the nine athletes who clinched their country's first Olympic golds, or Team GB who finished second in the medal table with their best performance in more than a century with golds across an unrivalled 15 sports.

Some felt Rio failed to present the five-star experience tourists and visitors had enjoyed at London 2012, but the Games proved the city could deliver a spectacle against the odds.

"Nothing big wrong went wrong, right?" was a verdict repeated time and time again by smiling locals.

A swampy green diving pool and a bullet whizzing into the equestrian centre were of no



Performers take part in the closing ceremony 2016 Rio Olympics Closing Ceremony at Maracana in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 21 August 2016.

PHOTO: REUTERS

consequence to most locals.

Rio 2016 had struggled with transportation, security, empty stands and dwindling funds as Brazil was gripped by its worst economic downturn since the 1930s.

For weeks, they suffered blow after blow. They were accused of cutting corners and the Australians threatened not to move into the athletes' village unless urgent improvements were made.

Ryan Lochte and the other three US swimmers hijacked

media coverage for the second half of the Games by lying about being robbed at gunpoint to cover up for a drunken night.

And then there was the arrest of 71-year-old International Olympic Committee (IOC) member Pat Hickey in a dawn raid, as part of a Brazilian police investigation into ticket touting.

But for the thousands of visitors and locals who embraced the Games, flowing each morning over an elevated walkway into the Olympic Park, this had been a resounding success.

"Even with all our problems we pulled off a good Olympics. Nothing too bad happened and I'd say it was better than expected," said Nivea Araujo, a Rio resident attending the closing ceremony.

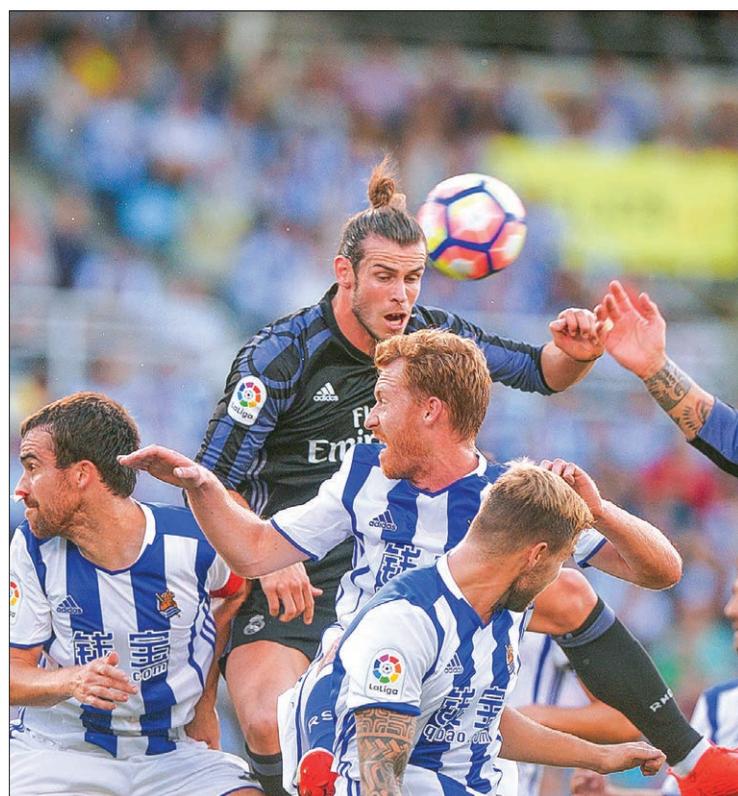
Certainly there were many highs.

In the pool, Michael Phelps swam into retirement, the US great adding five golds to a tally that now stands at 23, among a total of 28 medals. He bowed out with one last 4x100m relay victory that brought tears

to his eyes.

Phelps savored his 200m butterfly gold, winning back the title he had lost to South African Chad Le Clos in London, as well as victory in the 200m individual medley which made him the first swimmer to win the same event at four successive Games.

But he was also beatable, as Singapore's Joseph Schooling showed in touching out the legend who had inspired him with a historic victory in the 100m butterfly. Phelps finished in a three-way tie for silver.—Reuters



Real Real Madrid's Gareth Bale heads the ball during Spanish Liga Santander at Anoeta, San Sebastian, Spain, on 21 August 2016.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Bale helps Real to winning start, Atletico held

BARCELONA — Gareth Bale scored a double in a commanding 3-0 win for Real Madrid in their La Liga opener at Real Sociedad on Sunday, building on his stunning displays for Wales at Euro 2016.

Bale opened the scoring with a powerful header in the second minute and rounded off the win four minutes into added time with a simple finish after new arrival Marco Asensio had scored his first league goal for Real in the 40<sup>th</sup> with a sumptuous lob.

Elsewhere, title rivals Atletico Madrid were denied a win with virtually the last kick of the game and had to settle for a 1-1 draw at home to promoted Alaves.

The game looked to be heading for a goalless draw until the home side were awarded a penalty in injury time for a handball, allowing Kevin Gameiro to mark his Atletico debut by converting from the spot in the 93<sup>rd</sup> minute.

Diego Simeone's side were dealt a nasty late surprise though when Manu Garcia let fly from outside the area to salvage a point for the Basque side, the 2001 UEFA Cup runners-up who were playing their first top flight game in 13 years.

Earlier on Sunday, Sporting Gijon beat Athletic Bilbao 2-1 thanks to quick fire goals from Duje Cop and Victor Rodriguez at the start of the second half, with Borja Viguera scoring late for the visitors.

Midway through the first half referee Carlos Clos Gomez halted the game for a minute after Athletic striker Inaki Williams, a Spain under-21 international born in Spain to a Ghanaian father and Liberian mother, was subjected to racist chanting from the home supporters.

Real are third in the table with three points, behind Barcelona and Sevilla on goal differ-

ence, while Atletico are seventh.

After title rivals Barcelona had laid down a marker with a ruthless 6-2 win at home to Real Betis on Saturday, the pressure was on Real to make a strong start.

They were without first choice forwards Cristiano Ronaldo and Karim Benzema, so Bale was accompanied by Alvaro Morata and Asensio instead.

The Wales international had nodded in the only goal in this fixture last season late in the second half but needed little more than 60 seconds to strike this time, meeting Dani Carvajal's whipped cross from the right to power the ball into the top near corner.

"It's important to get off to a winning start especially at a ground as difficult as this one. This was the best way to start the season," Zidane told reporters.—Reuters