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DON'T RUSH IT

Military to support State Counsellor Bill if found constitutional

IF the State Counsellor Bill is in line with the constitution, the military representatives will support it, said Brig-Gen Maung Maung, a military representative in the Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House), yesterday.

The State Counsellor Bill would create the post of the State Counsellor for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in the new cabinet. It was passed by Amyotha Hluttaw with no amendments by a vote of 137 to 68 and was advanced to the Lower House yesterday.

"We need enough time to discuss some provisions in the bill so that it will achieve constitutional compliance," said Brig-Gen Maung Maung, who is also a member of the Pyithu Hluttaw Bill Committee.

"If the bill is made into law within a short time, it would be questionable as to whether it is in line with democratic norms and transparency," said Brig-Gen Maung Maung.

Brig-Gen Maung Maung also pointed out that the term 'Democratic Federal Union', which the bill uses to describe the country, is not stated in the 2008 constitution. He also called for replacing the word 'State' in the title of the State Counsellor Bill with the one that is more appropriate, such as 'President'. He also demanded the placement of a clear demarcation between the legislative branch and executive branch in the Bill.

"The bill was drawn up with the aim of ensuring a multi-party



Daw Aung San Suu Kyi smiles with army members during the handover ceremony of Presidency in Nay Pyi Taw on 30 March. PHOTO: REUTERS

democratic system, a market economic system, a federal Union, peace and development in the Union," said U Tun Tun Hein, chairman of the Pyithu Hluttaw Bill Committee in his presentation of the committee's report, calling for parliamentary approval of the bill.

However, U Stephen, secretary of the Bill Committee, said the Bill needs to be reviewed to ensure its provisions conform to the constitution.

The bill will be debated in the Pyithu Hluttaw today.

The bill includes five chapters and eight articles. The term of the office for the State Counsellor is the same as that of the president, who will be in office throughout the duration of the term of current second parliament, according to the bill.

The bill is aimed at helping create a multi-party democracy in Myanmar and building a peaceful, modern and developed nation with a market-oriented economic system and establishing a democratic, free federal Union.—GNLM

Rush before power transfer pushes Myanmar FDI to record \$9 bln

FOREIGN direct investment (FDI) in Myanmar in the fiscal year ending in March grew to nearly \$9 billion, a government official said on Monday, after a rush of last-minute approvals before the handover of power to (Daw) Aung San Suu Kyi's administration.

The figure, a record high, rose by about \$1 billion compared

with the previous fiscal year, fuelled by investment in the energy, manufacturing and telecoms sectors, San Myint, an official at the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, told *Reuters*.

The investment reflects growing, if still cautious, interest in one of Asia's last remaining untapped

markets, which has offered tax breaks and export tariff perks to create urgently jobs for its 51.5 million people.

San Myint said FDI rose sharply after a body approving projects signed off on several large deals before (Daw) Suu Kyi's government took power in April, following an election win last year by her Na-

tional League for Democracy.

"(Projects) pending a long time in the process due to lack of necessary information were expedited before the end of the fiscal year," said San Myint.

Myanmar received \$4.1 billion in FDI in 2013/2014 and that number doubled by the end of last fiscal year as foreign firms

won oil and gas concessions and international hotel chains started moving in.

Singapore tops the list of foreign investors, the official said, followed by China, Hong Kong and the Netherlands. He said a detailed breakdown was not available as it was still being calculated.

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Pyidaungsu

President proposes transfer of two of Daw Suu Kyi's ministries

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw submitted a proposal to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw yesterday to transfer two of the four ministerial portfolios held by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

The president nominated U Myo Thein Gyi, who is currently the director-general of the Department of Higher Education, as Union Minister of Education and U Pe Zin Tun, who is currently the permanent secretary of Ministry of Electric Power and Energy, as Union Minister for Electric Power and Energy.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's other two portfolios—Union Minister for Foreign Affairs and

Union Minister at the President's Office—will remain unchanged.

U Htin Kyaw also sought approval for the appointment of U Tun Tun Oo as Union Attorney General and U Maw Than, a well-known economist, as the Union Auditor General.

U Tun Tun Oo was Deputy Attorney General under the previous government, while U Maw Than is a retired rector of the Institute of Economics.

Union Parliament Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than invited MPs to discuss the president's proposals today if they wish to object to the nominations. —GNLM



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

More steps to be taken for release of political prisoners, detained students



Former prisoners demand the release of political prisoners, detained students. PHOTO: KYAW SWA MYINT FACEBOOK

MORE efforts will be made to secure the release of political prisoners and detained students, announced the Former Political Prisoners Association yesterday. "We will make wide strides in our commitment to getting all political prisoners and detained students released unconditionally," said U Tun Kyi, the secretary of the Association. "The unconditional release of all political prisoners is a step toward ensuring national reconciliation," added the secretary.

According to the society, around 100 political prisoners still remain behind bars, while about

420 political activists and students are still on trial. "We will not put pressure on the new government to release political prisoners as the government already said the issue is a top priority, and it is seeking avenues for their release," said U Tin Maung Oo, a member of the Association. "I believe the new government will bring good news of great joy for all the people soon," he added. About 1,500 political prisoners were released across the country during the period from 2011 to 2015 through amnesties granted by the former government. —Min Thit

Myanmar delegation attends 29th session of ICC general meeting

A two-member delegation led by Chairman U Win Mra of Myanmar National Human Rights Commission attended the 29th session of General Meeting of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for Promotion and Protection of Human Rights-ICC in Geneva, Switzerland from 21 to 23 March.

During its presence in Geneva, the Myanmar delegation held talks with officials from Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions, and attended the launch of publication of legal guidelines against torture.

Myanmar National Human Rights Commission was graded with a 'B' status in the ICC formed with 72 A-status, 29 B-status and 10 C-status institutions. During the 29th session, the ICC was renamed as Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions-GANHRI. — Myanmar News Agency

Union Chief Justice attends 4th ASEAN Chief Justices' Meeting in Viet Nam

UNION CHIEF Justice U Tun Tun Oo attended the fourth ASEAN Chief Justices' Meeting held in Ho Chi Minh City of Vietnam on 1 April.

The meeting aimed at strengthening judicial cooperation among the courts of ASEAN nations has been held annually since 2013.

With the release of a joint statement at the end of the event, the meeting agreed to rename the ASEAN Chief Justices' Meeting as the Council of ASEAN Chief Judges, to turn the council into an independent entity in accordance with the Charter of ASEAN and to produce a report on future work of the council following the formation of a study team comprising delegates from countries in the region.

The delegates also agreed to inform ASEAN of the council and to work on realization of the goals of the previous meetings. — Myanmar News Agency

Pavilions permitted to pump water from Mandalay moat



Thingyan revellers enjoy water festival in Mandalay last year. PHOTO: TIN MAUNG (MANDALAY)

A TOTAL of 150 water pumps, 75 each for the pavilions set up at the west and north sides of the Mandalay Palace moat, will be allowed during 2016 Maha Thingyan Festival, announced the Mandalay City Development Committee.

The decision allowing the use of the moat came after a meeting of the Mandalay Region government on 1 April.

According to the results of the meeting, those who want to

use water pumps will have to pay a fee of K200,000 to the MCDC.

"We decided to allow the pavilions to pump water out of the moat at the festival as there will be no impact on water usage by pumping water out of the moat," said an official from the MCDC.

However, those who use the water pumps must follow instructions issued by the MCDC, which bans the use of gas-powered water pumps, nozzles and fire hydrants.

Around 30 million gallons of water are expected to be used during the Myanmar New year festival, and authorities hope to reduce water usage to nearly half the usage levels in previous years by limiting water-throwing hours, added the official.

Water-throwing hours have been set from 8am to 12pm and from 3pm to 6pm. The use of unpermitted water pumps will result in fines of K300,000. —Aung Thant Khaing

Correction

Please read "Myanmar needs to invest US\$ 60 billion into its transportation sector" and "Transport investments need to rise from the 1% of GDP seen over recent years to the equivalent of 3% to 4% of GDP" in the story "New govt should invest more in transportation sector: ADB" on front page of the 2nd April 2016. —Ed

Union Information Minister meets Japanese Ambassador

UNION Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint received Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Tateshi Higuchi at his office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they held discussions on matters related to further cooperation in development of media sector in Myanmar.

Also present at the call were Permanent Secretary U Tint Swe and officials.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint hold talk with Japanese Ambassador Mr. Tateshi Higuchi. PHOTO: MNA

Landmines still present severe risks to Myanmar

MYANMAR is still designated as one of 'the highest mine risk areas' in the world, according to the 11th annual International Day for Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action in Yangon yesterday.

UNICEF Myanmar's Deputy Representative Ms Shalini Bahuguna called on all parties to stop the use of landmines and explosive weapons and to protect schools, health facilities and other places used by children from any attacks.

She said the new chapter in

Myanmar's history is an opportunity to act immediately to protect innocent lives, adding that Myanmar should join the 162 countries that have signed or ratified the International Mine Ban Treaty.

The National League for Democracy will ensure that words are turned into actions, said U Tin Oo, the NLD's patron, in his address, in which he denounced the use of landmines.

The United Nations launched the Myanmar Portfolio for Mine Action Projects in 2016 with a total funding appeal

of US\$5.8 million, said sources within the UN, adding that many challenges remain, and the support being provided is clearly insufficient, with only 26 per cent of the required resources being secured to date.

According to UNICEF and its partners, 21 casualties have been documented in the first three months of 2016, and 59 casualties were documented from landmines and explosive remnants of wars, causing 17 deaths and severe injuries to 42 people in 2015.—*Myat Sandi Thin Zaw*

Commerce minister gives motivational speech to staff

UNION Minister for Commerce Dr Than Myint said staff are essential to the success of the implementation of government policies in meeting with his staff at the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

In his address, the Union minister highlighted the importance of the role of the ministry in ensuring a balance in consumers' and producers' interests, saying improving the socio-economic lives of the people can be

brought about by fair trade-offs between producers and consumers.

Also present were the permanent secretary of the ministry, directors-general and other officials.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Tea picker shortage likely to impact output in Shan State

A shortage of workers triggered by fighting in Shan State (North) is likely to cause tea output in the region, said a tea plantation owner.

"Tea picking needs to be carried out during its harvest time. It will be useless if picked late," said Sai Aik Paung, adding that tea pickers from plain region did not dare to come here due to clashes.

U Maung Maung, tea broker from Kyaukse, predicted that tea plantation owners could face losses due to shortage of tea pickers at the harvest time.

It has raised worries among tea plantation owners as tea pickers from villages in Mandalay, Magwe and Sagaing Regions have not arrived yet.—*Aung Thant Khaing*



Tea leaves plantation in Shan State.

Health minister meets departmental staff

UNION Minister for Health Dr Myint Htway met with staff from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Sports and Physical Education Department separately in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

In his address to the FDA, the Union minister called for public awareness campaigns to ensure success in the administration's activities and for cooperation to be set up between the department and relevant min-

istries while taking measures against irregularities at school food stalls.

In meeting with staff of the Sports and Physical Education Department, the minister stressed the need to ensure the fitness of the entire people through community-based and school-based education programmes. He also called for sports lessons to be included in school curricula.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Union Minister for Health Dr Myint Htway holds talk with officials from FDA and the Sports and Physical Education Department. PHOTO: MNA

State-run dailies to alternate during Thingyan

DAILY newspapers published by the News and Periodicals Enterprises under the Ministry of Information will be published on an alternating basis throughout the Thingyan holiday.

The publication of Myanmar Alinn will continue from 11 to 15 April, while The Mirror and The Global New Light of Myanmar will stop during that time and resume publication on 16 April. Myanmar Al-

inn will not be published from 16 to 20 April.

The sub-printing house in Mandalay will halt its work on 13, 16 and 20 April, and the sub-printing house in Mawlamyine will take a holiday on 17 April.

Advertisements will continue to be accepted during the alternating holidays. All of the state-run dailies are set to resume their regular publications on 21 April.—*GNLM*

LOCAL Business



Myanmar Kyat. PHOTO: MOORE ZACK

Central Bank manoeuvres rise in kyat value

THE value of the Myanmar kyat has risen due to the efforts of the Central Bank of Myanmar, according to Xinhua News Agency.

The kyat value rose gradually starting from the beginning of this year following a year of declining value compared to the US dollar, according to local money changers.

On 2 April, US\$1 was valued at K1,191, down from around K1,300 in 2015.

The Central Bank has been

selling and purchasing US dollars depending on the market in order to keep the foreign exchange rate stable. The bank sold US dollars while they were in high demand at money changer markets and purchased dollars without limit while the supply was high.

The Central Bank plays a major role in raising the value of the kyat, according to economists.

"The local currency value has risen this year. The rising

number of investors who are interested in the Yangon Stock Exchange helped raise the value of the kyat. There are also cases of US dollars being sold at lower prices than the actual exchange rate in the illegal money exchange market," said U Mya Than, chairman of the Myanmar Oriental Bank (MOB).

The Central Bank of Myanmar monitors the illegal money exchange market, said U Than Lwin, a senior advisor for Kanbawza Bank.—PPN/Union Daily

Regulations on mobile financial services available at CBM website

THE unofficial translation of regulations on mobile financial services is available at www.cbm.gov.mm, the official website of the Central Bank of Myanmar.

The Central Bank of Myanmar

released regulations on mobile financial services on 30 March with the aim of helping banks, financial institutions and mobile network operators ensure effective service.—Myanmar News Agency

Japanese buyers eye Myanmar avocados and mangosteens

DEMAND for Myanmar avocados, mangosteens and seintalone mangoes is rising among Japanese buyers, according to businessmen in Loikaw, Kayah State.

"At the moment, there is no company that exports avocados. Japanese companies show high interest in mangosteens and avocados. They said farmers should extend their cultivation in order to export more. They will come back when the fruits are mature. We expect the companies to share their growing methods," said farmer U Moe

Kaung.

There are 21 varieties of avocado in Myanmar, and they are mainly grown in southern Shan State and Kayah State. Seintalone mangoes are grown in Yatsauk, Intaw, Taunggyi, Nyaungshwe, Hopon-Sisine and Pindaya. Mangosteens are mainly grown in Mawlamyine, Kyaikto and Mondon in Mon State.

Farmers in these areas say they will try to penetrate the export market by organizing growers' associations for avocados and mangosteens.—200

Eel supply low, prices high

THE local price of eels is on the rise, while eel exports are in a slump due to low eel populations this year.

The price of eels, including long-finned eels, rose to K5,000 per viss (1.63 kilos) this year, up from K1,4000 last year. But exports have declined by 40 per cent, said U Ba Thaw, vice president of the Central Executive Committee

under the Myanmar Fishery Federation. The rise in prices has been attributed to low populations of farmed eels this year.

"There have been deaths of eels and long-finned eels due to harsh temperatures. That's the reason why the supply has declined," said an eel breeder.

Local consumers prefer eels to long-finned eels.—200



A vendor sells fresh eels and fish at a market in Kalaw, southern Shan State. PHOTO: JESSICA MUDDITT

Malaysian distributors to boost investments in Myanmar fisheries

MALAYSIAN companies plan to expand their investments in Myanmar's fisheries sector, according to The Star, a Malaysian news agency.

Texchem Resources Bhd (TRB) was among the first Malaysian companies to invest in Myanmar's fisheries sector.

TRB distributed seafood in partnership with the Kokubu Group Corporation. The company now plans to expand its distribution of Myanmar crabs, lobsters and clams in Malaysia and throughout ASEAN.

Exports of Myanmar fish-

ery products declined over the last few years as supply dwindled. Experts have encouraged Myanmar fishers to catch and breed aquatic animals in natural, sustainable ways and to breed rather than catch whenever possible.—PPN/Union Daily

Rush before power transfer pushes Myanmar FDI to record \$9 bln

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The Asian Development Bank forecast last week Myanmar's economic growth would recover to 8.4 per cent in the fiscal year ending March 2017, partly thanks to a pick up in foreign investment.

"Foreign direct investment is expected to get a lift from the successful political transition following national elections in November 2015, with investment

flowing into newly established special economic zones and rapidly expanding transport, telecommunications, and energy sectors," the bank said.

Growth in Myanmar's investment follows reforms launched in 2012 by former president Thein Sein, a former general who enlisted help from technocrats and global financial institutions to overhaul an economy that wilted under sanctions and inept poli-

cymaking during five decades of military rule.

The lifting of most Western embargoes has allowed foreign access to sectors from banking, property and tourism to factories, infrastructure, airports and agribusiness.

The \$9 billion in FDI is some 27 times the \$329.6 million received in 2009/2010, the year before the military ceded power.—Reuters

US, Philippines begin military exercises as maritime tension simmers

MANILAR — About 8,000 US and Filipino troops began annual military exercises on Monday against a backdrop of tension over China's greater assertiveness in the South China Sea though a Philippine commander played that down as the reason for the drills.

Over the next two weeks, the allies will test their command-and-control, communications, logistics and mobility procedures to address humanitarian and maritime security, Philippine defence officials said.

Their troops will also simulate retaking an oil-and-gas platform and practice an amphibious landing on a Philippine beach.

"The Balikatan exercise is designed not to address a particular concern but the whole lump in the spectrum of warfare," Vice Admiral Alexander Lopez, the Philippine military's exercise director, told a news conference.

"China is not part of the idea."

Ash Carter, will be the first US defence secretary to observe the exercises when he arrives next week,



Soldiers carry a Philippine and US flags during the exit of colours, as part of the opening ceremony of the 2016 Balikatan military exercises at the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) headquarters in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon city, metro Manila on 4 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

underscoring the significance of the war games for both countries.

China's more assertive pursuit of its claims in the South China Sea over the past year or so has included land reclamation and the

construction of air and port facilities on some isles and reefs.

The United States has conducted what it calls "freedom of navigation" patrols in the area, sailing near disputed islands con-

trolled by China to underscore its right to navigate the seas.

The patrols have drawn sharp rebukes from China but despite that, US officials have made clear the United States would

continue to challenge what it considers China's unfounded maritime claims.

China claims almost the entire South China Sea, believed to have huge deposits of oil and gas. Brunei, Malaysia, the Philip-

pines, Taiwan and Viet Nam also have claims to parts of the waters, through which about \$5 trillion in trade is shipped every year.

The Philippines has sought international arbitration on the dispute and a decision is expected late this month or in early May. China has declined to take part in the case.

Lieutenant-General John Toolan, commander of US Marine forces in the Pacific, told the news conference it was prudent to plan for any situation that could occur and to practice how the two allies would likely respond.

Asked if that included a security crisis in the South China Sea, Toolan said: "It does, absolutely."

Toolan said US forces would for the first time in the Philippine exercises fire a long-range truck-mounted multiple-rocket launcher known as the high mobility artillery rocket system (HIMARS). A small contingent of Australian troops will join the exercises while Viet Nam and Japan have sent officers to observe.—Reuters

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As Indonesian forests burn, new anti-fire agency feels heat

JAKARTA — As forest fires raged like never before across Indonesia last year, President Joko Widodo announced he was setting up a special agency to tackle the annual scourge that shrouds parts of Southeast Asia in choking haze.

But, with this season's fires already blazing, the Peatlands Restoration Agency has barely got off the ground and has a huge task ahead of it.

Nazir Foead, who was appointed to lead the body, told Reuters it needed at least \$1 billion in funding over five years, but that the government was unlikely to allocate a budget for another two months.

Foead, an environmental expert who was formerly the World Wildlife Fund's conservation director in Indonesia, so far has just a handful of staff and concedes the agency won't have the clout to force plantation companies to toe the line in helping restore dried-out peatland.

The fires are often started by palm oil planta-

tion and paper firms or by smallholders who use slash-and-burn practices to clear land cheaply. Peaty soil, found in many parts of Indonesia, is particularly flammable when dry, often causing fires to spread beyond their intended areas.

"The authority to issue or freeze licenses lies with the environment ministry and local governments, not with this agency," Foead said, referring to permits needed to operate the plantations that dominate swathes of the nation's landscape. Much of Southeast Asia was blanketed in acrid haze for several months last year and, as pollution levels spiked, thousands of people were afflicted by respiratory illnesses, while tourism, schools and flights were disrupted.

The agency's goal is to prevent fires by "re-wetting" 2 million hectares (5 million acres) of drained and damaged peatland — roughly the size of Israel — with at least 30 per cent of that carried out this year. The process involves rais-

ing water levels using dams and irrigation channels.

Nearly half the fires during 2015's prolonged dry season were on peaty soil. But the agency's budget has not been decided yet, and it has been operating since it started in January using money from around \$80 million pledged by donors.

Presidential Chief of Staff Teten Masduki said the agency would also have access to funds already allocated to the environment ministry as a stopgap until its budget was finalised.

"The agency is just in the institution building and staffing stage," Masduki said, adding the government remained optimistic the body would achieve its targets this year.

As the agency looks to find its feet, fires are already flaring in some areas. Riau province on Sumatra island last month declared a state of emergency, with over 1,000 people deployed to manage the crisis.

Chief Security Minister Luhut Pandjaitan said the

government would declare emergencies in affected areas earlier this year to ensure firefighting resources were deployed quickly.

"Last year we didn't declare emergency until September, when the fires were already widely spread, that was our mistake," he said last month.

President Widodo, who last year cut short a visit to the United States because of the disaster, has threatened to sack officials if they fail to contain blazes.

Foead and his fledgling agency want plantation companies to restore peatlands within their concessions. "There is no other choice for companies but to restore or they will risk huge penalties," he said. Although he added that the agency would have no legal authority to enforce this.

NGO sources said the agency would likely face challenges in convincing companies and communities, used to slash-and-burn clearing, to take responsibility for damaged land.—Reuters

China debt-to-equity swap could 'resolve' \$154 billion in potential bad debt

BEIJING — China's first batch of debt-to-equity swaps is expected to "resolve" 1 trillion yuan (109 billion pounds) in potential bad banking debt in three years or less, media group Caixin reported on Monday, citing an unnamed policy banking source.

In a cover story in its weekly magazine, Caixin cited a single "high-level" source at China Development Bank [CHDB.UL], a policy bank under the direct supervision of the State Council, regarding the scope of the programme without stating how the person had knowledge of the plans.

Calls to China Development Bank were not answered. Monday was a state holiday in China.

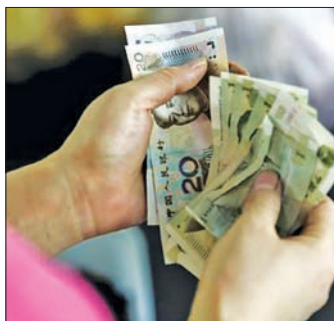
Last month, people with direct knowledge of the policy told Reuters that China's central bank is drawing up regulations to al-

low commercial lenders to swap non-performing loans of companies for stakes in those firms.

The programme could reduce commercial banks' non-performing loans, which surged to 1.27 trillion yuan at the end of 2015, although analysts have suggested it will reduce banks' capacity for new lending to stronger borrowers. Also, many believe that moves to ease bad loan burdens at China's big banks may be of only marginal help in the near term.

Swapping debt into equity in a troubled borrower might get bad loans off lenders' books, but as China Construction Bank (601939.SS)(0939.HK) Chairman Wang Hongzhang warned last month, there was a danger of simply converting "bad debt into bad equity".

The Caixin report, citing several unnamed bankers, said Chi-



A customer counts Chinese Yuan notes at a market in Beijing, in August 2015.

PHOTO: REUTERS

na Development Bank, Bank of China (601988.SS)(3988.HK), Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (601398.SS)(1398.HK), China Merchants Bank (600036.SS) and others had been selected for trial moves in programme's first round of swaps.—Reuters

Japanese tourists stranded after landslides in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD — A group of 16 Japanese tourists are marooned in northern Pakistan in the wake of landslides caused by heavy rains, and efforts are under way to clear the roads to bring them back to Islamabad, a tourist operator said on Monday.

Ejaz Sohail, tour manager at Islamabad-based Saiyah that organizes sightseeing, trekking and mountain-climbing excursions for

foreigners, told Kyodo News that a bus carrying the Japanese is stuck at Pattan in the Kohistan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. They were part of tour involving 45 Japanese tourists organized by Saiyah with Tokyo-based Saiyu Travel Co. to the mountainous region of Gilgit and Baltistan.

The main group is staying in Hunza. There were no reports of any injuries. The nearly 700-kilo-

metre-long Korakoram Highway linking Pakistan with China was blocked at many places due to heavy rains and flash floods during last two days in northern and northwestern Pakistan.

The Frontier Works Organisation, which is responsible for the maintenance of Korakoram Highway, is trying to clear the road, district administration officials said.—Kyodo News

Cambodian ambassador to S Korea detained over corruption allegations

PHNOM PENH — Cambodia's ambassador to South Korea was detained on Monday for questioning over allegations of corruption, a senior official from Cambodia's anti-graft body said.

Om Yin Tieng, president of the Anti-Corruption Unit, said Suth Dina was arrested on Monday morning in Phnom Penh and is being detained for questioning on at his office.

He said the arrest was made following a number of lawsuits filed against him, from both Cambodia and South Korea.

Suth Dina arrived in Cambodia on Sunday after he was called in by the foreign ministry.—Kyodo News

Australian PM indicates timeline for submarine decision

SYDNEY — Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull indicated Sunday that his government is close to reaching a decision on who will build Australia's next fleet of submarines.

Tenders have been submitted by Japan, Germany and France for the contract to build 12 new submarines to replace the current Collins-class fleet.

In an interview with Sky News, Turnbull said the competitive evaluation process is nearing its end. "That process is coming to a close and...the government

will make a decision shortly."

When that will be, however, depends on whether Australia will have a double dissolution election on 2 July. The double dissolution election, which will see both houses of parliament dissolved, will be called if two government bills fail to make it through the senate for a second or third time respectively.

A special sitting of parliament on 18 April will bring the senate back to debate the bills.

Comments Turnbull made to Sky News indicate the decision

on who will receive the submarine contract will be made after the election if a double dissolution is called.

"Whether it is before the election, obviously, depends on the timing of the election," he said. Japan's Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. is battling for the submarine contract against Germany's ThyssenKrupp AG and French defence firm DCNS.

An announcement on a possible double dissolution election is expected by 11 May.—Kyodo News



Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

U-tapao airport in eastern Thailand set to serve more tour flights

BANGKOK — U-tapao international airport in eastern Thailand is expected to accommodate a highly increased number of tourists from China and elsewhere.

U-tapao airport director Worapol Tongpreecha said on Monday the navy-run airport is currently capable of accommodating some 800,000 passengers

a year, given a new terminal scheduled to open next month.

That compared to only about 170,000 passengers who flew in and out of Thailand via U-tapao international airport throughout last year.

Not only regular flights but chartered flights from Chinese mainland and China's Hong Kong can use the renovated, ex-

panded airport, according to the airport director.

U-tapao is only about 40 kilometres south of Pattaya, a major seaside tourist destination to which incoming passengers can be shuttled by bus or car from the airport.

It currently accommodates an average of 15 flights daily though it has the improved ca-

capacity to serve as many as 300 flights daily, he said.

U-tapao airport, earlier used as a military air base, was primarily designed to alleviate the congested uses of major international airports in Bangkok's outskirts, namely Suvarnabhumi airport and Don Muang airport, particularly during high tourist season.—Xinhua

India's ruling party in tight fight in border state as voting begins

NEW DELHI — India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party will fall short of a majority in a border state after a tense anti-immigrant campaign, an opinion poll showed as voters on Monday trickled into polling booths in the first phase of a five-state election.

A disappointing showing in northeastern Assam, the only state where the ruling party has a chance to win power, will be a further blow to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambition to consolidate strength in parliament and push reforms.

Last year, Modi lost an election in the big northern heartland state of Bihar to a united opposition that has blocked his moves to reform state taxes and land transfers and deliver on his promise of rapid growth and jobs.

The BJP is forecast to win 55 seats in the 126-member Assam state assembly, the poll by India TV-CVoter showed, more than its rival Congress, but not enough to win power.

The party ran a fierce campaign to disenfranchise millions of Muslim immigrants from neighbouring Bangladesh, long an emotive issue with Assam's Hindus who say they have taken away jobs and enjoy govern-

ment welfare programmes.

Assam is one of the seven states in India's northeast that border Bangladesh, Bhutan, China and Myanmar, and the BJP's political rivals say it is trying to whip up divisive politics in the volatile region.

"People don't want politics of confrontation," said Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi, a leader of the Congress party. "How can there be any development if there is this kind of atmosphere?"

Critics have long accused the BJP of a bias against minority Muslims and of trying to push a partisan agenda to undermine India's secular constitution. The BJP says it is opposed to appeasement of any community.

The elections are also being held in the eastern state of West Bengal, and in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry in the south. The BJP trails in these areas dominated by regional parties, although its vote share is expected to rise in West Bengal, where party workers have toiled in villages for years.

By noon, a third of voters in Assam and nearly 45 percent in West Bengal had cast their vote, the election commission said.—Reuters

Migrants sent back from Greece arrive in Turkey under EU deal



Frontex officers (R) guide migrants boarding a Turkish-flagged passenger boat to be returned to Turkey, on the Greek island of Lesbos, on 4 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

DIKILI — Migrants sent back from the Greek island of Lesbos began arriving in Turkey on Monday under a disputed European Union scheme aimed at closing the main route by which a million people poured across the Aegean Sea to Greece in the last year.

Under a deal denounced by refugee agencies and human rights campaigners, Ankara will take back all migrants and refugees who enter Greece illegally, including Syrians, in return for the EU taking in thousands of Syrian refugees directly from Turkey and rewarding it with more money, early visa-free travel and progress in its EU membership negotiations.

Two Turkish-flagged passenger boats carrying 131 migrants arrived in the Turkish town of Dikili early on Monday, accompanied by two Turkish

coast guard vessels with a police helicopter buzzing overhead, a Reuters witness said.

A coastguard official on the Greek island of Chios told Reuters that 66 people, most of them Afghans, were also sent to Turkey on a third boat early on Monday.

The aim of the EU-Turkey deal is to discourage migrants from perilous crossings, often in small boats and dinghies, and to break the business model of human smugglers who have fuelled Europe's biggest migration wave since World War II.

A few hours after the first boat of returnees set sail from Lesbos, Greek coast guard patrol vessels rescued at least two dinghies carrying more than 50 migrants and refugees, including children and a woman in a wheelchair, trying to reach the island.

"We are just going to try our

chance. It is for our destiny. We are dead anyway," said Firaz, 31, a Syrian Kurd from the province of Hasakah who was travelling with his cousin.

Asked if he was aware that the Greeks were sending people back, he said: "I heard maybe Iranians, Afghans. I didn't hear they were sending back Syrians to Turkey... At least I did what I could. I'm alive. That's it."

A group of 47 mainly Pakistani men were also intercepted by the Turkish coast guard on Monday and taken to a holding centre next to Dikili's port, a Reuters witness said.

Under the pact, the EU will resettle thousands of legal Syrian refugees directly from Turkey - one for each Syrian returned from the Greek islands. German police said the first Syrian refugees arrived by plane on Monday under the deal.—*Reuters*

Landmines still kill at least 10 people every day around world: UN official

GENEVA — Landmines kill at least 10 people every day around the world and 40 per cent of these casualties are children, a UN official has said.

Bruno Donat, chief of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) Geneva office, made the remarks ahead of the 11th International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action.

The UN official added that in 2015, some 64 square km of land were cleared, which is equivalent to 16,000 football pitches.

The United Nations' Inter-

national Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action is observed on 4 April each year, the aim of which is to raise awareness about landmines and progress toward their eradication.

This year's theme for the commemoration of the day is "Mine action is humanitarian action."

Mine action saves lives and ensures that landmines and explosive hazards in war-torn areas are found and destroyed, making possible the delivery of humanitarian assistance so that people and supplies reach those most in

need, Donat explained.

In Geneva, UNMAS is marking the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action with an exhibition showcasing a selection of photos and art pieces that illustrate the pillars of mine action, such as clearance, stockpile destruction, mine risk education, victim assistance and advocacy.

According to the UN official, UNMAS will also host seven live interactive sessions with country programmes from Afghanistan, Iraq, Mali, Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan and Syria.—*Xinhua*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Russia demands that Assad should leave hinder Syria's political process

MOSCOW — Demands for Syria's President Bashar al-Assad to step down restrict perspectives for political settlement in this country, Russia's RIA news agency on Monday quoted Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov as saying.

Moscow proposes to put off discussions about Assad's fate, Ryabkov said, adding the issue should be decided later by the sides involved in the Syrian conflict.—*Reuters*

Man nabbed at Britain's Gatwick Airport for terrorism offences

LONDON — A 24-year-old man was arrested on Monday on suspicion of Syria-related terrorism offences before boarding a plane at Gatwick Airport here, police said.

The man was detained by the West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit and searches are being carried out at two addresses in Birmingham, Britain's West Midlands Police said.

A 20-year-old woman was also arrested in west London on Monday "for Syria-related offences."

There is "no risk to any passengers at Gatwick Airport or to the wider public in relation to these arrests," police said.—*Xinhua*

Five killed, 20 wounded when suicide bomb strikes Iraqi restaurant

BAGHDAD — At least five people were killed and some 20 others wounded on Monday in a suicide bomb attack at a restaurant in Iraq's southern province of Dhi Qar, a provincial security source said.

The restaurant bombing brought the toll of suicide attacks on Monday across Iraq to at least 11.

The attack at the eatery took place at dawn when a suicide bomber blew up his explosive vest at the restaurant on a main road south of the provincial capital city of Nassriyah, some 375 km south of Baghdad, the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

The attacker apparently targeted members of a Shiite paramilitary unit, known as Hashd Shaabi, or Popular Mobilization, who were having breakfast at the time, the source said.

Many civilians were also among the killed and wounded, the source added.

Earlier, security sources told Xinhua that a suicide bomber hit a crowded checkpoint in the northern part of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, leaving at least three people killed and 12 wounded, while another suicide bomber struck a convoy of vehicles carrying Shiite members of Hashd Shaabi unit on a main road in Mesha'hda area, some 30 km north of Baghdad, killing three members and wounding eight others along with destroying three of their vehicles.—*Xinhua*

Tainted Argentine beef offals found in Vladivostok, Russia

VLADIVOSTOK — More than 15 tons of frozen beef offals carrying dangerous bacteria were found here by Russia's food safety agency, reports said on Monday.

"Analysis of the product samples revealed the presence of bacterium *Listeria* in meat," the Interfax news agency reported quoting the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance in Russia's Primorsky region, located in the south of the Russian Far East.

The food agency said that the frozen beef produced by the Argentine company Frigorifico H.V.S.A. was addressed to an entrepreneur from Yakutsk, the capital city of Russia's Sakha Republic in the north.—*Xinhua*

India should continue pace of reform—says Finance Minister

NEW DELHI — India should continue its pace of reforms since it has lost many opportunities in the past to lead global economy, the country's Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said on Monday.

"India has missed many chances in past to be the leading global economy, so its important for the country to continue its pace of reforms," the minister said at a function in the national capital.

He reiterated that amidst the global slowdown, India is moving and "we are moving fast."

"If India aspires to be a global leader as far as the economy is concerned, the government has primary responsibility in terms of policy and public opinions," the minister added.—*Xinhua*

— OPINION —

Another view on late marriage

Khin Maung Aye

IN the past, Myanmar women married at an early age. After they married, most of them quit their jobs to become homemakers. The reason may be that they could depend upon their spouses for a living. However, women today have begun marrying at later ages. Highly educated women find it difficult to justify marriage when they are financially independent. Another reason for their lack of interest in marriage may be that they cannot find spouses who match their educational qualifications or financial status. The world is slowly taking an egalitarian turn.

In any case, as the educational level of women increases, the proportion of women who have never married tends to rise. The proportion of never-married women in Myanmar is already high compared to other countries in the region, and the demographic and social impact of this trend can be expected to be even greater in future. It is worth noting that much of this social impact will be driven by unmarried women being more likely to participate in the labour force and to contribute to the country's productivity.

The rise in the proportion of late-marrying women has a number of implications for themselves and for their families. Women who marry later can stay at school longer and acquire the skills and training needed for higher-income jobs. Thus, they can earn more for themselves and for their families before and during marriage. Marrying at a later age enables them to enter marriage with greater emotional and physical maturity to meet the challenges of family life. This should enable them to play more active roles in the community and in national development.

Later marriage often means having children at a later age. This may reflect a reduction in teen pregnancies, in which the risks to both the mother and baby are high. However, child-bearing at much older ages also comes with health risks.

In a nutshell, both late marriage and early marriage have advantages and disadvantages. The decision to never marry also presents benefits and challenges for both the individual and the society at large.

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Roadside Universities in Oxford

Maung Phyo (WYU)

(The present article is the author's nostalgia for his sojourn in Oxford for the past few months as a visiting research fellow.)

**Reading maketh a full man;
Conference a Ready man;
And Writing an Exact man.
(Sir Francis Bacon)**

At first sight, I have not fallen in love with Oxford until I found out about its chequered past. The city owes much of its international fame to its string of colleges. Still, Oxford, with its metaphorical name "the city of dreaming spires", is said to be really a tale of two cities. It is one of the most special places in UK especially for education. It lays very quiet among the vast meadows, century-old colleges and museums. It is situated in Oxford Shire in the southeastern part of UK. It is also the home of the Oxford University, the oldest university in English-speaking world. It is located approximately 50 miles northwest of London. Its core comprises a gravel terrace between the upper River Thames (the Isis) and the smaller River Cherwell.

In retrospect, probably the first settlement was established in Oxford since Saxon times. The city obtained its name from the original "Oxen ford" (the present day Folly Bridge). As for education, the Augustinians established monasteries as the very first learning centers in the early 12th century. Later, the need to meet the local demand for higher education arose. It was far beyond the ecclesiastical schools could provide. Therefore, in 1167, during a feud between Henry II and

the King of France, the university of Paris was closed to the scholars. Consequently, they migrated to settle in Oxford. In about the 13th century, friars from the most prominent religious orders came to teach in Oxford, living and studying in large town houses or academic halls. Late in the same period, rich and powerful bishops established their own centers of scholarship in the town, which turned out to be the establishment of the first colleges there. As was the case elsewhere in the world, the arrival of students in the town caused friction with townspeople. In 1209, a scholar killed a local woman in Oxford. In consequence, the scholar's two unfortunate friends were hung in revenge. This led to a strike staged by the university. Many students fled in fear and some moved to Cambridge where they founded Oxford's sister university. Today, the university comprises 38 colleges and almost 20,000 students. The appeal of the city may be its medieval atmosphere created by many of its college quadrangles. Most of the locals said that much has changed since the early days.

I still remember that when I came to Oxford from London, I took Oxford Tube that plies between London and Oxford. It cost me 15£ for a one-way ticket. It was just a 2-hour ride. The sun has already set when I stepped down from the tube at the Gloucester Green bus stop. What first amazed me in Oxford were books. In fact, I almost ran into books placed in order on a shelf close to the door when I entered the house rented for me there on Observatory Street. They were chronologically and neatly displayed on the shelves.

They numbered more than one hundred on each shelf. Thus, I thought my landlady must be a bibliophile or a bookworm. Later I found out that I was right when I happened to chat with her about books. Next morning, in order to cook my lunch, I entered the kitchen to see another bookshelf. The kitchen bookshelf disclosed those books on culinary art. She said she used to consult the books whenever she was to prepare a special dish on a special occasion. Two German friends and I had the chance to enjoy her dishes at times during our sojourn. She even made our breakfast tea according to these cooking books.

Even in my room were two bookshelves with books about English literature, history, geography, etc. Many paintings were also hung on the wall. So I was thankful towards her for all her room-decoration. The first bookshop I visited in Oxford was Oxfam, located on St Giles street. It was the first of its kind officially opened in 1987 by Sir John Mortimer. It had a wide selection of academic and foreign language books at a relatively cheap price. As that two-story building was a thrift shop, volunteers, donors and customers to that bookshop were part of the thriving University community. New books, old books and secondhand books were available at the shop. Next was Waterstones or "The Bookshop on the corner", situated in William Baker House, a Grade II heritage listed building on the corner of Cornmarket Street and the Broad in the center of Oxford. It is a haven for lovers of literature with five floors of books, Stationery, Gifts and a Café W, as

well as a host of regular literary events. Even the same book can be available in various format and package styles at a varied price. Specially packed books for gifts were always available for special occasions like Christmas.

I also liked to browse around a second-hand bookshop called Blackwell's Oxford on Broad Street. There, new, secondhand, antiquarian and rare books across every conceivable subject were within the reach of every bookworm. It has been serving the needs of academics, students and book-lovers since 1879. At the same time, I remember my window-shopping at Albion Beatnik on Walton Street with its impressive range of US pulp, beat poetry and Jazz and Blue literatures, the Classic Bookshop on Sheep Street with its plethora of books on archaeology and ancient history, the Last Bookshop on New Inn Hall Street, offering the customers very good quality reminder and secondhand academic, literary and specialist books and Oxford University Press Bookshop on High Street.

While drifting myself into Oxford's reverie, I strike upon our roadside bookstalls with a wide variety of books on display. I also miss my frequent visits to those bookstalls on Pansodan Road during my freshman and sophomore days in order to taste those books financially beyond my reach. One day, I happened to spot a rare book of my favorite in a shop beside the Ganesh Temple on the Pansodan Road. The seller was an old and cheerful man. I knew the price was very reasonable. But, like true to the type of sellers, I

tried to strike a bargain out of its floor price. The old man indulged my unreasonable thriftiness. So I managed to get the book at a far lower price than it really should be. All on my way towards, I was sad and uneasy, let alone to have been happy, whenever I recalled the event in a sad flashback with an old and sweaty man in dingy yellow shirt sitting all day with the harsh sun. I have wronged him. I made up my mind to pay for it. I jumped down from the bus before it took off and scurried towards him. He was already gone when I got to the spot. I made another visit next day. I saw him selling his old books in the hot sun. As I caught his eyes, he beamed at me. He seemed to recognize me so well that I flushed a little bit, as if stung by a pang of guilty-consciousness. I came to greet him and bought him a mug of sugarcane juice. For, I knew he would refuse if I compensated for his loss yesterday. Meanwhile, I apologized to him for my self-centeredness yesterday. On hearing my apology, he exploded with a wild laughter, saying "O what a naïve! I got it from a friend for free (He did not know that you looked more naïve by his admission.). He then presented me with a Readers' Digest in return for my drink. So I was pleased with all I had done that day. Thus have I been an avid frequenter to the roadside bookstalls at Pansodan since my varsity days, which in a way created me a window of opportunity to be able to haunt the roadside bookstalls at Oxford. To me, these roadside bookstalls, local or foreign, mean universities in a sense that they serve as feeding grounds for initiating any of my academic pursuits.

Mandalay hosts international marionette festival

UNDER the supervision of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the Goethe Institute in Yangon and the Myanmar Marionette Association, the Myanmar Upper Land tour company organised the Myanmar and International Marionette Drama Troupe Festival in Mandalay from 2 to 3 April.

Members of the public attended the festival free of charge.

The festival aimed to revive Myanmar marionette drama troupes and to preserve, upgrade and propagate Myanmar marionette arts. The organisers also sought to promote relations between Myanmar marionette artists with other artists around the

world.

During the festival, marionette troupes based in Yangon, Indonesia, Mandalay and Thai performed with a Myanmar traditional orchestra. Students entertained the public with Myanmar indigenous puppetry and modern marionettes created by U Ye Dway.—*Tin Maung(Mandalay)*



A Myanmar puppet performance in Mandalay. PHOTO: TIN MAUNG



A Myanmar traditional marionette. PHOTO: TIN MAUNG

Crime NEWS



Four arms and ammunition seized. PHOTO: AUNG THANT KHAING

Four arrested for arms possession in Kalay

FOUR men were arrested in Kalay, Sagaing Region, on 3 April for illegal arms possession. Police have tightened security in the area in preparation for the Thingyan New Year Festival.

Residents of the area saw the men with homemade firearms and reported them to the police.

Man Htar Lwe, Lar Lan Lyan, Darl Nay Kar and Byat

Swan have been charged for illegal arms possession.

Kalay, which is located near the border with India, is notorious as a site of arms deals between India and China.

"Since 2012, we have told the local authorities to crack down arms smuggling in Kalay," said Kyaw Thet Win from the Network of Youths from the Chindwin Area.—*Aung Thant Khaing*

Man dies in fall from building

A MAN fell to his death from a building in Ahlone Township on 3 April.

Than Htoo Aung, 26, was under the influence of alcohol and fell from a 32-foot high building in Hsinmin Ward while

taking a rest at 2am that night.

The body was sent to hospital for an autopsy.

The victim was an electrician and from Kyonpyaw Township, Ayayawady Region.—*Tin Maung Oo*

Three on the run after attacking police

A COMBINED security team was attacked by three people in a Honda CRV (SHN-6F/---) at 11pm on 2 April on the Mong Khat-Mong Yang road in Kengtung Township, eastern Shan State. The suspects attacked when police stopped the vehicle to inspect it. The people in the car shot at the police without

stopping, and the police returned fire. The occupants of the car fled on foot after crashing into a ditch.

Sergeant Zaw Min Oo and Private Zaw Min Htwe, members of the combined team, were injured during the attack. The police seized the drugs worth K41,000, K1.3 million in cash, two handsets,

a green coat and two pistols inside the vehicle. The team brought the drugs and other items to the Kengtung Police Station. The two injured officers are receiving the treatment at the People's Hospital in Kengtung. Charges have been filed against the attackers, and police are searching for them.—200

Opium seized Naungtaya Township



Khun Thein Soe poses with drugs seized from him.

ACTING on a tip-off, a combined team comprising an anti-drug squad and local police searched the house of Khun Maung Pay in Laikpay Village, Nann Palin Village-tract, Naungtaya Township, on 3 April, and discovered 8.1 kilos of raw opium, 1.8 kilos of solid opium-oil and K150,000 in cash. The police arrested Khun Thein Soe who was found home. Similarly, an anti-drug squad in Mabein Township discovered 52,000 yaba pills and 36 grams of heroin hidden in a hut owned by Ma Nann Aung on 2 April. The team also stopped and searched a motorbike driven by Kyaw Ye Aung and seized 2,600 yaba pills hidden in the vehicle. Charges have been filed against all of the suspects under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—*Myanmar Police Force*

Drugs worth over K110 million seized in Mabein Township

POLICE seized a cache of drugs worth over K111.1 million in Mabein Township, northern Shan State, on 2 April.

Acting on a tip-off, a combined team comprising an anti-drug squad and local police searched the

house of Daw Htwe, 52, in Nguzin Village and found 41,000 'WY' yaba pills; 11,000 '88/1' yaba pills; and three soup cans containing 30 grams of heroin. The team also found 2,600 'WY' yaba pills inside a motorbike belonging to Kyae Ye

Aung, 21, who does not have a licence. The drugs, along with their owners and the motorbike, were taken to the Mabein Police Station, where they were charged under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—200

Ties between Germany and Russia enter new chill

BERLIN — At an hour-long meeting in Moscow on 23 March, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov irritated his German counterpart by raising the case of a German-Russian girl who said she was raped by migrants in Berlin earlier this year.

After the girl's claims were reported by Russian media in January, Lavrov accused Germany of "sweeping problems under the rug." The Berlin public prosecutor's office, though, said a medical examination had found the girl had not been raped.

That was why Germany's Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier was so upset when Lavrov raised the issue again. "I can only hope that such incidents and difficulties, as we had in that case, aren't repeated," he told reporters afterwards.

The rape case is indicative of the mutual suspicion that officials from both countries say extends to

the highest levels of government. At the root of those tensions lie opposing visions for Europe and the Middle East. Those rival visions have led to clashes at diplomatic negotiating tables, in cyberspace and in the media.

German and other European security officials accuse Russian media of launching what they call an "information war" against Germany. By twisting the truth in reports on Germany's migrant crisis, the officials say, Russia hopes to fuel popular angst, weaken voters' trust in Chancellor Angela Merkel, and feed divisions in the European Union so that it drops sanctions against Moscow.

"Russian propaganda is a danger to the cohesion of our society," Ole Schroeder, German deputy interior minister and a member of Merkel's conservatives, told Reuters.

Russian officials deny their country is mounting a campaign

against Germany. "These accusations are atrocious," said one Russian official, who said Moscow is the victim of an "indiscriminate information war" being waged from Germany.

In February, Dmitry Peskov, a spokesman for Russian President Vladimir Putin, denied the Kremlin had exploited the rape case to stir up tensions around immigration in Germany.

"We cannot agree with such accusations," Peskov said. "On the contrary, we were keen that our position be understood, we were talking about a citizen of the Russian Federation. Any country expresses its concerns (in such cases). It would be wrong to look for any hidden agenda."

But officials in Berlin say Russia's aim is to muddy what is true and what is not and shake Germans' trust in Merkel. "The idea today is to get disinformation, which means you don't believe

anything," Hans-Peter Hinrichsen, a Foreign Ministry official, told a recent meeting on Russia's role in Europe at the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP).

German and European officials say Russia's aim is two-fold: To exaggerate the problems the migrant crisis is causing Germany and to push Germany to relax its backing for European sanctions on Russia over Moscow's interference in Ukraine. While EU governments last month extended asset freezes and travel bans on Russians and Russian companies, there is less consensus on whether to prolong more far-reaching sanctions on Russia's banking, defence and energy sectors from July.

Both sides agree on one point: relations between the two countries are at their lowest point since the early days of the Cold War.

Beginning in the late 1960s, the then West Germany pursued a policy of 'Ostpolitik', which en-

couraged warmer ties with Russia. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the two countries grew even closer thanks to trade and cultural ties. But those ties began unraveling when Vladimir Putin returned as Russian president in 2012, and worsened further after the Ukraine crisis began in late 2013.

"All the networks, all the personal ties — they just don't work anymore," said Stefan Meister, at the DGAP.

The accusations of disinformation have spawned a whole new vocabulary. Officials at NATO now talk about the 'weaponization of information' by Russia. Colonel Aivar Jaeski, deputy director at the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, says Russia's campaign against Europe uses "angry trolls" who produce online hate speech, and "bikini trolls" to lure followers and then sow discord and doubt about news events.—Reuters

Syrian forces seize Islamic State-held town near Palmyra

BEIRUT — Syrian and allied forces backed by Russian air strikes drove Islamic State militants out of the town of al-Qaryatayn on Sunday after encircling it over the past few days, Syria's military command said.

Surrounded by hills, al-Qaryatayn is 100 km (60 miles) west of the ancient city of Palmyra, which government forces recaptured from Islamic State last Sunday.

Al-Qaryatayn had been held by the militant group since late August. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has been trying to retake al-Qaryatayn and other pockets of Islamic State control to reduce the jihadist group's ability to project military power into the heavily populated western region of Syria, where Damascus and other main cities are located.

Syrian state television said the army and its allies "fully restored security and stability to al-Qaryatayn after killing the last remaining groups of Daesh terrorists" in the town, using the Arabic acronym for Islamic State.

In a statement read out on Syrian television, the military command said this was a strategic victory which secures oil and gas routes between the Damascus area and oilfields in eastern Syria. It also disrupts Islamic State supply routes within Syria.

Government forces entered the town from a number of directions, Syrian media said.

A Syrian military source told SANA state news agency the army had cleared areas northwest of the town of explosives planted by Islamic State.

Islamic State militants retreating from Palmyra laid thousands of mines which the Syrian army is now clearing before civilians can return.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said government forces had taken over half the town and that fierce fighting continued between Assad's troops and Islamic State to the north and southeast of al-Qaryatayn.

The Britain-based Observatory, which monitors the five-year-old Syrian conflict through a network of sources on the ground, said more than 40 air strikes by Russian and Syrian planes hit areas near the town on Sunday.

When Islamic State took over al-Qaryatayn last August it demolished a Christian monastery and took around 200 of the town's residents prisoner, transferring some of them to the Syrian city of Raqqa, the group's de facto capital.

Islamic State still has complete control over Raqqa and runs most of Deir al-Zor Province in eastern Syria, which borders Iraq.

A fragile "cessation of hostilities" truce has held in Syria for over a month as the various parties to the conflict try to negotiate an end to Syria's civil war.—Reuters



An Armenian serviceman of the self-defence army of Nagorno-Karabakh launch artillery toward Azeri forces in the town of Martakert in Nagorno-Karabakh region, which is controlled by separatist Armenians, on 3 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

Azerbaijan says three of its servicemen killed in Nagorno-Karabakh clashes

BAKU — Three Azeri servicemen were killed in fresh fighting with Armenian-backed separatists over the breakaway Nagorno-Karabakh region on Monday, Azerbaijan's Defence Ministry said.

Dozens were killed on both sides at the weekend in the biggest flare-up of violence over the region in years, creating a risk that the conflict, frozen for two decades, could again erupt into full-out war.

Accounts from both sides indicated the fighting was not at the same level of ferocity as at its peak on Saturday, but there was still large-calibre fire being exchanged.

The separatist military said it had destroyed an Azeri army unit, while Azerbaijan said it

had struck a separatist command point, causing several casualties. Reuters could not independently verify those assertions.

Azerbaijan's defence ministry said that it had halted its attacks but that separatist forces were still "aggravating the situation", attacking Azeri positions and shelling nearby settlements, forcing Azeri forces to defend themselves.

The separatists, who are ethnically Armenian, and their backers in the Armenia government, said Azerbaijan was the aggressor.

An Azeri army unit was "encircled and fully destroyed on the southern flank of the front", Armenian Defence Ministry spokesman Artsrun Hovhannesyan wrote on his Facebook page.

Nagorno-Karabakh, which lies inside Azerbaijan but is controlled by ethnic Armenians, has run its own affairs with heavy military and financial backing from Armenia since a separatist war ended in 1994.

The heavily-militarised contact line that separated Azeri and separatist forces had for years remained largely static, though there were intermittent exchanges of gunfire and occasional casualties.

However, at the weekend there was a dramatic escalation, with tanks, missile systems, artillery, and helicopters being used. Azerbaijan said it had seized two separatist-held villages from which it said it had been taking fire, though the separatists disputed that account.—Reuters

Type 1 diabetes may up epilepsy risk by three times



PHOTO: PTI

BEIJING — People with type 1 diabetes have a three-times increased risk of developing epilepsy later in life, according to a new study.

Type 1 diabetes mellitus is one of the most common autoimmune disorders in children, with a 3 per cent annual increase in the global incidence rate since the 1980s.

In recent decades, the incidence of type 1 diabetes has increased in children and adolescents, particularly those aged younger than 5 years. Patients with diabetes are at increased risk of severe health problems and mortality.

For the study, researchers from China Medical University Children's Hospital in Taiwan evaluated the relationship between type 1 diabetes and epilepsy.

Data from the Taiwan National Health Insurance Research Database was used to conduct retrospective analyses. The study cohort contained 2,568 patients with type 1 diabetes, each of whom was frequency-matched by sex, urbanisation of residence area and index year with ten control patients without type 1 diabetes.

Computer ling was used to estimate the effects of type 1 diabetes on epilepsy risk. In patients with type 1 diabetes, the

risk of developing epilepsy was significantly higher than that in patients without type 1 diabetes, researchers said.

After adjustment for potential confounders, the type 1 diabetes cohort was 2.84 times more likely to develop epilepsy than the control cohort, they said.

"This result is consistent with those of previous studies in that epilepsy or seizures are observed in many autoimmune or inflammatory disorders and are linked to the primary disease, or secondary to pro-inflammatory processes," researchers said.

Immune abnormalities, brain lesions, genetic factors and metabolic abnormalities are all potential causes for the link between type 1 diabetes and epilepsy, they said.

"In particular, both hyperglycaemia and hypoglycaemia commonly occur in elderly people with diabetes, and can alter the balance between the inhibition and excitation of neuronal networks and cause focal motor seizures," researchers said.

"In addition, we found that younger age was associated with an increased risk of developing epilepsy," they said. According to researchers, the results could provide evidence to facilitate the prognosis of children with type 1 diabetes.—PTI

Boy tests positive for Ebola in latest Liberia flare-up

MONROVIA — A five-year-old boy tested positive for Ebola in Liberia just days after his mother died of the virus in the second flare-up to hit West Africa in recent weeks, the health ministry said on Sunday.

A 30-year-old woman died of Ebola in Monrovia last week, months after Liberia was declared free of the virus. Her death followed a recent flare-up that cost the lives of at least four people in neighbouring Guinea.

"A five-year-old boy, the son

of the deceased, tested positive early on Sunday morning," Deputy Health Minister Tolbert Nyenswah said.

More than 11,300 people have died over the past two years in the world's worst Ebola epidemic, nearly all of them in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

While the WHO said this week that West Africa's Ebola outbreak no longer constitutes an international public health risk, there have been small flare-ups even af-

ter countries received the all-clear.

Guinea announced new cases on 17 March just hours after Sierra Leone declared an end of active transmission, which briefly meant that West Africa was officially free of Ebola.

Liberia subsequently closed its border with Guinea, fearing the potential spread of the outbreak onto its territory. It was not immediately known whether the death in Liberia was linked to the new cases in Guinea.—Reuters

Bezos praises third Blue Origin launch-and-land rocket test as 'perfect'

SEATTLE — Jeff Bezos' space transportation company Blue Origin successfully launched and landed for the third time a suborbital rocket capable of carrying six passengers, taking another step on its path in developing reusable boosters, the company said on Saturday.

The New Shepard rocket and capsule blasted off from a launch site in West Texas on Saturday at an undisclosed time, and landed minutes later back at a landing pad, the company said. The capsule, which was flying autonomously, parachuted to a nearby site and was recovered, the company said.

"Perfect booster landing," Bezos wrote on Twitter. Blue Origin declined to comment on the test but said on Twitter, "Congrats Blue team on today's (flight)!"

Saturday's flight marks the third successful launch-and-land for the rocket, with similar missions completed in January and November. Bezos, the founder of Amazon.com Inc (AMZN.O), said earlier this month that Blue Origin expects to begin crewed test flights of the New Shepard next year and begin flying paying passengers as early as 2018.

Blue Origin and Elon Musk's SpaceX are among a handful of

companies working to develop rockets that can fly themselves back to Earth so they can be refurbished and flown again, potentially slashing launch costs.

For now, Blue Origin is flying suborbital rockets, which lack the speed to put spacecraft into orbit around Earth.

The New Shepard rose through clear skies to an apogee of 339,138 feet (103,369 meters), the company said. The engine that powers the pocket restarted at 3,635 feet (1,108 meters) above ground level "and ramped fast for a successful landing," the company said.—Reuters



The New Shepard rocket and capsule blasts off in this handout photo provided by Blue Origin, from a launch site in West Texas, on 2 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

Less-invasive heart valve implant outperforms surgery in study

CHICAGO — A minimally invasive procedure to replace the aortic heart valve is superior to open surgery for patients with an intermediate risk of complications, according to a study that could pave the way for wider use of the approach.

Patients who received the less-invasive implant had fewer strokes and a lower mortality rate after one year than those whose valve was replaced through open heart surgery, the Sapien 3 study showed.

The procedure, called transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR), is currently available only for patients considered unlike-

ly to survive open heart surgery or at high risk for complications.

The new data, presented Sunday at the American College of Cardiology meeting in Chicago, will be used to seek US regulatory approval for Edwards Lifesciences' Sapien 3 valve in patients deemed at intermediate risk for complications with open heart surgery.

"It seems likely that TAVR will become the new benchmark for the treatment of severe aortic stenosis in intermediate-risk patients," Dr Vinod Thourani, professor at Emory University School of Medicine and a lead

investigator for the study, said in an interview.

TAVR involves threading the valve into place through blood vessels using a catheter. Medtronic Plc also sells TAVR systems in the United States.

The Sapien 3 study found that 4.6 per cent of patients who received Edwards' valve had a stroke and 7.4 per cent died within a year of their procedure. Among surgery patients, 8.2 per cent suffered a stroke and 13 per cent died.

Surgery resulted in less valve leakage, or aortic regurgitation, than TAVR, but few people in ei-

ther group experienced the complication, which affected 1.5 per cent of the TAVR patients, Thourani said.

The Sapien 3 study compared 1,078 TAVR patients with outcomes for 944 patients who had open heart surgery in a related trial called Partner II. The Partner II study, presented on Saturday, showed Edwards' older-model Sapien XT valve was as effective as surgery in intermediate-risk patients.

Edwards expects US regulators to review data from both studies to approve an expanded indication for the Sapien 3 valve

before the end of the year, Chief Executive Michael Mussallem said in an interview.

"The only option up until now has been open surgery, which is very effective, but many patients would not opt for that," he said.

Approval would more than double the pool of patients eligible for the catheter-based approach, Mussallem said.

"We expect the treatment paradigm for intermediate-risk patients to change almost overnight and for the TAVR market to accelerate dramatically," J.P. Morgan analyst Michael Weinstein said in a note to clients Saturday.—Reuters

Tax authorities begin probes into some people named in Panama Papers leak

SYDNEY/PANAMA CITY — Tax authorities in Australia and New Zealand are probing local clients of a Panama-based law firm at the centre of a massive data leak for possible tax evasion.

Other jurisdictions are likely to follow suit following the leak over the weekend of details of hundreds of thousands of clients in more than 11.5 million documents from the files of law firm Mossack Fonseca, based in the tax haven of Panama.

The documents are at the centre of an investigation published on Sunday by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists and more than 100 other news organizations around the globe.

The German newspaper Sueddeutsche Zeitung said it received the huge cache of documents and shared them with the other media outlets.

The leaked “Panama

Papers” cover a period over almost 40 years, from 1977 until last December, and allegedly show that some companies domiciled in tax havens were being used for suspected money laundering, arms and drug deals and tax evasion.

“I think the leak will prove to be probably the biggest blow the offshore world has ever taken because of the extent of the documents,” said Gerard Ryle, director of the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists.

Britain’s Guardian newspaper said the documents showed a network of secret offshore deals and loans worth \$2 billion led to close friends of Russian President Vladimir Putin. Reuters could not independently confirm those details.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov did not immediately respond to a request for comment from Reuters on Monday.



A company list showing the Mossack Fonseca law firm is pictured on a sign at the Arango Orillac Building in Panama City on 3 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

Last week, Peskov said reports about the financial dealings of concert cellist Sergei Roldugin, a friend of Putin, and other related reports, were part of a politically motivated campaign to discredit Putin ahead of a cycle of elections.

The Australian Tax Office (ATO) said it was investigating more than 800 wealthy clients of Mossack Fonseca.

“We have now linked over 120 of them to an as-

sociate offshore service provider located in Hong Kong,” the Australian tax office said in a statement. It did not name the Hong Kong company.

ATO Deputy Commissioner Michael Cranston said his office was working with the Australian police and the anti-money laundering regulator AUSTRAC to cross-check the data, and some cases may be referred to the Serious Financial Crime Taskforce.

The 800 individuals

under investigation include taxpayers who had previously been investigated and others who had reported themselves to the tax office under a voluntary disclosure initiative which allowed people to come forward and avoid steep penalties and criminal charges and has since ended.

However, the ATO said those under investigation also included many taxpayers who had not previously come forward.—Reuters

Peru’s Fujimori signs pledge to avoid authoritarian ways of father

LIMA — Peru’s presidential front-runner Keiko Fujimori signed a pledge at a debate on Sunday committing her to avoiding the authoritarian ways of her father, in a final appeal to middle-ground voters ahead of next week’s ballot.

Fujimori, 40-year-old daughter of ex-president Alberto Fujimori, has long enjoyed a double-digit lead over her nine rivals but she is not expected to win the simple majority needed to avoid a presidential election run-off in June.

The centre-right candidate has struggled to calm fears that she will reactivate the government of her father, now serving a 25-year sentence for human rights abuses and corruption.

“I know how to look at the history of my country. I know what chapters should be repeated and I’m very clear on which ones shouldn’t,” Fujimori said during her final message in the debate.

The document she signed committed her to respecting human rights, freedom of the press and democratic institutions that her father weakened as he consolidated power.

“Never another 5th of April!” Fujimori said, referring to the day 24 years ago when her father shuttered congress and intervened in the courts with the backing of the military.

Fujimori also vowed to give the opposition control of oversight and intelligence committees in congress and reiterated a promise to provide reparations to scores of women forcibly sterilized during her father’s 1990-2000 government.

Critics dismissed the pledge as a cynical ploy for votes.

“The same mafia, the same sweet-talk,” the collective No To Keiko said on Twitter.

Opposition to Fujimori has eased as it looks increasingly likely that she will face 35-year-old leftist lawmaker Verónica Mendoza in a polarizing run-off race.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV INNWA STAR VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV INNWA STAR VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5.4.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV PACAO VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PACAO VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.4.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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In Wisconsin, Trump looks to put rough week behind him

MILWAUKEE — Donald Trump is fighting to put a difficult week behind him and finish strong on Tuesday in Wisconsin, a state whose primary contest may prove to be a turning point in the race for the Republican presidential nomination.

The Republican front-runner is at risk of losing the Midwestern state to US Senator Ted Cruz of Texas, an outcome that would dent the New York billionaire’s aura of inevitability and make it harder for him to win the 1,237 delegates needed for the party’s nomination for the 8 November election.

On the Democratic side, US Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont is trying to hold on to a slender lead over front-runner Hillary Clinton in the opinion polls in Wisconsin and eke out another victory over the former secretary of state.

Trailing Cruz in the polls in Wisconsin, Trump spent a good deal of a lengthy speech on Sunday night to supporters in West Allis, Wisconsin, attacking Cruz as a liar and a “dirty rotten cheater” who is weak

on immigration and would cut Social Security benefits.

“Wisconsin is going to be such a big surprise on Tuesday. We are doing so well,” Trump said.

A loss would add to Trump’s woes after his campaign was rocked last week by the fallout from his suggestion, which he later dialed back, that women be punished for getting abortions if the procedure is banned.

He also drew fire for comments that he would not rule out using nuclear weapons in Europe and that Japan and South Korea might need nuclear weapons to ease the US financial commitment to their security.

“Was this my best week? I guess not,” Trump told “Fox News Sunday” in an interview conducted last Friday. But he added: “I think I’m doing OK.”

Cruz, speaking to supporters on Sunday in Green Bay, Wisconsin, was eager to take advantage of whatever opening Trump had provided him.

More and more Republicans are recognizing, said Cruz, that “nominating Donald Trump would be

a train wreck — and that’s not fair to train wrecks — (and) that nominating Donald Trump elects Hillary Clinton. Hillary wins and she wins by double digits.”

Cruz faces difficulty in winning the delegates needed to win the nomination, given that the next round of states to vote, such as New York on 19 April, are friendly territory for Trump.

Both Cruz and the third Republican left in the race, Ohio Governor John Kasich, are trying to deny Trump enough delegates so that the nomination fight is decided at the Republican National Convention in July.

Trump complained that Kasich was an irritant for remaining in the race and gobbling up some of the delegates Trump needs.

“The problem is he’s in the way of me, not Cruz,” Trump said. “He hurts me more than he hurts Cruz.”

Kasich vowed to stay in the race.

“That’s not how our republic works, Donald,” Kasich tweeted in response. “We’ll keep fighting until someone reaches a majority of delegates.”—Reuters

IMF chief denies threat to pull out of Greek bailout

ATHENS/WASHINGTON — International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde denied on Sunday that IMF staff would push Greece closer to default as a negotiating tactic on a new Greek bailout deal, which she said was “still a good distance away.”

Lagarde said in a letter to Greece’s prime minister that the debt talks should continue despite damage from reports of a leaked transcript suggesting that IMF staff may threaten to leave the bailout to force European lenders to offer more debt relief.

“Any speculation that IMF staff would consider using a credit event as a negotiating tactic is simply nonsense,” Lagarde wrote to Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras.

“My view of the ongoing negotiations is that we are still a good distance away from having a coherent program that I can present to our Executive Board,” Lagarde wrote, adding that such a deal

must put Greece on a path of robust growth and gradually restore debt sustainability.

Tsipras’ office said on Sunday that he had demanded that Lagarde clarify the IMF’s stance after Internet whistleblowing site WikiLeaks published what it said was the transcript of a 19 March conference call of three senior IMF officials.

The officials were discussing tactics to apply pressure on Greece, Germany and the EU to reach a deal in April. They were quoted as discussing a threat that the fund might not participate in Greece’s third bailout programme as a way to force EU creditors, especially Germany, to reach a deal on debt relief before Britain’s June referendum on whether to stay in the European Union.

EU/IMF lenders are due to resume talks on Greece’s fiscal and reform progress in Athens on Monday, aiming to conclude a bailout review that



A farmer carries a Greek flag in front of the parliament during a protest against planned pension reforms in Athens, Greece, on 12 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

will unlock further loans and pave the way for negotiations on long-desired debt restructuring.

The review has been adjourned twice since January due to a rift among the lenders over the estimated size of Greece’s fiscal gap by 2018, as well as disagreements with Athens on pension reforms and the management of bad loans.

The Greek government interpreted the leak as

revealing an IMF effort to blackmail Athens with a possible credit event to force it to give in on pension cuts which it has rejected.

In his letter to Lagarde, Tsipras “expressed his concern about the credibility of the negotiations after the leaks,” an official at his office told Reuters.

Lagarde said in her response that “the IMF conducts its negotiations in

good faith, not by way of threats, and we do not communicate through leaks.”

She reiterated her view that if fiscal surplus targets were lowered for Greece, then more debt relief would be needed.

German government and finance ministry representatives declined to comment on the leaked transcript.

Germany has in the past said the IMF is an important player in the Greek rescue but it does not support the debt relief demanded by the IMF. Some German officials also say that they believe there are different views on Greece within the IMF.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel is due to meet Lagarde in Berlin on Tuesday.

The purported conversation on the conference call involved Poul Thomsen, head of the IMF’s Europe department, Delia Velculescu, leader of the IMF team in Greece, and IMF official Iva Petrova.

They discussed wheth-

er Greece could apply more austerity as a condition for receiving more aid ahead of big debt repayments in July and voiced frustration at the European Commission’s reluctance to side with IMF pressure on Athens.

If genuine, the transcripts suggest that Brussels is sticking to unrealistic assumptions about Greece’s budget shortfall to minimize the need for debt relief, which is unpopular with Germany and other northern euro zone hawks.

If concluded, the review will unlock a fresh tranche of about 5 billion euros (\$5.7 bln), which Greece needs to pay off state arrears and European Central Bank and IMF maturing debt. Greece has no major debt redemptions due until July. Commenting on the leak, Tsipras told weekly newspaper Ethnos: “It seems that some people are playing games with an aim to destabilise us. We will not allow (IMF’s) Thomsen to destroy Europe.”—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV GREAT RAINBOW VOY NO (1602)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV GREAT RAINBOW VOY NO (1602) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5.4.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T-5 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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AGENT FOR: M/S BRIGHT SAIL SHIPPING
CO LTD.**

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MOROTAI VOY NO (285)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MOROTAI VOY NO (285) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.4.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV EVER APEX VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV EVER APEX VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.4.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MIAMI PRIDE VOY NO (-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MIAMI PRIDE VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5.4.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P.L where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S HELIO INT’L SERVICES
PTE LTD.**

Phone No: 2301186

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KULNATEE VOY NO (03/16)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KULNATEE VOY NO (03/16) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.4.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-6 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S KULNATEE CO LTD.**

Phone No: 2301186

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV THAI BINH STAR 01 VOY NO (03/2016)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV THAI BINH STAR 01 VOY NO (03/2016) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.4.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-6 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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Phone No: 2301186

Taylor Swift, Justin Bieber win big at iHeartRadio Awards

LOS ANGELES —

Singer Taylor Swift emerged as the top winner at the iHeartRadio Awards by bagging four honours, including album of the year for “1989”, while pop star Justin Bieber came close with three trophies.

“1989” beat Adele’s “25”, “Beauty Behind the Madness” by The Weeknd, “In the Lonely Hour” (Sam Smith) and “X” (Ed Sheeran) to become the winner.

Swift’s other honours included artist of the year, best tour and most meme-able moment. Bieber, 22, became the artist of the year. He also bagged trophies for best dance song of the year (“Where Are U Now?”) and best fan army.

“Hello” from “25” became song of the year, defeating “Can’t Feel My Face” (The Weeknd), “Shut Up and Dance” (Walk The Moon) and “Uptown Funk” by Mark Ronson featuring Bruno Mars.



Artist Justin Bieber poses with his Dance Song of The Year Award for “Where Are U Now” and Male Artist of the Year Award backstage at the 2016 iHeartRadio Music Awards in Inglewood, California, on 3 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

Fetty Wap as announced as the best new artist. Maroon 5 won the best duo/group award, while popular group Foo Fighters received the award for best rock artist of the year.

In a new category, Luke Bryan won the award for country artist of the year. Swift’s boyfriend Calvin Harris bagged the dance artist of the year trophy. Hip hop

artist of the year award went to Drake.

Pitbull received the Latin artist of the year honour. Selena Gomez won the triple threat award as the singer has dabbled into dancing and acting besides a full fledged singing career.

“Uptown Funk”, by Mark Ronson featuring Bruno Mars, got the best collaboration. Lady

Gaga’s “Till It Happens To You” won the best song in a movie award.

R&B song of the year trophy went to “Earned it” by The Weeknd, while Drake’s “Hotline Bling” won the R&B song of the year award. Rock song of the year award went to “Heavy Is The Head” by Zac Brown band featuring Chris Cornell.—PTI

Judi Dench picks up record eighth Olivier Award

LONDON — Veteran film, television and stage actress Judi Dench picked up her eight Olivier Award on Sunday, a record tally at Britain’s biggest night for theatre.

The 81-year-old scooped the Olivier for best actress in a supporting role for “The Winter’s Tale”.

“Ladies and gentlemen, I am absolutely livid as I had a bet with my grandson, which I’ve now lost and I’m never going to be allowed to forget it,” Dench said in her acceptance speech.

“I know everybody says what a wonderful time they had doing something, I can truly say this time that in ‘The Winter’s Tale’, it was an absolutely memorable time for me.”

Asked backstage if she had any plans to slow her workload down, Dench told Reuters: “Who wants to slow down? No, I want to be employed. It’s putting the car in the garage that. You will never get it started.”

“Gypsy” picked up four prizes, the most awards for a single production on the night, including best musical revival and best actress in a musical for Imelda Staunton, who opened the glitzy London ceremony in character as Momma Rose.

“Gypsy” also picked up awards for best actress in a sup-

porting role in a musical for Lara Pulver and best lighting design.

“Kinky Boots” picked up three awards, including best new musical, best actor in a musical for Matt Henry and best costume design. Pop singer Cyndi Lauper, who collaborated with playwright Harvey Fierstein on bringing the 2005 film first to the Broadway stage before London, also performed on the night.

“Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom”, inspired by the blues singer, won best revival while “Hangmen”, about the abolition of hanging in Britain in the 1960s, won best new play.

Kenneth Cranham beat competition from the likes of Benedict Cumberbatch, Kenneth Branagh and Mark Rylance to be named best actor for “The Father”, in which he portrays a man with dementia.

In a category including nominees Nicole Kidman and Gemma Arterton, Denise Gough won best actress for “People, Places And Things”, a rehab drama in which she plays an addict.

In her acceptance speech, Gough lamented the lack of diversity among nominees - an issue that overshadowed February’s Oscars.

“I love this industry so much and to be given an award is fantas-



British actress Judi Dench.

PHOTO: REUTERS

tic but we have a responsibility,” she said backstage.

Robert Icke picked up the best director award for “Oresteia” while long-running musical “The Phantom Of The Opera” won the audience award - the sole prize voted for by the public.

“Nell Gwynn”, which stars Arterton, won best new comedy. The awards, celebrating their 40th anniversary, wrapped up with past winners performing “What I did For Love” from “A Chorus Line”, which won best new musical at the 1976 ceremony.—Reuters

Chris Stapleton scores big at Country Music awards

LAS VEGAS — Chris Stapleton, in his breakthrough year, took home more hardware at the Academy of Country Music Awards on Sunday, winning Male Vocalist of the Year, Album of the Year with “Traveller” and Song of the Year with “Nobody to Blame.”

Before success on his own, the bearded, Kentucky-born singer wrote or co-wrote six number one hits for some of country’s biggest stars. His 2015 debut studio album “Traveller” also won a Grammy Award earlier this year for Best Country Album.. “Thank you everybody and thank you for being so kind to me,” he said after winning best male vocalist.

In other major awards, Jason Aldean won Entertainer of the Year. Miranda Lambert won the Female Vocalist of the Year Award and took the stage to perform “Tush” with Keith Urban and ZZ Top’s Billy Gibbons.

The Country Music awards show held in Las Vegas got off to a raucous start with co-host Luke Bryan performing “Huntin’ Fishin’ And Lovin’ Every Day.” He was later joined on stage by Blake Shelton, with

whom he had co-hosted the awards since 2013.

This year, Shelton was replaced by Dierks Bentley. When Bentley came on stage with Bryan, Shelton joined in and said: “Good luck tonight boys.”

He then turned to Bryan and said, “You’re a dumbass.” Bentley and Bryan then joked about how everyone in Nashville wanted to take credit for Stapleton’s success. Country music legend Dolly Parton also took to the stage to perform a melody of “Coat of Many Colours,” “Jolene” and “9 to 5” with pop music giant Katy Perry. Eric Church, in a performance of his song “Record Year,” paid tribute to musicians who died in the past year including David Bowie, Stone Temple Pilots vocalist Scott Weiland, Motorhead bass player Lemmy and Eagles guitarist and vocalist Glenn Frey. Kelsea Ballerini won the New Female Vocalist of the Year award. Thomas Rhett won Single Record of the Year with the song “Die a Happy Man.” Florida Georgia Line won the Vocal Duo of the Year while Little Big Town won Vocal Group of the Year.—Reuters

Fukushima youth musicians pluck at US heartstrings

BOSTON — An orchestra composed of teenagers from Fukushima Prefecture in Japan's northeast made its US debut Sunday, showing an audience in Boston the members' musical chops as well as their resilience in the wake of the devastating March 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear power plant disaster.

The concert at Boston Symphony Hall allowed the roughly 50-strong Fukushima Youth Sinfonietta to express their thanks for support from overseas musicians and friends in the United States. The group of junior high and high school students practiced feverishly in preparation for the trip. In one of their recent rehearsals at a community hall in the suburbs of Fukushima's prefectural capital of the same name, the heartrending melody of US composer Samuel Barber's "Adagio for Strings" floated out into the evening air.

With violins, cellos, contrabasses and more, the young people whose lives were forever changed on 11 March, 2011, constructed the piece as if it was made from layer upon layer of their sadness. "We're playing it so as to bring forth thoughts of the disaster," said 15-year-old vi-



An orchestra composed of teenagers from the northeastern Japanese prefecture of Fukushima, perform during a concert at Boston Symphony Hall in the capital city of Massachusetts on 3 April. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

olinist Akane Yuda, who is just about to start high school in the city.

"But usually we are not so serious — there is nothing out of the ordinary," she said, cracking a warm smile. The orchestra performed overseas for the first time in London in 2014, and in August

last year held a concert in central Tokyo attended by Japan's Empress Michiko.

"We wanted to show (the empress) how we haven't lost our spirit to the disaster," said fellow violinist Yuta Iwabuchi, 17, in his second year of high school.

Greek pianist Panos Karan,

33, brought the group together after spending time playing for young people at schools and evacuation centers around the hard-hit Tohoku region in the summer following the quake.

Karan founded in 2011 Keys of Change, a charity organization aiming to uplift children world-

wide through the power of music.

He said even the students who at first seemed frightened, or hid their emotions behind a calm facade, gradually opened up through rehearsing and performing.

Karan put the group through its paces with special training in the run-up to the Boston concert with the help of his friends in the music world.

Across the Pacific, the Japan Society of Boston's former president Peter Grilli scrambled to pull together the funds to bring the orchestra to the United States.

Grilli, 73, said he was driven by remarks he heard from one of the students after their Tokyo performance in August: "We're still alive. We want to show the world Fukushima isn't a radioactive desert." US Ambassador to Japan Caroline Kennedy, who has strong links to Boston, lent her support to the trip, as did Japan-US friendship organisations.

Through showcasing Fukushima's young talent, the orchestra aims to not let the world's interest in the prefecture fade as the years pass since the massive quake, tsunami and one of the world's worst nuclear disasters.—Kyodo News



News Channel in Brief

5-4-2016 (Tuesday)

6:00 am

• Paritta By Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw

7:35 am

• Socio Economic Scenes

8:35 am

• MRTV's Youth Programme

9:35 am

• Dances of Thingyan Festival

10:35 am

• Science and Technology Programme

11:35 am

• Documentary (Weather)

12:50 pm

• TV Drama Series

2:00 pm

• Sing & Enjoy

3:35 pm

• Socio Economic Scenes

4:15 pm

• Documentary

4:35 pm

• Football Magazine (Ayeyawady United FC)

5:15 pm

• Kyaye Pwint Myaye Yin Khone Than

5:35 pm

• Money Talk Myanmar(Part-3)

6:35 pm

• People's Talk

7:15 pm

• TV Drama Series

8:00 pm

• News / International News/ Weather Report

8:35 pm

• Documentary

9:00 pm

• News
• TV Drama Series
• Yes or No Talk Show (Review of Season-1) (Part-2)

Note / Hourly News Bulletins (Local + International)

Soseki Museum in London to close next year

LONDON — A museum in London dedicated to Japanese novelist Soseki Natsume (1867-1916), who spent two years in the British capital, plans to close in September next year due to financial difficulties amid declining visitors, its operator told Kyodo News on Monday.

Next year marks 150 years since Soseki's birth, and the Soseki Museum will finally close its doors after more than 30 years on the occasion of this anniversary, according to the museum's director, Ikuo Tsunematsu.

"It's gratifying that I was able to keep it open for so long," said Tsunematsu, 64, an authority on Soseki and a professor at Sojo University in Kumamoto City in southwestern Japan, who opened the museum in 1984.

"I'd be happy if young scholars follow in my footsteps."

The museum is located in the city's Clapham district in South London, across the street from one of the lodging houses where Soseki stayed while in the British capital between 1900 and 1902.

It has more than 2,000 items related to Soseki, a literary giant in modern Japan, including a copy of a 1901 census by the Public Record Office of Britain that lists his name and photographs of the district at the time of his stay.

Soseki, whose real name was Kinnosuke Natsume, was sponsored by the Japanese government to study the English language and British literature during his visit to the country.

Visitors of the museum have

included Japanese Crown Prince Naruhito and former Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu as well as many Soseki scholars, including those from prestigious universities outside Japan.

The museum is open three days a week between February and September and has been run by Tsunematsu's wife Yoshiko, 56, since 2004, when her husband began teaching at the Japanese university.

The number of visitors has kept dropping and the revenue from its 4 pounds (640 yen) entrance fee cannot pay the museum's maintenance costs, they say. They intend to sell the museum, a room in a private terraced house, after Tsunematsu returns to London next spring when he retires from the university.—Kyodo News



(5-4-2016 07:00am ~ 6-4-2016 7:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Insight Myanmar: Library (Ep-1) Myanmar Library Survey
07:47	Am	Natural Lake: Fish Breeding Business
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Travelogue: Ngwe Saung Beach
08:46	Am	Thingyan Songs & Dances
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Culture Show: Abdication of King Thibaw
09:43	Am	Today Myanmar: Online Shopping- Food Delivery Service
09:53	Am	Art Students: Theatrical Art

10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Trend Of Kachin Dress
10:51	Am	Black Gold (Part- I)

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

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	A Day Out With Sarah (EP-5)
07:50	Pm	Thingyan Songs & Dances
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Discovering Tribes: Pre Kayaw (Their Life and Customs) (Part- II)
08:52	Pm	Culture Shows: Composer Ma Mya Lay

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

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



(5-4-2016, Tuesday)

6:00 pm
• Weather Report
• Music Programme

6:30 pm

• Pyi Thu Ni Ti

6:40 pm

• Thingyan Dances

7:00 pm

• International Drama Series

7:40 pm

• International Drama Series

8:30 pm
• Cartoon Programme "Alice in Wonderland" (Part 1)

9:10 pm

• Music Programme

9:30 pm

• Sai Htee Hseng Or An Exceptional Music Star From Shan Plateaus (Ep-1)

9:50 pm

• International Movie Songs

From 5-4-2016 (Tuesday) 6:00 Pm
To 6-4-2016 (Wednesday) 6:00 Pm

This schedule will be repeated four times in 24 hours.



Wes Morgan celebrates with Danny Drinkwater and Riyad Mahrez after scoring the first goal for Leicester City against Southampton during Barclays Premier League at The King Power Stadium on 3 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

Leicester 'dreaming' of title after win over Southampton

LONDON — A year to the day since being seven points from safety at the foot of the Premier League and facing relegation, Leicester City moved seven points clear at the top of table when they beat Southampton 1-0 at the King Power Stadium on Sunday.

"We are dreaming," declared Leicester manager Claudio Ranieri after watching his team, 5,000-1 outsiders to win the title at the start of the season, secure a fourth straight 1-0 victory thanks to a first-half header from captain Wes Morgan.

The win moved Leicester on to 69 points with just six matches remaining, seven points clear

of second-placed Tottenham Hotspur, who drew 1-1 at Liverpool on Saturday.

Arsenal stayed third, moving on to 58 points after their 4-0 win over Watford on Saturday with Manchester City remaining fourth on 54 points after their 4-0 win at Bournemouth.

Manchester United stayed in the hunt for a top-four finish when they beat Everton 1-0 at Old Trafford on Sunday to move into fifth place on 53 points with Anthony Martial scoring the winner early in the second half.

Arsenal, City and United all have one game in hand on Leicester but if the Foxes win four of their remaining games,

they cannot be caught and will complete one of the most remarkable stories in the 128-year history of the English League.

Leicester's best-ever finish was as runners-up in 1929 and the last time they made any kind of push for the title was in 1963 when they finished fourth and were beaten in the FA Cup final.

Yet after beating West Ham a year ago this weekend to begin their revival and avoid the drop, they have not looked back.

"We are dreaming. If we fight, we can do something and we must continue. It's important to stay very calm and maintain our feet on the ground," Leicester manager Claudio Ranieri told

Sky Sports.

"Clean sheet, three points, step by step. It's fantastic because we know very well Southampton came here with a lot of confidence.

"I said to the players, it's the chairman's birthday, he needs a special present from us."

Southampton boss Ronald Koeman was not in such a giving mood afterwards.

His side should have taken the lead six minutes before Leicester scored when Saido Mane rounded keeper Kasper Schmeichel then saw his shot hit the arm of Danny Simpson who cleared the ball. —Reuters

Djokovic beats Nishikori in Miami for 63rd career title

MIAMI — Top seed Novak Djokovic continued his domination of men's tennis with a 6-3, 6-3 win over Japan's Kei Nishikori in the Miami Open final in Florida on Sunday, before quickly turning his thoughts to the upcoming clay court season.

The French Open is the only grand slam missing from Djokovic's otherwise glittering resume, but he has already been installed by the bookmakers as odds-on favourite for Roland Garros after a magnificent start to 2016.

Djokovic dropped serve in the first game against Nishikori but it was pretty much one-way traffic after that as he outclassed the sixth seed in all facets of the game on the hardcourt at Key Biscayne. The 28-year-old Serb took 85 minutes to join American Andre Agassi as a six-time Miami Open winner. Djokovic said his first Miami win in 2007 paved the way for a career that now includes 63 ATP titles.

"It gave me a lot of confidence, a lot of self belief that I can finally win these big tournaments, finally beat the top players," he said in a courtside interview. "Every year I come back to this tournament I get goose bumps from those days. I was still 19 years old and making my way to the top." —Reuters

Ko wins second LPGA major with Mission Hills triumph

RANCHO MIRAGE, (California) — New Zealand's Lydia Ko became the youngest player to win two LPGA major championships when she birdied the par-five 18th to clinch the ANA Inspiration by one stroke in Rancho Mirage, California, on Sunday.

For the 18-year-old world number one, who closed with a three-under 69 at the Mission Hills Country Club to finish at 12-under-par 276, the win marked her second successive major title after winning the Evian Championship last year.

"It was always my dream to play on the LPGA. Just being here was a dream come true," said Ko, who started the day one back of leader Lexi Thompson. "For these amazing things to be happening is unbelievable but it also motivates me to work harder."

Britain's Charley Hull (69) and South Korea's Chun In-gee (70) finished a stroke back. Thai-

land's Ariya Jutanugarn (71) led late but bogeyed the final three holes to finish two strokes off the pace.

The season's first major looked headed for a playoff when Jutanugarn's bogey at the par-three 17th, where she pulled her tee shot badly, set up a three-way tie for the lead.

But Ko, who was coming off a win at last week's Kia Classic, would secure her 12th LPGA Tour victory by striking a precise wedge from 88 yards to set up a one-foot birdie putt.

Following her triumph, Ko took the traditional leap into Poppie's Pond next to the 18th green along with her mother, sister, caddie and caddie's fiancé.

The South Korean-born Ko was bogey free for the final round and made several crucial putts to stay in the hunt, including pair of long birdie putts on the front nine and a solid par-save on the 13th

to stay two shots back of Jutanugarn.

"This been a long week," said Ko. "I'm proud I was able to make those clutch putts, especially on the back nine."

Jutanugarn, 20, made a red-hot start to her quest for a maiden LPGA Tour win as she carded five birdies and one bogey over her opening 11 holes.

But Jutanugarn was undone by a disastrous finish that saw her three-putt at 16, send her tee shot at 17 into a bunker before finding water on 18.

American Thompson (73) finished three shots back of Ko in fifth place while defending champion Brittany Lincicome (74) finished 10 shots off the pace. —Reuters



Lydia Ko. PHOTO: REUTERS