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State Counsellor to discuss peace initiative

Thein Ko Lwin

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi will discuss peace initiation with the Union-level Cease-fire Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) today, said Lt-Gen Ya Pyayt at a meeting held by JMC yesterday.

The meeting will continue today for the second day with State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who will lead the new government's peace initiative, in attendance to discuss guidelines and procedures relating to the Union-level ceasefire agreement, added Lt-Gen Ya Pyayt in his capacity as the chairman of the Joint Monitoring Committee.

This is the fifth meeting but the first held during the period of the incumbent government. The two-day meeting is being held at Horison Lake View Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.

"The political issues are required to be solved only through use of political means. As these political issues have been solved through use of arm line policy, the country has been suffering for decades with officers and other ranks from both sides having sacrificed their lives and limbs," remarked General Saw Issac Po from Karen National Union (KNU) in his capacity as the vice chairman-1 of JMC-U meeting media during an interval.

The meeting focused upon the formation of Mon State and Kayin State-level JMCs. The



Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.
PHOTO: AUNG SHINE OO

meeting elected U Pyayt Son as alternate vice chairman of the committee according to the rules and regulations of the committee.

The Union-level JMC was formed with eight ethnic armed groups which have signed Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement with the Tatmadaw.

There have been three occurrences of armed skirmishes between the eight ethnic armed organisations and Tatmadaw since the signing of the NCA, said Lt-Gen Ya Pyayt.

The JMC was first formed on 18 November, 2015 with 10 representatives from the government side, another 10 representatives from eight ethnic armed organizations and six civilian representatives nominated by the both sides.

The 26-member committee is chaired by Lt-Gen Ya Pyayt with Saw Issac Po and U Pyayt Son as vice chairman-1 and-2 respectively whereas U Khin Maung Soe, Lt-Gen Ye Aung, Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung, Lt-Gen Aung Kyaw Zaw, Lt-Gen Min Naung, Maj-Gen Aung Soe, U Myint Soe, Dr Min Zaw Oo, Saw Ne Soe Mya, Saw Kyaw Than Htay, Khun Aung Mann, U Salai Yaw Aung, Khaing Myo Chit, U Hsaung Han, Saw Tar Doe Mu, Sai Hlyan, Rev Saw Matthew Aye, U Ko Ko Gyi, Sai Myo Thant, U Maung Maung Nyein, Thura U Tin Hla as members and Dr Shwe Khar and Col Wunna Aung as Secretary-1 and 2 respectively.

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Mine blast injures two Dutch tourists, one interpreter

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Thousands of farmland confiscation cases unresolved by previous gov't

APPROXIMATELY 6,000 cases of farmland confiscation remain unresolved from during the term of the First Hluttaw, according to the Amyotha Hluttaw Farmer Affairs Committee.

A total of roughly 18,000 cases of farmland confiscation, from complaint letters received, were investigated during the First Hluttaw, approximately 12,000 cases of which were resolved, it is known.

"There are still over 6,000 cases [relating to farmland confiscation] which have yet to be investigated and resolved from the previous Hluttaw. These cases will continue to be investigated during

the current Second Hluttaw. Disputes [over farmland confiscation] has meant there are many complaint letters which remain to be processed – it's a very big issue.

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Myanmar New Year Lucky Draw Special Programme

MECTel launches its Myanmar New Year Lucky Draw Special Programme to create opportunities to try your luck from 31st March, 2016 to 29 April, 2016.

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Fields damaged by catastrophic rains and storms. PHOTO: AUNG THANT KHAING

Crops on 12,815 acres in Kyaukse damaged by hailstorms

HAILSTORMS on 22 and 23 April in Mandalay Region damaged about 12,815 acres of 13 different kinds of crops, mostly in Kyaukse township, according to the Mandalay Region Agriculture Department.

Myittha township suffered catastrophic damage after Kyaukse with about 4,000 acres

of land damaged.

The most damaged crops were summer sesame and green gram. Some mango farms were also damaged with growers suffering greatly.

To cover the loss of the crop growers the president established a fund of K174 million to provide them with seeds and culti-

vation loans.

During the 2013-14 fiscal year, Mandalay Region experienced drought which hit mostly Myingyan District with over 30,000 acres of crops damaged. The region also suffered from floods which destroyed nearly 4000 acres of crops in 2014-2015. —Aung Thant Khaing

Yangon Region to develop industrial zones

THE Yangon Region government will handle industrial zones in the region and the first priority will be given to the improvement of the management sector and disciplinary matters relating to the zones, said Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein on Monday.

The chief minister said that he and the respective ministers will make a tour of the zones to fulfill any and all needs.

There is also a plan to improve the small and medium enterprise by encouraging banking

systems, human resource development and providing technical assistance, the chief minister added.

Insufficient electricity, high transport charges, problems in waste disposal and a lack of skilled labour are among the challenges Myanmar is now facing and other issues such as scarcity of raw materials, the high cost of production, the needs of infrastructure and a lack of ability to penetrate foreign markets are problems to be tackled, said industrialist U

Zaw Min Win.

During the reign of the new government the Ministry of Commerce has set a target to increase the amount of export by three fold. Currently, the country is trading mostly with neighbouring countries but in future will spread its wings to reach Europe and America, said Commerce Minister Dr Than Myint.

Yangon Region, the economic hub of the country, has 23 industrial zones and over 6000 small and medium enterprises.—Ko Moe

Patent laws to be enacted

PATENT laws are to be promulgated through parliament to help develop the innovative minds and creative ideas of the citizens, said the Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

On an occasion to mark the World Intellectual Property Day held in MICC 2 in Nay Pyi Taw, the minister said that the ministry is now learning intellectual property rights from a number

of experts from the United States and Japan with the aim of soon enacting protection laws here in Myanmar. As foreign investments are mostly based on how much protection they have for their investment, the patent laws play an important role in attracting them, said Director Daw Moe Moe Thwe of Intellectual Property Rights Department under the Ministry of Education.

According to officials there

are four laws concerning intellectual property rights to be enacted to promote the innovation of citizens, to create job opportunities and generate more income.

Yesterday was the World Intellectual Property Day and has been marked by the World Intellectual Property Organisation yearly beginning in 2001. Myanmar is the 176th country to join the organisation. —Thein Ko Lwin

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker receives Chargé d'affaires a.i. of Georgia Embassy

MAHN WIN KHAING THAN, the Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw, received Mr Levan Machavariani, Chargé d'affaires a.i. of Georgia Embassy based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, yesterday.

During the meeting at Amyotha Hluttaw in Nay Pyi Taw, they discussed promoting bilateral friendship between

Myanmar and Georgia and boosting economic cooperation between the two countries.

Also present at the call were Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung, Amyotha Hluttaw International Relations, Inter Parliamentary Friendship and Cooperation Committee U Zone Hlyan Htan and officials of the Amyotha Hluttaw office.—Myanmar News Agency



Mahn Win Khaing Than receives Mr Levan Machavariani. PHOTO: MNA

Military helicopter crashes into reservoir, pilots rescued

A MILITARY helicopter crashed into a reservoir in Meikhtila yesterday with both pilots being rescued by fishermen.

The Bell helicopter, No.6125 crashed into Montaing Reservoir at approximately 8.30 am yesterday morning due to mechanical failure during flight training, according to a news release from the armed forces.

Two pilots are identified as Maj Win Aung and Maj

Khun Kyaw Hlaing who were on board the helicopter when it crashed and were saved by fishermen nearby in the reservoir.

The two captains received only cuts and bruises and were sent to hospital.

The cause of the crash is so far unknown but the incident is under investigation.

The bell, which was manufactured in 1977, was overhauled in 2012 by a foreign company, and re-used for training.—Myanmar News Agency

Thousands of farmland confiscation ...

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There's are still so many landless [farmers]." said U Soe Win, secretary of the Amyotha Hluttaw Farmer Affairs Committee.

It is known that plans are in place for a group to be established which could directly resolve farmland confiscation cases through cooperation between Amyotha and Pyithu Hluttaws.

The principal actors in farmland confiscations have been the Tatmadaw (Myanmar Armed Forces), government ministries; confiscation for infrastructural construction and business initi-

atives of private companies; national economic projects; and the construction of industrial zones.

On 6 April 2016, at the commencing of the Second Hluttaw, approximately 80 letters of complaint on farmland confiscations were lodged, whilst the majority of these complaints came from Mandalay Region and Kayin State, according to the Amyotha Hluttaw Farmer Affairs Committee. The aforementioned committee has also revealed that, to date, a total of around 200,000 acres of farmland has been confiscated nation wide.—Myitmakha News Agency

President U Htin Kyaw accepts credentials of ambassadors of Sweden, Ireland, Timor-Leste

U HTIN KYAW, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, accepted credentials of Mr Staffan Herrstrom, the newly-accredited Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden, Mr

Brendan Rogers, the newly-accredited Ambassador of Ireland and Mr Joao Freitas de Camara, the newly-accredited Ambassador of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste yesterday separately.

Present on the occasions were Minister of State of Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin and Director-General U Ko Ko Naing of the Protocol Department.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Mr Brendan Rogers, the newly-accredited Ambassador of Ireland, presents his credentials to President U Htin Kyaw in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

President U Htin Kyaw felicitates South African counterpart

U HTIN KYAW, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Jacob Ged-leyihlekisa Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa, on the occasion of the Freedom Day of the Republic of South Africa, which falls on 27 April 2016.—*Myanmar News Agency*

President U Htin Kyaw felicitates Netherland King

U HTIN KYAW, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands, on the occasion of His Majesty's Birthday, which falls on 27 April 2016.—*Myanmar News Agency*

President U Htin Kyaw felicitates Netherland PM

U HTIN KYAW, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Mark Rutte, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, on the occasion of the Birthday of His Majesty King Willem-Alexander, which falls on 27 April 2016.—*Myanmar News Agency*

FM Daw Aung San Suu Kyi felicitates South African counterpart

DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to Her Excellency Ms Maite M Nkoana-Mashabane, Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa on the occasion of the Freedom Day of the Republic of South Africa, which falls on 27 April 2016.—*Myanmar News Agency*

FM Daw Aung San Suu Kyi felicitates Netherland counterpart

DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Albert Gerard Koenders, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, on the occasion of the Birthday of His Majesty King Willem-Alexander, which falls on 27 April 2016.—*Myanmar News Agency*

UCSB Chairman holds talks with UNDP's country director

DOCTOR Win Thame, the Chairman of the Union Civil Service Board, received Mr Toily Kurbanov, Country Director of the United Nations Development Programme-UNDP yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting Mr Toily Kurbanov offered the Union Minister the opportunity to arrange lectures by experts from the UNDP when Civ-

il Service Academy is established in the country. The two representatives also exchanged views on an offer from UNDP to provide assistance to the formation of groups offering expertise from local and international professionals in order to give lectures as part of the courses taught at the Civil Service Institutes.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Nay Pyi Taw Council formed

THE President's Office announced yesterday the names of five members and a secretary of the new Nay Pyi Taw Council.

According to the announcement signed by President U Htin Kyaw the five members are Col Min Naung, U Aung Myin Tun, U Tin Tun and U Tin Htut and the secretary is U Aye Maung Sein. The announcement stated that the Head of the Nay Pyi Taw General Administration Department is the secretary of the coun-

cil in accordance with Sub-article (c) under Article-3 of the Nay Pyi Taw Council Law. The Nay Pyi Taw Council, which will be led by Dr Myo Aung as chairman, has been formed with the five members in accordance with the Sub-article (b) under the Article 285 of the constitution, Article 21 of the Union Government Law and Sub-article (a) under the Article-3 of the Nay Pyi Taw Council Law, according to the announcement.—*GNLM*

Union Minister for Information holds talks with three delegations over media cooperation

UNION Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint received the Ambassador of Germany to Myanmar Mr Christian Ludwig Weber Lortsch, a BBC delegation, and Deputy Representative of UNICEF Shalini Bahuguna yesterday separately.

During the meeting with the

German ambassador the two discussed programs for the development of a media sector in Myanmar and further cooperation between the two countries.

At the meeting with the BBC delegation, Union Minister Dr Pe Myint and Daw Tin Htar Swe, the Head of BBC Burmese Service,

sought ways for possible cooperation between Myanmar Radio and Television and the BBC.

The meeting between the Union minister and the deputy representative of the UNICEF focused on possible cooperation between the MRTV and UNICEF.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Army bristles at U Shwe Mann's message to DSA

THE Myanmar army has strongly objected to an on-line message sent to the graduates of the Defense Services Academy 11th Intake on their 47th anniversary graduation by retired army general Thura U Shwe Mann.

The press release from the military states that U Shwe Mann's message, uploaded onto social media, is especially dedicated to the graduates of the Defense Service Academy. The army says that this kind of message can be regarded as an act designed to drive a wedge between military personnel still in

service and retired military personnel and that this incident could lead to the disintegration of the military and that although the military has invariably asserted that it would co-operate with the government elected by the people, this assertion has been neglected and insinuations were made (by U Shwe Mann in his message) in the form of abetment that the military was not cooperating with the incumbent government.

Furthermore, the army said, news reports that appeared in some newspapers and journals were

found to be based on the former general's message which, they claim, cannot bring any benefit to the nation or to the people.

Moreover, they continued, these news reports can mislead readers regarding the performance of successive governments as well as the military's attitudes and actions. This being so, the military decided to publish a news release to prevent disintegration within the armed forces and to avoid adversely affecting national reconciliation objectives, according to their statement.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Crime NEWS

Six-wheel truck overturns near Sittaung Bridge



The six-wheel truck being seen overturned. PHOTO: YE KHAUNG OO

A SIX wheel vehicle overturned near Sittaung Bridge, Kyaikto township, Mon State on 24 April.

According to an investigation the vehicle was en route to

Myeik from Aung Pan and was being driven by one Khin Maung Tun alias Ah Wah, 23. The vehicle overturned between mileposts 7/7 and 8/1, on the Yangon-

Mawlamyine road when the driver lost control.

Charges have been filed against the driver by local police.—Ye Khaung Oo

Yaba and ice seized

AN anti-drug squad in Northern Yangon seized yaba at No 242-A, Aung Theikdi 4 Street, Ward 12, Hlaingthayar township, Yangon on 24 April. Acting on a tip-off police searched the home of Zaw Moe Latt at that address and discovered 251 yaba pills.

This seizure led police to search further, uncovering 600 yaba pills from one Ma Than Than Mu on Padamyar Yadana Street, Ward 9 in Hlaingthayar Township. The police searched another home at No 1100, Yarzakonmar Street, Ward 12 in

Hlaingthayar Township that is owned by one Ma Di Di Moe, daughter-in-law of Ma Than Than Mu and found 2,278 yaba pills. On the same day police discovered 1,944 yaba pills on a motorcycle driver identified as one Thanmani with Zin Lin Oo on board. The search and seizure took place in front of the Shwin Pyaw Pyaw restaurant beside Mudon-Kyonywar Road.

Likewise, members of police searched one Ma Khin Myint's home at No. A-39, Shan Gone Ward in Hpa Khant Township and found 1,650 yaba pills. Similarly, police seized 1,595 yaba pills from one Ma Nan Kyein's house in ward 4, Mong Seik village, Namhsan Township.—Ko Ye



Zaw Moe Latt, Ma Than Than Mu and Ma Di Di Moe. PHOTO: KO YE

Fire breaks out near A-1 construction

A FIRE broke out near the A-1 construction servant quarters in Mingalar Dipa ward, Pobbathiri township, Nay Pyi Taw on Monday evening, it has been learned.

The fire broke out due to the igniting of a pile of dry leaves, it was reported. However, at this time the exact details of how the blaze began have not been found. The fire was brought under control by firemen with three fire engines and with the help of local residents. The fire did not cause any property or personal damage.—Shwe Ye Yint



Woman charged with handbag theft

POLICE have filed charges against a woman on suspicion of theft as she failed to prove that a handbag in her possession belonged to her.

Police officers stopped and interrogated one Ma Nu Nu Aye, 20, in Pauk municipal market on 23 April. Upon

searching, the suspect police found K24,750, a SAMSUNG mobile phone, a small knife, a gold chain and a bracelet in her handbag. Police decided to take action when the suspect was unable to show any documentation to prove that the bag belonged to her.—The mirror

Methamphetamine, yaba confiscated in Taninthayi Region

A COMBINED team including members of the Anti-Drug Squad Unit-23, based in Myawady, searched a house owned by Ma Win Yi (aka Ma Hnin Yone) in Myatlin-nayemyaing Street, Ward-5, in Myawady, on 24 April

and discovered 570 grams of methamphetamine and 1,908 WY-branded yaba tablets.

Police have filed charges against the suspect under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—Htein Lin Aung



Ma Win Yi (aka Ma Hnin Yone). PHOTO: HTEIN LIN AUNG

Welding electrodes from Thiri Hinthia Dockyard stolen

LOCAL Police from Southern Yangon arrested a man for stealing welding electrodes worth over K240,000 from Thiri Hinthia Dockyard in Dala Township on 24 April.

"He is from Wak Choke village in Nat Mauk Township. He has been working at the Dockyard for about three months," said Sub-inspector of police Myat Khine Oo.

Acting on an information tip-off, Sub-inspector of police Myat Khine Oo checked the Thiri Hinthia Dockyard on 19 April and found 49 KOBE welding electrode packs and 29 J-38 welding electrode packs, worth K2,482,000 missing. Dockyard guard Myo Thu, 23, was report-

ed to have fled with the stolen property.

These packs were bought by one Thein Tun alias Wa Toke, 20, living at No 12, Aung Mingalar 3 street. He kept J-38 welding electrode packs at a house owned by one U Kyaw Kyaw Win alias Phoe Kyaw living at No 6/832, Thiha Thu Street, Myoma Ward 4. The police discovered KOBE welding electrode packs, sold by Thein Tun in the Kaung Sar Aung electric and hardware shop which is owned by one U Win Zaw living at No 182, Aung Thiri Street, Myothit Ward, Dawbon township.

Those involved in the case have been charged under the law.—Than Htay (Dala)

LOCAL Business



Farmers transplanting on a field near Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

Summer paddy yield high but price are dropping

Soe Soe Yu

FARMERS are reportedly suffering from the low price of rice despite the high domestic yield of summer paddy.

“Rice dealers offer a good price at early harvest time, at a high price of around K600,000. Some farmers did not get a good price as they have not finished their harvest in time. Now the price of rice paddy has dropped down to K400,000”, said Daw Moe Moe, a farmer from Gonnyin-tan village.

Last year, rice dealers competitively purchased the rain crop despite the high price because of the low yield, and they suffered losses when they sold in border areas.

“The shortage of farm workers caused a late harvest. The price of paddy is always higher at the early harvest and when the paddy is short of supply. Sometimes, farmers are forced to sell their crops when there are buyers because they have to give back their cultivation loan. Dealers gain more profit when the price

of rice has become higher”, said U Khin Nyunt who owns five acres of land.

“Dealers offer low demand out of fear for losses. The price cannot head up again these days. The price of paddy always rises in June and July, said U Soe Tun, the joint secretary of Myanmar Rice and Paddy Traders Association (MRPTA).

Last year, the price of paddy was just over Ks300,000 after the end of the harvest time. This year, summer paddy yield high at around 100 baskets per acre.

Japanese companies keen to invest in Myanmar

MORE Japanese companies are offering to invest in economic zones, it has been learned. Currently, Japanese investment has reached US\$619 million from 85 different Japanese enterprises, according to a responsible person from the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC).

Japanese enterprises have agreed to be engaged in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone and the Dawei Special Economic Zone of Taninthayi Region. More Japanese enterprises have

submitted proposals to the MIC to grant a permit. These companies are mainly interested in conducting manufacturing.

Currently, Hino Motors Ltd has received a permit to open service centers in order to provide repair and maintenance service. Other Japanese auto enterprises such as Toyota, Suzuki, Mazda, Nissan, Mitsubishi have already entered the Myanmar auto market. Misui & Co Ltd and Marubeni Corp have already received permission to establish

a fertilizer plant in early March. Marubeni plants to start operating their fertilizer plant in April of 2017. Japan based Mitsubishi Estate Co Ltd will construct buildings on the land of the Myanmar Railway Head Office with an investment of US\$ 439 million.

Three Japanese Banks have also received permits to open branches in order to offer services to Japanese enterprises which are currently running businesses in Myanmar.—200

Small enterprises forced to shut down their business in Mandalay Industrial Zone

WITH the illegal inflow of products which do not meet required standards from neighbouring countries, most small enterprises are being forced to shut down their businesses in the Mandalay Industrial Zone as they cannot survive low production within a highly competitive market, said U Khin Maung Thein, the vice chairman of the Mandalay Industrial Zone Supervisory Committee

“Products are imported via the border areas without paying taxes. The small enterprises are suffering from the low production caused by old and outmoded machines. We want the authorities to control the illegally imported low-quality goods which are being resold at a cheaper

price, he added.

The Mandalay Industrial Zone was established in 1990 with 13 businesses and is situated on the east of the Yangon-Mandalay Road. The number of large enterprises increased from 89 to 387 plants while the medium enterprises, from 126 to 282 plants. But, the number of small enterprises decreases from 2,117 to 572 plants.

To have fair play within the high competitive market, bank loans with low interest rates are required. A regular electricity supply is also important in manufacturing. A Social Security Board’s Hospital is needed to provide medical care to labourers working day and night shifts.—200

Rubber price expected to rise at end of April

LOW yields of rubber might result in a rise in rubber prices at the end of April.

The price of the Ribbed Smooth Sheet (RSS3) variety has increased from K650 to K700 per pound because of the low yield caused by hot temperature.

“The yield of rubber declined on account of the possible impact of El Niño in South East Asia because rubber latex cannot be produced in hot weather. As you know, it is always a matter of demand and supply. When the supply is low and demand doesn’t change, the price will rise,” said U Khaing Myint, general secretary of the Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association.

Production of rubber latex was forced to stop in January and February by hot weather, driving prices up.

“The weather in Mon State is still in normal, but the yield has declined. The rubber planters won’t produce rubber latex,” said Naing Chan Yit, the chairman of the Mon State Rubber Entrepreneurs Association.

The yield in Mon State declined to about one third of production in April 2016 compared to August 2015.

There were 1.6 million acres of rubber fields in Myanmar in the 2015-2016 fiscal year, and China is the main buyer. The volume of rubber export is expected to reach over 80,000 tonnes in the 2015-2016 fiscal year. The volume of exports was over 90,000 tonnes in 2009-2010, over 80,000 in 2011-2012 and over 78,000 tonnes in 2013-2014, according to figures from the Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Associations.—200

Emerald Rural Development Plan to be launched in 60 villages in Yangon

THE Emerald Rural Development Plan will be launched in 60 villages of Yangon Region in the 2016-2017 fiscal year, said a responsible person from the Yangon Regional Rural Development Department.

The plan covers arrangements for the development of the agriculture and livestock sector. Goals include the ensuring of

available electric power and water supply; improving the manufacturing business and trade and conducting vocational trainings for locals from the villages of Thanhlyin, Kyauktan, Khayan, Thonegwa, Tuntay, Kawmhu, Kungyangon and Coco Island townships of Southern District of Yangon and Tikekyi, Hmawbi, Hlegu and Htantabin of Northern

District of Yangon.

“The Emerald Rural Development Plan was started to implement by the previous government and is still implemented by the current government.

The plan will be carried out in the villages which meet prescribed requirements. Villages that have at least 80 households, a low economic status and a prom-

ising capacity for agricultural and livestock activities will be covered by the plan.

The plan will require the spending of K30 million per village. The allocated funding for the plan is K1.8 billion for 60 villages in the 12 townships of Yangon Region.

Government officials, the ministries representatives, MPs

and organisations concerned will hold meetings to check if they are entitled to the plan.

The Yangon Regional Development Department implemented the Emerald Rural Development Plan for 28,865 people in 155 villages of Yangon Region in the 2015-2016 fiscal year, spending K46.2 billion, according to the figures of the department.—200

North Korea seen readying another intermediate missile launch attempt

SEOUL — North Korea appears to be preparing a test-launch of an intermediate-range ballistic missile, South Korea's Yonhap news agency said on Tuesday, after what the United States described as the "fiery, catastrophic" failure of the first attempt.

On April 15, the North failed to launch what was likely a Musudan missile, with a range of more than 3,000 km (1,800 miles), meaning it could, if launched successfully, hit Japan and also theoretically put the US territory of Guam within range.

The Musudan missile, which can be fired from a mobile launcher, is not known to have been successfully flight-tested.

North Korea tested its fourth nuclear bomb on 6 January and launched a long-range rocket on 7 February, both in defiance of UN resolutions. The North on Saturday conducted a test of a submarine-launched ballistic missile.

"There are indications that the North may fire a Musudan missile that it launched and failed on Kim Il Sung's birthday on 15 April," Yonhap quoted an



A missile is carried by a military vehicle during a parade to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the signing of a truce in the 1950-1953 Korean War, at Kim Il-sung Square in Pyongyang. PHOTO: REUTERS

unnamed government official as saying. Kim Il Sung is the North's founder.

North and South Korea remain technically at war after their 1950-53 conflict ended in a truce, rather than a treaty. The North, whose

major ally is neighbour China, routinely threatens to destroy South Korea and its major ally, the United States.

The 15 April failure was seen as an embarrassing blow for current leader Kim Jong Un, Kim Il Sung's

grandson, who has claimed several advances in weapons technology in recent months and is widely expected to conduct a fifth nuclear test soon.

South Korean Defence Ministry spokesman Moon

Sang-gyun declined to confirm the Yonhap report but said the North's military would likely spend some time trying to fix the problem following the failed launch. Experts see North Korea's Musudan test as part

of an effort to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile that can reach the mainland United States.

North Korea said its fourth nuclear test in January was a hydrogen bomb, although that claim has been disputed by foreign governments and experts given the relatively small size of the blast.

North Korea said its submarine-launched ballistic missile test on Saturday was a "great success" that provided "one more means for powerful nuclear attack".

South Korea on Tuesday described the test, which sent a missile travelling about 30 km (18 miles), as a partial success.

The United States and South Korea began talks on possible deployment of a new missile-defence system, the Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD), after the latest North Korea nuclear and rocket tests.

Expanded UN sanctions aimed at starving North Korea of funds for its nuclear weapons programme were approved in a unanimous Security Council vote in early March on a resolution drafted by the United States and China.—Reuters

GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Chief Executive Officer - Nakagawa Kiyoshi

ceo@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Chief Editor - Khin Maung Aye

ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Deputy Chief Editor - Aye Min Soe

dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Chief Reporter - Ye Myint

chiefreporter@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Consultant Editors

Jacob Goldberg

counslantanteditor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Alec Wilmot

counslantanteditor2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Editors

Ye Htut Tin

editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Kyaw Thura,

editor2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

International news

Tun Tun Naing

intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Reporters

Khaing Thanda Lwin

reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Tun Aung Kyaw

reporter2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Translators

Hay Mar Tin Win

translator@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Proof reader

Nwe Nwe Tun

Computer Team

Tun Zaw, Thein Ngwe, Zaw Zaw Aung, Ye Naing Soe,

Nyi Zaw Moe, Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win, Sanda Hnin,

Zu Zin Hnin

Circulation & Advertising

San Lwin (+95) (01) 8604532

Ads and subscription enquiries:

subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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India, Pakistan diplomats meet after months-long hiatus

NEW DELHI — The top diplomats of India and Pakistan met on Tuesday for talks after a hiatus of several months following a militant attack on an Indian air base, in what the Pakistani side called a useful and wide-ranging exchange of views. The low-key meeting between the foreign secretaries, on the sidelines of a regional conference in New Delhi, seeks to restore a dialogue that was derailed by the raid in January on the

Pathankot air base that killed seven military.

"The meeting provided a useful opportunity to exchange views on recent developments," Pakistan's High Commission in New Delhi said in a statement.

It added that "all outstanding issues", including a dispute between the two countries over the divided territory of Kashmir, were discussed at the meeting between India's Subrahman- yam Jaishankar and his Paki-

stani counterpart, Aizaz Ahmed Chaudhry. Relations remain fraught between the two nuclear-armed neighbours, which have fought two of their three wars over Kashmir since independence in 1947. One bone of contention has been whether to include Kashmir in the agenda for peace talks.

There was no immediate word from the Indian side on the talks, which sought to restore a dialogue launched when Indian Prime

Minister Narendra Modi paid a surprise visit to Pakistani Premier Nawaz Sharif in December.

India has accused Pakistan-based militants of carrying out the Pathankot attack and provided what it calls "actionable intelligence" to Islamabad to follow up. Pakistani investigators have visited the scene of the attack close to the border between the two countries but, as yet, no arrests have been made.—Reuters

Japan protests over North Korea's submarine-launched missile test

TOKYO — Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida on Tuesday said Japan has lodged a protest with North Korea over the recent firing of a submarine-launched ballistic missile.

North Korea's "provocative" nuclear test and ballistic missile launches are "to-

tally unacceptable," Kishida told reporters.

The protest was made through a diplomatic channel in Beijing, Kishida said.

A South Korean military source has said the projectile launched by North Korea flew about 30 kilometres from a submarine off

Sinpo in the eastern part of North Korea but that the launch itself was a failure.

The launch came as the secluded country is suspected of preparing a fifth nuclear test, following its globally condemned fourth test in January. UN Security Council resolutions ban Pyong-

yang's nuclear and missile development activities.

"Japan is making efforts to collect and analyze information with strong interest. We will be fully prepared to respond to any situations through coordination with other countries," Kishida said.—Kyodo News

Australia's asylum seeker detentions on PNG island ruled illegal



A group of around twenty protesters occupy Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull's electoral office, demanding the end to the policy of offshore detention of asylum seekers, in the Sydney suburb of Edgecliff, Australia, in 14 October, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

PORT MORESBY — (Papua New Guinea) — Papua New Guinea's Supreme Court on Tuesday ruled that Australia's practice of detaining asylum seekers on PNG's northern Manus Island was illegal and must stop.

Papua New Guinea's highest court said the detentions breached the country's constitution. Under Australia's controversial immigration laws, anyone intercepted while trying to reach the country by boat is sent for processing to camps in Nauru and Manus Island. They are never eligible to be resettled in Australia.

More than 800 people are detained on Manus Island on behalf of Australia. The detention centre on Nauru houses about 500 people and has been widely criticized by the United Nations and human rights agencies for harsh conditions and reports of systemic child abuse.

Australian Minister for Immigration Peter Dutton said the ruling would not change its policy of offshore detention.

"It does not alter Australia's border protection policies — they remain unchanged," said Dutton.

"Those in the Manus Island Regional Processing Centre

found to be refugees are able to resettle in Papua New Guinea. Those found not to be refugees should return to their country of origin." Australia's asylum seeker policy has attracted international criticism from human rights groups.

"People have been detained for over three years in contravention of the laws of Papua New Guinea in abusive conditions," said Elaine Pearson, Australia Director at Human Rights Watch. "It is time to stop the abuse of vulnerable people who only ask for safety and the opportunity to rebuild their lives." —Reuters

US challenged China, 12 others on navigation rights last year

WASHINGTON — The US military conducted "freedom of navigation" operations against 13 countries last year, including several to challenge China's claims in the South and East China seas, according to an annual Pentagon report released on Monday. The operations were against China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Libya, Malaysia, the Maldives, Oman, the Philippines and Viet Nam, the report said.

It did not specify how many such operations were conducted against each of those countries. The US military carried out single operations against Taiwan, Nicaragua and Argentina, for a total of 13 countries, the department said in the two-page report.

The freedom of navigation operations involve sending US Navy ships and military aircraft into areas where other countries have tried to limit access. The aim is to demonstrate that the international community does not accept such restrictions.

The US military has repeatedly conducted operations disputing China's maritime claims in recent years and did so again in 2015, a year in which Beijing's island-building activity in the resource-rich areas of the South China Sea led to rising tensions in the region.

A US guided-missile destroyer conducted a freedom of navigation patrol near one of China's man-made islands in the Spratly archipelago in October. US military flights near the islands have been warned off.

US Defence Secretary Ash Carter said the Navy would continue to operate in the region despite China's condemnation of the patrols.

China's Defence Ministry said in a statement on its website late on Monday that it was deeply concerned by such operations.

"The United States carries out militarisation in the South China Sea in the name of freedom of navigation and overflight, threatens coastal nations' sovereignty and security and destroys regional peace and stability," the ministry said.

It made the comment in response to what it said were reports of recent US military flights near Scarborough Shoal — known by Beijing as Huangyan Island — an area China seized control of after a stand-off with the Philippine coast guard in 2012.

Admiral Harry Harris, the head of US Pacific Command, said this year the Navy would step up the freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea because of concerns China is attempting to assert its dominance by building military facilities there.

US freedom of navigation operations last year also challenged China's claims of jurisdiction in the airspace above its maritime Exclusive Economic Zone as well as restrictions it has tried to impose on aircraft flying through an Air Defence Identification Zone over the East China Sea. —Reuters

US Ospreys win Japanese hearts and minds with quake relief flights

IWAKUNI, (Japan)—The US military's MV-22 Osprey aircraft has been a lightning rod for opposition to US bases in Japan since 24 of them were deployed on the southern island of Okinawa in 2014.

By sending eight of the tilt-rotor Ospreys to help with relief efforts for survivors of recent earthquakes on Kyushu island, both US and Japanese military planners have been able to showcase an aircraft they see as necessary for Japan's defence.

When an Osprey set down last week on a sports ground in Hakusui village on Kyushu, the first person out was a US Marine Corps photographer taking pictures of Japanese troops unloading supplies. Within hours, the pictures were on social media.

Opposition to US bases in Japan has simmered for years, especially on Okinawa where many people believe the MV-

22, which can hover like a helicopter and fly as a fixed wing craft, is prone to crashing.

They say the US military's deployment of the Osprey on Okinawa shows its disregard for their feelings.

The US military insists the Osprey is safe but in 2012 it nevertheless agreed to curb flights over heavily populated areas.

Since earthquakes killed about 50 people on Kyushu this month, the aircraft has been seen in a new light, thanks in large part to pictures of it ferrying blankets, food and water to quake survivors, posted on the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit's Facebook and Twitter feeds.

"We have had no negative reaction," said Colonel Romin Dasmalchi, commander of the unit, which is based in Okinawa.

Visits to the unit's social

media sites surged by as much as 10 times after it began flying relief supplies, a spokesman for the U.S. Marine Corps said.

Eight Osprey's were deployed for the relief effort from Okinawa to a USMC air station at Iwakuni near Hiroshima because "of the speed and efficiency of the airframe to get into those places where a traditional aircraft could not land", he said.

By the time the US military's relief mission ended on Sunday, its posts had earned more than 230,000 hits compared with a normal rate of between 10,000 to 50,000.

While the publicity is unlikely to placate opponents of US bases, it should improve the Osprey's image.

The deployment has also given the Japanese military a chance to see how the Osprey fits with its kit. Japan ordered five Ospreys last year, making it



A US soldier stand near the US MV-22 Osprey aircraft at the Iwakuni U.S. marines air station in southern Japan, on 22 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

the first foreign force to buy it.

"The more exposure you get to any weapon system aircraft I think the better it is going to be," Dasmalchi said.

Japan's Ospreys will be based on Kyushu from around

2019, near a new unit of Japanese marines that represent the spearhead of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's plan to give Japan's military a global security role by making it more mobile and expeditionary. —Reuters

OPINION

Good governance versus the wish lists

Khin Maung Aye

DESPITE having no unanimously agreed definition of the term “good governance”, the usual definition consists of a wish list of reforms, practices and outcomes with a particular eye on developing countries. Each organization concerned with the notion of good governance seems to construct its own wish list, with some laying emphasis upon political and legal institutions, participation, accountability, rule of law and human rights whereas some stressing neoliberal economic reforms and better management of resources.

There are also some institutions that focus upon social structures and practices.

Most of the wish lists are concerned with the interactions of the state and society. Their focus is on the rules, processes and behaviour that define nature and limits of political authority. They try to ensure that political actors at all levels should be responsive and accountable to the stakeholders. They also seek that the state acts impartially and fairly, and restricts itself to particular domains.

On the basis of the wish list of various organisations, good governance can be defined as the existence of political accountability, bureaucratic transparency, the exercise of legitimate power, freedom of association and participation, freedom of information and freedom of expression, sound financial management and public financial accountability, respect for the rule of law, respect for human rights, an active legislative, enhanced opportunities for the development of pluralistic forces inclusive of civil society and capacity development (Kempe Ronald Hope, Sr: 2009).

Good governance plays an important role in the creation of capable states that have the capacity to spearhead development efforts. Ac-

cording to Leftwich (1993), the concept of good governance has three main components. First, governance denotes the structures of political and economic relationship and rules by which the productive and distributive life of a society is governed. Secondly, good governance implies a state that enjoys both legitimacy and authority, derived from a democratic mandate and built on the traditional liberal notion of a clear separation of legislative, executive and judicial powers. Finally, good governance, from an administrative view, means an efficient, open, accountable and audited public service which has the bureaucratic competence to help, design and implement appropriate policies and manage whatever public sector there is.

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Development and Human Rights

Dr. Khine Khine Win

DEVELOPMENT is one of the most urgent human rights imperatives. Indeed, it is a human right for all individuals. The Declaration on the Right to Development describes development as “a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, which aims at the constant improvement of the wellbeing of the entire population and of all individuals on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of benefits...”

Furthermore, the term “development” is closely connected to the struggle against poverty. Poverty is an urgent human rights concern itself. It is both a cause and a consequence of human rights violations and an enabling condition for other human rights violations, according to OHCHR. Human rights reinforce the demand that poverty reduction be the primary goal of development of policy making.

In this regard, all human beings have a responsibility for development individually and collectively, taking into account the need for full respect of their human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as their duties to the community. Many studies show that human rights are highly correlated economic development and are often precursor for it. However economic development

alone is not enough. Development without equality, without social inclusion will not reduce poverty. If people understand human rights as essential to attaining to socioeconomic goals, then they should work toward the realization of rights.

Therefore ensuring rights is a vital step toward economic development because when people are denied their rights, it often results in social instability and other conflicts which have vast economic consequences. While State are responsible for realizing human rights, other actors, including international organizations, civil societies organizations, national human rights institutions, business enterprises also have responsibilities regarding of those living in poverty. It is fact that, full realization of human right is the goal, development work is a means.

From development perspective, today human rights-based approach is viewed by many as essential to achieving development goals. So what is a human-rights based approach? A

human- rights based approach is a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standard and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human

fundamental to sustainable development of society. Without rights such as right to health, education, freedom of expression, equality before the law, poverty and marginalization may become permanent and sustainable devel-

while human rights works exposes abuses of power. Here what I would like to high light is that without embracing human rights and considering them for every policy, program or discussion the most vulnerable groups in society are further marginalized, social equity is sacrificed and the likelihood in development is lessened. It stresses the need to educate the public so that civil society and decision-makers consider issues of development and the context of human rights.

With respect to international human rights, States have the threefold responsibility: to respect, to protect and to fulfill. It has been decided within the United Nations that human rights principles and standards are to be mainstreamed into all efforts to promote security and social and economic development. This means that the development plans should prioritize anti-discrimination measures; treat individuals as participants rather than recipients of charity; and clearly define the responsibility for implementation of the rights, ensure evaluation of the results of the measures and establish human rights in effective legislation.

In conclusion, a State that is not responsive, transparent and accountable is, in this sense, failing to develop. And a government that ignores the freedom, equality and rights of all is a poor government and a weak one, for it lives in fear of its own people.



rights. Universally adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development marks a paradigm shift towards a more balanced model for sustainable development aiming to secure freedom from fear and freedom from want for all, without discrimination. Right based approach respect the dignity and autonomy of persons living in poverty and empower them to enjoy their rights. Furthermore, human rights-based approach is

opment will fail. For instance, the right to life cannot be realized without basic rights to safe water, air and land. Bear in mind that right-based approach may not clearly spell out what we ought to do, but it surely tells us what not to do.

Development and human rights work constitute two distinct areas, where development is devoted to economic growth and the satisfaction of basic needs,

Asia-Pacific region seeing historic population shift

DEMOGRAPHIC change in Asia and the greater Pacific region is occurring at a rate the world has never seen before, according to a report released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The report claims that an unprecedented explosion in the working age population and a fall in birth rates, the likes of which took a century of development in Europe, has happened in Asia over the last 30 years.

If countries do not start planning for this demographic change they will miss out on a unique opportunity to boost growth and investment for the future, the report says in its latest Regional Human Development Report section. Nations also risk a surge in youth frustration, exacerbating potential political instability and conflict.

The report, entitled “Shap-

ing the Future: How Changing Demographics Can Power Human Development”, notes that Asia-Pacific countries now have more working-aged people and fewer dependents than at any point in history, providing a springboard for growth. Region-wide, 68 percent of people are of working age and only 32 percent are classed as dependents.

“When countries have a greater share of people who can work, save and pay taxes, they have the potential to transform their economies and power investments in healthcare, education and other building blocks of future prosperity,” said Thangavel Palanivel, lead author of the report.

The report calls for immediate responses and outlines “9 Actions for Sustainable Development”. These are concrete pol-

icies tailored to the demographic profile of individual countries.

For states with a large working-age population the UNDP is calling for the creation of decent jobs to match the growing workforce, equal employment for women, and ways to turn savings into investments within the region.

For countries with young populations, there is a need to invest in education and healthcare, smooth the transition from school to work and encourage youth participation in public life.

In countries with a greater aged population, governments have to design fair, sustainable pension systems, support active ageing and promote appreciation for the value of older citizens. This includes making sure that older people who want to work can bring their skills and experience to the market.

“The window of opportunity to increase productivity, invest in growth and save for the future is between now and 2050,” said Haoliang Xu, UN Assistant Secretary-General and UNDP Director for Asia and the Pacific. “If countries in the Asia-Pacific region do not create optimal employment conditions, the regional economy will begin to slow down by 2050 as the current working-age population begins to retire.”

With 58 percent of all the working people on earth, what happens in Asia-Pacific will affect countries far beyond the region, it is noted.

“Growth, employment and migration in the west are inextricably linked to what happens in the east,” said Haoliang Xu. “The sun rises here, but its effects are soon felt on the other side of the world.”

There is no one solution for every country, but the region’s diversity provides room for co-operation. Governments need to share experiences on long-term fiscal planning, including the sustainable use of tax revenue. Cooperation can also encourage safe migration from younger to older countries within the region and reduce the desperate flight of migrants to Europe. “With 50 years of expertise and offices in 24 countries in Asia-Pacific the UNDP is ideally placed to help implement the ‘9 Actions for Sustainable Development’,” said Haoliang Xu. “We can facilitate partnerships combining domestic, international, public and private funding and expertise on youth, ageing, migration, social protection, climate change and disaster risk management, governance, urbanisation and technology transfer.—GNLM



Merlin (Falco columbarius) at Ayeyawady River near Htigayint on 26 March 2016. It is the new recorded species for Myanmar. No Myanmar name has not been given to it. Bird expert Thet Zaw Naing has discovered during his bird survey trip in Upper Myanmar. PHOTO: THET ZAW NAING (WCS)

Myananda Lake in Ngathayauk Town drying up

The Myananda Lake seen dried up in Ngathayauk. PHOTO: YE WIN NAING (NYAUNGGOO)



MYANANDA Lake, a rain water storage lake located in No. 2 Zaygon Ward, Ngathayauk Town, Mandalay Region is used to provide drinking water to local communities. However, due to rising temperature accompanied by the effects of El Niño the Myananda Lake is facing rapid depletion and is becoming dry, according to locals.

“The Myananda Lake provided enough water for drinking,

bathing and washing for local people who reside in the four wards of Ngathayauk Town in Mandalay Region. Water in this lake hasn’t become depleted before but this year the water in the lake is facing almost complete depletion due to the effect of El Niño,” a local said.

When the Myananda lake dries up completely we will all be dependent on tube wells, he added.—Ye Win Naing (Nyaunggoo)

Mine blast injures two Dutch tourists, one interpreter

TWO Dutch tourists and an interpreter have been injured in a mine blast yesterday in Kyaume, northern Shan State.

The Dutch tourists namely Mr Zimmermann Felix, aged 24, holding passport No. CSH75GL90 with Visa No. J-C454396, and Mrs Rosler Wiebke, 24, holding passport No. CSXYOHV5H with Visa No. J-C458895 were travelling together with their interpreter Sai Khun Tun Oo when the accident happened yesterday at Tawpe Village in Kyaukme township.

The injured are not in the critical condition and they were taken to Kyaukme Township Hospital in the evening and referred to Mandalay People’s Hospital around 7 pm on the same day.—Kyaukme Information and Public Relations Department



Local people prepare to send the injured tourist to hospital. PHOTO: U MYINT AUNG

Police, firemen distribute water to villages in Magwe Region

MEMBERS of the Police Force, led by Police Maj. Than Aye of a police station based in Pauk Township, Magwe Region, with the assistance of Fire Service Department, on Monday, supplied and distributed 3,600 gallons of water for drinking and bathing to the villagers of Tarchaung village in Kaile Village-Tract of Pauk Township who are currently facing the water crisis.

On the same day, a combined team comprising members of the Fire Service Department of Thayet District and members of Thayet Township Police Force donated 54 drinking water bottles—a bottle with capacity of 20 litres – and 1,600 gallons of water for bathing and washing to the villagers of Taungta village in Padaukpin Village-Tract, Thayet Township, Magwe Region.—Myanmar Police Force



Polices and firemen distribute water to villages in Thayet Township. PHOTO: MPF



A pilot looks up from a US F-22 Raptor fighter as it prepares to refuel in mid-air with a KC-135 refuelling plane over European airspace during a flight to Britain from Mihail Kogalniceanu air base in Romania on 25 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

US sends F-22 fighters to reassure NATO allies facing Russia

MIHAIL KOGALNICEANU AIR BASE, (Romania) — Two highly advanced US fighters flew to the Black Sea on Monday for the first time since Washington beefed up military support for NATO's eastern European allies who say they face aggression from Russia.

President Barack Obama promised in 2014 to bolster the defences of NATO's eastern members, unnerved by Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimea and the Kremlin's backing for pro-Russian forces in eastern Ukraine.

A US KC-135 refuelling plane flew with the two F-22 Raptor fighters from Britain to Romania's Mihail Kogalniceanu air base on the Black Sea.

"We're here today to demonstrate our capability to take the F-22 anywhere needed in NATO or across Europe," said Squadron commander Daniel Lehoski.

"We want to ... actually fly the aircraft and train with our NATO allies," he told a travelling Reuters reporter.

The F-22s are almost impossible to detect on radar and so advanced that the US Congress has banned Lockheed Martin from selling them abroad. The US has deployed 12 of them at a British base in eastern England.

"The increased size of the 2016 deployment ... allows US Forces to assert their presence more widely across the eastern frontier," said US Air Force

spokeswoman Major Sheryll Klinkel.

"We want to be able to operate out of multiple locations. We want to be able to keep our adversary guessing on where we're going to go next."

The West is seeking to strengthen the defences of its eastern flank and reassure eastern European NATO members — such as Poland, the Baltic states and Czech republic which spent decades under Soviet dominance — without provoking the Kremlin by stationing large forces permanently.

But tensions are rising and Russia says the NATO build-up is stoking a dangerous situation.—*Reuters*

On Election Eve for five states, Trump rips Cruz and Kasich

WEST CHESTER, (Pa) — Republican Donald Trump, on the eve of primary elections in five states that he is expected to sweep, launched blistering attacks on Monday on rivals Ted Cruz and John Kasich for their 11th-hour joint effort aimed at denying him the party's presidential nomination. The Cruz-Kasich agreement, which some stop-Trump Republican strategists say should have been undertaken weeks ago, was forged to try and keep Trump from securing the 1,237 delegates he needs to win the nomination outright and force Republicans to consider the two rivals at the party's national convention in Cleveland in July.

Kasich, the Ohio governor, and Cruz, a US senator from Texas, agreed not to compete against each other in three upcoming nominating contests that could prove to be pivotal: Indiana, Oregon and New Mexico.

Trump, speaking at Penn-

sylvania's West Chester University, near Philadelphia, dismissed the deal as a sign of desperation and predicted he still would win the nomination on the convention's first ballot. With dramatic flair, he compared his plight to a champion boxer whom Trump said he once warned not to go into unfriendly territory because the judges could rule against him.

The boxer, Trump said, replied: "If I knock him out there's not a damn thing the judges can do." Trump is expected to win all five of Tuesday's nominating contests in the northeastern states of Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Delaware and Maryland, which have a total of 172 delegates at stake.

Trump is already ahead in the delegate race with 845, followed by Cruz with 559 and Kasich with 147, according to the Associated Press. After Tuesday, Indiana, which votes on 3 May, will be the

next big battleground, with 57 delegates up for grabs.

The Kasich-Cruz deal already showed signs of bending on Monday, with Kasich telling voters in Philadelphia that people who want to vote for him in Indiana should still do so. "I've never told them not to vote for me, they ought to vote for me. But I'm not over there campaigning and spending resources," he said.

Cruz took steps to maintain he is a serious contender for the nomination with his campaign team announcing he has developed a short list of vice presidential running mates. Traditionally, candidates wait until they have secured the nomination to select a running mate.

One person being vetted for the No. 2 position is former Republican presidential candidate Carly Fiorina, an aide to Fiorina said. Fiorina, a businesswoman, endorsed Cruz when she dropped out of the race.—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Japan to prepare extra budget of over \$4.5 billion for quake recovery

TOKYO — The Japanese government is looking to prepare an extra budget of more than 500 billion yen (\$4.5 billion/3.1 billion pounds) for reconstruction in the areas affected by the recent earthquakes in southern Japan, sources told Reuters.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe ordered his government on Sunday to compile the extra budget package to fund reconstruction.

The government aims to get approval from the cabinet on 13 May and put it into effect by 1 June when the current session of parliament ends, the sources said.—*Reuters*

Targeted air strikes kill five rescue workers near Syria's Aleppo

BEIRUT — Overnight air strikes and a rocket attack on an opposition-held area west of Aleppo killed five rescue workers, who appeared to have been deliberately targeted, a monitoring group and colleagues nearby said. The raids, which the rescue workers said consisted of two air strikes and at least one rocket, hit a centre for the Syrian Civil Defence, known as the "White Helmets", in the town of Atareb, some 25 km (15 miles) west of Aleppo.

Fighting has intensified in Aleppo Province in recent weeks as a partial truce brokered by the United States and Russia has all but broken down. The Civil Defence corps work as first responders in opposition-held territory where medical infrastructure has broken down.

"The targeting was very precise," Radi Saad, a Civil Defence worker based in northwestern Syria, told Reuters via internet. "They were in the centre and ready to respond. When they heard warplanes in the area they did not think they would be the target."—*Reuters*

Japan releases detained Taiwanese fishermen

TAIPEI — The Japanese government has released a Taiwanese fishing boat and its crew members found fishing in waters near Okinotori, the southernmost point of Japanese territory, Kyodo News learned on Tuesday.

Diplomatic sources said the boat and its crew were released at 4:40 pm Japan time, after a 6 million yen fine was paid to the Japanese side. The boat, identified as the Dong Sheng Ji No. 16, was found by the Japan Coast Guard fishing around 150 nautical miles east-southeast of Okinotori late Sunday night.

Taiwan's Foreign Ministry had earlier demanded their "immediate" and "unconditional release," with spokeswoman Eleanor Wang telling Kyodo News that the ministry was "not in favour" of paying any money. It was not the first time for Taiwanese fishermen to be detained by Japanese authorities for what Japan views as illegal fishing in the contested waters.—*Kyodo News*

New Zealand, Australia share ideas on tackling crime, emergencies

WELLINGTON — Illegal firearms and unexplained wealth will be among the focus topics at a meeting of New Zealand and Australian ministers this week.

Ministers from the Australian national and state governments will join New Zealand counterparts for the fifth meeting of the trans-Tasman Law, Crime and Community Safety Council in the South Island resort town of Queenstown on Wednesday and Thursday. The focus of the meeting would be in the areas of illegal firearms, unexplained wealth, domestic violence, compensation for child sexual abuse and national disaster resilience strategy, Justice Minister Amy Adams said in a statement on Tuesday.—*Xinhua*

Massive fire destroys museum in Indian capital

NEW DELHI — A massive fire broke out Tuesday in a multi-storied building in Indian capital city New Delhi, destroying a museum, officials said.

Six firefighters were injured while trying to douse the flames.

The fire broke out early Tuesday and the flames engulfed the building of a trade body (FICCI) housing National Museum of Natural History.

"The fire erupted at the top floor of the building in Mandi House locality at around 1:45am (local time) and soon spread down to other floors," a police official told media. "The injured firemen have been admitted in RML hospital."—*Xinhua*

Syrian food crisis deepens as war chokes farming

ABU DHABI/HASAKA, (Syria) — Syria's war has destroyed agricultural infrastructure and fractured the state system that provides farmers with seeds and buys their crops, deepening a humanitarian crisis in a country struggling to produce enough grain to feed its people.

The country's shortage of its main staple wheat is worsening. The area of land sown with the cereal — used to make bread — and with barley has fallen again this year, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) told Reuters.

The northeast province of

Hasaka, which accounts for almost half the country's wheat production has seen heavy fighting between the Kurdish YPG militia, backed by the US-led air strikes, and Islamic State militants.

Farming infrastructure, including irrigation canals and grain depots, has been destroyed, according to the FAO. It said the storage facilities of the state seeds body across the country had also been damaged, so it had distributed just a tenth of the 450,000 tonnes of seeds that farmers needed to cultivate their land this season.

Farmers are also struggling to get their produce to market so it can be sold and distributed to the population.

The conflict has led to the number of state collection centres falling to 22 in 2015, from 31 the year before and about 140 before civil war broke out between government forces and rebels five years ago, according to the General Organisation for Cereal Processing and Trade (Hoboob), the state agency that runs them. Many of those lost have been damaged or destroyed.

The breakdown of the ag-

ricultural system means Syria could struggle to feed itself for many years after any end to the fighting, and need a significant level of international aid, the FAO says.

It has had a major impact on plantings; the area of land sown with wheat and barley for the 2015-2016 season stood at 2.16 million hectares, down from 2.38 million hectares the previous season and 3.125 million in 2010 before the war, and only around two-thirds of the area targeted by the government, said the FAO.

The UN organisation said

its planting information came from the Syrian government. The government itself has not made public the figures for 2015/16 plantings.

The agriculture ministry could not be reached for comment. A government source told Reuters that information on the 2015/16 crop area was still not ready for publication.

"What concerns us is not the fluctuations from one year to the other, it is the worrying overall downward trend," said Eriko Hibi, the FAO's main representative for Syria. —Reuters

Obama sends more Special Forces to Syria in fight against IS



A US Air Force B-52 Stratofortress bomber arrives at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar on 9 April.
PHOTO: REUTERS

HANOVER, (Germany) — President Barack Obama announced on Monday the biggest expansion of US ground troops in Syria since its civil war began, but the move was unlikely to mollify Arab allies angry over Washington's cautious approach to the conflict.

The deployment of up to 250 Special Forces soldiers increases US forces in Syria roughly six-fold and is aimed at helping militia fighters who have clawed back territory from Islamic State militants in a string of victories.

Defence experts said giving more fighters on the ground access to US close air support could shift the momentum in Syria. But a senior member of the Saudi royal family who asked not to be identified dismissed the decision as "window dressing."

In announcing the deployment, Obama emphasized the importance of sustaining the gains made in the fight against Islamic State, although he cautioned that the US forces would not be spearheading the battle.

"They're not going to be leading the fight on the ground, but they will be essential in providing the training and assisting local forces as they continue to drive ISIL back," he said in a speech in the German city of Hanover, using an acronym for Islamic State.

Obama was speaking on the last stop of a foreign tour that also took him to Saudi Arabia and Britain. Democratic presidential front-runner Hillary Clinton and her rival, Bernie Sanders, voiced support on Monday for the deployment.

"These Special Forces will continue to provide critical support to local forces on the ground who ultimately must be the ones to win this fight," Clinton's campaign said in a statement. The former secretary of state previously called for a tougher approach to fighting Islamic State militants, including more air strikes and Special Forces.

Sanders, a US senator from Vermont, said during an MSNBC town hall: "I think what

the president is talking about is having American troops training Muslim troops, helping to supply the military equipment they need, and I do support that effort."

The US military has led an air campaign against Islamic State since 2014 in Iraq and Syria, but its effectiveness in Syria has been limited by a lack of allies on the ground in a country where a multi-sided civil war has raged for five years.

A Russian air campaign launched in Syria last year has been more effective because it is closely coordinated with the government of President Bashar al-Assad, who is Moscow's ally but a foe of the United States.

Rising tensions with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Arab monarchies, which have privately criticised the Obama administration's security policy toward the region, also have complicated the US effort in Syria.

US Republican Senator John McCain called the move overdue but insufficient. "Another reluc-

tant step down the dangerous road of gradual escalation will not undo the damage in Syria to which this administration has borne passive witness," said McCain, who leads the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump did not mention the deployment during a campaign rally in Rhode Island. He plans to address foreign policy in a speech on Wednesday in Washington.

Washington's main allies on the ground have been a Kurdish force known as the YPG, which wrested control of much of the Turkish-Syrian border from Islamic State. But the alliance has been constrained because US ally Turkey is deeply hostile to the YPG. "Presumably these (extra US forces) are going to assist our Kurdish YPG friends to widen and deepen their offensive against IS in northeastern Syria," said Tim Ripley, defence analyst and writer for IHS Jane's *Defence Weekly* magazine. —Reuters

Iran in talks with Russia on heavy water sales

TEHRAN — Iran is holding talks with Russia to sell it about 40 tonnes of heavy water from its nuclear programme, Iran's deputy foreign minister was quoted as saying by the Fars news agency.

Under last year's landmark nuclear deal between Iran and world powers, Tehran is responsible for reducing its stock of heavy water which is a component of making nuclear weapons and producing nuclear energy.

It is not radioactive and the nuclear deal gives Iran the right to sell, dilute or dispose of it under certain conditions.

Abbas Araqchi, who is also a top nuclear negotiator, was quoted by the Fars agency as saying late on Sunday that the United States had been the first buyer of Iranian heavy water and some other world powers, including Russia, were now showing an interest.

"We are negotiating with Russia to sell 40 tonnes of heavy water," he said.

The Russian Foreign Ministry later confirmed Moscow was considering the purchase.

In January Iran removed the core of its Arak heavy water nuclear reactor and filled it with cement as required under a nuclear deal. The United States, Russia and China have agreed to participate in the redesign and the construction of a modernised reactor. —Reuters

Fujimori's brother says he will seek Peru presidency if she loses

LIMA (Peru) — Kenji Fujimori, the youngest son of imprisoned ex-president Alberto Fujimori, said on Monday that he will run for president in 2021 if his sister Keiko Fujimori does not win a tight run-off election on 5 June.

The comment contradicted Keiko Fujimori's pledge that no Fujimori would seek the presidency in the next election - part of her ongoing effort to shore up her democratic credentials with voters wary of a return to the authoritarian rule of her father, Alberto Fujimori.

"The decision is mine," Kenji Fujimori said on Twitter. "Only in the event that Keiko does not win the presidency, I will run in 2021."

Kenji Fujimori, 35, belongs

to his sister's centre-right party Fuerza Popular and was re-elected as a lawmaker in Peru's single-chamber Congress with more votes than any other candidate.

Peruvian law bars family members of presidents from immediately succeeding them. Patriarch Alberto Fujimori is now serving a 25-year sentence for human rights abuses and corruption during his 1990-2000 government.

"In 2021, there will be no (presidential) candidate with the Fujimori surname," Keiko Fujimori said in a televised interview with the show Panorama on Sunday.

Keiko Fujimori, a 40-year-old former congresswoman, won the biggest share of votes in the April 10 first-round presidential



Peru's presidential candidate Keiko Fujimori attends a meeting at Peru's electoral board in Lima, Peru, on 18 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

election but has been seen as tied or slightly behind centrist economist Pedro Pablo Kuczynski in a 5 June run-off, according to recent polls.

She is popular in poor and

rural districts where her father is celebrated for building schools and cracking down on Shining Path guerrillas, although she faces stiff opposition from others who consider him a corrupt dic-

tator. Kuczynski has called on Peruvians to vote for him instead of Keiko Fujimori to avoid a "dynasty" in the Andean country, a major exporter of copper, gold and silver.—Reuters

Venezuela court blocks another opposition tactic to oust Maduro

CARACAS — Venezuela's Supreme Court shot down on Monday one of the opposition's main tactics to oust socialist leader Nicolas Maduro with a ruling that any constitutional amendment to reduce the presidential term could not be retroactive.

Having won control of the legislature last year due to public ire over an economic crisis, the opposition coalition is seeking to remove Maduro via popular pressure, constitutional reform or a recall referendum.

However, government-leaning institutions are thwarting it at every turn: the National Election Council is dragging its feet on the referendum, and the Supreme Court is striking down measures passed by the opposition in parliament.

In its latest judgment, the court said that while modification of the six-year presidential term was viable in principle if

approved in a referendum, "it cannot take effect retroactively or be applied immediately."

That decision, which came even before parliament had formally proposed an amendment, will add to opposition frustration at government stalling tactics and accusations that institutions are in the pocket of Maduro.

The 53-year-old former bus driver and long-serving foreign minister narrowly won election in 2013 to replace his mentor Hugo Chavez but his popularity has tumbled amid a recession.

Opposition leaders have called for a march to the election board on Wednesday to demand paperwork in the first step towards seeking the nearly 4 million signatures needed to trigger a recall referendum.

Venezuela's constitution allows elected officials to be recalled through such a vote halfway through their term.—Reuters



Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro attends a rally to celebrate the 206th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, in Caracas, Venezuela, on 19 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

Danish government ally, eyeing UK, urges referendum on EU ties

COPENHAGEN — Denmark should consider holding a referendum on its relations with the European Union, a key ally of the country's minority government said on Monday, as Britain prepares to vote on 23 June on whether to leave the 28-nation bloc.

Like Britain, Denmark has negotiated several exemptions from EU laws, most notably from having to join the euro currency.

The British referendum comes after Prime Minister David Cameron renegotiated some terms of Britain's EU membership, including curbs on EU migrants' access to some welfare benefits.

Denmark should try to win

similar concessions from the EU if Britons vote to stay in the bloc, said Kristian Thulesen Dahl, leader of the populist Danish People's Party, the largest of the three parties supporting the minority government in Copenhagen.

If the Danish parliament is unable to agree on the matter, "then why not ask the Danes to decide on the matter via a referendum," Thulesen Dahl said in a blog.

If Britain votes to leave the EU, Thulesen Dahl said he thought London would forge an accord with the EU based on close cooperation, adding that this would also "most likely" be an interesting position for Den-

mark. "Other countries may find it attractive as well," he said without elaborating. He stopped short of calling for a British-style In-Out referendum on Denmark's EU membership.

The Danish People's Party says it is not opposed to Denmark's EU membership but calls for less interference by Brussels in Danish affairs.

The party holds 37 seats in Denmark's 179-seat parliament, three more than the ruling Liberal Party, giving it a strong hand in negotiations with the government. Denmark joined the European Economic Community (EEC), the forerunner of the EU, with Britain and Ireland in 1973.—Reuters

Israel arrests 3 Palestinians for allegedly planning attack

JERUSALEM — Israeli security forces arrested overnight three Palestinians in east Jerusalem for allegedly planning an attack against Israelis, authorities said Tuesday.

The three suspects, originally from Nablus in the West Bank, were arrested at the east Jerusalem neighborhood of Jabel Mukaber, the Israeli Shin Bet security agency said in a statement.

The arrest came after intelligence that the three, aged 15, 16 and 23, were planning to carry out a combined attack against Israelis in the upcoming Passover holiday, in Jerusalem, the statement said.

Three other Palestinians were also arrested overnight by the Israeli military, one in Qalandiya and two others in villages near Bethlehem in the West Bank, the

Times of Israel website reported. It was not immediately known what prompted those arrests.

Israeli security forces are on high alert this week in Jerusalem, specifically around the Old City and the Temple Mount site in east Jerusalem, amid the Jewish holiday of Passover, in which many Jewish worshippers arrive at the contentious site, a source of strife between Jewish and Muslim worshippers.

Israeli security forces have also boosted their presence in the West Bank.

Since October, 28 Israelis have been killed in a wave of stabbing, shooting and car-ramming attacks; 200 Palestinians have died in clashes with Israeli security forces or after carrying out attacks on Israelis. Last week, 20 people were

injured in an explosion on a bus in southern Jerusalem. One of the injured died later; he was identified as a 19-year-old Palestinian who was affiliated with Hamas, the Palestinian organization that claimed responsibility for the blast.

Israel occupied the West Bank, east Jerusalem and Gaza Strip territories in 1967, and annexed Palestinian villages in east Jerusalem shortly thereafter, as part of the Jerusalem municipality. More than 300,000 Palestinians live in this area. Israeli leaders have accused the Palestinian authorities of inciting violence, whereas the Palestinians say it is the result of 49 years of Israeli occupation and the dim prospects of establishing a Palestinian state in the occupied territories.—Xinhua

France sinks Japanese, German bids to win \$40 billion Australian subs deal

SYDNEY/TOKYO — France has beaten Japan and Germany to win a A\$50 billion (\$40 billion/27.5 billion pounds) deal to build a fleet of 12 new submarines for Australia, one of the world's most lucrative defence contracts, Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull announced on Tuesday.

The victory for state-owned naval contractor DCNS Group underscored France's strengths in developing a compelling military-industrial bid and is a blow for Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's push to develop defence export capabilities as part of a more muscular security agenda.

Reuters earlier reported that DCNS would be announced as the winner, citing sources with knowledge of the process.

"The recommendation of our competitive evalua-

tion process ... was unequivocal that the French offer represented the capabilities best able to meet Australia's unique needs," Turnbull told reporters in the South Australian state capital of Adelaide where the submarines will be built.

Australia is ramping up defence spending, seeking to protect its strategic and trade interests in the Asia-Pacific as the United States and its allies grapple with China's rising power.

Japan's government with its Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (7011.T) and Kawasaki Heavy Industries (7012.T) boat had been seen as early frontrunners for the contract, but their inexperience in global defence deals and an initial reluctance to say they would build in Australia saw them slip behind DCNS and Germany's ThyssenKrupp AG (TKAG.DE).



Crew members stand atop of the Royal Australian Navy's Collins class submarine HMAS Sheean as it prepares to berth at the naval base HMAS Stirling located near Perth, Western Australia, in 2004. PHOTO: REUTERS

Industry watchers had anticipated a decision to come later in the year, but Turnbull's gamble on a 2 July general election has sped up the process.

The contract will have an impact on thousands of jobs in the shipbuilding industry in South Australia, where retaining votes in

key electorates will be critical for the government's chances of re-election.

"The submarine project .. will see Australian workers building Australian submarines with Australian steel," said Turnbull.

DCNS, which traces its roots to 1624 and is 35 per cent owned by defence

electronics giant Thales SA TCPF.PA, proposed a diesel-electric version of its 5,000-tonne Barracuda nuclear-powered submarine. DCNS enlisted heads of industry and top government figures to convince Australia of the merits of its offering and the benefits to the broader relationship.

Japan had offered to build Australia a variant of its 4,000 tonne Soryu submarine, a deal that would have cemented closer strategic and defence ties with two of Washington's key allies in the region but risked antagonizing China, Australia's top trading partner.—Reuters

Billionaire green donor launches US millennial voter drive

WASHINGTON — Billionaire environmental activist Tom Steyer's super PAC launched a \$25 million youth voter drive on Monday in seven political battleground states to help elect candidates that champion climate change policies in November's general election.

Steyer's NextGen Climate super PAC, a political group that raises funds to boost candidates with strong environmental platforms, said the campaign aims to

boost turnout of millennials, who have become one of the largest potential voter groups.

In the lead-up to the November general election, NextGen will deploy hundreds of organisers across over 200 colleges to register young voters and facilitate on-campus voting.

"We are determined that they will be a difference maker," Steyer told reporters on a conference call.

The group is targeting seven battleground states

where Steyer said millennial voters could "make up the difference in a tight race." Those states are Pennsylvania, Iowa, Ohio, New Hampshire, Nevada, Illinois and Colorado. Steyer has been the second largest individual political donor in 2016, having spent \$13 million so far this year, according to OpenSecrets.org. NextGen said the number of registered millennials has nearly tripled since 2008 from 17.2 million to 50.3 million, making the de-

mographic a key political force in 2016.

Climate change and clean energy is an area where there is widespread millennial interest.

NextGen cited a June 2015 poll that found that 73 per cent of young voters want the United States to get 50 per cent of its energy from renewable sources by 2030.

The group has not yet announced which candidates it will endorse in the presidential or congressional

elections but said it has challenged all candidates to say how they would achieve a goal of hitting a 50 percent clean energy target by 2030.

He said the air and water impacts of fracking, a controversial drilling technique that has been responsible for a boom in US oil and natural gas production over the past decade, shows the US needs to make a faster transition away from fossil fuels. Steyer said NextGen will spend around \$25 million on the months-long

campaign and will launch several other initiatives later in the election cycle.

Steyer's PAC in 2014 aimed to make climate change into a wedge issue in the 2014 midterm elections, spending over \$70 million with mixed results.

But with millennial voters turning out in record numbers in the 2016 primaries, Steyer sees a formula for success. "We need to make sure to carry on that momentum until November," he said.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV TAN BINH 134 VOY NO (04-2016)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV TAN BINH 134 VOY NO (04-2016) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27.4.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-7 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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Phone No: 2301928

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Consignees of cargo carried on MV MAENAM 1 VOY NO (547N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27.4.2016 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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PHOTO: REUTERS

Lady Gaga goes unrecognisable with boyish look

LOS ANGELES — Pop star Lady Gaga, who is known for her over-the-top appearances onstage, toned down her look during a recent outing.

The 30-year-old pop diva was almost unrecognisable as she opted for a boyish style,

which she showed off in some new Instagram pictures, reported Ace Showbiz.

Ditching her extravagant style, Gaga opted for a checkered shirt, black skinny jeans and a cowboy hat during the outing.

She added a touch of glamor with her bejewelled boots. She brought a bouquet of flowers in one of the images and captioned the pic, “Cherry blossoms for my baby.”

It’s not clear for whom the flowers were.—PTI

Sales soar for late singer Prince as his music tops Billboard charts

LOS ANGELES — The music of Prince soared to the top of the weekly US Billboard 200 album chart on Monday after the singer’s sudden death last week, as mourning fans rushed to remember the artist’s legacy through his music.

Nielsen Music said Monday it had tracked 2.3 million song sales and more than 579,000 albums sales from Prince’s catalog in the three days following the news of his unexpected death at age 57 at his Minnesota estate last Thursday.

Album sales were led by “The Very Best of Prince,” a 2001 compilation of the R&B artist’s hits including “Purple Rain” and “Kiss,” which sold more than 250,000 copies in the three days.

The compilation topped the Billboard 200 album chart, which measures music sales on a Fri-

day through Thursday week, with 179,000 units from album and song sales and limited streaming, according to figures from Nielsen.

Prince’s 1984 album “Purple Rain” came in at No 2 with 69,000 units sold, and the singer’s 1993 box-set “The Hits/The B-Sides” reached No 6 with 41,000 units sold.

Prince had been tenacious in limiting use of his material on YouTube and digital music streaming platforms such as Spotify and Rhapsody. The singer did make his entire catalog available on the artist-owned, premium subscription streaming service Tidal, launched by rapper Jay Z.

On the Digital Songs chart, “Purple Rain” led five Prince songs in the top 10, which measures online song download sales.—Reuters

Kirsten Dunst, Donald Sutherland join Cannes jury

LOS ANGELES — American actress Kirsten Dunst and legendary Canadian actor Donald Sutherland are among those that will join president George Miller on the 2016 Cannes Film Festival jury.

Dunst, 33, won the best actress prize at Cannes for “Melancholia” in 2011 and starred in Sofia Coppola’s “Marie Antoinette” (2006). Danish actor Mads Mikkelsen, who won the best actor prize four years ago for his performance in “The Hunt”, will also join the panel, said The Hollywood Reporter. Hungarian di-

rector Laszlo Nemes, whose first feature “Son of Saul” was a major surprise last year, winning the fest’s Grand Prize and going on to win the best foreign-language film Oscar, is another celebrity on the jury.

Italian multihyphenate Valeria Golina, probably best known to American audiences for her role in “Rain Man” but known in her native Italy as an actress, director and writer, also will be on the jury. Iranian producer Katayoon Shahabi will round out the jury. The festival is set to run 11-24 May.—PTI



Actress Kirsten Dunst and actor Donald Sutherland. PHOTO: PTI

Richard Madden struggled with ‘Cinderella’ costumes

LONDON — Actor Richard Madden says he struggled with the skintight costumes he had to wear for Disney movie “Cinderella”.

Talking on “The Graham Norton Show”, Madden, 29, admitted the outfits he donned to play Prince Charming were more revealing than he could have imagined, reported Contactmusic.

“(The costume) was very constraining in ways I’d not imagined. It was a Disney thing and – here we

go – because it was Disney, I was in quite skintight white trousers,” the former “Game of Thrones” star said. “Maybe some people would (call them) leggings — I don’t like to use that word! They can be very revealing, so we spent a few days trying out different jock straps. It’s just so dirty, even saying this story! Trying on these things, everyone’s just kinda looking at you to see what they can and cannot see under the light,” he added.—PTI



Cast and Crew members of the film pose for photographers at a media event ahead of the release of, “Captain America: Civil War”, in London, Britain, on 25 April. PHOTO: REUTERS

Control and conscience divides heroes in ‘Captain America: Civil War’

LOS ANGELES — Marvel’s band of Avengers are usually a friendly bunch, but when faced with the destruction of their heroic efforts to save the world, the superheroes are split between maintaining control of their powers or going under government contract, leading to an explosive battle.

“Captain America: Civil War,” out in international theaters this week and in US theaters on 6 May, holds the heroes accountable for the mass destruction caused by their efforts to save the planet. Last year’s “Avengers: Age of Ultron” ended with an entire town being lifted into the air.

In “Civil War,” Chris Evans’ Captain America fights for superheroes to govern themselves and goes head to head with his former ally, Robert Downey Jr.’s Iron Man, who wants the heroes to be governed by the United Nations.

“We like to liken it to a fight at a wedding,” said Joe Russo, who co-directed the film with his brother Anthony Russo.

“It’s something that’s been brewing in a family for some time and something happens that instigates a fall-out amongst all of the characters so relevancy and topicality are really important to us because it makes the audience feel like it’s part of their world.”

“Civil War” sees Captain America’s best friend the Winter Soldier (Sebastian Stan) seemingly cause massive acts of destruction. A divided superhero camp mirrors the complexities of the current US political stage, Evans said.

“Even in American politics, no one is right or wrong. There’s no evil here, we’re not fighting Nazis or aliens. This is just a matter of whether we’re fighting for

our head or our heart,” he said.

Moments of levity come courtesy of new additions to the superhero ensemble, namely Paul Rudd’s smart-talking Ant-Man and the first appearance of British newcomer Tom Holland’s Spider-Man, the latest iteration of the web-slinging hero. Spider-Man is joining Disney’s Marvel cinematic universe as part of a collaborative deal between Walt Disney Co and Sony Pictures, which owns the rights to Spider-Man. Holland will be swinging his way into 2017’s standalone film “Spider-Man: Homecoming.”

“I like the fact that they’re skewing Spider-Man young because that’s how he is in the comic books. He’s a young kid, and Tom Holland has this really great innocence and naivete but sense of subtle maturity,” Evans said.—Reuters

Tom Hanks jokes that he backed Leicester City for the Premier League title

LOS ANGELES — Leicester City soccer club’s remarkable pursuit of the English Premier League title has even caught the attention of one Hollywood A-lister, as actor Tom Hanks hinted that he may just have placed a bet on the team to win the championship.

“You know what I did at the beginning of the season? I put 100 quid (pounds) on Leicester (City) so I think I’ll do okay,” the actor quipped on Monday at the London premiere of his latest film “A Hologram for the King.”

“You should find somebody you know, somebody local up there who decided to put 25 pounds on their local soccer club, they are going to be millionaires,” he added. Leicester City started the soccer season with odds to win at 5,000-1, but has enjoyed an unexpected rise to become a top contender, with just three games standing between the team and its first ever soccer premiership league title.—*Reuters*

Art detective says female and male model used for Mona Lisa face

ROME — Mona Lisa’s enigmatic smile draws millions of viewers from across the world, all eager to see the art world’s most famous female face. But is it?

An Italian art detective is arguing that research backs his long-standing claim that Leonardo Da Vinci used both a female and male model to create the acclaimed portrait that hangs in Paris’ Louvre museum.

While the identity of the woman is not certain, historians believe Lisa Gherardini, the wife of Florentine silk merchant Francesco del Giocondo, sat for Da Vinci for the painting.

But Silvano Vinceti, who heads Italy’s National Committee for the Promotion of Historic and Cultural Heritage, says he used infrared technology to examine the painting and made key findings in its first layer.

“In that layer we can see that she was not smiling and joyful but looked melancholic and sad,” he said, adding the second model was Gian Giacomo Caprotti - Da Vinci’s male apprentice, known as



A boy runs across a giant copy of the Mona Lisa as it is unveiled in Wrexham, north Wales, in 2009. PHOTO: REUTERS

Salai. Using Photoshop, Vinceti compared the “Mona Lisa” face to other Da Vinci works Salai is believed to have posed for, including “St John the Baptist”.

“We have used all the paintings in which Leonardo used Salai as a model and compared them to the ‘Mona Lisa’ and certain details correspond perfectly; so he used two models and added creative details which came from his own imagination,” he said.

“I believe that this goes with a long-time fascination of Leonardo’s, that is, the subject of androgyny. In other words, for Leonardo, the perfect person was a combination of a man and a woman.”

Vinceti also bases his theory on claims by 16th Italian art historian and painter Giorgio Vasari that Gherardini’s husband hired clowns to try to make her smile for the sitting.

Salai’s name has in the past been linked to the “Mona Lisa”, but other historians have dismissed the claims.—*Reuters*

MRTV

News Channel
in Brief

(27- 4-2016, Wednesday)

6:00 am

- Paritta By Venerable Mingun Sayadaw

8:35 am

- People’s Talk

9:35 am

- Science and Technology Programme

10:35 am

- Documentary

11:35 am

- MRTV’s Youth Programme

1:15 pm

- TV Drama Series

1:55 pm

- Kyae Pwint Myaye Yin Khone Than

2:25 pm

- Mahar Gita

2:50 pm

- Traditional Boxing

3:45 pm

- AFC Cup 2016 Football (Live) South China vs Yangon United

6:35 pm

- Football Magazine (Yangon United)

7:15 pm

- TV Drama Series

8:00 pm

- News / International News/ Weather Report

9:00 pm

- News
- TV Drama Series
- Storles
- Musician’s Talk

Note / Hourly News Bulletins (Local + International)

Guard was wrong to silence school choir, 9/11 Memorial says

NEW YORK — A security guard who stopped a middle-school choir from singing the national anthem at the September 11 memorial in Manhattan acted inappropriately and the students are welcome to come back and sing the anthem, a memorial official said on Monday.

Fifty-one choral students led by their teacher from Waynesville Middle School in North Carolina started signing “The Star-Spangled Banner” at the National September 11 Memorial in New York last week when a security guard stopped them because they lacked the required permit to perform.

The sixth- to eighth-graders, who generally range in age from 11 to 14, stopped immediately, even though another security guard had orally granted them permission.

Although the rules require a permit, which takes 10 business days to process and carries a \$35 fee, it was still appropriate for middle-school students to sing the national anthem at the site, where more than 2,700 people died in the 11 September, 2001, attacks, a spokeswoman for the 9/11 Memorial said.

“The guard did not respond appropriately,” spokeswoman Kaylee Skaar said. “We are working with our security staff to ensure that this will not happen again. We reached out to the school to express our regret for how this was handled and asked the principal to share that with the students.”

Skaar said the choir was welcome to return to sing the national anthem, as many groups have done. Waynesville Middle School Principal Trevor Putnam said it would be difficult during the school year as the students have already returned to North Carolina.

The next choral group to visit New York will get a permit to sing at the memorial, he said. “This was a good civics lesson. Why are there limits put in place in public forums?” Putnam said. “I was really proud of our kids. They were asked to stop and did so respectfully.”—*Reuters*

MRTV

Entertainment Channel

(27- 4-2016, Wednesday)

6:00 pm

- Weather Report
- Music Programme

6:30 pm

- Pyi Thu Ni Ti

6:50 pm

- Music Programme

7:10 pm

- International Drama Series

7:50 pm

- International Drama Series

8:30 pm

- Cartoon Programme “Flushed Away ” (Part-2)

9:10 pm

- Music Programme

9:20 pm

- English Premier League (Review-I)

9:40 pm

- International Movie Songs

9:50 pm

- Clay Toy Pots Festival

10:10 pm

- Myanmar Movie

Midnight

- Close Down.

From 27-4-2016 (Wednesday) 6:00 Pm
To 28-4-2016 (Thursday) 6:00 Pm

mitv

Myanmar International

(27-4-2016 07:00am ~ 28-4-2016 7:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03 Am

News

07:26 Am

Yangon Markets: Da Nyin Gone Market

07:36 Am

Family of Toys

07:56 Am

Goldsmith

08:03 Am

News

08:26 Am

Amazing May Phoo Han

08:36 Am

A Historic Town: 9 Pagodas

08:48 Am

Farming: Duck Breeder

09:03 Am

News

09:26 Am

Serene and Happy Rural Life in Myanmar

09:38 Am

Interview with Ayeyawady Region Chief Minister

10:03 Am

News

10:26 Am

Orchidologist Dr. Saw Lwin

10:47 Am

ABU Radio Song Festival

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

(03:00 Pm ~ 06:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 10:00 Am)

06:30 Pm

Live: AFC Cup 2016 Football Competition “South China vs Yangon United”

08:26 Pm

Myanmar Traditional Identity (EP- 3) The Sphinx Of Egypt And The Manousiha Of Myanmar

08:40 Pm

Bollywood Actress “Laila Khan” (Born & Raised in Myanmar) (Part-I)

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

(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Tuesday 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)



AS Roma's goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny makes a save against Gonzalo Higuain of Napoli at Olympic Stadium, Rome, on 25 April.
PHOTO: REUTERS

Juventus win fifth successive Serie A title after Napoli loss

ROME — Juventus won Serie A for the fifth season in a row without kicking a ball on Monday after Napoli, the only team that could have caught them, were sunk 1-0 by a late Radja Nainggolan goal at AS Roma.

Juventus, who have led the table since beating Napoli 1-0 in February, were left with an unassailable 12-point lead with three games each left to play as they clinched a record 32nd league title.

The match, played at a half-empty Stadio Olimpico on a sunny bank holiday afternoon, was an anti-climatic end to a season which had at one stage promised to be one of the most exciting Italian title races

for years.

During the first half of the season, the lead had changed almost weekly with AS Roma, Napoli, Inter Milan and Fiorentina all taking turns at the top.

But, as their rivals faltered, Juventus, who beat Fiorentina 2-1 on Sunday, put together an astonishing run in which they took 73 of a possible 75 points to snare the title with games to spare.

The clash of Serie A's two highest-scoring sides was threatening to peter out into a tame goalless draw until Nainggolan slotted the ball home in the 89th minute following a move started with a delicate pass from Roma substitute Francesco Totti.

The 39-year-old Roma stalwart, in his 24th season at the club and no longer able to command a place in the starting lineup, has made a recent habit of coming on in the last few minutes and having a major impact on games.

Roma had more possession but Napoli, whose top-scorer Gonzalo Higuain returned after a three-match ban, carved out the better chances and Jose Callejon had a first-half goal ruled out by a hairline offside decision.

Higuain, who has scored 30 goals this season, nearly gave Napoli a first-half lead with a delightful piece of control only to see his shot saved by Wojciech Szczesny.

A Napoli goal looked imminent in the second half as Dries Mertens curled a shot agonisingly wide and Antonio Ruediger saved Roma by sliding in to take the ball off Marek Hamsik's foot just before an almost certain score.

Instead, Nainggolan slotted the ball past Pepe Reina after Mohamed Salah managed to find the Belgian despite being surrounded by Napoli defenders.

Napoli, who would qualify directly for the Champions League group stage if they finish second, are now only two points clear

of Roma, who are in third place, good for a berth in the final qualifying round. —Reuters

Tottenham title hopes in tatters following West Brom draw

LONDON — Tottenham's Hotspur's Premier League title hopes are hanging by a thread after a 1-1 draw at home to West Bromwich Albion on Monday left Leicester City tantalisingly close to being crowned champions of England for the first time.

Craig Dawson's 32nd-minute own goal put Tottenham in front as they sought to cut Leicester's lead back to five points.

But Tottenham produced a nervy second-half display and Dawson redeemed himself when he headed his side level after 72 minutes to deflate the home crowd and no doubt kickstart a party in the east Midlands.

Tottenham struck the woodwork three times on a frustrating

night and Leicester can now clinch the title if they beat Manchester United at Old Trafford on Sunday.

With three matches remaining Leicester have 76 points with Tottenham, the only side who can deny them the title, on 69.

Manchester City and Arsenal have 64.

"It was very frustrating," Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino told reporters. "It was a game we had to win."

"The first half we played very well but we spent a lot of energy to make it 1-0 and in the second half we lost a bit of control of the game and that allowed them to believe."

Asked if Tottenham had

blown their title chances, the Argentine added: "It's not over, the gap is seven points and we have three games left. But it's true it's very difficult."

Tottenham bossed the opening period and West Brom barely got out of their own half in the opening 15 minutes.

Leading scorer Harry Kane saw his close-range shot turned onto the inside of the post by West Brom goalkeeper Boaz Myhill and then Tottenham's Danish playmaker Christian Eriksen grazed the crossbar with a free kick.

West Brom were well organised, however, and had managed to blunt Tottenham's attack until the opener arrived in unusual circumstances.

Eriksen's dangerous free kick was aimed towards Jan Vertonghen but Dawson, in his desperation to intercept it, stumbled and saw the ball go into the net off his arm.

There was relief all around a chilly White Hart Lane as the home fans again began to dream of a first title since 1961.

But the second half did not go to plan.

West Brom were far more ambitious, causing Tottenham problems with a barrage of high balls into the area. Even so Tottenham still should have doubled their lead when Eriksen and Dele Alli combined to tee up Erik Lamela but his close-range shot spun against the foot of the post. —Reuters

Woods feels 'nice and smooth' after first holes of the year

MONTGOMERY (Texas) — Tiger Woods played his first stretch of golf holes since last August on Monday at a course opening in Montgomery, Texas to fuel speculations that he could return soon.

Woods was present for the opening of Bluejack National Golf Course, which he helped design. The former world number one warmed up in front of a crowd, hit a ceremonial tee shot and then played a few holes with longtime friend and fellow Major champion Mark O'Meara. "I haven't been out here playing like this. I hadn't played any holes until today," Woods told reporters.

"I know people have said I've played holes back at Medalist, but I haven't. This is actually the first time I've played holes since Wyndham. It's been a while." Woods, 40, last competed at the Wyndham Championship in North Carolina last August before back surgeries ended his year. —Reuters

Suhr, Blake among Rio contenders to compete in Boston

Rio Olympic medals contenders Jenn Suhr, Meseret Defar, Yohan Blake and Nick Willis are among top athletes expected for the inaugural adidas Boost Boston Games on 17-18 June, organisers said on Monday.

The international meet, which replaces the adidas Grand Prix Diamond League meeting that had been held in New York City, will climax on Saturday in a "street meet" held on historic Charles Street between the Boston Public Garden and Boston Common. American Suhr is the 2012 Olympic women's pole vault gold medallist and world indoor record holder, and Ethiopia's Defar is a six-times IAAF world champion, two-time Olympic gold medallist and former world record holder at 5000 metres. New Zealander Willis is the 2008 Olympic silver medallist at 1500 metres, while Jamaica's Blake is the 2011 IAAF world champion at 100 metres and 2012 Olympic silver medallist at both 100 metres and 200 metres. —Reuters