

UPDJC commits to success of 21st century Panglong Conference

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When it comes to peace, the sooner the better

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Police to toughen stance on 'disruptive elements'

ANARCHICAL activist groups passing themselves off as peaceful organisations will be exposed and legal action taken, according to a statement from Colonel Tin Aung Htun, Minister for Security and Border Affairs for Yangon Region.

The Yangon regional government will not only expose and press legal charges against labour camp escapees, escapees from policy custody, military deserters

and undesirables hiding themselves in squatter settlements, but also those anarchical types passing themselves off as members of peaceful organisations.

"These kinds of people are scarce amongst genuine organisations. But there are those anarchical groups of people who, after breaking the law, ostensibly work for peaceful organisations but only as front for making money. These groups will be exposed and

legal action taken against them in accordance with the law," stated Colonel Tin Aung Htun.

U Phyto Min Thein, Yangon Region Chief Minister, has said that those peaceful organisations concerned will be informed of the instances of anarchical behaviour by those attempting to mask themselves as peaceful organisation.

"There are some instances of these people, in which called peace

organisations, attributing themselves military abbreviations and wearing a uniform before acting as they please. It really impacts negatively on the reputation of genuine peace organisations. We've informed peace organisations of such people. It's a misuse of a peace organisation's name," said U Phyto Min Thein.

As well as instructing those involved in business operations whilst sheltering in squatter set-

tlements - such as the opening of liquor bars - to make themselves scarce in a timely manner, security and administration sectors will be ramped up in a bid to mitigate unexpected anarchical behaviour from arising during the surveying of squatter settlements, while submissions will be made to Union Government to allow for an increase in legal action to be taken, should it be deemed necessary.—*Myitmakha News Agency*



About 2,000 affordable rental apartments would emerge in the vicinity of industrial zones in Yangon. PHOTO: THE MIRROR

Apartments planned for workers facing housing difficulties in Yangon

CONSTRUCTION Union Minister U Win Khaing said that his ministry will construct affordable rental apartments intended for workers facing housing difficulties in Yangon this year.

According to its housing policy the ministry will build 2,000 rental apartments in the vicinity of industrial zones for the use of

workers on its list of priorities.

"They will be fully-serviced apartments, and the rent is around K20,000 a month," the union minister said, adding that the non-profit housing policy would mitigate the city's squatting issue.

A rental housing project called Mahabandoola was imple-

mented in Dagon Myothit (South) township during the time of the previous government. The estate comprises 1,200 apartments, 1,152 rooms of which were sold by lot. The remaining 48 rooms were given to people whose land plots had been effected by the project.

According to Union Minister

U Win Khaing, plans are under way to implement more housing projects in Yangon Region over the next two years.

"We will build 8,000 apartments. Each apartment will cost less than K10 million. These living spaces will be especially dedicated to low income families" he said.—*Ko Moe*

Security standards to be raised in Yangon Region

COLONEL Tin Aung Htun, Minister for Security and Border Affairs for Yangon Region, has stated efforts will be exerted to raise the standard of security within the region.

"The bringing together here [in Yangon] of the local and Naypyidaw police forces, in the name of the new government's hundred day project initiative, is to show the extent of our capacity. We will continue [to provide security] within the city in the wake of the hundred day project implementation period," said the colonel.

The Minister's remark was in response to a question posed by U Wai Phyto Han, Yangon Hluttaw MP for Insein Township constituency 2, during parliament in which he stated that legal charges should be pressed against drug racketeers in the region for distribution and selling narcotics, together with amendments made to current legislation.

"Adolescents and women have become involved in the distribution and selling of narcotics substances. Close inspections on these kinds of matters need to be carried out on a daily basis," said U Wai Phyto Han.

The MP for Insein Township added that the hundred day initiative to curtail crime has seen eighty arrests made concerning prostitution, and over a hundred-and-twenty arrests relating to narcotics, within the greater Yangon Region.

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Literary festival plus political literature reading to be held in late July



Union Minister Dr Pe Myint and officials discuss ways to organize political literature reading. PHOTO: MNA

A COORDINATION meeting took place at the Printing and Publishing Department in Yangon yesterday to discuss ways to organise a political literature reading.

At the meeting, Information Union Minister Dr Pe Myint urged officials to invite resourceful people to the event, describing it as the first of its kind.

"Literary festivals have hardly ever touched on the ques-

tions of politics in our country, despite an abundance of political literature," he said.

The paper reading session will be held in conjunction with a monsoon literary festival, with the union minister calling for collective efforts to be made to make sure the event goes smoothly.

Political researcher U Ko Ko Hlaing spoke in support of the event, suggesting that the meeting focus on deciding the

number of papers to be read and the categories of topics to be discussed.

"If political literature thrives, it will help people broaden their political horizons."

The literary festival will be held in the compound of the Printing and Publishing Department on Theinbyu road in Yangon for three days in late July and is expected to draw the participation of some 100 book shops.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Mandalay's air pollution worse at night

AIR pollution in Mandalay is worse at night than day, according to studies.

"The Department of Environmental Conservation is carrying out the measurement of air pollution 24 hours a day. Air pollution is worse at night, our studies have revealed" said Mandalay Region, environmental conservation department deputy director U Min Thein. An air pollution testing machine was installed in April of last year at an estimated cost of k100 million, it has been learned.

A standard volume will be announced in 2017. The department has said it will also carry out pollution measurements in rivers, creeks and lakes.

"Changes are taking place hourly. Particles called PM 2.5 are measured. The machine sucks the air from within a radius of three metres and makes readings," said U Min Thein.

According to the measurements of the PM 2.5 particle last April, the maximum volume is 99.3356 ug/m3 and the minimum is 16.915 ug/m3. During the rains, the atmosphere is clean and pollution goes on the decline. The volume should be at least 25 ug/m3, according to the Environmental Conservation Department.

Mandalay has a population of more than 1.2 million population density increasing.—*Aung Thant Khaing*



Mandalay is facing air pollution at night. PHOTO: AUNG THANT KHAING

Construction situation expected to recover at end of this year

The following is an exclusive interview with Mr Marco Romahn, Managing Director of PERI Asia Pte Ltd Formwork Scaffolding Engineering that is currently partaking in the Buildtech exhibition in Yangon.



Mr Marco Romahn is seen during the interview with GNLM. PHOTO: GNLM

Q: What does your company hope to achieve by participating in the Buildtech exhibit? What is your position in the Myanmar market?

A: PERI is a German family owned engineering company and the largest supplier of Formwork and Scaffolding worldwide.

BuildTech is a great opportunity for us to showcase our innovative Formwork and Scaffolding Products which have been utilised since 2014 to carry out construction projects in Yangon, such as the extension of the Sedona Hotel

and the Junction City Towers.

On this year's BuildTech we focus on our comprehensive construction services such as engineering, logistic, on-site support and customer training, true to our motto "PERI - we offer more than just products".

An example. Since the beginning of this year we have been offering customer training in Yangon with our local partner Kabar and TiongSeng from Singapore. We hope to support the Myanmar construction market and to make construction more safe and more

productive.

Q: What are your views on the nearly stalled construction sector in Myanmar? When can the situation recover?

A: Construction in Myanmar is mainly carried out using outdated formwork and scaffolding as well as low skilled construction workers. On top of this construction methods are not environment friendly. According to my understanding the new government will investigate the current construction situation to implement measures that will help to improve it.

I expect a recovery at the end of this year.

Q: Does your company have any plans to operating in Myanmar?

A: We are committed to doing business in Myanmar and we have a long-term plan.

We began our business in 2013. In 2014 we opened an office in Yangon and carried out our first construction project. In 2015 we qualified ourselves again to provide our services to a local construction partner. This year we will hire more employees in order to be permanently present in Myanmar.—*GNLM*

Kyaukphyu squatters suffer from low employment

SQUATTERS in the Rakhine State township of Kyaukphyu are struggling to earn livelihood for lack of employment in the region.

The squatter community, which is made up of over 200 families and a populace of approximately 1,000, erected dwellings on eight land plots confiscated by the previous government, according to local administrators.

"We've finished putting roofing on our dwellings. But in terms of employment, strong winds and a scarcity of fish in the river have made things difficult for us. Some who can't get work every day are forced to go hungry. To make things worse, it's time for parents to enrol their children in school, for which they need to buy school uniforms and books. We don't dare to think about the costs involved," said U Maung Nu Phyu, a squatter residing in Milaungpyin.

The squatters have arrived from employment-scarce regions across Rakhine State, such as Myebon, Sittwe, Minbya and Mrauk U, and they were settled

in Kyaukphyu expecting to secure work in construction at the Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone (SEZ).

"The government has changed, and the SEZ project has yet to commence. Work here is few and far between, and we don't possess the expenses needed to return to our villages. Everybody is at a loss as to what to do after hearing the news that the government would evict us before the onset of the rains," said U PhyuThi, a squatter living on land within a government fish farm project in Mrauk U Township.

The township's General Administration Department issued an official notification last year and again in January 2016, warning squatters in Kyaukphyu to remove themselves or face legal action.

However, due to difficulties in finding alternative housing for the squatters, none of the squatters have vacated their current locations yet.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

UPDJC commits to success of 21st century Panglong Conference

THE Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) pledged yesterday to hold the 21st century Panglong conference successfully, agreeing to put forward 16 representatives.

The UPDJC will be re-formed with 16 representatives from the government, 16 from ethnic armed groups and 10 from political parties.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said at the first day of the meeting on Friday that the participation of political parties should be based on their representation in parliament, adding that parties that have at least one representative in a parliament will be allowed to attend the peace conference.

The 21st Century Panglong conference will be convened based on the Nationwide Cease-fire Agreement (NCA), said State



Participants discuss at Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) meeting. PHOTO: MNA

Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in her capacity as chairperson of the Union-level Peace Dia-

logue Joint Committee (UPDJC) at a committee meeting yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw, adding that

the UPDJC will thus remain active during the peace process. —Myanmar News Agency

Security standards to be raised in Yangon Region

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U Wai Phyo Han further mentioned that Yangon Region is serviced by 5,780 police officers operating from 84 police stations, and that desire is for them to tackle, in a timely manner, the distribution and sale of narcotics and those perpetrators acting outside the confines of the law to allow for peace of mind over public security.

It is known the remarks made by U Wai Phyo Han were supported by U Nay Bone Lat, Yangon Hluttaw MP for Thimgangyun Township, with further discussion in Hluttaw over the issue earmarked for June 14.—Myitmakha News Agency

Reduction in offshore fishing permitted during Tanintharyi Region's 'closed season'

THE Tanintharyi Region Department of Fisheries has stated that it will permit forty per cent of offshore fishing trawlers to continue their fishing activities along the region's coastline during the closed fishing season.

The restrictions on fishing only apply to offshore fishing trawlers within the region from 1 June until August, but forty per cent of licensed trawlers which registered their license prior to yesterday will be allowed to continue trawling.

"There are different categories of fishing trawlers, depending on the types of fishing nets and equipment they use. We'll allow forty per cent fishing trawlers dependant on their classification of used fishing equipment," said an official from the Tanintharyi Region Department of Fisheries.

Only limited numbers of

fishing trawlers are annually allowed to fish during the closed fishing season annually, but last year saw an expect to the precedent with fifty per cent of offshore trawlers permitted to continue fishing.

This year, however, see a reduction to forty per cent with added restrictions on types of trawler.

"We've requested the list of fishing trawlers from fisheries departments from respective districts and townships within Tanintharyi Region. We need to submit this complied list to our Naypyidaw headquarters later today," added the official.

A total of 1,355 fishing trawlers ply the coastal waters of Myanmar's southern coastline, of which just 720 trawlers have registered fishing licenses, the rest remaining unlicensed.

Myitmakha News Agency



Workers repair a fishing boat in Kawthoung.

PHOTO: MYINTMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

Second Myanmar Editors' Forum in Yangon focuses on challenges to overcome

THE Myanmar Journalist Network (MJN) and the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL) jointly organised the second Myanmar Editors' Forum in Yangon yesterday to seek ways to overcome obstacles and challenges, according to MJN's General Secretary U Zeyar Hlaing.

According to advisor to the ANFREL Mr Bidhakyak Das, the first forum focused on the opportunities and challenges of the elections and the second on election promises. He spoke of the need for the media to closely monitor whether the election promises were kept or not.

In his response to an interview at the event, Information Union Minister Dr Pe Myint stressed the importance of the media as the fourth pillar, saying that the media should keep a watchful eye on the other three pillars- executive, legislative and judicial- in a bid to redress their functions.

He urged the media to follow



Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint delivers address at Myanmar Editors Forum in Yangon. PHOTO: MNA

the government's 100-day plan and analyse what went wrong with the plan. "Now all the ministries have spokespersons you (journalists) are able to contact them for information when you want and evaluate how well they can respond to your queries," Dr Pe Myint said.

Seasoned correspondents, in-

cluding U Thiha Saw, chairman of the Myanmar Journalists Association, and U Zaw Thet Htwe of the Myanmar Journalist Union, described the government's ongoing efforts as satisfactory, saying that the government would continue to work for the betterment of the nation.—Myanmar News Agency

Internal migrant workers to Bago Region issued with national ID cards

AS one of the projects of the new government's hundred day initiatives, internal migrant workers who have lived for a period of over three years within Bago Region will be issued with national identity cards and household registration certificates, according to Bago Region Department of Immigration and National Registration.

According to the department, the issuing of Citizenship Scrutiny Certificates to children between Grade 8-10 and household registration certificates to internal migrant workers from 26 factories will be implemented within the hundred day project period.

"We've already made contact with some of the 26 factories. ID cards have been issued to a total of 82 workers who have been working in Bago Region for three years or more. We'll continue to carry out further field trips to other factories," said U Myo Tint, officer of the department.

Those who have three years of work-service within the region are eligible to receive both national identity cards and household registration certificates, whereas those with less than three years of experience are required to return to their original hometown in order to apply.

"I've been working here for over ten years. I registered during the census back in my hometown, but have since lost the documentation. The authorities have recently collected names to issue me with national identity cards. I think their plan to issue them for us here [in Bago] is a good one," said Ma Win Mar, a worker from the Myan Stat garment factory in Bago.

The aforementioned internal migrant workers will be issued with ID cards and household registration certificates only if they meet the criteria as stipulated in the 1982 Citizenship Law, it is known.—Myitmakha News Agency

Tatmadaw flies rice to Khaunglanphu in Myintkyina

THE Kachin State Government recently donated sacks of rice to local in Khaunglanphu, it is learnt.

People residing in Khaunglanphu, Putao District, Kachin State have been suffering from insufficient supplies of food because of recent heavy rain which has caused landslides and blocked roads in the region.

Provisions and consumer goods were unable to reach residents

of the disaster-hit areas in Khaunglanphu.

As of Friday the Tatmadaw have been providing assistance by way of sending sacks of rice, donated by the Kachin State Government.

The rice is being delivered from Myitkyina to Putao with the use of Tatmadaw aircraft and from Putao to Metgayza village by land via Khaunglanphu.—Office of the Commander in Chief of Defence Services



Tatmadawmen loading sacks of rice onto the aircraft. PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES

Crime NEWS

Raw opium and yaba pills seized in Pyin Oo Lwin

A LOCAL police squad in Pyin Oo Lwin seized yaba near the Asia World tollgate, Pyin Oo Lwin township on Tuesday. Acting on a tip-off, police searched a six-wheel vehicle being driven by one Maung Maung alias Ya Hin together with Soe Win Aung alias Soe Win on board.

The police discovered 1,940 yaba pills and raw opium weighing 700 grams from a white ISUZU BIGHORN vehicle on board.

Police have filed charges against Maung Maung alias Ya Hin, 51, and Soe Win Aung alias Soe Win, 35, under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—Police IPRD



Maung Maung (a) Ya Hin with Soe Win Aung (a) Soe Win. PHOTO: POLICE IPRD

Heroin and Yaba seized in Kyaukme

A LOCAL anti-drug squad seized heroin and yaba from a motorbike heading for Kyaukme from Kyauk Taung village on Kyauk Taung road, Kyaukme town, Shan State(North) on Tuesday, according to the police.

Acting on a tip-off, police searched the motorcycle that was being driven by one Aung Oo, 30, and discovered heroin weighing 1.8 grams and 19 yaba pills.

Police have filed charges against him under the Narcotic



Aung Oo. PHOTO: KYAUKME DISTRICT (IPRD) ic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—Kyaukme District (IPRD)

Shooting reported in Sagaing



LOCAL authorities are investigating the shooting of a firearm on a bailey bridge on Wednesday.

According to an investigation police discovered shell casings on the bridge.

Local people claimed that eight gunmen were seen shooting the bridge and left in the direction of Makkalatt village. Police are still investigating the case.—Win Naing (Tamu)

Two hundred Yaba tablets seized in Mongsat

MEMBERS of police searched a motorbike driven by Kya Bo on the Mongsat-Tachilek Road on 24 May. The police discovered 200 Yaba tablets from his bag. The police have filed charges against Kya Bo, 60, under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—Police IPRD



Overheated electric motor causes fire



Firefighters extinguishing the blaze. PHOTO: DISTRICT IPRD

A FIRE started due to an overheated electric motor on Palae road, Yadanar Thiri ward, Taunggyi, Shan state (South) on Thursday. The accident happened at the house of one U Kyaw Wub alias Chit San Ko. The electric motor got

overheated and caused electric short-circuiting. The fire quickly got out of control and burned down the house. The fire was brought under control by firemen with nine fire engines. The police have taken action.—District IPRD

Girls code in India to tackle challenges of slum living

MUMBAI — Adolescent girls in the Mumbai slum of Dharavi are battling the daily challenges they face, one mobile app at a time.

Tutored on laptops donated by friends of Nawneet Ranjan, a filmmaker who set up a charity in Dharavi, the girls are embracing technology to confront issues ranging from their safety to garbage in the sprawling slum in India's biggest city.

"Girls and women suffer the most in a slum, as they often have no resources and are not aware of their rights," said Ranjan, who studied filmmaking in the United States before returning to Mumbai.

"I wanted to teach the girls how to use technology to get ahead," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in a bare room that serves as the classroom. About two dozen girls were seated on the floor, tapping at laptops or reading.

The girls are building apps they hope will be used



Windows of various shanties in Dharavi, one of Asia's largest slums, are seen in Mumbai on 28 January 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

by slum dwellers to make their lives easier — by allowing them to send a distress call if a woman is being harassed, a message to civic authorities when garbage needs clearing, or to receive an alert when it's their turn at the communal water tap.

India is one of the world's largest software services exporters. Global and local technology companies hire tens of thou-

sands of English-speaking college graduates every year at modern campuses in cities such as Bengaluru and Hyderabad.

The spare room in Dharavi where Roshani, Ansuja, Sapna and Nahek learned to code is a far cry from those glass-and-chrome offices and from global movements such as Girls Who Code and Girls in Tech, aimed at getting more women into technolo-

gy. Ranjan's Dharavi Diary project began with 15 girls. It has grown to more than 200 now, and includes boys and mothers of the children, as well.

"I like building apps. Knowing how to use a computer, to write code is important for getting a good job," said Ansuja, a slight and articulate 15-year-old.

"I want to build an app that can help fight child la-

bour, because these are children younger than us and instead of studying, they have to work," she said.

After school every day, there are lessons in maths, science and arts besides computers, and a game of football most evenings in the playground across the street. During the summer holidays, children stream in and out of the brightly-painted room all day.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has made girls' education one of his priorities, with a nationwide campaign.

A long-delayed plan to redevelop Dharavi envisages tearing down the shacks and building apartments for the residents, who live beside open drains and with no running water.

"They see so much every day — domestic violence, drug abuse, child abuse, poverty. Their parents are taxi drivers and domestic workers, and these

kids are usually the first in the family to go to school," said Ranjan.

"But every family has at least one smartphone, and that's why I thought of using technology. Technology is such a leveller, and it gives them such confidence," he said.

The girls picked the issues they wanted to address and built the apps in groups of four each, using open-source software. Their apps include one for women's safety, one for water conservation and one on education.

For Ranjan, watching the girls interact with visitors and showing off their apps on a tablet or mobile, is evidence that even limited resources can be put to use.

"It's frugal innovation at its best," he said.

"With the right resources and mentoring, they can do so much more. And these can be applied in slums, in cities everywhere." —Reuters

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Outrage in multi-ethnic Malaysia as government backs Islamic law

KUALA LUMPUR — Prime Minister Najib Razak's government threw its support in parliament this week behind an Islamic penal code that includes amputations and stoning, shocking some of his allies and stoking fears of further strains in the multi-ethnic country.

Critics believe the scandal-tainted prime minister is using 'hudud', the Islamic law, to shore up the backing of Muslim Malay voters and fend off attacks on his leadership ahead of critical by-elections next month and a general election in 2018.

The government on Thursday unexpectedly submitted to parliament a hudud bill that had been proposed by the Islamist group Parti Islam se-Malaysia's (PAS).

Although debate on the law was deferred to October by PAS leader Abdul Hadi Awang, its submission to parliament brought criticism from leaders across the political spectrum, including allies of the ruling Barisan Nasional coalition, who represent the ethnic Chinese and Indian communities.

Najib sought to ease

tensions with his allies on Friday, saying the bill was "misunderstood".

"It's not hudud, but what we refer to as enhanced punishment," he told a news conference after meeting leaders of his ruling United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) party.

"It applies only to certain offences and this comes under the jurisdiction of the Syariah court and is only applicable to the Muslims. It has nothing to do with non-Muslims."

He added that the punishments would be limited and canings meted out under the law would not injure or draw blood.

Earlier in the day, the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), a key party in the BN coalition, called the submission of the hudud bill to parliament "unconstitutional".

"As we repeatedly pointed out, the implementation of Hudud law is against the spirit of the Federal Constitution, and would ruin the inter-ethnic relationship in the country," MCA President Liow Tiong Lai said.

Arguments for and against the introduction of

hudud have divided Malaysia for years. Most of the Southeast Asian country's states implement sharia, the Islamic legal system, but its reach is restricted by federal law.

Still, the hudud bill appears doomed as the UMNO-led coalition lacks the two-thirds majority needed to pass it into law.

The Islamist party PAS is pushing for a constitutional amendment that would allow hudud to be implemented in Kelantan, a northern state where nightclubs are banned and there are separate public benches for men and women.

Many fear such a move would open doors for other states to bring in the Islamic penal code. Hudud stipulates ancient religious punishments for Muslims who violate the law.

Critics say that Najib, with an eye on by-elections for two parliamentary seats on 18 June, is seeking to appease the majority Muslim votebank with his stand on hudud and to deflect attention from a multi-billion-dollar scandal at the state fund 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB).

They allege Najib was a beneficiary of 1MDB's funds, after about \$680 million was deposited in his bank account before a 2013 election. Najib has denied any wrongdoing.

Some political heavyweights in Najib's party have questioned whether he can lead them to victory in the 2018 general election.

However, he has consolidated power by sacking dissenters within UMNO, which has ruled Malaysia since 1957, and using a controversial and repressive colonial-era sedition law to silence other critics.

Najib seized on the resounding victory of a coalition partner in a Borneo state election earlier month as evidence that he and his government remain popular. The by-elections in peninsula Malaysia are likely to be a closer contest.

"Najib did not want the 1MDB global scandal to become the issue in both by-elections," said Lim Kit Siang, parliamentary leader of the Democratic Action Party, adding that Najib has ensured the focus will now be on hudud.—Reuters

Pakistani PM to undergo heart surgery in London

LONDON — Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will undergo open heart surgery in London on Tuesday, his family and media said.

It will be Sharif's second heart operation in five years.

Sharif's daughter, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, said on her official Twitter account that the surgery would be for "perforation of the heart", a complication from an earlier procedure in 2011.

"Prayers are the most effect & potent medicine. Millions will pray for him," she tweeted.

Dawn newspaper quoted Defence Minister Khawaja Asif as saying Sharif would be hospitalised for a week after the surgery and would return to Pakistan when his doctors allowed it.



Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif looks on during a lecture on Sri Lanka-Pakistan Relations in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 5 January, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Dawn also quoted Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, chairman of the opposition Pakistan People's Party,

urging all Pakistanis to pray for the prime minister. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi

also wished Sharif well.

"My best wishes to PM Nawaz Sharif Sahab for his open heart surgery on Tuesday. And for his speedy recovery & good health," said a tweet from Modi, who made a surprise visit to Sharif in December as a gesture of conciliation between the two nuclear-armed rival states.

Sharif has frequently travelled abroad for medical treatment in the past year.

His last public statements were on Sunday, after the US drone strike that killed Afghan Taliban leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour in the Pakistani province of Baluchistan, an attack Sharif condemned as a violation of Pakistan's sovereignty. —Reuters

80 US scholars urge US to close bases in Okinawa

WASHINGTON— About 80 prominent scholars and activists are calling on the US government to close its military bases in Japan's Okinawa Prefecture over a former Marine's alleged involvement in the death of a local woman.

The scholars and activists, including Peter Kuznick, a professor at American University and known as a staunch advocate for the abolition of nuclear weapons, and cognitive scientist Noam Chomsky, issued the call in a recently released statement.

The statement encouraged the administration of President Barack Obama to discuss with Okinawa Gov. Takeshi Onaga the crimes often committed by US servicemen and the possibility of shutting the US military bases there.

"We are horrified by the recent rape and murder of a young woman from Okinawa by a former US Marine," it said. "Many of us have been to Okinawa, and stand with the peace-loving people there in demanding the complete withdrawal of US military bases from that beautiful island."

The arrest last week of Kenneth Franklin Shinzato, 32, a former Marine who works at the US Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, reignited anti-American sentiment in Okinawa, where there is a heavy US military presence.

Investigative sources have said the suspect has admitted to killing the 20-year-old victim after sexually assaulting her. —Kyodo News

China, Australia pledge to enhance bilateral relations

SYDNEY — Chinese and Australian leaders have vowed to enhance bilateral relations to achieve a healthy and sustained development.

The pledge was made here Saturday during a meeting between Liu Qibao, head of the Publicity Department of the Commu-

nist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, and Australian Governor General Peter Cosgrove.

China-Australia relations have achieved a leaping development in the past few years and now have come to a threshold where new opportunities have emerged, Liu said, calling on the

two countries to further boost bilateral relations at a strategic level through more communications and enhanced understanding.

Liu said both countries should respect each other's core national interests and greatest concern, continue to deepen political trust and expand the areas of coop-

eration. The two countries also should promote people to people communications and cooperation so as to achieve a healthy and sustained development of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between them.

Cosgrove said Liu's visit is expected to promote a better understanding by Australians from all walks of life of the opportunities presented by China's development, especially in the areas of trade, media and tourism.

During his visit, Liu attended the dialogue with sinologists in Australia where he suggested that Australian sinologists have more communications with their Chinese counterparts and research institutions.

Liu also attended a signing ceremony of six agreements between Chinese media organisations and Australian institutions including a university, a publishing company and a number of media groups.

Liu is here on a two-day visit to Australia starting Friday. —Xinhua



Representative of Chinese media and his Australian counterpart exchange a Memorandum of Understanding enabling greater information exchange after a signing ceremony for six China-Australia media cooperation agreements in Sydney, Australia, on 27 May 2016. PHOTO: XINHUA

DPRK warns South Korea not to cross maritime demarcation line

PYONGYANG — The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on Saturday warned the South Korean military not to intrude into the DPRK waters north of the maritime demarcation line, otherwise they would face direct fire from the DPRK army.

In a notice sent to the South Korean authorities, the General Staff of the Korean People's Army (KPA) blamed the South Korean navy for sending several ships into the DPRK waters and then firing rocket gun shells at an unarmed DPRK ferryboat on Friday morning. The notice was carried by the official news agency KCNA. "This reckless military provocation was

evidently prompted by a premeditated sinister plot to bedevil the north-south relations and further aggravate the tension on the Korean Peninsula," the KCNA said.

The General Staff threatened that the DPRK army will open fire directly at any warships from South Korea without prior warning, if they intrude a slightest bit into the DPRK water territories north of the maritime demarcation line. On Friday, the Supreme Command of the KPA said in a report that three speedboats and a vessel from South Korea sailed 6.4 km across the maritime demarcation line into the DPRK waters four times and refused to return, and later fired several rocket gun shells

against an unarmed ferryboat of the DPRK. The report said that "the situation in those waters is inching to the unpredictable extreme phase." Earlier on the same day, South Korean media quoted the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) as saying that a patrol boat and a fishing boat from the DPRK returned to the north after crossing the Northern Limit Line after the South Korean military fired warning shots. The Northern Limit Line, or NLL, is a disputed maritime demarcation line in the Yellow Sea between the DPRK and South Korea. As the DPRK has never officially recognised the NLL, navies of the two countries patrol the area regularly. —Xinhua

Duterte, Robredo official winners of 2016 polls

MANILA — Rodrigo Duterte and Maria Leonor Robredo have officially won the 9 May presidential and vice-presidential elections respectively, said the final tally of votes by the Philippine Congress Friday.

Sitting as the National Board of Canvassers, Congress said Duterte, 71, garnered a total of 16,601,997 votes or 6,623,822 votes ahead of his closest rival, administration candidate Manuel Roxas, who got 9,978,175 votes.

Congress finished canvassing all 166 certificates of canvass on its third day of official counting of votes, which started Wednesday.

"Finally victory has been achieved," Duterte's campaign spokesperson Peter Lavina said in a statement.

"The official results of 2016 presidential race with Duterte as winner may be anti-climactic, but we should not lose its historic significance," he added.

The official tally also showed that Robredo, 51, won as the country's vice president, garnering a total of 14,418,817, or 263,473 votes ahead of her closest rival Sen. Ferdinand Marcos, who got 14,155,344.

Congress is expected to officially proclaim both winners on Monday. —Xinhua

Putin says Romania, Poland may now be in Russia's cross-hairs

ATHENS — Russian President Vladimir Putin on Friday warned Romania and Poland they could find themselves in the sights of Russian rockets because they are hosting elements of a US missile shield that Moscow considers a threat to its security.

Putin issued his starkest warning yet over the missile shield, saying that Moscow had stated repeatedly that it would have to take retaliatory steps but that Washington and its allies had ignored the warnings.

Earlier this month the US military — which says the shield is needed to protect from Iran, not threaten Russia — switched on the Romanian part of the shield. Work is going ahead on another part of the shield, in Poland.

"If yesterday in those areas of Romania people simply did not know what it means to be in the cross-hairs, then today we will be forced to carry out certain measures to ensure our security," Putin told a joint news conference in

Athens with Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras.

"It will be the same case with Poland," he said.

Putin did not specify what actions Russia would take, but he insisted that it was not making the first step, only responding to moves by Washington. "We won't take any action until we see rockets in areas that neighbour us."

He said the argument that the project was needed to defend against Iran made no sense because an international deal had been reached to curb Tehran's nuclear programme. The missiles that will form the shield can easily reach Russian cities, he said.

"How can that not create a threat for us?" Putin asked.

He voiced frustration that Russia's complaints about the missile shield had not been heeded. "We've been repeating like a mantra that we will be forced to respond... Nobody wants to hear us. Nobody wants to conduct ne-

gotiations with us."

Putin sounded a defiant note over Crimea, the Ukrainian region which Russia annexed in 2014. Moscow said it was acting on the will of the Crimean people, who voted to join Russia, but Western governments say it was an illegal land grab.

"As far as Crimea is concerned, we consider this question is closed forever," Putin said. "Russia will not conduct any discussions with anyone on this subject."

The Russian leader also touched on relations with Turkey, which have been toxic since the Turkish military shot down a Russian fighter jet near the Syrian-Turkish border last November. Ankara said the plane strayed into Turkish airspace, an allegation Moscow denies. Putin said he was ready to consider restoring relations with Ankara, but that would require a first step from Turkey, and so far there was no sign of that.—*Reuters*

Trump's San Diego rally draws more than 1,000 chanting protesters

SAN DIEGO — Donald Trump brought his message of walls and deportations to the doorstep of America's busiest border crossing on Friday as the presumptive Republican presidential nominee greeted supporters in San Diego, amid one of the largest counter-protests organised against him.

The scene inside the San Diego Convention Centre during Trump's speech was relatively placid, while outside demonstrators opposed to his controversy-ridden White House bid marched and chanted, carrying signs criticising his rhetoric against illegal immigration.

Waving US and Mexican flags, more than 1,000 people turned out for anti-Trump rallies in San Diego, a city on the US-Mexico border whose San Ysidro port of entry sees nearly 300,000 people a day cross legally between the countries.

San Diego is considered a binational city by many who live and work on opposite sides of the border, and about a third of the city's population is Latino.

During Trump's speech on Friday, some protesters outside the convention centre scaled a barrier and lobbed water bottles at police. One man was pulled off the wall and arrested as others were surrounded by fellow protesters and backed away from the confrontation.

After the convention centre emptied, clusters of Trump supporters and anti-Trump demonstrators began to mix in the streets,



A man is arrested during a demonstration against Republican US presidential candidate Donald Trump outside his campaign event in San Diego, California, US, on 27 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

many exchanging shouted epithets and some throwing water bottles at one another. Police in riot gear declared the gathering an unlawful assembly and ordered the crowd to disperse, herding the crowd out of the city's hotel and restaurant-filled Gaslamp Quarter.

San Diego police said on Twitter that 35 arrests were made during the protest. No property damage or injuries were reported, police said.

"Fantastic job on handling the thugs who tried to disrupt our very peaceful and well attended rally," Trump tweeted to police afterwards. Trump has weathered months of blowback from all ends of the political spectrum for his immigration policy, which calls for the building of a wall along the US-Mexico border and deporting the nearly 11 million undocumented

immigrants who reside in the United States. Critics have said his plan is needlessly cruel and impossible to implement. At Trump's campaign stops, attendees often chant "build the wall."

While Trump is running unopposed in the 7 June California Republican primary, his stance on border control and deportation seems unlikely to resonate with the electorate at large in a state where political fallout from a Republican-backed crackdown on illegal immigrants 20 years ago cost the party dearly. Friday was not the first time Trump has been greeted by civil unrest in California, which is home to the largest Latino population in the country. Late last month, a visit to the California Republican convention set off days of protests in the area, leading to several arrests.—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Blast kills one at Bulgaria's biggest military plant

SOFIA — A blast at Bulgaria's biggest weapons maker, Arsenal, in the centre of the Balkan country killed one person on Friday night, the interior ministry said on Saturday.

A ministry's spokeswoman told Reuters the accident that killed a 52-year-old man occurred at 2220 local time (2020 BST) at Arsenal's production unit in the town of Muglitzh, 250 km (155 miles) east of the capital Sofia.

"There are no other injured people," she said.

Bulgarian prosecutors have opened an investigation into the incident, which is normal procedure in an incident when someone is killed or seriously hurt. Last month, two workers were killed in an explosion at Arsenal, triggering a fire.—*Reuters*

US sailor pleads guilty to taking photos inside nuclear submarine

WASHINGTON — A US sailor pleaded guilty on Friday to taking photos of the inside of restricted areas of a nuclear submarine in Connecticut in 2009 and then trying to cover up his actions when authorities began to investigate, federal prosecutors said.

Kristian Saucier, 29, of Arlington, Vermont, pleaded guilty in US District Court in Bridgeport, Connecticut, to one criminal count of unauthorized possession and retention of national security information.

Saucier admitted to taking cellphone photos of classified areas of the USS Alexandria, including its nuclear reactor and equipment used to maneuver the submarine. He took the pictures on three occasions in 2009, while he was stationed on the sub in Groton, Connecticut, as a machinist's mate.—*Reuters*

At least two killed, others missing in Texas flooding

BERNHAM — At least two people person were killed and three others missing on Friday as record rainfall and severe flooding hit hard parts of southeast Texas, officials said.

A record 16.6 inches (42 cm) of rain fell in Brenham, about 80 miles (130 km) west of Houston, on Thursday, according to the National Weather Service (NWS), which posted flash flood watches in some parts of southeast Texas for Friday.

A cluster of thunderstorms was moving southeast over Houston and toward western Louisiana on Friday afternoon before they were expected to move off the Gulf Coast, NWS meteorologist Brynn Kerr said on Friday.

One person was killed overnight in a drowning incident in the eastern part of Washington County, located about half-way between Austin and Houston, according to Brenham officials. A second death earlier on Friday was believed to have been caused by a heart attack shortly after the victim's vehicle was carried through high water.—*Reuters*

More storms roar across Houston area with road closures

HOUSTON — More storms raged through the Houston region Friday night, bringing thunder, lightning and road closures.

Some highways surrounding the nation's fourth largest city were affected by floodwaters, and flights were delayed at George Bush Intercontinental Airport, according to the website of the local English daily the Houston Chronicle.

In Houston, where an emergency operations centre opened on Thursday, officials are monitoring severe weather conditions, and have erected barricades at 50 locations to prevent people from entering high-water areas. Meanwhile, some school districts canceled classes.

The Red Cross opened a shelter in Hempstead, a city in Waller County, for those forced to leave their homes.—*Xinhua*

Nuclear project priority investment for Romania: president

BUCHAREST — Romanian President Klaus Iohannis stressed Friday that the Cernavoda nuclear project is a priority investment for the country.

"We have analysed and approved the report by the energy minister on the stage and evolution of the units 3 and 4 project from the Cernavoda nuclear plant," the president told a press conference after the conclusion of the Supreme Council for National Defence, the country's top-most executive body able to decide on security and defence issues.—*Xinhua*

Opinion

Write for us

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

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

When it comes to peace, the sooner the better

Kyaw Thura

At a time when our country as a nascent democracy is undergoing a time of great change, the decision makers from various mechanisms must be brave enough to spare no effort to meet challenges ahead with strength and resolve. In other words, renewed efforts are to be made to improve the six decades of strained relations between the army and the ethnic armed groups.

Clearly, no peace talks will bear fruit as long as the stakeholders refuse to unclench their fists and let shared hope burn in their hearts. The implementation of the peace process comes with some risks involving compromise and concession. It is, therefore, necessary for them to prepare themselves to take these risks and bring our country to its rightful place in the international community.

There is every reason to believe that the government will resume the 21st Century Panglong Conference, which is much after the fashion of the Union Peace Conference. At the meeting of the Union-level Peace Dialogue Joint Committee in Nay Pyi Taw two days ago, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi gave a broad hint concerning the reconvening of the conference in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement signed between the government and eight ethnic armed groups last October.

To put an end to the internal conflict, all the armed groups have little choice but to avoid further head-on confrontations. As Martin Luther King once spoke eloquently on peace, “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.” The sooner peace is restored, the better it will be for the country.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

The article “Non-persuasion, But Broad-mindedness towards Peaceful Planet” in today’s paper is a well written article most appropriate and timely with present events and problems in our country.

May I suggest to the author, Ashin Suriya (Gemini), that he should have this article translated and published in our Myanmar newspapers. It would really be a thought-provoking article for our local readers.

A Wellwisher

U Than Myint
12, KabaAye pagoda Road
Bahan Township

World No Tobacco Day 2016

Dr Aung Tun

World No Tobacco Day is celebrated around the world every year on May 31. The day was created by the member states of the WHO in 1987 to draw global attention to the tobacco epidemic and the preventable death and disease it causes. Every year, World No Tobacco Day is observed, with a different theme to cover the broad range of measures within the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC).

The Tobacco Epidemic

The tobacco epidemic is one of the biggest public health threats the world has ever faced, killing around 6 million people a year. More than 5 million of those deaths are the result of direct tobacco use while more than 600 000 are the result of non-smokers being exposed to second-hand smoke.

Nearly 80% of the more than 1 billion smokers worldwide live in low- and middle-income countries, where the burden of tobacco-related illness and death is heaviest.

In South Asia, approximately 1.2 million people die every year from tobacco use.

Tobacco damages not only the whole person but also the whole planet. The harm caused by the tobacco use is not limited to lung cancer, heart disease, and emphysema. Tobacco use exacerbates other non-communicable diseases, mental illness and substance abuse problems, as well as damages the environment and undermines human development.

Tobacco users who die prematurely deprive their families of income, raise the cost of health care and hinder economic development.

The harm caused by Second-hand smoke

Exposure to secondhand smoke can cause many of the same diseases as active smoking. Secondhand smoke is the smoke that fills restaurants, offices or other enclosed spaces when people burn tobacco products such as cigarettes, bidis and water-pipes. There are more than 4000 chemicals in tobacco smoke, of which at least 250 are known to be harmful and more than 50 are known to cause cancer.

There is no safe level of exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke.

In adults, second-hand smoke causes serious cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, including coronary heart disease and lung cancer. In infants, it causes sudden death. In pregnant women, it causes low birth weight. Almost half of children regularly breathe air polluted by tobacco smoke in public places. Secondhand smoke causes more than 600 000 premature deaths per year. In 2004, children accounted for 28% of the deaths attributable to secondhand smoke.

Every person should be able to breathe tobacco-smoke-free air. Smoke-free laws protect the health of non-smokers, are popular, do not harm business and encourage smokers to quit.

Tobacco use in Myanmar

National Tobacco Control Program of Department of Public Health has been implementing tobacco control activities in collaboration with related ministries; school-based tobacco control activities are being conducted in coordination with the Ministry of Education. Myanmar has been participating in the Global Tobacco Surveillance System and has conducted Global Youth Tobacco Surveys (GYTS) in 2001, 2004 2007 and 2011 and the Global School Personnel Surveys (GSPS) in 2004, 2007 and 2011. National Tobacco Control Program has already planned to conduct a new Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) in Myanmar this year.

The GYTS is a school-based survey of students aged 13-15 years. The GSPS is also a school-based survey of all school personnel from the schools that the GYTS was conducted. The GYTS and GSPS were conducted as a nation-wide survey in Myanmar.

According to Global Youth Tobacco survey (GYTS, 2011), about 7% of school youths (13% of boys and 0.55% of girls) were currently smoking cigarette while about 17% (28% of boys and 7% of girls) were currently using other tobacco products. Like the adult population, about 38% of them were also exposing to environmental tobacco smoke in public places. Between 2001 and 2011, a significant reduction in the proportion of students currently smoked cigarettes is observed (a fall from 13-15 year olds of 10.2% to 6.8%) but reported use of other tobacco products had increased during the period from 5.7% to 9.8%. The ability to purchase cigarettes in a store had reduced significantly from 72.9% to 39.2%; percent. There is no change in percent of



PHOTO: (SUPPLIED BY WHO)

students receiving education on dangers of tobacco. According to the National STEPS (The WHO STEPwise approach to Surveillance) survey 2009 showed that about 22% of people (45% of men and 8% of women) are currently smoking, about 30% of people (51% of men and 16% of women) are currently using smokeless tobacco and 39% of people are exposing to environmental tobacco smoke in work places.

World No Tobacco Day 2016

May 31 is World No Tobacco Day, a day designated by the World Health Organization to draw global attention to the tobacco

epidemic and to advocate for strategies to reduce tobacco use. The theme for 2016 is “Get ready for plain packaging”. For this year’s campaign, WHO and the Secretariat of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control are calling countries to get ready for plain (standardized) packaging of tobacco products.

Plain packaging (also called standardized packaging) refers to “measures to restrict or prohibit the use of logos, colours, brand images or promotional information on packaging other than brand names and product names displayed in a standard colour and

font style (plain packaging).

Plain packaging has also been described as packaging that is “black and white or two other contrasting colours, as prescribed by national authorities; nothing other than a brand name, a product name and/or manufacturer’s name, contact details and the quantity of product in the packaging, without any logos or other features apart from health warnings, tax stamps and other government-mandated information or markings; prescribed font style and size; and standardized shape, size and materials. There should be no advertising or promotion in-

side or attached to the package or on individual cigarettes or other tobacco products.

Plain packing of tobacco products is an important demand reduction measure. It reduces the attractiveness of tobacco products, restricts use of tobacco packaging as a form of advertising, limits misleading packaging and labeling, and increases the effectiveness of health warnings.

Guidelines for Implementation of Article 11 (packing and labeling of tobacco products) and Article 13 (Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship) of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) recommend that Parties consider adoption of plain packaging.

Specific goals of the 2016 campaign are that:

- * Highlight the role of plain packaging as part of a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach to tobacco control.
- * Facilitate policy development by Member States and the globalization of plain packaging by providing informative, compelling and persuasive information.
- * Encourage Member States to strengthen packaging and labeling measures and restrictions on advertising, promotion and sponsorship as they work towards plain packaging in a step-wise approach.
- * Support Member States and civil society against tobacco industry interference in political processes leading to adoption of plain packaging laws.

Myanmar has been celebrating the World No Tobacco Day, both at Central and Regional/ State level every year since 2000.

Tobacco Control Measures relating to packaging and labeling in Myanmar

The National Program on Tobacco Control was officially launched in January 2000 with the drafting and approval of the National Policy on Tobacco Control and Plan of action. In collaboration with Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Sports has launched the Tobacco Free School Program in 2003. The Tobacco Free Youth Program was also implemented by School and Youth Health Project since 2009.

The Myanmar Tobacco Control Program has been implementing its activities in line with the six MPOWER policies rec-

ommended in the “WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic 2008”.

Myanmar has signed the WHO FCTC in October 2003 and ratified in April 2004. With the objectives of protecting and reducing the dangers of tobacco among the community and based on the provisions of the WHO FCTC, “The Control of Smoking and Consumption of Tobacco Product Law” was enacted in May, 2006 and it came into effect in May,

In accordance with new administrative structure, the National Tobacco Control Committee was reformed in January 2011, headed by the Minister for Health and included heads of related departments and chairpersons of several national NGOs as members. The Committee set guidelines for the tobacco control measures to be implemented in the country. Myanmar also attended the 5th session of the Conference of the Parties to the WHO FCTC (COP 5), held in Seoul, Korea from 12th to 17th November, 2012. At COP 5, Myanmar has signed the Protocol on Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products on the day of the opening ceremony on 10th January, 2013 at Geneva, and it was the 1st country of signatories in South East Asia Region. Over the past two years, Myanmar has strengthened the tobacco control cell within the Department of Public Health, worked with civil society to build support for tobacco control among the public, and partnered with related ministries and NGOs to prohibit all forms of direct and indirect advertising, promotion and sponsorship of tobacco.

In 2015 Cigarette taxes in Myanmar are levied at 120% (commercial tax) of taxable turnover.

A new legislation to print warning messages and illustrations of the health risks of tobacco use on all tobacco packages was announced by the Ministry of Health and Sports on February 29, 2016. According to the legislation, the new packaging will feature images of the health consequences of tobacco use across 50 percent of the surface area, and text warnings in local language across 25 percent. Old packaging will be illegal from 1 September 2016.

Working Together for Tobacco Free Myanmar

Currently, the Ministry of

Health and Sports is committed to promoting and maintaining the health status of Myanmar people through various health care services, with the support and participation of the related ministries and sectors, international and local NGOs and the community as a whole.

The Control of Smoking and Consumption of Tobacco Product Law was adopted on 4th May, 2006. The adoption of the law was a very significant milestone in the history of public health of Myanmar and was highly appreciated by the World Health Organization and anti-tobacco advocates.

There is a need to enforce school policy on tobacco and the need to provide training to school personnel on prevention of tobacco among the youth. Specifically youth-focused programs should be implemented as joint efforts between Ministry of Health and Sports and Ministry of Education in collaboration with related ministries.

Myanmar Tobacco Control Program also needs to set in place mechanisms to strengthen implementation and enforcement of existing tobacco control laws in Myanmar and to develop new regulations needed on key tobacco control policies to bring them in line with WHO FCTC provisions and best practices. The program is also required to build Myanmar’s capacity for tobacco control in the long-term.

Continued support and close collaboration from the WHO and other partners are essential in the struggle against tobacco epidemic in Myanmar. Civil society at national, regional and international levels are needed to play an important role in contributing to the success of tobacco control efforts in Myanmar including effective implementation of pictorial health warnings, plain packaging and labeling for all tobacco products.

- Ref: 1. 2016 WHO WNTD pack age
2. The Tobacco Atlas, The American Cancer Society, 2015
3. Health in Myanmar, MOH, 2014

Dr Aung Tun is a retired Pro-Rector of University of Community Health and the former Director (Public Health) of Department of Public Health.

Islamic State advance near Turkish border, civilians trapped

BEIRUT — Islamic State fighters captured territory from Syrian rebels near the Turkish border on Friday and inched closer to a town on a supply route for foreign-backed insurgents fighting the jihadists, a monitoring group said.

The hardline group has been fighting against rebels in the area for several months. The rebels, who are supplied via Turkey, last month staged a major push against Islamic State, but the group counter-attacked and beat them back.

The United States has identified the area north of Syria's former commercial hub Aleppo as a priority in the fight against the Islamic State group (IS).

The British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Friday's advance was the biggest by IS in Aleppo province for two years. It brought the jihadists to within 5 km (3 miles) of Azaz, a town near the border with Turkey through which insurgents have been supplied.



Men walk near a damaged building in Aleppo's rebel held al-Fardous district, Syria, on 26 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Islamic State said in a statement it had captured several villages near Azaz.

International medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres said it

evacuated patients and staff from a hospital in the area as the fighting got closer, and that tens of thousands of people were trapped between the frontlines and the

Turkish border.

A Syrian NGO operating in the area said the latest assault by IS had displaced 20,000 more people towards Turkey.

The International Rescue Committee, a humanitarian organisation present in Azaz, said the IS advance had caused more than half the residents of a camp for 8,500 internally displaced persons to move elsewhere. It said people were "terrified for their lives".

Around 160,000 people are trapped in Azaz, unable to flee while Turkey's border remains closed and exit roads have been blocked, the IRC said.

The Observatory said the fighting had killed 30 rebel fighters and 11 members of Islamic State.

In April, Islamic State militants seized another strategic town near the Turkish border from rebel factions fighting under the banner of the Free Syrian Army.

Their advances on Friday encroach on a corridor of rebel-held territory that leads from the Turkish border down towards Aleppo city, which is divided between insurgent and government control.—Reuters

UN urges Syrian government to stop blocking aid deliveries

WASHINGTON — The United Nations' humanitarian chief on Friday demanded that the Syrian government and militant groups stop interfering with the delivery of food and medicine for civilians trapped in besieged and difficult-to-reach areas in war-ravaged Syria.

"The continued use of siege and starvation as a weapon of war is reprehensible," UN under secretary-general Stephen O'Brien told the 15-nation Security Council. "Based on the latest information, we now estimate that some 592,700 people are currently living in besieged areas," he said, adding that most of those were surrounded by government forces. The five-year-old civil war in Syria has killed at least 250,000 people. Millions have been displaced and many of those are now refugees living abroad.

O'Brien said the Syrian government, and to a lesser extent the militant groups fighting the government and against each other, deliberately interfere with and restrict aid deliveries.

He complained that the UN had asked to send aid convoys to 35 besieged and hard-to-reach

areas in Syria in May but the government only granted full access to 14 of them and partial access to another eight. He added that the parties to the conflict also continued to siphon off crucial medical supplies from aid convoys.

"The removal of life-saving medicines and medical supplies such as surgical kits, midwifery kits, and emergency kits has continued unabated, with supplies for an estimated 150,000 treatments removed from convoys since the beginning of the year," he said.

Since February 2014, medical supplies for over 650,000 treatments have been taken from aid convoys, O'Brien said.

Syrian UN Ambassador Bashar Ja'afari questioned the accuracy of O'Brien's claims and blamed the bulk of the violence against civilians in Syria on Islamic State and Nusra Front militants. O'Brien told the council he stood by his claims. US Ambassador Samantha Power said the complaints from Syria were ironic given that it is "a government that pulls infant formula off of convoys, (as well as) anaesthetics and surgical equipment." —Reuters



Fighters of the Syria Democratic Forces prepare to fire a mortar shell towards positions held by Islamic State fighters in northern province of Raqqa, Syria on 27 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Mexico drug boss Chapo files legal challenge against extradition

MEXICO CITY — Lawyers for Mexican drug boss Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman have filed a legal challenge against a decision by the foreign ministry to approve his extradition to the United States, a newspaper reported on Friday.

A judge granted him "provisional suspension", meaning that the foreign ministry has 48 hours to present a report justifying its decision, Mexican newspaper *El Universal* reported.

Mexico's Foreign Ministry approved Guzman's extradition to the United States earlier in May, and said it had received guarantees that the death penalty would not be sought against



Recaptured drug lord Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman is escorted by soldiers at the hangar belonging to the office of the Attorney General in Mexico City, Mexico, on 8 January 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Lebanese Hezbollah ministers, MPs could be hit by US law

BEIRUT — Ministers and members of parliament belonging to Lebanon's Hezbollah could be sanctioned under a new US law targeting the group's finances, a US Treasury official said on Friday.

The US Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act (HIFPA) passed in December threatens sanctions against anyone who finances Hezbollah in a significant way.

It has ignited an unprecedented dispute between Lebanon's most powerful group — the heavily armed Hezbollah — and a central bank widely seen as a pillar of the otherwise weak and dysfunctional Lebanese state.

When asked in an interview

with television channel LBC if the law could be applied to Hezbollah ministers and MPs in Lebanon, the US Treasury's Assistant Secretary for Terrorist Financing Daniel Glaser said: "We don't make a distinction among Hezbollah members."

Iran-backed Hezbollah, whose fighters played a major role in forcing Israel to withdraw from southern Lebanon in 2000, enjoys strong support in the Lebanese Shi'ite community. Its members include government ministers, MPs, and local councillors.

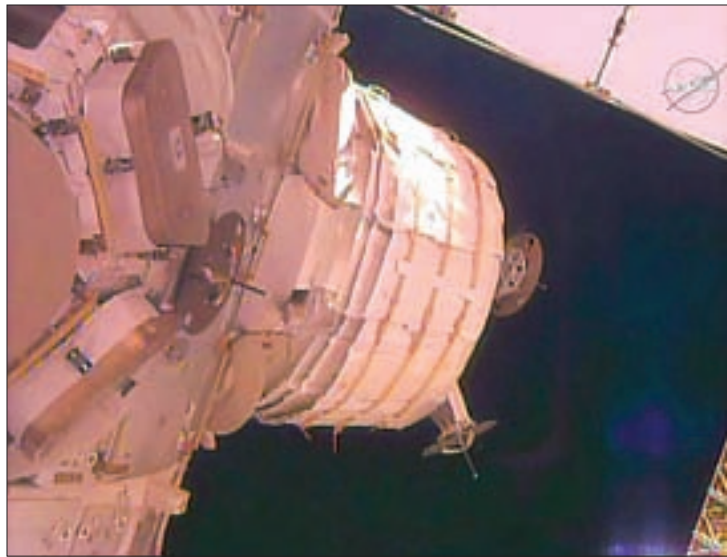
Classified as a terrorist group by the United States, Hezbollah wields enormous political influence in Lebanon and its powerful military wing is playing a major

role in the Syrian conflict.

The Lebanese central bank and US officials have repeatedly said the law does not target ordinary Lebanese citizens, or the Shi'ite community in particular, and will not adversely affect the country's financial sector.

"We understand the difference between Hezbollah and the broader Shi'ia community," Glaser said.

"We are implementing this law world wide. Obviously it has specific impact here in Lebanon because Hezbollah has a big presence here in Lebanon. But Hezbollah is the target of this legislation, not the Shi'ia. And I can't say that strongly enough," he said.—Reuters



The unexpanded Bigelow Expandable Activity Module (BEAM) is seen attached to the Tranquility module on the International Space Station in this still image taken from NASA TV on 26 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

NASA to make second attempt at inflating space station test module

CAPE CANAVERAL (Fla) — Astronauts aboard the International Space Station will try again on Saturday to inflate a novel experimental habitat after the fabric module failed to unfurl as planned earlier this week, NASA officials said on Friday.

The problem may have resulted from its materials becoming stiff. The Bigelow Expandable Activity Module, or BEAM, was unpacked 10 months later than expected due to launch delays, manufacturer Bigelow Aerospace told reporters on a conference call.

The impact was likely most serious on the outer layers, said Lisa Kauke, BEAM deputy programme manager at Bigelow. The prototype habitat, which could provide living quarters for crew one day making trips to Mars, is made of impact-resistant, Kevlar-like materials and flexible layers of fabric and foam.

"The longer they're packed, the more they are compressed and it takes a little while for those shapes to return," Kauke said.

NASA astronaut Jeff Wil-

liams on Thursday tried to inflate the module with spurts of the space station's air, but it failed to expand as planned.

Left alone overnight, the barrel-shaped module grew slightly in both length and diameter, giving the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration and Bigelow Aerospace confidence that the problem can be resolved.

Astronauts will make another attempt to inflate BEAM on Saturday morning, station operations manager Kenny Todd said during the call.

The lightweight habitats could save millions of dollars in launch costs compared with metal modules. They may also offer better radiation protection for astronauts.

The module is designed to expand to the size of a small bedroom, a 10-fold increase in volume. NASA plans to keep it attached to the International Space Station, a \$100 billion research laboratory that flies about 250 miles (400 km) above Earth, for a two-year trial run.—*Reuters*

Cancer strikes almost 300,000 people in England in just one year

LONDON — Almost 300,000 people in England were diagnosed with cancer in 2014, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said in a new report on Friday.

The figure of cancer registrations in England was 296,863, an increase of just over 4,000 compared to the previous year.

The ONS figure shows slightly more males than women were affected by cancers, with the majority of cancer sites showing more males are diagnosed with cancer than females. The most common cancers reported were breast (15.6 per cent), prostate (13.4 per cent), lung (12.6 per cent) and colorectal (11.5 per cent). ONS said those continued

to account for over half of all malignant cancer registrations in England for all ages combined.

"Cancer is a disease of the elderly, as approximately 12 per cent of the population are aged 70 and above and account for 50.2 per cent of the total cancers registered in 2014," said ONS. A total of 46,417 cases of breast cancer were diagnosed in 2014, accounting for 31.6 per cent of all cancers in women.

In men, prostate cancer was the most common, with 39,741 cases registered, accounting for 26.3 per cent of male cancer registrations. ONS said the second most common cancer for both males and females was lung cancer.—*Xinhua*

How mutant cells turn into aggressive cancers discovered

NEW YORK — Scientists have discovered how a gene mutation found in several human cancers — including leukaemia, gliomas and melanoma — promotes the growth of aggressive tumours, a finding that may help develop new treatment for the deadly diseases.

"We've found the mechanism through which this mutation leads to a scrambling of the genome. That's when you get really massive tumours," said Eros Lazzerini Denchi, associate professor at The Scripps Research Institute (TSRI) in US.

The research also suggests a possible way to kill these kinds of tumours by targeting an important enzyme.

The researchers studied mu-

tations in a gene that codes for the protein POT1.

This protein normally forms a protective cap around the ends of chromosomes (called telomeres), stopping cell machinery from mistakenly damaging the DNA there and causing harmful mutations.

POT1 is so critical that cells without functional POT1 would rather die than pass on POT1 mutations. Stress in these cells leads to the activation of an enzyme, called ATR, that triggers programmed cell death.

Knowing this, scientists in recent years were surprised to find recurrent mutations affecting POT1 in several human cancers, including leukaemia and melanoma. "Somehow those cells found a way to survive — and thrive. We

thought that if we could understand how that happens, maybe we could find a way to kill those cells," said Lazzerini Denchi, who co-led the study with Agnel Sfeir of New York University (NYU) School of Medicine.

Using a mouse model, the researchers found that mutations in POT1 lead to cancer when combined with a mutation in a gene called p53.

"The cells no longer have the mechanism for dying, and mice develop really aggressive thymic lymphomas," said Lazzerini Denchi.

P53, a well-known tumour suppressor gene, is a cunning accomplice. When mutated, it overrides the protective cell death response initiated by ATR.—*PTI*

Air pollution may up heart disease risk

WASHINGTON — Long-term exposure to air pollution may increase the risk of developing heart disease, a new study in the US has warned.

The decade-long study of thousands of Americans found that people living in areas with more outdoor pollution accumulate deposits in the arteries that supply the heart faster than do people living in less polluted areas.

Previous epidemiological studies have shown associations between particle pollution, referred to as particulate matter, and heart disease.

It has been unclear, however, how exposure to particulate matter leads to diseases of the cardiovascular system.

Now, direct evidence from a 10-year epidemiological study of more than 6,000 people from six US states, shows that air pollution — even at levels below regulatory standards — accelerates the progression of atherosclerosis.

The condition, also called hardening of the arteries, can cause heart attacks. Researchers repeatedly measured calcium deposits in the heart's arteries by using CT scans. They also assessed each person's exposure to pollution based on home address.

"The study provides important new information on how pollution affects the main biological process that leads to heart disease," said Dr Joel Kaufman, professor at the University of Washington.

"The evidence supports worldwide efforts to reduce exposures to ambient air pollutants," Kaufman said. The researchers calculated each participant's exposure to ambient fine particulate matter that is less than 2.5 microns in diameter and too small to be seen by the naked eye. In addition to PM2.5, they also measured exposure to nitrogen oxide and nitrogen dioxide, and black carbon or soot.

They collected thousands of air pollution measurements in the

study participants' communities and at their homes.

Researchers also developed and applied computational models that included local information on land use, roadway and traffic volumes, weather conditions, and local sources of air pollution.

These models could generate accurate pollution concentrations at each person's home. Between the years 2000 and 2012, participants visited study clinics several times to undergo CT scanning to determine the amount of calcium deposits in their heart arteries.

Results were strongest for fine particulate matter and the traffic-related pollutant gases called oxides of nitrogen.

The study found that for every 5 microgrammes per cubic metre higher concentration of PM2.5, or 35 parts per billion higher concentration of oxides of nitrogen, individuals had a 4 Agatston units/year faster rate of progression of coronary artery calcium scores.—*PTI*



Smoke is released into the sky at a refinery in Wilmington in 2012. PHOTO: REUTERS

Rio de Janeiro police investigate alleged gang rape that has shocked Brazilians

RIO DE JANEIRO — Rio de Janeiro police are investigating allegations that more than 30 men and boys raped a 16-year-old girl, officials said on Friday, as outrage spread in the host city for the Olympics and reverberated across the country.

The reported assault was discovered after one of the suspects posted to Twitter a video of the nude, semi-conscious youth, with a few men brazenly insulting the girl, showing their faces, and one man heard saying, “more than 30 impregnated her!” The Twitter account where the video was posted has since been suspended.

Police said the girl told them more than 30 men had assaulted her, but they could not yet confirm how many took part in the alleged rape, as they are still investigating.

“There are all the indications that this rape did in fact happen, but we still have to investigate further before we can absolutely confirm it,” said Fernando Veloso, head of Rio’s civil police department, at a press conference on Friday.

Veloso said police have identified four suspects so far in the assault that apparently took place last Saturday in a western Rio slum - but have yet to make any arrests, saying further investigation is required.

Hashtags on Twitter such as #EstuproNaoÉCulpaDaVitima — Portuguese for “rape is not the victim’s fault” — blasting the reported crime were among the top global trends.



Rio de Janeiro’s Police Chief for Internet crimes Alessandro Thiers (L), Civil Police Chief Fernando Veloso (C) and Police Chief for crimes against minors Cristiana Honorato attend a news conference on the investigations on the gang rape of a teenage girl after a video of the assault circulated widely on social media in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 27 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Many Facebook users in Brazil, including suspended President Dilma Rousseff, the nation’s first woman leader, changed their profile photos to the Venus female gender symbol with words calling for an end to a “culture of rape.”

Brazil’s interim President Michel Temer wrote on his Twitter account that he “vehemently repudiates” the alleged rape, and added that “it is absurd that in the 21st century we have to live with barbaric crimes like this.”

Temer appointed a new gov-

ernment this month when Rousseff was suspended to face trial in the Senate for allegedly breaking budget rules. He came under intense criticism for excluding women and black Brazilians from his cabinet — something not seen in decades.

Temer said his justice minister would meet on Tuesday with the public security chiefs who oversee policing in Brazilian states to discuss how better to combat violence against women.

The interim president also

said he would form a special department within the federal police focused on crimes against women, which would help to coordinate action and share information among the individual state security departments.

When Temer served as head of public safety for Sao Paulo state the early 1990s, he created the first police division in Brazil devoted to combating crimes against women, an idea that has since spread throughout the country.—Reuters

Poll gives Peru’s Fujimori 5.8 point lead a week before election

LIMA (Peru) — Centre-right presidential hopeful Keiko Fujimori gained more ground over her centrist rival Pedro Pablo Kuczynski in a Datum opinion poll on Friday, the third survey in the past week to show her winning Peru’s 5 June run-off election.

Fujimori, the daughter of imprisoned ex-president Alberto Fujimori, had 52.9 per cent of valid votes compared with Kuczynski’s 47.1 per cent, according to Datum’s mock voting exercise. The survey of 1,979 voters 23-25 May had a 2.2 point margin of error.

The two free-market advocates in the world’s third top copper supplier were locked in a statistical tie in previous Datum polls.

However, 13.7 per cent of respondents cast blank or spoiled ballots, giving Kuczynski room to pick up more support if he can exploit fears about Fujimori’s ties to her father’s authoritarian government and alleged drug trafficking.

Fujimori has climbed in opinion polls even after Univision reported on 15 May that a top aide is under investigation by the US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). The DEA declined to confirm or deny the report. Fujimori and her aide have denied wrongdoing and said they were victims of a smear campaign.—Reuters

Australia police use pepper spray as nationalists clash with anti-racism protesters

MELBOURNE — Australian police used pepper spray to break up clashes between rightwing nationalists and anti-racism protesters on the streets of Melbourne on Saturday as Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said eliminating racism was still a “work in progress”.

The United Patriots Front

(UPF) organised a “Stop the Far Left” rally while anti-racism protesters marched under the banner “Moreland says No to Racism”, in reference to a Melbourne district.

Fears of young Australian Muslims being inspired by militants such as Islamic State and traveling to fight in Iraq and Syr-

ia have underpinned support for rightwing groups like UPF and Reclaim Australia.

Former prime minister Tony Abbott made blocking migrants trying to reach Australia by boat a key plank of his victorious election campaign in 2013.

TV footage showed UPF members with Australian flags on poles and their faces covered by bandanas wrestling with leftwing militants, many of whom were hooded and had black cloths over their faces.

On one occasion, a UPF protester who fell to the ground was kicked several times by two anti-racism activists. “I understand the need and the right to protest ... but what we can’t have is this violence in our community,” Victorian state Police Commander Sharon Cowden told Sky. “We saw inappropriate and often cowardly behavior, people wearing masks.”

ABC said two people were arrested for weapons offences before the trouble flared despite a large police presence.—Reuters



A policeman deploys capsicum spray towards a protester during clashes in the Melbourne suburb of Coburg, Australia, on 28 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Colombia’s ELN rebels free three kidnapped journalists

BOGOTA — Three journalists held by Colombia’s Marxist ELN rebels were freed on Friday after going missing over the past six days in the restive Norte de Santander province.

Spanish journalist Salud Hernandez, who went missing on Saturday in El Tarra municipality, was freed in the early afternoon and called into various radio and television stations to confirm her release.

Colombian reporter Diego D’Pablos and cameraman Carlos Melo, who went missing on Tuesday after going to the largely lawless northeastern area to cover Hernandez’s disappearance, were freed Friday evening and spoke live to their employer, Noticias RCN.

Hernandez, who had been last seen climbing aboard a motorcycle taxi while reporting a story on the illegal drug trade, thanked the Catholic Church for its help with her release.

“Thank you to the Catholic Church, to all my colleagues,”

Hernandez said by telephone to Caracol television news. “I’m perfectly fine.”

Hernandez said at a press conference that leftist National Liberation Army (ELN) rebels had treated her well and told her they would hold her for several days.

The government confirmed on Thursday that the three journalists were being held by the ELN, which operates in the area alongside larger rebel group the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, and criminal gangs.

In a printed statement given to Hernandez, the ELN said it was responding to what it perceived as a security threat.

The release of the reporters could help move the ELN and the government toward beginning the peace talks they announced in March. The negotiations have been delayed by the rebels’ continued kidnappings and infrastructure attacks.—Reuters

Global airport trade group opposes new checkpoints after attacks

MONTREAL — The United Nation's aviation agency should avoid creating new checkpoints outside airport terminals as it draws up proposed global guidelines to improve security in the wake of recent attacks on travellers, the head of Airports Council International said on Friday.

Angela Gittens, director general of the global airport trade group, said she did not want external checkpoints, which are being debated as a way to deter attacks on airports, to become part of a proposed global security standard for public areas because the additional lineup could create a new target.

The UN's International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) last week discussed creating a new

standard that could push countries to come up with security rules for public sections of airports. Security in these so-called landside areas is run by a patchwork of local and state authorities, depending on the country.

"Most airports were not built to have people congregate at doors," Gittens said in her first interview on the proposed standard. "And every time you stop people, you're interfering with what airports were supposed to be doing. You're trapping people in a line where if something did happen these people would not be able to scatter."

Montreal-based ICAO sets standards that its 191 member states typically adopt as regulatory requirements.

The agency's council

would vote on any proposed changes to airport security only at year's end, or in 2017, two sources familiar with the confidential talks said on condition of anonymity.

While global security guidelines already exist for closed areas limited to passengers with boarding passes, the ICAO has not set standards for public sections of airports. Even before a March attack on a Brussels airport, the agency was already discussing ways to improve security after a Metrojet plane crashed in Egypt last year.

A US congressional panel heard this week that more than 70,000 American Airlines customers missed their flights this year and 40,000 checked bags failed to be loaded on scheduled flights because



An airport private contractor prepares a passenger at a security checkpoint during the check-in process at JFK airport in the Queens borough of New York City, US, on 27 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

of airport screening delays.

One of the sources said the agency had proposed giving guidance on security to member states, but would allow individual countries to draw up their

own national security rules for airports. ICAO spokesman Anthony Philbin said in an email on Friday that it was "far too premature" to comment since the agency was only considering pro-

posed changes.

"They are trying to broaden that to say it's not just the access to the flight, it's the safety/security of the passenger before that," he said.—Reuters

French recovery on track as consumers unfazed by strikes

PARIS — Wracked by fears about rising unemployment for years, French households are at long last turning more optimistic, keeping an economic recovery on track despite waves of strikes and protests over a contested labour reform.

The official consumer confidence index published on Friday surged well past even the highest estimate to reach the highest level since October 2007, before the global financial crisis broke.

Less than a year from a presidential election, the timing could not be better for President Francois Hollande with his Socialist government locked in a showdown with the hardline CGT union over its plans to ease labour regulations.

Perhaps most inspiring for Hollande, who has said he would not run for re-election unless unemployment falls, the confidence survey saw joblessness concerns drop to the lowest level since June 2008.

Households' view on their standard of living also returned to pre-crisis levels, suggesting that they may be beginning to buy into Hollande's much-mocked recent claim that "things are going better".

"You'd really have to be a killjoy to say it's not getting better," economist Denis Ferrand at COE-Rexcode told Reuters.

In Paris for an annual review of the French economy, IMF France mission chief Christian Mumssen

said this week that consumers' purchasing power was improving against the background of solid wage growth and virtually no inflation.

What's more, companies are also turning cautiously more optimistic. Business activity recovered in May to levels not seen since the 13 November attacks in around Paris in which 130 people died, according to a closely watched monthly survey of purchasing managers.—Reuters

UN urges Greece to improve conditions for transferred refugees

IDOMENI, (Greece) — Refugees removed from a makeshift Greek camp near the Macedonian border have been taken to sites with "sub-standard conditions" in derelict buildings with insufficient food, water, toilets and showers, the United Nations refugee agency said on Friday.

Greece cleared out the Idomeni camp this week and transferred thousands of people living there to state-run facilities. The site had sprung up in February after some Balkan states shut their borders to migrants seeking passage to northern Europe. At

its peak, it held more than 12,000 people sleeping in tents.

The UN agency, the UNHCR, said refugees removed by bus from Idomeni had received little information about conditions at the new sites and how long they would stay there. Poor conditions were compounding the already high level of distress and fuelling tensions, it said.

"We urge the Greek authorities, with the financial support provided by the European Union, to find better alternatives quickly," UNHCR spokeswoman Melissa Fleming told a briefing.



A worker removes tents used by migrants during a police operation to evacuate a migrants' makeshift camp at the Greek-Macedonian border near the village of Idomeni, Greece, on 26 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Greece said it was surprised by the criticism. It said authorities were aware of the "shortcomings" of the sites and the need to improve conditions there, and it hoped the UNHCR would be an "active ally" in that effort.

Fleming said while some refugees were taken

to refurbished facilities, most were taken to places which "had not been repaired properly for human habitation." She said the UNHCR was advising Athens to move people away from some facilities it judged were "completely inappropriate even if they are refurbished".—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KUO HSIUNG VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KUO HSIUNG VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 29.5.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY

AGENT FOR: M/S CHINA SHIPPING LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MCC HA LONG VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MCC HA LONG VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 29.5.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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Adele forgets her own lyrics

LOS ANGELES — Grammy-winning singer Adele forgot her own lyrics during a concert in Lisbon, Portugal.

The “Hello” hitmaker was in the midst of performing her track “Million Years Ago” when she mistakenly started singing

the chorus lyrics rather than the first verse, which prompted her to stop and apologise to the crowd, reported Female First. “Wrong words. I started singing the verse instead of the chorus! Sorry!” she told the crowd.

Adele has a history of for-

getting the lyrics to her own chart-topping tunes. In 2011, for instance, she stopped during a performance of “Chasing Pavements” and acknowledged to her fans in Boston that she couldn’t remember the next line of the song.—PTI

Bruno Mars eyeing to release new album in November

LOS ANGELES — Singer Bruno Mars is planning to come out with his new album in November this year.

There were rumours that the 30-year-old “Marry You” hitmaker will release his new album this autumn, reported

Aceshowbiz.

Sources at his record label Atlantic Records said that the Grammy-winning singer will be dropping the highly-anticipated project in November.

The new LP will come as a follow-up to “Unorthodox

Jukebox”.

Nothing much is revealed about the record yet, but Mars’ father Pete Hernandez said in an interview earlier this year that there would be at least seven songs that could be hits.—PTI

Former AKB member Oshima has minor car accident in Tokyo parking lot

TOKYO — Former member of the Japanese all-girl pop group AKB48 Yuko Oshima had a minor car accident Thursday in a parking lot in Tokyo but was

uninjured, police said on Friday.

When the 27-year-old actress was trying to park her car at around 5:30pm Thursday, the vehicle hit the fence of the park-

ing lot.

She is believed to have mistakenly steered in the wrong direction, according to the police.—Kyodo News

‘Warcraft’ cast meet their wax doubles in London

LONDON — The stars of new action fantasy “Warcraft” met their characters’ wax doubles on Friday at a new exhibit dedicated to the movie at London’s Mad-

ame Tussauds museum.

Actor Travis Fimmel who plays Lothar, Paula Patton who plays Garona and Toby Kebbell who plays Durotan, turned out

for the unveiling of the waxwork figures, posing alongside them for photographs. “Warcraft” began its worldwide cinema rollout this week.—Reuters



Megan Fox. PHOTO: REUTERS

I love being pregnant: Megan Fox

LOS ANGELES — Actress Megan Fox says she loves being pregnant.

The 30-year-old “Transformers” star said she enjoys the whole process of becoming a mother, reported *People* magazine.

“I feel great. I love being pregnant. A lot of women don’t feel that way. It is really uncomfortable and painful at parts. I feel the overall process is an amazing one.”

“I feel so productive creating a human person that I’m so excited to meet because I know that I have such a spiritual connection to them, so I can’t wait to meet this new member of my family,” Fox said. This will be her third child with husband Brian Austin Green. They currently have two sons together, Noah and Bodhi.—PTI

Jamie Bell in talks to be the new James Bond?

LOS ANGELES — “The Fantastic Four” star Jamie Bell is reportedly in discussion with James Bond producer about replacing Daniel Craig as 007 agent in the franchise.

Bell has had a meeting with Barbara Broccoli, who coincidentally produces the actor’s new movie “Film Stars Don’t Die”, about taking over the coveted role, reported Deadline.

The casting report comes after Craig was rumoured to turn down a lucrative deal to reprise his role and serve as a co-producer for the next two films.

Bell was last seen in “The Fantastic Four” as Ben Grimm or best known as The Thing.

He is not the only one linked to the “Spectre” sequel. Idris Elba and Tom Hiddleston are among fans’ favourites while Gillian Anderson is campaigning to be the first female 007 Agent.—PTI



Actor Jamie Bell. PHOTO: REUTERS

Social media causes issues in industry: Scarlett Johansson

LOS ANGELES — Hollywood star Scarlett Johansson finds it “disturbing” how celebrities are victimised in this day and age.

The 31-year-old actress has been in front of the camera for around two decades and is still going strong today, with several projects including animated movie *Sing* in the pipeline.

There’s been a great deal of change in the industry since she started out, with A-listers now being targeted on their every move by the press and the public through the Internet — something Johansson is horrified by, reported OK! magazine.

“You know, I didn’t grow up in the glare of social media. That stuff wasn’t an issue when I was a teenager,” she said.

“I remember watching Macaulay Culkin dealing with (the media), but it was because he had that Shirley Temple effect (and) he was making so much money. That was a very unusual situation.

“I was in the generation of Kirsten Dunst and Natalie Portman, a little bit younger, but none of us were dealing with that, the way young stars are (today). Watching it snowball into

what it has become today, it’s so disturbing.”

The “Lost in Translation” actress said she makes an avid effort to keep her private life under wraps, especially regarding her marriage to Frenchman Romain Dauriac and their daughter Rose, born in 2014.

But even when in her husband’s home country she can’t go unnoticed while out and about.

“People in France are just as crazy about movies as any other place. It’s probably a similar reaction as in New York: People

Scarlett Johansson. PHOTO: REUTERS

in big cities are involved in their own thing and (not as) totally star-struck as if you were in a more rural place. (But) fans are fans everywhere.—PTI



Record low number of whales taken off Japanese coast this spring

SENDAI (Japan) — Only 16 whales were taken this spring off Miyagi, north-eastern Japan, under the government's research whaling programme, a record low since the programme began in 2003, a government-commissioned whalers' group said Friday.

The maximum catch

of minke whales allowed under the so-called research whaling for this year is 51.

The number of whales captured under the programme has been declining over recent years, as fewer minke whales are around possibly due to changes in the dietary environment.

Tatsuya Isoda, a sen-

ior official of the regional whaling promotion association, told reporters in Ishinomaki, Miyagi that the number of minke whales which come to Sendai bay in the Sanriku region has fallen due to a change in marine species that the whales feed on.

The Fukuoka-based association said the whal-

ing was conducted from 9 April to 25 May under research consigned by the government's Fisheries Agency to examine what whales eat and to monitor marine resource conditions.

It said the main fish whales off the Sanriku region used to consume was ammodytes personatus,

but their number fell after the March 2011 powerful earthquake, while the number of sardinops melanostictus increased.

It is unknown if the quake is linked to the change, as the decline of ammodytes personatus is believed to be related to a rise in water temperature, the association said.

The Fisheries Agency is expected to consider waters off Sanriku or other locations for the site of research whaling next year and after by taking into account the March 2014 order from the International Court of Justice in The Hague to Japan to halt whaling in the Antarctic Ocean.—Kyodo News

Florence fines Uffizi Gallery director for ticket tout warning

FLORENCE (Italy) — The city of Florence has fined the head of the Uffizi Gallery for broadcasting publicity without authorisation after he aired a recording warning visitors not to buy entry to one of the world's most famous art museums from ticket touts.

Uffizi director Eike Schmidt played the recording of his own voice in English and Italian into the square outside the museum saying where and how much to pay for entry, and telling people to beware of unofficial street vendors

and pickpockets.

City police slapped Schmidt with a 295 euro (\$329.78) fine for breaking a law governing audible advertising in the streets. The German art historian said he would pay up on Friday.

But Schmidt, who took over the job at the home of Botticelli's Birth of Venus last year as part of Italy's campaign to overhaul a sclerotic museum system, criticised the fine.

"Instead of investing time and energy in working out whether we have made an administrative error with our initiative against ticket

touting, we should work together to fight crime and defend our cultural heritage," Schmidt said.

Tickets to the Uffizi, which also houses Titian's Venus of Urbino, cost up to 12.50 euros, but vendors on the street charge 20-45 euros to skip the queue or have a guided tour.

Last year, authorities in the capital Rome cracked down on the armies of people who hawk sightseeing tours, rickshaw rides, and photos with centurions around the Colosseum amphitheatre, prompting protests.—Reuters



Visitors look the painting "The Birth of Venus", 1486, by Sandro Botticelli at the Uffizi Gallery Museum in Florence in 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

Int'l Children's Day celebrated in Beijing



BEIJING — Students perform folk dance during a performance to celebrate the upcoming International Children's Day in Beijing, capital of China, on 27 May 2016. PHOTO: XINHUA

MRTV News Channel in Brief

(29- 5-2016, Sunday)

6:00 am

• Paritta By Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw

7:35 am

• Business News

8:35 am

• Documentary

9:35 am

• People's Talks

10:35 am

• Documentary (Women in Myanmar Society)

11:15 am

• Gitadagale Phwintbaohn

12:50 pm

• Myanmar Movie

4:35 pm

• "traffic" (an mtv exit special)

5:35 pm

• Documentary

5:45 pm

• Analysis for Myanmar Movie

6:30 pm

• Sing & Enjoy

7:15 pm

• Teleplay (Part-11)

8:00 pm

• News / International News/ Weather Report

8:35 pm

• Documentary

9:00 pm

• News

• Teleplay

Note / Hourly News Bulletins (Local + International)

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(29- 5-2016, Sunday)

6:00 pm

• Weather Report
• Kyauk Se Elephant Dance

6:30 pm

• Music Programme

6:50 pm

• Myanmar Video

9:10 pm

• Music Programme

9:30 pm

• The Writer: Chit Oo

Nyo (Part - II)

10:00 pm

• Myanmar Movie

From 29-5-2016 (Sunday) 6:00 Pm
To 30-5-2016 (Monday) 6:00 Pm

mitv Myanmar International

(29-5-2016 07:00am ~ 30-5-2016 7:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03 Am News

07:26 Am Shwe Maw Daw : The Glory of Bago City

07:53 Am Sticky Shan Snack

08:03 Am News

08:26 Am Interesting Features of Rakhine

08:46 Am Creations of a Designer

08:52 Am Orchid Lover

09:03 Am News

09:26 Am To The Land of Countless Temples - Bagan Trip (EP-1)

09:51 Am Egg Shell

10:03 Am News

10:25 Am Paper Products... Plain but Pretty

10:46 Am Ywar Thit's Monhinkhar

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

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

Prime Time

07:03 Pm News

07:26 Pm A Day In Bagan

07:47 Pm Today Myanmar: Nutrition or Contamination

08:03 Pm News

08:26 Pm Bogalay Tint Aung: A Man of Versatility (Part-3)

08:53 Pm Myanmar Masterclass "Contemporary Art"

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

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

Rashford nets place in record books as England win

LONDON — Marcus Rashford's rapid progress continued as the 18-year-old took 138 seconds to become the youngest player to score on his England debut in a 2-1 friendly win over Australia on Friday.

The Manchester United striker probably booked his place in Roy Hodgson's Euro 2016 squad and his Manchester United team mate Wayne Rooney added a second before substitute Eric Dier headed a late own goal.

But the night belonged to Rashford, who netted three minutes into what was only his 19th professional match, stroking the ball first time past goalkeeper Matt Ryan after creating space inside the area at Sunderland's Stadium of Light.

Rashford, who also scored on his United debut in February, could have had a second goal minutes later and produced an assured performance before coming off on the hour.

Manager Hodgson praised his debutant but refused to confirm whether Rashford will be in the trimmed down 23-man squad that must be named before Tuesday.

"It was fantastic, he did very well and I am pleased for him on his debut," Hodgson said. "He would not be out of place in anyone's 23."

Rashford probably only started against Australia because of an injury to Daniel Sturridge, but Hodgson said he was hopeful the Liverpool striker will recover sufficiently to train with the squad on Monday.

"If he does, the calf injury will not be a reason to leave him out of the 23," said Hodgson. "None of those decisions (about who to leave out) will be injury-related."

Rooney scored a record-extending 52nd goal for his country with a fine strike 10 minutes after the break.—Reuters



Marcus Rashford celebrates after scoring the first goal for England during International Friendly at Stadium of Light, Sunderland, on 27 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Nadal pull-out stuns French Open but show goes on

PARIS — Rafael Nadal went down fighting on his favourite battleground a year ago but this time his quest for an unprecedented 10th French Open title ended sitting glumly in front of a microphone.

With third-round action in full swing out on the Roland Garros claycourts, Nadal dropped a bombshell midway though a sunny afternoon when he announced he was withdrawing because of an injury to his left wrist.

For one of the game's fiercest fighters, it was a lame way to go — especially after he had dropped only nine games in reaching the third round where he had been due to play compatriot Marcel Granollers on Saturday.

The Spaniard's hastily convened news conference which caught everyone on the hop cast a pall over the tournament, especially after 17-times grand slam champion and 2009 French winner Roger Federer withdrew last week due to a back injury.

There was still some notable action on Friday, however, as seeded players began colliding.

Men's defending champion Stan Wawrinka eased into the last 16 by beating Frenchman Jeremy Chardy 6-4, 6-3, 7-5, second seed

Andy Murray defused Ivo Karlovic's rocket serve and home favourite Richard Gasquet had fans on Philippe Chatrier Court drooling as he took out Australian maverick Nick Kyrgios.

Agnieszka Radwanska, the women's second seed, and Spain's fourth seed Garbine Muguruza also advanced in the sunshine as did Australian Sam Stosur who beat 2015 runner-up Lucie Safarova to set up a match with another former finalist Simona Halep.

Ordinarily, 10th seed and twice Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitová's shock 6-0, 6-7(3), 6-0 defeat by 108th-ranked American Shelby Rogers would have reverberated.

But everything was overshadowed by

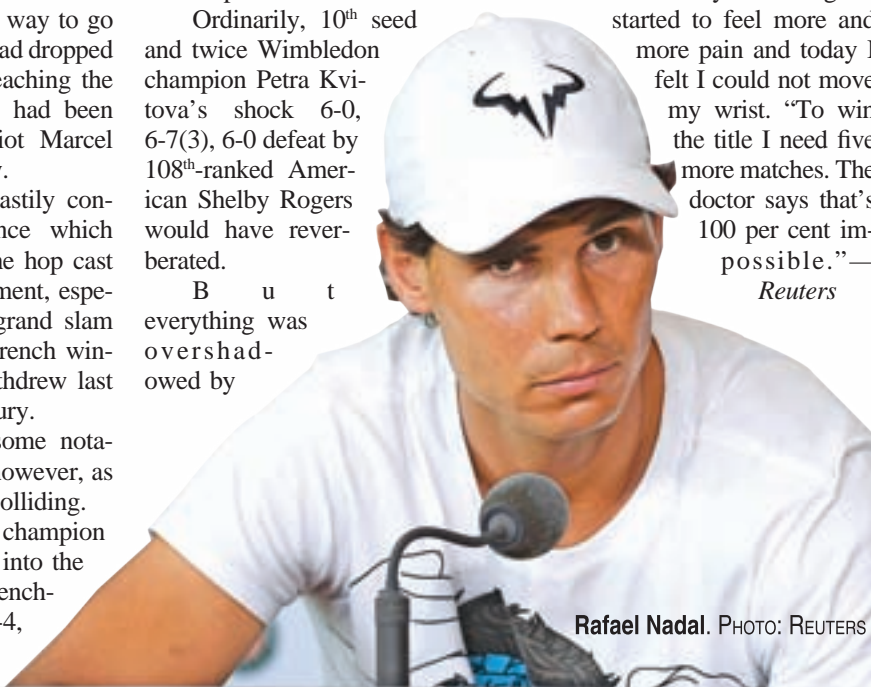
Nadal's wrist.

Explaining the problem, he said an injury that first flared up in Madrid a few weeks ago had returned with a vengeance and that soldiering on could risk snapping a tendon.

"I'm here to announce that I have to retire from the tournament because I have a problem in my wrist that I have had a couple of weeks," Nadal, 30 next week, told a room packed with non-plussed reporters.

"Yesterday evening I started to feel more and more pain and today I felt I could not move my wrist. "To win the title I need five more matches. The doctor says that's 100 per cent impossible."—

Reuters



Rafael Nadal. PHOTO: REUTERS

Forget last three years, Mourinho tells United



Jose Mourinho walks towards his house in London, Britain, on 27 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Jose Mourinho will forget what has gone on for the last three disappointing seasons at Manchester United, he said in his first interview after being installed as manager on Friday.

Since Alex Ferguson retired after winning the Premier League in 2013 the club have finished seventh, fourth and fifth, securing their only silverware in that time by winning this season's FA Cup.

That trophy was not enough to save Louis van Gaal who was dismissed this week following two years in charge.

"I think I prefer to forget the past three years," Mourinho told the club's TV channel. "I prefer to focus on the giant club I have in my hands now and I think what the fans are expecting me to say is that I want to win."

The former Porto, Chelsea, Inter Milan and Real Madrid manager, sacked by the London club in December after his second spell there, believes he has the right experience to be successful at United.

"I think it comes in the right moment of my career because Man United is one of these clubs where you need really to be prepared for it," said the charismatic Portuguese.

"Giant clubs must be for the best managers and I think I am ready for it so I could say I am happy, I am proud, I am honoured. I feel great.

"I want to win," added Mourinho. "I need the supporters and players to feel that. (The fans) know what they can give me and what I can give them.

"I've played so many times at Old Trafford and the feeling was empathy. I remember when I won at Old Trafford with Real Madrid and I said the best team lost, not many people at Real Madrid were very happy with that." Mourinho did not offer any hints about whether Ryan Giggs, who worked as Van Gaal's assistant, would be staying.

There was also no mention of possible transfer targets like Sweden and Paris St Germain striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic.

Mourinho has been given a three-year contract, which British media estimated being worth between 30 million and 45 million pounds (\$43.99-\$65.98 million).—Reuters

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