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Matho Robe-Weaving Contest at Shwedagon



The Matho Robe-Weaving Contest, a centuries-old tradition, is a competition held at prominent pagodas to see who can weave the most beautiful decorative robes for the Buddha statues in the temples. Tradition dictates that the weaving of the robe must be completed in one evening and must be offered to the Buddha before dawn. If the weaving of the robes is delayed and cannot be completed, it is considered an unsuccessful attempt. The most significant robe-weaving contest in Myanmar is the one celebrated at the Great Shwedagon Pagoda. Nine teams of weavers took part last night on the eve of the Full Moon of Tazaungmon. Each team has six members, one of them a team leader, who weave their offerings until dawn, at which time the judges choose a winner and award prizes. This ceremony not only allows for good deeds to be made, but also preserves the weaving tradition of Myanmar. PHOTO: YE HTUT

Violent attackers set fire to 80 houses in Maungtaw

THE violent armed attackers torched about 80 homes in a village, Maungtaw Township yesterday before fleeing, after the government troops and the police had hunted them.

Acting on a tip-off that about 10 violent attackers had entered Warpaik village, the government troops and the border guard police conducted their clearance operations in the village at about 4:50 pm yesterday because the attackers set the houses on fire and fled to Zinpaingnyar village.

The fires were brought under control by the troops at about 6 pm and destroyed approximately 80 houses.

Officials said that the violent attackers intentionally burn down the houses in order to cause misunderstanding and tension between the government forces and the people and get aid from the international communities.—Myawady

Clashes continue in the northern Rakhine, 25 violent attackers dead

The government troops continued its area clearance operations yesterday near Maungtaw Township's villages such as Mayintaung, Pwintphyuchaung and Gwason, where the deadly clashes occurred on Saturday.

While conducting the clearance operation in Gwason vil-

lage around 9 am yesterday, the troops found 50 houses burnt by the armed attackers who had retreated on Saturday.

In the operation, seven violent attackers wielding with machetes ran towards the troops in order to attack. The troops returned fire, killing six.

Similarly, a combined team that comprised of the government troops and the border guard police was attacked by about 20 violent aggressors equipped with machetes and wooden clubs while the security forces were conducting the clearance operation in Dargyzartaung village

around 1 pm yesterday. But the troops fired back them and 19 aggressors killed.

The troops also found the bodies of three attackers in the aftermath of its clearance operations nearby Gwason and Dargyzartaung villages. —Myawady

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200 acres of pulses in Sagaing destroyed by flood



Groundnut plantation are submerged in Katha, Sagaing Region. PHOTO: IPRD

MORE THAN 200 acres of bean and pulse plantations in Katha District in Sagaing Region were destroyed by floods caused by torrential rain in first week of this month, local growers say.

The unrelenting rain caused Maeza Creek and the Ayayawady River to reach dangerously high levels that create floods in many parts of Htigyaing Township in early November, damaging numerous plantations.

The recent floods damaged

a total of 234.50 acres of crops, including 50 acres of mung bean, five acres of groundnut, 60 acres of green peas and 27 acres of paddy fields that are tended by 90 farmers.

Farmers are now worried about high agriculture costs due to low production, as they cannot cultivate substitute crops in time, one of growers from Wonlogon Village said. Beans and pulses are among the major industrial crops in Myanmar, which remains a largely agricultural country, with 40 per cent

of its economy based on farming. The country's beans and pulses mostly go to India.

Between April and the first week of October, the country earned US\$872.348 million from the export of over 758,000 tonnes of beans and pulses, including over \$450 million from the export of over 322,000 tonnes of mung bean, over \$220 million from nearly 229,000 tonnes of green gram export and over \$97 million from the sale of 80,768 tonnes of pigeon peas. — Township IPRD

64 cases of electricity theft in Yangon this year

YANGON, the commercial capital of Myanmar, had 64 cases of stolen electricity this year, causing the government to lose revenue for over 200,000 units of energy, according to a news release issued by the Yangon Electricity Supply Corporation.

Theft of electricity can be the illicit use of electricity in residential houses and businesses, which illegally obtain electricity from the government's power

distribution system in various ways. Those businesses, which operate their firms through a residential meter, will have to pay a fine calculated on average monthly billing if found guilty of power theft.

According to the investigators, the cases of electricity theft were mostly found in Yangon, Bago and Ayeyawady regions.

Yangon, as the largest commercial city in Myanmar, con-

sumed around 1,200 megawatts of electricity this summer, which is half of the total electricity consumption nationwide. The city's electricity demands increase by around 15 per cent yearly. The region is home to 29 industrial zones and over 6,000 small-and-middle-sized enterprises, all of which account for the higher energy demand in the region compared to other regions.—200

New 3MDGF health facilities aim to reduce TB in Myanmar

TO REDUCE the incidence of tuberculosis in the country, a new outpatient department will be built in Yangon with the support of the Third Millennium Development Goal Fund (3MDGF), one of the largest contributors of external assistance for health in Myanmar.

The project is a part of the 3MDG's US\$3.1 million investment, which covers the establishment of four TB facilities including two outpatient departments, a biosafety level-3 national TB reference laboratory and single-level caretaker quarters in both Yangon and Mandalay.

According to the fund's

press release on Saturday, the groundbreaking ceremony for the new TB facility was held by the supporting body at the target area located within the compound of the Yangon Regional Tuberculosis Centre (Aung San) in Insein Township on 12 November.

The four-storey facility will be equipped with a laboratory, medical store, dispensary X-ray, counselling, consultation and emergency rooms. In addition, restrooms, entry points and parking areas for people with disabilities will be constructed.

The new OPD will be fully operational by 2018 and will

receive between 100 and 150 out-patients a day. This will include referrals of complicated and drug resistant TB cases from across the region.

The new facility will provide diagnostic and treatment services to patients who do not need to stay in the hospital free of charge. It will also support research into the disease, and contain a training centre and resource library for health staff.

Myanmar is one of the world's countries with the highest TB burden. According to the study, there are approximately 150,000 TB patients detected annually in the country.—GNLM

Crime NEWS

Locals accused of illegal logging detained in Kawthaung

AUTHORITIES detained eight people accused of illegal logging in a jungle near Lonphaw Village, Khamoutaw, Kawthaung District on Friday.

Acting on a tip, a combined team comprising police and staff from the district department of forestry raided the temporary tents of the accused and seized about 40 tonnes of timber and machinery used in logging.

Police detained U Hlaing Win, accused of being the owner of the illegal logging business,

five workers and two dependents of the workers.

The tents were accidentally discovered by a search team for water resources led by District Chairman of the National League for Democracy and an official of Green Network, an NGO. They reported on the discovery to the state Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Minister. Authorities said that action will be taken against them according to the law.—Kyaw Soe (Kawthoung)



Seized timber are seen on way to a local police station. PHOTO: MPF

In case of use of stoves

1. Place a person to keep vigil.
2. Don't overuse fuel fire power.
3. Put out the remnants of fire.
4. Place heat-resistant barriers between stove and roof/ wall.
5. Don't leave the oil pan forgotten.

Warning

1. Don't run away in case of fire. Seek help from the people nearby.
2. Prompt extinguishing of fire reduces losses and damages.
3. Keep dry chemical powder extinguishers and/or fire extinguishers in all apartments, buildings and shops to put out fire promptly and protect against the danger of fire.



Keep a fire extinguisher in your car to make people on board and the car free from the danger of fire.

Fire Services Department

Government troops attacked with improvised mines in Maungtaw

A COLUMN of the government forces, who were on their way from Kyikanpyin Border Guard Command Centre to Gwason village, was attacked with an improvised mine by the violent attackers near a bridge in Oolar village, Maungtaw Township on Saturday.

No one was injured in the

attack, but one vehicle was damaged.

Earlier that afternoon, the violent attackers also attempted to blow up a convoy on its way from the Border Guard Command Centre to Taungpyoletwe village. One vehicle was damaged, but there was no one injured during the bomb attack. —*Myawady*

Authorities makes inspection tour of villages in Maungtaw Township

RAKHINE State Minister for Electricity, Industry and Transportation U Aung Kyaw Zan and Amyotha Hluttaw MP Daw Htu May met with local residents in Kainggyi Village and Mawrawady Village in Maungtaw Township.

At the meeting at Kainggyi Village, the villagers suggested that authorities establish a local bazaar, appoint a doctor to the village's clinic, make arrangements for security, create job opportunities, set up a library and install TV receivers.

During the visit to Mawrawady Village, locals asked the authorities to boost security measures and to supply more power as they are supplied only two hours of electricity per day.

The authorities also observed the harvesting of rice with the use of a harvesting machine provided by the Agricultural Mechanization Department.

The department has provided two harvesters each to villages in the township, making a total of 40 harvesters.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Authorities observe harvesting of rice at Mawrawady Village. PHOTO: MNA

Two factories suspended for environmental concerns in Pyigyidagun

Aung Thant Khine

MANDALAY Region Government has ordered two factories in the industrial area of Pyigyidagun Township in Mandalay Region to suspend their operations due to environmental concerns, according to U Myo Thit, regional minister for Environment, Natural Resources and Forestry.

Toepwar Fertilizer Factory and Shwe Myinpyan Distillery are said to have been instructed

to temporarily shut down.

"One of them was reported by the public, and the other was discovered to be in violation in a surprise inspection," the regional minister said.

Factories have been informed of rules and regulations since August, but some have still failed to follow the law, the ministry said.

The factories were accused of improper factory smoke emissions and discharge of untreated waste.



Myanmar Navy transports food, household goods to Sittway

People from various parts of the country have been donating food and household goods for displaced people and security forces in Buthidaung and Maungtaw Townships in Rakhine State. A total of 698 bags of rice, about 12 tonnes of food and about 2.5 tonnes of household goods were transported from a Navy Jetty to Sittway by warship.—*Myawady*

Transportation between Buthidaung and Maungtaw has improved

Ye Khaung Nyunt

ROAD engineers are trying their best to improve the road between Buthidaung and Maungtaw in northern Rakhine State.

Buthidaung and Maungtaw, two towns in Northern Rakhine, are divided by Mayu Mountain Range and transportation between them always posed a problem to local people.

In addition, landslides often occur along the road during the rainy seasons, resulting in blockage of the road.

Despite the difficulties, about 450 vehicles have to use the road between the two towns as it is an entrance to the neighbouring country.

"During the previous rainy season, landslide occurred along the section of two furlong length and we had to remove about 30 million cubic feet of earth within

a week. We are trying to build a gravel road there. In addition, we are widening the road at blind sights so that vehicles can drive smoothly," said U Khin Maung Lwin, Assistant Engineer of Maungtaw District Road Department.

The road department is responsible for maintenance of eight roads including Buthidaung-Maungtaw Road, Buthidaung-Thinbawseik Road, Buthidaung-Kyaikaw Road, Maungtaw-Alethanyaw-Angukyaw Road, Maungtaw-Kyikanpyin-Kyainchaung-Aungthapay-Bandoola Road, and Taungpyo-Kyainchaung Road, Taungpyo-Gordonkha Road and Liekya-Leikya Station Road in Taungpyo Township. The eight roads has a total length of about 149 miles.

"We are widening and straightening Buthi-

daung-Maungtaw Road. People can travel from Buthidaung to Maungtaw within 45 minutes. After we have straightened and paved the road, it will take only 30 minutes to travel between the two towns," said U Zaw Min, Assistant Director of the road department.

The road will be widened from current width of 25 feet to 34 feet with 18-foot wide asphalt road within a five-year plan.

Arrangement to build walls where landslides often occur during the rainy season is also underway, according to the engineers of the department.

The road was built as a railway line in 1916 and completed in 1918 and it was made a road in 1962. During the times of the British colonialists, two tunnels were built through mountains along the road.

"We have done maintenance work along the two tunnels as they were seeping. However, they are too narrow for big vehicles, machinery and armoured vehicles to drive through. We built a round road of about three furlong length and it was completed in 2014. Most vehicles, including light ones and heavy ones are using the round road.

One of the tunnels has a length of 658 feet, a height of 12.5 feet and a diameter of 15.5 feet. Another tunnel has a length of 98 feet, a width of 15.5 feet and a height of 12.5 feet.

The two tunnels were built in 1916 by a railway company from Florida and completed in 1918.

"We never closed the tunnels but almost all vehicles are using the round road," U Zaw Min said.



Buthidaung-Maungtaw road being upgraded recently. PHOTO: PHOE HTAUNG

LOCAL Business

Myanmar rice market encounters challenges

THE Myanmar rice market is being faced with many challenges in its attempt to enter the highly competitive international market.

Concerted efforts need to be exerted by all the stakeholders who are engaged in supply chain and the officials concerned to maintain a stable price, to make a profit for those who are participating including farmers, to reduce processing and transportation costs, to have a fair price for input, to boost the yield, to cultivate the pedigree crops to a higher yield, to produce high-quality rice with the use of modern mills and to systematically store the rice in keeping with international criteria, said experts.

Myanmar yielded about 12.20 million metric tonnes from 7.21 million hectares of acres of land in the 2015-2016 fiscal year, whereas the rice volume yielded from Viet Nam from 7.67 million hectares of acres of cultivation land was 28.17 million metric tonnes. More than double the amount of rice was produced by Viet Nam from about the same area of land, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Only 12.5 per cent of the total volume of rice from Myanmar flows into foreign market. Local consumption is found to be the major market. The decrease in production in 2015 and 2016 was attributed to flooding for two straight years, plus the high cost of input materials: fertiliser and pesticides. The high production cost resulted in an increase in price. The volume of rice exports in the 2015-2016 fiscal year slumped by 296,656 metric tonnes, whereas that of broken rice slumped by 50,687 metric tonnes when com-



A farmer being seen ploughing on a field in Zigon, Bago Region. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

pared to that of 2014-2015 fiscal year, it is learnt.

Rice is the staple food of Myanmar and plays a vital role in the agricultural export sector. Myanmar's rice was mostly exported to Bangladesh, the Philippines, ASEAN and African markets from 2003 to 2008. The market then extended to Russian and Middle Eastern markets. China has become the main buyer of Myanmar's rice in 2011 through

the border areas. After a lift of the sanctions by the European Union (EU) against Myanmar in 2012, Myanmar's rice could penetrate the EU market through normal trade, according to the Commerce Ministry.

However, only a limited quota of rice is legally exported to China and anything above that amount that enters China is considered illegal trade. The Chinese market results in a greater profit than oth-

er international markets because Chinese merchants do not choose the rice varieties to purchase and offer a higher price than the market price. But rice export are on the decline because of confiscation from the China side, the depreciation of the yuan and flooding in the Shweli river, according to rice merchants.

Dr. Than Myint, the Minister for Commerce, authorities concerned, the Myanmar Rice Feder-

ation, the Myanmar Rice Millers Association and businessmen reportedly discussed these matters concerning the progress of Myanmar rice market, global rice market and market price on 29th October in Yangon region government office.

About 300,000 tonnes of rice are slated for export to foreign countries in the upcoming three months from November, 2016 to January, 2017. —*Mon Mon*

Agency to be established to enhance SMEs

AN exclusive agency will be set up to enhance the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), said an official from the Directorate of Industrial Supervision and Inspection.

This agency mainly aims to handle the SMEs which are usually seen as traditional types which need to be turned into the business type. Therefore, the Directorate of Industrial Supervision and Inspection will conduct matters concerning SMEs as an agency.

A business plan has to be submitted to the agency. Income and expenditure statement needs to be presented to the agency. To enhance SMEs,

the government will contribute 30 per cent of the budget while interested associations invest 70 per cent, it is learnt.

Myanmar has been implementing the National Development Plan with an aim to accelerate growth, achieve equitable and balanced development and reduce the socio-economic development gap between rural and urban areas of the country. A country's economic development depends on economic stability. The country would see an increase in the economic indicator, which generates more job opportunities, more exports and increase in balance of payment (BOP) ratio, according to the Ministry of Industry.—200

Dubai considers purchase of Myanmar's muskmelon

DUBAI has already proposed to purchase Myanmar's muskmelon, which will be exported to Dubai in 2017, said U Naing Win, chairperson of Myanmar Watermelon and Cucumber Growers and Exporters Association.

Myanmar's muskmelon are being planned to export with the assistance of Winrock Interna-

tional. The export volume will be dependent on the demand order.

Dubai has already conducted a practical study tour of muskmelon's cultivation and its quality. Winrock International has provided technical assistance to be able to export the quality muskmelon. Efforts are being made for watermelon and cucum-

ber growers and exporters association develop.

China is the main export market of Myanmar's muskmelons, while the muskmelons are also exported to Singapore. Over 100,000 tonnes of muskmelons are annually exported to foreign market, according to the aforementioned association.—200

Over 160 enterprises granted license for microfinance businesses

A total of 168 enterprises have reportedly been granted licenses to provide microfinance services, including INGOs, NGOs, foreign and local consortiums and joint ventures.

The development of microfinance businesses is part of the eight-point tasks of development currently being undertaken to

reduce the poverty rate in rural areas. Apart from urban areas, efforts are made for the microfinance services to reach rural areas, said a spokesperson. The request for a license is scrutinised on a basic set of criteria: measures taken by association, ability to enhance the social life of low-income people and ability to

survive for the long term.

Enterprises which have been recently granted one-year licenses are ADVANS Microfinance Myanmar, Nong Hyup Finance Myanmar, TUTU Finance-WCI Myanmar, DARIU Microfinance and two local companies—Taw Win Han Thi and Pine Tree Development Corporation.—*Ko Htet*

Philippine leader threatens tough measures to boost drugs war

MANILA — Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has warned he may use his executive power to suspend a legal safeguard against arbitrary arrest and detention, and was willing to use drastic measures and even go to jail to make his war on drugs a success.

The former prosecutor, dubbed “the punisher” and elected on promises of a fierce campaign to stop crime and illicit drugs, said there were so many narcotics suspects on his wanted list that building cases one-by-one took too much time and manpower.

He was therefore considering suspending a writ of habeas corpus, which requires the state to justify arrests and detentions.

“I am the president. Of course I have the powers,” he said at the launch of a foundation late on Friday.

“I can be ordered by the Supreme Court to stop it, but there are things that

they cannot, and maybe, I will not, stop.

“I can go to jail. File all the charges that you can think of. But this country, in my time, will not deteriorate any further.”

In the absence of the writ, police would be able to detain suspects without warrant and hold them for three days without charge.

According to the constitution, the president may “in case of invasion or rebellion, when the public safety requires it”, suspend the writ for periods of up to 60 days. The same clause allows for martial law to be invoked, but Duterte said he would not do that.

The firebrand former city mayor has resolutely defended his drugs crackdown and chastised anyone who has voiced criticism or concern, among them the European Union, US President Barack Obama and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.—*Reuters*

Abe aims to underscore importance of Japan-US alliance with Trump

TOKYO — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe aims to underscore the importance of the Japan-US alliance when he meets President-elect Donald Trump on Thursday, Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida said on Sunday.

“This is going to be an important meeting to build trust,” Kishida told public broadcaster NHK. “We also would like to use this opportunity to input the importance of the Japan-US alliance, as well.”

With Abe set to meet Trump in New York on his way to an Asia-Pacific summit in Peru, Tokyo has been seeking clarity on what direction the Republican political novice wants for bilateral relations after he made comments on the campaign trail that were at odds with longstanding policies.



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe reviews Japanese Self-Defence Forces' (SDF) troops during the annual SDF ceremony at Asaka Base, Japan, On 23 October, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Kishida reiterated Japan's long-standing position that it has no plans to possess nuclear weapons. During his campaign, Trump left open the possibility that Japan — the

only country to have suffered a nuclear bombing — might adopt nuclear weapons.

“I don't believe Japan will possess nuclear arms. This principle won't

change,” Kishida said.

Trump's campaign comments on Japan's nuclear armament and his demand that Japan pay more for the upkeep of US forces on its soil have worried Tokyo about a possible rift in a security alliance with Washington that has been the bedrock of its defence since World War Two.

Defence Minister Tomomi Inada told the same NHK programme that Japan is already shouldering enough financial burden to support US troops deployed in Japan.

“Japan is making sufficient contribution,” she said. “I would like to continue underscoring that Japan is going to strengthen its own defence posture both in quality and quantity, strengthen the Japan-US alliance and strengthen ties with other relevant countries.”—*Reuters*

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Viet Nam destroys mass rhino horns and elephant ivory



Seized elephant ivory and rhino horns are destroyed by Vietnamese authorities in Hanoi on 12 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

HANOI — Viet Nam destroyed nearly 2.2 tonnes of seized elephant ivory and 70 kg of rhino horns on Saturday, in one of its strongest moves yet to stop illegal wildlife trafficking.

The specimens, estimated to be worth more than \$7 million on the black market, came from about 330 African elephants and 23 rhinos, said UK-based Humane Society International (HSI), which has been working with the Vietnamese government since 2013 to reduce de-

mand for rhino horn in the country.

Viet Nam is a transit point for elephant ivory for consumers in mostly China and the United States to make jewellery and home decorations, while the Southeast Asian nation is a major consumer of rhino horn.

“The destruction today is a clear indication of our government's political determination to fulfil our international duty in conventions to protect wildlife,” said Ha Cong Tuan,

Viet Nam's deputy agriculture minister.

The usage and trading of rhino horn is a criminal offence in Viet Nam, but demand is strong due to a long-held belief in rhino horn's medical power as an elixir, especially among the country's growing middle and upper classes.

Saturday's event added Viet Nam to a list of 20 other countries that also have crushed or burned seized ivory and rhino horns.

“The illegal wildlife

trade is very serious, organised crime,” British Ambassador to Viet Nam Giles Lever said.

“The more efforts which Viet Nam and the Vietnamese government can have to working with other countries to stop the illegal wildlife trade, I think that will really help Viet Nam's international image.”

The African elephant faces an unprecedented poaching and trafficking threat. Between 2010 and 2012, an estimated 100,000 elephants were killed illegally to meet global demand for ivory, HSI said.

Over the past decade, poachers killed more than 6,000 rhinos across Africa, with more than 1,300 poached in 2015 alone. With only about 29,000 rhinos of five species remaining in the wild, rhinos are facing a crisis, according to HSI. “If we could do something to reduce demand here, reduce demand in China, maybe wipe it out, that will help rhinos in Africa,” said Teresa Telecky, director of the wildlife department at HSI.—*Reuters*

Prosecutors to question South Korean president over political scandal

SEOUL — South Korean prosecutors will question President Park Geun-hye over a political corruption scandal engulfing her presidency, an official said on Sunday, the first time a sitting president will be questioned by prosecutors over a criminal case.

Hundreds of thousands marched in the capital Seoul on Saturday demanding Park resign. Many protesters said Park, whose public support has dropped to the lowest point ever for a democratically elected South Korean leader at 5 percent, was unfit to rule.

Prosecutors are investigating whether Park exerted improper pressure on “chaebol” conglomerate bosses to raise funds for two foundations at the centre of an influence-peddling scandal involving a friend of hers, Yonhap reported on Sunday, citing prosecution sources.

They are also probing Park’s friend, Choi Soon-sil, who is alleged to have used her ties to the president to meddle in state affairs and wield influence in the cultural and sports communities, a prosecutor has previously said.

Prosecutors have already questioned the de facto head of Samsung Group SAGR.U.L Jay Y.



People march toward the Presidential Blue House during a rally calling for President Park Geun-hye to step down in central Seoul, South Korea, on 12 November, 2016. The sign reads: ‘Step down Park Geun-hye.’ PHOTO: REUTERS

Lee and the chairmen of Hyundai Motor Group (005380.KS) and Hanjin Group HANJUL over the scandal, media reports said on Sunday.

“It’s correct we’re planning to question the president but the date is undecided,” an official at the prosecutors’ office told Reuters.

Yonhap news agency

quoted a prosecution official as saying Park’s questioning should be done no later than Wednesday.

“Questioning people face-to-face is our principle,” the official said. Park will appear before prosecutors as a witness, Yonhap reported.

Park’s office said it would be Tuesday at the earliest before it will have

a position on the prosecutors’ plan and was considering retaining a lawyer for the president.

While some previous South Korean presidents have been mired in scandals or allegations of wrongdoing involving family members during their terms, none were directly questioned by prosecutors while they

were in office.

The prosecution office official confirmed the chairman of Hyundai Motor, Chung Mong-koo, was questioned on Saturday but declined to confirm whether the other chaebol bosses had met prosecutors.

A Korean Air Lines (003490.KS) spokesman confirmed that Cho Yang-

ho, who is chairman of Hanjin and South Korea’s largest airline, had appeared for questioning but did not elaborate further.

A Hyundai Motor spokesman declined to comment and Samsung Group could not immediately confirm the reports of prosecutors questioning their respective officials.

Park faces intense pressure from the public and parliament to step down over the scandal, but the main opposition parties have not raised the possibility of initiating impeachment proceedings.

The presidential office said earlier on Sunday that Park was “earnestly considering ways to normalise state affairs” and that she had “heard the voices of the people at the rally”.

Park has said she had discussed with conglomerate heads in July last year her desire for them to contribute more for culture without elaborating.

South Korean prosecutors raided Samsung Electronics last week as part of the probe over the scandal and whether the company separately gave millions of euros to a company controlled by Choi and her daughter. —Reuters

Japan conducts defense drill to fight illegal entry of armed fishermen

TOKYO — Japan’s Self-Defence Forces, coast guard and police have conducted their first joint drill to cope with an illegal entry of armed fishermen on a remote island, a government source said Saturday, amid tension with China over a group of islands in the East China Sea.

The exercise was held on an island in Kagoshima Prefecture Friday as Chinese government vessels repeatedly entered Japan’s territorial waters around the Japanese controlled Senkaku Islands, claimed by China which calls them Diaoyu, in Okinawa Prefecture south of Kagoshima, with the Japan Coast Guard reporting the latest breach Saturday.

The source said the drill, aimed at increasing the coordination and ca-

pability of the police, the coast guard and SDF, did not assume any specific country or place.

The three parties examined their collaboration based on a scenario that armed fishermen illegally landed on the island — a situation defined as a so-called “gray zone” incident that is short of an organized, premeditated attack of force by another country but poses a threat of violating Japan’s sovereignty.

The exercise could trigger protest from China as it came after Beijing agreed in September with Japan to accelerate discussions for an early introduction of a maritime and aerial communication mechanism designed to avoid accidental clashes in the East China Sea.

According to the

source, dozens of troops from each organ participated in the undisclosed drill held on the island of Eniyabare on the Amami islands chain in Kagoshima, mobilizing a helicopter and patrol vessel.

The coast guard restricted armed fishermen approaching by boats on the sea followed by responses by the police and SDF to the fishermen who landed on the island, the source said. In July last year, the coast guard and Maritime Self-Defence Force conducted a drill in waters around Izu Oshima Island south of Tokyo based on a “gray zone” scenario in which a foreign military vessel was making suspicious movements in Japan’s territorial waters.

—Kyodo News

ကွန်ပျူတာ စနစ်ဖြင့်ထိန်းသော
MECHANICAL CAR PARKING

Side View Front View

21'6" 7'2" 14'4" 7'2" 18'

21'6" 7'2" 7'2" 7'2" 7'2" 21'6"

Plan View Front View

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Ideas coming true
(BRNo.200904356H)

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Hillary Clinton attends an event where she addressed her staff and supporters about the results of the US election at a hotel in the Manhattan borough of New York, US, 9 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Clinton blames FBI's Comey for her defeat in call with donors

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON — Hillary Clinton blamed FBI director James Comey for her stunning defeat in Tuesday's presidential election in a conference call with her top campaign funders on Saturday, according to two participants who were on the call.

Clinton was projected by nearly every national public opinion poll as the heavy favourite going into Tuesday's race. Instead, Republican Donald Trump won the election, shocking many throughout the nation and prompting widespread protests.

Clinton has kept a low profile since her defeat after delivering her concession speech on Wednesday morning.

Clinton told her supporters on Saturday that her team had drafted a memo that looked at the changing opinion polls leading up to the election and that the letter from Comey proved to be a turning point. She said Comey's decision to go public with the renewed examination of her email server had caused an erosion of support in the upper Midwest, according to three people familiar with the call.

Clinton lost in Wisconsin, the first time since 1984 that the state favoured the Republican candidate in a presidential election. Although the final result in Michigan has still not been tallied, it is leaning Republican, in a state that last favoured the Republican nominee in 1988.

Comey sent a letter to Congress only days before the election announcing that he was reinstating an investigation into whether Clinton mishandled classified information when she used a private email server while secretary of state from 2009 to 2012.



FBI Director James Comey testifies before a House Homeland Security Committee hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington, US on 14 July, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Comey announced a week later that he had reviewed emails and continued to believe she should not be prosecuted, but the political damage was already done.

Clinton told donors that Trump was able to seize on both of Comey's announcements and use them to attack her, according to two participants on the call.

While the second letter cleared her of wrongdoing, Clinton said that it reinforced to Trump's supporters that the system was rigged in her favour and motivated them to mobilise on Election Day.

The memo prepared by Clinton's campaign, a copy of which was seen by Reuters, said voters who decided which candidate to support in the last week were more likely to support Trump than Clinton.

"In the end, late breaking developments in the race proved one hurdle too many for us to over-

come," the memo concludes.

A spokesperson for the FBI could not immediately be reached for comment.

On the phone call, Dennis Chang, who served as Clinton's finance chair, said her campaign and the national party had raised more than \$900 million from more than 3 million individual donors, according to the two participants who spoke to Reuters.

As Clinton gave her account to donors, Trump hunkered down at Trump Tower with members of the transition team announced on Friday and tasked with selecting the 15 Cabinet posts and thousands of political appointment jobs.

Kellyanne Conway, who served as his campaign manager, said on Saturday that the announcement of a new chief of staff is "imminent." Two candidates whose names have surfaced as contenders for the top White House job are campaign CEO Steve Bannon and Republican National Committee Chairman Reince Priebus.

Trump will deliver a speech about his plans moving forward in the coming days and may undertake a national victory tour, Conway said, without providing further details. He will be sworn in on 20 January. The president-elect plans to keep his communication channels open. In an interview with CBS' "60 Minutes" that will air on Sunday, Trump said he isn't ready to give up his Twitter account, where he routinely posted controversial statements during the campaign that unleashed harsh criticism.

"I'm going to be very restrained, if I use it at all, I'm going to be very restrained," Trump said. —Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

Shooting at New York mall, no injuries reported

NEW YORK — A shooting incident occurred Saturday at a shopping mall in a town west of Albany, the capital of New York, local police confirmed.

The shots were heard at Crossgates Mall, Guilderland, about three hours drive north of Lower Manhattan, Saturday afternoon, an officer with Albany's LGBT Liaison for the Police Department told Xinhua via phone.

There were no immediate reports of injuries, and the officer had no knowledge if anyone were arrested as the incident took place in the city sharing a border with Albany, the officer said.

Dozens of officers, many with assault weapons, could be seen milling around the mall and every entrance to the mall was blocked off, local media reported.

Shoppers and mall employees were directed to evacuate to the parking lots.—Xinhua

Magnitude 7.4 earthquake strikes near Christchurch, New Zealand — USGS

An earthquake with a magnitude of 7.4 struck 91 km (57 miles) north-northeast of the city of Christchurch, New Zealand just after midnight (1102 GMT Sunday), the US Geological Survey said.

Christchurch is the biggest city on New Zealand's South Island. A 6.3 quake there in February 2011 killed 185 people and caused widespread damage.

The US Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre said there was no tsunami threat from Monday's quake.—Reuters

Iraqi troops say recapture Nimrud, site of Assyrian city

BAGHDAD — Iraqi soldiers have captured Nimrud, the site of an ancient Assyrian city overrun by Islamic State militants two years ago, a military statement said on Sunday.

"Troops from the Ninth Armoured Division liberated Nimrud town completely and raised the Iraqi flag above its buildings," the statement said. The town of Nimrud lies 1 km (less than 1 mile) west of the ruins of the old city.—Reuters

French Far-right leader hopes for Trump-like win in 2016 election

LONDON — Donald Trump's election win was a victory of the people against the elite, France's far-right National Front party leader Marine Le Pen said on Sunday, adding she hoped the French people would follow suit next year.

Opinion polls show Le Pen likely to win the first round of French presidential elections next April but lose the runoff round in May to whoever should be her opponent.

Asked during an interview with the BBC's Andrew Marr show if Trump's victory in the United States made her own election win more likely, Le Pen said: "He made possible what had previously been presented as impossible so it is really the victory of the people against the elite."

"So if I can draw a parallel with France then yes I wish that in France also the people up-end the table, the table around which the elites are dividing up what should go to the French people," she said, according to a translation into English provided by the BBC.—Reuters

Four children injured in suspected militant attack on Indonesia church

JAKARTA — Indonesian authorities on Sunday arrested a suspected militant who threw an explosive device at a church in the eastern island of Borneo and injured four children.

Police in East Kalimantan province said the attacker had been imprisoned on terrorism charges in the past.

"A suspected low-impact bomb was thrown...Four children were injured and four motorcycles were damaged," East Kalimantan police spokesman Fajar Setiawan said, adding police were looking into links with radical networks.

The attack took place at 10am in the parking lot of Oikumene church in the town of Samarinda.

Indonesia has seen a string of Islamic State-linked attacks this year, the biggest of which was a gun and bomb assault in the capital Jakarta that killed four people.—Reuters

Opinion

Write for us

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Soup kitchens in Myanmar which people from all walks of life join in

Khin Maung Oo

According to Myanmar calendar, each month has its particular festival. Most are related with religious events. As per Myanmar’s nature of being in the habit of giving freely, many kinds of donation attend Myanmar festivals. Of them, soup kitchens are commonly found almost in all seasonal festivals. “Oxford Advanced American Dictionary” defines the word as a place where people who have no money can get soup and other food free. Thus, I think it will be suitable to render it in Myanmar as ဆာသိုတာ meaning four directions. Nowadays, it is very pleasant to see the poor as well as well-to-do people come to join the community event for delicious meal. This custom can be said to date back many years ago in our nation. It is customary for us to provide food and other necessary commodities to flood, fire, quakes and storm victims at the time of any disasters. This kind is home-to-site (soup kitchen) delivery, to coin a phrase.

“Going on a 7-day fast or going without water for a morning period will put you to a sure death”, as a Myanmar saying goes. A scarcity of drinking water is still a ubiquitous problem in dry areas of our country. There seems to be an element of hyperbole in claiming that we had ever experienced a severe drought in our arid zone so much so that there was no enough water to extinguish an outbreak of fire in a village of our home town, some two decades ago. Now water shortage problem has been solved out to some extent, thanks to the governments’ efforts, Samaritan groups in the country, NGOs and INGOs.

Some people used to say proudly that there has been no one who has starved to death in Myanmar, as the country is the one which has been producing much paddy. And the plan to alleviate poverty is being implemented. Undeniably, yet, high unemployment rate, increasing commodity prices—legacy left by previous regimes, are still difficult problems for the incumbent government to solve in a short period of time. But there are many orphans and decrepit old people left in the lurch by their families because of their poor conditions. They are greatly in need of much help from us for their survival.

Institutions and foundations performing social activities are mushrooming these days. Wonderfully enough, most of those activists in the philanthropic works are youths and middle-aged ones. In this age when most are claiming “Self, self, self”, the obliging younger generation is depicting their noble inner self.

If we can ignite their hidden capacities and lead them to a paradigm shift on life, I dare say that everywhere will be full of active citizens and their activities will help our government build the country into a Modernized Democratic Federal Union. In fact, each and every one of us is responsible to actively and voluntarily participate for the betterment of our society, believing in the importance of emergence of Samaritan activities such as soup kitchen more and more in the time of our government’s nation-building.

Festivals of the month “Tazaungmon” Part I

Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Sithu,
Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt

TAZAUNGMON the 8th month in Myanmar lunar calendar approximately corresponds to November. It is the first month of Myanmar cold season covering four month period Tazaungmon [November], Nattaw [December], Pyatho [January] and Tabodwe [February]. If the climate is clement, rain has withdrawn and open season begins in this month with clear blue sky and cool north-east wind from the icy land of the north turns the entire Myanmar land into a chilly breezy state. So Tazaungmon is the most favorable month for holding festivals of all nature and kind. There is a folk song or nursery rhyme that bespeaks the festivals of this month:-

အဘိုးကြီးတို့ ခါးကုန်ကုန်
Old man bent and double
မေသပိန်ခန်း
Don’t die so soon,
နောင်နှစ်ခါ တန်ဆောင်မုန်း
For watch again the pwes [Festivals] at next
ပြည့်ညိုပဲခန်း
Tazaungmon’s fullmoon.

Astrological name of Tazaungmon is Bjeihsa [Scorpio. Vrischika] Scorpio is its zodiacal sign. A particular creeper species called in Myanmar Kha wei [angular luffa plant] with gold colour fragrant blooms and tender sweet fruits either grows wild or cultivated for vegetable is the designated flower of this month. At mid night in the clear blue firmament an asterism Kyattika shines astride with the Moon.

Festivals held in this month may be classified into three categories- pre. Buddhist, Buddhist and post Buddhist. As the month is clear of all kinds of pollutions [mist, snow, haze, clouds, smoke ဆီနုနု၊ ဝိဇ်သုရိန် မီးခိုသော် မိုးကင်းကွာ လတ်ဆောင် မဟာ] all heavenly bodies are visible to naked eyes. In the pre-Buddhist time. Myanmar people worshipped natural phenomena. Heavenly bodies were believed to exercise their influence upon human life and career. They were therefore propitiated for favour. The festival of propitiation of constellations and planets including the Sun and the Moon known as Net Khat Thabin was held in Tazaungmon. Light festival of Tazaungmon originally was the Net Khat Thabin festival —lights were lit to dedicate them to all heavenly bodies. There are 27 constellations, according to Myanmar astrology, which all come out in the sky of Tazaungmon. These 27 are as follows:-

- 1. Asavani
- 2. Barani
- 3. Kyattika
- 4. Rohani

- 5. Migasi
- 6. Bhadra
- 7. Punnaphusshu
- 8. Phussha
- 9. Assalissa
- 10. Magha
- 11. Pyubbaparagunni
- 12. Uttaraparagunni
- 13. Hassada
- 14. Cittara
- 15. Swadi
- 16. Visakha
- 17. Anurada
- 18. Jetha
- 19. Mula
- 20. Pruppasan
- 21. Uttarasani
- 22. Sarawun
- 23. Dhanasiddha
- 24. Sattabhissha
- 25. Pyupabadrapaik
- 26. Uttarabadrapaik and
- 27. Revati.

It is believed that these Net Khats are guarded by devas. On the full moon night of Tazaungmon, Net Khat feast was held at which, fruits, flowers, juice, honey, milk rice cakes and incense were offered to heavenly bodies, followed by illumination of light, musical and dance entertainments and all kinds of celebration.

The name Tazaungmon for this month is derived from the festival of constellations and planets. Ta-zaun means illumination by oil lamps. “Mon” means to embellish. So Tazaungmon is the month in which Net Khat Thabin is embellished by lights.

In one of Buddha Jataka stories called Ommadanti we have the full account of a state festival of Net Khat Thabin on the full moon night of Tazaungmon. The following is an abridged story of Ommadanti Jataka and Net Khat Thabin Light Festival.

“Ommadanti was an extremely beautiful girl born of a wealthy noble family. The fame of her beauty spread to all directions-praising that her beauty deserves her to become a queen. When King Thiwi of Arihtapura kingdom heard of that fame he sent his wise brahmins to her to confirm if she had the queenly qualities. At the dinner given in their honour, upon seeing Ommadanti, all brahmins became so bewitched by her charming beauty that they made a mess of everything at the dinner. So annoyed by their ill manners Ommadanti ordered her servants to throw the boors out of her house. Ashamed and humiliated the brahmins reported to the king that the lady was unworthy to be a queen. The King believed their report. Ommadanti was married to the king’s General Abiparaka. Al-

though Ommadanti was faithful and devoted to her husband she could never forgive and forget the slight the king had given her. With a feminine pride, she harbored vengeance upon the King.

On the full moon Tazaung mon night the whole capital city was illuminated to celebrate the Royal Net Khat Thabin. A royal pageant around the city was prepared with the general Abiparaka in charge of the King’s security. Before he went to his duty the general told his wife Ommadanti not to come out and show herself when the royal coach with the king passed by their house for he knew that her beauty would do harm to the king. But Ommadanti had made up her mind to make the king go crazy about her by means of her charming beauty. When the royal coach turned up in front of their house, she made her appearance at the open window of the balcony and with a captivating smile she threw fragrant flowers at the King who looked up only to get a glimpse of the feminine idol in perfect beauty because Ommadanti rushed in and closed the door, leaving the King in a state of extreme desire and love mania. The King cut short of his city tour and at the palace he shut himself in his chamber, refusing to hold daily audience but suffering alone. The General knew at once what had happened to the King. So the General told the King that he consulted the guardian god of the Bannyan Tree whose oracle told him that the King was infatuated with Ommadanti. The General magnanimously offered his wife Ommadanti to the King. Ashamed and repented the king was brought back to his senses. He recovered from his love mania. He ruled his kingdom justly till his old age.

Ommadanti Jataka is the favorite story which is played at the Tazaung mon festival. It befits the occasion and its plot and characters appeal to the Myanmar youths and adults alike.

But with the introduction and spread of Buddhism to Myanmar, Tazaung mon festival assumed religious features and characters. Lights are illuminated and a variety of fun-making is carried out but the festival of Net Khat Thabin recedes to the back ground. Kahtein festival takes over its place. The word “Kahtein” is a derivative of a Pali word “Kathina” meaning ‘Firm’ or ‘durable’. Monks who receive Kahtein robe and monks who express their appreciation at the offering and receiving of Kahtein robe by uttering “Sadu” [well done] three times, gain five durable merits. The five durable merits are the privileges of enjoying relaxation of certain rules of Vinaya [Priestly Disciplines governing the monks]. These five are as follows;

- 1. Monks can go out to the house

of the donor who invites them for offering food, without informing the other monks nearby, even if the donor has in advertently used improper language in inviting.

- 2. Monks who have resolved to practice the Ti-civara austerity [possessing a robe of 3 garments only] are allowed to go out without carrying the resolved robe with them.
- 3. Robes received can be worn by monks without performing certain religious procedure.
- 4. Even if and when an invitation for food offering comes in an improper manner, at least four monks and above can accept it.
- 5. Monks of the monastery where Kahtein robes are offered for the Sangha [the entire Holy Order] can wear these robes.

The donors of Kahtein robes attain the following merits.

- 1. There shall be no danger or disturbance wherever the donor travels.
- 2. The donor shall have plenty of good and healthy food. He shall never suffer from food poison.
- 3. The donor’s possessions are safe from destruction, robbery or theft.
- 4. The donor shall recover the long forgotten or lost property.
- 5. The donor shall get wealth without much difficulty and
- 6. The donor shall have a good look.

No religious restriction regarding robe offering to monks. Donors may offer one piece or the whole set to any monk at any time. But regarding Kahtein robe there are religious rules to abide by. The Kahtein robe offering period is from the first waning moon day of Thadinkyt [October] to the full moon day of Tazaung mon [November]. Both the donor and the recipient monk must observe this time limit.

One or the whole three pieces of robe can be offered as Kahtein robe. The donor must have good and sincere intention and he must donate Kahtein robe out of his voluntary will. The donor offers Kahtein robe not to individual monk or monastery but to the Sangha [all members of Buddhist Holy Order] as a whole. Monks must never request anyone, even his parents, relatives or friends directly or indirectly to donate them robe. According to Vinaya [Priestly rules of Monk Discipline] if monks in need of robe and if there is no donation of robe, they must collect discarded clothes, wash them clean, dye them with bark, piece and sew them together to wear as robe.

Recipients of Kahtein robe are selected in accordance with the rules pertaining to Kahtein robes. Not any monk and not all monks are eligible to receive Kahtein robe.

The deserving recipient monks are those monks who have;

- 1. Observed Purima Wa or first lent First waning moon of Waso [July] to the full moon day of Thidinkyt [October]
- 2. Performed Pawarana [confession of monks to one another on the full moon day of Thidinkyt]
- 3. Have not record of breach of lent vow
- 4. Shortage of robe
- 5. Being the most senior monk among those who are in real need of robe.

The selection of the deserving recipient of Kahtein robe is carried out by an assembly of monks in the Sima [Ordination Hall]. The Kahtein robe is offered to the monk or monks who have the above mentioned qualifications. The recipient monk has to discard, the piece of robe he is wearing which is corresponding to that of Kahtein robe offered him. Then he has to say in Pali the acceptance of the Kahtein robe offered him. He makes a mark on the accepted Kahtein robe. Then declares in Pali “that the Kahtein robe has been offered and accepted in accordance with the rules of Vinaya laid down by Lord Buddha. Then he requests all monks present to share in the merit by exclaiming word of appreciation “Sadu- [well done] three times.

Kahtein robe can be donated by anyone, lay or monk, men or women, adult or youth. But each monastery is entitled to one Kahtein robe offering a year. Kahtein robe must be untainted, clean, new, not borrowed one or second hand one. It is a pure religious offering by voluntary will of the donor.

The origin of Kahtein robe offering dates back to the life time of Lord Buddha. While Lord Buddha was residing at Jetavana Vihara at the city of Savatthi, thirty Buddhavaggi monk from Paveti-yaka came to pay homage to Lord Buddha. It was a long journey. They could not reach Savatthi before the commencement of lent. So they stayed at a small town Thakayta during lent. After lent when they continued their journey a heavy rain came down soaking them wet and damaging their robes. Since they were practicing 13 classes of austerities, they did not have extra robes to change. When they arrived at Jetavana Vihara, Lord Buddha on seeing their plight allowed offering and receiving of Kahtein robes, laying down rules and procedures and expounding the merit gained from this religious deed.

Stone inscriptions, chronicles and literature bear evidences and account of Kahtein robe offering festival in Tazaungmon since the time of ancient Bagan or even earlier.

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Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visits the historical museum of Granatieri in Rome. PHOTO: MNA

SG Min Aung Hlaing visits defence and security companies in Turin, Italy

COMMANDER-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visited two companies which produce military vehicles and aircrafts on 12th November during stay in Italy.

The Senior General flew from Rome to Turin at 11.30 am local time to visit the ARIS Company which manufactures mili-

tary vehicles with special designs.

In the afternoon, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visited LEONARDO Aircraft Company, an Italian multinational aerospace, defence and security company, which produces fighters, aircrafts, airborne and space systems, land and naval defence electronics, defence systems, se-

curity and information systems.

Before leaving for Turin, the Myanmar delegation led by Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visited the historical museum of Granatieri in Rome.

The Senior General and party arrived back in Rome at 6 pm local time.—Myanmar News Agency



Government troops extinguishing fire at Warpaik Village. PHOTO: MYAWADY (NEWS ON PAGE-1)

Yangon Eye Hospital asks for more donations

YANGON Eye Hospital, a specialist hospital offering comprehensive eye care services, invites further donations for patients who need to undergo corneal transplant surgery to regain their sight.

A corneal transplant is an operation to remove a damaged cornea and replace it with healthy donor tissue. The cornea helps to control the volume of light entering the eye. Corneal damage is caused by injury, disease and infection.

The hospital normally receives around 150 corneal do-

nors a month. The number is lower when compared with the country’s population of over 51 million, said Professor Tin Win from the YEH, adding that Sri Lanka has a population of only 17 million but it receives about 600 cornea donations a month.

Public participation plays an important role in successfully undertaking the cornea transplant programme, said Professor Tin Win, who confirmed that the hospital accepts corneal donations from donors younger than 40 years of age.

He continued to say that the hospital allows people of all ages to make cornea donation by registering at the Eye Bank. However, those 18-year-old and younger wishing to make a corneal donation needs an approval letter from their parents.

Myanmar enacted the Eye Donation Law in 1996 to provide extensive medical treatment to persons with eye diseases to regain sight by undergoing a corneal transplant. The law was amended in 2012. —Myitmakha News Agency

Taliban bomber kills 4 Americans at NATO base in Afghanistan

KABUL — A Taliban suicide bomber dressed as a labourer blew himself up at the NATO air base at Bagram north of the Afghan capital Kabul on Saturday, killing four Americans and wounding at least 17 people in one of the bloodiest attacks against US forces since President Barack Obama took office.

Two US military service members and two US contractors were killed, and 16 other US service members were wounded, along with a Polish soldier who was part of the NATO mission, US Defence Secretary Ash Carter said in a statement.

“For those who carried out this attack, my message is simple. We will not be deterred in our mission to protect our homeland and help Afghanistan secure its own future,” Carter said.

It was the deadliest attack on US soldiers in the country since a suicide bomber on a motorcycle killed six American troops on patrol near Bagram in December 2015.

Carter said the Pentagon will investigate Saturday’s attack to determine what steps could be

taken to improve protection for the base.

The attack, which was claimed by the Taliban, underlines the foreign policy challenge that will face US President-elect Donald Trump when he takes office in January.

President Barack Obama had originally hoped to have all US forces out of the country by the end of his term, but was forced to abandon that goal as Afghan forces struggled to contain the Taliban insurgency.

Under current plans, 8,400 US troops will remain as part of the Resolute Support operation and a separate US counterterrorism mission after Obama decided to slow down a planned reduction of the force, leaving it to his successor to decide future strategy.

Waheed Sediqqi, spokesman for the Parwan provincial governor, said the bomber managed to enter the heavily protected site, the largest US base in Afghanistan, and was standing in a queue with Afghan labourers when he detonated a suicide vest.

The NATO-led Resolute Support mission response teams



Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers keep watch outside the Bagram Airfield entrance gate, after an explosion at the NATO air base, north of Kabul, Afghanistan on 12 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

at the airfield were treating the wounded and investigating the incident.

It follows a suicide attack on the German consulate in the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif late on Thursday night that killed four people and wounded more

than 100 others. That attack was retaliation for air strikes near the northern city of Kunduz last week which killed more than 30 civilians.

The Taliban’s spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said Saturday’s attack, which he said had

been planned for four months, had caused heavy casualties, killing 23 Americans and wounding 44.

The movement often exaggerates the number of casualties caused by its operations. —Reuters

Afghan leaders urge lawmakers to halt confidence votes

KABUL— Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah have urged parliament to halt confidence votes against ministers, fearing further dismissals could rock an already fragile Western-backed government, lawmakers said on Sunday.

In a bold move on Saturday parliament dismissed three cabinet ministers, including the minister of foreign affairs, because of poor performance and vowed to use their votes against 14 more ministers.

Hours later, Afghanistan’s two leaders invited lawmakers to the presidential palace and pleaded with them to suspend further votes.

“President Ghani and Dr. Abdullah told MPs that their decision will deal a huge political blow to the government at this critical time and urged them to stop the process,” Mirdad Najrabi, chairman of parliament’s security commission, told Reuters.

Despite the pleas from Ghani and Abdullah, many lawmakers looked determined to continue the confidence votes with the finance, education and transportation ministers scheduled to appear later on Sunday.

“If the ministers do not want to come, we will vote anyway to keep them or dismiss them,” said lawmaker Gul Padsha Majidi. “This is our right and we will use it and will not let the government politicize

this process,” he added.

A statement released by Ghani’s office said the government did not want confrontation and respected the decision of the parliament, but asked the House of Representatives to suspend its decision. The Afghan constitution gives parliament the power to sack ministers. On Saturday, Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani, Public Works Minister Mahmood Baligh and Social Services Minister Nasreen Oryakhel failed to win confidence votes and were declared to have been dismissed by the speaker. Afghanistan’s national unity government, which the United States helped broker following the disputed 2014 election, has been weakened by infighting and a resurgent Taliban. Kabul was supposed to have overseen fresh parliamentary elections and a constitutional grand council to re-establish political legitimacy.

However, a two-year deadline has passed with none of the promised steps taken, leaving question marks over the future of the government at a time when political uncertainty is already being stoked by rising ethnic tensions.

The deteriorating political situation could become a major foreign policy challenge for US President-elect Donald Trump, who said little about Afghanistan on the campaign trail. —Reuters

Fragile army gains in Mosul leave residents exposed

THE fierce ebb and flow of battle in Mosul’s eastern districts is leaving residents feeling in constant threat, even after army advances in their neighbourhoods, as counter-attacks by Islamic State jihadists often put them straight back on the front line.

Special forces and a tank division fighting to expand their foothold in the east of the city for nearly two weeks have faced determined opposition from the militants who have launched waves of suicide bombers, sniper attacks and ambushes against them.

The army has said it controls or has advanced in nearly a dozen districts in Mosul. But announcements of gains are often followed by reports of renewed fighting in the same areas which have been declared under control.

One resident of al-Qadisiya al-Thaniya district, which the elite Counter Terrorism Service entered on Friday, said the special forces later pulled back and Islamic State fighters returned.

“They came back to us again, and this is what we feared. At night there were fierce clashes and we heard powerful explosions,” she told Reuters.

In some districts, control has changed hands three or four times as the militants, using a tunnel network and exploiting the presence of civilians as cover, have launched night-time attacks and reversed military gains of the previous day.

The CTS special forces spearheading the advance into Mosul are part of a 100,000-strong force of army, security forces, Kurdish



Children gather as smoke rises from oil wells, set ablaze by Islamic State militants before the militants fled the oil-producing region of Qayyara, Iraq, on 12 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

peshmerga fighters and mainly Shi’ite “Popular Mobilisation” forces aiming to drive Islamic State from the largest city under their control in Iraq or Syria.

The operation, which enters its fifth week on Monday, is the most complex in Iraq in over a decade and is complicated by the presence of the more than 1 million civilians still living under Islamic State control.

In Intisar, further south on the same eastern flank of the city, the army’s Ninth Armoured Division has been fighting for nearly two weeks without securing the neighbourhood.

“We have not been liberated yet,” a mother of four told Reuters by telephone late on Saturday, describing how a mortar bomb had

landed on her house while her family was sheltering under the concrete staircase indoors.

“My husband moved us to a relative’s house not far from our house. We walked hurried by a wall, scared of the indiscriminate shelling,” she said.

In areas which are under the control of the army in Mosul and surrounding towns and villages, tens of thousands of people “lack access to water, food, electricity and basic health services”, the Norwegian Refugee Council said on Sunday. More than 54,000 people have been displaced so far in the four-week Mosul campaign, and the NRC said ultimately 700,000 people were likely to shelter, food, water or medical support. —Reuters

YANGON TO BANGKOK			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
TG-304	09:50	11:45	Daily
TG-2302	15:00	16:55	Daily
TG-306	19:45	21:40	Daily
PG-706	6:15	8:30	Daily
PG-702	10:30	12:25	Daily
PG-708	15:20	17:15	Daily
PG-708	18:20	20:15	3
PG-704	20:00	21:55	Daily
8M-335	7:40	9:25	Daily
8M-331	16:30	18:15	Daily
UB-017	17:50	19:20	2,4,6,7
UB-019	8:05	9:35	7
UB-019	6:30	8:00	1,2,3,4,5,6

BANGKOK TO YANGON			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
TG-303	7:55	8:50	Daily
TG-2301	13:15	14:10	Daily
TG-305	17:50	18:45	Daily
PG-701	8:50	9:40	Daily
PG-707	13:45	14:35	Daily
PG-703	18:25	19:15	3
PG-703	16:45	17:35	Daily
PG-705	20:30	21:45	Daily
8M-336	10:40	11:25	Daily
8M-332	19:15	20:00	Daily
UB-020	11:00	11:30	7
UB-018	20:20	20:50	Daily
UB-020	9:15	9:45	1,2,4,5,6

YGN TO DMK			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-252	8:30	10:15	Daily
FD-256	13:25	15:10	Daily
FD-254	17:30	19:05	Daily
FD-258	20:05	21:55	Daily
DD-4231	08:00	9:50	Daily
DD-4235	12:00	13:45	Daily
DD-4239	21:00	22:45	Daily
SL-201	11:00	13:00	Daily
SL-207	20:05	21:45	"Daily"

DMK TO YGN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-251	7:15	8:00	Daily
FD-255	12:05	12:55	Daily
FD-253	16:20	17:00	Daily
FD-257	18:05	18:55	Daily
DD-4234	10:25	11:15	Daily
DD-4230	6:20	7:05	Daily
DD-4238	19:30	20:15	Daily
SL-200	9:05	10:00	Daily
SL-206	18:15	19:05	"Daily"

YGN TO CAN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-711	20:30	01:05+1	5
8M-711	8:40	13:15	2,4,7
CZ-3056	11:25	16:15	3,6
CZ-3056	17:30	22:35	1,5

CAN TO YGN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-712	2:45	4:20	6
8M-712	14:15	15:50	2,4,7
CZ-3055	8:50	10:25	3,6
CZ-3055	14:40	16:30	1,5

YGN TO SIN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-231	8:20	12:50	Daily
SQ-997	10:35	15:10	Daily
MI-515	14:20	18:50	1,5
MI-519	17:35	22:10	Daily
MI-522	15:45	20:15	4,6
MI-533	13:10	20:15	2
3K-584	19:15	23:50	2,5
3K-582	11:15	15:50	1,3,4,5,6,7
TR-2823	9:45	2:15	Daily
UB-001	7:30	12:00	Daily

SIN TO YGN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-232	13:50	15:20	Daily
SQ-998	07:55	09:20	Daily
MI-522	11:00	12:20	4,6
MI-518	15:15	16:40	Daily
MI-516	12:00	13:25	1,5
MI-533	11:00	12:20	2
3K-583	17:05	18:35	2,5
3K-581	8:55	10:25	1,3,4,5,6,7
TR-2822	7:20	8:45	Daily
UB-002	13:15	14:45	Daily

YGN TO TPE			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CI-7916	10:45	16:15	1,2,3,4,6

TPE TO YGN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CI-7915	7:00	9:45	1,2,3,4,6

YGN TO PEK			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-906	23:50	0550+1	3,7

PEK TO YGN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-905	19:30	22:50	3,7

YGN TO HAN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-956	19:10	21:30	1,3,5,6,7

HAN TO YGN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-957	16:50	18:10	1,3,5,6,7

YGN TO SGN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-942	12:10	15:00	2,3,4,5,7

SGN TO YGN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-943	9:35	11:10	2,3,4,5,7

YGN TO HKG			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KA-251	1:10	5:45	1,2,3,4,6,7
KA-251	1:30	5:55	5
UB-8027	9:45	14:15	1,5,7

HKG TO YGN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KA-250	21:45	23:30	1,2,3,5,6,7
KA-252	22:50	00:30+1	4
UB-8028	15:15	16:55	1,5,7

YGN TO DOH			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
QR-919	8:15	10:55	1,4,6

DOH TO YGN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
QR-918	20:40	6:25	3,5,6

YGN TO CNX			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-724	13:10	15:05	Daily

CNX TO YGN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-723	11:40	12:35	Daily

YGN TO DAC			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
BG-061	16:15	18:00	1,3,6

DAC TO YGN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
BG-060	12:45	15:30	1,3,6

MDL TO DMK			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-245	12:45	15:00	Daily

DMK TO MDL			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-244	10:50	12:15	Daily



INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS SCHEDULE

AIRLINE CODES

8M = Myanmar Airways International	AK = Air Asia
BG = Biman Bangladesh Airlines	CA = Air China
MH = Malaysia Airlines	CZ = China Southern
MU = China Eastern Airlines	FD = Air Asia
NH = All Nippon Airways	KE = Korea Airlines
SQ = Singapore Airways	QR = Qatar Airways
PG = Bangkok Airways	TR = Tiger Airline
UB = Myanmar National Airlines	
VN = Vietnam Airline	
3K = Jet Star	
AI = Air India	
CI = China Airlines	
DD = Nok Airline	
KA = Dragonair	
MI = Silk Air	
TG = Thai Airways	

DAY	
1 = Monday	4 = Thursday
2 = Tuesday	5 = Friday
3 = Wednesday	6 = Saturday
	7 = Sunday

MDL TO SIN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
MI-533	15:20	20:15	2
MI-522	13:40	20:15	2,6

SIN TO MDL			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
MI-522	11:00	12:50	2,6
MI-533	11:00	14:25	2

MDL TO BKK			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-710	14:05	16:30	Daily

BKK TO MDL			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-709	12:00	13:20	Daily

MDL TO KMG			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
MU-2030	14:05	16:45	Daily

KMG TO MDL			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
MU-2029	13:20	13:15	Daily

NYT to BKK			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-722	20:25	22:35	2
PG-722	19:30	22:30	1,2,3,4,5,7

BKK TO NYT			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-721	18:25	19:35	2
PG-721	17:00	19:00	1,2,3,4,5,7

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Croton Travel :	526165 , 09780068666	Seven Diamond Express:	392962, 203398	Ha Ha Travel :	557502, 0973241241, 09254203798



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Tsunami hits New Zealand after series of strong quakes

WELLINGTON — An earthquake with a magnitude of 7.4 struck central New Zealand just after midnight, the US Geological Survey said, generating a tsunami that hit the north-east coast of the South Island.

New Zealand's Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management warned of the risk of destructive waves along the country's entire east coast and urged residents in low-lying areas to evacuate and seek higher ground.

Anna Kaiser, a seismologist at GNS Science said a tidal signal or surge of up to one metre (3 feet) had been recorded in North Canterbury region of the South Island.

"That's reasonably significant so people should take this seriously," she told Radio New Zealand.

The quake was centered 91 km (57 miles) north-northeast of Christchurch, the biggest city on New Zealand's South Island. A 6.3 quake there in February 2011

killed 185 people and caused widespread damage.

The tremor, which was measured by New Zealand's Geonet at magnitude 6.6, was felt throughout most of New Zealand. Civil Defence said it was too early to assess the damage or whether there had been any injuries or deaths.

"The whole house rolled like a serpent and some things smashed, the power went out," a woman who gave her name as Elizabeth told Radio New Zealand from her home in Takaka, near the top of the South Island.

Chris Hill, a fire officer in Cheviot, a coastal town near the quake's epicentre, said officials had gone door to door evacuating residents.

"Everyone seems OK here," he told RNZ. "There's a lot of debris in houses, but at this stage it doesn't look like anything too bad has happened."

Residents in Wellington said glass had fallen from buildings into the streets and hotels and



Photo taken on 14 November 2016 (local time) shows a kitchen of a house in Wellington, New Zealand. A major earthquake rocked South Island of New Zealand in the wee hours of Monday, followed by a series of strong aftershocks and a tsunami warning. PHOTO: XINHUA

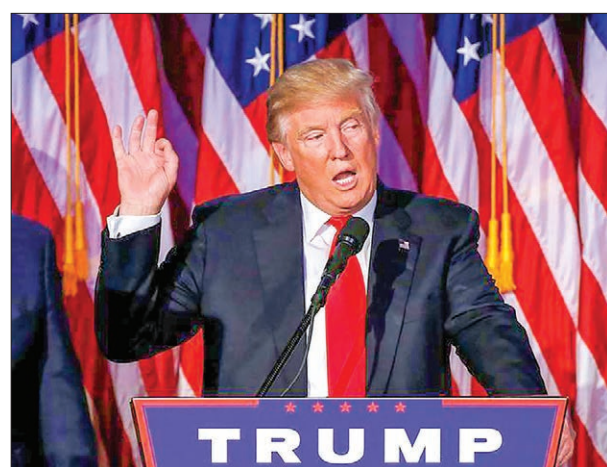
apartment buildings had been evacuated.

RNZ said the Wellington City Council had received multiple reports of

significant damage.

A series of aftershocks were recorded around the country, some as strong as 6.1 magnitude.—Reuters

Trump looking at fast ways to quit global climate deal



US President-elect Donald Trump speaks at election night rally in Manhattan, New York, US, on 9 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

WASHINGTON/MARAKESH — Donald Trump is seeking quick ways of withdrawing from a global agreement to limit climate change, a source on his transition team said, defying widening international backing for the plan to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

Since the US President-elect was chosen, governments ranging from China to small island states have reaffirmed support for the 2015 Paris Agreement at 200-nation

climate talks running until 18 November in Marakesh, Morocco.

Trump, who has called global warming a hoax and has promised to quit the Paris Agreement, was considering ways to bypass a theoretical four-year procedure for leaving the accord, according to the source, who works on Trump's transition team for international energy and climate policy.

"It was reckless for the Paris agreement to enter into force before

the election" on Tuesday, the source told Reuters, speaking on condition of anonymity. The Paris Agreement won enough backing for entry into force on 4 November.

Alternatives were to send a letter withdrawing from a 1992 Convention that is the parent treaty of the Paris Agreement, voiding US involvement in both in a year's time, or to issue a presidential order simply deleting the US signature from the Paris accord, he said.

Many nations have expressed hopes the United States will stay.

Host Morocco said the agreement that seeks to phase out greenhouse gases in the second half of the century was strong enough to survive a pullout.

"If one party decides to withdraw that it doesn't call the agreement into question," Foreign Minister Salaheddine Mezouar told a news conference.

The agreement was reached by almost 200 nations in December and, as of Saturday, has been formally ratified by 109

representing 76 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions, including the United States with 18 percent.

The accord seeks to limit rising temperatures that have been linked to increasing economic damage from decertification, extinctions of animals and plants, heat waves, floods and rising sea levels.

UN climate chief Patricia Espinosa declined to comment on the Trump source's remarks to Reuters.

"The Paris Agreement carries an enormous amount of weight and credibility," she told a news conference.

She said the United Nations hoped for a strong and constructive relationship with Trump. The Trump source blamed US President Barack Obama for joining up by an executive order, without getting approval from the Senate.

"There wouldn't be this diplomatic fallout on the broader international agenda if Obama hadn't rushed the adoption," he said.—Reuters

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY NATIONAL ELECTRIFICATION PROJECT Invitation for Bids

Date: 14th November, 2016
SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT NOTICE
IDA Credit No. : 5727-MM

Contract Title: Distribution Transformer for National Electrification Project
Reference No. : C1-G1

1. The Ministry of Electricity and Energy has received financing from the World Bank towards the cost of the National Electrification Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds towards payments under the contract for Distribution Transformer for National Electrification Project.

2. The Ministry of Electricity and Energy now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for supply of 11/0.4 kV-50 kVA, 100 kVA, 200 kVA, 315 kVA and 33/0.4 kV-100 kVA, 200 kVA and 315 kVA distribution transformer, for the total quantities of 5,389 transformers to be delivered in 2017 and 2018 to multiple destinations in all Regions and States of Myanmar. Domestic preference with the margin of 15% will apply. The goods will be grouped into 10 lots and bidders may submit bid for any one or more lots. Evaluation and award of contract will be on a lot-wise basis.

3. Bidding will be conducted through the International Competitive Bidding procedures as specified in the World Bank's [Guidelines: Procurement of Goods, Works and Non-Consulting Services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers](#) [edition of January 2011 revised in July 2014] ("Procurement Guidelines"), and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the Procurement Guidelines. In addition, please refer to the paragraphs 1.6 and 1.7 setting for the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from Project Manager, Office No(27), Ministry of Electricity and Energy, nep.pmomoep@gmail.com and inspect the bidding documents during office hours 10:00 to 16:00 hours at the address given below.

5. A complete set of bidding documents in CD with English language may be purchased by interested eligible bidders upon the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of Myanmar Kyats 100,000. The method of payment will be transferred to the following account:

Electricity Supply Enterprise, account no. SEE 10316 at Myanma Economic Bank in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. The transferred slip shall be submitted with the above application. Once the application and the transferred slip received the bidding documents will be provided in the CD.

In case of any difficulty in purchasing the bidding documents, interested parties may contact in writing:

1. Director General
Department of Electric Power Planning
Ministry of Electricity and Energy
City: Nay Pyi Taw
Country: The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Email: dep.pssp.info@gmail.com
2. Ms. Xiaoping Wang, Task Team Leader
The World Bank
Address: 30th Floor, Siam Tower.
989 Rama I Road, Pathumwan Bangkok 10330, Thailand
Email: xwang3@worldbank.org

6. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 10:00 am, 30th December, 2016. Electronic bidding will not be permitted. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the bidders' designated representatives at the address below at 10:00 am, 30th December, 2016.

Director General Office, Department of Electric Power Planning
Office No (27), Ministry of Electricity and Energy, Nay Pyi Taw
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar

7. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security as described in the bidding document.

8. The address referred to above para 4 and 5 are :
Attention : Director General Office, Department of Electric Power Planning
Office No(27), Ministry of Electricity and Energy, Nay Pyi Taw
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Telephone : +95 67 410203
Facsimile : +95 67 410077
E-mail : nep.pmomoep@gmail.com
Web site : <http://www.moep.gov.mm>

Five decades and 200 films later, Jackie Chan 'finally' wins Oscar

LOS ANGELES — When Jackie Chan saw an Oscar at Sylvester Stallone's house 23 years ago, he said that was the moment he decided he wanted one.

On Saturday at the annual Governors Awards, the Chinese actor and martial arts star finally received his little gold statuette, an honorary Oscar for his decades of work in film.

"After 56 years in the film industry, making more than 200 films, after so many bones, finally," Chan, 62, quipped at the star-studded gala dinner while holding his Oscar.

The actor recalled watching the ceremony with his parents and his father always asking him why he didn't have Hollywood's top accolade despite having made so many movies.

He praised his hometown Hong Kong for making him "proud to be Chinese," and thanked his fans, saying they were the reason "I continue to make movies, jumping through windows, kicking and punching, breaking my bones."

The actor was introduced by



Actor Jackie Chan is congratulated by fellow actor Sylvester Stallone (R) after accepting his Honorary Award at the 8th Annual Governors Awards in Los Angeles, California, US, on 12 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

his "Rush Hour" co-star Chris Tucker, actress Michelle Yeoh and Tom Hanks, who referred to him as "Jackie 'Chantastic' Chan."

Hanks said it was especially gratifying to be able to acknowledge Chan's work because martial arts and action comedy films were two genres often overlooked

during awards season.

The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences, hosts of the annual ceremony, also bestowed honorary Oscars on Brit-

ish film editor Anne V Coates, casting director Lynn Stalmaster and prolific documentarian Frederick Wiseman.

The evening was attended by Hollywood's elite, including Denzel Washington, Lupita Nyong'o, Nicole Kidman, Emma Stone, Ryan Reynolds, Amy Adams and Dev Patel.

Stalmaster, 88, credited with securing career-defining roles for actors such as Jeff Bridges, Andy Garcia, Christopher Reeve and John Travolta, is the first casting director to receive an Oscar.

Coates, 90, who won the film editing Oscar for 1962's "Lawrence of Arabia" and has edited more than 50 films, said she shared her honorary Oscar "with all the unsung heroes" of filmmaking.

Wiseman, 86, whose documentaries include 1970's "Hospital," 1987's "Blind" and last year's "In Jackson Heights," said: "I think it's as important to document kindness, ability and generosity of spirit as it is to show cruelty, banality and indifference," he said. —Reuters

Sting reopens Paris' Bataclan hall on anniversary of militant attack



Musician Sting performs at the Bataclan concert hall in Paris, France, on 12 November, 2016, one year after the deadly Paris attacks. PHOTO: REUTERS

PARIS — Rock star Sting headlined a concert in Paris' Bataclan music hall on Saturday to mark the venue's reopening a year after three Islamist militants gunned down 90 revelers in France's bloodiest terror attack.

Sting, who fronted the hit pop band The Police before a long solo career, opened the emotionally charged gig with a minute's silence, telling the crowd: "We will not forget them."

"Tonight we have two tasks to achieve: first to remember those who lost their lives in the attack, and then to celebrate life

and music in this historic place," the performer said.

On 13 November, 2015, the assailants burst through the music hall's main entrance and sprayed automatic gunfire into the crowd as the Californian rock band the Eagles of Death Metal played on stage.

During a more than two-hour long assault, the attackers executed some victims and took others hostage.

The attack ended after one militant was shot dead and the two others killed themselves by detonating explosive vests.

In coordinated strikes that night, other gunmen and suicide bombers targeted a soccer stadium and several cafes in Paris. In all, the Islamic State militants killed 130 people.

Adrien, a survivor of the Bataclan attack who lost two friends that night, said: "It was my duty to come, to remember those who died here."

As the concert hall emptied, another concert-goer said: "Tonight was beautiful. He set the place alight and we forgot our fears."

The Paris attacks prompted the government to impose a state of emergency, which remains in place, following attacks this summer in Nice and Normandy.

Writing in an opinion column published in several European newspapers on Saturday, Prime Minister Manuel Valls said the "heavy and constant threat" of more terror attacks hung over France, and urged Europe to strengthen its defense capabilities.

"And this is all the more so as the United States becomes less and less involved in the affairs of the world. Europe can no longer shirk its responsibilities and take refuge behind its American ally," Valls wrote.

Proceeds from Saturday's Bataclan gig will go to two charities helping survivors of the Paris attacks.

"Long live the Bataclan," Sting said as he left the stage. —Reuters

Shahid, Deepika, Kareena hail currency demonetisation



Deepika Padukone. PHOTO: PTI

MUMBAI — Bollywood stars Shahid Kapoor, Deepika Padukone, Kareena Kapoor Khan and Taapsee Pannu have welcomed the government's move to scrap Rs 500 and 1000 notes.

Shahid said it was an extremely important and bold step taken by the government.

"If we have to eliminate corruption, when it is so much, it is necessary to take a hard step. I think it's still early to comment on how it'll go because there are certain practicalities attached to the change in currency notes. It is going to be difficult.

Everybody is finding it difficult, but if it leads to less corruption, less black money, less fake money- which is also a very big issue we are facing- then I think it's a bold step and in the right direction," the "Udta Punjab" star told reporters.

Deepika called it an exceptional move.

"I think it was high time (we did it). I would not like to comment much. But I think it was an

exceptional move by the government... I would like to congratulate them on that."

Kareena also praised the new development, saying, "It is a very good decision.

When asked if she was facing inconvenience in currency exchange, she said, "I am only carrying Rs 2000 note, I don't have Rs 500, 1000 note!"

Actress Tamannaah Bhatia said, "I know the common man is facing a lot of difficulty because of this condition but I know for a fact that it is for a good cause and eventually this will turn out to be the right thing to do. From a long run perspective this is the best thing to have happened."

Aditi Rao Hydari said the common man is facing trouble with the sudden currency demonitisation but she feels it will benefit in the long run.

"People like vegetable vendors and others are facing inconvenience and I am trying to help them. But it is a very good step by the government." —PTI

Oscar winner Ennio Morricone honors homeless at Vatican concert

VATICAN CITY — Homeless people were the guests of honor on Saturday night at a special benefit concert in the Vatican conducted by Oscar winning composer Ennio Morricone.

Morricone, 88, who won this year's Academy Award for "The Hateful Eight," premiered a new, short composition for the event called "God, One of Us," and also conducted the orchestra in some of his most famous film sound tracks.

They included three tracks from one of his most evocative sound scores, for the 1986 film "The Mission," by Roland Joffe and

one from Sergio Leone's 1984 film "Once Upon a Time in America".

Several thousand of Rome's homeless were given pride of place in the front rows of the large auditorium where Pope Francis holds some of his general audiences. Diplomats, Vatican officials and other VIPs were behind them.

"I live in a tent. It was something else for me to be in the front row here," said Attila, a 48-year-old Hungarian man who lost his construction job in Rome and was brought to the concert by a Catholic charity.

The pope is due to say a special Mass in honor of homeless people on Sun-



Italian composer Ennio Morricone conducts during a Jubilee concert in Paul VI hall at the Vatican on 12 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

day as part of the Roman Catholic Church's Jubilee Year of Mercy. Morricone, one of the world's most prolific composers of film scores, is best known for the music that accompanied Italian director Sergio Leone's so-called Spaghetti Westerns, such as "A Fistful of Dollars," "For a Few Dollars More," and "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly."

Donations made at the concert, where entry was free, will go to help build schools and churches in Uganda and Burkina Faso.—Reuters

Slovak brothers win burial competition with fastest, neatest grave

TRENCIN (Slovakia) — Two brothers from Slovakia won a grave-digging competition at an international exhibition of funeral, burial and cremation services on Thursday.

Ladislav and Csaba Skladan, aged 43 and 41 respectively, dug a grave 1.5 meters deep, two meters long and 90 centimeters wide in

54 minutes in the western Slovak town of Trencin, beating 10 other two-member teams from Slovakia, Poland and Hungary as a small audience cheered

loudly. Their grave was also the neatest, a five-member jury agreed.

"We want to show and appreciate the hard work of grave diggers," said Ladislav Striz, who established the contest last year.

"Most Slovak graveyards are so crowded and spaces between graves so narrow that we need human diggers instead of machines," he said. "They work hard, come rain, come snow."

"I am happy we won, it's a satisfaction after fifteen years in this job," Csaba Skladan said. "I had to focus on speed today but usually, when the weather is nice and I can chat with my brother, it's a dream job," added Ladislav Skladan. —Reuters



Venetians hold up luggage in a protest that calls for the authorities to think of the local community and not just about tourists, in Venice, Italy, on 12 November, 2016. Photo: Reuters

Vintage biplanes attempt Greece-South Africa imperial route

ATHENS — Twelve vintage biplanes from the 1920s and 1930s set off from the Greek island of Crete on Saturday bound for South Africa for a 12,800-kilometre (8,000-mile) race never attempted before by so many antique aircraft.

The planes are following the route plied by Imperial Airways, a British commercial air transport company that linked Britain's colonies in Africa. The trip is expected to take 35 days and teams are representing 18 countries, including Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, Russia, South Africa, the United States and Britain.

They will travel through 10 nations such as Egypt, Botswana, Zanzibar, Zimbabwe and Tanzania and make 37 stops en route before finishing in Cape Town.

"Hopefully, we'll all get there and have a massive party when we arrive," said Vintage Air Rally organiser Sam Rutherford. The planes will make a stop at the Giza pyramids in Egypt, the first time a group of aircraft have been allowed to land there in 80 years.

The plane flown by Robert Redford in the Oscar-winning film "Out of Africa", which he starred in with Meryl Streep, will join the journey in Kenya.

Pilots will be challenged by weather conditions in open cockpits and will sleep in deserts, under the wings of their planes in tents and on riverboats on the Nile.—Reuters



Biplanes representing Britain, Botswana and South Africa fly during the start of the Vintage Air Rally over the airport of Sitia on the island of Crete, Greece, on 11 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

mitv

Myanmar International

(14-11-2016 07:00am ~ 15-11-2016 07:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03

Am

News

07:27

Am

Myanmar Delicate Artistic Handy Procedure

07:44

Am

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08:03

Am

Lacquerware Technology College

08:26

Am

News

08:47

Am

Yoga & Health

08:54

Am

Yangon Markets: Nyaung Pin Lay Market

09:03

Am

A Photographer's Life at Shwedagon Pagoda

09:26

Am

The Eel Business (Fisherman the eel culture)

09:41

Am

Myanmar Weaving

09:53

Am

Talented Kid "Moe La Win"

10:03

Am

News

10:25

Am

Product of Myanmar — Pictures Decorated With Sea- and Gemstones

10:38

Am

YUFL

10:51

Am

Kyeik Paw Law Pagoda

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

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

Prime Time

07:03

Pm

News

07:27

Pm

Food Trip (Ep-3)(Part-1)

07:51

Pm

Culture Shows: Theatrical Art

08:03

Pm

News

08:25

Pm

Discovering Tribes "Bwe"

08:53

Pm

Distinguished Myanmar Lady "Kyin Po"

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

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

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

Garcia upsets Kvitova as France draw level in final

STRASBOURG — Caroline Garcia stunned Petra Kvitova 7-6(6) 6-3 to pull France level at 1-1 with champions Czech Republic in the Fed Cup final after Karolina Pliskova won an epic first singles earlier on Saturday.

Garcia produced an aggressive performance to down Kvitova and the Czech threatened a comeback in the second set but the Frenchwoman was too hot and closed it out on her second match point.

World number six Pliskova had overcome Kristina Mladenovic's stubborn resistance to put the visitors ahead with a thrilling 6-3 4-6 16-14 win.

Mladenovic will take on double Wimbledon champion Kvitova while world number 23 Garcia will play Pliskova in Sunday's reverse singles as the

Czech look to claim a fifth title in six years.

After surrendering the first set in a tie break, world number 11 Kvitova fell further behind as she trailed 4-1 in the second set.

She did close the gap to 4-3 before Garcia held her nerve to break again and wrap up victory with a forehand winner.

The highlight of the show, however, was earlier.

In one of the competition's finest rubbers, US Open finalist Pliskova wore down Mladenovic in a nail-biting third set which was the longest ever played in a Fed Cup final.

Pliskova appeared to be cruising toward victory after breezing through the first set but then lost her focus in the second to allow Mladenovic back in the contest.



Czech Republic's Karolina Pliskova returns a shot to France's Kristina Mladenovic during the final match of Fed Cup Strasbourg, France on 12 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

The Czech served for the match at 5-3 in the decider but lost her composure, Mladenovic breaking back with a forehand winner before leveling for 5-5.

The world number six earned two match points on Mladenovic's serve while leading 9-8, but the Frenchwoman served an ace on the first while Pliskova's forehand flew wide on the second. Play was interrupted

as the Frenchwoman had her left thigh strapped by the trainer before captain Amelie Mauresmo took over the massaging duties at each change of ends.

Pliskova saved a break point at 10-10 but sent a backhand long to concede what had appeared a decisive break in the 23rd game. Yet she broke back immediately with Mladenovic serving for the match.

With the Frenchwoman struggling physically, Pliskova proved she had the stamina to get over the finishing line and she finally wore down her opponent in three hours 48 minutes.

"It's the longest match I have ever played," said Pliskova. "She was serving so well in the third set. Unbelievable match from both of us." —Reuters

Late Mitrovic header earns Serbia 1-1 draw in Wales

CARDIFF — An 85th-minute header by striker Aleksandar Mitrovic gave Serbia a 1-1 draw against Wales after Gareth Bale had given the home side a first-half lead in a pulsating World Cup Group D qualifier on Saturday.

The result left Serbia second in the section on eight points from four games, two behind leaders Ireland who were 1-0 winners in Austria. Wales are third on six points while fourth-placed Austria have four.

Bale fired the Welsh ahead with his 26th international goal when he unleashed a sizzling low shot in the 30th minute to close in on their all-time leading scorer Ian Rush (28). Bale missed a golden opportunity to double the home side's lead moments before Serbia struck at the other end, when Mitrovic got away from his marker to head home Antonio Rukavina's cross from the right. —Reuters

England keep their heads to down Scotland 3-0

LONDON — A trio of thundering headers gave England a thumping victory over their oldest foes as Scotland put up a fight before being swept aside 3-0 in Friday's World Cup qualifier at Wembley.

Daniel Sturridge's bullet header in the first half and equally impressive efforts after the break from Adam Lallana and Gary Cahill ensured England emerged from international football's oldest fixture having consolidated their lead at the top of Group F.

While it was not the one-sided romp the scoreline suggests and England only pulled clear in the second half having survived some nervy moments, the result will have strengthened interim boss Gareth Southgate's chances of claiming the role on a permanent basis.

With his side having moved onto 10 points from four matches, two clear of nearest rivals Slovenia, Southgate now looks almost certain to be appointed the permanent replacement to Sam Allardyce.

"Tonight is down to the players they have shown what they are capable of," he told reporters -- although he was equally keen to stress his side had almost been the architects of their own downfall when Scotland put them under pressure in the second half.

For his counterpart Gordon Strachan, though, the future looks increasingly bleak, his



England's Gary Cahill scores their third goal during the match between England v Scotland in 2018 World Cup Qualifying European Zone - Group F - at the Wembley Stadium, in London, England on 12 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

side sitting second bottom in the standings with four points.

However, he was adamant, that he would not be rushed into decisions about his role.

"If you think I'm thinking about myself now, or worrying about myself, you don't know me," was his response to questions about his future.

Strachan had made sweeping changes to the side that lost to Slovakia in their previous qualifier and had clearly set his team up to make England uncomfortable and it was a game-plan that worked to perfection until 24th minute.

A sprawling Scottish defender blocked Raheem Sterling's shot, but the ball fell

kindly for Kyle Walker whose driven cross was angled superbly into the net by a stooping Sturridge.

Having broken the visitors' resistance, England conspired to hand them a route back into the match two minutes later and would have been pegged back had Scotland defender Grant Hanley not headed hopelessly over the bar when completely unmarked.

That was the first of a series of let-offs for England, who survived two heart-in-mouth moments at the start of the second half when James Forrest pulled a shot hideously wide from 10 metres and Robert Snodgrass had one blocked from a

similar range.

Within moments, however, England put the encounter to bed showing the sort of quality in front of goal Scotland had lacked, as Danny Rose's cross from the left found Lallana on the penalty spot to head powerfully past Craig Gordon.

England's third arrived on 60 minutes as Wayne Rooney's corner found Cahill, who flashed his near-post header past Gordon and into the far corner.

The defeat was already ensured, but England should have rubbed further salt into Scotland's wounds but Sterling somehow scooped his finish over from almost under the cross bar. —Reuters