

Myanmar armed forces will strengthen ties with Japanese Self-Defence Forces: Senior General

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Sept—A Defence Delegation led by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visited Hamamatsu Self-Defense Air Force, the Japan-Myanmar Friendship Monument, the Hounji Buddhist Temple, and the house once resided by Col Suzuki on Friday.

In the morning, the

senior general and party, together with Chief of Staff of Japanese Self-defense Force General Shigeru Iwasaki and wife, arrived at Hamamatsu Self-defense Air Force, where they were welcomed by Chief of Staff of the Air Training Command Maj-Gen Shinichi Tsuruda and the Guards of Honour. Fighters of the air force flew in groups to salute the senior general and party. Then, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and Maj-Gen Shinichi Tsuruda held discussions. The senior general said he was proud of being the first head of the Myanmar armed forces who visited Japan on the 60th anniversary of friendship between the two countries, and Hamamatsu was the historical town where

the Myanmar army was born when General Aung San made contacts with Col Suzuki in order to provide military training to 30 comrades. After the meeting, the senior general and party viewed round the airbase. At the guest house of the airbase, General Shigeru Iwasaki and wife hosted a luncheon in honour of the

senior general and party. Two daughters of Col Suzuki attended the luncheon. Afterwards, the senior general and party went to Okusa Yama Hill and laid bouquets of flowers at the Japan-Myanmar Friendship Monument there. At the monument, the senior general said that the second generations of Myanmar armed forces will strengthen the ties between the two armed forces.

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UPWC, NCCT to hold next round of talks in October



Participants to sixth-round of UPWC-NCCT peace talks shake hands with each other in closing the five-day meeting at MPC in Yangon.

PHOTO: YE MYINT

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 26 Sept—Five-days of talks between the Union Peace-Making Work Committee-UPWC and the Nationwide Cease-fire Coordination Team-NCCT concluded with the release of a joint statement that stated the fourth draft of a ceasefire agreement has been approved with an agreement to hold the next round of meetings in October.

Both sides stressed in the joint statement that great strides are being made in pursuit of an all-inclusive political dialogue following the signing of a nationwide ceasefire deal as soon as a single text document is finalized. Participants to the sixth meeting are committed to striving

for the realization of lasting and durable peace in Myanmar, it added.

In his closing remarks, Union Minister U Aung Min, who led the UPWC, said that it is usual to encounter more difficulties when both sides are close to reaching the goal of achieving peace.

Like a marathon, a series of peace talks presents challenges and obstacles, but the shared goal is peace within reach and it can be realized through broad and sustained efforts, he added.

U Naing Han Thar who led the NCCT remarked in his closing speech that situations that had been tackled by both sides on the front line for more than sixty years is more difficult than the present challenges despite having more difficulties than the previous

meetings.

“I hope next round will be more successful than this one,” Dr. Salai Lian Hmong Sakhong, one of NCCT members told the media.

The UPWC of the government and the NCCT of the ethnic armed groups kicked off their sixth round talks for drafting a single text for a truce deal at Myanmar Peace Centre in Yangon last Monday.

Officials said the second informal tripartite meeting of UPWC, NCCT and political parties will take place at the same venue tomorrow.

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Myanmar, South Korea step up efforts to boost business-to-business relations in SME sector

YANGON, 26 Sept — Not less than 33 firms from South Korea visited Myanmar on a trade mission to explore business opportunities in the country's small and medium enterprise sector.

The trade mission followed a preliminary discussion between the officials of Kangnam-gu Chapter of Seoul Chambers of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) last May.

“The purpose of the three-day mission is to promote economic relations

between the two countries through the signing of a memorandum of understanding and a discussion on business matching opportunities with the UMFC-CI”, Mr. Choi Jae-Young, President of Kangnam-gu Chapter of SCCI, told The New Light of Myanmar on Thursday. The trade delegation comprised of 29 members who are engaging in different businesses such as construction, manufacturing in cosmetics, stationery and electrical and pharmaceutical products, wholesale and retail, real estate, hotel and restaurant, printing and wedding.

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A South Korean trade mission in discussion with UMFCCI officials in Yangon on Thursday.—PHOTO: YE MYINT

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Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Losses of state-run industries dominate Pyidaungsu Hluttaw discussion

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Sept — The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on Friday discussed to approve the national education bill, which was returned with some remarks by President U Thein Sein.

Major Ye Min Htwe, Defence Services Personnel Representative, said that the introduction of independent teaching and learning as well as independent management at tertiary education is against the current situation.

Regarding the situation of privatization and state-owned factories and

industries that have been making losses, U Thein Aung, Deputy Minister for Industry blamed the rise in production costs on the practice of the market economic system, saying it has brought with it changes in trade policies, the uniformity of foreign exchange rates, increased salaries for state service personnel and high electricity and fuel bills.

According to him, products of state-owned industries are not in a position to compete with imported goods in terms

of quality and price, with state-run industries suffering losses resulting from a shrinking marketplace.

In a bid to minimize the losses, some governmental factories were handed over to private industrialists, given technological advantage and investment volume, he said, adding that plans are under way to work with private business people for mutual benefits.

U Khin Maung Aye, Deputy Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, said that his ministry made losses



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw being convened with participation of representatives on Friday's session.—MNA

of K2.6 billion and K 8 billion in the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 fiscal years respectively.

He said that his ministry's losses were due to storms, global economic

downturn, international monetary crises, and abrupt changes in foreign exchange rates and a decline in prices of local meat.

U Han Sein, Deputy Minister for Transport,

said that his ministry made a loss of K1.5 billion in 2012-2013 fiscal year, citing the imbalance between earnings and expenditures as the reason for economic losses.—MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw

Cultivable lands reclaimed for farmless people to help reduce poverty: Lower House



Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Khin Zaw.

MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Sept — Virgin lands, wetlands and marshlands have been allocated to farmless people in a bid to reduce poverty in rural areas, with the land management committees turning shifting plantation into ladder farming in hilly



Deputy Minister for Communications and Information Technology U Win Than.—MNA

regions, the deputy minister for Agriculture and Irrigation has told the Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House).

U Khin Zaw told the Lower House on Friday that permits have been granted to individual farmers to work on 50 acres of land in line

with the rules and regulations by management committees.

Lack of funds has made some regions and states difficult to reclaim cultivable lands, despite a vast stretch of virgin lands, wetlands and marshlands there.

Regarding a question of possible disputes among telephone operators in the country, Deputy Minister for Communications and Information Technology U Win Than told the Upper House that the ministry is responsible for dealing with impending disputes according to the law.

Plans are under way to form a national-level communications advisory committee and a communications commission, which he said will come into existence soon.—MNA

Myanmar, PRC agreed to accelerate momentum of cooperation in potential sectors

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Sept — The Second Myanmar-China (Yunnan) Cooperation Forum took place for a second day here, discussing matters related to the ongoing bilateral cooperation in various sectors and agreed to accelerate the momentum of cooperation in potential sectors.

The forum is aimed at promoting the existing friendly relations and enhancing the bilateral cooperation between Myanmar and the People's Republic

of China within a comprehensive strategic cooperation framework.

It was co-chaired by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Thant Kyaw and Vice-Governor of Yunnan Province Mr. Gao Shuxun.

On the Myanmar side, the responsible officials from the Union Government Ministries concerned and the State Government officials from the States connecting with the Yunnan Province participated

in the future.

The Yunnan delegation led by the Vice-Governor consisting Director-General of Foreign Affairs Office of Yunnan Provincial People's Government Mme. Zhou Hong and government representatives as well as the forum delegates led by the Deputy Secretary-General of people's Government of Yunnan Province and Director-General of Yunnan International Expositions Bureau Mr. Li Jiming attended the forum.—MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw

Labour ministry says setting minimum wage is time-consuming process

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Sept — Steps are being taken by means of conducting seminars and meetings and distributing questionnaires with a view to collecting data that can help set the minimum wage, the deputy minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security has told the Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House).

Daw Win Maw Tun, Deputy Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security, told the Amyotha Hluttaw on Fri-

day that discussions relating to the calculation of living costs are under way based on research works, adding that comparison should be made between outcomes of research and current salaries.

According to her, the information about the proposed minimum wage will be made public 60 days before approval.

"Our calculation will be based on individual incomes right enough for employees to cover their daily

expenses," she said.

Defence Services Personnel Representatives Lt-Cdr Myint Sein and Lt-Cdr Ko Ko participated in discussions to add some provisions to the Inland Water Transport Bill.

The designation of a minimum wage is a time-consuming process, for it involves taking into consideration differences in job types and living costs depending on places, she said.

MNA



Deputy Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security Daw Win Maw Tun.

MNA



Lt-Cdr Ko Ko discusses amendment for Inland Water Transport Bill.

MNA



Lt-Cdr Myint Sein takes part in amendment of the bill.—MNA

Dinner to mark seminar on Germany's tax system hosted

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Sept — A dinner to mark a seminar on tax system and budget process of Prof. Dr Hans Fehr from University of Wuerzburg of Germany was held at Hotel Max

(Nay Pyi Taw) in Nay Pyi Taw on Friday.

It was attended by the deputy speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and the deputy speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw (Up-

per House), members of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) committees and commission and officials of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office.—MNA

NATIONAL

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After visiting the Organ Museum on the hill, the senior general and party visited the Hounji Temple where the tomb of Col Suzuki had been erected and donated a jade Buddha image before saluting late Col Suzuki and laying a wreath at his tomb.

The senior general and party arrived back in Tokyo by bullet train in the evening.

In the evening, Chief

Cabinet Secretary Mr Yoshihede Suga hosted a dinner in honour of the senior general and party at the State Guest House in Tokyo.

They discussed matters related to promotion of friendship between the two countries and cooperation between the two armed forces. After the dinner, they exchanged gifts and posed for documentary photos.

Myawady



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife lay a wreath and pay tribute at the tomb of Col Suzuki.—MNA

Eid Day on 6 October

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Sept—As Eid Day (Bakri Id) falls on 6 October 2014 (Monday), the day is declared as a public holiday in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar according to Section 25 of the Negotiable Instruments Act.—MNA

Health development discussed at ASEAN Health Ministers' meetings

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Sept—Union Minister for Health Dr Than Aung arrived back in Yangon after attending the ASEAN Health Ministers' meetings in Vietnam from 15 to 20 September.

During the meetings, the Union minister discussed the ministry's preparation for millennium development goals, health care services for chronic diseases such as diabetes

and cancers, preparation for getting universal health coverage, harmonious cooperation among ASEAN countries, prevention of infectious diseases in Myanmar, controlling of malaria and experience on solving the suspected Ebola case in Myanmar.

Participant ministers approved the health development agenda beyond 2015, sources said.

MNA



Union Minister for Health Dr Than Aung attends ASEAN Health Ministers' meetings in Vietnam.—MNA

ASEAN Plus Three civil service organizations meet

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Sept—The ASEAN Heads of Civil Service Meeting and the Second ASEAN Plus Three Heads of Civil Service Meeting were held at the Sedona Hotel in Yangon on Friday.

The ASEAN Heads of Civil Service Meeting was held in the morning and it was attended by ASEAN heads of civil service, the

deputy secretary general (ASEAN Social Cultural Community), officials from ASEAN Secretariat, senior officials from civil service organizations of ASEAN countries, and responsible officials from the UCSB.

At the meeting, a representative of Myanmar reported the outcomes of the senior officials meeting held in September, and heads of

ASEAN civil service organizations presented their activities in 2014-2015 and progress achieved under the ACCSM Work Plan (2008-2015). Then, the Chairman of Union Civil Services Board U Kyaw Thu handed over the chairmanship of ASEAN Civil Service Meeting to the head of the Philippines civil service organizations.

The Second ASEAN Plus Three Heads of Civil Service Meeting was held in the afternoon. Heads of civil service organizations from ASEAN, China, Japan and South Korea held discussions on ways to promote cooperation at the meeting

Chairman U Kyaw Thu hosted a dinner to the delegates of the two meetings in the evening.—MNA

Ministers of ASEAN, dialogue partner countries tour farmlands in Nay Pyi Taw

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Sept—Ministers from ASEAN countries and the ASEAN Plus Three dialogue partner countries China, Korea and Japan visited a 900-acre organic vegetable farms, agricultural produce booths and a forest product booth in Ottarathiri Township, a Paletwe monsoon

paddy plantation in Pinyinmana Township and a paddy seed production farm in Dekkhinathiri Township on Friday.

Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing and officials explained cultivation of organic vegetable plantations, supply of water to the farm-

lands from Ngalaik Dam and supply of electricity from solar panels with the technical assistance of US based ACO Company.

The foreign ministers viewed round the booths of the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, value-added wood products booth and rattan

product booth of the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry.

They looked into supply of water from the canal of Ngalaik Dam to Paletwe monsoon paddy plantation. They also visited the 440-acre Paletwe paddy plantation in Alyinlo Village of Pinyinmana Township and 100-acre Paletwe paddy plantation in Dekkhinathiri Township.—MNA

Myanmar, South Korea step...

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During the meeting, the Trade Promotion Committee of the UMFCCI and the Kangnam-gu trade delegation signed the MoU to boost trade and investment and exchange market and business information between the two private sectors.

“We are interested in doing business activities with Myanmar counterparts in the sectors of agriculture, energy, manufacturing, construction, transport and trading,” Choi Jae-Young who led the trade delegation of small and medium enterprises from Gangnam district of

Seoul added.

Dr Myo Thet of the UMFCCI expressed his view that the trade delegation's visit would create business opportunities for both Myanmar and South Korean SMEs.

In his greeting speech to the delegation, U Zaw Min Win, UMFCCI vice president, highlighted the importance of business ethics to avoid unwanted situations in bilateral economic relations.

According to the UMFCCI, economic cooperation with the Korea Chamber of Commerce is progressing, following the establishment of Myanmar-Korea/Korea-Myanmar Business Council.

With its growing presence in Myanmar with cheap labour force and abundant natural resources, South Korean investment in Myanmar amounted to more than US\$ 3 billion in 83 businesses, accounting for 8.19 per cent of the total foreign inputs and ranking fifth in the country's investment line-up.

With the aim of strengthening bilateral economic ties, the UMFCCI has signed MoUs with a number of South Korean business associations, including the Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) so far.

NLM

MCDC to renovate Clock Tower of Zaygyo Market



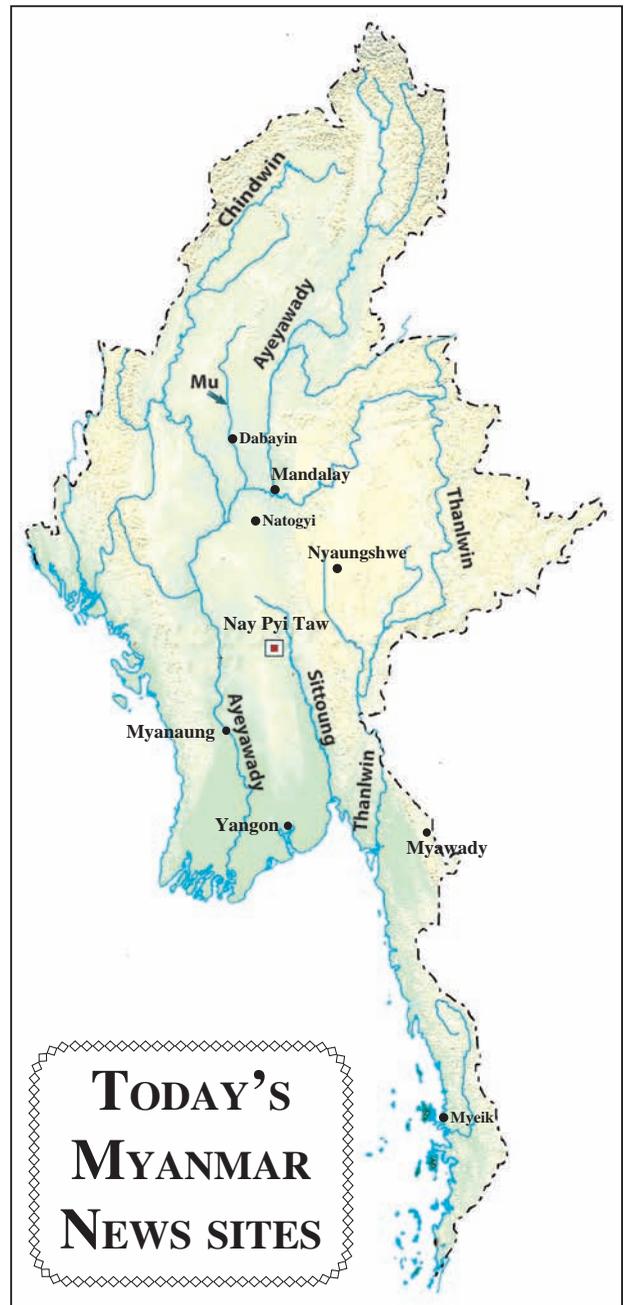
MANDALAY, 26 Sept— The Clock Tower at the junction of 26th and 84th streets in Chanayethazan Township is one of the significant symbols of Mandalay.

Mandalay City Development Committee and clock technician U Ye Win of Mandalay-based Processor Electronics will jointly renovate the clock tower. The committee plans to spend K13 million on renovation of the Zaygyo clock tower within two months as of 1 October.

The technician will install lightings at all flats of the tower and adjust the time of clocks at four sides. The clock tower was renovated in 1985 to have sweet songs at the centennial celebration of the Zaygyo Market of Mandalay.

The clock tower was built in 1909 in honour of the 60th anniversary of the royal term of Her Majesty Victoria of Britain. It was decorated with Myanmar handicrafts in 1985.

Maung Pyi Thu
(Mandalay)



Monsoon paddy in Myanaung Tsp to get irrigated water

MYANAUNG, 26 Sept— Township authorities and departmental officials on Wednesday met village administrators from the villages that faced difficulty to irrigate their farmlands for successfully thriving paddy plantations. The officials arranged to irrigate the monsoon paddy plantations from Kunchaung and Ma Mya Dams and Kazunkhon and Ngapiseik river pumping stations. The dams started sup-

ply of water to the farmlands. They managed to move the water pumps to the necessary places. As of 30 September, the water pumping stations will irrigate the farmlands. In Myanaung Township, farmers from eight village-tracts will get the irrigated water from the dams and those from four village-tracts can use water from river pumping stations.

Win Bo (Myanaung Township IPRD)



MANDALAY, 26 Sept — Directorate of Road Administration opens its district office of Mandalay near the Sacred Tooth Relic Pagoda in Mandalay. The directorate implemented the plan to accept overage vehicles and to recommend import of new vehicles for the people. Up to 15 September 2014, the owners handed over 31,774 overage vehicles, according to the Mandalay Region Directorate of Road Administration.—Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Authorities expanding culverts, bridges on road sections

NATOGYI, 26 Sept — Culverts on road sections of Myingyan-Yaywun-Mandalay road and Myingyan-Natogyi Road are being expanded with 10 feet wide on both sides. Myingyan-Yaywun-Mandalay Road is being expanded to the 24-foot wide facility. Although the road is broad, the culverts are still narrow. As such, vehicles cannot use the road as a two-way lane, causing

traffic accidents near the culverts and bridges. At present, the culverts and bridges are being expanded to the 40-foot wide ones for enabling the vehicles to drive safely on the two-way lane. At the same time, bridges and culverts are also being widened on the 56 miles long Myingyan-Yaywun-Mandalay Road and the 20 feet long Myingyan-Natogyi Road.

Htay Myint Maung



LOCAL NEWS

Telenor SIM cards available anywhere in Mandalay District



MANDALAY, 26 Sept—Norway-based Telenor Company will sell Telenor SIM cards at its head office at the corner of 30th and 73rd Streets in Chanayethazan Township of Mandalay and 1,200 sale centres in Mandalay District as of 27 September. Customers can buy the SIM cards by showing IDs at the sale centres said CEO Mr. Shri Rup of Telenor (Myanmar) on Thursday.

Telenor SIM cards are available at nine Telenor sale centers and 1,200 mobile phone shops in Mandalay District.

The cards will be distributed to Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon in the next week.

Telenor SIM cards can be used to seek general knowledge visiting m.wikipedia.org. Phone calls to any place of the country may cost the subscribers one minute per K25, one SMS per K15 and 1MB of Internet per K6.

At present, the company allows Internet users 20 minute free of charge and one month free of facebook. The top-up cards are graded at K1000, K3000, K3000 and K10000 respectively.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Equipment, rice, edible oil donated to older persons



MYEIK, 26 Sept—As a gesture of hailing the International Day of Older Persons, a ceremony to donate equipment, rice and edible oil to older persons was held at the hall of the Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association in Myeik of Taninthayi Region on Wednesday.

Chairperson of the association Daw Than Than Swe and World Vision (Myeik) project manager Daw Mie Mie Htwe

gave speeches and presented one blanket, rice, edible oil and cash assistance to each older person. The volunteers presented the donations to the aged who could not attend the ceremony.

Under the leadership of Myeik Township MCWA, volunteers look after of 30 aged at their homes and the association donate nutritious feeds and medicines to the aged monthly.

Khaing Htoo (Myeik District)

Cattle insemination techniques shared to local farmers

DABAYIN, 26 Sept—The cattle insemination course 2/2014, conducted by Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department, kicked off at its office in Dabayin Township of Sagaing Region on 23 September.

Staff Officer of Township Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department

Dr Daw Ohnma Aye explained the purpose of conducting the training course.

Altogether 20 trainees from village-tracts attended the course. Thanks to the training course, the local breeders can produce quality pedigree of cattle, milch cows and oxen for development of meat production.

Aung Lin (IPRD)



Winners in aerobic contest awarded in Nay Pyi Taw

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Sept—Nay Pyi Taw Women's Affairs Organization held the aerobic contest at Kandaw Mingala Hall in Pinyinana Township of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.

On Thursday, The Pinyinana team secured the first prize, Lewe Township the second and Pobbathiri Township third in the U-12 event. Lewe Township stood first, Tatkon Town-

ship second and Pinyinana Township third in the Above-12 event.

Chairperson of Nay Pyi Taw WAO Daw Myat Myat Moe, Chairperson of Nay Pyi Taw Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee Daw Aye Aye San and officials presented prizes to the winning teams.

Myo Zeyar (Pinyinana)



Vendors urged to sell fresh foods to students



MYAWADY, 26 Sept—A talk on sales of fresh foods at school canteen was held at the hall of Myawady Basic Education High School No 1 in Kayin State on 24 September.

Before the talks, a total of 15 health staff led by School Health Officer Dr Kyawt Khin Khin and dentist Dr Thein Than Myint of District Health Department performed medical check-up at students.

The health officers gave talks on sanitation of school canteen and sales of fresh foods to the students.

Wai Yan Lin (IPRD)

US business questions Modi's reform credentials ahead of visit

WASHINGTON, 26 Sept — The US business lobby on Thursday questioned the reformist credentials of new Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on the eve of his visit to the United States in which he will encourage investment and declare India open for business.

The US Chamber of Commerce and 15 other US business associations representing sectors ranging from agriculture to movie making, pharma-

ceuticals and telecoms, called on President Barack Obama to press Modi to remove barriers to fair trade when the two leaders meet in Washington on Monday and Tuesday.

"Since taking office, Prime Minister Modi has declared India 'open for business' and promised to incentivise investment and 'give the world a favourable opportunity to trade with and produce in India,'" the Alliance for Fair Trade with India said in a

letter to Obama.

"Thus far, however, the new Indian government has produced troubling policies of its own," the group said, adding: "These actions send perplexing and contradictory new signals about India's role in the global marketplace."

The letter highlighted India's blockage of a key World Trade Organization agreement reached in Bali last year, which overshadowed a 30 July-1 August visit to India by US Secre-

tary of State John Kerry.

The business alliance also complained about India's raised tariffs and "burdensome" new testing requirements on imported information and communication technology products.

US officials say the United States will press Modi to end the WTO blockage during his visit, something that could dampen the mood of a trip aimed at revitalising a strategic relationship Washington sees as a key counterbalance in Asia to an increasingly assertive China.

Also on Thursday, US Congressional leaders dealing with trade and finance wrote to the US International Trade Commission calling for a second investigation into India's "unfair" trade practices, detailing any changes under Modi. They called for the ITC to deliver a report to Congress on 24 September, 2015, a

statement said.

A report requested in August last year is due to be delivered to Congress on 15 December this year.

Stephen Ezell, senior trade policy analyst at the Washington based Information Technology & Innovation Foundation, told a teleconference that Modi had taken some positive steps, including an easing of some restrictions on investment in the defence, insurance and railway sectors.

"However ... we've also seen the continuation of existing — and even the promulgation of some new — trade-distorting policies that do give us some pause," he said.

Chris Moore, of the National Association of Manufacturers, said Modi and his administration were "saying positive things."

"But their actions tell a different story," Patrick Kilbride, of the US Chamber of Commerce, wel-

comed the Indian government's plans to review the environment for intellectual property rights, but said it remained "very poor."

The chamber would take the pledges at face value, he said, but added: "Recent history has given us many reasons to be wary."

Modi is due to arrive in the United States on Friday for his first visit as prime minister and has meetings scheduled with 17 US corporate chiefs including those of Google, IBM, GE, Goldman Sachs and Boeing.

Analysts say maintaining a positive mood will be important during the visit, given that Modi was denied a US visa in 2005 after more than 1,000 people, most of them Muslims, were killed in riots in the state he governed. There was no immediate comment from the Indian embassy in Washington on the letter from the US business lobby.—Reuters



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (3rd L) unveils the logo of "Make in India" initiative prior to his scheduled departure to the United States in New Delhi, India on 25 Sept, 2014. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi launches "Make in India" campaign on Thursday in the capital, inviting global firms to set up manufacturing bases here.—XINHUA

Thai junta appoints reform council as part of plan for polls next year

BANGKOK, 26 Sept — Thailand's junta approved on Friday a 250-member council to draw up political reforms and approve a new constitution, main steps in a military plan for a general election late next year.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, the army chief who led a 22 May coup, picked the members of the council himself but declined to release their names, saying they needed royal approval first.

"The NCPO has chosen the 250 candidates and the names will be forwarded to His Majesty the King for endorsement," Prayuth told reporters on Friday, referring to the junta, formally known as the National Council for Peace and Order.

"There are academics, lawyers and (members of) social organizations so it should be viewed in a positive light," Prayuth said.



Thailand's Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha (R) reads out his government's policy, as Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Prawit Wongsuwan listens, at the Parliament in Bangkok on 12 Sept, 2014.—REUTERS

The junta has said the country needs to overhaul its political system but it has offered few details of how.

Thailand has been roiled by political turmoil for much of the last decade as the largely rural-based supporters of populist former premier Thaksin Shinawatra vie for power with

the Bangkok-based royalist establishment.

Prayuth's coup in May ousted the government of Thaksin's sister, Yingluck Shinawatra, and their supporters fear the junta's reforms will be aimed at preventing the Shinawatra family and their allies from regaining power.—Reuters

Indonesia scraps direct elections for regional leaders

JAKARTA, 26 Sept — Indonesian legislators early on Friday voted to scrap direct elections for mayors, district heads and governors, which opponents of the move view as a major setback for democracy.

During a 10-hour plenary session of the 560-seat House of Representatives, supporters of the bill from former presidential candidate Prabowo Subianto's camp won 226 of the 361 votes cast, after most members of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's Democratic Party, the biggest party in the House, refused to take part in the vote since their related proposal was not accepted.

The motion was opposed by lawmakers from a coalition of parties that support

president-elect Joko Widodo, popularly known as Jokowi, which controls only 139 seats in the House.

The development means regional leaders will now be elected by local legislative councils, not directly by the people.

Direct regional elections were introduced in 2005 as a part of the country's reform movement, but opponents have argued that they are too costly and problematic.

Jokowi, who himself was a directly elected mayor and governor before he won the July 9 presidential election, has said scrapping direct elections for regional leaders would threaten democracy.

Kyodo News



Chinese Ambassador to Japan Cheng Yonghua (C) delivers a speech during a ceremony marking the 65th anniversary of the People's Republic of China in Tokyo, Japan on 25 Sept, 2014.—XINHUA

UN & WORLD

French, US planes strike Islamic State, Britain to join coalition



A pilot of a French Rafale fighter jet is pictured as he flies in formation next to an airborne Boeing C-135 refuelling tanker aircraft, during a mission from Al-Dhafra airbase on 18 Sept, 2014, in this handout image provided by ECPAD. — REUTERS

NEW YORK/BEIRUT, 26 Sept — French fighter jets struck Islamic State targets in Iraq on Thursday, and the United States hit them in Syria, as a US-led coalition to fight the militants gained momentum with an announcement that Britain would join.

The French strikes were a prompt answer to the beheading of a French tourist in Algeria by militants, who said the killing was punishment for Paris' decision last week to become the first European country to join the US-led bombing campaign.

In the United States, FBI Director James Comey said Washington had iden-

tified the masked Islamic State militant in videos with a knife at the beheading of two American hostages in recent weeks. Those acts helped galvanize Washington's bombing campaign.

"I'm not going to tell you who I believe it is," Comey told reporters. He said he knew the person's nationality, but declined to give further details.

A European government source familiar with the investigation said the accent indicated the man was from London and likely from a community of immigrants. US and European officials said the principal investigative work identifying the man was conduct-

ed by British government agencies. Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi, in New York to attend a UN meeting, said on Thursday he had credible intelligence that Islamic State networks in Iraq were plotting to attack US and French subway trains. Senior US officials and French security services said they had no evidence of the specific threat cited by Abadi. But New York Police Commissioner William Bratton said the department boosted its presence on subways and city streets after the Iraqi warning.

City officials added there was no specific, credible threat, and Mayor Bill

de Blasio said: "We are convinced New Yorkers are safe."

Officials in Chicago and Washington, DC, said they knew of no threats to their transit systems.

Some Iraqi officials in Baghdad questioned Abadi's comments. One high-level Iraqi government official told *Reuters* it appeared to be based on "ancient intelligence".

France said earlier on Thursday it would boost security on transport and in public places after the killing of French tourist Herve Gourdel by Islamic State sympathizers in Algeria.

Britain, the closest US ally in the past decade's wars, announced on Thursday that it too would join air strikes against Islamic State targets in Iraq, after weeks of weighing its options. Prime Minister David Cameron recalled parliament, which is expected to give its approval on Friday.

While Arab countries have joined the coalition, Washington's traditional Western allies had been slow to answer the call from US President Barack Obama. But since Monday, Australia, Belgium and the Netherlands have said they would send planes.

Reuters

UNSG's Message for World Tourism Day

27 September 2014

This year's observance of World Tourism Day focuses on the ability of tourism to fully empower people. It seeks to provide them with the skills they need to achieve real change in their communities through tourism. It will also highlight the potential of tourism to help advance sustainable development.

Tourism's capacity to lift millions from poverty, promote gender empowerment and help protect the environment has made it a vital tool for achieving positive change in communities across the world.

Harnessing tourism's immense benefits will be critical to achieving the sustainable development goals and implementing the post 2015 development agenda.

On World Tourism Day, I encourage the international tourism community to commit to sustainable policies and ensure that host communities worldwide share in the benefits generated by tourism.

UNIC/Yangon

Arms trade treaty to come into effect in December

NEW YORK, 26 Sept— The first treaty requiring countries to regulate the sale of conventional weapons to keep them off the black market will come into effect this year after being ratified by dozens of nations.

The treaty will become legally binding on the countries party to it in December, ninety days after surpassing the fifty state ratification quota. Eight states including Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Senegal ratified the

treaty on Thursday, bringing the total to 53.

"Today marks a milestone in the history of the Arms Trade Treaty," said Angela Kane, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, delivering a statement from UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon at a commemorative event.

Japan joined the treaty in May. The US, which is the world's largest exporter of conventional weapons, has signed the treaty but not ratified it.

Kyodo News

US officials reassure public following Iraqi PM's warning of alleged IS plot to attack US, Paris subways

NEW YORK, 26 Sept — New York City officials on Thursday reassured the public that it was safe to ride the subways following Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi's warning of the Islamic State (IS) network's plot to attack subways in the United States and Paris.

The IS elements captured in Iraq said the IS plotted the attacks from inside Iraq, Abadi told reporters on Thursday while in New York for the annual meeting of the UN General Assembly.

The Iraqi prime minister described the plot "credible" as he has "the details", saying the attackers are not Iraqis, some of them are French and American nationals in Iraq.

Iraq reportedly has shared the information about the "serious threats" with its allies' intelligence agencies, but US and

French officials said they had no evidence to back Abadi's remarks.

The US had not confirmed any "specific threat", said Ben Rhodes, a security aide to US President Barack Obama.

If Iraq has any such information, it should share that through the intelligence and law enforcement channels, he said, but adding that the US will take seriously any information it is receiving.

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said that there is "no immediate credible threat" to the subway system.

"The NYPD Intelligence Bureau, which everyone knows has outposts all over the world and is the leader in terms of this work in local law enforcement all over the country, has assessed the statements of the Iraqi prime minister, and at this point finds no



A member of the NYPD is seen with a canine at the Times Square subway station in New York, on 25 Sept, 2014. —REUTERS

specific, credible threat," the mayor told a news conference at Manhattan's Union Square where he arrived by subway from the City Hall.

Minutes ago, New York State Governor An-

drew Cuomo also rode the city's subway from the World Trade Centre to Penn Station with Metropolitan Transportation Authority Chairman Tom Prendergast to reassure New Yorkers and delivered

remarks at Penn Station upon arrival.

"We are aware that there is info about possible threats. There is no credible information about any specific threats to the New York City subway system,"

said Cuomo.

French officials said that French security services said that they have no information to confirm Abadi's remarks.

Last week, France launched its first air raids which destroyed IS targets. After the air raids, a French tourist kidnapped by militants in eastern Algeria was beheaded.

French President Francois Hollande announced on Thursday a three-day period of national mourning after the French tourist was killed.

The US started its air strikes on the IS last month and it is continuing to attack IS forces in Iraq and Syria. The US Central Command said on Thursday that it has conducted 198 airstrikes across Iraq against the IS, and along with partner nations, has conducted 20 airstrikes against the IS in Syria.—Xinhua

PERSPECTIVES

Saturday, 27 September, 2014

Good news for Yangonites

By Myint Win Thein

The Yangon mayor has recently announced that a new city plan near Yangon has been shelved. Most people welcomed the move as local authorities have a lot of things on their plates before being able to develop a new city.

It is essential to fix the problems faced by Yangon residents, including insufficient water supply system, crowded public transport, poor sanitation and drainage systems, an unsafe electricity supply system, substandard of new and

old apartment buildings and rampant crimes.

The insufficient water supply system leads to excessive tapping of underground water. Now almost every new apartment building is drilling one tube-well each in booming townships like Thingangyun, South Okkalapa and North Dagon as residents cannot rely on the existing water supply system. Excessive tapping of ground water will result in the gradual sinking of land as in Bangkok, which is predicted to be under water by 2030.

Crowded public transportation systems cause traffic congestions in the entire city, forcing the public to spend more time on commuting than at work. Poor drainage systems are the main culprit of floods on roads and streets after heavy rains. The unsafe electricity supply system has led to a number of deaths from short circuit caused by broken electric lines. Substandard apartment buildings will be dangerous for the public in

earthquakes. People feel they are not as safe as before as a number of violent crimes are committed in townships like Hlinethaya and Thakayta.

It is also important to build infrastructures in townships established during the previous government to encourage people to live there.

With the cancellation of the new city project, local authorities will be able to exert more effort and allocate more resources to improve the conditions of the largest city in Myanmar.

Write for us

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

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

A Welcome Boost for the Cultural Heritage in Myanmar

Maung Phyto (WYU)

A middle aged gentleman was speaking to a group of people who were seemingly spellbound by the former's eloquence. The people sitting face to face with the speaker were of infinite variety ranging from retired professor to novice reporter. An array of slides popped up intermittently on a large screen by a projector. Curiosity about the matter in discussion sparked in the audience along with the rhythm of the slide-flow. Even in a clean, well-lit, modernized apartment, everyone was drifted into ancient places of some thousand years ago and woke up after a few minutes just to find themselves amid a seminar on the Cultural Heritage in Myanmar and their Public and Societal Challenges. Indeed, it is a snapshot of the Seminar organized by Myanmar Archaeology Association (MAA) held at Diamond Condominium on 9th August 2014.

Myanmar Archaeology Association (MAA) was established on 11th December 2013 by alumni of Archaeology with a view to raising public awareness and educating the historical, cultural and archaeological values of cultural heritage in all parts of Myanmar. MAA has dedicated to bridge the gap between NGOs and the Government Sectors as to the cultural heritage issues. It has also come up with the objectives of conducting archae-

ological researches, presentation and preservation together with creating opportunities for the public to participate in protection and conservation of cultural heritage, thereby, developing the cultural tourism that will contribute to booming the national economy.

I was among the audience on the day of the Seminar. There were altogether nine speakers with very interesting topics that can capture the attention of the audience. Indeed, the speakers are researchers, scholars and independent researchers, local and foreign. The seminar fell into three sessions each of which was chaired by eminent scholars. As for the audience, MAA embraced with due respect every archaeology enthusiast irrespective of age.

The first speaker was Dr. Myo Thant Tin who imparted his knowledge on Expedition the First Cross-Draft Kiln Site in Myanmar. He recalled the memory of his marvelous senior researcher, Mr. Don Hein.

Dr. Tin Maung Htwe, the second speaker, read his paper titled "Preservation of the Khampat Old City" with much enthusiasm, which evoked inspiration in us. Khampat old city is situated about 1½ mile east of present Khampat Town about 53 mile north of Kalay, Sagaing Division. Field survey and research show that the first old city came into existence

between 5th Century and 9th Century AD. The present Khampat city was built during 15th Century AD. Indeed, he brought into public a very interesting issue.

U Hla Thaug @ Hla Thaug (Dip in BDh) appeared as the third speaker. He has already been a widely known writer. Not-widely known fact is that he is also an independent researcher who has also shown his deep interest in history by his bilingual book: "In Search of Suvannabhumi and Other Articles". He expounded his view on the relation between "Suvannabhumi and Myanmar" that was the topic of his research paper. He indeed made a very interesting speaker.

The fourth speaker Dr. Saw Mra Aung astounded the audience with his wide knowledge and eloquent speech on the topic "A Study of Suvannabhumi with Special Reference to Pali Texts to Their Commentaries Concerning the Intangible Cultural Heritage". Most of the references he quoted from the Pali Texts and Commentaries were alien to the ordinary ears. However, he sowed the seed of knowledge on archaeology through Buddhism (Pali Texts) in us thus widening our horizons.

The fifth speaker U Kyaw Sein stood up as the best speaker. The topic of his paper read "Management Plan for Preservation of Cultural Heritages Inscribed and Protected by Government in Rakhine

State". He looked old but firm. He started his presentation with a slow and clear tone. He shed more light on the current conditions of the cultural heritage in Rakhine State. He quoted a few news media for his source of data. He made a splendid and impassioned presentation getting all the audience moved at the sad news but again, inspired with the new hope. His presentation evoked a train of thought in us.

The sixth speaker U Htein Lin tried to dig up the relation between archaeology and Buddhism. Another speaker U Thein Aung came up with invaluable suggestions to support archaeology from a different angle. He brought into light the importance of the conservation of wild life and indigenous plants in the archaeological site. The next speaker, U Win Naing Tun expounded his view on natural heritage and environmental impacts in Myanmar. The last, Dr Elizabeth Moore honoured us with her idea- the reconciliation between veneration and preservation in archaeology. The seminar successfully came to an end at 5 pm that day.

However, the Seminar left us with things to ponder on. Indeed, smuggling of antiquities and other cultural heritage is known to have long been active. Furthermore, few people have the ample knowledge of the archaeological and cultural values of the things in their environment. Rakhine State is not an exception. Indeed, things seem worse

there. A piece of news issued on 12th August 2014 from the Nirinjara News read "houses are built near the precinct of the Shit-thaug Pathodawgyi and the Yatanabon Ceti". Other cases arose as in plowing in the precinct of the Pagoda, unnecessary renovation of the antiquities especially such as repainting the walls of an ancient building, renovating the ancient façade or arched gateway or substituting with a new one, gilding or liming the ancient pagodas, building of a pagoda in an archaeological site, constructing of a railway in the ancient archaeological site. At least one of these is likely in any corner of the country in no time if the educating programs cannot reach the grass-roots level. However, a relief for Rakhine State arose as new PM of Rakhine State vouched for a halt on the construction of the railway in MraukU until further investigation and negotiations with the local

are completed. This decision seems one of the preliminary steps to be done by the authorities on their part towards preservation and conservation of the cultural and natural heritage. However, the people on their part should also be equipped with the a-b-c knowledge of Do's and Don'ts so as to preserve the cultural heritage in Myanmar. In order to educate people on the preservation of our natural heritage, it is out of question that MAA would play its part very well in conformity with its motto: "Be Heritage, Be Sustainable." MAA will surely raise public awareness and evoke their involvement and support for protection of Cultural Heritage.

As their objective goes, they will conduct more research and so doing, facilitate the cultural tourism that can lead to the economic development in Myanmar. Thus I presume.

The author of this article is a freelance translator, writer and independent researcher on Myanmar Culture and History.

GOLD PRICE, FE RATE (26-9-2014)

Yangon Gold Price

Buying K653,600 per tical: Selling K654,600

Mandalay Gold Price

Buying K653,600 per tical: Selling K654,600

FE RATE

USD Buying K990 - Selling K995

SGD Buying K780 - Selling K788

Euro Buying K1260- Selling K1280

NATIONAL

SWRR Ministry organizes meetings on ASEAN Disaster Preparedness and Response Simulation Exercise



Union Minister Dr Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin highlights preparedness for natural disasters and response simulation exercise with the strength of volunteers.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Sept — The ASEAN Rehabilitation Taskforce Meeting, the Consultation Workshop on the ASEAN Guideline on Recovery Planning and the ASEAN Disaster Preparedness and Response Simulation Exercise took place at Shwe Kyunmyaw Hotel-2 in Inlay Lake of Nyaungshwe Township in Shan State on 22 September.

At the meetings, Chairperson of National Disaster Management Work Committee Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin said that Myanmar leads the process of ASEAN guideline on recovery planning while Indonesia is leading collec-

tion of loss and waste. She urged all the participants to take part in tasks of the Rehabilitation Taskforce to have accomplishment in 2014-15.

Practice Coordinator Mr Sanny Ramos Jegillos of Asia-Pacific Regional Centre (APRC) of UNDP and Executive Director Mr Said Faisal of AHA Centre made a speech. The participants exchanged views on recovery from natural disasters in ASEAN countries.

After that, they participated in the simulation exercise as preparedness and response for disasters. Later, the Union minister inspected the site for construction of the pre-primary school in Aungpan.

MNA

Best ways to develop children's head, heart and hands

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 26 Sept— Education expert Dr Thein Lwin said parents should instill self-confidence into the children. Having self-confidence helps a child achieve more success in his or her future life.

At an education seminar in Yangon, he gave lecture on how to train a kid without beating them, urging parents not to force their children but to encourage them. The majority of children feel depressed as parents force them to replace their own natural bent.

These days, parents are paying more attention to physical development

rather than mental development. Frequently holding discussions between parents and their children is the best way to promote their relations as well as to develop the children's head, heart and hands, he added.

Dr Daw Yuzana Saw Myint, a child specialist, said pre-school age is the best time to put children



Education expert Dr Thein Lwin giving talks about important role of child care in their learning education.—PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN

U Myint Naung accredited to Italian Republic

NAY PYI TAW, 27 Sept—The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Myint Naung, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of South Africa, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Italian Republic.—MNA

FSWG launches photo contest to mark World Food Day

YANGON, 26 Sept— To mark World Food Day 2014, the Myanmar Food Security Working Group (FSWG) launched a photo contest, inviting people who want to take part in the contest under the title of "Family Farming: Feeding the world, caring for the earth," a source said on Friday.

Interested parties may send their two 10x14 photos together with a CD to the FSWG's office no later than 3rd October. For more information, dial 09421055004 of Nay Linn Aung, Communications Officer of Food Security Working Group.

Knowledge exchange forum, photo gallery, quilt show, debate, video clips and other programmes to mark the day will also be held on 10 October at Summit Parkview Hotel in Yangon.

NLM

New school building, duplicate tooth relic, chamber donated to Natmauk Tsp

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Sept — A ceremony to hand over a school building, duplicate of the tooth relic and the golden chamber was held at the Basic Education High School Branch in Nyaungkyatbin Village of Natmauk Township in Magway Region on Thursday.

Agga Maha Saddhammajotika Most Ven Shi Chang Zang of the Buddha Tooth Relic Chamber Temple of Beijing in the People's Republic of China handed over documents to the Ministry of Education.

The handover of the duplicate Buddha tooth relic and chamber followed at Shinbin Myathla Pagoda where the duplicate tooth relic and the chamber will be kept in Nyaungkyatbin Village of the township.

After the ceremony, the most venerable abbot donated K100,000 each to the aged of the village.

The ceremonies were attended by Chief Minister of Magway Region U Phone Maw Shwe and Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs Dr Maung Maung Htay.—MNA

European Film Festival launched

YANGON, 26 Sept— The European Film Festival, organized by the Swiss Embassy was held at Nay Pyi Taw Cinema in Yangon yesterday evening, attended by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, Deputy Minister for Culture Daw Sanda Khin, Swiss Ambassador Mr Christoph Burgenen, Israeli Ambassador Mr Hagay

Moshe Behan and officials. An official of the Swiss Embassy introduced a brief story of the film to be shown at the opening day of the festival. (I thought 25 Sept is opening, so why TO BE shown?)

Seven countries will present 10 films during the festival from 25 September to 5 October.

MNA

NLM

Iran hopes for final nuclear deal despite discords

TEHERAN, 26 Sept — Iran is “hopeful” about comprehensive nuclear deal in the short time left, Iran’s President Hassan Rouhani said in his address to the UN General Assembly meeting on Thursday, according to Iranian local media report.

Iran is determined to continue its nuclear activities, including uranium enrichment on its soil, Rouhani said, adding that his country will not slacken over its nuclear rights.

The prospect of “a nuclear deal can be the initiation of multilateral cooperation for security, peace and development in the region and in the world” provided that “the West does not miss this historical opportunity,” Rouhani said.

Diplomacy is the only proper way to resolve Iran’s nuclear standoff, otherwise, it will be “a grave mistake”

to resort to other means to tackle the issue, he said.

On Thursday, Iran’s senior nuclear negotiator Abbas Araqchi said key issues are the sources of disagreement between Iran and the world powers in the ongoing nuclear talks. “We have not been able to narrow the gaps over the key issues and we haven’t reached a point of agreement over them,” Araqchi told IRIB state TV, adding that “of course, both sides are at work to reduce the differences.”

The Iranian nuclear negotiator did not refer to major differences between Iran and the P5+1 group, — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States plus Germany — in the talks, but said that some progress has been made in the areas where positions are not so apart.

“What is of importance

for us is to insist on our nuclear rights and observe our red lines which would not be transgressed,” he said.

Asked about the possibility of promoting the ongoing talks to a higher level, Araqchi said that “No, it is very unlikely, since we have not reached that point yet.”

Uranium enrichment capacity of Iran is one of the key issues in the nuclear talks. The West demands Iran dramatically lower its enrichment capacity. Western media reported recently that Iran and the world powers are working on a new proposal by the West based on which Iran would be allowed to have more uranium enrichment centrifuges but will be disconnected from the feeds of uranium.

Iranian officials or nuclear negotiators have not made any public comments

on the reported proposal so far.

Iran is determined to reach a final deal with six world powers over its nuclear programme and the West should seize this “rare” opportunity to settle the “fabricated” nuclear dispute, Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad-Javad Zarif also said echoing Iran’s president’s remarks.

The top Iranian diplomat expressed Tehran’s firm determination in considering any proposal aimed at resolving the country’s nuclear issue, Press TV reported on Thursday.

Iran and six countries started a new round of talks over Iran’s nuclear programme on Friday at the UN headquarters. The talks are expected to last a week.

In July, Iran and the six countries agreed to extend negotiations over Iran’s



Iranian President Hassan Rouhani is escorted to the podium for his address to the 69th United Nations General Assembly at United Nations Headquarters in New York, on 25 Sept, 2014. —REUTERS

controversial nuclear programme for another four months till 24 November as they could not narrow down the significant gaps on core issues during the past six months.

An interim deal, which

took effect on 20 January, was designed to buy time for negotiations. Under the deal, Iran would suspend some sensitive nuclear activities in exchange for a limited sanction relief.

Xinhua

We’ve never been so close to nuclear deal with Iran



German Minister of Foreign Affairs Frank-Walter Steinmeier speaks during a United Nations Security Council meeting on Iraq at the UN headquarters in New York, on 19 Sept, 2014. —REUTERS

NEW YORK, 26 Sept — Six world power have never been so close to a deal with Iran that would resolve the

decade-long nuclear standoff once and for all, but the final phase of the negotiations will be the hardest,

Germany’s foreign minister said on Thursday.

“We have never been so close to a deal as now. But the truth is that the final phase of the talks that lay before us is probably the most difficult,” Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier told reporters after meeting Iran’s President Hassan Rouhani on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly.

“Now is the time to end this conflict. I hope that Iran ... in view of the situation in the Middle East, knows and senses that a collapse of the talks now is not permissible.”—Reuters

Russia vows to protect national security amid NATO military deployment

MOSCOW, 26 Sept — Moscow will take into consideration NATO’s military deployment when making national security plans, a senior Russian diplomat said on Thursday.

“We should certainly be very vigilant about the military preparations under way near our borders,” said Alexander Grushko, Russia’s ambassador to NATO.

Russia has to consider an entire set of security measures with regard to NATO’s military plans, he said.

Grushko also mentioned the decisions made at the latest NATO summit

in Wales. “These decisions show that NATO is moving toward the security scheme of the Cold War time,” he said.

In order to resume cooperation, NATO must reconsider the decisions for the sake of its own interests and of global security issues, the *Interfax* news agency quoted Grushko as saying.

Russia has been ready to continue cooperation in the interests of global and regional security, but NATO has decided to suspend cooperation in the Afghanistan issue and in the fight against terrorism,

he added. Jens Stoltenberg, who will take office as NATO’s new secretary-general on 1 October, said Wednesday that the bloc is not planning to return to the previous partnership format with Moscow, accusing Russia of “sticking to a more aggressive policy.”

Russian President Vladimir Putin said on 11 September that the West has taken advantage of the crisis in Ukraine to resuscitate NATO, and that Russia will take measures to strengthen Moscow’s military power against emerging security threats.

Xinhua

Police search knife attack suspect in SW China bush

NANNING, 26 Sept — Police are searching mountainous woodlands in southwest China’s Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region for a man suspected of killing four primary school kids on Friday.

More than 300 people, both police and civilians, have joined the manhunt, aided by sniffer dogs, in woods in Lingshan County, about 7 km from the crime scene.

Police have identified

the suspect as a 56-year-old local man surnamed Shi.

Four primary school students were killed at around 6:20 am in a knife attack on their way to Gupu Primary School. Three died at the scene and one died later in hospital.

Police have offered an award of up to 20,000 yuan (3,250 US dollars) for information. The search team is increasing as more police and civilians get involved.—Xinhua



Photo taken on 24 Sept, 2014 shows a scenery of Ha Long Bay, literally “the descending dragon bay”, a world heritage and travel destination in northern Vietnam. Ha Long Bay, in the Gulf of Tonkin, includes some 1,600 islands and islets, forming a spectacular seascape of limestone pillars. Because of their precipitous nature, most of the islands are uninhabited and unaffected by a human presence. The site’s outstanding scenic beauty is complemented by its great biological interest. It was inscribed in UNESCO’s World Natural Heritage list in 1994. —XINHUA

WORLD

ABUJA, 26 Sept — One of more than 200 school-girls abducted by Islamist Boko Haram rebels in the northeastern Nigerian village of Chibok was freed this week, police and a parent of some of the other missing girls said on Thursday.

Boko Haram militants took the girls from a secondary school in the village near the Cameroon border in April, sparking a worldwide outcry, and have remained in captivity ever since.

Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan has been pilloried at home and abroad for his slow response to the kidnapping and for his inability to quell the violence by the Islamist militants, seen as the biggest security threat to Africa's top economy.

"She was found running in a village. She was in the bush for about four days. She's still receiving medical attention," said a parent, who has two girls still with the insurgents and who declined to be named.

He added that she was now in the northeastern city of Yola. Police spokesman Emmanuel Ojukwu told reporters in Abuja that the 20-year-old woman was discovered on Wednesday, saying she had been "dropped off by suspected

Gov't yet to confirm reports of nine Japanese joining Islamic State

TOKYO, 26 Sept — The government has yet to confirm information that nine Japanese nationals have joined Islamic State extremists, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said on Friday.

"We, as the government of Japan, have yet to confirm such information," Suga said at a Press conference. Separately, a senior Foreign Ministry official said Tokyo is "checking with the Israeli side" the authenticity of information disclosed by former Air Self-Defence Force chief Toshio Tamogami about the nine Japanese allegedly joining the militant group. In a recent blog post describing his trip to Israel, Tamogami, known for his conservative views, said he heard from a high-ranking Israeli Foreign Ministry official that "nine Japanese have joined the Islamic State extremist group along with British and other nationals."

Kyodo News

One of the girls abducted by Boko Haram in Nigeria's Chibok freed



"#Bring Back Our Girls" campaigners march during a rally calling for the release of the Abuja school girls who were abducted by the Boko Haram militants in Borno State on 22 Aug, 2014. —REUTERS

Boko Haram militants" at Mubi in Adamawa state, some 100 km (60 miles) from Chibok.

"Her condition is stable," he said, without explaining why she might

have been released.

The Islamists offered last May a prisoner swap to release the girls, but the proposal was rejected by the government.

A military operation

in the northeast has so far failed to quell the rebellion and has triggered reprisal attacks that are increasingly targeting civilians, after they formed vigilante groups to try to help the

government flush out the militants.

Boko Haram militants on motorcycles killed at least 18 people in an attack on the northeast Nigerian town of Shaffa late on

Wednesday, witnesses said on Thursday.

The attack late on Wednesday left bodies in the street, witness Amos Mshelia, who escaped by running into the surrounding bush and on to the nearby town of Biu, told Reuters by telephone.

"People ran out of their houses in fear, but unknown to many of us the insurgents were nearby and they were pursuing people, shooting as we were fleeing," he said.

Boko Haram has seized several towns in the last two months, although the military said on Wednesday it had pushed them back and that 135 fighters had surrendered this week. It also said Nigerian troops had killed a man posing as Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau in several videos, including one in which he threatened to sell the girls into slavery. The military said last year that Shekau himself might have been killed.

Boko Haram gunmen carried away some 270 girls and women, aged from 13 to over 20, when they raided the Chibok school. More than 50 eventually escaped, but at least 200 remain in captivity, as do scores of other girls kidnapped previously.

Reuters

Syrian, Iraqi and other asylum seekers on rise in West

GENEVA, 26 Sept — Wars in Syria and Iraq, and instability in other hotspots are driving ever more people to seek asylum in wealthy nations, with requests on track to hit a 20-year high in 2014, the United Nations refugee agency said on Friday.

Some 330,700 people sought refugee status in 44 industrialized countries in the first half of the year, an almost 24 per cent rise on the same period in 2013, it said.

If the trend continues, the number of new asylum claims could reach 700,000 in 2014, "the highest total for industrialized countries in 20 years and a level not seen since the 1990s conflict in former Yugoslavia," it said in a report.

"The international community needs to prepare their populations for the reality that in the absence of solutions to conflict more and more

people are going to need refuge and care in the coming months and years," said UN High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres, a former prime minister of Portugal.

More than two-thirds

of all asylum claims in the first six months of this year were lodged in just six countries, in order: Germany, the United States, France, Sweden, Turkey and Italy, according to the UNHCR. And more than

one in seven claims — 48,400 — were from Syrians, twice as many as in the same period last year.

For the first time since 1999, Germany received the largest number of new asylum claims among in-

dustrialized countries, 65,700, mainly due to a rise in applications by Syrians. The figure was up by 50 percent from the same period in 2013.

The 28 member states of the European Union (EU) registered 216,300 claims, a 23 percent rise compared to the same six-month period last year, it said.

The Nordic region led by Sweden remained a popular destination in Europe, with 38,900 applications, the UNHCR said.

Italy, whose shores are sought by many desperate families fleeing conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, recorded 24,500 claims during the period, almost as many as all of last year.

Many failed to reach safety, with the death toll so far this year from shipwrecks in the Mediterranean nearing 3,000 would-be migrants and asylum-seekers, aid agencies say. —Reuters



A Kurdish Syrian refugee waits for transport during a sand storm on the Turkish-Syrian border near the southeastern town of Suruc in Sanliurfa Province, on 24 Sept, 2014. —REUTERS

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (029N)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (029N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28.9.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
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APEC conference on higher education cooperation opens in Vladivostok

VLADIVOSTOK, 26 Sept—The third APEC Conference on Cooperation in Higher Education kicked off on Thursday in the Russian Far East port city of Vladivostok.

Some 60 delegates of education ministries and departments from China, South Korea, Russia, Japan, Brunei and other Asia-Pacific countries will mainly focus on collaborative programmes and mobility schemes during the two-day conference.

"This event plays a great role in boosting mobility of students, education providers, and researchers of the Asia-Pacific countries," said Liu Qiang, professor of the Beijing Normal University.

According to the organizer, the delegates will discuss issues on cross-border educational cooperation, mutual recognition and coordination of education policies and credit transfers in the region.—Xinhua

Hamas, Fatah agree on resuming unity government in Gaza

CAIRO, 26 Sept—Palestinian factions Hamas and Fatah agreed on Thursday on resuming unity government in Gaza after two days of negotiations in Cairo, state-run MENA reported.

The two Palestinian factions had set up a unity government in June but never took hold. Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas criticized Hamas of running another administration in Gaza.—Xinhua



Officials inspect the blast site in the Yungay neighbourhood in downtown Santiago, capital of Chile, during the early hours of on 25 Sept, 2014. An unidentified young man died early on Thursday in the centre of Chilean capital after a handmade bomb blew off while manipulating it, police said.—XINHUA

No report of quake casualties in Alaska

SAN FRANCISCO, 26 Sept—A 6.2-magnitude earthquake struck near Alaska's most populous city of Anchorage on Thursday, but apparently causing no casualties.

The US Geological Survey (USGS) said the quake originated at a depth of 101.7 kilometres below the surface and took place at 09:51 local time, with the epicenter 130 kilometres northwest of Anchorage. Given the depth, as USGS explained,

the quake seemed to have caused no casualties or severe property damage.

Media reports reaching here quoted police sources as saying that building and car alarms went off in the wake of the temblor.

No tsunami warning was issued afterwards.

On the website, USGS explains that the Aleutian arc extends some 3,000 kilometres from the Gulf of Alaska in the east to the Kamchatka Peninsula

in the west, marking the region where the Pacific plate subducts into the mantle beneath the North America plate.

This subduction, it says, is responsible for the generation of the Aleutian Islands and the deep offshore Aleutian Trench. And most of the seismicity along the Aleutian arc results from thrust faulting that occurs along the interface between the Pacific and North America plates.

Xinhua



Members of the Joint Task Force patrol during an operation on the Horqueta mountain in Concepcion Department, Paraguay, on 25 Sept, 2014. The operation was held to search for members of the Paraguayan People Army and the Armed Farmer Group, considered by the government of Paraguay as highly dangerous groups.—XINHUA

Two foreign exchange offices in Stockholm attacked by armed robberies

STOCKHOLM, 26 Sept—Two foreign exchange bureaux in Stockholm were attacked by armed robberies on Thursday that also left suspected bombing packages which delayed traffic for hours, according to local news reports.

According to the Swedish daily *Dagens Nyheter*, witness at the scene said the masked robbers had a "pistol-like object in his hand" while robbing a foreign exchange office in southern Stockholm on Thursday morning, which the police confirmed to be a failed mission. The other one, took place almost simultaneously at a foreign exchange bureau in central Stockholm was confirmed by the police as a successful one, but the police declined to reveal the exact amount robbed.

Despite no reported casualties or anyone harmed in either robberies, police said "ticking packages" were left in each location, which were later detonated by bomb squad.

Stockholm's Metro green line suffered lengthy delays as some nearby subway stations were closed off, and large parts of Stockholm south were cordoned off for several hours until Thursday afternoon.

Xinhua

Russia, India start joint anti-terror military drill

MOSCOW, 26 Sept—Russia and India have started a joint drill in southern Russia to improve bilateral military and anti-terror cooperation, the Russian Defence Ministry said on Thursday.

More than 250 Indian infantry troops have been transported to the Prudboy training range in the Volgograd region, said the press service of the Russian Southern Military District.

The press service did not specify how many troops are to be involved, but said they belong to the 20th infantry brigade.

The drill will include joint patrol of important facilities, coordination of combat actions, cargo convoy and destruction of illegal armed groups. The

troops will strike about 300 targets, including 100 mobile ones, during the exercises.

As part of Indra-2014, the military drill will last till 2 October.

Russia and India have conducted biannual Indra drills since 2003. Initially, the exercises involved only naval forces, but later extended to ground forces.

In July, Russian and Indian navies conducted drills in the Sea of Japan as part of Indra-2014. In August, air forces of the two countries held their first joint exercises, Avia Indra, in Voronezh in central Russia and Astrakhan region in southern Russia.

The second Avia-Indra drill is scheduled in November in India.

Xinhua

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

**The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Energy
Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise
Auction for Petroleum Coke
Tender No.(1)**

The Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise (MPE), the Ministry of Energy, hereby announces a tender for auctioning the 3,000 (±5%) metric tons of petroleum coke (FOR EXPORT ONLY) in foreign currency.

1. The documentation related to the petroleum coke auction can be purchased with 100 USD per package by any interested parties commencing 1st October 2014 in the head office of MPE at the address mentioned below.
2. The petroleum coke shall be auctioned off in United States Dollar.
3. Interested parties can submit the bid with proposed price as EX-FACTORY in accordance with the details mentioned in tender document in sealed envelope to the following address in person before 31st October 2014 at 12:00 noon;
Chairman
Tender Evaluation Committee
Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise
Building No.44, Nay Pyi Taw
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
4. Bidders shall also submit a bid bond of 50,000 USD issued by the Myanma Foreign Trade Bank (MFTB) in the name of MPE together with the bid in the same envelope.
5. The tender evaluation committee shall receive all bids by the mentioned deadline and open the bids on 31st October 2014 at 13:00 hour at the same location.
6. For more information, Please contact the following address;
Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise
Ministry of Energy
Building No.44, Nay Pyi Taw
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
mpeict@gmail.com
Fax: +95 67 411094, +959411343
7. Late inquiries or inquiries via telephone will not be answered.

Tender Evaluation Committee
Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV LUO ZHOU VOY NO (001)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV LUO ZHOU VOY NO (001) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27.9.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
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Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S EVERGREEN SHIPPING
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**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV DYNAMIC OCEAN-09 VOY
NO (-)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV DYNAMIC OCEAN-09 VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27.9.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S G LINK EXPRESS PTE
LTD**

Phone No: 2301191/2301178

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV MALTE RAMBOW VOY
NO (1438)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MALTE RAMBOW VOY NO (1438) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28.9.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT
(S'PORE) PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV SHINING PESCADORE VOY
NO (1401)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SHINING PESCADORE VOY NO (1401) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27.9.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T(2) where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S SPLENDOR TRANS CO**

Phone No: 2301186

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV PORT MELBOURNE VOY NO
(087)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PORT MELBOURNE VOY NO (087) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28.9.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P.L where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S BRIGHT SAIL**

Phone No: 2301186

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV KULTHARA VOY NO (04/14)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KULTHARA VOY NO (04/14) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28.9.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W(7) where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301186

Weather report

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is weak in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

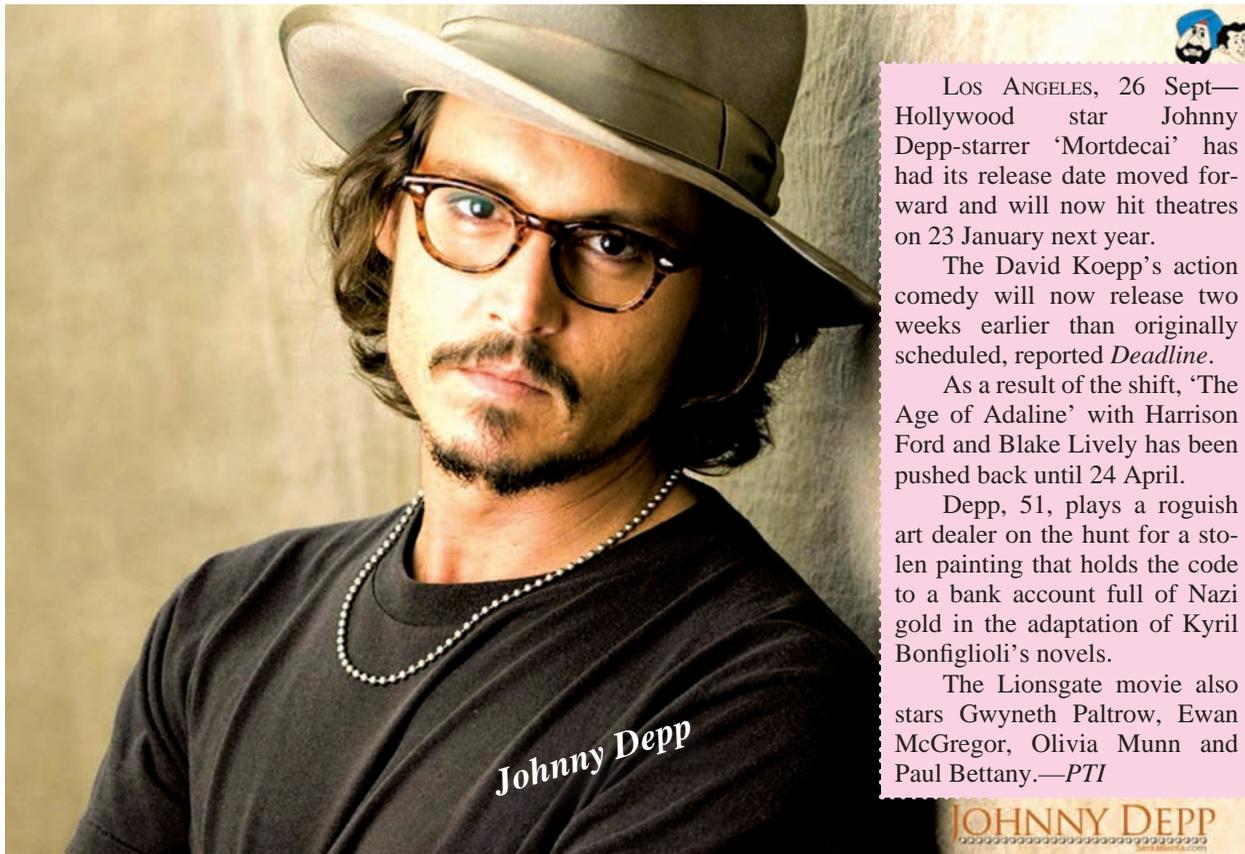
FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 27th September, 2014: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions, Chin State, scattered in Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions, Shan, Rakhine and Kayah States and fairly widespread in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (80%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters.



People from the Czech Republic talk about the history of glass art at the exhibition in the Inner Mongolia Museum in Hohhot, north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, on 25 Sept, 2014. The European Glass Art Exhibition, co-sponsored by the Prague National Gallery and the Inner Mongolia Museum, was opened to the public on 26 Sept.—XINHUA

Johnny Depp's 'Mortdecai' to release in January next year



LOS ANGELES, 26 Sept—Hollywood star Johnny Depp-starrer 'Mortdecai' has had its release date moved forward and will now hit theatres on 23 January next year.

The David Koepp's action comedy will now release two weeks earlier than originally scheduled, reported *Deadline*.

As a result of the shift, 'The Age of Adaline' with Harrison Ford and Blake Lively has been pushed back until 24 April.

Depp, 51, plays a roguish art dealer on the hunt for a stolen painting that holds the code to a bank account full of Nazi gold in the adaptation of Kyril Bonfiglioli's novels.

The Lionsgate movie also stars Gwyneth Paltrow, Ewan McGregor, Olivia Munn and Paul Bettany.—PTI

My parents were not happy with my decision of joining 'Big Boss 8': Sonali Raut

MUMBAI, 26 Sept—Model-actress Sonali Raut, who is among the 15 contestants in the 'Big Boss' house, said her parents were not happy with her decision to join the eighth season of the controversial reality show.

Sonali, however, feels that since she is a beginner, she has not much to lose. "Of course, my parents were not okay with the idea. They were concerned about me but they agreed later. I am just at the beginning of my career so I have nothing to lose by entering the house," Sonali said.

'The Xpose' actress said she has no plans to play any games in the reality show but would take a stand if provoked.

'Big Boss' is hosted by Bollywood superstar Salman Khan. "Another reason for doing the show was to meet Salman Khan. I am a huge fan. I would get to meet him every weekend," she said.

PTI



Tyler James Williams joins 'The Walking Dead'

LOS ANGELES, 26 Sept—Actor Tyler James Williams has been added to the cast of post-apocalyptic horror drama TV series 'The Walking Dead'.

Williams will play a character called Noah, although the exact details are being kept under wraps, according to *The Hollywood Reporter*.

It is not currently clear whether the 21-year-old actor will appear in the AMC zombie drama on a guest, recurring or regular basis.

Noah is not a character featured in Robert Kirkman's Walking Dead comics.

Williams joins the likes of Seth Gilliam for season five of the hit series, while Andrew J West, Alanna Masterson and Christian Serratos are promoted to regulars.

It was confirmed earlier this month that the long-planned 'Walking Dead' spin-off has been given a pilot order by AMC.

'The Walking Dead' season five begins on 12 October.—PTI



Tyler James Williams

UNAIDS appoints Victoria Beckham goodwill ambassador



Victoria Beckham

UNITED NATIONS, 26 Sept — The United Nations programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) on Thursday named fashion designer and former Spice Girl Victoria Beckham a goodwill ambassador. Beckham, who said she was inspired to help after a "life-changing" visit to HIV clinics in South Africa, will focus on working toward ensuring that all children are born free from HIV and that children and women who are living with and affected by HIV have access to medicines and care, UNAIDS said.

"It's taken me getting to 40 years old to realize I have a responsibility as a woman, as a mother, I have a voice that people will listen to," she told a news conference at the United Nations on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly.

"I'm not going to sit here and pretend to know everything right now, I don't, I'm learning," said Beckham, adding that she planned to take field trips to learn more about the problem and how she could help.

Sub-Saharan Africa is the region hardest hit by HIV, with 24.7 million HIV-positive people in 2013. Women account for 58 percent of those with HIV in the region, which is also home to 85 percent of pregnant women with HIV, according to UNAIDS. Last month Beckham auctioned off 600 pieces of clothing, including several evening dresses, to raise money and awareness for mothers living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa.—Reuters

Nothing cynical about 'Star Wars Episode 7'

LOS ANGELES, 26 Sept — Actor Oscar Isaac says there is nothing "cynical" in Star Wars Episode VII.

Isaac, 35, will have a role in JJ Abrams's highly-anticipated sequel alongside original trilogy stars Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher and Mark Hamill, reported *Entertainment Weekly*.

"They're such funny people. Carrie is hilarious and doing such cool work. Harrison is back. He went on hiatus for a little while, but he's 150 per cent back. It's pretty amazing to see him bounce back. He looks incredible," Isaac said.

"Everyone's having a really good time. JJ sets that tone. There's a lot of enthu-

siasm and it's being done with a lot of heart. There's nothing cynical about the way we're doing this. Even in the way he's shooting it — he's shooting on film and actually building the sets, so you've got hundreds of Stormtroopers or whatever, and hundreds of extras and all the ships. You actually see it. It's all real. Everyone can interact with the world," he added.

Isaac is joined in the main cast by John Boyega, Daisy Ridley, Adam Driver, Domhnall Gleeson, Lupita Nyong'o, Gwendoline Christie and Andy Serkis.

'Star Wars Episode VII' opens on 18 December, 2015.—PTI

GENERAL

Changing United's fortunes my toughest job, says Van Gaal

LONDON, 26 Sept— Leading Manchester United through their current period of transition is the toughest job Louis van Gaal has faced during his trophy-laden career, the manager said on Thursday.

The Dutchman added that he was also enduring the worst injury crisis he could remember in his 23 years as a coach. Van Gaal arrived at Old Trafford after the World Cup tasked with bringing the good times back to the red half of Manchester but his side have failed to deliver so far, taking five points from their opening five matches.

Despite investing heavily in attacking players during the recent transfer window, United's cause has not been

helped by their defensive frailties, which were all too evident during last weekend's humiliating 5-3 defeat to promoted Leicester City.

"At this moment maybe (it is the hardest job) but you have to see in a year and not in one week that we have nine injuries and a red card," Van Gaal told a news conference. "This club is in transition. We should have won last weekend and, if we had, we would be two points off second place."

"If we'd have won it would be different. You can't make one incident a regular one. We will overcome things. The season lasts more than one competition day." Eighth-placed West Ham United travel to



Manchester United's manager Louis Van Gaal applauds his team during their English Premier League soccer match against Queens Park Rangers at Old Trafford in Manchester, northern England on 14 Sept, 2014.—REUTERS

Old Trafford on Saturday hoping to take advantage of United's defensive worries as Phil Jones, Chris Smalling and Jonny Evans are all

injured, while Tyler Blackett is suspended after being sent off against Leicester.

"I have to admit that I am never in this situation be-

fore so that is strange," Van Gaal said. "For me, it is difficult to understand because we are evaluating what we can do in a different way." Van Gaal has experience of nurturing young talent having done so at Bayern Munich and the 63-year-old is ready to give United's academy players first-team opportunities. "There are vacancies," Van Gaal said. "The younger players can have their chance. They are hungry to play the game."

"United's youth education has a level that can provide that. There's a big difference between youth games and the Premier League but in one game you can show yourself."

Reuters

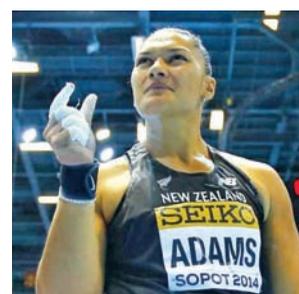
Olympic champion Adams has shoulder, elbow surgery

WELLINGTON, 26 Sept — Two-time Olympic shotput champion Valerie Adams had surgery on her right elbow and left shoulder in Auckland on Friday.

The injuries affected the 29-year-old New Zealander throughout the season, though she clinched her third Commonwealth Games gold in Glasgow and extended her four-year winning record to 56 successive competitions.

"Valerie's surgeries have been completed successfully," her manager Nick Cowan said in an Athletics New Zealand statement.

"They were reasonably straightforward and the medical team are very happy. "Valerie is now resting and her rehab programme begins." Adams, who won her first Olympic title at Beijing in 2008, was awarded her second after Belarusian Nadzeya Ostapchuk had to



Valerie Adams of New Zealand reacts during the women's shot put final at the world indoor athletics championships at the ERGO Arena in Sopot on 8 March, 2014.

REUTERS

give up her London gold after failing a drug test.

The statement gave no indication when Adams might be fit to compete again, though she has already confirmed she will strive for a third successive shot put gold at the 2016 Rio Olympics. — Reuters

WUHAN, 26 Sept — A tournament plagued with falling seeds, withdrawals and retirements will at least enjoy a high-powered final after Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova reached the championship match of the inaugural Wuhan Open on Friday.

The Czech beat Ukraine's Elina Svitolina 6-3, 7-5 to set up a final against either Canada's Eugenie Bouchard, whom she beat in the Wimbledon final, or US Open runner-up Caroline Wozniacki.

Victory in her 18th Tour final on Saturday will seal Kvitova's place in the year-ending WTA Finals in Singapore.

Kvitova lost her only previous meeting with Svitolina but was always the dominant player this time, winning the first set with ease and edging the second after surrendering an early break of service to the world

Kvitova powers through to Wuhan final



Petra Kvitova of the Czech Republic returns to Elina Svitolina of Ukraine during their women's singles semi-final match at the Wuhan Open tennis tournament in Wuhan, Hubei Province, on 26 Sept, 2014. — REUTERS

number 34.

Organizers will be breathing a sigh of relief that they will at least have a marquee final.

After local heroine Li Na announced her retirement from the sport on the eve of the tournament, world number one Serena Williams withdrew through illness and Maria Sharapova

was bundled out by Swiss qualifier Timea Bacsinszky.

Former world number one Victoria Azarenka also withdrew before the tournament started while second seed Simona Halep could not take to the court for her third round match because of a stomach bug and Jelena Jankovic retired with a back injury.—Reuters

American Simpson launches 40th staging of Ryder Cup

GLENEAGLES, (Scotland), 26 Sept — The Ryder Cup got underway on Friday when American Webb Simpson sent the opening tee shot down the first fairway on a chilly morning at the PGA Centenary Course.

A noisy crowd gathered on the first tee at 7:35 am (0635 GMT) at Gleneagles and it was the American challengers who had the honour of opening the 40th edition of the biennial team event against holders Europe.

The 2012 US Open winner Simpson teamed up with big-hitting US Masters champion Bubba Watson in match one, taking on the European pairing of Justin Rose and Henrik Stenson in the first of four morning fourballs.

The quartet will be followed at 7:50 am when Thomas Bjorn and Martin Kaymer represent Europe against Rickie Fowler and 35-year-old rookie Jimmy Walker.

Match three features

US debutants Jordan Spieth and Patrick Reed facing Scottish favourite Stephen Gallacher and Ian Poulter, while world number one Rory McIlroy and Sergio Garcia tee off at 8:20 am against Phil Mickelson and Keegan Bradley.

Europe are looking to retain the trophy they won in the 'Miracle at Medinah', where they clawed their way back from 10-4 down to win by 14-1/2 points to 13-1/2.

Reuters



Team Europe captain Paul McGinley speaks during the opening ceremony of the 40th Ryder Cup, at Gleneagles in Scotland on 25 Sept, 2014.— REUTERS

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(27-9-14 07:00 am~ 28-9-14 07:00 am) MST

- * Local News
- * The Prayer Halls And Buddha Images (Part-1)
- * World News
- * Distinguished Myanmar Ladies "Tin Moe Lwin"
- * Local News
- * Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda Festival (Part-1)
- * World News
- * Crab Business (Part-II) Soft Shell Crab
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Zhang Nan (R) of China returns the shuttlecock during the badminton mixed doubles round of 16 match against Hayakawa Kenichi and Matsutomo Misaki of Japan at the 17th Asian Games in Incheon, South Korea on 26 Sept, 2014. Zhang Nan and Zhao Yunlei won 2-0.—XINHUA

Hagino entering Phelps territory with strong Games

INCHEON, 26 Sept — After collecting four gold, one silver and two bronze medals from seven events, one would think Kosuke Hagino would be happy with the Asian Games he's had. But Hagino gave himself a 50 out of 100, 60 tops. "Out of a 100, I think I deserve a 50 or 60," he said on Friday, the last day of the swimming competition and a night after finishing third in the 200-meter backstroke to compatriot Ryosuke Irie. "I didn't come into this meet with a set number of medals I wanted to win. But I don't think I could've won any more gold medals than I did because there was no way I could have had the time (Irie) did in the backstroke, and I just don't have the power like (China's) Sun Yang."

"There were some races and times that I was happy with, and some that I wasn't. I'd probably say overall, I'm more dissatisfied than I am satisfied."

That doesn't bode well for Hagino's future competitors. The two bronze were from the backstroke won by Irie, a world-class specialist in the event, and the silver was from the 400 freestyle, which Olympic champion Sun continues to

dominate.

Hagino romped to his four golds here, the most impressive being the one from the 200 free in which he beat both Sun and South Korea's Park Tae Hwan, who were joint silver medalists in the event at the 2012 London Olympics.

Given how outstanding Hagino has been here, and at last month's Pan Pacific Championships in Australia, comparisons to the versatile Michael Phelps are perhaps natural.

Phelps remains Hagino's idol and after the performance Hagino has had here, expectations for him at the next Olympics in Rio de Janeiro are certain to be Phelps-like, at least from the Japanese public.

But if the 20-year-old Hagino, who shows a maturity beyond his years, remains as humble and modest as he is, a one-man gold rush in Rio is not completely beyond the realm of possibility.

"I think everyone has a role model he or she looks up to and mine happened to be Michael Phelps," Hagino said. "I've swam in multiple events at the world championships, now here and it's what I plan to do at Rio."—Kyodo News

China's Zhou sets clean and jerk world record, wins gold



China's Zhou Lulu sets a new world record in the women's over 75kg clean and jerk weightlifting competition at the Moonlight Festival Garden during the 17th Asian Games in Incheon on 26 Sept, 2014. Zhou set a new world record lifting a weight of 192kg and won the gold medal in the event.—REUTERS

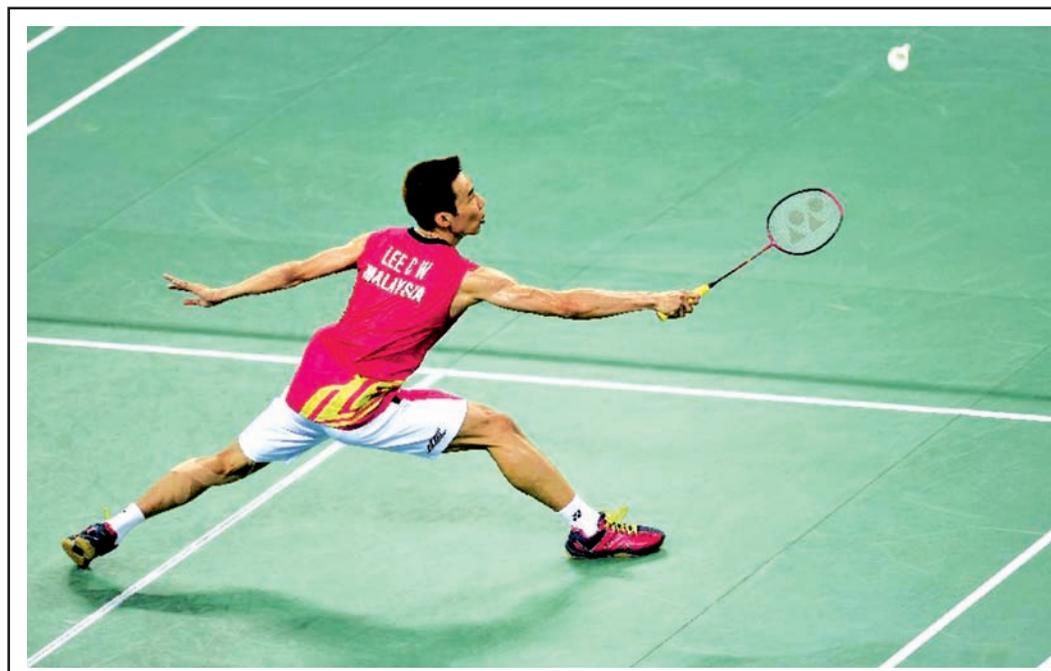
INCHEON, (South Korea), 26 Sept — Chinese weightlifter Zhou Lulu set a clean and jerk world record of 192 kilograms to win gold in the women's +75kg category at the Asian Games on Friday.

Zhou added 2kg to Russian Tatiana Kashirna's previous mark set last year in Poland. The London Olympics champion also hoisted 142kg in the snatch component to record an overall lift of 334kg but seemed completely underwhelmed at becoming the Asian Games champion. "Nothing special about it," she said, her world record barely meriting a mention. Zhou preferred to focus on the negatives.

"I don't feel like I performed well in the snatch," she added of her lift which set a new Asian Games record. Kazakhstan's Mariya Grabovetskaya took the silver with a total lift of 302kg while Thailand's Chitchanok Pulsabsakul lifted 292kg for the bronze at the Moonlight Festival Garden Weightlifting Venue.

Zhou's team mate, Yang Zhe, won gold in the men's -105kg category with just two clean lifts.

He lifted 186kg in the snatch on his first go, then failed twice at 191, before lifting 217kg in his first clean and jerk attempt and failing with this final two.—Reuters



Lee Chong Wei of Malaysia returns the shuttlecock during the badminton men's singles round of 16 match Parupalli Kashyap of India at the 17th Asian Games in Incheon, South Korea on 26 Sept, 2014. Lee Chong Wei won 2-0.—XINHUA

Medals table of the Asian Games 26 September, 2014

	G	S	B	Total
China	91	49	39	179
South Korea	31	37	36	104
Japan	30	42	35	107
Kazakhstan	8	9	17	34
North Korea	6	7	9	22
Iran	5	6	4	15
Taiwan	5	3	7	15
Hong Kong	4	5	16	25
Mongolia	4	3	6	13
Malaysia	2	5	6	13
Qatar	2	-	1	3
Myanmar	2	-	-	2
Vietnam	1	6	18	25
Singapore	1	3	7	11
Kuwait	1	3	2	6
India	1	2	14	17
Thailand	1	-	8	9
Pakistan	1	-	1	2
Uzbekistan	-	4	8	12
Indonesia	-	3	5	8
Macao	-	3	-	3
Philippines	-	2	1	3
Turkmenistan	-	1	2	3
Laos	-	1	1	2
Bangladesh	-	1	-	1
Lebanon	-	1	-	1
Iraq	-	-	1	1
Sri Lanka	-	-	1	1
UAE	-	-	1	1