

Education is for 'wisdom': Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker

YAMETHIN, Oct 26 — The 80th anniversary Maha Kathina robe offering ceremony was held at Yan Aung Myin Sasana Beikman in Myoma Ward of Yamethin in Mandalay Region on Sunday morning.

Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) U Khin Aung Myint, Mandalay Region Electricity and Industry Minister U Kyaw

Myint, Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) representative U Bo Ni and officials formally opened the ceremony.

Townsenders and departmental officials have been holding the Kathina robe offering ceremony since 1934 in Yamethin of Mandalay Region. They have a plan to organize the Kathina robe offering ceremony from 26 Octo-

ber to 1 November so as to donate Kathina robes and alms to 60 monasteries of the township.

After attending the opening ceremony, the speaker viewed round the dredging of Kyeeni Lake where Assistant Director U Khin Zaw of Irrigation Department reported on renovation and dredging tasks of the lake.

Amoytha Hluttaw

(Upper House) Speaker U Khin Aung Myint attended the ceremony to upgrade middle schools here on Sunday, giving advice to the school children for their future.

U Khin Aung Myint said that completing university courses is not meant for only civil service, but for wisdom after acquiring knowledge and lessons from classrooms

of various levels.

He emphasized that contrary to illusion, wisdom has the power that can differentiate the right from the wrong.

The speaker also recounted the 2-year Sorantovila Plan led by Bogyoke Aung San during pro-independence period and Pyidawtha Plan during post-independence period by inviting US economists.

The eight-year Pyidawtha Plan saw solid achievements in infrastructure and industry, despite failing to meet its ambitious targets.

With a view to ensuring development of the whole nation, all the people are to work in concert for establishment of an industrial country based on agricultural sector.

(See page 3)

Myanmar's traditional blacksmiths take to reinforcing modern farming machinery for survival



Workers of blacksmith workshop focusing on poduction of agricultural tools in traditional ways at a village in Kawa Township to survive their livelihoods while agricultural machinery are bieng used on a wider scale in rural area for cultivation of paddy and crops.—PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

By Aye Min Soe

KAWA, 26 Oct — Myanmar blacksmiths who mainly make traditional farming tools are augmenting their careers as welders for survival as the agricultural sector is transiting from traditional to mechanized farming.

Blacksmiths now often weld metal reinforcing onto Chinese-made power tillers and to do other strengthening to the tillers to increase the machines' durability even before they are used on the land.

"We have to adapt our

career to a modern style to survive because it is impossible for a blacksmith to rely only on our traditional career because the farming tools we make are no longer used by farmers," U Win Thaung, 56, a blacksmith in Kawa, a country town about 20 miles southeast of Bago, said.

He is one of the town's six blacksmiths who have adapted to the changes by establishing cottage industries with welding machines and mini drills.

U Win Thaung said an example of the chang-

es is the downward spiral of sickles ordered by his customers, which dropped from around 500 last year to 300 this year. And he has had no orders for tools for ground-preparation work for two years.

According to local farmers, the use of traditional blacksmith-created tools such as ploughs is on the verge of extinction as power tillers become ubiquitous.

The upside for U Win Thaung has been that the number of power tillers needed his reinforcement techniques rose from sev-

en last rice-planting season to 10 during this year's cultivation season.

Reasons for the shift away from traditional, handmade tools among farmers are two-fold.

Power tillers can prepare the land faster and speed the harvest and they are less labour intensive, an increasingly important aspect as workers who used help on farms for daily wages are increasingly leaving rural for towns and cities areas and leaving behind an acute shortage of farm day-labourers.

(See page 3)

Accommodation, transport services arranged for media to attend 25th ASEAN Summit

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Oct — Myanmar will host the 25th ASEAN Summit on 12 and 13 November at Myanmar International Convention Center (MICC) here.

The source said five hotels—Royal Naypyitaw Hotel, Tungapuri Hotel, Zabu Thiri Hotel, Hotel Shwe Pyi Taw and Sky Palace Hotel have been reserved for local and foreign media persons who will get shuttle bus services that have been arranged from Sky Palace Hotel to the MICC.

For more information, dial 067-414960~967 of Royal Naypyitaw Hotel (royalnaypyitawhotel@gmail.com), 067-422020~026 of Tungapuri Hotel (reservation@tungapurihotel.com), 067-422042, 422044 and 422050 of Zabu Thiri Hotel (zabuthirihotel@gmail.com) 067-422163~167 of Hotel Shwe Pyi Taw (hotelgoldenland.npt.mm@gmail.com) and 067-422122~126 of Sky Palace Hotel (FOM@SkyPalace.com).—MNA

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Dinner to mark golden jubilee of YIE held in Yangon

YANGON, 26 Oct — Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Dr Kan Zaw and Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe attended a dinner to mark the golden jubilee of Yangon Institute of Economics (YIE) on Saturday here.

Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw, a former rector of the YIE, said the background history of the institute and its leading role in participating the country's development programmes.

Chief Minister U Myint Swe urged the attendees to maintain the good relationship between the retired faculty members and the students of the institute that plays a key role to meet more development of the university.

The Yangon Institute of Economics (YIE) was established in November, 1964. It has produced many scholars in the fields of economics, statistics and management as well as popular artists and sportspersons. The institute signed several memorandums of understandings with international universities and organizations to produce more qualified students.

The dinner was attended by Deputy Minister Daw Lei Lei Thein, Yangon region ministers, President's economic advisors Dr Aung Tun Thet and Dr U Myint, Interfaith Friendship Group Patron retired Ambassador U Hla Maung, retired rectors, chairman of the Myanmar Institute of



Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Dr Kan Zaw speaking at the dinner to mark golden jubilee anniversary of Yangon Institute of Economics.—MNA

Economics Graduate Association (MIEGA) and MCC Group Chairman U Tin Win Aung.

The institute has turned out famous artistes, economists, statistic experts, management experts and outstanding athletes who brought honour to the State during the 50 years period. The institute conducts Master of Public Administration and PhD courses so as to contribute towards economic sector of the State.

At the dinner, Rector in-charge Dr Khin Naing Oo of the institute extended greetings and the chairman of Myanmar Institute of Economics Graduate Association (MIEGA) and MCC Group Chairman U Tin Win Aung gave speeches.

Yangon Institute of Economics was opened on 2 November 1964.

MNA

YANGON, 26 Oct—Deputy Minister for Construction U Soe Tint inspected progress of Bayintnaung No 2 Bridge being built by Special Project Group-5 of Public Works and preparations for opening of the bridge on Saturday.

The deputy minister revealed that arrangements will be made for three-lane two-way traffic facility for Bayintnaung Bridge and Bayintnaung Bridge No 2. For traffic safety, over-load vehicles will not be allowed to pass Aungzeya suspension bridge, he noted.

Deputy Minister for Rail Transportation U Myint Thein and Yangon Region Minister U Aung Khin explained plans of transport for public convenience and plans to designate traffic ways and water ways.

Officials of Public Works, coastal liners association, container asso-

Dy Construction Minister looks into progress of Bayintnaung Bridge-2



Deputy Minister for Construction U Soe Tint inspects progress of Bayintnaung Bridge-2.—MNA

ciation, highway bus association and departmental officials participated in dis-

cussions.

According to the meeting, three lanes each of traf-

fic way will be designated on two bridges.

MNA

SPA-IV to be confirmed at 3rd Regional COMMIT Taskforce Meeting in Thailand

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 26 Oct—Thailand will host the 3rd Regional COMMIT (Co-ordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking) Taskforce Meeting on 28 and 29 October in Bangkok to finalize the Sub-regional Plan of Action 4 (SPA-IV), Police Captain Min Naing of the Anti-Human Trafficking Police Corps told the Global New Light of Myanmar

on Sunday.

The major objective of the plan is to fight against human trafficking cases among the Greater Mekong Sub-region (Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam), drafted by the UN-ACT and those six regional governments.

The meeting is said to focus on the key sectors of the preliminary draft—

monitoring and evaluation, policy, prevention, protection and prosecution—which were also reviewed at the previous meeting in Nay Pyi Taw on 25 October.

According to the schedule, three Myanmar delegates—Police Brig-Gen Win Naing Tun, commander of the Anti-human Trafficking Police Corps under the Myanmar Police Force, U Hsan Linn, assistant director of the Union Attorney-General's Office,

and Daw Aye Aye Mar Kyaw, project director of the UN Action for Cooperation against Trafficking (UN-ACT)—will leave Yangon for Bangkok on Monday to attend the meeting.

The second regional COMMIT taskforce meeting was held in May 2014 in Thailand and discussed matters related to combat trafficking in persons with effective action plans.

GNLM

IT Business Plan Contest 2014 held

YANGON, 26 Oct — Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Ko Ko Oo attended the final round of IT Business Plan Contest 2014 held at MICT Park Conference Hall in Hline Campus in Yangon on Saturday.

The contest was jointly organized by Myanmar Computer Federation and Crossborder International Education Support Foundation-CIESF.

In his address, the Union minister said that he was delighted to see Myanmar Computer Federation

which is creating sound opportunities for today's youth who are interested in IT. He called on the nation's youth to firmly grab the opportunity.

Next, Deputy Minister U Thaung Tin and President of MCF U Khun Oo elaborated on the purpose of organizing the contest and role of creativity and innovation in the future.

Then, Deputy Minister Dr Ba Shwe and MCF patron U Thein Oo presented certificates of honour to responsible persons and judges.—MNA



Delegates from the greater Mekong sub-region discussed human trafficking issues at the 2nd Regional COMMIT Taskforce Meeting in May 2014 in Thailand.—PHOTO: MYANMAR'S ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING POLICE CORPS

NATIONAL



Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) U Khin Aung Myint views construction works during his inspection tour of Yamethin Township.—MNA

Education is for 'wisdom' . . .

(from page 1)

The plan included the education policy in which

construction of a primary school in each village across the country.

U Khin Aung Myint said that as agriculture is the basic economy of Myanmar, and that school children should have knowledge

about cultivation.

He then urged the school children to learn vo-

calational training courses of electronics, electrical sub-jects, steel-fixing, driving,

mechanic courses and other professions to reduce jobless rate of the country.—MNA

Union I&P Minister meets locals in issuance of CSC

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Oct — Ministry of Immigration and Population has been implementing the Moe Pwint Plans for issuance of citizenship scrutiny cards to the eligible citizens in grassroots level as soon as possible, said Union Minister U Khin Yi at Bawaing

Village of Pantanaw Township in Ayeyawady Region on 20 October.

The union minister urged local people not to amend the inscriptions of the cards of their own. He invited discussions and suggestions from local people over the issuance

process of the cards.

Local people welcomed the field trips of staff from Department of Immigration and National Registration for their tasks to issue the CSC to locals.

Officials presented cards to the people.

MNA

Rakhine State Chief Minister opens new reinforced concrete streets in Sittway

SITTWAY, 26 Oct — Rakhine State Chief Minister U Maung Maung Ohn on Saturday opened the government-funded new reinforced concrete streets in Ohdan Ward, Ywagyitaung Ward and Kathe Ward of

Sittway Township.

The government provided K60 million funds for the construction of the 672-ft long, 25-ft wide and 8-ft high street in Shwetha Street in Ohdan Ward, over K50 million funds for the 784-ft long,

16-ft wide and 8-ft high street in Atheik Street in Ywagyitaung Ward and K63 million for the 800-ft long, 16-ft wide and 8-ft high street in Manipura Street in Kathe Ward, source said.

State IPRD

Myanmar's traditional . . .

(from page 1)

"Not every farmer owns draught cattle anymore. Some sold their cattle to pay off their debts. Some sold their cattle to buy a power tiller because the money from the sale of two draught cattle is nearly enough to buy a power tiller made in China," one farmer said, explaining why there is no longer much need for blacksmith-made tools.

Even farmers who cannot afford a power tiller on their own can hire one.

Blacksmiths in country towns have also faced a fall-off in orders for bull-

ock carts because many farmers are switching to use of trailers to haul goods rather than the traditional two-wheel wood and iron carts.

U Win Thaung said he has not had an order for a new bullock cart in a decade, but, he added, orders for trailers are growing.

"(Now) I build and repair trailers instead of bullock carts," he said.

Even sales at shops specialising in wooden parts for bullock carts and agricultural tools in Bago, about 15 miles northeast of Kawa, are falling, a sig-

nal that traditional carts drawn by oxen will disappear from Myanmar farms before too long, if not even sooner.

"We were very busy this time last year, but, this year the sales figure dropped by a fourth to a third from last year," said Ko Kalar, 43, who sells wooden parts for bullock carts and farm tools made by blacksmiths.

U Win Thaung concluded, "In the future, only household items such as choppers and knives will remain as works made by traditional Myanmar blacksmiths."

GNLM



Union minister attends opening ceremony of asphalt road

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Oct — Union Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development U Ohn Myint attended the opening ceremony of an asphalt road in Shaukkon Village in Tatkon Township of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on Saturday.

The 1.25 mile road which connects the former Yangon-Mandalay road and the village was constructed by Nay Pyi Taw Development Affairs Com-

mittee. U Kyi Khin, a local at the village, expressed his thanks for the government for construction of the road.

Member of Nay Pyi Taw Council U Myint Shwe, Director U Aung Toe of the road and bridge section of Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee and District Deputy Commissioner U Tun Zaw formally opened the bridge.

Then, the union minister met with local people from nearby villages.

The union minister also visited Ayechanthaya model village of the township.

Director-General Dr Myint Than reported on breeding of milch cows, goat and poultry farmings in the village which is home to over 2,000 people.

The union minister fulfilled the requirement of education, health, water supply, electrification and upgrading of rural road.

MNA

MCDC reminds contractors, engineers for renewal of licences

MANDALAY, 26 Oct — Mandalay City Development Committee issues contract licences in calendar years.

In 2015, the committee informed renewal of licences of contractors and engineers not later than 31 December 2014. New ap-

plicants may submit applications to the committee not later than 30 November 2014. —Maung Pyi Thu (Mandalay)



A worker of blacksmith welding a machine part of power-tiller at the workshop in Kawa Township.—PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

Local road expanded flanked with concreted pedestrian ways

NYAUNGDON, 26 Oct — Nyaungdon Township Development Affairs Committee carries out expansion of two feet wide pedestrian way on either side along Nyaungdon-Yangon Road in Nyaungdon of Ayeyadady Region spending its fund in 2014-15 fiscal year.

Moreover, the expanded pedestrian ways are being placed with concrete and it will be 2,000 feet long for traffic safety of various sizes of vehicles, said Assistant Engineer U Myo Chit Oo of the Township Development Affairs Committee.

Tun Kyaw (Nyaungdon)



Students keep schools clean in Taunggyi



TAUNGGYI, 26 Oct — A ceremony to mark the School Environment Day which falls on 25 October,

teachers and students of basic education schools carried out sanitation tasks inside and outside the school compounds in Taunggyi of Shan State.

They cleaned the school compounds, classrooms, parks, toilets and water tanks.

The students including scouts and members of Red Cross Society participated in the sanitation tasks.

Than Wai (Taunggyi)

Students get knowledge about life for skills

GANGAW, 26 Oct — The additional course Life for Skills is being lectured to the students at the Basic Education Middle and High Schools in Gangaw District.

To give lectures to the students, a total of 117 junior assistant teachers were trained in 2013. This year, one JAT and one SAT each

from BEHSs and one JAT each from BEMS, totalling 61 from Gangaw Township, 31 from Htilin Township, 34 from Saw Township one from District Health Department and one from District Education Office attended the course under the arrangements of the Department of Education Planning

and Training.

Assistant Director Daw Khin Cho Oo of Gangaw District Education Office said, "Thanks to the lectures, the teenagers will have knowledge about sexual diseases, social skills, spirit of unity and other social behaviors."

Kyaw Than Swe

Use of quality cotton strains demonstrated in Mahlaing Township

MAHLAING, 26 Oct — Industrial Crops Development Department of Mahlaing Township in Mandalay Region and Reveal Project jointly organized the demonstration on cultivation of late-monsoon long-staple cotton-8 and Ngwechi-9 strains in Hse-

daw Village of the township on 24 October.

Head of Meiktila District Industrial Crops Development Department U Aye Lwin, Township Administrator U Aung Thein Hlaing and officials explained high yield of Shwedaung-8 and Ngwechi-9 cotton strains,

use of pesticides and fertilizer. Local farmers raised questions how to grow cotton strains and choose of best quality strains.

Officials replied to queries and explained advantages of high yield cotton strains.

Aung Htay (Mahlaing)

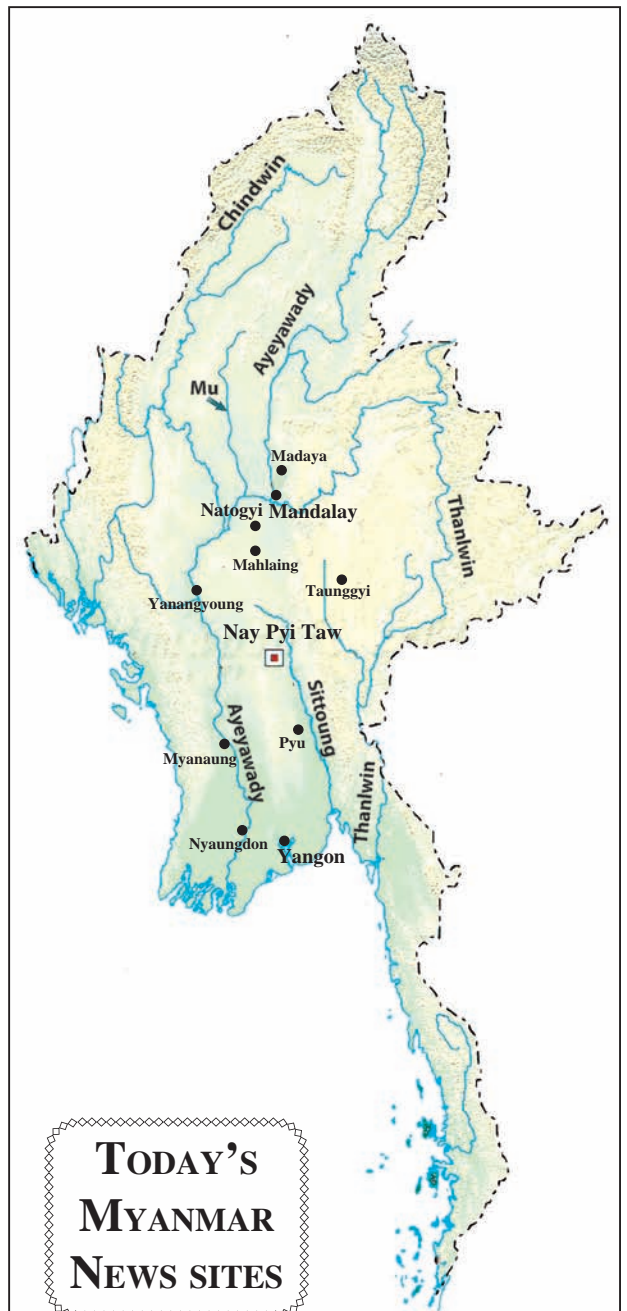
One dead, 24 injured in plunge of express bus

MADAYA, 26 Oct — An express bus running along Singu-Mandalay route driven by Aung Hlaing Moe plunged into the road side near mile post 35/2 of the Mandalay-Mogoke Road in Petlein Village in Madaya Township of Mandalay Region on 24 October evening.

In the incident, Daw Po, 59 on board the bus of Kyitaukpauk Village in Singu Township died on the spot and 24 passengers, dead. Of them, four passengers including Naing Tun were rushed to Mandalay General Hospital due to serious conditions. The remaining injuries are under treatment at Madaya Hospital.

Yenatha Police Station of Madaya Township filed reckless driver Aung Hlaing Moe under the law.

Maung Pyi Thu (Mandalay)



Branches of trees cut along power lines

PYU, 26 Oct — Under the arrangements of Township Electrical Engineer U Tun Tun Oo of Pyu Township Electrical Office in Bago Region, electricians and workers cut the branches of trees around the power lines in the township along Yangon-Manda-

lay Highway on Saturday morning with the aim of ensuring safety of electricity and minimizing loss of power.

They have a plan to clear the trees' branches along the power lines in urban wards.

Pyu Myint Oo



LOCAL NEWS

Sanitation tasks mark Anniversary Day of GAD



MYANAUNG, 26 Oct — As a gesture of hailing the anniversary day of General Administration Department, Myanaung Township GAD and the Township Administrator organized the sanitation at ancient pagodas in the urban area every Saturday.

On 25 October, Dep-

uty Township Administrator U Aung Win and staff performed sanitation tasks around the pagoda.

In October, they cleaned Gukoelon, Myanaung Bontha, Zeyathayi and Hsutaungpyae pagodas in Myanaung every Saturday.—Win Bo (Township IPRD)

Community based child protection course conducted



MADAYA, 26 Oct — Committee of the Child Development Association — Madaya Township Rights and CFN Child Development Association jointly conducted the

community based child protection course at the hall of the Township General Administration Department in Madaya Township of Mandalay Region on 25 October.

Responsible persons of Township Committee of the Child Rights and CFN Child Development Association gave lectures to the trainees from 9 am to 4 pm on 25 and 26 October.

The course was attended by Deputy Township Education Officer Daw Kyin Win and school heads of basic education primary, middle and high schools.

Soe Kyaw Thu Htwe (Madaya)

School health team gives health knowledge talks to students

YANANGYOUNG, 26 Oct — A team led by Chairperson of Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association Daw Myint Myint Swe and doctors and health staff performed school health activities at basic education schools in Yanangyoung Township of Magway Region on 24 October.

Officials of Township MCWA, Dr Phyto Phyto Han, Dr Naing Win Thein and Head of Township Traditional Medicine Department Daw Myint Myint Swe gave talks on sanitation of school and environs, personal hygiene, disadvantages of mosquito-borne diseases and tape worms to the students.

They performed medical checkup and oral checks at the students.

Nyein Nyein Ei (Township IPRD)



Street prices of land plots hike in Mandalay City



MANDALAY, 26 Oct — The local authorities construct new roads and upgrade the local roads in satellite towns of Mandalay, prices of land plots and housings are higher day by day.

The Mandalay City Development Committee sells low-cost housings around 48th street in Myayi Nanda new ward in Chanmyathazi Township. As a result, the land plots around the area surged to about K100 million. Thanks to construction of the gravel-filled retaining walls of Panyan Creek, construction of Kanthaya 58th street and 59th streets, the urban is now free from flood, with the increase of the price of land plots to K350 million on Aung San Street and K150 million to K200 million.

As rural development tasks are being undertaken in Thinpangon ward of Pyigyidagun Township, prices of land plots rose to K150 million. Likewise, land plots along Yaw Mingyi Street in industrial city reached K500 million and the plots in the streets K200 million.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)



Photo taken on 26 Oct, 2014 shows the Beihai Park under the clean and blue sky in Beijing. Thanks to overnight wind which dispersed the week-long smoggy weather, Beijingers finally see crystal blue and sunny sky on this Sunday. — XINHUA

Philippines strengthens airport tests amid Ebola threat

MANILA, 26 Oct — Philippine health authorities strengthened their preparation against the Ebola virus with the expected influx of overseas Filipinos who are returning home this coming Yuletide season, a senior government official said on Saturday.

Presidential Communications Operations Office Secretary Herminio Coloma Jr said that those who came from Ebola affected countries, when they stepped into the Philippines through the airport, they would immediately undergo the process of screening

and if they had any symptom, they would be quarantined.

“We are expecting many of our countrymen will be going home this Christmas season.

We need to strengthen our system to ensure that we won’t be affected or the deadly epidemic won’t spread in our country,” he said.

Aside from Western African countries, it was reported recently that a health worker in New York tested positive for Ebola virus after working in Africa.

Xinhua

Japanese PM Abe’s public support slumps in wake of resignations

Tokyo, 26 Oct — Public approval of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s government slumped after the resignation of two high-profile cabinet ministers last week, according to a poll published on Sunday, adding more pressure on Abe as he struggles to turn around the Japanese economy.

Japan’s biggest daily the *Yomiuri* surveyed 1,059 people by telephone on Friday and Saturday and found support for Abe’s government had fallen to 53 percent from 62 percent in less than a month.

Of those surveyed, 37 percent said they disapproved of the government, up from a 30 percent disapproval rating in a previous

poll on 10 October.

In the biggest setback since he took office in December 2012, Abe lost two cabinet ministers on one day last week, complicating tough decisions on key policies, including whether to proceed with an unpopular sales tax hike and restarts of nuclear reactors shut down after the 2011 Fukushima disaster.

Japan’s economy is floundering and analysts polled by *Reuters* have cut their annual growth forecast for a fifth straight month. Yuko Obuchi, the daughter of a former prime minister, quit as trade and industry minister on Monday after acknowledging doubts over whether her support groups misused

political funds.

The *Yomiuri* survey found 73 percent agreed that it was right for Obuchi to quit. Midori Matsushima also stepped down as justice minister on the same day over allegations she violated election laws by handing out paper “uchiwa” fans to voters.

Obuchi and Matsushima were two of five women that Abe appointed in September in a move to win the backing of female voters by challenging the male domination of politics in Japan.

Abe hopes to contain the damage through swift replacements of the two, but other cabinet members including Defence Minister Akinori Eto, Ag-



Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe reacts as he speaks to the media at his official residence in Tokyo on 20 Oct, 2014. — REUTERS

riculture Minister Koya Nishikawa and Health Minister Yasuhisa Shiozaki, also face questions over finances.

And Obuchi’s replacement at the economy

and trade ministry, Yoiichi Miyazawa, has also come under fire. A support group for the veteran politician spent money at the sadomasochism-themed bar in his political district

of Hiroshima, which it recorded as an entertainment expense, according to local press reports.

Abe’s first stint as prime minister in 2006-2007 was marred by scandals among his ministers — several quit and one committed suicide. Abe himself resigned after just one year in the face of parliamentary deadlock, sliding support rates and ill health.

The recent scandals has fired up the main opposition Democratic Party of Japan, which Abe routed in elections almost two years ago, but Abe’s ruling coalition has a hefty parliamentary majority and no general election need be held until 2016.—*Reuters*

Beijing expects to cut pollutants discharge by 1/3 during APEC

BEIJING, 26 Oct — The pollutants discharge in Beijing and neighbouring regions of Tianjin and Hebei is expected to be cut by a third during next month’s APEC meeting, thanks to a series of air pollution control measures.

“China will take the highest-level measures to guarantee the air quality during the APEC meeting,” said Chai Fahe, vice president of the Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences, on Saturday.

“It is expected that the pollutants discharge in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei re-

gions will be reduced by 30-40 percent, and the air quality will hopefully be further improved,” he said.

Chai said that Beijing has since June shut down part of its power plants, eliminated old vehicles and boilers, used clean energy, closed more than 300 polluting factories, and upgraded technologies to cut emissions.

The capital will also restrict cars based on an odd-and-even-number rule, almost halving the number of cars during the meeting.

In addition, major polluting businesses will be

ordered to cut production and work on some construction sites will be suspended during the period.

According to a forecast of the China National Environmental Monitoring Centre, most parts of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei regions will enjoy favourable conditions for air pollutants to drift away from 1 to 3 November.

Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli on Friday said that ensuring air quality for the APEC meeting is the “priority of priorities” for the current air pollution control work.

Xinhua



Workers set up a flower decoration for the upcoming APEC meeting in Xidan of Beijing, China, on 25 Oct, 2014. The APEC Economic Leaders’ Meeting will be held in Beijing from 10 to 11 November. The APEC leaders’ week also includes the final senior officials’ meeting from 5 to 6 November, and the 26th ministerial meeting from 7 to 8 November. — XINHUA

WORLD

Putin critical of US but not anti-American — Russian MP

Moscow, 26 Oct — A speech of Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Valdai club meeting was critical of the United States but not anti-American, the chairman of the Russian State Duma's committee for international affairs, Aleksei Pushkov, tweeted on Saturday.

"But the US is thin-skinned to criticism and allows only ill-conceived admiration," he said.

A major part of Putin's speech at the forum focused on the US policy on the global arena as an answer to US President Barack

Obama who called Russia the second threat to global security after the Ebola virus outbreak but before terrorism. Putin said that "the self-appointed leader" — the United States — declaring itself the winner of the cold war considered self-confidently that there is no need in reconstruction of international relations.

"There was an impression that the so-called 'cold war winners' decided to 'put the squeeze on the situation' and to change the world exclusively 'for their needs and

interests'," he said.

Thus, a notion of "national sovereignty" has become a relevant term that is adapted to loyalty to the US — the higher loyalty is the more legitimate could be the ruling regime.

Enumerating multiple blunders made by the United States that backed up militants in Afghanistan in the Soviet Union's times, turned a blind eye on terrorist activity against Russia, interfered into Libya's internal affairs and supplied weapons to Syrian militants, Putin said that "the American counterparts are constantly struggling with the results of their own policy."

Russia has repeatedly warned Washington of a danger of these activities but blinded by their "grandeur" the US "did not heed Moscow's precautions."

So the US efforts have brought about a rather dangerous situation in the new, altered world and urgent stabilization is much needed here so that to return to the principles of international law and to revive undermined respect for sovereignty.—*Itar-Tass*



Russian President Vladimir Putin

Voting begins in Fukushima gubernatorial election

FUKUSHIMA, (Japan) 26 Oct — Voting began on Sunday for the gubernatorial election in Fukushima Prefecture that is being contested by six candidates who have all pledged to reconstruct the region following the 2011 earthquake and tsunami and subsequent nuclear disaster.

The six candidates hoping to succeed Gov Yuhei Sato include former Vice Gov Masao Uchibori, 50, Yoshihiro Kumasaka, 62, a former mayor of Miyako in Iwate Prefecture, and Katsutaka Idogawa, 68, a former mayor of Futaba in Fukushima, which hosts Tokyo Electric Power Co's Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

Vote counting will begin in the evening. All six candidates are running as independents, with two backed by local chapters of political parties.

It is customary in Japanese local elections for most candidates to run as independents, although some receive backing from political parties in various ways.

Uchibori is supported by the local chapters of the ruling coalition Liberal Democratic Party and Komeito party as well as the main opposition Democratic Party of Japan and the Social Democratic Party. Kumasaka has the backing of the New Renaissance Party and the

local chapter of the Japanese Communist Party.

The other contenders are Yoshitaka Ikarashi, a 36-year-old pastor, Akiko Iseki, a 59-year-old convenience store manager, and 58-year-old Yoshinao Kaneko, president of a construction company.

It is the first gubernatorial election in the prefecture since the 11 March, 2011, earthquake and tsunami, with the number of candidates at a record high.

With all six candidates supporting the decommissioning of nuclear reactors within Fukushima — and the prefecture having demanded the central government and TEPCO decommission the four reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant in addition to the reactors at the crippled Fukushima Daiichi plant — there has been little debate over nuclear power in the run-up to the election.

The only difference of opinion on the issue has been over whether nuclear reactors outside the prefecture should be reactivated.

Uchibori is the only one of the candidates to assert that the Fukushima governor should not comment on the matter, apparently in deference to the central government which is pushing to restart nuclear plants around the country.

Kyodo News

Stefanovic discusses security-related issues with Wilhelm



German Ambassador Heinz Wilhelm and Interior Minister Nebojsa Stefanovic.—TANJUG

BELGRADE, 26 Oct — Interior Minister Nebojsa Stefanovic has talked with German Ambassador Heinz Wilhelm about Serbia's EU integration and Germany's support in the process, as well as Chapter 24-justice, freedom and security.

Stefanovic and Wilhelm agreed that it is necessary to conduct joint activities of the interior ministries of the two countries so as to resolve the issue of asylum seekers, which will contribute to a better cooperation between the two countries.

During the German interior minister's visit to Serbia, it was agreed that the two ministries should set up a working group at the level of experts, which will deal with the asylum-related issues.

The German representatives described the police cooperation between the two countries as excellent, especially in the field of the fight against organized crime, with Interpol and the Service for Combating Organized Crime (SBPOK), the Serbian interior ministry stated in a release.—*Tanjug*

Brazil votes in tight presidential runoff split along class lines



Brazil's presidential candidate Aécio Neves of Brazilian Social Democratic Party (PSDB) greets supporters in Sao Joao del Rei on 25 Oct, 2014.—REUTERS

RIO DE JANEIRO, 26 Oct — Brazilians vote on Sunday in a bitterly-contested election that pits a leftist president with strong support among the poor against a centrist senator who is promising pro-business policies to jumpstart a stagnant economy.

Polls give a slight edge to incumbent Dilma Rousseff, 66, who is seeking a second four-year term. Her Workers' Party has held power for 12 years and leveraged an economic boom to expand social welfare programmes and lift over 40 million people from poverty.

But many voters believe Aécio Neves, a 54-year-old former state governor with strong support among upper-middle class and wealthy Brazilians, offers a much-needed change of the guard for Latin America's biggest economy. A decade of growth peaked at 7.5 percent in 2010 and has flagged

since Rousseff took office.

Despite acrimonious finger pointing and corruption scandals that have characterized the campaign since a first-round vote on 5 October, voters are likely to be divided between those who feel better off than they did before the Workers' Party took office and those who believe its reign, no matter how successful, is no longer producing results.

"Forget the noise on both sides," said Alexandre Barros, a political consultant in Brasilia, the capital. "This is about an individual choice by each voter — what's in it for me?"

Rousseff has promised to deepen flagship welfare programmes and seek to restore growth with a new economic team.

Neves also vows to keep the social benefits while adopting more market-friendly fiscal meas-

ures to rein in public spending, take a tougher stance against inflation and give the central bank more autonomy to set monetary policy.

The choice takes Brazil back to a clash between classes in a country still riven by inequality.

It also reverts to a longstanding rivalry between the Workers' Party, with roots in Brazil's labour movement, and the Brazilian Social Democracy Party, which held power for two terms before Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, Rousseff's mentor and predecessor, was elected in 2002.

Two closely-watched polls on the eve of the runoff showed Rousseff with a lead of as much as 6 percentage points.

Earlier in the day, however, a smaller poll swung in favour of Neves, who surprised in the first round of voting earlier this month by surging from a distant third place in polls to clinch second.

Pollsters faced widespread criticism for failing to pinpoint Neves' strong showing then, and he himself has dismissed them as unreliable. If the vote were about the economy alone, Rousseff would have a hard time winning.

As demand for Brazil's vast natural resources cooled in recent years, her administration has been unable to revive growth. That has strained a government model that relied on soaring tax revenues to fuel social programs and pump subsidized credit through state lenders, juicing a consumer boom.

Reuters

PERSPECTIVES

Monday, 27 October, 2014

Telecommunication services and the public

By Myint Win Thein

People in Myanmar are using more mobile phones than ever with new telecom companies providing services in the Myanmar market and SIM cards prices have dropped to K 1,500 from about K 1.5 million.

With affordable SIM cards, some people use more than one mobile phone as the newcomers' networks are not as comprehensive as the oldest mobile phone operator in Myanmar while the

formers' Internet services are better than the latter.

Moreover, with fierce competition among the mobile operators, they offer various services and bonuses to mobile phone users who want the best services at the cheapest prices. They use one SIM card each from the three operators that offer different services and bonuses from one another and have to carry more than one mobile handset. However, mobile phones transmit radio waves, some of which are absorbed by the body.

Although there is no evidence of health problems from using mobile phones, maximum levels of energy absorption by the body are set differently by different governments to protect the public from possible health problems. In the US, the Federal Communication Commission set the maximum level at 1.6 watt/kg while the EU set the maximum level at 2 watt/kg.

Carrying more than one mobile phone will surely increase the amount of radiation from two to three times. Scientists who conducted research on health effects of mobile phones may not have expected a person to use more than one mobile phone. It is expected that people will use only one SIM card of their choice when all operators provide the most reliable services at the cheapest prices.

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PROGRESS

Kyi Mun

* Not to go forward is to turn back; and not to be gaining is to be losing.

—St. John

Progress means : (1) The process of improving or developing, or getting nearer to achieving or completing something.
(2) Movement forwards or towards a place. In order to thoroughly understand the meaning of PROGRESS, let us analyze the word as follows:

- P for Purpose
- R for Resources
- O for Opportunities
- G for Goal
- R for Responsibility
- E for Execution
- S for Strengths
- S for Strategy

PURPOSE

A purpose or a definite purpose is always the starting point towards the final success of a long march. Without a passionate purpose, no definite victory could be attained. Every traveler has a destiny. Every ship has a port to reach to. Every train has a station to arrive at. Every building has a building to be built. Every sculptor has a model to be sculpted. Every architect has a blueprint to construct by. Every river has a source and a mouth to arrive at.

RESOURCES

Every person has the potential of :

- Physical Quality
- Mental Quality
- Emotional Quality
- Spiritual Quality
- Achievement Quality

Every person has the responsibility to improve and develop these potential qualities. These qualities are the resources of a person for future development.

An organization must see to it that it has at its disposal the following resources for getting some desired results.

- Human resources
- Financial resources
- Technological resources
- Material / Machinery resources
- Information resources

Without adequate resources, an organization cannot have distinctive capabilities and cutting edge.

OPPORTUNITIES

Generally, life has the following four quadrants :

Strengths	Opportunities
Weaknesses	Threats

Our duty is to minimize Weaknesses and Threats, and to maximize Strengths and Opportunities. Opportunities are better obtained with strengths, drive, observation, mental alertness and curiosity.

GOAL

Your goal is what your Head aims at, what your Heart desires and what your Spirit aspires to. If you have a definite PLAN to go to the Golden City, the City is your goal, the stages of your journey are your objectives and each stop along the journey are your milestones of progress. Your goal is where you want to arrive at.

RESPONSIBILITY

If you have a PURPOSE to achieve, and a GOAL to arrive at, you have got to take responsibility to meet your expectations. You have got to EARN the benefits that you want by taking full responsibility to PAY for those benefits. Life's wisdom consists of : "More Pains, More Gains".

EXECUTION

Wishes remain wishes, plans remain plans unless they are actually executed for their full realization. The essence of a strategy is "RIGHT IS MIGHT, and the meaning of a strategy is its implementation in live action.

Fortunes are made not by wishful thinking but by actual execution of a plan with passion and purpose.

STRENGTHS

In Life's quadrant No. 1, Strengths precede all accomplishments. Without physical, mental, emotional and spiritual strengths, no worthwhile achievement can be accomplished. In every field of Endeavour, ABILITIES, Skills and Knowledge must be animated and vitalized by exerting EFFORT backed by courage, commitment and caring.

STRATEGY

PROGRESS, any sort of progress, should first be passionately longed for. The expectation to be better than ever would be your objective. So, to translate your objective of Continuous Quality Improvement-CQI, into reality, you have to adopt the strategy of KAIZEN which means : "Everyone can improve anything at any time." In other words the strategy of Kaizen means continuous quality improvement.

CONCLUSION

The law of life is GROWTH. Growth in a person and in his affairs is assumed to be progress. So, everyone should have a burning desire and a very passionate Endeavour to improve and develop his or her life to the fullest potential. Progress in life should be conscientiously sought after with tremendous hope and courage.

U Kyi Mun residing in Yangon is a consultant of NAING Group Capital Co.,Ltd.

Asphalt road to Nyaungbinwaing village inaugurated in Zabuthiri Township

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Oct — A ceremony to commission the asphalt road into

service was held at the road to Nyaungbinwaing Village of Zabuthiri Township in

Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on Sunday.

Member of Nay Pyi

Taw Council U Myo Nyunt explained regional development in Zabuthiri Township.

Director (Engineer) U Aung Moe of Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee reported on paving of the road.

Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Myo Nyunt, Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee member U Kyaw Myint and District Deputy Commissioner U Zaw Lwin Oo cut the ribbon to open the road and strolled along it.

The newly-opened road is 4,000 feet long and 12 feet wide. It was upgraded from the earthen facility for convenience of public transport.—MNA



Opening ceremony of asphalt road to Nyaungbinwaing village in progress in Zabuthiri Township.—MNA

ARTICLE

SMEs are now looking up

H Aung

SME sector promotion issue is taking place on the fore, in the business talks between foreign diplomatic guests and leaders of Myanmar Government, and in leaders' speeches at national level meetings. In president's speech, delivered at the 29th regular meeting session of the first Union Parliament, on 26th March, Nay Pyi Taw, was included some important points among other things, featuring prominent achievements within last three years i.e. "necessary reforms were made in 2011 for changing domestic infrastructures; international investors made feasibilities in 2013; tangible changes in banking, tax system, setting of minimum wages and infrastructures had been made to create a promising investment environment; Government also aim to create public and private sector co-operation so that young entrepreneurs who are facing difficulties due to insufficient resources may realize the dreams and for SMEs today."

Myanmar has rich human resources for which it becomes onerous duty of Government to create job opportunities. SME promotion is a remedy to undo this knot that has been lasting these decades. Compared with the past, SMEs are now encompassed by good environment covering pragmatic reform of financial policy, close partnership of international agencies, and changing attitude of local regulators and entrepreneurs towards SME movement. SMEs can now have access to SME loans provided with restraint by Small and Medium Industries Development Bank (SMIDB). Partnership organ formed with local and international stakeholders, SME Development Department, UMFCFI, Agencies, are working together for technical support to Central SMEs Development Committee which is guiding policy maker. Those are as key motivators of all businesses across the country for development activities, i.e. linking local businesses and foreign part-

ners, trade fairs thereby expanding their external markets. In former days, SMEs are focused only on manufacturing industries. Now, we adopted global concept that all arrays of economic businesses, covering production, trade, service, tourism, etc. constitute SME.

I recall the years when Cooperative sector also contributed its lion's share to SME development in Socialist era during which private sector was kept in low profile. As a matter of fact, SME is not a title getting popular only now, but the hot-line issue organizations concerned under previous different regimes regarded as primary productive force of national economy.

Only now, there comes enabling environment and community build-up with excessive care for SMEs sector which we have been hoping for since some 3 decades back. It is not that we did not make any attempt for this SME promotion in years went by. We did of course, but so to say honestly, not with exponential result that could impress the public and mechanism dedicated to SMEs was not as powerful as now. It might be also because our attempts were misled, or we were inefficient, or suitable enabling ground could not be laid like today. Industrial development movement in successive eras can be seen in different colors according to policies of relevant Governments. My one intention for writing this article of motley style is to give message how Cooperative sector partook of SME sector from the corner duty was assigned to it. Otherwise, today's stakeholders local and abroad might be led to thinking that preceding generation had no enthusiasm in SME activities. And it is my sincere wish that endeavors really made for the same purpose of SME development should not be just like legendary events in history. Availing myself of this opportunity, let me bring the reader to nostalgic events, starting from British Government time, just to let the reader catch the general trend, vicissitude of Myanmar small

industries. (not by way of history researcher).

British time

In Colonial period, British Government disregarded industrial promotion, but emphasized extraction of natural resources, such as timber, minerals, oil, jewels, etc. They are not to be blamed as they are not native people. They did care only for enterprises which could earn Great Britain huge benefit. They set up industries which generated power supply sources, and service providing enterprises for transportation, i.e. dockyards, railways and waterways departments, supportive of natural resources extraction processes, vein-income of theirs. Railway transport in Myanmar began in 1877.

Cross section of Colonial day's industries showed British owned companies and enterprises, Chinese and Indian owned industries and a few Myanmar owned industries just above cottage industries level and traditional handicraft industries. There existed one Cottage Industries Department which looked after Bagan lacquer ware Training School (established in 1924), Amarapura Saunders Weaving School (established in 1914), Myitkyina carpentry and metal work school, Sagaing toy making school, Government crockery training school at Insein Engineer School and hand-woven textile wear Promotion Department. It is remarkable that British noticed the tradition of Myanmar crafts and founded the said institutions for maintaining and developing the techniques.

Mr. Saunders brought a sley, a component of hand loom, from England in 1910 and introduced hand loom operation to Myanmar. Saunders Weaving School in Amarapura was named after Mr. Saunders's name and propagated hand loom technology as focal training center, with weaving instructors in local townships. Weaving Industries became developed so much so that it became ubiquitous village-industries generat-

ing major income of rural households. Government enacted **Weavers Loan Act** and by-law (1940) for providing loans to these industries. British did mere works for promotion of factories, in capacity of a government, assuming that it was no concern of theirs, but incumbent only on private sector. They followed non-interference policy. In those days, all production enterprises are termed factories, regardless of their sizes. But British, as a nation used to doing everything with system-basis, enacted industrial laws such as, the State Aid to Industries Act Burma (1939) and by-law, Electric Power Law (1948), Boiler Act (1923).

Factories cover mostly rice mill, timber mill, and enterprises related to footwear, crockery, lacquer-ware, silk-wear, cotton-wear, pottery, sunshades, etc. Around 1930-31, rice mills numbered about 1000 across the county and had good external market. Myanmar topped the list of rice exporting countries in Asia, with export amount of 3 million-ton a year, with Thailand in Second and Indochina in third. The larger part of those was owned by foreigners. In those days, Myanmar youths had little interest in industrial works and no partnership-spirit like Chinese, and Indians. British imperceptibly gave backing to such capable foreigners to set up industries, which were as a good market for England-made machines and parts, such as Steam boilers, Steam engines, oil extractors, and filters, electric generators etc. For systematic management for these industries, British enacted relevant laws mentioned earlier.

Despite British Government's little interest in nurturing Myanmar industrialists, we still owe thanks to British for its establishment of Engineering School in 1924, started with 2 lecturers and 17 students. Civil Engineering is the only subject that the school could offer. (This is the origin of today's Yangon Institute of Technology, Gyogone.) And one note-worthy fact about British Government's public-wise activ-

ity for Myanmar industrial movement is "Arts crafts and Agricultural Exhibition held from 8th waxing day to 7th waning day of Tabaung, 1302 ME (1940), at Jubilee Hall, Yangon, on grand scale." Masterpieces of superb quality were on display and competition was also celebrated.

In 1947, Burmans (Myanmar) owned only 45% of factories, most of which were rice mills and saw mills. Myanmar owned factories employed only about 20% of total factory workers. Foreigners predominated over key role of industry sector. As for an example, of the 4 rope-factories in Burma, all were Indian owned; of the half dozen soap factories, most were owned by Chinese and Indians; of the 2 umbrella factories, all were owned by Indians and Chinese. All the match factories were owned by Indian and Chinese. The only cement factory was owned by the British. And the only knitting mill was owned by an Indian. And majorities of factories, having good prospects for thriving, like candle manufacture, soap manufacture, leather tanning, leather goods manufacture, hat making, were in the hands of either Chinese or Indians.

Parliament period

After scourge of Second World War, industries of Myanmar fell into shattered, wretched condition. Factories were silent with the doors closed causing workers to be job-less. According to list compiled by Labour Directorate, in 1951, industrial sector covered 882 rice mills, 194 saw mills, 110 sesame and groundnut oil-extraction plants, 80 flour mills, 67 cotton ginning and spinning mills, 16 beverage plants, 3 sugar extraction and refining plants, 3 match factories, 2 small glass-ware plants, 1 cement plant, 1 starch plant, some miscellaneous facilities for the manufacture of tobacco, rope,

rubber products and other small industries. Although there were cottage industries, most could not raise heads due to problems with marketing, obsolete techniques, shortage of raw materials, and lack of capital. Nor was there coordination, and warm business relation between larger industries and cottage industries.

Under parliament Government, Ministry of Industries came into existence, formed with 8 bodies, comprising Directorate of Industries, Industrial Development Corporation. The former undertook implementation of Government owned factories, while the latter attended to private sector industries in such a way of giving recommendations for import license, for sharing parts and raw materials, providing consultancy and foreign-expertise for industrial development. But on practical ground, only well-off foreigners, citizenship-holder-foreigners, human-parasites winning special chances from political circle, and Yangoonites from the top layer of elite could have access to resources of opportunities.

Cottage Industries Department had to take charge of Amarapura Saunders Weaving School, Bagan Lacquer-ware Training School and District Weaving Schools. The fact that 31 weaving schools could be opened in major towns between 1947 and 1955, showed how weaving industries were in vogue in local areas. Instructors under CID were used to travelling all the time for imparting techniques of hand loom weaving, textile dyeing, soap making, and cottage scale production. The private small industries such as hand loom weavers, carving artists, blacksmiths, silversmiths, etc. contacted the department for technical advice they needed. There was no compulsory and voluntary registration involved.

(To be continued)

The author of this article got B.E (Mechanical) from R.I.T, Gyogone, in 1974. Starting 1980, he served Cottage Industries Department, Ministry of Cooperatives, as Assistant Engineer. After working for almost 30 years, in 2010, he retired from CID (now Small Scale Industries Department) as Deputy Director General, and now he is working for Pact Global Micro finance Fund as an adviser.

Last US Marines, British combat forces end Afghan operations, prepare withdrawal

CAMP LEATHERNECK, 26 Oct — The last US Marines unit and final British combat troops in Afghanistan officially ended their operations on Sunday as they packed up to leave the country and transferred a massive military base to the Afghan military.

The American and British flags were lowered and folded up for the final time at the regional headquarters of the international military, 13 years after the toppling of the Taliban's radical Islamist regime launched America's longest war.

The timing of the troops' withdrawal from the base in the strategic province of Helmand was not released for security reasons.

Camp Leatherneck is the largest US base to be handed over to Afghan control as the coalition ends its combat mission at the end of the year, leaving most of the fight against a resilient Taliban insurgency to Afghan army and police.

British forces transferred the adjacent Camp Bastion at the same time.

Once a teeming compound of some 40,000 personnel, the coalition's Regional Command (Southwest) combined base on Sunday resembled a dust-swept, well-fortified ghost town.

Concrete blast walls and razor wire were left guarding empty sand lots and barracks. Offices were bare, and bulletin boards stripped of photo tributes of fallen American troops.

"It's empty now — when I got here, it was still bustling, so there were a lot of services around and people around," said Marine Capt Ryan Steenberge, whose taskforce was overseeing surveillance and security for the withdrawal and will be among the last troops out. "It's weird to see different pieces pull away."

The most recent official estimate of combined international troops at the base was 4,500 — and those last few will be gone soon, officials said.

After the withdrawal, the Afghan National Army's 215th Corps will be headquartered at the 6,500-



US Marines march with flags during a handover ceremony, as the last US Marines unit and British combat troops end their Afghan operations, in Helmand on 26 Oct, 2014. — REUTERS

acre base, leaving almost no foreign military presence in Helmand.

The province, which produces 80-90 percent of the opium that helps finance the Taliban's insurgency, has seen fierce fighting this year, with Taliban and allied forces seeking to seize the district of Sangin from Afghan army and police.

The battles have raised concerns about whether Afghan forces are truly able to hold off the Taliban without intelligence and air support from the United States and its allies.

Officials with the US-led coalition say the Afghan forces held their own this summer fighting season and did not lose any significant

ground.

"I'm cautiously optimistic they will be able to sustain themselves," said Brig Gen Daniel Yoo, the commander of Regional Command (Southwest), said of the Afghan forces.

He said the success of the Afghan security army and police depended on leadership, continued de-

velopment of logistics and confidence.

"They've got to want it more than we do," he said of Afghan forces that have been losing hundreds of soldiers and policemen each month in battles, assassinations and suicide attacks by insurgents.

Helmand was a major focus of the 2010 troops surge to wrest control back from the Taliban insurgency. The surge saw international forces in Afghanistan swell to about 140,000. By 1 January, that number will be about 12,500 of mostly trainers and advisers.

The Marine Expeditionary Brigade-Afghanistan is the last US Marine unit in the country, and the British forces at Bastion will be the last UK troops to go home.

"The guys right now are mostly looking forward to getting home," said Marine Lt John Pratson, 24, of Leonardtown, Maryland, as his team played touch football and lifted weights outdoors on the eve of the handover ceremony. "It's been a long hot summer," he said.—Reuters

Germany's Merkel deals blow to UK on EU migration reform

LONDON, 26 Oct — German leader Angela Merkel has said she will not back restrictions on the freedom of workers to move around the European Union, potentially derailing plans of British Prime Minister David Cameron, a newspaper reported.

The *Sunday Times* quoted Merkel as saying in an interview that she would not support any limitations of movement within the 28-nation bloc. "Germany will not tamper with the fundamental principles of free movement in the EU," Merkel told the newspaper. Cameron, who plans to hold a referendum on Britain's EU membership if his Conservative party wins a 2015 election, has said he wants to respond to concerns among voters about immigration. Cameron is also seeking to counter the rise in support for the anti-EU UK Independence Party, which is pushing for much lower levels of immigration in Britain.

The *Sunday Times* has previously reported that Cameron is considering the



German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron (L). — REUTERS

idea of a cap on the number of low-skilled migrants from within the EU seeking work in Britain, something which would require a major reform of the bloc's rules.

The *Sunday Times* said in its latest edition that Merkel was open to talks with Cameron about possible restrictions on migrant EU workers bending the rules to claim welfare benefits inappropriately in other countries in the bloc.

"These are controversial issues that are debated

also in our country," Merkel told the newspaper. "I am of the opinion that they need to be resolved in a way that tackles abuse."

"On the other hand, we must not interfere with the fundamental principles of free movement in Europe."

A poll to be published in Britain's *Observer* newspaper on Sunday showed almost one-third of voters would be prepared to back UKIP if they believed it could win in their own constituency.—Reuters

Canada intelligence-sharing on suspects curbed by court ruling

OTTAWA/WASHINGTON, 26 Oct — Canada did not share some intelligence with the United States about two men who mounted fatal attacks last week because of a 2013 court ruling limiting the transfer of personal data, a Canadian official said on Saturday.

US authorities therefore knew little about Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, who killed a soldier on Wednesday before attacking Parliament in the capital Ottawa. They also did not realize that Canada had withdrawn the passport of Martin Rouleau, who ran over and killed a soldier in Quebec on Monday.

The United States and Canada share the world's largest undefended border and for decades have also exchanged information about people deemed to be high risks. Along with Australia, New Zealand and Britain, the two nations belong to the so-called Five Eyes intelligence-sharing network.

But a court ruling last year said the Canadian Security Intelligence Service spy

agency was breaking personal privacy laws by passing on data about Canadian citizens.

"That's why CSIS could not share information on this guy, Zehaf-Bibeau, and others with the Five Eyes," the official told *Reuters*.

"The United States was not aware that the Rouleau passport had been revoked because he was a Canadian national so CSIS couldn't share this information," said the official, who spoke on the grounds of anonymity.

The court ruling last year said Ottawa would have to create legislation if it wanted to allow CSIS to pass on data. Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney said this week that he would address the issue by amending the act of Parliament that governs CSIS.

Pressed as to whether the United States had complained about the lack of intelligence-sharing, the official replied: "I'm not aware of that."

US security officials defended the Canadian record

of exchanging counter-terrorism data and said Canada was regarded as a fully participating partner in the Five Eyes group.

"It is unfair to say that the Canadians were slow in providing information about the incident or the individual once he was identified," a US security official said about the attack on Wednesday. "Everybody knew this was a fluid situation, and the information was shared in a reasonable time frame."

Several US officials say they were told by Canadian counterparts that Zehaf-Bibeau was an alias and that the shooter had been born Michael Joseph Hall. The officials say this information turned out to be incorrect.

And a US source familiar with the security file said some government agencies had been frustrated by what they saw as Canada's reluctance to share information on suspects on occasion. The source made clear they were not talking about the two recent attacks.—Reuters

WORLD

British “Islamic fighter” killed in Syria

LONDON, 26 Oct — A young man from port city Portsmouth who went to fight in Syria for Islamic State (IS) is reportedly killed on the frontline in Syria. Mehdi Hassan, 19, traveled to Syria with five other men from southern Portsmouth in October last year, local media reported on Saturday.

“It has been confirmed with the family that he has died. Right now they are very upset,” said Abdul Jalil, chairman of the Portsmouth Jami Mosque.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Office said it had not received any reports about Hassan’s death but was aware of reports about the death of a British national in Syria. Hassan is the fourth man who was killed in the fighting. The last report of the death was

Manunur Roshid, 24, who was killed in fighting on the Syrian frontline. His death had been confirmed by a mosque earlier on Tuesday.

Iftekar Jaman, 23, and Hamidur Rahman have been confirmed dead in December and August 2013, respectively.

Mashudur Choudhury, 31, were captured when he returned to Britain at Gatwick Airport in May. He was the first person in the country to be convicted of terrorist offences in connection with the conflict in Syria. Assad Uzzaman, 25, is believed still fighting in Syria with IS.

Local media said an estimated 500 British people have traveled to Iraq and Syria to join IS, while study suggested that 24 Britons were believed to have died. — *Xinhua*



Nepalese people are seen visiting Yamleshwor Temple for offerings during “Bhai tika”, the fifth and last day of Tihar festival at Ranipokhari in Kathmandu, Nepal, on 25 Oct, 2014. Nepalese people visit this temple to receive blessings and Tika at the temple which opens for the day once in a year. — *XINHUA*

Iraqi forces seize four villages after victory near Baghdad

BAGHDAD, 26 Oct — Iraqi government forces retook four villages on Sunday near a mountain ridge overlooking Islamic State supply lines, security officials said, in a campaign which has struggled to make advances against the Sunni Islamist insurgents.

Iraqi security forces backed by Shi’ite militias gained some momentum on Saturday in their bid to loosen the grip of Islamic State, which controls large swathes of territory in the north and west of the country.

After months of fighting they drove Islamic State militants out of Jurf al-Sakhar, just south of Baghdad, while Kurdish fighters regained control over the town of Zumar in the north.

Sunni insurgents have been moving fighters, weapons and supplies from western Iraq through secret desert tunnels to Jurf al-Sakhar, Iraqi officials have said. Now it appears government forces may be able to disrupt that network.

Iraqi security forces backed by Shi’ite militias launched an assault on Saturday on areas around the Himreen mountains, a hotbed of militant activity 100 km (60 miles) south of the oil city of Kirkuk.

On Sunday they seized control of four villages in the area, security officials said, adding that it was very difficult to accelerate efforts to capture more territory because of roadside bombs and booby-trapped houses.

“We have decided to

make slow advances. We hold the ground, set up watch towers, clear the explosives and build sand barriers to prevent the armed men from returning,” army major Ahmed Nu’aman told *Reuters* by telephone.

The operation is designed to isolate Islamic State fighters controlling the towns of Jalawla and Saadiya and cut off the areas they seized northeast of the city of Baquba, which is held by Iraqi security forces and Shi’ite militias.

Government forces and Kurdish peshmerga fighters have been trying for months to take over Jalawla and Saadiya, located northeast of Baghdad.

Islamic State swept through northern Iraq in the summer, facing little resist-

ance from US-trained government troops.

The al-Qaeda offshoot then declared a caliphate and threatened to march on Baghdad, rattling the Shi’ite-led government and intensifying sectarian bloodshed.

While US airstrikes on Islamic State targets in Iraq and Syria may have disrupted their operations, it is hard to tell whether the campaign can defeat the insurgents who want to redraw the map of the Middle East.

Much may depend on whether the performance of Iraq’s army and security forces improves. On Sunday, a suicide bomber in a truck packed with explosives killed three soldiers at an Iraqi army gathering on a highway west of former Ira-

qi president Saddam Hussein’s home town of Tikrit, military sources said.

Government forces and Shi’ite militias also attempted to advance on a village near Tikrit held by Islamic State, the sources said. But they failed in the face of roadside bombs, landmines and sniper fire. Clashes raged in the area all day.

The next major security operation is expected to target the town of Amriyat al-Falluja, located in the Sunni heartland of Anbar province, just 40 km (25 miles) from Baghdad.

The Sunni insurgents have been surrounding it for weeks. Security officials said government forces are preparing to try and break the siege, security officials said. Islamic State fighters

also appear to be gearing up for battle.

Militants in the nearby town of Falluja, an Islamic State bastion and former al-Qaeda stronghold under the US occupation of Iraq, used loudspeakers attached to police vehicles they captured to address supporters.

They were told to expect good news from Amriyat al-Falluja.

“Don’t be afraid. Don’t worry about what happened in Jurf al-Sakhar. The mujahideen will be back,” was the message conveyed over loudspeakers, a witness told *Reuters* from Falluja.

“Be cheerful. We have 100 suicide bombers preparing for the battle of Amriyat al-Falluja and we have more if the situation warrants.”

Reuters

German IS fighter killed during clashes in Syria

DAMASCUS, 26 Oct — A German fighter from the Islamic State (IS) militant group was killed on Saturday during clashes with the Syrian troops in the country’s eastern province of Deir al-Zour, the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) reported.

The German IS fighter, known as Abu Muhammad al-Almani, was killed during his group’s clashes with the Syrian troops at the al-Sina’a neighbourhood in the oil-rich province of Deir al-Zour, said SANA, adding that many other IS fighters, most of whom are

foreigners, were also killed in the clashes. In the town of Hwaijat Sakr in Deir al-Zour, a Syrian army unit killed undisclosed IS fighters, including Libyans, according to SANA.

The Syrian troops also killed foreign rebels in the eastern countryside of the capital Damascus on Saturday, including Jordanians, Tunisians and Egyptians, SANA reported, adding that the Syrian troops continued on Saturday its attacks against the positions of the “terrorist” groups across Syria.

The Syrian govern-

ment has for long complained of the flow of foreign jihadists into Syria, accusing neighbouring countries of facilitating the flow of such radical fighters into the war-torn country. Meanwhile, the oppositional Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said on Saturday that the Syrian air force carried out around 533 airstrikes against several Syrian cities in recent days.

The Syrian war jets carried out 27 airstrikes on Saturday alone against the rebel-held areas in the eastern countryside of Damas-

cus, the outskirts of Deir al-Zour, the southern province of Qunaitera and areas in the central province of Hama and the northwestern province of Idlib, according to the Observatory.

It said tens of people, including women and children, were killed as a result of the days-long intensive airstrikes.

Syria’s crisis has been dragging on for over three years with no sign of tapering off. The long-running conflict has killed over 190,000 people and displaced millions of others.

Xinhua

Colombia’s rebels demand compensation for victims

HAVANA, 26 Oct — Colombia’s rebel Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) on Saturday demanded here compensation for the victims of the conflict.

Besides civilians, the victims should include soldiers, policemen, political prisoners, as well as guerrilla fighters, said a high-ranking guerrilla commander Luis Antonio Losada, who was in Cuban capital to take part in the latest round of talks with the Colombian government.

The two sides have been meeting in Havana for nearly two years since November, 2012 to seek an end of the conflict that has killed more than 200,000 people and displaced more than five millions others, according to official figures.

They have reached agreements on rural reform, the rebels’ participation in politics and eradicating illicit drugs.

They are expected to continue talks on compensation for war victims.—*Xinhua*

Aid for another 2,000 flood-hit families

BELGRADE, 26 Oct — The Serbian government adopted on Saturday the national flood recovery programme for those living in housing facilities that were damaged or destroyed as a result of the floods and landslides, which envisages grants-in-aid for 2,000 families that did not exercise the right up to this point.

The flood recovery programme envisages grants-in-aid for repairing the damaged and destroyed facilities ranging from RSD 24,000 to 144,000, depending on the scope of



the damage.

The government will earmark RSD 150 million for implementing the decision, local self-governments will issue rul-

ings, which will be carried through in cooperation with the Office for Reconstruction and Flood Relief, the government stated.

Tanjung

Japan urged to make ambitious contribution to climate change fight

BONN, 26 Oct — Christiana Figueres, executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, on Saturday urged Japan to set an ambitious goal of greenhouse gas emission cuts to contribute to a new framework for combating global warming from 2020.

“My expectation of Japanese contributions is the same as my expectation from every other country,” Figueres said in an interview with *Kyodo News*.

Parties to the convention are required to show

their reduction targets by the end of March 2015. The Japanese government on Friday started discussions on the matter.

Figueres also urged Japan to play an active role in the Green Climate Fund, which is expected to be one of major topics at the 20th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC, or COP20, to be held in December in Peru. The fund is designed to facilitate the fight against global warming in developing countries.

“Financial contribution from Japan is abso-

lutely critical,” she said, noting the world is “anxiously and eagerly waiting for the pledge from Japan.”

Referring to billion-dollar contributions to the fund pledged by France and Germany each, Figueres said, “We will certainly expect Japan to be higher than that.”

“The quicker the world moves toward a low-carbon economy, the quicker we move toward a high efficient economy,” which will lead to more demand for Japanese exports, she said.

Kyodo News

Israeli-Palestinian cease-fire dialogue postponed

GAZA, 26 Oct — The Egypt-sponsored indirect dialogue on reinforcing a cease-fire between Israel and the Palestinians, which is due to resume on Monday, has been postponed, a senior official said on Sunday.

Khaled al-Batsh, a senior Islamic Jihad leader from Gaza, said in an e-mailed press statement that Egypt has postponed the dialogue between Israel and the Palestinian factions until a further notice due to the security situation in Egypt's Sinai.

He declined to give more details, but said that talks on restoring calm and cease-fire in the Gaza Strip, building a seaport and an airport, as well as on the process of Gaza reconstruction, were scheduled to start in Cairo on Monday. Earlier on Friday, 30 Egyptian soldiers were killed in a series of attacks by extremist militants in Sinai. The Egyptian authorities on Saturday shut down Rafah border crossing with the Gaza Strip until a further notice, and launched

a large-scale military operation in the peninsula.

The indirect Israeli-Palestinian dialogue was a resumption of the talks that led to an Egypt-brokered cease-fire agreement, which ended the latest 50-day large-scale Israeli air and ground offensive on the Gaza Strip in August. More than 2,000 Palestinians were killed, 11,000 others wounded and over 100,000 displaced during the conflict, while Hamas attacks also killed at least 73 Israelis.—Xinhua



A Pakistani soldier stands guard on the road due to high-level security alerts on the first day of Muslims month of Muharram in southwest Pakistan's Quetta on 26 Oct, 2014.—XINHUA

Two bomb blasts kill 5, wounds 3 in S Afghanistan

KANDAHAR, (Afghanistan), 26 Oct — Five people were killed and three others sustained injuries as two roadside bombs went off in Maiwand district of the Kandahar province 450 km south of Kabul on Saturday afternoon, a local official said on Sunday.

“The first blast occurred in Shir Ali Kariz area targeted a vehicle of local police killing three civilians and a police personnel on the spot, and in the second blast which happened in Shahi Kariz area left a civilian dead on the spot,” Abdul Ali Kaliwal, police chief of Mai-

wand district told *Xinhua*.

Three people, including a local police and two civilians, sustained injuries in the blasts, the official added.

Maiwand district has been regarded as a hotbed of Taliban militants in the troubled Kandahar Province.

Xinhua

Russia to build its own helicopter carriers after Mistral contract ends

MOSCOW, 26 Oct — Under a naval construction programme, Russia will be building its own helicopter carriers, a deputy commander-in-chief of the Russian Navy said on Saturday in comments on the Mistral ship deal with France on hold over Ukraine.

“We don't depend on France, it was one of military-technical cooperation contracts, nothing more, and the construction of ships of this kind is planned in the shipbuilding programme, they will be built at Russian enterprises,” Rear Admiral Viktor Barsuk, in charge of arma-

ment issues, told Echo of Moscow radio on Saturday.

Russia and France signed a 1.2 billion euro deal for the delivery of two Mistral-class ships in June 2011. The first vessel, the *Vladivostok*, was floated out in October 2013. It was due to be transferred to Russia this autumn, but the transfer is still pending amid sanctions imposed on Russia over Ukraine.

The second ship, the *Sevastopol*, is supposed to be delivered in 2015. France will have to pay Russia a penalty fee if it fails to fulfill the contract.

Russia came under



Western sanctions, originally visa bans and asset freezes, for incorporation of Crimea in mid-March after a coup in Ukraine in February. Later, Western claims that Russia is taking part in hostilities in south-east Ukraine, which Moscow has repeatedly denied, resulted in more serious, sectoral, restrictions.

Itar-Tass

“We don't depend on France, it was one of military-technical cooperation contracts, nothing more”, Rear Admiral Viktor Barsuk told.

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Japan mulls asking importers not to buy bluefin tuna from Mexico

Tokyo, 26 Oct—Japan's Fisheries Agency is considering asking importers to refrain from buying Pacific bluefin tuna from Mexico as much as possible in a bid to nudge the Latin American country to take steps against overfishing, sources with the knowledge of the matter said on Saturday.

The envisioned request would represent a rare move for Japan, the world's largest consumer of tuna, in seeking to effectively manage the finite resource, and it comes just as countries are convening a meeting from Monday in California of a regional tuna commission to discuss bluefin tuna fishing in the eastern Pacific.

At the meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, participating countries are set to discuss Tokyo's proposal to halve catches in the eastern Pacific of juvenile bluefin tuna weighing less than 30 kilograms.

It remains unclear whether the proposal will be adopted because Mexico is said to be reluctant about the proposal. Juvenile bluefin tuna thrive in large quantities in the waters off

Mexico.

Japan, which may see fewer imports of bluefin tuna as a result of the Fisheries Agency request, hopes to win concessions from Mexico by taking a tough stance toward the country, according to the sources. The request to trading houses and other importers would be non-binding.

Mexico caught roughly 5,280 tons of juvenile bluefin tuna in the Pacific Ocean in 2012, roughly half the global catch of the fish in that region. Most was shipped to Japan, where demand for Mexican-caught tuna is strong because of its reasonable price.

In 1995, it is estimated there were over 80,000 tons of adult bluefin tuna in the Pacific. But the estimated stock fell to about 26,000 tons in 2012 due to overfishing, according to the Fisheries Agency.

In an international conference on control of bluefin tuna in the northern Pacific in September, participating countries such as Japan and South Korea broadly agreed to halve catches of juvenile Pacific bluefin tuna from next year.

Kyodo News

Japanese anime exhibition in Cuba

Visitors look at a model of Ultraman, a superhero from a Japanese television series, displayed at the "JAPAN: Kingdom of Characters" exhibition in Havana, on 24 Oct, 2014. The exhibition, organized by the Japan Foundation, began that day and will run until on 15 Nov in the Cuban capital.—KYODO NEWS



Thai couple arrested for murder of 2nd Japanese man

BANGKOK, 26 Oct — Thai police said on Saturday that a Thai couple already under arrest for the murder of a 79-year-old Japanese man have been arrested on suspicion of killing another Japanese man over 10 years ago.

The police said on Friday that the Thai man, Somchai Kaewbangyang, 47, admitted to killing Katsutoshi Tanaka in 2003 for financial gain. Tanaka's death in a Bangkok suburb had previously been ruled an accident.

Tanaka, originally from Aomori Prefecture, moved to Thailand in 1984 and worked in the interior business.

Tanaka had been married to a Thai woman, but in 2002 married Phornchanok Chaityapa, Somchai's common-law wife who was arrested with him on Thursday on suspicion of killing Yoshinori Shimato, a Japanese-language teacher.

Phornchanok is said to have introduced Somchai to Tanaka as her brother.

Phornchanok reportedly received a huge insurance payout after Tanaka's death at the age of 56.

As Phornchanok had been in a relationship with Shimato in recent years, it is possible that both incidents are premeditated crimes.

Kyodo News

Washington state teen shooter's family living in 'nightmare'

MARYSVILLE, 26 Oct — Relatives of a Washington state teen accused of a high school shooting rampage said on Saturday that they were living in a "nightmare" and struggling to understand why the boy targeted his two cousins and several friends before killing himself.

One girl was killed and four other freshman students were severely wounded in Friday's morning rampage inside the cafeteria at Marysville-Pilchuck High School, north of Seattle.

Police have not formally identified the student gunman, but family members on Saturday told Reuters 14-year-old Jaylen Fryberg was the shooter. Relatives also said two male victims were his cousins, Nate Hatch and Andrew Fryberg.

"I feel very distraught, like it's a nightmare," said Paula Hatch Satiacum, 49, the aunt of one teen and a relative of the other two.

She said there was "no

indication" of trouble between the cousins before the incident.

Brandon Hatch, 26, the boys' cousin, described the three as best friends who lived just doors away from each other on Native American land, near Marysville.

"Nate and Jaylen and Andrew grew up together," Hatch said. "They'd go over to each other's houses on the weekend, after school, and play games, play sports together."

Both the Hatch and Fryberg families are members of the Native American Tulalip Tribes.

"As far as I knew, they were all a bunch of bright kids and had a future," Hatch said. "It's very hard. I don't know why this happened. I've heard the rumours, but I just want to know the truth."

Investigators said they were still searching for a motive and had recovered a .40 caliber handgun from the school. The shooter targeted a cafeteria-table

gathering of his friends and family, prompting a lockdown of the school and a flood of heavily armed police, law enforcement officials and witnesses said.

One girl was killed. Her identity has not been released.

Fifteen-year-old Andrew Fryberg, was in critical condition with a gunshot wound to the head, and Nate Hatch, 14, was in serious condition with a gunshot to the jaw, hospital officials said.

Two other female victims, Shaylee Chuckulnaskit, 14, and Gia Soriano, 14, remained in critical condition at a different hospital, medical officials said. The incident sent shock waves through the Tribes and broader Marysville, a town of about 63,000 people, with many voicing disbelief that Fryberg could be responsible.

"Jaylen was always outgoing, an athlete," Brandon Hatch said. "He was a funny guy at times, too, a jokester."

However, there were troubling signs. Classmates and parents said Fryberg had recently had a dispute on the football field.

Rebecca Cooley, whose son played football with Fryberg, said he had been in a fight with another player over a disparaging remark made during football practice.

"(Jaylen) broke the kid's nose," Cooley said. "A lot of the football players stepped in during this fight." There were also hints on social media at a disappointment of some sort. Messages at times suggested signs of heartbreak and anger. A school official who requested anonymity and a friend of one of the female victims said a girl had recently rejected Fryberg.

"I heard he asked her out, and she rebuffed him and was with his cousin," said Bella Panjeli, a ninth-grade student at a different school who said she was a friend of one female victim.—Reuters

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WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 27th October, 2014: Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Taninthayi Region, isolated in Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions, Kachin, Shan, Kayah, Kayin and Mon States and weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (80%).

9th Rome Film Festival kicks off in Rome



Chinese director Xu Ang holds the People's Choice Award for his movie "12 Citizens" during the 9th Rome Film Festival in Rome, Italy on 25 Oct, 2014.—XINHUA

J K Rowling to release new 'Harry Potter' story for Halloween

LOS ANGELES, 26 Oct — The new story is scheduled to be published online on the author's official blog on Halloween Day, 31 October.

Author J K Rowling has announced that she will release a tale about Dolores Umbridge, who served as the Defence Against the Dark Arts teacher known for her abusive punishments against students in "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix". The new story is scheduled to be published online on the author's official blog on Halloween Day, 31 October.

It will unveil the villain's back story and offer "revealing first-person" thoughts about the former Hogwarts professor, reported Ace Showbiz. The cruel teacher was played by Imelda Staunton. In the on-screen adaptations of the books, she made her debut in the fifth "Order of the Phoenix" and reprised her role in the seventh installment "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part I".

Earlier this year, Rowling delighted "Harry Potter" diehard fans by releasing two other stories from the wizarding universe. One revolves around a 33-year-old Harry Potter at the Quidditch World Cup and another gives more depth to singing sorceress Celestina Warbeck.—PTI



Molestation scandal leaves Stephen Collins unemployed

LOS ANGELES, 26 Oct — Actor Stephen Collins is unemployed following the allegation that he molested some under-aged girls, a legal document has revealed.

Collins, 67, has allegedly admitted to molesting three underage girls in an audio tape that emerged earlier this month, reported TMZ.

The audio tape was apparently taken a therapy session with his wife Faye Grant in 2012. Collins is currently in the process



Actor Stephen Collins

of filing for divorce from Grant.

His lawyer Mark Vincent Kaplan says in the legal document, "Faye's

decision to parade that recording... has resulted in Stephen having no income other than investment income and pension income."

"Stephen suffers greatly from the pillaring (sic) by the media surrounding Faye's unlawful recording," he added.

Collins' appearance in the upcoming movie 'Ted 2' and on 'Scandal' will also be edited out. His talent agency also dropped him about a week later.

PTI

Former Cream frontman Jack Bruce dies aged 71



Jack Bruce

LONDON, 26 Oct — Jack Bruce, who formed influential British rock band Cream in the 1960s with guitarist Eric Clapton, has died aged 71, his family said on Saturday.

Bruce co-wrote some of Cream's biggest hits including "Sunshine of Your Love" and "I Feel Free" before the band broke up after only two years in 1968.

"The world of music will be a poorer place without him, but he lives on in his music and forever in our hearts," family members said on Bruce's website.

Bruce, who was born in Glasgow, began playing bass as a teenager and

dropped out of music school because he was not allowed to play jazz.

After spells with British blues bands, he turned down an offer of work with US soul singer Marvin Gaye in order to get married, according to his website.

He met Clapton while playing in another band and the two of them set up Cream in 1966 with drummer Ginger Baker.

After Cream, Bruce played with top jazz musicians including guitarist John McLaughlin and drummer Tony Williams and with rock stars such as Lou Reed and Frank Zappa. Cream reformed briefly for concerts in 1993 and 2005. The most recent of many solo albums by Bruce was released in March.

Roger Waters, the bassist of British rock band Pink Floyd, once paid tribute to Bruce, calling him "probably the most musically gifted bass player who's ever been."

British media said Bruce had been suffering from liver disease.

Reuters

Oscar ceremony mostly filled with losers: Neil Patrick Harris



LOS ANGELES, 26 Oct — Neil Patrick Harris, who has been roped in to host Oscars 2015, has revealed that the grand ceremony is mostly filled with losers because there is one who wins out of the five nominees.

The 'How I Met Your Mother' star said the show area is filled with bunch of nervous people, reported E!Online.

"Keep in mind, award shows is a room filled with terribly nervous people who have been through a gauntlet of anticipation, including the red carpet, where they're constantly asked what they'll say if they win..."

"And then most of the show, it's all filled with losers. Because out of the five nominees, only one wins. So as the show goes on, more and more of the people are unhappy..."

"So that's kind of the game, is to try and figure out how to be fun and casual and confident and keep it moving and keep it a good show, regardless of whether you win or lose, that you're at least enjoying yourself for the evening," he said.

The 41-year-old actor had previously hosted Emmy and Tony awards.

PTI

GENERAL

Murray ousts fighting Ferrer to boost London bid

VALENCIA, (Spain) 26 Oct — Andy Murray took another step toward securing a berth at next month's World Tour finals when he fought off a typically dogged David Ferrer to win 6-4, 7-5 and move into the final of the Valencia Open on Saturday.

A wildcard at the Spanish indoor hardcourt event, which he won in 2009, 10th-ranked Murray is eighth in the race to secure a spot at the season-ending tournament in London and will play unseeded Spaniard Tommy Robredo in Sunday's showpiece.

Robredo, a semi-finalist in Valencia in 2008 when the event was played outdoors

on clay, edged Frenchman Jeremy Chardy 7-6, 7-6 in Saturday's second semi-final.

Murray has been on a late-season charge and won the Vienna title last week when he came from a set down to beat world number five Ferrer in the final. "After the US Open I was aware that I would need to win a lot of matches to try to reach the Tour Finals," Murray told a news conference.

"So it was important for me to try and get as many matches as I can against the top players between now and the end of the year."

Top-seeded Spaniard Ferrer, who was chasing a



Andy Murray of Britain returns a shot during his men's singles tennis match against David Ferrer of Spain at the Shanghai Masters tennis tournament in Shanghai on 9 Oct, 2014. —REUTERS

fourth Valencia trophy after triumphs in 2008, 2010 and 2012, remains well placed to make the Tour finals and,

along with Murray, will look to secure his spot by collecting points at next week's Paris Masters.—Reuters

Machida defends Skate America crown

CHICAGO, 26 Oct — Japan's Tatsuki Machida won the season's first ISU Grand Prix event of the season on Saturday by nearly 35 points, earning his second-straight Skate America title and his fourth on the Grand Prix circuit.

The 24-year-old Machida, the silver medalist at this year's world championships in Saitama, Japan, won last season's Rostelcom Cup in Moscow and the Cup of China the year before that.

Machida entered Saturday with a sizable lead after winning Friday's short programme, and added to that by winning the free skate.

Machida finished with a total of 269.09 points in the event held at Sears Centre outside Chicago. Jason Brown of the United States was second with 234.17, while Canada's Nam Nguyen was third.

Japan's Haruka Imai fell on a triple loop and was eighth after the women's short programme with 53.79 points. Russia's Elizaveta Tuktamysheva led the short program with 67.41 points, while compatriot Elena Radionova was second and American Gracie Gold was third.

Kyodo News

Kyodo News

Dane Olesen wins in Perth to end trophy drought

PERTH, 26 Oct — Thorbjorn Olesen of Denmark cantered to a three-shot victory at the Perth International on Sunday to win his second European Tour title after a gap of two years.

The 24-year-old Olesen, who had an overnight lead of three strokes, finished with a one-under-par 71 in the final round for a total of 17-under.

Frenchman Victor Dubuisson scorched the Lake Karrinyup course with a blemish-free round of 66 to

climb up the leaderboard for second spot.

England's Mark Foster finished a stroke further back on 12-under for outright third. Olesen, who won his first and only European Tour title in Sicily two years ago, made the turn on one-under and came under pressure after having two bogeys in the next three holes to see his lead cut to one stroke.

But he responded strongly with birdies on the 13th and 15th to restore his

advantage. "It was tough — they were not easy conditions today," Olesen said after pocketing the winner's cheque of 198,300 euros (\$250,000). "I missed a few short putts today in the middle of the round and I think that the lead got down to one shot, but I was just thinking about getting my round back to under par, keeping focused, and seeing if I could make a few birdies coming in."

"It was a tough day but

it was worth it — that walk down 18 was beautiful.

"My driving and a couple of three-woods were off line which made it tricky, but I made some great putts coming in."

"It's been a couple of years since I won last time, so this gives me a lot of confidence and belief for the last bit of the season, this has been a great week and I've really enjoyed being here."

Reuters

Nadeshiko Japan defeat Canada in friendly

EDMONTON, (Canada), 26 Oct — Defending World Cup champions Nadeshiko Japan defeated Canada 3-0 in a friendly on Saturday behind goals from Yuki Ogimi, Yuri Kawamura and Nahomi Kawasumi.

Ogimi put Nadeshi-

ko in front in the ninth minute at Commonwealth Stadium after getting a pass from Shinobu Ono. Kawamura gave the visitors some breathing room in the 70th minute, heading in a corner to make it 2-0. Kawasumi, who is on the shortlist for FIFA's wom-

en's player of the year, added the finishing touches for Japan.

"The first goal was a good effort," Nadeshiko coach Norio Sasaki said. "It's been a while since we've been together, and we withstood some pressure, established our

rhythm and scored."

Japan, third in the FIFA women's rankings, and Canada, ranked eighth, will play again in Vancouver on Tuesday. Canada will host next year's Women's World Cup.

Kyodo News

Balotelli given Rodgers backing after another goalless afternoon

LONDON, 26 Oct — Liverpool manager Brendan Rodgers praised Mario Balotelli for "working hard and doing his best" as the misfiring Italian striker had to suffer another fruitless afternoon in front of goal at Anfield on Saturday.

After Balotelli had again failed to break his Premier League goalscoring duck for Liverpool in the 0-0 draw with Hull City, Rodgers, who had been unimpressed by the striker's midweek half-time shirt swap during the Champions League defeat by Real Madrid, offered a more sympathetic verdict.

Reflecting on an improved effort by Balotelli, Rodgers said: "I thought he worked very well, very hard. He maybe thought he

wasn't going to play today but you have got to stay with it. He is working hard and he is doing his best.

"Unfortunately it is that wee bit of confidence sometimes, when you don't get the goal. He kept going, kept getting into the areas.

"Sometimes with players if it's not going so well they have a day where they don't train or don't work, but he puts himself out to train every single day. He is out there wanting to be better, wanting to improve.

"Goalscorers will tell you they get their energy from the ball hitting the back of the net and it is just not happening for him in terms of that, but all I will ask is they do their best.

"You saw today's reaction. It was unlucky he

didn't get the goal."

Balotelli was denied in the first half by a fine save from Eldin Jakupovic and failed to convert an excellent chance in the dying seconds.

"He will be disappointed he hasn't scored but, for the team, it was a big effort on the back of playing against a good team in midweek."

The pressure mounts on Balotelli, who has now scored just once in 11 matches for Liverpool, with none in 514 minutes of Premier League football.

Yet Hull manager Steve Bruce also had words of support for Balotelli, insisting that criticism of the enigmatic striker had been harsh.

"I thought he was their



Liverpool's Mario Balotelli (2nd R) misses the chance to score during their English Premier League soccer match against Hull City at Anfield in Liverpool, northern England on 25 Oct, 2014. — REUTERS

best player," said Bruce. "There is a lot written about him and a lot of debate about him and he is

not everyone's cup of tea, but he is a bit of a character, a bit of a maverick. When you sign a maverick you

have to treat him like one and get the best out of him somehow.

Reuters

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Rampant Real riding high after 'Clasico' triumph

MADRID, 26 Oct — Real Madrid's decision to sell midfielders Xabi Alonso and Angel Di Maria left many scratching their heads and consecutive La Liga defeats as well as a reverse to Atletico Madrid in the Spanish Super Cup set alarm bells ringing at the Bernabeu.

Toni Kroos, who joined from Bayern Munich while Alonso went the other way, was seen as a poor substitute for the experienced Spain midfielder, while James Rodriguez, top scorer at the World Cup finals in Brazil with six goals, seemed to lack Di Maria's intensity and eye for a killer pass.

A couple of months later and the picture is an altogether different one.

Real have come into the kind of form that propelled them to a record-extending 10th European title last season in coach Carlo Ancelotti's first term in charge. Recent performances, including Saturday's 3-1 win at home to

Barcelona in the La Liga 'Clasico', suggest Ancelotti has successfully completed the integration of Kroos and Rodriguez into a side that is fearsome in attack and mean in defence.

Since they were beaten at home by Atletico in La Liga on 13 September, Real have scored 38 goals in nine outings in all competitions and conceded a mere six.

Portuguese World Player of the Year Cristiano Ronaldo is in the form of his life and has netted a jaw-dropping 16 goals in eight La Liga appearances, including the equaliser from the penalty spot on Saturday.

The victory lifted Real to within a point of leaders Barca after nine matches and they are virtually assured of passage to the Champions League knockout round after winning their opening three group games.

"We're in very good form, I don't know if I've found the perfect formula,"

Ancelotti told a post-'Clasico' news conference.

"We're also in good mental shape," added the Italian. "We still have the same idea as last year. We're trying to improve our play and everything is coming off well."

Barca, by contrast, are licking their wounds after their defensive frailty was again exposed on Saturday and they squandered a number of chances after Neymar had put them ahead in the fourth minute.

Pepe was left unmarked to head in from a corner for Real's second goal, while their third came after a mix-up between Andres Iniesta and Javier Mascherano.

Ronaldo's penalty was the first goal Barca had conceded in La Liga this season but, worryingly for new coach Luis Enrique, they have failed in both their biggest tests so far this term, also losing 3-2 at Paris St Germain in the Champions League.

"The game clearly



Real Madrid's Pepe (L) celebrates with James Rodriguez (C) and Marcelo after scoring against Barcelona during their Spanish first division "Clasico" soccer match at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on 25 Oct, 2014.—REUTERS

showed that there are opponents who are just as good as us, if not better, like today," Luis Enrique told a news conference.

"(In Paris) we de-

served more and the team was good in general terms," added the former Spain midfielder, who had stints at both Real and Barca.

"It was a different sto-

ry against Madrid as they deserved more. But we'll pick ourselves up and at the end of the season we'll see if we have deserved something."—Reuters

Wenger hails 'super' Sanchez after Chilean sinks Sunderland

LONDON, 26 Oct — Alexis Sanchez was presented with two of the easiest goals he will ever score but it did not stop Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger purring about his striker's "super quality" after the Chilean's match-winning double against Sunderland on Saturday.

Sanchez cashed in on two dreadful mistakes from defender Wes Brown and goalkeeper Vito Mannone to convert the simplest of opportunities and add to the misery of Sunderland, who conceded eight goals through inept defending against Southampton last weekend.

Still, it was not the undemanding finishes that enthused his manager, but another impressive all-round performance from Sanchez, who is beginning to look increasingly good value for the 30 million pounds Arsenal paid Barcelona in the close season.

His two goals in the 2-0 victory at the Stadium of Light — the first after half an hour from a mis-hit Brown back pass and the second in stoppage time when Mannone made a mess of a clearance — took his total in all games this

season to eight from 15 matches. "He took advantage of the mistakes they made but as well, he has super quality, Sanchez. He has quick feet and that's why he wins many balls that normal players don't win," said Wenger.

"In transition from offence to defence, he is very quick and wins the ball back very quickly, and you can take advantage of that."

Three days after the late, late show which saw them nick a 2-1 Champions League victory at Anderlecht, Arsenal's performance, which leaves them

fifth in the table, delighted Wenger.

"We won at Anderlecht, we won here today two and a half days later, and that's never easy in this game," said Wenger. "I believe we were quite in control, but as long as we couldn't score the second goal, of course you concede a goal and drop points."

For Sunderland manager Gus Poyet, though, there was only more dismay as he watched his side try valiantly to bounce back from their humiliation at St Mary's only to be undone by two awful errors.—Reuters



Arsenal's Alexis Sanchez (C) celebrates after scoring his second goal past Sunderland goalkeeper Vito Mannone during their English Premier League soccer match at the Stadium of Light in Sunderland, northern England on 25 Oct, 2014.—REUTERS

Manchester City beaten at West Ham, Southampton win again

LONDON, 26 Oct — West Ham United and Southampton maintained their unlikely but impressive starts to the season when the Hammers beat champions Manchester City 2-1 and Saints moved up to second with a 1-0 win over Stoke City on Saturday.

Chelsea, who visit Manchester United on Sunday, lead the Premier League title chase with 22 points from eight matches while Saints are second

with 19 from nine games.

Manchester City are third on 17 after losing at West Ham through goals from Morgan Amalfitano and Diafra Sakho. The champions could trail Chelsea by eight points on Sunday night if Jose Mourinho's men triumph at Old Trafford. Elsewhere on Saturday, Arsenal won 2-0 at Sunderland, Liverpool were held to a goalless draw at home by Hull City, Swansea City defeated Leicester

City 2-0 and West Bromwich Albion fought back from 2-0 down to draw 2-2 at home to Crystal Palace. West Ham did not have it easy against Manchester City who dominated possession but hit the bar twice through Yaya Toure and only scored once through David Silva. Frenchman Amalfitano put the Hammers ahead with a tap-in after a brilliant low spinning cross from Enner Valencia after 21 minutes.—Reuters

Williams crushes Halep to win WTA Finals title

SINGAPORE, 26 Oct — Serena Williams of the United States crushed Romania's Simona Halep 6-3 6-0 on Sunday to win the WTA Finals championship in Singapore.

Williams avenged her loss to Halep in the group stage of the season-ending tournament to claim her fifth WTA championship, tied for second with Steffi Graf. Only Martina Navratilova, with eight titles, has won more.

Halep shocked Williams 6-0 6-2 in the group



Serena Williams (USA) at the trophy presentation after the 2014 WTA tennis tournament in Singapore on 26 Oct, 2014.—REUTERS

stage of the event but was unable to reproduce that performance in the final as the

world number one dictated terms from the outset.

Reuters