

President holds talks with China's Xi; meets NPC chairman, PM

BEIJING, 8 Nov—President U Thein Sein and Chinese President Mr Xi Jinping on Saturday agreed to promote cooperation in bilateral ties in a meeting at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

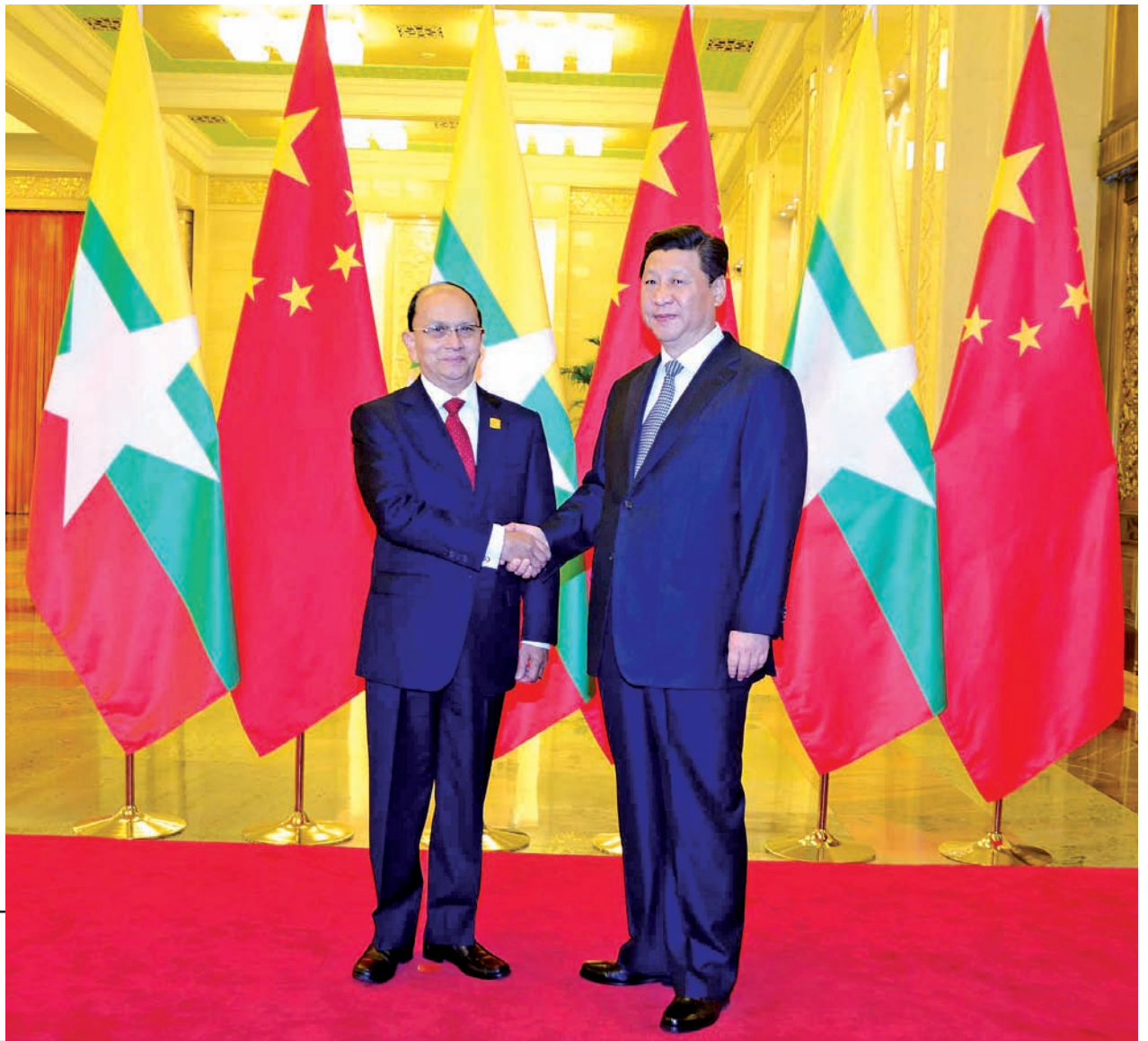
The visiting Myanmar president and his counterpart also discussed rural development programmes, cultural and information exchanges,

border affairs, promotion of trade and advances in socio-economic development.

In addition, the two leaders exchanged views on the implementation of multilateral strategic ties, China's proposal of a "maritime silk route" and construction of the Bangladesh-India-Myanmar-China economic corridor.

(See page 3)

President U Thein Sein and Chinese President Mr Xi Jinping meet to discuss promoting cooperation.—MNA



Air Mandalay to receive technological assistance from Boeing

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 8 Nov—Domestic airline Air Mandalay Limited on Saturday signed a memorandum of collaboration with U.S. aircraft giant Boeing Co. with the aim of receiving training to provide technical support for the 737 series of aircraft, source said.

According to the agreement, Boeing will assist at least four experts in the fields of aviation engineering and commercial management from the local airline. It is scheduled to begin providing technical training after three months.

Currently, Air Mandalay has no plans to purchase Boeing airplanes but given the growth of the avi-

ation market, Air Mandalay aims to improve its servic-

es with the use of Boeing's products, the special assistant to the chairman of Air Mandalay said.

Mr Adam Htoon, principal of Air Mandalay, said: "The memorandum (See page 3)



(From left to right) Principal of Air Mandalay Mr Adam Htoon and President of Boeing Southeast Asia Skip Boyce with an aircraft replica seen at an MoC signing ceremony at Sule Shangri-La Hotel in Yangon.

PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN

President sends messages of felicitations to Cambodia

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Nov —U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent messages of felicitations to His Majesty Preah Bat Samdech Preah Boromneath Norodom Sihamoni, King of Cambodia, and His Excellency Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, on the occasion of the 61st Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Kingdom of Cambodia which falls on 9 November 2014. —MNA

Union FM sends message of felicitations to Cambodia

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Nov—On the occasion of the 61st Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Kingdom of Cambodia which falls on 9 November 2014, U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Hor Namhong, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia.—MNA

Second Myanmar arts show to be held in mid-November

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Nov—The second arts show of 2014 will be held here on 14 and 15 November with the aim of promoting the traditional arts of Myanmar.

The Myanmar Traditional Arts and Crafts Exhibition will display

hand-woven textiles, cotton fabrics, silk fabrics, lotus thread fabrics, silverware, lacquerware, tapestries and gems.

The first Myanmar Traditional Arts and Crafts Exhibition was held in the capital in May.

MNA

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Myanmar Traditional Arts & Crafts Exhibition

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14.11.2014 - 15.11.2014 (9:00) AM to (8:00) PM MANIRADANAR HALL, NAY PYI TAW

Maha Arnthtoo Kantha Pagoda consecrated in PyinOoLwin



PyinOoLwin, 8 Nov — A ceremony to consecrate Maha Arnthtoo Kantha Pagoda was held at its chamber in PyinOoLwin

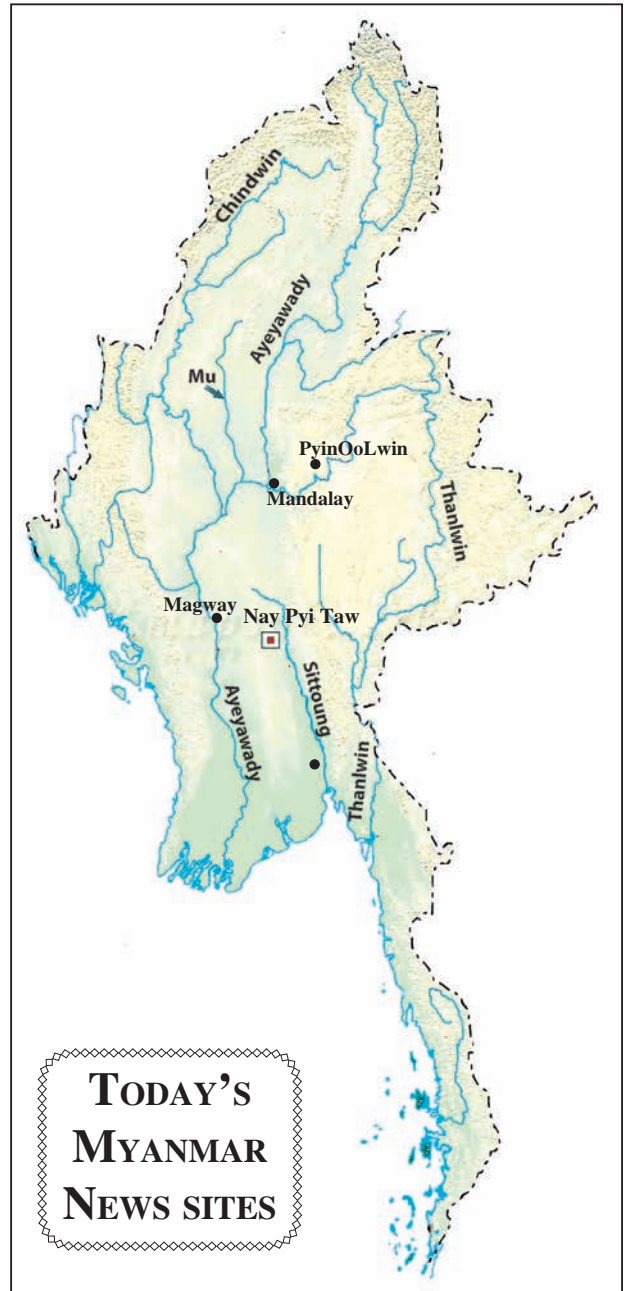
Township on 6 November, attended by 18 venerable members of the Sangha as well as Chief Minister of Mandalay Region U Ye

Myint and his wife.

Well-wishers donated K1 million to a fund for renovating all aspects of the pagoda. After the ceremony, they offered meals

to members of the Sangha at Sasana Beikman in the precinct of the pagoda.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)



2nd FIFA training course turns out 24 trainees in Mandalay



MANDALAY, 8 Nov — The FIFA 11 for Health Training Course 2/2014 concluded at the Football Academy of the Myan-

mar Football Federation in Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay, on Friday afternoon.

Professor Colin Fuller, project leader of FIFA's Medical Assessment and Research Center, U Soe Nyunt, principal of the academy, and FIFA instructors Mr Rangeev and Ms Mary Joyee presented certificates to 24 trainees.

They provided curricula, 10 footballs and sports gear to 12 schools involved in the project.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Mandalay officials lecture students on safeguarding environment

MANDALAY, 8 Nov — The Mandalay City Development Committee on 5 November gave an educational talk on ways to protect the environment at No 8 Basic Education High School in Aungmyathazan Township, Mandalay, on 5 November.

MCDC member Dr Thwin Kyaw Kyaw explained the importance of clean water and air for environmental conservation, damage to soil caused by polyethylene bags and problems stemming from systematic littering as part of measures to keep Mandalay City clean and pleasant.



ant. U Min Aung Phyo of the Sanitation Department briefed the students on systematic littering.

MCDC members also lectured students at No 2 Basic Education High School in Chanayethazan

Township and No 3 BEHS in Mahaaungmye Township.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Rural development works gaining momentum in central Myanmar

MAGWAY, 8 Nov — The Department of Rural Development under the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development places emphasis on water supply, rural electrification and construction and upgrading of roads to enable rural people

to enjoy better living standard. In the financial year that began in April, the Department of Rural Development in Ngaphe Township, Magway Region, sank three artesian wells, laid water pipelines and built two 5,000-gallon-capacity water

tanks in the rural areas.

The department also dug a lake, constructed box culverts on Ohmyedwin-Zeedaw road and Paunggale-Aungpinle road and installed solar panels for electrification in rural areas in nine villages. In so doing,

the department has joined hands with three private companies. The ministry allotted K77.76 million for implementing nine projects. Of them, the construction of two box culverts are more than halfway completed.

Than Naing Oo (Ngaphe)

Dengue fever prevention measures taken in Mandalay

They demonstrated the use of treated mosquito nets for prevention of dengue fever and disseminated health knowledge about the danger of the mosquito-borne viral infection.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

to-borne viral infection.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

MANDALAY, 8 Nov — The Mandalay Region Health Department and Mandalay City Development Committee on Friday morning carried out sanitation operations in extended ward 4 in Amarapura Township as part of preventive measures against dengue fever.

MCDC workers cleaned and unblocked drains to ensure the proper flow of water while staff of the Health Department and members of social organizations fumigated residences and chlorinated water tanks and pots.



NATIONAL

President holds talks with...

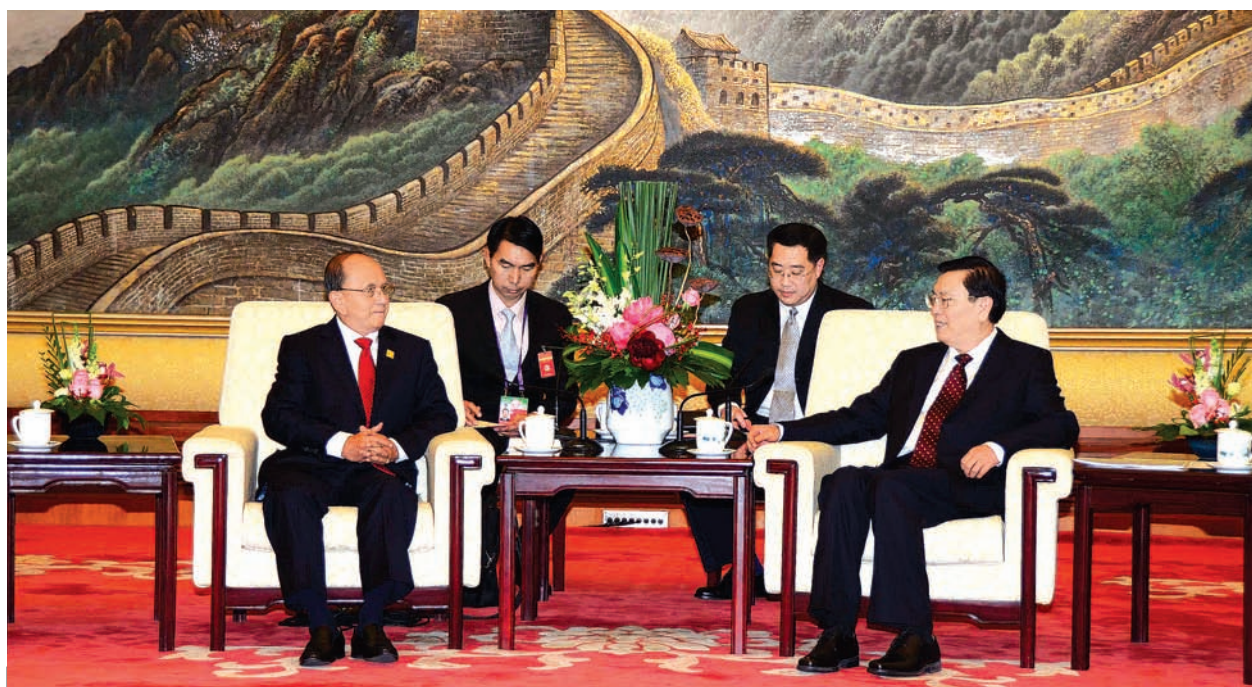
(from page 1)

U Thein Sein and Xi also agreed to jointly hold ceremonies to commemorate the 65th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Myanmar and China.

Later in the day, U Thein Sein held discussions with Mr Zhang Dejiang, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse.

The President also met Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China Mr Li Keqiang and discussed matters on development of Kyaukpyu

Economic Zone, developing transportation between Myanmar and China, successfully holding of ASEAN Summit and related summits, relations between ASEAN and China and regional affairs, sending Myanmar scholars, enhancing bilateral relations during Chinese premier's visit to Myanmar. The President met the premier on 28 June this year to discuss prospects of establishing Bangladesh-India-Myanmar- China economic corridor. Chinese premier will pay an official visit to Myanmar after attending ASEAN Summit and related summits.—MNA



President U Thein Sein meets Mr Zhang Dejiang, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress.—MNA

President U Thein notes importance of infrastructure in regional development at summit



President U Thein Sein seen together with other leaders at Dialogue on Strengthening Connectivity Partnership.—MNA

BEIJING, 8 Nov—President U Thein Sein on Saturday said at a summit of regional leaders here Saturday that infrastructural

development has brought significant economic development to the Asia-Pacific Region.

The president also

stressed that connectivity is an essential component for regional cooperation in the four major networks of trade and transport, information and telecommunication, energy infrastructure and public relations.

He was addressing the Dialogue on Strengthening Connectivity Partnership, held at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse. It was also attended by Bangladesh's President Abdul Hamid, China's President Xi Jinping, Laos' President Choummaly Sayasone, Mongolia's President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj, Tajikistan's President Emomali Rahmon, Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Sen, Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Shamshad Akhtar, executive secretary of the United Nations Economic and

Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, and Secretary-General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Dmitry Mezentsev.

In addition, U Thein Sein said that development of infrastructural networks will help connect regional and international markets by linking Asian highways and railways, as well as maritime routes with coastal countries and developing island states.

He also mentioned the need of network expansions in the Asia-Pacific region in the coming decades, noting that Myanmar is participating in both the Asia Highway Project and the Trans-Asia Railway.

The president noted that Myanmar is a member of such sub-regional networks as the

India-Myanmar-Thailand highway, the ASEAN Mekong Basin Development Cooperation (AMBDC), the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) economic corridor, the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation and the Mekong Sub-region.

The India-Myanmar-Thailand highway, which is expected to be completed soon, is projected to expand to Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam.

The president said that APEC should look beyond its boundaries, for there exist promising opportunities for growth and cooperation outside its territory.

This means that both members and non-members are in a position to share these benefits. Thus, Myanmar believes that the integrated partnership in the Asia-Pacific region will benefit all the countries in the region and the people as well, he said.

He noted that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations is making strenuous efforts to establish an ASEAN Economic Community in late 2015 and has been determined to lay down a policy of one community through a common way, thereby facilitating economic growth in the ASEAN region.

At a time when the world is faced with a growing number of complex issues and threats to security, no country will be able to enhance prosperity on its own, nor will any country be able to initiate peace and stability internally and

externally, he said.

Economic relations amount to laying a firm foundation for increased cooperation in politics and security among the countries concerned. Simultaneous efforts to resurrect the Silk Road through trade, investment and public cooperation will bring about a better relationship, which will in turn ensure peace.

With this end in view, Myanmar recognizes China's initial plans for the New Silk Road and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, with both leading to peace, stability and prosperity for the whole region and the rest of the world.

Leaders of the respective countries also took part in the discussions. The president together with heads of states and business leaders attended the dinner hosted by Chinese president and wife.

China will contribute USD 40 billion to set up a silk road infrastructure fund to boost connectivity across Asia. China has dangled financial and trade incentive before mostly to central Asia but also to countries in south Asia, backing efforts to resurrect the old silk road trading route.

The silk road fund will be opened and welcome investors from Asia and beyond to actively take part in the project. It would focus on 21st century maritime silk road initiative which aims to build roads, railways, ports and airports across central Asia and south Asia.

MNA

Air Mandalay to receive ...

(from page 1)

is an important step in our growth strategy. Boeing will provide us with capabilities to support this critical national growth strategy."

Myanmar forecasts growth in tourism and business investment, and consequently air transportation has become an increasingly important contributor to both the country's economic growth and its infrastructural development, he added. "We look forward to supporting Air Mandalay on its fleet expansion strategy, setting the foundation

for a long and successful partnership between Air Mandalay and Boeing," said Skip Boyce, president of Boeing Southeast Asia.

The 737 series is the best-selling jet airliner in the history of aviation, with more than 8,000 having been manufactured.

Earlier this year, Air Mandalay, which operates services to major tourist destinations in Myanmar, signed an agreement with Mitsubishi Aircraft Corporation to purchase up to ten aircraft to expand its regional air transport network.

GNLM

Philippines marks first anniversary of super typhoon Haiyan

TACLOBAN CITY, (Philippines), 8 Nov — Filipinos on Saturday marked the first anniversary of super typhoon Haiyan that slammed the central Philippines leaving thousands dead and causing massive devastation to properties and infrastructure.

A memorial walk to honour the dead and increase people's awareness of the importance of better preparedness was held in this worst-hit city located in the central Philippine province of Leyte.

"We want to make it more meaningful, our memorial. What's important is we prepare the next generation and the people now, that they don't forget what a category 5 storm is," Alfred Romualdez, mayor of Tacloban, told *Kyodo News* at the start of the walk at sunrise.

"At the same time, we honour our dead because at that time, (their families) never really had the time to mourn. So now is the time," he added.

The memorial walk, which drew thousands of people, was followed by the simultaneous sounding of sirens and ringing of church bells at the exact time of Haiyan's onslaught on Tacloban. In addition, a mass was held at a cemetery where more than 3,000 victims are buried, candles were lit around the city and flower petals were thrown into the sea. Recovery has been seen in some affected areas but there are also cries for more assistance.

The central district of the city has been substantially rebuilt but much remains to be done in areas where the less privileged live, accord-

ing to Msgr Alex Openiano of the Sto Nino Catholic parish in Tacloban.

Jane Labanan, 16, a local who survived the typhoon, said that the international community should not forget the victims of Haiyan, citing a lack of government support. Labanan and her family still stay at a makeshift house built in one of Tacloban's coastal villages that were wiped out by the tsunami-like storm triggered by Haiyan.

Haiyan, with winds of up to 235 kilometres per hour, left 6,300 people dead, more than 1,000 missing and some 4.1 million people displaced. Damage to infrastructure, agriculture and other sectors is estimated at more than 89 billion pesos (about \$2 billion).

Kyodo News



A couple looks at a list of Typhoon Haiyan victims buried at a mass grave for residents who perished during the onslaught of the typhoon a year ago in Tacloban city, central Philippines on 8 Nov, 2014.—REUTERS

Lao embassy in London to encourage investment, tourism

VIENTIANE, 8 Nov — The reopening of the Lao embassy in London will strengthen investment and tourism in Laos, Deputy Head of Mission of the British Embassy Alexandra Needham said on Friday.

The reopening of the Lao Embassy in London follows a diplomatic absence in the United Kingdom of almost 30 years. Since the reopening of the British Embassy in Laos in 2012, UK's exports to the country have risen by almost 20 percent.

"The embassy will give Laos a higher profile in the UK and help to spread more knowledge about what's happening in the country," Needham told *Xinhua*.

The reopened embassy is expected to strengthen bilateral trade and investment links between the two countries as well as promote contacts and cooperation on global issues. Over 43,000 British tourists visit the Laos every year, making the UK one of the largest non-Asian tourist groups. Needham expected that presence of the Lao embassy in London and the ability to apply for a Lao visa before arrival will only increase the popularity of the country for British tourists. —*Xinhua*

Singapore PM wins defamation case against blogger

SINGAPORE, 8 Nov — Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong won a High Court defamation case against a blogger on Friday, the first time the city-state's leader has sued an online critic.

Roy Ngerng, 33, was sued for his blog post in May when he was alleged to have implicated Lee in impropriety in connection with how funds in Singapore's mandatory retirement savings scheme, the Central Provident Fund(CPF), are managed.

Singapore's leaders have in the past sued or settled out of court with several foreign media publications including *The New York Times*, *Wall Street*



Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien

Journal, *Bloomberg* and *The Economist* for alleged defamatory remarks but this is the first time a blogger has faced such action.

High Court judge Lee

Seiu Kin ordered Ngerng was not allowed to publish or disseminate such claims in the future, or any words and images to the same effect. Damages will be as-

sessed at a later date.

"I think it is a sad commentary when the elected leader of a country can't take criticism from its citizens about issues related to public policy," said Phil Robertson, the Bangkok-based deputy director of Human Rights Watch's Asia division.

Singapore's government has been grappling with how to regulate internet content and last year introduced new restrictions on news websites.

In a media statement, Ngerng's lawyers said they were studying the judgment "very carefully and will decide the next course of action in due course".

Reuters

Australia says pleased with progress on China free trade pact



Australia's Foreign Minister Julie Bishop (C) speaks with China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi (2nd R partially hidden) and Canada's Foreign Minister John Baird (L) at the start of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit ministerial meetings at the China National Convention Centre (CNCC) in Beijing on 7 Nov, 2014.—REUTERS

BEIJING, 8 Nov — Australia said on Saturday it was pleased with progress on a long-planned free trade agreement with China and that it would be happy to conclude it by next week when Chinese President Xi Jinping visits.

Xi will attend the G20 summit in Brisbane next week and then make a formal state visit.

"I understand that our negotiators are very pleased with the progress," Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop told reporters on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in Beijing.

"If the agreement can be concluded by the time of the G20, we would be delighted, but we are not pursuing an agreement for the sake of an agreement. It has to be in our national interest and in the interest of Australian businesses and exporters and the same with China."

China is Australia's largest trading partner, with two-way trade of around \$150 billion in 2013. The two countries are in the final stages of reaching a free trade agreement that Prime Min-

ister Tony Abbott wants signed by the end of the year, after nearly 10 years of negotiations.

Trade talks have been hampered by Beijing's concerns over opening its markets to Australian food and its worries about Australia's tough approval process for foreign investment by China's state-owned enterprises.

Canberra wants China to give Australian businesses access to key industries in which foreign investment is currently restricted.

Last month, Australian Treasurer Joe Hockey said Australian coal would be exempt from controversial new import tariffs imposed by China when the two countries sign the free trade pact.

Countries attending the APEC summit are seizing the opportunity to discuss both bilateral and multilateral free trade, including the China-championed Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific and the Trans-Pacific Partnership, backed chiefly by the US.

Reuters

US welcomes “positive” development in Japan-China relations

BEIJING, 8 Nov — The United States welcomed “positive” developments in the relationship between Japan and China as the likelihood of a fence-mending meeting between the leaders of the two Asian countries increases, Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida said on Friday.

At his 40-minute meeting with US Secretary of State John Kerry on the fringes of a regional economic summit in Beijing, the two also reaffirmed cooperation in preventing the spread of the Ebola virus and resolving issues related to past abductions of Japanese nationals by North Korea, the Japanese minister said.

With attention focused on the envisioned, much-anticipated Japan-China summit between Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Chinese President Xi Jinping, Kishida told reporters he had informal exchanges with his Chinese and South Korean counterparts, Wang Yi and Yun Byung Se.

Kishida said he and

Kerry also agreed on maintaining continued close cooperation in dealing with issues involving East Asia.

Their meeting on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum came at a time Beijing is stepping up its military influence and assertiveness in the Asia-Pacific region where the country’s growing clout has created tensions with some countries.

Japan and some Southeast Asian countries, particularly Vietnam and the Philippines, are engaged with China in territorial disputes.

Touching on Japan’s efforts to combat Ebola, Kerry said the role that Japan fulfills in the international community is highly appreciated, according to a Japanese official.

Japan’s measures so far include monetary assistance. In Tokyo on Friday, the Japanese government announced it will provide up to \$100 million in additional humanitarian assistance to Ebola-hit West Africa. Prime Minister Abe had already pledged



Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida (L) and US Secretary of State John Kerry shake hands before holding talks in Beijing on 7 Nov, 2014, on the sidelines of a ministerial meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.—KYODO NEWS

\$40 million in aid at the UN General Assembly in New York in September.

On the abduction issue, a key concern for Japan, Kishida told his US counterpart that Japan’s policy to aim for a comprehensive resolution of the North Korean abduction, missile and nuclear issues remains unchanged, and briefed Kerry about the latest developments involving Japan and North

Korea.

North Korea is investigating the fates of the abduction victims and Japan is waiting to get a full account of the abductions which took place in the 1970s and 1980s.

Kishida and Kerry also agreed to work together to tackle other multilateral concerns such as the situation in Ukraine and Islamic State militants.

Kyodo News

US to attend nuclear arms impact conference next month

WASHINGTON, 8 Nov — The United States will attend the third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Austrian capital Vienna next month, the State Department said on Friday, making it the first of the world’s five recognized nu-

clear powers to do so.

In the run-up to the review conference for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in April and May next year, participation in the Vienna conference will allow the United States to show its engagement in nuclear disarmament and

the commitment of the administration of President Barack Obama to a world without nuclear weapons.

Previous conferences were held in Oslo, Norway, in March 2013, and Nayarit, Mexico, in February this year.

None of the five na-

tions allowed to possess nuclear weapons under the NPT attended either of the previous conferences. The other four nations — Britain, France, China and Russia — have yet to announce whether they will attend the Vienna conference. —*Kyodo News*

Abe, Obama, 10 other leaders to discuss Pacific trade deal on Monday

BEIJING, 8 Nov — Leaders from Japan, the United States and 10 other countries will convene a meeting to discuss the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade deal in Beijing on Monday afternoon, negotiation sources said.

While the leaders — including Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and US President Barack Obama — are not expected to reach an agreement on the trade pact at the meeting, they are eyeing working out a statement noting that a major stride has been

made in negotiations and conclusion of the agreement is drawing near, the sources said.

The US Embassy in Beijing has been picked for the venue as a precaution against snooping by the Chinese government, according to the sources. China is not a participant in the US-led TPP and is believed to be concerned about being left out of the process to draw up trade rules in Asia.

Chief negotiators from the 12 countries held an informal meeting in

Beijing on Friday night to confirm the schedule and venue of the TPP summit and also discussed what the statement would say, according to the sources.

While a statement by the leaders is planned, no Press conference involving all the 12 countries are expected to be held in Beijing, where China is hosting a series of meetings for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, the sources said. The APEC summit is also planned on Monday and Tuesday.

Trade ministers from the TPP negotiating countries are expected to meet on Saturday afternoon ahead of the TPP summit.

Japan and the United States are also working to arrange a meeting by TPP minister Akira Amari and US Trade Representative Michael Froman.

The TPP negotiating countries are Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States and Vietnam.

Kyodo News

Obama to send 1,500 more troops to Iraq as campaign expands

WASHINGTON, 8 Nov — President Barack Obama has approved sending up to 1,500 more troops to Iraq, roughly doubling the number of US forces on the ground helping Iraqi and Kurdish forces battle the militant group Islamic State, US officials said on Friday.

Obama’s decision greatly expands the scope of the US campaign and the geographic distribution of American forces, some of whom will head into Iraq’s fiercely contested western Anbar Province for the first time to act as advisers.

It also raises the stakes in Obama’s first interactions with Congress after his Democratic Party was thumped by Republicans in mid-term elections this week. The White House said it would ask Congress for \$1.6 billion for a new “Iraq Train and Equip Fund” and billions more for operations to battle the group.

Pentagon spokesman Rear Admiral John Kirby said those funds would need to be approved before the first additional forces head to Iraq, something one official speculated could happen in just weeks.

“(Iraqi forces are) going on the offense now. And what this is designed to do is to help them continue to be able to do that, to improve their capability and their competence on the battlefield,” Kirby said, stressing no American ground forces will take on combat roles.

Alarmed by the advance of Islamic State militants across Iraq, Obama began sending non-combatant troops back to Iraq in the summer for the first time since he withdrew US forces from the country in 2011.

At the time of the withdrawal, the Pentagon boasted of Iraqi military capabilities. But Iraqi forces crumbled in the face of Islamic State’s offensive, exposing the toll sectarian strains and mismanagement took on the military.

Officials denied the new US troop buildup amounted to “mission creep” and said it was justified partly because of new Iraqi Shi’ite Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi’s efforts to reach out to Sunni tribesmen and new calls from Iraq’s most senior Shi’ite cleric to rush to the Sunni tribes’ aid. One Obama administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity, pointed to an Iraqi plan to “organize and equip 5,000 tribesmen in Anbar.”

“This is now being openly discussed in Iraq and it’s starting to happen,” the official said.

About 1,400 US troops are now on the ground, just below the previous limit of 1,600 troops. The new authorization gives the US military the ability to deploy up to 3,100 troops.

Kirby said about 870 of the additional US troops would be involved in “hands-on training,” and disclosed that “well over 700 additional trainers will come from foreign governments.”

The Pentagon said it planned to establish several sites across the country to train nine Iraqi army brigades and three brigades of Kurdish Peshmerga fighters. They would be set up in northern, western and southern Iraq.

Kirby said the training would focus on tasks such as battlefield leadership, tactical organization, logistics and intelligence matters. —*Reuters*



Iraqi security forces take part in an intensive security deployment against Islamic State militants in the town of Amriyat al-Falluja in Anbar Province, on 5 Nov, 2014. — REUTERS

Iran stalls probe into nuclear weapons research, UN report says

VIENNA, 8 Nov — Iran is failing to address suspicions it may have worked on designing an atomic bomb, according to the latest report by a UN watchdog, potentially complicating efforts by world powers to reach a deal with Tehran on its nuclear programme.

The report by the International Atomic Energy Agency said Tehran had still not provided information it was due to produce more than two months ago to help advance a long-running IAEA inquiry into suspected nuclear weapons research.

The confidential document was issued to IAEA member states less than three weeks before the 24 November deadline by which Iran and six global powers are seeking to end a decade-old standoff over the Islamic Republic's atomic activities.

"Iran has not provided any explanations that enable the agency to clarify the outstanding practical measures," it said.

The IAEA was refer-

ring to two steps that Iran had agreed to carry out by late August, by providing information concerning allegations of explosives tests and other activity that could be used to develop nuclear bombs.

Iran denies any intention of seeking atomic weapons, saying its nuclear programme is aimed at generating electricity.

The UN agency said the two sides last met on 2 November in the Iranian capital and had agreed to meet again as soon as possible, but not before 24 November. "There is no progress, basically," one diplomat familiar with the Iran file said.

The continuing deadlock in the IAEA's investigation suggests that any renewed headway will probably have to wait until after the negotiations between Iran and the United States, Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia are concluded.

Iran wants the talks to lead to a removal of international sanctions on its



The flag of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) flies in front of its headquarters during a board of governors meeting in Vienna on 28 Nov, 2013.

REUTERS

oil-dependent economy, but Western officials say it must step up cooperation with the IAEA to help clarify long-standing concerns about Tehran's nuclear ambitions.

While the six powers want Iran to scale back its uranium enrichment programme — and thereby lengthen the timeline for any covert bid to assemble

nuclear arms — the IAEA is investigating allegations of past Iranian research on designing an actual bomb.

Even though it has long been clear that the IAEA's inquiry into the possible military dimensions of Iran's programme will not be completed before the target date for a deal with the powers, Western diplomats

had hoped for more progress by now.

Iran and the powers will meet in Vienna from 18 November to try to seal a long-term agreement resolving a stand-off that over the last decade has raised fears of a new Middle East war. Experts differ on the need for Iran to come clean about all its alleged bomb-related

work: some say that full disclosure is necessary to make sure that any such research has since ceased, while others argue this objective can be achieved without a full "confession".

Iran's arch-enemy Israel and hawkish US lawmakers may pounce on any accord if they feel it does not sufficiently resolve the issue.

"Concrete progress is needed on the central issue of whether Iran has worked on nuclear weapons and is maintaining a capability to revive such efforts," said US expert David Albright and former IAEA chief inspector Olli Heinonen said in a commentary this week.

The US — based Arms Control Association said it would be naive to think that Iran's leaders would admit to any bomb work.

The main goal should be for an agreement to ensure that the IAEA obtains sufficient information to determine that Iran has halted any such activity, the research and advocacy group said.—Reuters

EU Council asks for deferral of extra budget contribution payment for member states

BRUSSELS, 8 Nov — The Council of the European Union here on Friday requested the European Commission to submit a proposal to allow member states related to defer the required payment over a reasonable period of time.

According to the presidency conclusions of the meeting of EU Economic and Financial Affairs Council, which was held on Friday, the date when the relevant member states can defer their payment should be no later than 1 September.

"Due to the major revisions of the Gross National Income (GNI) of several member states, their additional contributions to the EU budget will be substantial," said the presidency conclusions, adding that the payment date of the first working day of December is short.

It said the original payment date in December "may result in exceptionally high fiscal implications for those member states," it said.

For the sake of equal

treatment of all member states, deferral should then be an option for all if the overall sum of the GNI balances is exceptionally high. And taken into account the tight deadlines, this amendment should come into effect by 1 December this year.

Britain and other member states were informed of the new budget calculations at an EU summit last month. The amount is based on a calculation of how well the economies of member states have fared since 1995.

Media reports had that British Prime Minister David Cameron responded angrily to the new budget, based on data showing that Britain was wealthier than previously thought, and that Britain owed more money to the EU.

Cameron insisted that there was "no pressing need" for Britain to pay the extra budget contribution of 2.1 billion euros (2.67 billion US dollars) to the EU by the 1 December deadline.

Xinhua

EU Commission urges flexibility in air traffic reforms

ROME, 8 Nov — New European Transport Commissioner Violeta Bulc called on Friday for EU countries to show more flexibility in integrating air corridors as she pressed for completion of a long-delayed overhaul of air traffic control systems.

Speaking at an informal meeting in Rome of European Union transport ministers and regulators, Bulc said a deal on the so-called Single European Sky was a chance to reduce delays and inefficiency for passengers and airlines.

"We cannot deal with a reality based mainly around international flights with national systems," she said, according to a statement after the meeting.

"Be flexible, we will find the right compromise."

Friday's meeting ended without any substantial agreement. Italian Transport Minister Maurizio Lupi, whose country holds the rotating presidency of the EU, thanked participants "for the frankness of the discussion" but a scheduled news conference after the meeting was cancelled.

A statement from his ministry said the meeting laid the groundwork for more progress at the European Council meeting in Brussels on 3 December when he is expected to present draft proposals for a reform.

Agreement on the ambitious Single European Sky project has proved difficult, with airlines pushing for a streamlined system of controls and air traffic controllers arguing that the reforms could hit safety and jobs.

The present system divides air traffic control among EU member states, with each country responsible for managing flight paths in its own air space.

The Single European Sky proposal, first launched a decade ago, would arrange the continent's air space in transnational "blocks" in the biggest overhaul of the European aviation system in decades. Airlines argue it would cut flight delays, reduce emissions of CO2 and save billions of euros for airlines and passengers.

Air traffic control unions in France and Germany say the proposed changes are aimed mainly at cutting costs and could affect safety in European skies, which are among the most crowded in the world.

Reuters



European Union Transport Commissioner-designate Violeta Bulc of Slovenia adjusts her headphones as she addresses the European Parliament's Committee on Transport and Tourism at the EU Parliament in Strasbourg, on 20 Oct, 2014. —REUTERS

Cambodia's army marks 61st anniversary

PHNOM PENH, 8 Nov — Cambodia celebrated the 61st anniversary of the founding of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) on Saturday.

Defence Minister Gen Tea Banh, along with

RCAF's Commander-in-Chief Gen Pol Sareoun, presided over the ceremony, which were attended by some 500 military personnel. Tea Banh hailed the Cambodian armed forces for their great sacrifice for

the causes of independence, peace, territorial integrity, and people's happiness.

"Besides, our armed forces have actively engaged in humanitarian activities and maintained public security and safety," he said.

"On international affairs, the RCAF has adhered to the government's foreign policy and steadily strengthened and expanded ties and cooperation with friendly countries' armies."

Xinhua

WORLD

Peshmergas blunt, don't break, Islamic State siege of Syria's Kobani

MURSITPINAR, (Turkey) /BEIRUT, 8 Nov — Iraqi Kurdish forces have blunted but not broken the siege of the Syrian border town of Kobani, a week after arriving to great fanfare with heavy weapons and fighters in a bid to save it from Islamic State.

Kobani has become a test of the US-led coalition's ability to halt the advance of the Sunni Muslim insurgents. The town is one of few areas in Syria where it can co-ordinate air strikes with operations by an effective ground force.

The arrival of the Iraqi Kurd peshmerga, or "those who face death," with armoured vehicles and artillery, has enabled them to shell Islamic State positions around Kobani and take back some villages.

But the front lines in



A convoy of peshmerga vehicles is welcomed by Turkish Kurds at Habur border gate, which separates Turkey from Iraq, near the town of Silopi in southeastern Turkey, on 29 Oct, 2014. —REUTERS

the town itself are little changed, its eastern part still controlled by the insurgents, and the west still largely held by the main

Syrian Kurdish armed group, the YPG, and allied fighters.

"There is no change at all in Kobani as a result of

the peshmerga. Maybe one or two streets are gained then lost, back and forth," said Rami Abdulrahman of the Britain-based Syri-

an Observatory for Human Rights, which monitors the war. "ISIS (Islamic State) posts are well entrenched in Kobani city, and the Kurds say they need more heavy weaponry to make a dent ... There also needs to be better co-ordination between the Kurdish units and coalition air forces," he said, adding that Islamic State suicide attacks were also proving effective.

The peshmerga entered Kobani in more than a dozen trucks and jeeps last Friday from Turkey, cheering and making victory signs.

They were given a heroes' welcome by Turkish Kurds and Syrian Kurdish refugees, angry at Turkey's refusal to send in its own troops and optimistic, as they lined the streets cloaked in Kurdish flags,

that the peshmerga would turn the tide.

The Kurdistan Regional Government, which runs a semi-autonomous region in northern Iraq, has made clear from the outset that its peshmerga fighters, numbering around 150, would not engage in direct combat in Kobani but rather provide artillery support to Syrian Kurds.

"Of course the presence of the peshmerga has been helpful because they're shelling ISIS positions, destroying their fighters and weapons," Idris Nassan, a local official in Kobani, said by telephone. "Because of the peshmerga shelling we've stopped ISIS advances in the western rural areas as well as the east and southeastern front line of the city," he told Reuters.—Reuters

Rice says no military coordination with Iran over battle against Islamic State



National Security Advisor Susan Rice speaks to the press about US President Barack Obama's upcoming Asia trip while in the Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House in Washington, on 7 Nov, 2014. — REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 8 Nov — The United States is not engaged in military coordination with Iran over combating the Islamic State militants, National Security Adviser Susan Rice said on Friday. Asked about President Barack Obama's letter to Iran's Supreme Leader

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in which the president reportedly expressed a "shared interest" in fighting the extremist group also known as ISIL, Rice replied that "We are in no way engaged in any coordination, military coordination with Iran on countering ISIL."

She also denied any linkage between the ongoing efforts to seek a comprehensive deal over Iran's nuclear programme and the campaign against the Islamic State.

"We have never made that linkage, so the reports that suggest the contrary are inaccurate," she told reporters at the White House.

The Wall Street Journal, citing people briefed on the matter, reported on Thursday that in his letter sent to Khamenei in the middle of last month, Obama stressed that "any cooperation on Islamic State was largely contingent on Iran reaching a comprehensive agreement with global powers on the future of Teheran's nuclear programme by a 24 November diplomatic deadline."

Xinhua

Peru's jailed ex-President Fujimori makes second plea for house detention

LIMA, 8 Nov — Peru's jailed former President Alberto Fujimori made a second bid to be held under house arrest on Friday, saying he fears the 25-year prison sentence he is serving for human rights abuses and corruption will lead to his "slow death" behind bars. Fujimori, 76, said a Peruvian court's 2013 decision to deny him house arrest for what remains of his sentence should be reverted to protect his health.

"If I go on like this, I will breathe my last sigh before finishing this sentence," Fujimori told an appeals panel. "I don't believe I will make it to 95."

Fujimori has been imprisoned since 2007 for crimes committed during his 1990-2000 term. In 2009 he was sentenced to 25 years for ordering death squads to carry out massacres that killed 25 people during a crackdown on leftist insurgents.

Fujimori has frequently complained about health problems from prison. In March, he was hospitalized briefly after suffering a small stroke and had previously undergone surgery for a growth on his tongue. On Friday, Fujimori told the appeals panel



Peru's former President Alberto Fujimori listens to the judge's verdict about his sentence in prison, in Lima on 29 Oct, 2013. —REUTERS

that his imprisonment would be "a slow death."

In 2013, Peru's President Ollanta Humala rejected Fujimori's request to be pardoned and released from prison on humanitarian grounds after a medical review found he was not suffering a fatal disease as claimed.

Reuters

Libyan rebels threaten to declare independence over rival parliament

BENGHAZI, (Libya) 8 Nov — Libyan rebels who have seized oil ports in the past to press their demand for regional autonomy said on Friday they would declare independence in the east if the world recognized a rival parliament, heightening tensions in the major oil producer.

The actions of rebel leader Ibrahim Jathran are closely watched by oil markets. He and his followers once seized four major oil ports in eastern Libya, accounting for 600,000 barrels of oil, and held them for almost a year. Jathran

signed a deal with the government in April to reopen the oil ports and toned down his rhetoric. But now he has ramped it up considerably — he is not known to have threatened to break Libya up into separate states.

Libya is already effectively divided and turning into a security nightmare for its Arab neighbours and Western powers. Armed groups and Islamist militants who helped toppled Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 are fighting for power and a share of oil revenue.

An armed group seized the capital of Tripoli



A general view of pipelines at the Zueitina oil terminal in Zueitina, west of Benghazi on 7 April, 2014. — REUTERS

in August, set up its own parliament and left the internationally recognized government and House of Representatives a rump state in the east, with the prime minister and his cabinet based in Bayda and the parliament in Tobruk.

"If the world recognizes the (rival assembly) General National Congress ... then we will be forced to declare eastern independence," the group led by Jathran said in a statement. It said the group was speaking for unidentified eastern tribal leaders as well.

Reuters

PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 9 November, 2014

Peeping at Myanmar's political gridlock through the lens of history

By Kyaw Thura

A study of the history of Myanmar is indispensable for accurately judging why the country has lagged behind its neighbours in terms of infrastructural development. Living under colonial rule for over a century has left the country with a legacy of ethnic strife.

The situation was no doubt exacerbated by the isolationist policy that the Burma Socialist Pro-

gramme Party practised for 26 years from 1962 to 1988. In effect, the country defied the maxim that reads "No country can stand alone". As a result of decades of neglect, the Myanmar people could not familiarize themselves with contemporary world affairs and how other parts of the world were going about with their political change.

As a country of multiple ethnic groups, Myanmar has a rich cultural diversity. In this respect, learning to live together in diversity and promote tolerance and freedom in society is the lifeblood of peaceful coexistence.

Myanmar has experienced a series of disturbances throughout its history which are directly linked to the predicament the country currently finds itself in. So far fate has not yet favoured Myanmar to start to make efforts to keep abreast of its neighbours. It is however encouraging to see that the government is currently engaged with the few remaining ethnic armed groups in peace talks that

remain gridlocked.

It should be noted that a gridlock is not a dead-end in itself. If there is a will, there is always a way out. It is therefore necessary for all stakeholders to give in. In fact, 'giving in' has nothing to do with 'giving up'. All sides involved should put their egos aside so as to reach a compromise agreement by prioritizing national interests ahead of their personal interests. As the old saying goes, tough times never last, but tough people do.

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

Mindset change important for democratisation process, says Thura U Shwe Mann

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Nov—Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw and Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann said a change of mindset is crucial for democratization processes with harmonious reforms of thoughts, words and actions.

During his visit to Nat Mauk township of Magwe, central Myanmar region, he met with locals at the town hall to discuss de-

velopment programmes of the region. Thura U Shwe Mann also said that parliaments play crucial roles to ensure democratic practices in global countries.

He mentioned that reform process still has many hurdles, and it has not lived up to the public expectation, objecting the idea in which junior civil servants do not follow the policies of government.

The speaker insisted that the change of mindset at administrative level or members of parliament is important for effective reforms.

Parliament is composed with the representatives of 19 political parties.

Thura U Shwe Mann also said that majority of grassroots people are living in rural areas, and they will



Thura U Shwe Mann visits former residence of deceased Bogyoke Aung San in Nat Mauk.—MNA

be supported with cultivation loans, farming technologies and markets for

their produce, together with the 2013 Farmers Rights disbursement of agricultural funds in accordance with Protection and Promotion of Interest Law.—MNA

Riverine Ferry Service

The traffic congestions in Yangon are getting worse by every passing day. They would reach a stage when it could not be easily controlled, if not addressed promptly. This is a common problem that most of the developing and even the developed countries had to hurdle pass.

I praise the action taken by the Union Government to instruct the Yangon Region Government to tackle the problem promptly. In my previous article "Solving the Traffic Congestions in Yangon", I gave some suggestions, which I thought could ease the traffic jams, even if they could not be eradicated all together. One of them was to exploit the riverine system encircling more than three fourths of the metropolitan Yangon area. I had suggested to grant permission to the private sector to operate riverine ferry services on these waterways. However, to spare the readers from the long and tedious details, I have not elaborated as to

By Khin Maung Myint

how it should be done.

In this article I will attempt to go into some details. Before proceeding, I like to admit that it was not my original idea, but was derived from the convenience and efficient services provided by river and canal ferries in Bangkok, which I had experienced firsthand. They are safe, efficient, convenient, saves time and above all punctual. One advantage of the Bangkok boat service is the labyrinth of the canal system, which made access to the heart of the downtown areas possible.

If you are familiar with the riverine system encircling Yangon, you will know straight away that my suggestion for a riverine ferry service is sound enough for consideration to commission a thorough feasibility study.

If you have a map in front of you, you will see that right from somewhere north of Insein, the riverine system encircles impor-

tant business areas, such as Bayintnaung, Hlaing, Kamayut, Kyimyindine, Ahlone, Lanmandaw, Pabedan, Seikkan, Botataung, Pazundaung, Dawbon, Thaketa, Thingyankyun, Thuwunna, North, South and East Dagon. Many businesses are situated close to the rivers passing along these places mentioned. By now I hope you will agree with my idea of a riverine ferry system.

As a pilot project, the stretch between Pazundaung and Kyimyindine should be considered. However, a thorough and comprehensive feasibility study should be made. If necessary, should seek the assistance of foreign experts.

In my opinion this would be the easiest and quickest method to implement than the other long term plans, which I proposed in my previous article. For

those who have not read it, here is a gist :-

1. To widen and upgrade the existing roads.
2. To construct new roads, preferably, elevated freeways as they can be build over the existing ones, they do not need much extra land.
3. Provision of public parking spaces and to insist the inclusion of private parking lots when granting building permits or licenses.
4. Provision of efficient and sufficient Mass Rapid Transit System (MRTS).
5. Last but not least, to permit the private sector to operate riverine ferry services.

As an ex-naval personnel, I am quite familiar with this section of the riverine system as I had traversed it uncountable times, I dare say that my suggestion for the ferry service is plausible, though it may need thorough study and planning paying special attention to the safety of the passengers above anything else.

The author is Retired Deputy General Manager, Admin: Dept., Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications.

Ambassador U San Myint Oo concurrently accredited to Timor-Leste

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Nov – The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U San Myint Oo, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of Indonesia, concurrently as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. —MNA

Ambassador U Tha Aung Nyun accredited to South Africa

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Nov – The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Tha Aung Nyun, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Malaysia, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of South Africa.—MNA

U Zaw Myint appointed as Ambassador to Malaysia

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Nov — The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Zaw Myint as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Malaysia.—MNA

ARTICLE

MOVING FORWARD IN UNITY TO A PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY: OUR COMMITMENTS AND OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Nanda Hmun
Director-General
Ministry of Culture

We all have witnessed how ASEAN has endured and overcome the regional issues and try its resilience and sustain its **“One Vision, One Identity and One Community”** in its establishment of 47 years. That is why through its individual and collective efforts, ASEAN has become more united in striving for the establishment of an economically dynamic, politically peaceful, prosperous and stable, and socially caring community. Throughout the years of togetherness of ASEAN, those strong commitments that have been made by ASEAN Leaders, led ASEAN’s great achievements and make closer among its members to continue working together with ASEAN Spirit of unity and solidarity, friendship and cooperation towards the people-centered ASEAN. This also reflects the Theme for 2014 Myanmar’s Chairmanship: **“Moving forward in unity to a peaceful and prosperous community”**. According to this theme, we will move forward hand in hand for ASEAN to become a prosperous and developed community which we are committed to achieve by 2015.

At the ASEAN Summit held in December 1997 in Kuala Lumpur, the ASEAN Leaders declared the ASEAN Vision 2020, to transform ASEAN into a stable, prosperous, and highly competitive region with equitable economic development and reduced poverty and socio-economic disparities. This is the reason of why we formed THREE Pillars; ASEAN Political - Security Community (APSC), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) which are expected to work in tandem in establishing the ASEAN Community.

Though we are trying our best to narrow down the development gap

among ASEAN Members, it is still a great threat to the sustainability of socio-economic development of ASEAN achieved over the past four decades. It calls for all ASEAN member states to further strengthen its unity to jointly address and fulfill narrowing the development gap, ASEAN connectivity of both physical and institutional infrastructure and promotion of SME’s role in regional economic development.

For ASEAN Political and Security Council (APSC), it has priorities like : in moving forward to a peaceful and prosperous community, the successful establishment of ASEAN Community since ASEAN is now at the critical juncture for the establishment of ASEAN Community as inspired by its Vision 2020; to improve its efficiency and effectiveness, and to be more streamlined and better coordinated and to respond to the realities and changing circumstances of regional and international dynamics.

For ASEAN Economic Council (AEC), three priority areas; such as SMEs development, enhancing public-private partnership and moving ASEAN and AEC beyond 2015 have been identified and implemented as the key deliverables for 2014 under the Economic Community in order to accelerate the realization of the AEC by 2015.

For ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC), to strengthen and empower the existing ASEAN mechanisms and multi-sectoral actions to improve prevention, preparedness, response, relief and recovery on disasters; to strengthen the environmental resilience and adaptive capacity to climate change of the ASEAN Community; to undertake working for progress on ASEAN Agreement for Protection of Rights of Migrant Workers, to consolidate collective efforts on climate change issues, disaster management; to redouble the efforts on poverty reduction, strengthening social safety nets, forging a common

identity, building a caring, sharing, and harmonious society and promoting inclusiveness in sharing the benefits of region’s growth; to enhance the role of women and children.

As ASEAN looks towards developing a post-2015 vision, we need to consider not only the current challenges we face, but future challenges. Among the many topics discussed at the 24th ASEAN Summit in May was that of changing global and regional power dynamics and the potential challenge that poses to ASEAN.

ASEAN is only one year away from its first great milestone – the implementation of the ASEAN Community. It represents a single regional common market and production base of over 600 million people, with a free flow of goods, services, investment capital and skilled labor between member states.

With our commitments, we all are trying to reach our Community: ASEAN Political and Security Community is about **Peace**; the ASEAN Economic Community is about **Prosperity** while the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community is about **People**. Peace, Prosperity and People are at the core of a strong ASEAN Community that we all are striving to achieve. Moreover, ASEAN member States, who are sustaining their long partnership for more than 47 years proven that ASEAN will be a region of harmony and unity of new ideas; and ASEAN will be a beacon of hope for sustainable peace and prosperity for this region; ASEAN will be One Nation of Ten countries and One Identity at all.

ASEAN has a strong commitment to cooperate with, as many countries and regional and international organizations as possible. This is in line with the spirit of the Bali Declaration on the ASEAN Community in a Global Community of Nations. ASEAN adopted its **Vision 2020** seventeen years ago. Today, in accordance with this vision, we are striving to establish an ASEAN

Community that will soon be realized in 2015. Now this year is the watershed for ASEAN so we have to look forward to the next 15 or 20 years. Also we have to set a new vision so that ASEAN will be more credible, relevant and responsive to changing circumstances and overcome the threats. It calls for all ASEAN member states to participate actively in this important mission.

In order to redouble our community building efforts, we have adopted the Nay Pyi Taw Declaration on the realization of ASEAN Community at the 24th ASEAN Summit. In the declaration, the ASEAN leaders have shown their political will and determination to carry out the implementation task more actively and diligently. The successful establishment of ASEAN Community will show the world that ASEAN is credible, united and integrated.

After the ASEAN Charter came into force in 2008, ASEAN has transformed itself into a rules-based organization. ASEAN needs to be more strengthened and better coordinated. The time has come to review ASEAN mechanisms and organs as well as to strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat, in order for ASEAN to perform better in the future. The Adoption of Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration at the 23rd ASEAN Summit in Brunei Darussalam also paved the way to formulate Post 2015 Vision and its central elements for each pillar.

During Myanmar’s Chairmanship, our Leaders announced the **Nay Pyi Taw Declaration** at the 24th ASEAN Summit hosted in Myanmar. This was the Declaration which Leaders reaffirmed the commitment to the aims and purposes of ASEAN as set forth in the Bangkok Declaration of 8th August 1967. Since ASEAN is to promote regional cooperation in Southeast Asia in the spirit of equality and partnership and thereby contribute towards peace, progress and prosperity in the region. The Nay Pyi Taw Declaration also reflect and recall

the purposes and principles enshrined in the ASEAN Charter and upholding the Charter of the United Nations. The most significance of the Declaration is all our regional commitments already made such as; the ASEAN Vision 2020 (1997), the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II (Bali Concord II) (2003), the Cebu Declaration on the Acceleration of the Establishment of the ASEAN Community by 2015 (2007), the Cha-am Hua Hin Declaration on the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community (2009-2015), the Bali Declaration on an ASEAN Community in a Global Community of Nations (Bali Concord III) (2011), the Phnom Penh Agenda for ASEAN Community Building (2012) and the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on the ASEAN Community’s Post-2015 Vision (2013) have been recalled to draft it.

After reaffirming our commitment to working closely with all our partners through various ASEAN-led processes, such as ASEAN Plus One, ASEAN Plus Three (APT), East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus), through the Nay Pyi Taw Declaration, our Leaders stressed on the importance of cooperation among ASEAN Member States and the realisation of an ASEAN Community that is politically cohesive, economically integrated and socially responsible. There are altogether 28 agreed points in the Nay Pyi Taw Declaration which reflect those strategic objectives and activities mentioned in each blueprints of three Pillars.

It also supported a lot for formulating the ASEAN Community’s post-2015 vision and reiterated those commitments made for further strengthening efforts to enhance ASEAN integration and narrow the development gap by building on existing initiatives such as the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI), the Ha Noi Declaration for Narrowing the Develop-

ment Gap for Closer ASEAN Integration (2001), the Vientiane Declaration on Enhancing Economic Cooperation and Integration among Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam (2004) and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (2010).

It is convinced that the present regional and global dynamics are rendering to discussions on a regional architecture in East Asia and calls for more challenging engagement and management. Those uncertainties, challenges and opportunities brought together with those issues, the region has to manage very tactfully. ASEAN becomes as the fulcrum of relations in the East Asia region, it has to face more challenges in preserving its relevance and centrality. On the other hand, when it expands its external relations with a view to constructively engaging its friends and partners, ASEAN will strive to continue to exercise leadership and remain proactive in managing the cob-web of processes and cooperation in the region.

Taking this opportunity, Myanmar has to reaffirm its commitments: despite the many challenges, Myanmar continues to play active roles in supporting and coordinating with ASEAN Member States to help facilitate and drive the establishment of the ASEAN Community. We believe that there is room to improve policy implementation across the political-security, economic and socio-cultural pillars, streamline the performance of our institutions, further prioritize issues with a view to improving national and regional coordination. We are prepared to work closely with the ASEAN Member States to ensure that we are able to deliver our major commitments and objectives. Myanmar has joined the journey of ASEAN to reach its Community. Myanmar has to seize more opportunities, intensify exchanges, build trust, deepen cooperation and make cooperative partnerships among our ASEAN Members and its Dialogue Partners and grow from strength to strength!

US OKs genetically modified potato with lower cancer risk

WASHINGTON, 8 Nov — The US Department of Agriculture on Friday approved the first genetically modified potato for commercial planting in the United States, a move likely to draw the ire of groups opposed to artificial manipulation of foods.

The so-called Innate potato, developed by the J R Simplot Company, is engineered to contain less of a suspected human carcinogen that occurs when a conventional potato is fried, and is also less prone to bruising during transport.

Idaho-based Simplot is a major supplier of frozen French fries to fast food giant McDonald's Corp.

Friday's announcement came from the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). Simplot applied to APHIS for approval of the Innate potato in 2013. The submission was also reviewed by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration.

Field trials of the potato were conducted from 2009 through 2011 in eight states — Florida, Indiana, Idaho, Michigan, Nebraska,

ka, North Dakota, Washington and Wisconsin.

Genetic modification is common in US field crops such as corn and soybeans. More than 90 percent of US soybeans and about 89 percent of US corn are genetically altered for herbicide tolerance or other traits.

But the potential adoption of genetic modification has been more controversial in food crops such as wheat, where no GM varieties are approved in the United States, and for fruits and vegetables.

APHIS said it received hundreds of submissions from individuals or groups about Simplot's potato during a public comment period.

Among those opposing the potato were individuals and groups broadly opposed to the development of GM crops in general, as well as to the regulatory framework surrounding genetic modification, APHIS said.

The potential for human benefits — a lower cancer risk for consumers — was among the positives cited in public comments.

Reuters

World Economic Forum lists income inequality, unemployment as top trends of 2015

GENEVA, 8 Nov — Income inequality and unemployment top the ranking of ten major trends for the year ahead, said a latest report released by the World Economic Forum (WEF) on Friday.

The annual report, titled the Outlook on the Global Agenda 2015, identified top ten trends across the world requiring immediate attention and profound solutions over the coming year.

It listed the top ten trends for 2015 as: deepening income inequality, persistent jobless growth, lack of leadership, rising geo-strategic competition, weakening of representative democracy, rising pollution in the developing world, increasing occur-

rence of severe weather events, intensifying nationalism, increasing water stress and growing importance of health in the economy.

According to WEF, the first two trends were viewed as increasingly concerning problems, as stagnating wages contributed to a vicious cycle of entrenched inequality through suppressed growth and employment prospects.

Apart from economic challenges, two political trends — the rise of geo-strategic competition and intensifying nationalism — made into the list for the first time since the report was initially launched in 2010. The report highlighted difficulties many health systems face



in adapting to demographic change, rises in non-communicable diseases and the wider threat from outbreaks of infectious diseases.

"Never before has the need to find new solutions to shared problems been so clear — if only we were able to organize ourselves more effectively. Today's

challenges, which are global in scope, heavily interlinked in nature and critical in urgency, will only be addressed through greater understanding and stronger collaboration by all stakeholders," Espen Eide, managing director at the WEF, said in a statement.

Xinhua

Suspected Ebola case found at Airport in Japan

OSAKA, 8 Nov — A woman suspected of carrying Ebola virus was detected on Friday at the Kansai Airport in Osaka, local media reported.

The woman, in her 20s, was from Guinea in West Africa, and was found

having a fever at the airport. She was immediately transferred to a special hospital for quarantine, and her blood sample was sent to the National Institute of Infectious Diseases (NIID) in Tokyo for further tests.

Two suspected Ebola

cases were reported in Japan on Friday, with a man in his 60s found having a fever and sent to a hospital in Tokyo a few hours earlier. The man has recently travelled to Liberia.

According to the World Health Organiza-

tion, the death toll caused by the deadly virus infection increased to 4,951 out of 13,567 cases as of 29 October, and Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea are the top three countries that face the epidemic.

Xinhua

Bank of America still seeking SEC relief in \$16.7 billion settlement

NEW YORK, 8 Nov — Bank of America Corp (BAC.N) is still trying to get a penalty waiver from the US Securities and Exchange Commission over a \$16.7 billion (10.52 billion pound) settlement involving bad mortgages, Bloomberg reported on Friday, citing two people

familiar with the matter.

BofA reached a record \$16.65 billion settlement with the US government to settle charges it misled investors into buying toxic mortgage-backed securities.

Securitized mortgages were a major cause of the 2007-2009 financial crisis.

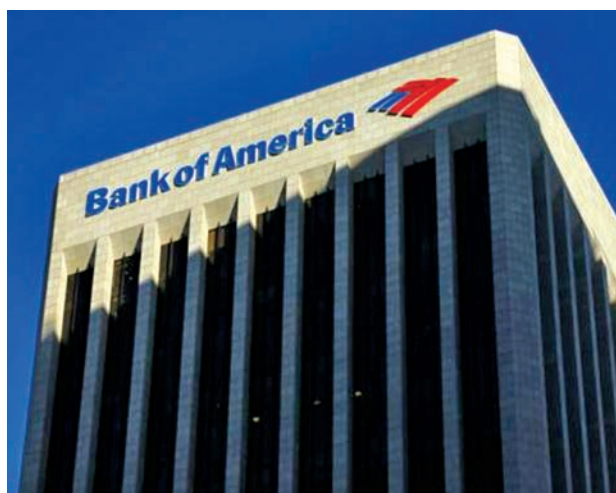
According to Bloomberg, BofA's lawyer, Gary Lynch, asked that additional sanctions tied to the settlement be waived. He argued the bank it is being unfairly treated compared with other firms that were given waivers in similar cases.

The disagreement is over a penalty that could prevent BofA from selling investments in hedge funds, Bloomberg said.

A vote on the waivers scheduled for last week was scrapped at the last minute, Bloomberg reported, citing one of the people. The SEC's staff have recommended that the commissioners approve the relief, it said.

BofA could not be reached for comment outside regular US working hours.

Reuters



The Bank of America building is shown in Los Angeles, California on 29 Oct, 2014.—REUTERS

Volunteers receive training on fighting Ebola in Belgium



A volunteer receives training on how to dress and de-dress personal protective equipments, which is aimed to deal with the Ebola disease in West Africa, at a training centre of Doctor Without Borders (Medecins Sans Frontieres) in Brussels of Belgium, on 7 Nov, 2014. The volunteers are set to leave for West Africa in the coming days or weeks.—XINHUA

Passing comet peppered Mars with shooting stars, scientists say

CAPE CANAVERAL, 8 Nov — The comet that sailed by Mars last month spawned thousands of shooting stars per hour and created a new layer of ionized particles high in the planet's atmosphere, NASA scientists said on Friday.

At twilight, the Martian skies likely took on a yellowish hue from sodium in vaporized comet dust, creating a glow similar to

sodium vapor lights commonly used in parking lots on Earth.

"To see (that) many shooting stars happening at once, I think it would have been really mind-blowing," planetary scientist Nick Schneider, with the University of Colorado in Boulder, told reporters on a conference call.

Scientists used a fleet of robotic spacecraft circling Mars to study Com-

et Siding Spring, which passed just 87,000 miles (139,500 km) by Mars on 19 October. That was less than half the distance between Earth and the moon, and 10 times closer than any known comet that has passed by Earth.

The comet was a rare visitor from the Oort Cloud, a spherically shaped reservoir beyond Neptune's orbit containing leftovers from the formation of the

solar system some 4.6 billion years ago.

Comet Siding Spring "probably has never been in to the inner solar system before," said Jim Green, head of NASA's Planetary Science Division in Washington.

The comet also left an imprint on Mars, depositing thousands of pounds of dust into the atmosphere, far more than computer models had predicted.

NASA had moved its orbiting spacecraft so they would be behind Mars and shielded from dust impacts at the peak of the storm.

"I really believe that hiding them like that really saved them," Green said. "We ended up with a lot more dust than we ever anticipated."

Measurements taken before and after Siding Spring's approach show significant changes in

Mars' upper atmosphere, including the addition of a new layer of charged particles and telltale chemical fingerprints of magnesium, iron and other metals shed by the passing comet.

Analysis is ongoing to determine the comet's size, composition and other attributes. The comet is named for the Australian observatory that discovered it last year.

Reuters

GT Advanced says fell victim to 'bait-and-switch' by Apple



A logo of Apple is seen in this 23 Sept, 2014 illustration photo in Sarajevo. — REUTERS

SAN FRANCISCO, 8 Nov — Apple Inc pulled a "bait and switch" move to force GT Advanced Technologies into a money-losing deal to supply the iPhone maker with sapphire, according to an affidavit by a senior executive at the company.

In documents unsealed on Friday by a US Bankruptcy Court in Springfield, Massachusetts, GT Advanced Chief Operating Officer Daniel Squiller says Apple offered what would have been GT Advanced's largest sale ever and then changed the terms of the agreement after it was too late for the smaller company to pursue other opportunities.

GT Advanced, a maker of sapphire furnaces that supplied sapphire material to Apple for its smartphone screens, filed for Chapter 11 protection on 6 October and refused to publicly explain why it had imploded, citing confidentiality clauses in its Apple contracts.

The two companies later reached a deal to part ways and allow GT Advanced to proceed with its bankruptcy, but Judge Henry Boroff denied requests by the companies to keep some of the documents in the case under seal. In a deal struck

last year, GT Advanced outfitted a plant owned by Apple in Mesa, Arizona with furnaces that it would use to make scratch-resistant sapphire exclusively for Apple.

"With a classic bait-and-switch strategy, Apple presented GTAT with an onerous and massively one-sided deal in the fall of 2013," Squiller wrote.

In another document unsealed on Friday, Apple called GT Advanced's accusations "scandalous and defamatory".

At the start of negotiations, Apple offered to buy 2,600 sapphire growing furnaces from GT Advanced, which GT Advanced would operate on behalf of Apple, the "ultimate technology client to land," according to Squiller.

"In hindsight, it is unclear whether Apple even intended to purchase any sapphire furnaces from GTAT," he wrote.

But after months of hard negotiating, Apple offered a deal under which it would shift away economic risk by lending GT Advanced the money to build the furnaces and grow the sapphire, and then sell it exclusively to Apple for less than market value, Squiller wrote.—Reuters

Acoustic warfare: bats jam each other's sonar while bug hunting

WASHINGTON, 8 Nov — All's fair in love and war — and also in mid-air bug hunting, if you're a bat.

Scientists studying a common species of these flying mammals found that the bats, while competing for the juicy insects they call dinner, make noises that "jam" other bats that are using their sonar-like echolocation abilities to zero in on prey.

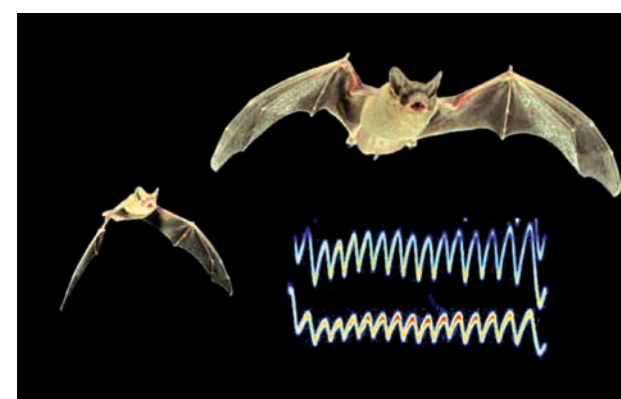
Echolocation — bouncing sound waves off objects — is how bats navigate in the dark while hunting, enabling them to find and catch elusive insects zipping through the nighttime air. Sophisticated video and audio recordings made during experiments in Arizona and New Mexico involving Mexican free-tailed bats revealed how they thwarted each other's meal plans. Just as one bat was within a split second of snatching a moth or other

insect in mid-air, another bat that was also out foraging used its vocal chords to emit a specialized jamming call to prevent the first one from making the catch.

"The bats jam competitors to prevent them from capturing insects so that the jamming bat has an opportunity to catch the prey," biologist Aaron Corcoran of Wake Forest University in North Carolina, who led the study published in the journal *Science*, said on Friday. "The hunting bat is 86 percent less likely to capture the prey when it is getting jammed," Corcoran added.

The researchers said this is the first bat species known to use jamming but it is possible other bats do it as well.

The jamming call has a pitch that rapidly moves up and down, covering the frequencies used by bats to locate and capture insects,



A composite picture of two Mexican free-tailed bats illustrating how they would compete for prey by jamming each other's sonar is seen in an undated handout illustration released on 7 Nov, 2014. — REUTERS

Corcoran said. The hunting bat simultaneously hears the jamming call and the echoes from its own echolocation, preventing it from being able to calculate the bug's position, he added.

"This is nature's version of acoustic warfare," Corcoran said.

The jamming is akin to techniques used in modern aviation warfare. "I liken it

to a pilot jamming the radar of an incoming missile," said Wake Forest biologist Bill Conner, another of the researchers.

Battling for bugs is particularly challenging for these bats considering that they often live in colonies of millions of individuals all wanting the same kind of meal.

Reuters

11th Optics Valley of China Int'l Optoelectronic Exposition kicks off in Wuhan



An exhibitor shows a laser equipment at the 11th Optics Valley of China International Optoelectronic Exposition in Wuhan, capital of central China's Hubei Province on 6 Nov, 2014. The expo, which kicked off on 6 November, will last until 8 November. — XINHUA

Mexico says missing students likely burned to ashes by gang

MEXICO CITY, 8 Nov — Forty-three missing students abducted by corrupt police in southwest Mexico six weeks ago were apparently incinerated by drug gang henchmen and their remains tipped in a garbage dump and a river, the government said on Friday.

Attorney General Jesus Murillo said three detainees, caught a week ago, admitted setting fire to a group of bodies in a dump near Iguala in the state of Guerrero, where the trainee teachers went missing on 26 September after clashing with local police.

Then, the perpetrators set about removing all the evidence, Murillo told a news conference, showing taped confessions of the detained, photographs of where remains were found and video re-enactments of how the bodies were moved. “They didn’t just burn the bodies with their clothes, they also burned the clothes of those who participated,”



Relatives of the 43 missing students of the Ayotzinapa teachers' training college walk through a metal detector before a meeting with Mexico's Attorney General Jesus Murillo Karam inside a hangar at an airstrip of Mexico's Federal Police in Chilpancingo on 7 Nov, 2014.—REUTERS

Murillo said, adding the gang members spent over 12 hours torching the remains. “They tried to erase every possible trace.”

The government says police working with a lo-

cal drug gang abducted the students after the clashes. The kidnapping triggered mass protests in much of the country and seriously undermined President Enrique Pena Nieto's claims that

Mexico has become safer on his watch.

The disappearances have been the toughest challenge yet to face Pena Nieto, who took office two years ago vowing to restore or-

der in Mexico, where about 100,000 people have died in violence linked to organized crime since 2007.

A grim-faced Pena Nieto said the findings had “shocked and offended” Mexico and pledged to round up everyone involved.

“The investigations will be carried out to the full, all those responsible will be punished under the law,” he said. Dozens of police are among 74 people held in the case.

The scandal has forced Pena Nieto to cut short a planned visit to China next week, and angry relatives of the missing students said the government had only made the announcement to clear the path for the president to go. “Pena Nieto should think hard about his trip,” said Felipe de la Cruz, father of one of the missing students. “As long as there is no proof, our children are alive.”

The confessions of the gang members pointed to the murder “of a large number of people,” Murillo said, showing a video of one suspect saying the victims had said they were students.

Reuters

JICA jointly builds classroom and trains labourers in Haiyan-hit town

LEYTE, (Philippines), 8 Nov — Japan's main aid agency started on Friday the training of Filipino welders and construction workers hired to construct a new six-classroom building it is donating to a public high school located in a remote village in the central Philippine province Leyte that was devastated by super typhoon Haiyan on 8 November last year. The assistance, which is among quick-impact projects of the Japan International Cooperation Agency, is “a very good occasion not only to help in the recovery from the Haiyan tragedy but also to train and educate local people so they can eventually help this region,” said Kunio Kimata of Oriental Consultants Co, a Japanese company contracted to implement the project.

Kimata said the skills training aspect is “unique” because paired with one Japanese trainer, who is an expert on roof installation, is a Filipino man whose work experience in Japan in the construction industry equipped him with knowledge of Japanese-standard welding. Noel Watanabe, who has opted to use his Japanese wife's surname, works for residential roofing company Takemura Roof in Yamanashi Prefecture and was tapped by his Japanese colleague Katsuya Usui, 42, to be part of the JICA project. Watanabe, who was born 51 years ago in Pampanga Province north of Manila, has been based in Japan since the age of 19.

“I didn’t expect that I can come here to help in the rehabilitation phase. If not for JICA, I would still be relying on television news about the developments here in this affected region. When I saw the news about Yolanda, I really had a strong feeling of sympathy that I wished I was Superman so I could fly and help save lives,” Watanabe told *Kyodo News*. The super typhoon was called Yolanda in the Philippines. JICA field officer Jenny Asis said Watanabe's participation in the skills-training aspect is an advantage because, as a Filipino, it is easier for him to pass along knowledge gained in Japan.

Kyodo News

Keep children out of conflict, UNICEF says after school attacks in Ukraine, Syria

UNITED NATIONS, 8 Nov — The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) called on Friday on all conflict parties to keep children out of harm's way following deadly attacks on schools in Ukraine and Syria this week, which it said were a “horrific reminder” of the terrible price youngsters are paying in the wars.

Mortar rounds shelled a primary school on Wednesday in the district of Qaboun in eastern Damascus, capital of Syria, killing at least 11 children and injuring many more, said Hanaa Singer, UNICEF representative for Syria. The Qaboun assault is the latest in a series of indiscriminate attacks on schools, teachers and students. In the first nine months of 2014 alone, the United Nations in Syria has verified at least 35 such incidents that killed 105 children and injured 293 others.

“The real numbers are surely higher, and there are indications that attacks in some areas may have been deliberate,” Singer said, expressing her deepest sympathies to the families of the children who had lost their lives or been injured.

Also on Wednesday, at least two children were killed and four others injured in Ukraine when an artillery shell hit a school sports field in Donetsk city.

UNICEF representative Christophe Boulhierac said the agency is outraged to learn of the casualties and expressed sympathy to the families of the children.

Boulhierac stressed that UNICEF has repeatedly called on all parties to the conflict to uphold their responsibility to protect children, schools, and other civilian infrastructure from the conflict.

Schools should be zones of peace and safe havens where children could learn without fear of death or injury, he said.

He reminded that all parties to any conflicts have specific obligations under international humanitarian and human rights laws to afford children special protection.

Xinhua



Smoke rises from a oil refinery in Baiji, north of Baghdad on 19 June, 2014. —REUTERS

Suicide bomber kills Iraqi commander, top cleric raps army corruption

BAGHDAD, 8 Nov — A suicide bomber in a truck packed with explosives killed a senior police commander involved in an operation against Islamic State militants who have been surrounding Iraq's biggest oil refinery for months, security sources said.

Friday's attack killed General Faisal Malik, one of the supervisors of a campaign designed to break the Sunni insurgents' grip on the facility and to rescue security forces trapped inside it just outside the town of Baiji.

Two policemen were also killed, the security sources said.

“The general was in his Humvee with two of his men. A suicide bomber in a truck targeted him directly,” said an officer under his command.

Iraqi security forces have repeatedly tried to push Islamic State fighters out of the refinery compound, where security forces have been surviving on airdrops.

The death of Malik came after Iraqi security tried a new strategy to break the Islamic State siege of the refinery near Baiji, which lies 200 km (130 miles) north of Baghdad. Backed by Shi'ite militias and army helicopters, government forces have

swept through a desert area west of Baiji, hoping to recapture the town and to cut off Islamic State supply lines.

Security forces were also hoping to gain control of a road leading to Mosul, the biggest city in the north which is held by Islamic State, according to an army colonel. Islamic State fighters seized the city of Baiji and surrounded the sprawling refinery in June during a lightning campaign through northern Iraq. The group also controls a swathe of territory in neighbouring Syria and has proclaimed a caliphate straddling both countries.

Reuters

Canadian PM meets Alibaba's Jack Ma for SME growth

HANGZHOU, 8 Nov — Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper met Jack Ma of Alibaba here on Friday, voicing hopes the Internet could help Canada's small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) tap Chinese market.

Harper, who is on his third visit to China since taking office in 2006, said the growing Chinese middle class provides an enormous market for Canadian food and manufacturing products.

He hoped the Internet would bring more business opportunities for Canadian SMEs and boost the country's employment.



Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper (3rd R, front) and Executive Chairman of Alibaba Group Jack Ma (2nd R, front) pose for photos in Hangzhou, capital of east China's Zhejiang Province, on 7 Nov, 2014.

XINHUA

Jack Ma, chairman of Alibaba Group, said his company has sold American cherries, Canadian lob-

sters and French wines to Chinese consumers on its online shopping platforms.

He said Alibaba is

willing to help more Canadian enterprises sell products to China.

Alibaba is the largest e-commerce company in the world in market value after it was listed in the New York Stock Exchange in September.

Before meeting with Ma, Harper attended a China-Canada business conference in Hangzhou, capital of east China's Zhejiang Province, to promote trade and investment. Harper continued his China visit in Beijing on Friday evening, and he will attend events related to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting.—Xinhua

Mexico scraps \$3.75 billion China rail deal ahead of state visit

MEXICO CITY, 8 Nov — Mexico has revoked a \$3.75 billion (2.37 billion pound) high-speed rail contract from a Chinese-led consortium after its uncontested bid prompted an outcry from lawmakers, souring a state visit to China next week by President Enrique Pena Nieto.

After the contract to build the link was awarded on Monday, opposition politicians accused the government of favouring the group led by China Railway Construction Corp Ltd, the sole bidder.

Mexico's communications and transport ministry,

which has defended the bid process, said on Friday it expects to re-run the tender in late November under the same terms, and would keep it open for six months to enable all interested parties to participate.

"The president wants this project which is so important for Mexico to not be questioned, to have absolute clarity," Transportation Minister Gerardo Ruiz Esparza said.

"We expect more participation from train makers in the new tender," he added. China Railway Construction can take part in the new tender and could be eligible for

compensation because Mexico's government withdrew the contract, he said.

Since Pena Nieto took office in late 2012, he has tried to forge closer ties with China after years of manufacturing rivalry between two nations seeking to supply the US market.

Announcing the contract on Monday, Mexico's government said the 210-km (130-mile) line to connect Mexico City and the central city of Queretaro would cost 50.82 billion pesos (\$3.74 billion), including the build cost and five years of operation.

The proposal came with

a 20-year, Chinese government-backed credit to cover most of the project's value, at interest rates below those available even to Mexico's government.

News of the cancellation helped to drag down Chinese stocks on Friday and is an embarrassment for Pena Nieto ahead of his trip to China. He is due to unveil a joint investment fund with China, which has so far invested a tiny fraction in Mexico of the billions of dollars it has spent in Latin America.

The fund could be worth up to \$5 billion, officials say.—Reuters

Brussels mayor claims 100 police officers injured in strike

BRUSSELS, 8 Nov — The City of Brussels mayor claimed on Friday that 100 law enforcement officers were injured during violent clashes between the police and strikers during a demonstration in the Belgian capital on Thursday. Speaking to press on Friday, Mayor Yvan Mayeur said property and vehicles were also damaged. According to the Mayor, protesters burned 11 vehicles and severely damaged 62 more.

Police and trade union demonstrators clashed on Thursday during a day-long strike over the economic policies of the new centre-right Belgian government.

Violence erupted late in the afternoon, when police fired tear gas and water cannons at protesters who responded by throwing rocks and pavement stones.

The police made 13 arrests. According to Yvan Mayeur, a group of those protesting joined the protest in a deliberate attempt to create trouble. He condemned "with utmost vehemence" such protesters, according to a report from the *Belga* news agency. Meanwhile, the Mayor of Antwerp, Bart De Wever, has said there is no other option to the policies being pursued by the new government.

Antwerp, Belgium's second largest city, also experienced protests in response to the government's economic plans, including raising the retirement age.

Bart De Wever's N-VA party of Flemish nationalists is a part of the new Belgian coalition government, which was sworn in on 11 October. Speaking on Belgian television, De Wever said "there is no alternative to our policy. We must now continue and create prospects for the people."

Referring to EU countries that have had to introduce austerity measures, such as Greece, he said: "Other countries that preceded us are expected to abide by this difficult phase." He said countries with a strong trade union representation, such as France, are "infinitely worse off" than Belgium. — Xinhua

WEATHER REPORT

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS RECORDED AT 09:30 hrs M.S.T.

During the past (24) hours, rain or thundershowers have been scattered in Mandalay, Magway and Ayeyawady Regions, Rakhine and Mon States, isolated in Bago, Yangon and Taninthayi Regions, Shan, Chin and Kayah States and weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States with isolated heavy falls in Mandalay Region. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) above November average temperatures in Upper Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions, Shan (North and East) and Chin States and about November average temperatures in the remaining Regions and States. The significant night temperature was (10°C) in Loilin. The noteworthy amounts of rainfalls recorded were Pyapon (1.74) inches, Nay Pyi Taw (Zayarthiri) and Manaung (1.69) inches each and Yay (1.46) inches.

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (12:30)hrs MST today, the depression over the Central Bay of Bengal moved Westward and weakened into a low pressure area over West Central Bay of Bengal. Weather is partly cloudy to cloudy in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 9th November, 2014: Weather will be partly cloudy in Sagaing Region and Kachin State, rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Taninthayi Region, scattered in Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions, Rakhine and Mon States and isolated in the remaining Regions and States with isolated heavy falls in Taninthayi Region. Degree of certainty is (80%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with rough sea are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35 - 40) mph.



People watch boat race in the Tonle Sap River in front of the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 7 Nov, 2014. The three-day celebration of the Water Festival in Phnom Penh, the capital city of Cambodia, came to an end successfully Friday evening, a city hall spokesman said.—XINHUA

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'Happy New Year' shakes up Bollywood's men's club

NEW DELHI, 8 Nov — A record opening-day debut for a Bollywood film that happens to be directed by a woman is shaking up the men's-only club of filmmakers in the list of India's highest grossing movies. Farah Khan's new film, a heist caper that doubles as

a song-and-dance extravaganza, is a rare blockbuster by a woman filmmaker in the Indian movie industry, the world's largest by ticket sales. Two of Khan's three previous films in the last decade were hits too, but not as big as "Happy New Year".



Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan (L) and director Farah Khan smile during a news conference in Mumbai on 18 Sept, 2007.—REUTERS

The choreographer-turned-filmmaker said withstanding pressure from people who expect her to make a certain kind of cinema because of her gender is her biggest success.

"Nobody is expecting a 200 crore (\$33 million) (20.85 million pound) hit from a woman director, which in itself is very sad and very patronising," said Khan, whose recipe of breezy, entertaining cinema woos children and adults alike, but is panned by critics. "I hope more women come and break this record. I think it will help every woman who wants to go out and make a movie, if our movies end up making as much money as the male directors."

Khan, 49, said she lived her dream with "Happy New Year", having wanted to make the "biggest film you've seen in India".

Her leading man Shah Rukh Khan, Bollywood's most bankable star, headlines the film's ensemble cast. In the film, Shah Rukh and his ragtag crew of loveable rogues worm their way into a global dance competition at a Dubai hotel, with their sights set on diamonds hidden in an underground vault at the venue.

Reviews have mostly been critical with Anupama Chopra writing in the *Hindustan Times* that "the desire to entertain overshadows everything else—script, character, coherence, narrative logic".—Reuters

Robert Downey Jr names daughter Avri Roel



Robert Downey Jr

LOS ANGELES, 8 Nov — Superstar Robert Downey Jr and Susan Downey have named their daughter Avri Roel Downey.

The 49-year-old actor shared the news on Facebook.

"Yep... Avri Roel Downey joined the party at 3:22 am on November 4th... She's 7lbs even, spans 20 inches, and is accompanied by a variety of Susan's traits that have seemingly overwritten my 'junk DNA.' I'll post pics here and there when I'm not too busy staring...." he

wrote.

The 'Iron Man' star, who also has a 21-year-old son, Indio from a previous marriage, revealed he can't stop taking pictures of the latest addition to his family.

"After 9 months of intensive development, Team Downey is pleased to announce our 2014 fall/winter project. Principal photography commenced 11-14 and will continue until she says, 'Dad! You are embarrassing me... I'm 30, this has gotta stop'," he added.—PTI

Rolling Stones cancel concert due to Mick Jagger's illness

MELBOURNE, 8 Nov — The Rolling Stones have been forced to cancel their concert here tomorrow after singer Mick Jagger developed a throat infection.

Jagger has been advised to rest his vocal chords for the next few days in order to recuperate for the remainder of the tour. "The Rolling

Stones are incredibly disappointed to cancel the Hanging Rock gig and to disappoint their fans but were left with no other option," a spokesperson for the band said.

Their next show is in Sydney on 12 November, said Frontier touring.com, the promoters behind the concert.

PTI



Mick Jagger has been advised to rest his vocal chords for the next few days in order to recuperate for the remainder of the tour.—PTI

Death of actor Robin Williams officially ruled a suicide

LOS ANGELES, 8 Nov — Oscar winning actor Robin Williams' death in August has been officially ruled a suicide, Marin County authorities said on Friday following an investigation and toxicology tests on the comedian's body. The 63-year-old Williams, whose body was found on 11 August by

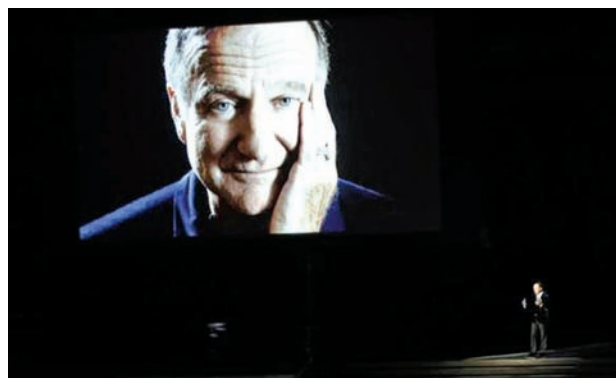
a personal assistant at his home in Tiburon in the San Francisco Bay area, died of asphyxia due to hanging, the Marin County Sheriff's Office said in a statement. That was the same finding sheriff's officials made in their preliminary conclusion.

Williams was suffering from the early stages of Par-

kinson's disease and from severe depression, his widow, Susan Schneider, said soon after his death. He had not been ready to share his diagnosis with the public, she said.

A toxicology test on Williams' body revealed the absence of alcohol or illicit drugs in his system, and prescription medications were detected in concentrations consistent with their use for therapeutic purposes, the statement from the Marin County Sheriff's Office said on Friday.

Williams, who was one of the world's most famous stand-up comedians, earned an Oscar for his role in the 1997 drama "Good Will Hunting." He also starred in the comedies "Good Morning, Vietnam," "Mrs Doubtfire" and "Night at the Museum."—Reuters



Billy Crystal takes the stage to pay tribute to the late Robin Williams, shown on a large screen, during the 66th Primetime Emmy Awards in Los Angeles, California on 25 Aug, 2014.—REUTERS

New 'Star Wars' film gets title

LONDON, 8 Nov—The name of the new 'Star Wars' movie has been revealed as 'The Force Awakens'.

The seventh installment of the sci-fi saga is set about 30 years after the events of 'Star Wars: Episode VI Return of the Jedi'.

The film sees a new cast including Daisy Ridley and John Boyega joining original cast members Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford and Carrie Fisher, reported BBC online.

The announcement was made on the movie's final day of production at

Pinewood Studios.

'Star Wars: The Force Awakens' will be directed by J J Abrams, who successfully reinvigorated the 'Star Trek' movie franchise in 2009, and is due to be released on 18 Dec, 2015.

PTI



The announcement was made on the movie's final day of production at Pinewood Studios.—PTI

Thirty years on, Bhopal film highlights tragedy of world's worst industrial disaster

NEW DELHI, 8 Nov — Thirty years on from the Bhopal disaster, an international film opens on Friday dramatising the story of how an American pesticide factory in India accidentally released cyanide gas into the atmosphere, killing thousands of people and leaving many more sick or disabled.

The thriller “Bhopal: A Prayer for Rain”, starring Hollywood actors Martin Sheen and Kal Penn, documents events leading up to the world's worst industrial disaster and its devastating aftermath.

Indian director Ravi Kumar said he hoped the film would help to ensure another such tragedy never occurred again.

“The template for most man-made industrial disasters is familiar — cost-cutting, pressure to make more money, callous attitude of corporate bosses in an exotic location,” Kumar



Security guards play cards on the roof of the former control room of the Union Carbide Corp pesticide plant in Bhopal on 1 Dec, 2009 which in December 1984 developed a toxic gas leak resulting in thousands of people dying in the aftermath.

REUTERS

told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

“We can learn from our mistakes and make sure Bhopal doesn't happen

again.” In the early hours of 3 Dec, 1984, around 40 metric tonnes of toxic methyl isocyanate (MIC) gas from Union Carbide's pesticide

plant in Bhopal leaked into the atmosphere and was carried by the wind to the surrounding slums.

Reuters

US senators urge women's World Cup switch to grass



Young soccer players form the logo for the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup during its unveiling in Vancouver, British Columbia on 14 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 8 Nov — A group of 13 members of the US Senate have urged FIFA to switch next year's women's World Cup in Canada to natural grass saying the decision to play on artificial turf was a

“short-sighted and counter-productive decision”.

Over 40 international women's players have filed a lawsuit in Canada against local organizers and FIFA claiming that is discriminatory to play a women's

World Cup on artificial turf when the men's tournament is always held on grass.

The bipartisan group of US Senators — led by Ohio Democrat Sherrod Brown also wrote to US Soccer President Sunil Gulati urging him to use his influence on FIFA's Executive Committee to bring about a change in policy.

“Artificial turf both increases the risk of serious injury and fundamentally changes the way the game is played. FIFA has never used turf fields for the men's World Cup,” the senators wrote in the letter to Blatter.

“As members of the United States Senate, we are deeply concerned with FIFA's treatment of these

players. We urge you to begin good faith negotiations with these athletes, free of retaliation and with the equal treatment that they deserve,” they added.

The senators' stance was welcomed by US international Abby Wambach who has been a leading voice against artificial turf at next year's World Cup.

“We're grateful that these Senators are standing beside us in our fight for an equal playing field at the World Cup,” said Wambach in a statement.

“But what's at stake here is more than just the surface we'll be playing on — it's about gender equality and standing up for what's right.”—Reuters

MYANMAR TV

(9-11-2014, Sunday)

- 6:00 am**
- * Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw
- 6:35 am**
- * Musical Programme (Myanmar Radio Modern Music Troupe)
- 7:00 am**
- * News / Weather Report
- 7:20 am**
- * MRTV's Youth Programme
- 8:00 am**
- * News / International News
- 8:30 am**
- * Amazing World
- 9:00 am**
- * News / International News
- 10:20 am**
- * Science and Technology Programme
- 11:10 am**
- * Gitadagale Phwintbarohn
- 12:00 noon**
- * News / International News / Weather Report
- 12:45pm**
- * Myanmar Movies
- 2:45 pm**
- * Musical Programme
- 4:40 pm**
- * University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) - Third Year (Myanmar)
- 5:15 pm**
- * Sing & Enjoy
- 6:00 pm**
- * News / Weather Report
- 6:30 pm**
- * Documentary
- 7:00 pm**
- * News
- 7:20 pm**
- * Weekly Entertainment News
- 8:00 pm**
- * News / International News / Weather Report
- 8:35 pm**
- * Documentary (Women in Myanmar Society)
- 9:00 pm**
- * News
- * Tamyethnar Takwetsar

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MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(9-11-14 07:00 am~ 10-11-14 07:00 am) MST

- * Local News
- * The Stories of The Great Souls (U Pyae Son)
- * World News
- * Short Cuts: Lucky Boy
- * Local News
- * A Day Life of Kayan Padaung Tribe
- * World News
- * Today Myanmar (Seafood Export)
- * Local News
- * A Famous Pagoda in the Sea
- * World News
- * Kyaikhteeyoe: Mountain Drivers
- * Local News
- * Reflected Glory
- * World News
- * In the Studio “Ki Ma”
- * Local News
- * Nine Wonders Around The Platform of Shwedagon Pagoda
- * World News
- * Products of Myanmar — Mya Setkyar Pure Silk Fabric From Inle Lake
- * Local News
- * Unique & Motivating Chap Char Kut Festival
- * World News
- * A Visit To Today's Along-Daw-Katthapha
- * Local News
- * Human Right, Human Dignity International Film Festival “Children of Kubu”
- * World News
- * The Land of Silver Mountains (Kayah State)
- * Local News
- * Glorious MraukU & Its Pagoda Festival
- * World News
- * In The Studio: Ah Moon

Solar eclipse in March to challenge European power grids

PARIS, 8 Nov — A solar eclipse in March next year will be an unprecedented test of European electricity grids because of the massive increase in solar power production on the continent, French power grid RTE said on Friday.

On the morning of 20 March, 2015, an almost total solar eclipse will block direct sunlight over Norway and northern Europe for about one hour and a half and will also be visible in other parts of Europe, North

Africa and Russia.

Europe's solar power capacity has significantly increased since the last major eclipse in August 1999, and, depending on the weather that day, the eclipse could cause rapid swings in output that will require adjustments by the grids.

“The passage of this shadow will considerably reduce photovoltaic power production,” Dominique Maillard, the head of France's power grid operator RTE, owned by EDF,

told reporters during its winter outlook presentation.

“According to our calculations, the impact could be a drop in production of as much as 30,000 megawatts across Europe, it's the equivalent of a six degrees Celsius drop in temperatures in half an hour,” Maillard said. That is also the capacity equivalent of 30 nuclear reactors. Maillard said RTE had started talks with other European grid operators to co-ordinate their response and prepare back-up power

capacity.

“If it's a cloudy day, it will go almost unnoticed. We will only know almost at the last minute, but that doesn't prevent us from getting our contingency plans ready,” he said.

Germany is Europe's leading country in terms of solar power capacity, with nearly 37,000 MW of installed solar capacity meeting 28.5 percent of its domestic power demand in the first half of 2014.

Reuters



A partial solar eclipse is visible over the city of Warsaw on 4 Jan, 2011.—REUTERS

Old guard primed for new generation in ATP finale

LONDON, 8 Nov — A season that produced the biggest shake-up in men's tennis for more than a decade draws to a close next week with three ATP World Tour Finals debutants striving to sign off breakthrough years with a large exclamation mark.

US Open champion Marin Cilic, the man he beat in New York Kei Nishikori and Milos Raonic, the fresh-faced Canadian with dynamite in his serving arm, will all add plenty to the mix at the glitzy season-ender now in its sixth year of residence at London's eye-catching O2 Arena.

However, three of the world's established "big four" will be only too happy to slap down the young upstarts.

Serbia's Novak Djokovic is seeking a third consecutive title alongside the River Thames, one that would seal the world number one ranking and complete a memorable year for the 27-year-old who recently became a father for the first time.

Effervescent Roger Federer, at 33 the oldest player in the eight-man event, is targeting a seventh title at the ATP's blue riband tournament, and few would bet against the ma-

jestic 17-times grand slam champion achieving it.

Britain's Andy Murray, who produced a dazzling late surge to qualify for London with three titles in his last six tournaments, will also be hungry to launch himself into next year with a first ATP World Tour Finals crown.

And why not? After all, it has been a year of firsts.

"You know, there was Stan's (Wawrinka's) first slam, Cilic's first slam, Nishikori his first final, Raonic in the semis at Wimbledon," the Scot told reporters on Friday.

"The young guys have improved and got more consistent but they are up against some of the best players of all time so regardless of how much they have improved it's not going to be that easy to knock them off."

Murray, absent last year because of back surgery, will open the tournament on Sunday against Japan's Nishikori with Federer and Raonic, the other two members of Group B, facing off later.

Djokovic, unbeaten in 27 indoor matches, begins his Group A challenge on Monday against Cilic after Wawrinka takes on O2 regular Czech Tomas Berd-



Finalists in the men's ATP World Tour tennis finals (L to R) Stan Wawrinka, Milos Raonic, Tomas Berdych, Novak Djokovic, Kei Nishikori, Andy Murray, Roger Federer and Marin Cilic pose for a group photo at the O2 Arena in London on 7 Nov, 2014.—REUTERS

ych. Djokovic warmed up for the tournament by retaining his Paris Masters title without dropping a set — his first tournament since his wife Jelena gave birth to son Stefan.

"Maybe I should be making more children," a relaxed Djokovic told reporters. "Jelena won't like that!"

On the subject of new arrivals, Djokovic said the three first-timers in London underlined a sense of change in men's tennis which since 2003 has been

dominated by Federer, the currently sidelined Rafa Nadal, himself and Murray.

"It's been a few years now that we've four different players winning the grand slam titles," said Djokovic who claimed a seventh major title at Wimbledon this year.

"There is some change in professional tennis in terms of new players and a new generation challenging the top four who have been winning most of the major titles but I think this is something normal to ex-

pect. "Maybe we expected it a bit earlier."

Federer, twice a champion at the O2, said this year's grand slam roll of honour made for exciting times, while firing a subtle psychological salvo at Raonic who he lost to at the Paris Masters last week.

"It's nice to see new faces out there with Raonic, Cilic and Nishikori," the Swiss told reporters.

"We'll see how it plays out this week. You really don't want to lose your first match in the group because

then it's out of your hands. I lost to Milos in Paris because he played well, but it's more up to me than him. Looking forward to a re-match."

Raonic was outclassed by Federer in the Wimbledon semi-finals this year but it has still been a superb year for the Canadian who reached as high as world number six in July.

"This is going to be a new challenge because, as he's been here many times, I will have to find my game straight away," the 23-year-old Raonic predicted.

Croatian Cilic, still not completely recovered from a nagging shoulder problem, said his win at the US Open, and Wawrinka's over Nadal at the Australian Open, had given "new breath" to the ATP Tour.

"I'm really honoured to be here, it's been an incredible season," he said. "I feel the door opened a little for the other guys, the second line of players, this year. Maybe we are going to see more new grand slam winners next year."

For the time being though, a \$1.9 million cheque is up for grabs for an undefeated champion in London and few would bet against one of the "old guard" walking off with it.

Reuters

Olympic officials name best London and Sochi athletes



Gold medallist David Lekuta Rudisha of Kenya celebrates during the presentation ceremony for the men's 800m event at the London 2012 Olympic Games at the Olympic Stadium on 9 Aug, 2012.—REUTERS

BANGKOK, 8 Nov — Kenyan middle distance runner David Rudisha was named as the best male athlete of the 2012 London Olympics at the inaugural Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) awards ceremony on Friday.

Chinese table tennis player Li Xiaoxia won the women's award while Norwegian biathlete Ole Einar Bjoerndalen and

Dutch speed skater Irene Wust were recognized as the top male and female athletes at this year's Sochi Winter Olympics.

Olympic officials hope the awards, held for the first time as part of an initiative to modernize the Games, will become the "oscars of Olympics sport."

The prizes were presented at a gala ceremony in Bangkok, attended by

more than 1,000 delegates from over 200 countries.

For the inaugural presentation, the winners were decided by a special committee set up by ANOC but in future will be decided by the public, voting through media.

Rudisha, who broke the world record to win the 800 metres in London two years ago, had to beat a star-studded field to win the men's individual

award. "To win this award really means a lot to me, it's very special," Rudisha said. "I can't really forget about it (winning gold), it was the greatest moment in my career."

Li claimed two gold medals in London, in singles and the team event, and was the only Chinese winner at Friday's awards.

"Winning the title at London 2012 was the proudest moment in my

career as an athlete, and one that I will always remember."

The French handball outfit was named as the best men's team in London after becoming the first to

win back-to-back gold medals in the event, while Brazil won the women's award in volleyball after clinching a second successive gold.

Reuters

Man United join race to sign Brazilian Talisca

RIO DE JANEIRO, 8 Nov — Manchester United have joined the battle to sign highly rated Brazilian midfielder Anderson Talisca, according to local media reports.

The 20-year-old has roused interest from at least seven major European clubs due to his stunning early-season form for Benfica, Brazilian news portal Lancenet reported.

Having already been linked to Premier League clubs Chelsea, Liverpool and Arsenal, the Brazil

under-23 international impressed United scouts by scoring the winner in the Portuguese outfit's 1-0 victory over Monaco in the Champions League on Tuesday. Talisca's recent performances are also said to have attracted the interest of Italian giants Juventus, AC Milan and Internazionale.

Contracted from Bahia for four million Euros in July, Talisca has already scored nine goals in 14 matches for Benfica.

Xinhua



Gold medallist Li Xiaoxia of China celebrates in the medal ceremony of the women's singles table tennis tournament at the ExCel venue during the London 2012 Olympic Games on 1 Aug, 2012.—REUTERS