

National brethren to make concerted efforts to fill the gaps and overcome hardship and challenges

NAY PYI TAW, 12 Feb—The following is an unofficial translation of the message of President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Agga Maha Thayay Sithu, Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma U Thein Sein on the occasion of the 68th Anniversary of the Union Day.

Esteemed national brethren

I would like to extend my warmest greetings by wishing all national brethren who are residing in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar prosperity and auspiciousness on the auspicious occasion of the 68th Anniversary Union Day, which would be always remembered at the heart by all national brethren.

It can clearly be seen in the history of the Republic of the Union Myanmar that the enthusiasm for national unity, the Union spirit and the anti-colonialist fervor among all the national brethren are the nationalistic strength that enables the Union to stand tall among world nations. As all national races are united in one accord, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has been standing firmly as a sovereign state.

Therefore, it is necessary for all national brethren to uphold the three main national causes such as non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty as a duty with all seriousness so that the Republic of

the Union of Myanmar can continue to stand tall among world nations and her sovereignty continues to perpetuate.

Esteemed national brethren

It has been prescribed as the basic principles of the Union in the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar that the Union shall assist to develop language, literature, fine arts and culture of the national races, to promote solidarity, mutual amity and respect and mutual assistance among the national races, and to promote socio-economic development including education, health, economy, transport and communication.

Therefore, it is our national duty to exert efforts for development of language, literature, culture, fine arts, customs, historical heritages, human resources and socio-economy of all national races. In order to be able to do so, stability and the rule of law in the entire Union of Myanmar are prerequisites.

Thanks to the success of democratic transition nowadays achieved, a new culture of seeking solutions through

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Loikaw to get new hospital buildings funded by JICA

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 11 Feb — A commencement ceremony of improving Loikaw General Hospital took place on Monday, with officials driving stakes to start the project at the hospital in Loikaw, Kayah State.

Kayah State Chief Minister U Khin Maung

Oo, Dr Akihiko Tanaka, President of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and Deputy Minister for Health Dr Daw Thein Thein Htay were among the participants at the stake-driving ceremony.

The project for improving the more than 50-year-old core medical

facility of the state includes construction of two two-storey buildings funded by the JICA with about 1.945 billion yen. The project is scheduled to be completed in April 2016.

Having a high ratio of patients to available places in the existing buildings of the hospital built in 1964, there has been an increase

in the number of in-patients with 194 in 2014, up from 155 in the previous year. In addition, the medical equipment is also inadequate in terms of quality and quantity.

According to the Ministry of Health, the 200-bed hospital is handling more than 1,600 operations (See page 2)

President Office issues notification on expiration of temporary identity cards

NAY PYI TAW, 11 Feb— The president of office issued a notification on expiration of temporary identity cards on Wednesday, announcing that holders of the temporary cards are required to hand over to authorities concerned and to be scrutinized in accord-

ance with the laws, rules and regulations concerned.

According to the notification, temporary identity cards, which were issued to some people residing in Myanmar as necessary under the Residents of Burma (See page 2)

National brethren to make . . .

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negotiations over different opinions in Myanmar politics has come into life. Therefore, the government has been exerting relentless efforts by signing the nationwide ceasefire agreement and holding all-inclusive political dialogues of all national political forces to develop the union system based on federalism for genuine peace after ending armed conflicts that have been raging for over six decades since the independence was regained. It is necessary for national brethren to make

concerted efforts to fill the gaps and overcome hardship and challenges in doing so.

Esteemed national brethren

The government has accelerated the momentum of reforms in political, economic, administrative and private sectors to promote stability and socioeconomic development, the two common wishes of the entire national people.

In doing so, there are achievements that have been recognized by the international community as well as challenges to be overcome. As so many reform measures are being taken simultaneously, the expectations of the national people have not yet been fulfilled to the full ex-

tent in some sectors.

It is of utmost importance for motherland Myanmar that all the national people cooperate in building the democratic nation after overcoming the hardships and challenges.

Therefore, on the auspicious occasion of the Union Day, I would like urge, with all seriousness, all national people such as the government, the Hluttaws, national race organizations, political parties and political forces to continue to make concerted efforts relentlessly to prevent the deceleration of momentum of reforms already achieved.

President Office issues notification . . .

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Registration Act (1949), will expire on 31 March 2015.

Holders of the temporary cards are required to hand over the cards to authorities by 31 May 2015, and the process will be carried out in a fair and transparent manner by township registration officers who will be assisted by region/state, district, township, ward, village-tract supervisory committees. Township officers of Immigration and National Registration Department will act as township registration

officers for townships concerned and the director-general of the department will act as the chief registration officer.

Citizenship scrutiny is being carried out under Moe Pwint Project in accordance with the Citizenship Law, the notification said.

The notification also stated that an advisory commission will be formed to review laws, rules and regulations and tasks related to the temporary cards as temporary identity cards have been an issue among the public.—MNA

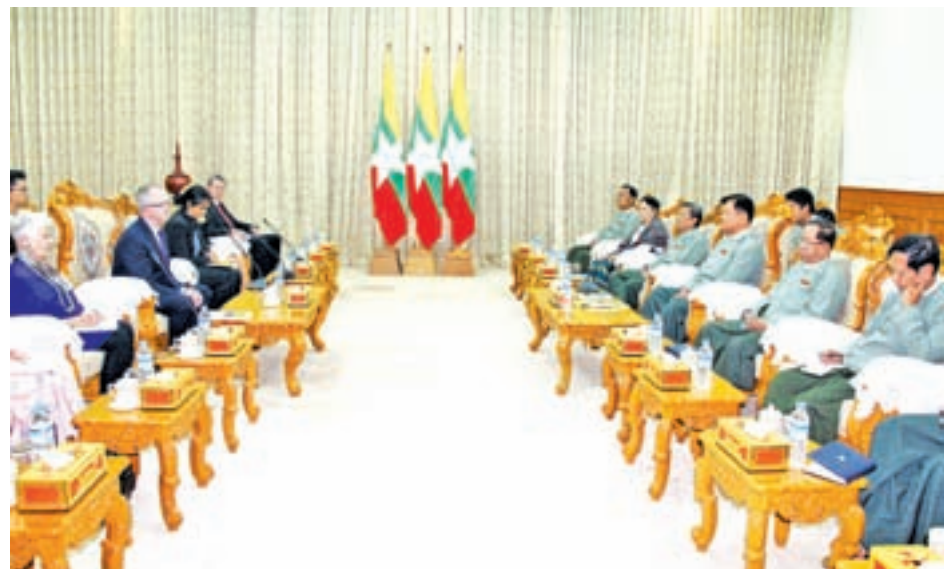
Union Election Commission Chairman meets Australian Electoral Commissioner

NAY PYI TAW, 11 Feb — Union Election Commission Chairman U Tin Aye received Electoral Commissioner Mr. Tom Rogers and party of Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) at his office on Wednesday.

The UEC Chairman elaborated on organizational structure of the commission, electoral system, voting system, electoral roll which is underway, background on Myanmar's politics and elections and work carried out for successful holding of 2015 general elections.

The Australian Electoral Commissioner also explained Australia's experience of holding 2013 elections, election results and lessons learned from 2013 poll. Next, both sides had a frank exchange of views on voter training, voter education and voter information processes being taken by Myanmar for upcoming general elections.

Also present at the



UEC Chairman U Tin Aye receives Electoral Commissioner Mr. Tom Rogers and party of Australian Electoral Commission.—MNA

meeting were UEC members U Myint Naing, U Aung Myint, Dr Daw Myint Kyi, U Win Kyi, U Nyunt Tin, U Win Ko and secretary U Tin Tun and officials.—MNA

Biodiversity conservation workshop kicks off

NAY PYI TAW, 11 Feb — Forest Department in Myanmar and National Institute on Biological Resources-NIBR of the Republic of Korea have been conducting biological resources in Myanmar at Mount Popa Park, Natmataung National Park and Alaungdaw Kas-sapa National Park since 2011, Union Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Win Tun told the workshop on studies of biodiversity at Mt Popa Park and biodiversity conservation strategy in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam, here, on Wednesday.

The department in cooperation with NIBR has published the book entitled biodiversity at Mt Popa Park to provide information on wildlife, species of plants and biodiversity to the researcher, he said.

He added that thanks to the workshop, the delegates from Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Myanmar will have the opportunities to exchange views on biodiversity conservation, management and utilization in Southeast Asian countries

to be able to raise cooperation with partner organizations in conservation of biodiversity and biological resources.

NIBR Chairman Dr Kim Sang Bae spoke words of thanks.—MNA



Kayah State Chief Minister U Khin Maung Oo and JICA President Dr Akihiko Tanaka observe a scale drawing of one of two reinforced concrete buildings for Loikaw general hospital.

PHOTO: YE MYINT

Loikaw to get new hospital . . .

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annually and treating more than 20,000 out-patients.

Upon completion of the project, there will be full health care coverage

to locals in the state and health care services extended to those in the southern part of neighbouring Shan State as well.—GNLM

Public Announcement for remonstrations

The Chin Progressive Party headquartered at Building No 147, 5th floor, 37th street (middle block), Kyauktada Township, Yangon Region, registered by the Union Election Commission as a political party under the Article 9 of the Political Parties Registration Law, submitted applications to change its flag and seal.

It is hereby announced that those who want to remonstrate with the UEC about the party's flag and seal may submit a complaint along with the strong evidences within seven days starting from issuance of this announcement in line with Section 14 (d) of the Political Parties Registration Rules.

Union Election Commission

Flag of Chin Progressive Party



Seal of Chin Progressive Party



Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham hosts dinner to armed ethnic group leaders



Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham delivers speech at dinner to armed ethnic group leaders.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 11 Feb — Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham who is also the chairman of Union Peace-Making Work Committee, hosted dinner to leaders of armed ethnic groups who are in Nay Pyi Taw to attend the 68th Anniversary Union Day celebration, at Hotel Max in Nay Pyi Taw Ho-

tel Zone on Wednesday evening.

First, the Vice President cordially greeted leaders of the KNU, KNY/KNLA (PC), CNF, DKBA, NSCN (Katpala), PNLO, ABSDF, NMSP, SSPP/SSA, RCSS/SSA, ALP, UWSA special region-2, NDAA and Shan State (East) special region-4.

In his greetings, the Vice President said that today's meeting could contribute towards achieving lasting peace. He highlighted the disadvantages of engaging in military means instead of trying to address problems occurred in the post-independence period through political dialogue.

He continued that economic development is the

most important means of raising a country's education and health standards.

He is of the view that meritocracy is of critical importance in realizing justice and equity and bringing the development to the country, he added.

He also called for sensible and pragmatic approaches, instead of being influenced by emotion and desire.

Next, the Vice President presented gifts to leaders of ethnic armed groups through RCSS/SSA Chairman U Yawd Serk.

The dinner was also attended by UPWC Vice Chairman U Aung Min, U Thein Zaw, the Union ministers, deputy ministers and officials.

MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw celebrates centennial birthday of General Aung San

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann speaking at ceremony to mark centennial birthday of General Aung San at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

MNA



NAY PYI TAW, 11 Feb — Pyidaungsu Hluttaw celebrated 100th birthday of General Aung San on Wednesday at Hluttaw Building.

The commemoration ceremony was attended by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the daughter of deceased independence hero, speak-

ers of Hluttaws, chairmen of constitutional court and union election commission, members of parliaments and chairman of central committee for the event.

The event was opened with excerpt documentary of General Aung San's political activities in striv-

ing for independence of the country, followed by a speech of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw speaker Thura U Shwe Mann.

Thura U Shwe Mann said that General Aung San and his friends took part in anti-colonialist movement before he was punished to leave

university. The national hero was elected as chairman of Students Union and formed a political party to gain independence.

He was called as Bo Tay Za in Burma Independence Army after it was formed 1941. General Aung San focused on

national unity with union spirit, without exploiting support of public and posing serious impacts on them during his independence attempts.

General Aung San managed to sign Aung San-Atlee Agreement and Panglong Agreement which were fundamentals for independence of the country. His 1947 draft constitution won supports of ethnic leaders due to its democratic criteria.

At the event, parliamentarians and MP from Defence Services read out 14 papers that honoured and reviewed the attitude of independence leader.

Amyotha Hluttaw speaker U Khin Aung My-

int said although General Aung San lived 30 years, his sacrifice made opportunities for independence of the country.

U Khin Aung Myint also quoted the words of British historian Paul Kennedy who wrote 'The Rise and Fall of Great Power' published in 1987.

Upper House speaker also remarked General Aung San could adjust personality of hard power and soft power in peace-making efforts.

Thura U Shwe Mann, U Nanda Kyaw Swa and U T Khun Myat hold a press conference in the evening, attended by 48 journalists from local and foreign media organizations.

MNA

Cold storage plant for fruit and vegetables opened in Nay Pyi Taw

NAY PYI TAW, 11 Feb — An opening of a 500-ton cold storage plant for keeping fruit and vegetables took place at 900-acre farmland in Ottarathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday.

Union Minister at President Office U Soe Maung,

Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing, Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint, deputy ministers, Nay Pyi Taw Council members, and responsible persons of Myanmar New Ayeyar Agriculture Company formally opened the plant.

Next, Union Minister U Myint Hlaing and Thura U Myint Maung, retired Religious Affairs Minister, unveiled the signboard of the plant.

Then, the Union ministers and officials viewed around the plant and observed farm machinery and

hydroponic vegetable cultivation.

Farmers from eight townships in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area also observed services of the factory and farm equipment to be sold to those interested through an installment plan.

MNA

Photo and art galleries mark centennial birthday of General Aung San



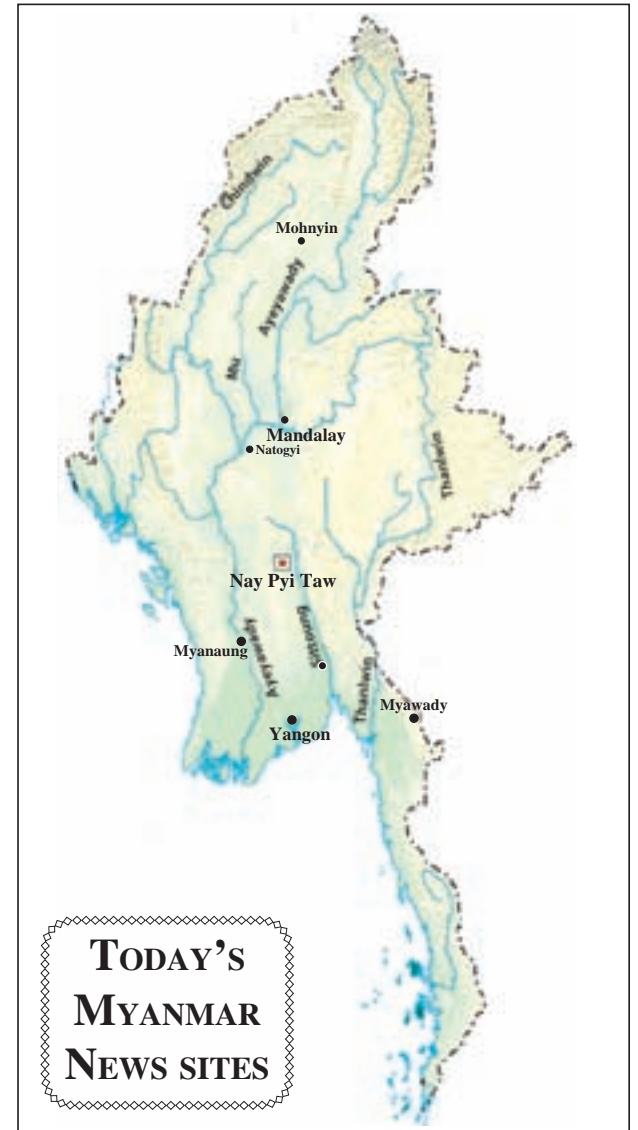
MYANAUNG, 11 Feb— To mark the centennial birthday of General Aung San, the photo and art gallery and souvenir showroom were opened at Zeyathayi Ground

in Ward 4 in Myanaung Township, Ayeyawady Region, on Wednesday.

Chairman of the leading committee for organizing General Aung San's centennial birthday Township Administrator U Min Min Tun and officials formally opened the showroom.

Officials of the showroom explained displays of photos and arts, rare documentary photos and paintings of General Aung San and his biography.

Township level officials visited the showrooms.—*Nay Win Zaw (Myanaung)*



MYAWADY, 11 Feb — As a gesture of honouring the 68th Anniversary Union Day, Bogyoke concrete road was commissioned into service in Myawady, Kayin State, on 10 February.

Assistant Director U Kyaw Kyaw Oo reported on facts about development tasks and Assistant Director U Soe Lwin, construction of the concrete road.

Deputy commissioner U Lwin Ko Oo and officials formally opened the upgraded road and strolled along it.

Myawady Township Development Affairs Committee spent K330 million on construction of 2,710 feet long concrete road, seven other roads and three other construction tasks in 2014-15 fiscal year.

Htein Lin Aung (IPRD)

Myawady Township inaugurates upgraded Bogyoke Road



Mohnyin Township to mark centennial birthday of General Aung San



MOHNYIN, 11 Feb — Townselders, political parties, civil society organizations and national races literature and culture committees will jointly organize the centennial birthday of General Aung San in Mohnyin, Kachin State. Township administrator U Kyaw Swa Aung told members of the organizing committee on 9 February.

The ceremony will be held at Shwethalyaung Theatre in Mohnyin on 12 and 13 February.

In commemoration of the birthday, the organizing committee will open the exhibition and organize the 12 events of sports contest, talks and traditional dances.

GNLM-001

Petrified wood garden attracts tourists in Natogyi

NATOGYI, 11 Feb — A ceremony to open Tree Jade petrified wood restaurant was held beside Myingyan-Mandalay-Bagan-NyaungU road in Ward 8 in Natogyi, Mandalay Region, on 10 February.

The restaurant displays four large petrified wood trunks and over 100 pieces of fossils, owner of the restaurant U Min Shwe told media.

The display of petrified woods attracts not only local travelers but tourists.

Over 20 companies are trading petrified woods in Natogyi Township. Of them, Tree Jade Company spent over K60 million on construction of the Petrified Wood Garden to be able to seek international and internal markets.—*Htay Myint Maung; Photo: Khin Zar Mon Myint (Law)*



LOCAL NEWS

Ethnics enjoy market festival, traditional dances in Mandalay

MANDALAY, 11 Feb— The 4th ethnics market festival in commemoration of the 68th anniversary Union Day was held at Shan national Dhammayon on 35th Street in Chanayethazan Township on 9 February. People from 15 ethnics attended the festival to open sales of traditional products and foods to the

people. Belles of national races entertained dances with traditional costumes. The festival was aimed at forging the union spirit among national brethren, chairman of the organizing committee U Sai Pan Hsai told media. “National races will have chances to meet among them at the festival

and exchange traditions and culture in addition to traditional foods. So, we will try hard to organize similar festival yearly,” the chairman said. The market festival was held in the morning and the traditional dancing in the evening. *Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)*



Children from pre-primary school take part in skills contest



MYAWADY, 11 Feb — In commemoration of Myanmar Children’s Day

which falls on 13 February 2015, Myawady District Committee of the Rights of Child and Social Welfare Department jointly organized the skill contests

for children at Thaugyin Hall in border town Myawady, Kayin State, on 10 February. Children from 20 pre-primary schools participated in the sports contests, painting, poem recitation, story telling and singing contests. Chairman of District Committee of the Rights of the Children Deputy Commissioner U Lwin Ko Oo made a speech, and Assistant Director U Than Aung of Social Welfare Department explained purpose of organizing the contests. Officials presented prizes to the winners in the contests. *Htein Lin Aung (IPRD)*

Township authorities honour three senior citizens in Myanaung Township

MYANAUNG, 11 Feb — The government has a plan to honour senior citizens of above 100 years old across the nation. According to the statistics, three senior citizens emerged in Myanaung Township. They were U Ngwe Dah of Pantoe Village, Daw Saw of Shagon

Village and Daw Than Sein of Gwaygon Village in the township. Township level officials gave certificates of honour presented by the President and K200,000 each as cash assistance to them. *Soe Myint (Myanaung)*

Rice offering to monks marks centennial birthday of General Aung San



MANDALAY, 11 Feb— Mandalarians will offer rice to 1,000 members of the Sangha in front of the centennial birthday committee in Mandalay on 13 February. After offering rice to 1,000 monks, the organizing committee will donate meals to 100 venerable monks at U Hla Thein Beikman in Mandalay. In the evening, Mann Padetha variety dances will be performed for the local people, said committee member U Shwe Htoo. Meritorious deeds will

be carried out thanks to cash donations of wellwishers. The birthday ceremony for General Aung San will be held from 10 to 15 February. Moreover, an exhibition on photo, painting, sculpture and documentary shows will be staged from 10 to 15 February at U Hla Thein Beikman. The committee member said that arrangements are being made to stage entertainment of Myoma Band and organize the literary talks.—*Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)*

Irrigation Department re-dredges Myaingtha Lake in Natogyi Township

NATOGYI, 12 Feb— Head of Mandalay Region Irrigation Department U Htay Oo and officials inspected maintenance of Myaingtha lake being dredged by Irrigation Department in Myaingtha Village, Natogyi Township, on 10 February. Staff Officer U Aung Myint Thein of Natogyi Township Irrigation Department reported on filling gravels and fencing of the bund for storage of water. On completion, the lake will supply about 200,000 more gallons of water yearly for the local people. *Khin Zar Mon Myint (Law)*

Rural area in Natogyi Tsp gets tube-well to supply water to locals

NATOGYI, 11 Feb—In honour of the 68th Anniversary Union Day, a tube-well was launched in Phetkhu Village, Natogyi Township, Mandalay Region, on 10 February. Mandalay Region Hluttaw representative U Aye Thant Swe, in-charge of Myingyan District Rural Development Department U Kyaw Min Naung and village water supply committee chairman U Mya Than formally opened the tube-well. Myingyan District deputy commissioner U Myint Thin Aung

made a speech. The tube-well is 650 feet deep and four-inch in diameter. Yadana Golden Hand Company built a 5,000-gallon-capacity tank to supply water to the local people. *Than Zaw Aung (Natogyi)*



Sound recordings of news conferences by key figures unveiled



File photo taken in October 1978 shows then Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping (C) after a Press conference at the Japan National Press Club in Tokyo. Historic sound recordings of news conferences by a number of world figures, including Deng, have been unveiled on the press club's website by 10 Feb, 2015.—KYODO NEWS

Antigraft party posts landslide win in Delhi assembly poll

NEW DELHI, 11 Feb — The Aam Aadmi Party, or Common Man's Party, led by former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, scored a landslide victory in the Delhi legislative assembly election held over the weekend, winning 67 of the 70 seats at stake, results showed on Tuesday.

The outcome of the polls in the Indian capital is seen as a major setback to the country's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, which managed to win just three seats, according to the election commission's official website.

The AAP got over 54 percent of the total votes cast Saturday, while the BJP got nearly 32 percent.

Kejriwal is seen as a reformist, rising in Delhi politics through an anti-corruption crusade.

He became Delhi's chief minister of a minority government after the assembly elections in December 2103 and resigned after 49 days in office over a controversial citizen's ombudsman bill aimed at stemming corruption.

Delhi has been under central government rule for almost a year.

The AAP, formally launched in November 2012, emerged as the second-largest party in the 2013 Delhi assembly election, winning 28 seats.—Kyodo News

China's President to visit US in September

BEIJING, 11 Feb — Chinese President Xi Jinping will make a state visit to the United States in September, state-run media said on Wednesday.

Xi accepted US President Barack Obama's invitation during a phone conversation between the two leaders earlier in the day, according to Xinhua News Agency.

US National Security Adviser Susan Rice

revealed at an event in Washington last week that Obama has invited Xi and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe for state visits this year, without specifying when they are scheduled to take place.

Japan and the United States are trying to arrange Abe's visit starting in late April or early May, according to diplomatic sources.

Kyodo News

Critics of former Thai PM try to discredit her with escape rumours: lawyer

BANGKOK, 11 Feb — Opponents of former Thai leader Yingluck Shinawatra were trying to discredit her by spreading false rumours that she would flee abroad before she is due to face criminal charges in court later this month, her lawyer said on Wednesday.

Yingluck became Thailand's first female prime minister in July 2011 but was removed from office days before a May 2014 coup led by then-army chief Prayuth Chan-ocha. That followed months of street protests in Bangkok against her government.

Last month, she was banned from politics for five years over her role in a state rice-buying scheme, which had won her many voters in the rural heartland but which cost Thailand billions of dollars in losses.

Yingluck, the sister of former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, was also indicted on criminal charges over the scheme, charges her supporters say were aimed at crippling her powerful family's political influence.

Thailand's attorney-general will submit a subpoena to the Supreme

Court on 19 February and wants Yingluck to be present.

Her lawyer, Norawit Laleng, said Yingluck was planning to fight the charges in person even though Thai law does not stipulate that she needs to present for the subpoena.

Rumours that Yingluck would flee were being spread by her critics to jolt the military into action, Norawit told Reuters.

"If she had a plan to flee she would not have publicly asked for permis-

sion to go abroad," he said. Yingluck had hoped to travel to Hong Kong from Sunday until 22 February.

"The opposition is trying to make out that she wants to flee abroad in order to discredit her," Norawit said.

"This is simply not true."

Thailand's military government denied Yingluck permission to travel overseas on Sunday to ensure she is in the country to face the criminal charges.

She faces up to 10

years in jail if found guilty.

The charges are the latest twist in 10 years of turbulent politics that have pitted Yingluck and her brother against the royalist military establishment that sees the Shinawatras as a threat and reviles their populist policies. Thaksin, who remains hugely influential in Thailand, was ousted in a coup in 2006 and fled into exile to avoid jail over a corruption conviction two years later on charges he says were politically motivated.—Reuters



Ousted former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra talks to reporters as she arrives at Parliament before the National Legislative Assembly meeting in Bangkok on 9 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS

Singapore tourism suffers first annual decline since 2009

SINGAPORE, 11 Feb — Singapore reported fewer international visitors last year, the first annual fall since 2009, hurt by a stronger Singapore dollar and a drop in the number of Chinese tourists amid slower regional tourism

growth. International visitor arrivals fell 3 percent last year to 15.1 million, missing the Singapore Tourism Board's forecast of an increase of 5 to 8 percent from 2013.

However, visitors stayed longer and spent

more, helping tourism receipts stay flat at S\$23.5 billion (\$17.3 billion), according to preliminary estimates.

Singapore, which relies on tourism for about 4 percent of its economic output, is often a pitstop

for travellers who combine it with trips to neighbouring countries.

But two mishaps involving Malaysian Airlines flights, political unrest in Thailand and a new Chinese law that clamps down on ultra-cheap tour packages have taken their toll. VIP volumes are also under pressure at Singapore's two glitzy casinos, Las Vegas Sands' Marina Bay Sands and Genting Singapore's Resorts World Sentosa, as China's corruption crackdown and economic slowdown reduce the number of wealthy players at their tables.

The STB did not give a forecast for 2015 on Wednesday, but said it would not be able to meet a 10-year plan to grow visitor arrivals to 17 million this year due to unforeseen circumstances such as the 2008 global financial crisis.—Reuters



Tourists take pictures next to the Merlion statue in the central business district of Singapore on 6 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

Australian anti-terror police say imminent IS-linked attack thwarted

SYDNEY, 11 Feb — Australian counter-terrorism police said on Wednesday they had thwarted an imminent attack linked to Islamic State after arresting two men in Sydney and seizing knives, a video and a flag associated with the militant group.

Australia, a staunch ally of the United States and its action against the Islamic State group in Syria and Iraq, has been on heightened alert for attacks by home-grown Islamist radicals since last year.

It raised its national terror threat level to “high” for the first time in September, when hun-

dreds of police conducted raids after receiving information that IS supporters planned to conduct a public beheading.

Police said the men, aged 24 and 25, were arrested after a raid on a home in a western Sydney suburb on Tuesday and had been charged with planning a terrorist act.

“When we did the search of the premises, a number of items were located, including a machete, a hunting knife, a homemade flag representing the proscribed terrorist organization IS, and also a video which depicted a man talking about carrying out an

attack,” New South Wales Deputy Police Commissioner Catherine Burn told reporters.

“We will allege that both of these men were preparing to do this act yesterday,” she said.

The men were not known to police, Burn said.

“This is indicative of the threat that we now have to live with and which we are now having to deal with,” she said.

Australia believes at least 70 of its citizens are fighting with the Islamic State group in Syria and Iraq, backed by about 100 Australia-based “facilitators”.

Reuters



Australian Federal Police Deputy Commissioner Michael Phelan (R) listens as New South Wales Deputy Police Commissioner Catherine Burn speaks during a media conference in Sydney on 11 Feb, 2015. — REUTERS

Obama and Xi discuss cyber issues, prepare for US visit

WASHINGTON, 11 Feb — US President Barack Obama called for “swift work” by Beijing to narrow their differences on cyber issues, the White House said, as the two sides start planning for Chinese President Xi Jinping’s visit to Washington in September.

The world’s two big-

gest economies have been trying to ease tensions amid mutual accusations of hacking and Internet theft.

In a phone call with Xi, Obama said he looked forward to welcoming him to Washington for a state visit later this year, the statement added. Chinese state news agency Xinhua said that Xi

would visit in September.

“During the conversation, both sides agreed to make full preparations to ensure the success of the trip,” the report said.

The White House added: “The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to coordinate closely on security challenges, including

by jointly encouraging Iran to seize the historic opportunity presented by P5+1 negotiations.”

The nuclear talks with the United States, Russia, China, Britain and France are aimed at clinching an accord that would ease Western concerns that Tehran could pursue a convert nu-

clear weapons programme, in return for the lifting of sanctions that have ravaged the Iranian economy.

Negotiators have set a 30 June final deadline for an accord, and Western officials have said they aim to agree on the substance of that deal by March.

Reuters

Taipei says 10 of 49 ATR pilots fail test, will be suspended

TAIPEI, (China), 11 Feb — Taipei’s aviation regulator said on Wednesday 10 of TransAsia’s 49 ATR pilots have failed oral proficiency tests on handling an aircraft during engine failure following a fatal airline crash in the capital last week. The 10 pilots will be suspended, the CAA said.

The tests were ordered after an ATR jet operated by TransAsia, the island’s third-biggest carrier, crashed into a river in Taipei, killing at least 40 of the 58 on board.

Initial data from the flight recorders indicate that the plane lost power in one engine just after take-off from Taipei’s Songshan airport.—Reuters

N Korea names new point man on US affairs

SEOUL, 11 Feb — The former deputy chief of North Korea’s mission to the United Nations, Han Song Ryol, has been named the new head of the North American affairs department at the nation’s Foreign Ministry, Yonhap News Agency said Wednesday, citing a diplomatic source.

Han, who assumed the No 2 post at the North’s UN mission from 2009-2013, will replace Ri Kun, the source said.

The appointment was made as Ri has been named North Korea’s new ambassador to Poland. “His experiences in the US seem to have been taken into account for the appointment,” the source said, according to Yonhap.—Kyodo News

G-20 finance chiefs vow to take policy actions decisively if needed



Group of 20 finance ministers and central bank governors are shown during a group photo shoot before wrapping up their two-day meeting in Istanbul on 10 Feb, 2015.

KYODO NEWS

ISTANBUL, 11 Feb — The Group of 20 finance chiefs agreed on Tuesday to take monetary and fiscal actions decisively if needed, with a plunge in crude oil prices and an economic slowdown in the eurozone and Japan souring the outlook for the world economy. In a statement released after they wrapped up their two-day meeting in Istanbul, the G-20 economies also reaffirmed monetary easing should not be used to control foreign exchange rates, warning against competitive currency devaluations.

“Growth in the global

economy remains uneven and although the recovery is in progress, it is slow, especially in some advanced economies, notably the euro area and Japan,” the statement said.

“We will continuously review our monetary and fiscal policy settings and act decisively, if needed,” it added. The G-20 finance ministers and central bank governors gathered after the International Monetary Fund in January cut its 2015 growth forecast for the world economy to 3.5 percent, down 0.3 percentage point from its previous projection.

The eurozone economy has been sluggish and faced the risk of deflation in the aftermath of the sovereign debt crisis, and Japan’s economy has been significantly hurt by the 3-percentage-point consumption tax hike to 8 percent in April last year.

A downturn in crude oil prices has also cast a shadow over world economic growth. “We note that the sharp decline in oil prices, reflecting both supply and demand factors, will provide some boost to global growth, but with varying implications across economies,”

the G-20 said.

“We will continue to closely monitor developments in commodity markets and their impact on the global economy,” it said.

Since crude oil prices started to drop in June last year, many G-20 members, including the eurozone, Japan, China, Russia and Australia, have implemented credit easing steps as inflation expectations have fallen significantly.

With concern rising over the outlook for energy exporting economies and deflationary risks, the G-20 supported monetary easing aimed at underpinning domestic growth while calling for the avoidance of currency manipulation.

“We agree that consistent with central banks’ mandates, current economic conditions require accommodative monetary policies in some economies,” the statement said.

But the G-20 added, “In an environment of diverging monetary policy settings and rising financial market volatility, policy settings should be carefully calibrated and clearly communicated to minimize negative spillovers.”

Among other issues

the G-20 members discussed in Turkey was how to strengthen measures to block terrorist financing.

It was the first G-20 meeting since the terrorist attacks in France at the offices of satirical weekly *Charlie Hebdo*, as well as the killing of the two Japanese hostages — Haruna Yukawa and Kenji Goto — in the Middle East.

The G-20 countries agreed to cooperate in eradicating the funding of terrorism.

“Considering the impact terrorist acts can have on our societies and economies, we commit to deepen our cooperation and urge all countries to speed up their compliance with the relevant international standards, in particular, concerning the exchange of information and the freezing of terrorist assets,” the G-20 said.

Representing more than 80 percent of the world’s gross domestic product, the G-20 groups Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Britain, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the United States and the European Union.

Kyodo News

PERSPECTIVES

Thursday, 12 February, 2015

“Unsplit” spirit for infinite unity

By Aung Khin

Unity in diversity is the highest possible attainment of a civilization. In another term, we can define society as unity in diversity.

Independence leader General Aung San emphasized on union spirit as a soft power to regain sovereignty of the country. To ensure the

same status among national people after independence, Panglong Agreement was signed in Panglong, Southern Shan State, on February 12, 1947.

Even in an individual family, the members are of different views and habits though they have grown up under a single shelter. They also have varieties of hopes and expectations for life. However, most of them try to live lovingly and peacefully, except black sheep.

When the level of evil intent becomes immense, it is very dangerous for unity. A closely knit community is a peaceful world. Society is knit together by certain commonly held beliefs despite different background or traditions. Even a fitful disagreement may turn into conflicts if suspicion and mistrust cannot be wiped out.

Unity can prolong the independence of indi-

viduals. No man is an island. There is no doubt at all that an infinite unity cannot be willed by mere declarations. Unity is not a tangible material. Unity can be sustained by selflessness, mutual trust, understanding, and wisdom.

It is easier said than done, but it is not always an open sesame. Unity does not depend only on verbal or paper agreement. It can be achieved by an “unsplit” spirit.

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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.

Financial Deepening and Economic Growth

By Kyaw Win Tin

Financial deepening generally means an increase ratio of money supply to GDP or some price index. It refers to liquid money. The more liquid money is available in an economy, the more opportunities exists for continued growth. Financial deepening theory also defines the positive role of the financial system on economic growth by the size of the sector’s activity. That means that an economy with more intermediary activity is assumed to be doing more to generate efficient allocation. In development studies, financial deepening is very often refers to the increased provision of financial services with a wider choice of services geared to the development of all levels of society. The size of the financial sector is usually measured by two basic quantitative indicators “monetization ratio” and intermediation ratio. Whereas monetization ratio includes money-based indi-

cators or liquid liabilities like broad money supply to GDP ratio, intermediation ratio consists of indicators concerning to bank-based measures like bank credit to the private sector and capital market-based measures such as capitalization ratio of stock market.

Economic growth and development of a country depends on the role of financial deepening. It also simply means an increase in the supply of financial assets in the economy. It can also play an important role in reducing risk and vulnerability for disadvantaged groups and increasing the ability of individuals and households to access basic services like health and education, thus having a more direct impact on poverty education. Financial Deepening is measured by ratio of gross domestic capital formation to GDP, ratio of gross domestic saving to GDP. Some countries especially USA and India have to intensify the financial sector and carry out crucial

measures to reinforce the long run relationship between financial deepening and economic growth in order to maintain sustainable economic growth. These measures embrace more financial integration, minimization of government intervention in the financial systems, escalating the status of financial institutions etc. It is recommended that financial system need developed financial markets which may complete its deepening to affect economic growth optimistically. Therefore, the sum of all the measures of financial assets gives us the approximate size of financial deepening. That means that the widest range of such assets as broad money, liabilities of non bank financial intermediaries, treasury bills, value of shares in the stock market, money market funds, etc., will have to be included in the measure of financial deepening. If the increase in the supply of financial assets is small, it means that the financial

deepening in the economy is most likely to be shallow, but if the ratio is big, it means that financial deepening likely to be high. If an increase in the real size of the monetary system will generate opportunity for the profitable operation of other institutions as well via bill dealers to industrial bank and insurance companies.

Supply-leading hypothesis suggests that financial deepening spurs growth. The existence and development of the financial markets brings about a higher level of saving and investment and enhance the efficiency of capital accumulation. This hypothesis contends that well-functioning financial institutions can promote overall economic efficiency create and expand liquidity, mobilize savings, enhance capital accumulation, transfer resources from traditional (non-growth) sectors to the more modern growth inducing sectors and also promote a competent entrepreneur response in these

modern sector of the economy. The demand-following view of the development of the financial market is merely a lagged response to economic growth (growth generates demand for financial products). This implies that any early efforts to develop financial markets might lead to a waste of resources which could be allocated to more useful purposes in the early stages of growth. As the economy advance this triggers an increased demand for more financial services and thus leads to greater financial development.

The economist Okoli (2010) examines the relationship between financial deepening and stock market returns and volatility in Nigerian stock market for the period 1980-2009. The empirical results revealed that financial deepening measured as the ratio of value of stock traded to GDP do not affect the stock market and there is no news about volatility. But financial deepening measured as the ratio of market capitalization to GDP affect the stock mar-

ket. It indicated that financial deepening reduces the level of risk (volatility) in the stock market. Result also recorded that the conditional volatility of return is slightly persistent. The study employs co-integration and error correction model (ECM) by making Gross Domestic Product as a function of lending rate, exchange rate, inflation rate, financial deepening (M2/GDP) and degree of openness as its financial liberalization indices. The study therefore concludes that financial deepening liberalization has a growth-stimulating effect on the developing countries.

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Kyaw Win Tin
Deputy Director General
Central Bank of Myanmar

Striking workers warned of legal action if they break the law

By Aye Min Soe

YANGON, 11 Feb — Authorities have warned striking workers in Hlinethaya Township not to violate the law or they will face legal action as labour disputes between the workers and employers are on negotiation table.

Blocking the entrance to factories and disturbing other workers by striking workers during the protests are not acceptable and have reached beyond the tolerance of authorities, said U

Htin Aung, deputy minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security, at a negotiation meeting between representatives of workers, owners of the factories and officials of the ministry in Yangon.

If they (workers and owners of the factories) cannot reach agreement during negotiations, they can go to the Dispute Settlement Arbitration Council, he added.

The striking workers sought better pay in early days of their strikes, but later they are off their original course, threatening to dis-

turb the community peace, an official of the Hlinethaya Township General Administration Department claimed.

Workers from Eland Myanmar Garment Factory, Costec Garment Factory, Ford Glory Garment Factory, and Red Stone Garment Factory are striking against the employers, seeking fair wages and their basic salaries and allowances for high living costs.

“We are urging our factory to increase our basic salary from K30,000 to K60,000 and our monthly



Workers from Red Stone Garment Factory and the manager of the factory are at the negotiation table.—PHOTO AYE MIN SOE

allowance for high living cost to K20,000,” said Thidar Pyone, a worker from the Red Stone Garment Factory.

The disputes between

the workers from Hang Jin Garment Factory and Chamzom Garment Factory and the owners of the factories have been solved at the ne-

gotiations table recently, according to the Factories and General Labour Laws Inspection Department.

GNLM

NATIONAL

NAY PYI TAW, 11 Feb—The Myanmar military delegation led by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing arrived back in Yangon on Wednesday after attending the 12th ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Informal Meeting (12th ACDFIM) hosted by Malaysia.

The military delegation was welcomed back at Yangon International Airport by Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Tun Tun Naung, Malaysian Ambassador to Myanmar H.E Mohd Haniff Bin Abd Rahman and officials.

The Senior General and delegation members were seen off at Subang Airport in Kuala Lumpur by Maj-Gen Dato' Hanafiah Jaafar, Assistance Chief

of Staff of Defence Logistic, Brig-Gen Dato' Mohd Azmi Borhan, Armed Forces Provost Marshall, and the Myanmar Ambassador to Malaysia and military attaché.

During his stay in Malaysia, the Commander-in-Chief attended a dinner hosted by Chief of Defence Force of Malaysia General Tan Sri Dato' Sri Dr. Zulkifeili Bin Mohd Zin and wife on Tuesday.

Also present at the dinner were Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Commander-in-Chief, Myanmar military delegation members, Chiefs of Defence Forces of ASEAN countries and their wives and members.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing enjoyed dinner with the Chiefs of Defence Forces of ASEAN

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing back home

countries. After the dinner, the Commander-in-Chief and wife posed for documentary photos together with Chiefs of Defence Forces of ASEAN countries and their wives and exchanged gifts.—*Myawady*

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing poses for documentary photo with chiefs of defence forces of ASEAN countries.—MYAWADY



Four-party talks result in agreements

YANGON, 11 Feb—Representatives of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, the National Network for Education Reform (NNER) and

the Action Committee for Movement of Education for Democracy held talks at the building of Yangon Region Hluttaw in Yangon from 9.30 am to 4.40 pm on 11 February and issued a joint statement.

According to the joint statement, four parties agreed in principle to include representatives of students and teachers in drafting policies, laws and rules related to education, to exclude the formation of national education commission from the national education law, to allow independent administration to schools and regions, to review the current examination system, to adopt teaching methods that encourage independent and critical thinking, to adopt mother-tongue based multi-lingual education system, and to adopt inclusive education system. Details of the points agreed will be discussed by working groups of the parties.

According to the joint statement, recognition of

the legal existence of student and teachers unions will be included in the national education law and legal action will not be taken against students who took part in the protests while students who were expelled from schools because of protests will be allowed to continue their studies. Free compulsory education will be raised from the current primary school level to the middle school level.

The four parties also agreed to continue cooperation until all points of

agreement have been successfully implemented including during the Hluttaw debates for amendment of the national education law and recognized the difficulty to stop the protests and concerns for difficulty to hold examinations and other undesirable incidents. Student representatives will explain the outcomes of the talks to the protesting students and will submit the altitude of the students to the four-party talks to be held on 14 February 2015.—*MNA*



Signatures of four-party talks' participants.—MNA

Tatmadaw forces in hot pursuit of Kokang renegade troops

NAY PYI TAW, 11 Feb—The forces of the Tatmadaw are in hot pursuit of the Kokang renegade troops and there was no fighting between the troops of the Tatmadaw and Kokang renegade troops on Wednesday.

Acting on tips-off, the forces of the Tatmadaw combed the area for the Kokang troops that sneaked into Laukkai through Nyochan Jetty and prepared for operations

in southern and northern parts of Laukkai.

Eight fightings broke out between the forces of the Tatmadaw and the Laukkai renegade troops on Monday and Tuesday. The Tatmadaw carried out five airstrikes during the operations.

The Kokang renegade troops tried to carry out military operations in Monesi, Nantkyun, Wawchon, Monekoe and Mon-eyar areas in 2014 and in

many parts in Laukkai area in January, 2015.

However, the Tatmadaw drove out them thanks to the cooperation of local people.

On 17 December, 2013, Kokang renegade group, with the use of explosive laden tricycle-motorized vehicle, also tried to blast Kunlong suspension bridge which is a main facility for public transportation, but their attempts failed.—*Myawady*

A map shows clashes in Laukkai region



Third four-party talks on amendment of National Education Law

YANGON, 11 Feb—Third four-party talks on amendment of National Education Law was held here Wednesday among the government, National Network for Education Reform and students.

The meeting at the Yangon region government's head office was attended by Union Ministers U Hla Tun, Dr Khin San Yi and Dr Ko Ko Oo, Deputy Ministers U Thant Shin, Dr Aung Kyaw Myat and U Thaung Htaik, chairmen of Hluttaw affairs committees, parliamentarians and members of NNER, together with moderators Dr Aung Tun Thet and Dr Kyaw Thu.

Dr Aung Tun Thet said the meeting to focus on main facts with the help of moderators in accordance with international dispute settlement procedures.

He also suggested making an agreement despite of different views and opinions at both sides of government and protest students.

U Hla Tun, Union Minister at President Office, said that negotiation is pivotal to settle disputes as students and parents are worrying about the existing

confrontation.

U Thein Zaw, MP of Pyithu Hluttaw, said his great expectation on the result of meeting before introducing with parliamentarians.

Dr Thein Lwin of NNER suggested government officials seriously consider the demands of students who are leaving away from classrooms to stage protest against the education law.

He was no longer invited in drafting education bill despite his earlier contribution.

Ma Phyo Phyo Aung, a member of Action Committee for Movement of Education for Democracy, said student protests will not threaten stability of the country due to peaceful demonstrations, urging the participants in the four-party talks to make a good sense in the discussions.

The discussion emphasized on 11 points demanded by protest students. At the end of meeting, a press conference was held with a joint-statement that includes holding the next meeting on February 14 in Yangon.—*MNA*

Obama seeks some limits on ground troops for Islamic State fight

WASHINGTON, 11 Feb — US President Barack Obama will propose to Congress on Wednesday a new three-year authorization for the use of force against Islamic State with limits on US combat troops' involvement, lawmakers and congressional aides said.

Obama has defended his authority to lead an international coalition against Islamic State since 8 August when US fighter jets began attacking the jihadists in Iraq. But he has faced criticism for failing to seek the backing of Congress, where some accuse him of breaching his constitutional authority.

Facing pressure to let lawmakers weigh in on an issue as important as the deployment of troops and chastened by elections that handed power in Congress to Republicans, he said in Novem-



US President Barack Obama speaks during a joint news conference with German Chancellor Angela Merkel following their meeting at the White House in Washington on 9 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

ber he would request formal authorization for the use of military force (AUMF).

An outline of that request, expected to be handed to Congress on Wednesday, could stir debate over how US troops

should be deployed and the extent of US engagement in Iraq and Syria.

The proposal would allow the use of special forces and advisors for defensive purposes but bar “enduring offensive ground forces,” lawmakers and aides said. It would

not, however, set geographic limits for the campaign against the group. Until now, Obama has justified US air strikes in Iraq and Syria under a 2001 authorization passed after the 11 September attacks and a 2002 authorization

used by President George W. Bush in the Iraq war.

The new proposal would repeal the 2002 authorization but leave in place the 2001 AUMF, which has been invoked by the White House to carry out drone and missile strikes against suspected al-Qaeda militants in Yemen and Somalia.

Fueled by outrage over the death of aid worker Kayla Mueller, the last-known US hostage held by Islamic State militants, as well as the slayings of journalists and a Jordanian pilot, lawmakers said they planned quick hearings on the authorization, and a vote within weeks of Congress' return from a 16-20 February recess.

Both Republicans and Democrats said there had been unusually close consultations between the administration and Capitol Hill on the authorization.

Many of Obama's fellow Democrats, war-weary after more than a dozen years of fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq, say they will oppose any AUMF that includes “boots on the ground.”

Obama's opposition to the

Iraq War helped propel him to victory in the 2008 campaign and bringing troops home from Iraq and Afghanistan has been a focus of his presidency.

“I worry that this AUMF gives the ability for the next president to put ground troops back into the Middle East,” said Senator Chris Murphy, adding that that would be a sticking point for himself and many other Democrats.

Some hawkish Republicans oppose restrictions on military commanders such as a ban on ground troops. Others are calling for a more extensive authorization allowing US forces to challenge President Bashar al-Assad of Syria, where a four-year-long civil war has fueled the rise of the Islamic State group.

“If the authorization doesn't let us counter Assad's air power, I think it will fail,” said Senator Lindsey Graham, a leading Republican foreign policy voice.

The White House has declined to discuss the specific time frame or details of its planned AUMF.—Reuters

German parliament less willing to help Greece, Merkel ally says

BERLIN, 11 Feb — Direct provocation by the new government in Athens is making politicians in Germany less willing to agree to further help for Greece, a senior member of German Chancellor Angela Merkel's party was quoted as saying on Wednesday.

Michael Fuchs, deputy parliamentary floor leader of Merkel's Christian Democrats, has frequently expressed frustrations felt by many politicians and the German public about the pace

of reform and political delays in twice-rescued Greece.

“The new leadership in Athens is taking the liberty of directly provoking Germany,” he told *Rheinische Post* newspaper.

“This decreases the willingness of the German parliament to agree to further help for Greece towards zero,” he said, noting many politicians in the coalition government shared his opinion.

He said in the interview that his trust in the new Greek gov-

ernment was already shaken.

On Monday, Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras hailed the decisive role “little Greece” was playing in reshaping Europe and promised Athens would not cave in to demands that it extend its international bailout “no matter how much” German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble asked for it.

Schaeuble has said that if Greece did not want a new aid program “then that's it.”—Reuters

Greek PM easily wins confidence vote, EU showdown looms

ATHENS / BRUSSELS, 11 Feb — Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras comfortably won a confidence vote on his plan to cancel a deeply unpopular bailout programme and challenge European leaders as both sides prepare for a showdown at meetings in Brussels this week.

In a rousing speech to parliament, Tsipras hailed the decisive role “little Greece” was playing in reshaping Europe and promised Athens would not cave in to demands it extend its international bailout “no matter how much” German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble asked for it.

“We are not negotiating the bailout; it was cancelled by its own failure,” he told parliament before winning the vote with the backing of 162 lawmakers in the 300-seat chamber.

“I want to assure you that there is no going back. Greece cannot return to the era of bailouts.”

That came after Schaeuble said that if Greece did not want a new aid programme, “then that's it,” adding to a chorus of warn-



Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras

ings from European policymakers urging Athens to seek an extension to the programme when it expires at the end of the month.

Tsipras — whose toughness has the backing of 75 percent of Greeks according to an opinion poll — said he was confident the two sides would reach an agreement. But there was

little sign of progress in bridging differences ahead of crunch meetings of euro zone finance ministers on Wednesday and EU leaders on Thursday when assistance to Athens beyond February will be discussed.

Hours before the vote, the European Commission said President Jean-Claude Juncker and Tsipras spoke on the phone in a “positive spirit of cooperation,” seeking to calm rising alarm in Western capitals at the risk of a Greek exit from the single currency area that could trigger wider financial instability.

However, Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis refused to rule out a standoff with his country's creditors. “We're not seeking a clash. We will do everything to avoid it,” he told parliament, but added: “If you're not willing to even consider a clash, you're not negotiating.”

Schaeuble and a Commission spokeswoman dismissed media reports of an EU compromise plan that lifted Greek and European financial markets and the euro on Tuesday.—Reuters

American hostage Mueller's family, US government say she is dead



Kayla Mueller, 26, an American humanitarian worker from Prescott, Arizona

WASHINGTON, 11 Feb — US aid worker Kayla Mueller, held hostage by Islamic State militants for 18 months, is dead, her family said on Tuesday, but the circumstances were unclear and President Barack Obama vowed to hunt down the culprits.

Mueller's family received an email and photograph over the weekend from her captors that enabled American intelligence to determine that she had been killed, US officials said.

Islamic State said on Friday that Mueller, 26, was killed when Jordanian fighter jets bombed a building where she was being held outside Raqqa, a stronghold in Syria of the Islamist militant group. Jordan and US officials have expressed doubt about Islamic State's account of her death.

Mueller, from Prescott, Arizona, was thought to have been the last American held hostage by Islamic State, an al-Qaeda off-

shoot that controls parts of Syria and Iraq. But on Tuesday, White House spokesman Josh Earnest said, “We are aware of other American hostages being held in the region.” He did not identify them or provide details.

Among hostages thought to be held by Islamic State is British photojournalist John Cantlie, captured in northern Syria in November 2012.

American journalist Austin Tice disappeared in Damascus in August 2012, and last week his family renewed its campaign to draw attention to his case. It is unclear who is holding Tice or if he is still alive.

Mueller's family said in a statement they were “heartbroken” to learn of her death, and released a letter she wrote in 2014 while in captivity. She was captured in August 2013 while leaving a hospital in Aleppo in northern Syria. Mueller had previously worked in Turkey providing humanitarian assistance to refugees from Syria's civil war.

In recent months, Islamic State has beheaded three Americans, two Britons, and two Japanese hostages, most of whom were aid workers or journalists.

Reuters

WORLD

Britain withdraws embassy staff from Yemen over security concerns

LONDON, 11 Feb — Britain has withdrawn staff from its embassy in Yemen and temporarily suspended operations there over security concerns, the Foreign Office said on Wednesday, a day after the United States shut its embassy.

“The security situation in Yemen has continued to deteriorate over recent days,” Minister for the Middle East Tobias Ellwood said in a statement.

State authority in Yemen has unravelled since a Shi’ite Muslim militia formally seized power last week and the Sunni al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) group has sworn to destroy it, stoking fears of sectarian civil war.

“Our Ambassador and diplomatic staff have left Yemen this morning and will return to the UK,” Ellwood said. —Reuters

United States closes its embassy in conflict-hit Yemen

SANAA, 11 Feb — The United States is closing its embassy in Yemen, the Arabian peninsula state that is a front line in Washington’s war against al-Qaeda, embassy employees and US officials said on Tuesday.

US officials in Washington confirmed the embassy would close because of the unpredictable security situation in a country where a rebel group has seized control of the capital, Sanaa.

State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki declined comment. But she noted that the embassy staff had been gradually reduced and said the safety of the personnel was a top priority. “We take steps in order to make sure we do everything we can to protect that,” she told a regular briefing. —Reuters

France to close embassy in Yemen over security concerns

PARIS, 11 Feb — France will close its embassy in Yemen from 13 February due to security concerns and has asked its citizens to leave the country as soon as possible, the embassy said on Wednesday.

“Given the latest political developments and for security reasons, the embassy asks you to temporarily leave Yemen as quickly as possible,” the embassy said in a statement on its website.

It said the embassy would close from Friday until further notice. —Reuters



Photo taken on 10 Feb, 2015 shows smoke rising from the site of attack in Kunduz Province, northern Afghanistan. A massive suicide attack in northern Afghanistan’s Kunduz Province and bomb blast against a member of the Provincial Council in eastern Nangarhar Province have left six persons including five attackers dead and injured seven others, including a police and six civilians on Tuesday, officials confirmed. —XINHUA

Gunmen in Central Africa Republic free kidnapped government minister

BANGUI, 11 Feb — Gunmen in Central African Republic have freed the minister for youth and sport who was kidnapped in January, the minister’s spokesman said on Wednesday.

Armel Ningatoloum Sayo was kidnapped on 25 January as part of a spate of hostage-taking linked to the anti-balaka militia that included the brief kidnapping of a UN staff member and a French charity worker.

The seizures highlight insecurity in the impoverished country where thousands have been killed and

around a million displaced from their homes since the mainly Muslim Seleka rebels took power in March 2013.

The group gave up power last year in the face of diplomatic pressure and violence by the “anti-balaka” militia, who are mainly Christian or animist, but it still controls the northeastern portion of the country.

Sayo was returning from church with his wife and brother in north Bangui when four gunmen in a taxi stopped his vehicle, shot in the air and seized him before fleeing towards

an anti-balaka stronghold, said his spokesman Tatiana Yangeko at the time.

Yangeko said Sayo was freed overnight. In January, the anti-balaka denied they played a role in Sayo’s kidnapping.

Sayo was a senior officer in the presidential guard before being arrested by former president Francois Bozize.

He led a northern rebel group called “Revolution and Justice” but was named minister in the 2014 peace deal in the former French colony.

Reuters

Niger approves sending troops to Nigeria to fight Boko Haram

NIAMEY, 11 Feb — Niger’s parliament has unanimously approved sending troops to northern Nigeria as part of a regional offensive against the Islamist Boko Haram insurgent group that has staged several cross-border attacks over the past week.

Security sources said soldiers in Diffa, a town on Niger’s border with Nigeria, shot dead a suicide bomber heading on foot towards a military base and warned that militants had infiltrated groups of civilians who had crossed into Niger.

The government later declared a 15-day state of emergency in the Diffa region with an 8 pm (1900 GMT) to 6 am (0500 GMT) curfew.

Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, Chad and Benin agreed at the weekend to send a joint 8,700-strong force to battle the Nigerian Boko Haram, which has killed thousands of people and kidnapped hundreds more in a jihadist campaign to carve out a medieval-style caliphate.

Nigeria has postponed its 14 February presidential election by six weeks, citing security concerns.

In the last few days, Niger has massed more than 3,000 troops in Diffa on its southeastern frontier with Nigeria, awaiting approval to go on the offensive. —Reuters

How the Houthis drove Yemen into a political vacuum

SANAA, 11 Feb — When Yemen’s Houthi fighters scaled the rooftops surrounding former president Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi’s home, killed his guards and put him under house arrest, they left no doubt that negotiating a political settlement with them would be difficult.

The actions of the Shi’ite Muslim fighters have drawn criticism from across Yemen’s political spectrum, especially after their declaration on Friday that they were dismissing the national assembly and would form a new government.

The move, condemned by Washington and Gulf Arabs, has added to fears in the United States and neighbouring oil giant Saudi Arabia that Yemen, which is

home to an active al-Qaeda wing, is on the verge of becoming a failed state.

Even after the United Nations managed to bring political factions to the negotiating table again, two parties walked out, complaining of threats from the Houthis.

“The problem isn’t in selecting a new president ... but it’s tied to the militias’ control of the capital and on decision-making,” said Abdullah Noman, secretary general of the leftist Nasserist party.

“So any new president will be at the mercy of these militias who are still holding Hadi, the prime minister and a number of officials under house arrest,” he added.

Indeed when the 69-year-old president as-

sumed office after Arab Spring protests ousted his predecessor, he never would have guessed that two years later he would be under control of rebels who had overrun Sanaa and became Yemen’s new de facto rulers.

Hadi tried to accommodate the rebels even after they took over the capital in September, but the crisis reached a critical point in mid-January that began with battles at the presidential palace and brought Hadi’s resignation.

The Houthis began as a revivalist group for Yemen’s Zaydi Shi’ite Muslim sect in the north, before morphing over the past decade into a revolutionary movement with national ambitions, and an ally of Iran.

In a lightning push through northern Yemen and into Sanaa last year, the group took advantage of splits in the ruling and tribal elite and of widespread anger at years of government malfeasance.

They portrayed their move as a “people’s revolution” against corruption

which they say was emptying state coffers. Their decision to dissolve parliament and set up an interim government was denounced as a coup by one political faction.

Reuters spoke to sources close to Hadi to draw a picture of what led Hadi to leave office. —Reuters



Houthi fighters ride a patrol truck in Sanaa on 10 Feb, 2015. —REUTERS

Massachusetts struggles to remove snow after massive storms

BOSTON, 11 Feb — Massachusetts officials called out National Guard troops on Tuesday to help dig out from a trio of massive snowstorms in the past two weeks, noting that at least seven roof collapses had been reported as a result of the heavy accumulation.

The head of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority defended the decision to shut Boston-area subways and rail service as schools remained closed across much of the area.

Some 500 National Guard troops were to deploy across eastern Massachusetts to help clear the roughly 6 feet (1.8 metres) of snow that has fallen in the past two weeks, Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker told reporters.

"We need to get the

Commonwealth back to work and we need to get our kids back to school," Baker told reporters, adding that his counterparts in New York and Vermont had agreed to lend heavy equipment to help with snow removal. Baker also said he had approved the purchase of two snow-melting machines capable of melting 120 tons of snow per hour.

The city's rail system will reopen on a limited schedule on Wednesday, and public schools will hold classes, Boston Mayor Marty Walsh told reporters.

"We've been informed that the MBTA will be operating tomorrow on a limited schedule, as of right now," Walsh said.

Beverly Scott, general manager of the MBTA, said she had no choice on Mon-



A pedestrian walks along a snow covered street during a winter snow storm in Boston, Massachusetts on Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

day afternoon but to order all rail services shut down, an announcement that came right before the evening rush hour and a few hours

before the 7 pm shutdown.

"We do not control Mother Nature," Scott told reporters, visibly angry about criticism of her han-

dling of the storm.

The train system carries about 950,000 riders on a typical weekday.

Commuters expressed

exasperation at Tuesday's shut-down, intended to allow crews to clear snow from above-ground tracks after three trains loaded with commuters were evacuated due to snow-related troubles.

"I was surprised at the MBTA shutdown. You can't just shut down the city," Ariel Freiberg, 32, of Somerville, said as she waited at the main train station for an Amtrak train to New York. The Amtrak service was running at full capacity despite the MBTA's shutdown.

Heavy snow on tracks had caused trains to lose contact with the electricity-carrying third rail across the system's 800 miles (1,290 kilometres) of tracks, prompting the shutdown, Scott said.—Reuters

Some 300 migrants missing at sea, feared dead: UN agency

ROME, 11 Feb — An estimated 300 people probably died this week after attempting to reach Italy from Libya in stormy weather, the UN refugee agency said on Wednesday after speaking to a handful of survivors.

An Italian tug boat rescued 9 people who had been on two different boats on Monday and

brought them to the Italian island of Lampedusa on Wednesday morning.

They are the only known survivors from their two boats, leaving more than 200 unaccounted for, they told representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The survivors said there had been a third large

dinghy that had also left Libya on Saturday and was missing, Barbara Molinaro, a spokeswoman for the UNHCR, told Reuters.

In an incident apparently related to yet another boat full of migrants, the Italian coast guard picked up 105 people on Sunday in extremely dangerous sea conditions near to Libya and with the tempera-

ture hovering just a few degrees above zero.

Twenty-nine from that dinghy died of hypothermia in the 18 hours it took the coast guard to ferry them to Italy.

The recent deaths at sea have reignited criticism of Italy's decision last year to end a full-scale search-and-rescue mission, known as Mare Nos-

trum, due to concerns over costs.

Pope Francis on Wednesday told pilgrims in St Peter's Square that he was "following with concern the news out of Lampedusa", saying he would pray for the victims and "again encourage solidarity so that those in need are rescued".

Reuters

Vucic: I expect negotiations with EU to open soon

BELGRADE, 11 Feb — Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic said on Tuesday that he expects negotiations on Serbia's accession to the European Union (EU) to open soon.

During the first conference of a new project titled Belgrade Dialogues (Beogradski dijalozi), Vucic said that he thought that the first chapters to be opened could be Chapters 23 and 24, aimed at fully introducing the rule of law in Serbia.

"I expect the first chapters to be opened very soon," said the prime minister, stressing at the same time that "what we will do with the country and how much we will be able to change is far more important than just opening the chapters." Vucic said that the international community had already recognized the efforts Serbia had made in the eco-



Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic

nomie field and had lauded the economic measures and reforms undertaken by the government. "I believe that the international community will recognize the efforts that Serbia is making in the political sphere," he said.

In the latest round of dialogue on the normalization of relations with Pristina in Brussels last night, the Belgrade delegation had long and difficult talks and they did everything they could to come to an agreement on the judiciary issue, Vucic said.

Tanjug

Sandstorm continues to hit Mideast with ports closed, flights grounded

CAIRO / Jerusalem, 11 Feb — A sandstorm continues to blow hard in parts of the Middle East on Wednesday, where authorities have remained sea ports closed and briefly grounded flights.

In Egypt, the dusty wind has caused serious lack of sight along the desert roads. In Cairo, skies turned yellow while the sun has almost been blotted out, yet people's daily actions in the capital go on as usual.

The storm has also raised wave levels in both the Red and Mediterranean seas, and has thus halted the marine activities.

Weather forecasters expect that the awful weather would go on storming most of the country throughout the day, with temperatures going down and raindrops in the coastal cities.

On Tuesday, because of the sandstorm, fishermen had to stay put, and a total of six ports have been

closed. Electricity went out in some 400 villages.

As many as six air flights, including international and local ones, were told to change their routes, and to land in Sharm El-Sheikh international airport instead of Cairo airport, which were shut down briefly.

In the coastal city of Alexandria, the wind broke a window, which accidentally fell on the neck of a child, who died later.

Israel has also been hit by the developing sandstorm. The country temporarily shut down two airports and suspended all domestic flights Wednesday morning as the sandstorm hit the country, the Israel Airport Authority said in a statement.

Flights to and from the Red Sea resort city of Eilat were grounded, and later one Eilat's airport and a small airport in Tel Aviv were shut down, according to the Airport authority. The

two airports serve mainly domestic flights.

The sky over Jerusalem and other major cities turned yellow, causing limited visibility. However, the flights at Israel's main international airport, Ben Gurion Airport outside Tel Aviv, were not affected by the storm.

Descended over the country late on Tuesday, the dust storm also disrupted traffic and raised air pollution to levels 50 times higher than usual.

A spokesperson for Israel's Meteorological Service said the sandstorm carries dust from North Africa and is moving through parts of the Middle East.

Lebanon is another victim. In Beirut, the storm brought heavy winds, rain and snow to the mountains. According to weather forecasters in Lebanon, the speed of the wind reached 100 km per hour (60 mph).

Xinhua

Russia preparing new humanitarian aid convoy for Donbas citizens

MOSCOW, 11 Feb — Russia's Emergencies Ministry has started preparing the next humanitarian aid convoy for the war-torn eastern Ukraine, the ministry's press service said on Wednesday.

"The Emergencies Ministry currently continues delivering humanitarian cargoes to the Rostov Region where the next convoy of vehicles is being formed for the citizens of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions," a ministry spokesperson said.

Later on Wednesday, the ministry's aircraft will deliver a humanitarian cargo of more than 70 tons from the Ramenskoye airfield near Moscow to Rostov-on-Don, in southern Russia.

The cargo mainly consists of medicines and medical appliances, which will be then loaded on the vehicles in Rostov-on-Don that are to become part of the convoy.

Since mid-August 2014, Russian convoys have delivered to Donbas more than 18,000 tons of humanitarian aid, mainly foodstuffs, medicines, building materials and primary necessity items.

Itar-Tass

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV MOROTAI VOY NO (YF 256R)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MOROTAI VOY NO (YF 256R) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12.2.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S CMA CGM**

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV KOTA TAMPAN VOY NO (TPN617)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA TAMPAN VOY NO (TPN617) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12.2.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER
LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO (117W)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO (117W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 13.2.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ORINET OVERSEAS
CONTAINER LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

**THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(2/2015)**

Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars and Myanmar Kyats.

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-143(14-15)	Spares for Kenworth Oil Field Truck (14) Items	US\$
(2)	IFB-144(14-15)	1500 Series Well Head Equipment & Accessories (2) Sets	US\$
(3)	IFB-145(14-15)	Spares for Down Hole Equipments (8) Items	US\$
(4)	IFB-146(14-15)	273 KW Gas Engine Driven Generating Set (1) Set	US\$
(5)	DMP/L-030(14-15)	Portable Fire Pump with Engine and Fire Assembly (3) Lots	Ks
(6)	DMP/L-031(14-15)	33 KV GCB Complete Set and 33 KV Current Transformer (2) Items	Ks
(7)	DMP/L-032(14-15)	Motor for SAFE and Intermech Compressor (2) Nos	Ks
(8)	DMP/L-033(14-15)	185mm ² , 4 Core, XLPE Cable (50) Meter	Ks
(9)	DMP/L-034(14-15)	SAE 15 W 40 Diesel Engine Oil (API-CF4) (1) Lot	Ks

Tender Closing Date & Time - 9-3-2015, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 9th February, 2015 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No (44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph.+95 67- 411097/411206

**Ministry of Energy
Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise
Invitation for Opened Tender (1/2015)**

1. Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United State Dollars (CIF Yangon).

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Qty	Remark
(1)	MPPE/MCY/CAP/T/7 (2014-2015)	Petroleum Products Testing Equipment (Brand New) (ASTM Standard) For Mobile Fuellab	1 Lot	USD
(2)	MPPE/MCY/CAP/T/8 (2014-2015)	120 IGPM Fuel Transfer Centrifugal Pump (Engine Driven)	3 sets	USD

2. Tender Closing Date & Time - 10-3-2015, 12:00Hrs

3. Tender documents are available at our office starting from 11-2-2015 during office hours and for further detail please contact: Phone : 067-411487.

Planning Department
Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise
Ministry of Energy, No (6) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV CHINDWIN STAR VOY NO (1003)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV CHINDWIN STAR VOY NO (1003) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12.2.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S CONTINENTAL SHIPPING
LINE PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

**Road pileup
kills seven in
north China**

TAIYUAN, 11 Feb — A road pileup left seven people dead and another two injured on Tuesday in north China's Shanxi Province, local government said on Wednesday.

The traffic accident in Lanxian County was caused by collision of a heavy-duty truck and three sedans at 5:50 pm, said the county government's information office.

The injured are in stable condition. The cause of the collision is being investigated.—Xinhua

HK court convicts boss of torturing domestic helper



Supporters of Indonesian domestic helper Erwiana Sulistyaningsih (3rd from L) hold a Press conference in Hong Kong on 10 Feb, 2015, after the District Court convicted Law Wan-tung, Erwiana's employer for eight months in 2013, of torturing her. Erwiana's plight put the international spotlight on the "slave-like" working conditions for many live-in maids in Hong Kong.—KYODO NEWS

Two killed, 65 injured in 100-car pileup near S Korea main airport

SEOUL, 11 Feb — Two people were killed and 65 injured, seven seriously, on Wednesday morning in a pileup involving about 100 vehicles in foggy weather on a bridge near Incheon International Airport, police said.

Yonhap News Agency said among those injured

seven were Chinese, five Thais, two Vietnamese, two Japanese, one Russian, one Bangladeshi and one Swiss national. Both fatalities were South Koreans.

The accident occurred around 9:40 am on the Seoul-bound side of the bridge linking the western

port city with an island where the airport is located.

South Korean police believe the initial pileup was caused by a collision between an airport limousine bus and a passenger car on an icy stretch of the road, Yonhap said.

Kyodo News

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WEATHER REPORT

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 12th February, 2015: Light rain are likely to be isolated in Upper Sagaing Region, Kachin and Shan States, weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters.

Jon Stewart leaving Comedy Central's 'The Daily Show'



Director Jon Stewart arrives at the Canadian premiere of "Rosewater" at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) in Toronto on 8 Sept, 2014. —REUTERS

LOS ANGELES, 11 Feb — Comedian Jon Stewart, famed for his biting television satire of politicians and the media, will leave his job as host of Comedy Central's parody newscast

"The Daily Show" later this year, he told his studio audience at the end of Tuesday night's episode.

Stewart, 52, who has starred on the show since 1999, said he had no specif-

ic plans for his next career move, but was thankful for the opportunity to host the programme.

"It's been an absolute privilege," said an emotional Stewart. "It's been the

honour of my professional life, and I thank you for watching it, for hate-watching it, whatever reason you are tuning in for."

The announcement came after Comedy Central's other big name, former "Daily Show" contributor Stephen Colbert, ended his tenure as star of companion show "The Colbert Report" and left the network in December to succeed the retiring David Letterman as host of the "Late Show" on CBS.

The New York-based "The Daily Show," which airs weeknights at 11 pm on the Viacom Inc-owned Comedy Central, is expected to continue, the network said, but a replacement for Stewart has yet to be named.

"Through his unique voice and vision, 'The Daily Show' has become a cultural touchstone for millions of fans and an unparalleled platform for political comedy that will

endure for years to come," Comedy Central President Michele Ganeless said in a statement. Stewart replaced Craig Kilborn roughly 15 years ago as host of the late-night cable programme, which has won Peabody and Emmy awards.

"17 years is the longest I have ever in my life held a job, by 16 years and five months," Stewart said on Tuesday's broadcast.

"The upshot there being I am a terrible employee. But in my heart, I know it is time for someone else to have that opportunity," he added, prompting boos from the audience.

"The Daily Show" averages slightly more than 1 million viewers a night, a far smaller audience than his late-night competition on broadcast networks, but Stewart became disproportionately influential in US politics and culture.

His lampooning of elected and would-be office-holders, broadcast

journalists and other public figures, especially on the conservative end of the spectrum, has made him a darling of the political left.

Young adult viewers form the core of his fan base. In a 2004 poll by the Pew Research Centre for the People and the Press, 21 percent of respondents aged 18 to 29 cited "The Daily Show" as a regular source of political news.

A two-time Oscar host who has branched out into the movie industry, Stewart made his directorial debut with the film "Rosewater" last year.

Beginning his show business career in stand-up comedy in New York, Stewart took his satirical humour to MTV in 1993, where he hosted "The Jon Stewart Show."

"The Daily Show" has been a launchpad for several comedians besides Colbert, among them Steve Carell and John Oliver.

Reuters

Angelina Jolie opens UK centre to fight warzone violence against women

LONDON, 11 Feb — Hollywood actress-director Angelina Jolie has opened Europe's first academic centre to combat the brutality faced by women in warzones. Jolie, a special envoy for the UN high commissioner for refugees (UNHCR), has just returned from northern Iraq, where she met some of the millions of refugees forced to flee from their homes due to Islamic State (Isis) violence, reported Guardian online.

The 39-year-old mother of six said students of the centre on women, peace and security at the London School of Economics (LSE) had the chance to change the world. "If you



were to ask me who I think this centre is for, I picture someone who is not in this room today. I think of a girl I met in Iraq three weeks ago. She is 13-year-old, but instead of going to school,

she sits on the floor in a makeshift tent," she said.

The girl was captured by Isis as a slave, and repeatedly raped, Jolie said. "Now she may never be able to complete her education, or get married or have a family, because in her society victims of rape are shunned, and considered shameful. To my mind, what we have begun today at LSE is for that Iraqi girl and others like her," she added.

The new centre will work to achieve the aims of the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (PVSI), which Jolie and the former UK foreign secretary William Hague co-founded back in 2012.—PTI

Australia granted wildcard entry to 2015 Eurovision Song Contest

CANBERRA, 11 Feb — Australia has been invited to join the glitz, glamour and theatrics of the Eurovision Song Contest after being granted a wildcard entry to this year's event by contest organizers.

The announcement was broadcast on Australian television on Wednesday morning, but Eurovision organizers were coy about the reasons for admitting Australia to a largely European event — to be held this year in Vienna.

"It's a daring and at the same time incredibly exciting move. It is our way of saying 'let's celebrate this party together'" said Jon Ola Sand, Executive Supervisor of the contest.

The move does have a precedent, however, as Australian singer Jessica Mauboy made a guest appearance in 2014.

Australian ratings for the contest have soared in recent years, drawing an average nightly viewership of over 750,000 people in 2013 and over one million in 2014.

Australia's Eurovision broadcaster, SBS, released a statement on Wednesday confirming the news.

"The deal is a result of SBS's ambition to increase Australia's presence at Eurovision following the success of Jessica Mauboy's performance last year in Denmark," the release said. "Australia's enthu-

siasm for the contest has been embraced by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) and the 2015 host broadcaster ORF, who have invited SBS to send an artist to compete as a wild card entry for 2015 in celebration of the 60th anniversary of the contest."

Those watching from home will be able to get into the spirit of the contest, after it was announced that Australian fans will be given the right to vote in the proceedings.

A performer is yet to be announced by SBS, however according to the broadcaster's Eurovision host Julia Zemiro, a decision will be made "very shortly".—Xinhua

Ringo Starr announces 18th album

LOS ANGELES, 11 Feb — Beatles icon Ringo Starr has revealed his 18th studio album will be out on 30 March via Universal Records. The drummer's album will contain 11 original tracks, recorded by Starr and his All Starr Band containing Steve Lukather, Todd Rundgren, Gregg Rolie, Richard Page, Warren Ham and Gregg Bissonette, reported the *Rolling Stones* magazine.

There will also be guest appearances from Joe Walsh, Benmont Tench, Dave Stewart, Ann Marie Simpson, Richard Marx, Amy Keys, Peter Frampton, Nathan East, and Glen Ballard among others. Starr will be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in April, while also receiving the Award for Musical Excellence.

"It means recognition. Finally, the four of us are in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame even though we were the biggest pop group in the land," he said.—PTI

Sony and Marvel to partner on Spider-Man movie



LOS ANGELES, 11 Feb — Sony Pictures and Marvel Studios have reached a deal to partner on the next instalment of the \$4 billion (3 billion pounds) Spider-Man franchise, uniting the web-slinging superhero with Marvel's comic book universe. Kevin Feige, president of Walt Disney Co's Marvel Studios, will co-produce the next film set for July 2017 release with Sony's Amy Pascal, according to a statement from the firms. Under the agreement, the Spider-Man will also appear in an upcoming Marvel film, and Marvel characters, which include Iron Man, Thor and Captain America, could appear in later Spider-Man films, the statement said.

Sony Pictures Entertainment, a division of Sony Corp, will continue to own the cinematic rights to Spider-Man, a Marvel superhero, the statement said.

"Spider-Man has more than 50 years of history in Marvel's world, and with this deal, fans will be able to experience Spider-Man taking his rightful place among other Super Heroes," the statement said.—Reuters

GENERAL

Sky pays record 4.2 billion pounds for top Premier League rights, BT takes the rest



A British Sky Broadcasting Group (BSkyB) work van is driven in west London on 25 July, 2014.—REUTERS

LONDON, 11 Feb — Pay-TV group Sky (SKYB.L) has agreed to pay 4.2 billion pounds to show 126 live English Premier League matches a season from 2016 to 2019, pressured by fierce rival BT (BT.L) to smash analysts' forecasts and secure the best games.

After one of the most high-profile broadcast auctions of recent times, the Premier League said that Sky had won five of the seven rights packages, including the most popular Sunday afternoon matches showing the likes of Manchester United and Arsenal.

With BT paying 960 million pounds to show 42 games a season, the two

companies will shell out a combined 5.14 billion pounds over three years, well above the 4 billion pounds analysts had expected and above the 3 billion pounds paid for the current contract. Sky, which is 39 percent-owned by Rupert Murdoch's 21st Century Fox (FOXA.O) and synonymous with top-flight English football, said it would cut costs within the business and likely raise some prices for customers to afford the new contract.

Premier League Chief Executive Richard Scudamore said he was surprised by how much the matches had fetched, but he noted that the game was the beneficiary of the two media

giants using football to draw and retain customers.

"These are huge companies doing huge things in a market that has gone way beyond football," Scudamore said.

Sky, has built its business around offering exclusive programming such as premium sports and drama to customers who can also take telephony and broadband packages.

But it has faced a far greater challenge in recent years, since the deep-pocketed BT copied its business model by buying up broadcast rights to attract customers to its new superfast broadband platform.

The 169-year-old telecoms company had already

ramped up the pressure on Sky by winning the right to show all the live European Champions League matches for three years from the 2015/16 season, forcing Sky to up its game in the English auction to retain its position as a leading sports broadcaster.

Scudamore said the League had received a broad interest in its rights but would not say who else had bid to show the games, which feature world-class players such as Chelsea's Diego Costa, Manchester United's Robin van Persie and Arsenal's Alexis Sanchez.

After three days of bidding, Sky won the right to show matches on Sunday afternoons and early Saturday games, while BT will show Saturday evening matches.

"We went into the Premier League auction with a clear objective and are pleased to have secured the rights that we wanted," Sky Chief Executive Jeremy Darroch said.

Analysts at Bernstein said they had been surprised by the 83 percent rise in Sky's three-year deal.

"Sky is on a trajectory that is unsustainable if a significant portion of the cost base must be expected to increase by such large growth rates every three years," they said.—Reuters

Van Gaal denies FA misconduct charge



Manchester United manager Louis van Gaal

LONDON, 11 Feb — Manchester United manager Louis van Gaal has denied a Football Association misconduct charge relating to comments he made following last month's FA Cup draw with Cambridge United, the governing body said on Tuesday.

"Louis van Gaal denies FA misconduct charge in relation to media comments and requests personal hearing, date to be confirmed,"

the FA said on Twitter.

"It is alleged his comments constitute improper conduct in that they allege and/or imply bias on the part of the match referee and/or bring the game into disrepute."

United were held to a 0-0 draw by the fourth-tier side but won the replay 3-0 at Old Trafford to set up a fifth-round tie away to Preston North End.

Reuters

Moon objects found in astronaut Neil Armstrong's closet

WASHINGTON, 11 Feb — A treasure trove of objects that were supposed to have been left behind after the first moon landing have turned up in the closet of Neil Armstrong, the first man to step onto the lunar surface, the Smithsonian Institution has said.

Armstrong died in August 2012 and his wife, Carol, found the items from the 1969 lunar landing as she was cleaning out one of his home closets in Cincinnati, Allan Needell, a space history curator at the National Air and Space Museum, wrote in a recent blog.

Among the objects are a camera that was mounted in the window of the Eagle lunar module to record the landing and two waist tethers. Armstrong used one of the tethers to support his feet during his rest period on the moon, Needell said.

The items were stashed

in a white stowage bag informally known as a McDivitt Purse used aboard Eagle to store items.

"Needless to say, for a curator of a collection of space artifacts, it is hard to imagine anything more exciting," Needell wrote.

The items were intended to be left behind on the moon but were instead brought back.

Needell said that as far as he knew Armstrong had never discussed them and no one had seen them in the 45 years since he returned to Earth.

According to mission transcripts, Armstrong described the objects to astronaut Michael Collins, who stayed in orbit around the moon aboard the command ship, as "just a bunch of trash that we want to take back - LM parts, odds and ends, and it won't stay closed by itself."—Reuters

mitv Myanmar International

(12-2-2015 07:00 am~ 13-2-2015 07:00 am) MST

- Local News
- Shan Novices To Be...
- World News
- Myanmar Union Day
- Local News
- Sai Htee Hseng Or An Exceptional Music Star From Shan Plateaus (IV)
- Local News
- Myanmar Weaving
- World News
- A Glance At A Naga Family Life
- Local News
- Beautiful Mon Choral Dance
- World News
- MURAL PAINTING BAGAN
- Local News
- Home Grown Treasure (Part-I)
- World News
- Home Grown Treasure (Part-II)
- Local News
- Sai Htee Hseng Or An Exceptional Music Star From Shan Plateaus (III)
- World News
- Wholesale Fish
- Local News
- Oboist and His Life
- World News
- Myanmar Agarwood
- Local News
- MUUN (Episode - I)
- World News
- Tea Leaves
- Local News

MRTV News Channel in Brief

(12-2-2015, Thursday)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>6:00 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paritta by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw <p>6:30 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 68th Anniversary Union Day Ceremony (Live Broadcast) <p>7:30 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Line News <p>7:35 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Entertainment <p>8:00 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News/ International News <p>8:35 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People's Talks <p>9:35 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentary (ASEAN) <p>9:50 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 68th Anniversary Union Day Programme <p>10:50 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (100) Birthday Anniversary Bogyoke Aung San <p>11:35 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science and Technology <p>12:00 noon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News / International News / Weather Report | <p>12:35 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hluttaw Image <p>12:50 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Game for Children <p>1:20 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine Arts-Boson of Dramatic Performance <p>3:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News/ International News (Package) <p>4:35 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentary <p>5:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News <p>5:35 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People's Talks <p>6:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News / Weather Report <p>6:35 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentary <p>7:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News <p>7:35 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Affairs <p>8:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News / International News / Weather Report <p>9:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News • Hluttaw Image • Clever • Talk on Old Film |
|---|--|

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(12-2-2015, Thursday)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>6:00 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandaya Kun Zaw Music Troupe <p>6:20 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TV Drama Series <p>6:45 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TV Drama Series <p>7:10 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fashion Show <p>7:40 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myanmar Series <p>8:00 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TV Drama Series | <p>8:40 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TV Drama Series <p>9:25 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Musical Programme <p>9:35 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASEAN CULTURAL FAIR 2014 <p>9:45 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China in Myanmar Cultural Show <p>10:00 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myanmar Video |
|--|--|

Arsenal into top four as Spurs lose at Liverpool

LONDON, 11 Feb — Arsenal climbed into the top four with a laboured 2-1 win over a spirited Leicester City while Liverpool continued their push up the Premier League table with a pulsating 3-2 victory at home to Tottenham Hotspur on Tuesday.

Mario Balotelli's first league goal for Liverpool sealed a topsy-turvy game at Anfield that they twice led through Lazar Markovic and a Steven Gerrard penalty before being pegged back by the in-form Harry Kane and Mousa Dembele.

Arsenal, with a revitalised Mesut Ozil in a central role, led 2-0 through Laurent Koscielny and Theo Walcott before basement side Leicester's record

signing Andrej Kramaric got his first goal for the club as they dominated the second half.

Fourth-placed Arsenal have 45 points from 25 games — two clear of sixth-placed Spurs and three ahead of Liverpool in seventh — though they could be displaced by Manchester United in fifth who host lowly Burnley on Wednesday.

"The performance wasn't the best at times but we got the three points and we ground it out in the end," Arsenal goalscorer Walcott told Sky Sports.

"I can't believe they're bottom of the league as they played some very good football. I think they're one of the best teams who have come to the Emirates this

year. If they continue playing like that they won't be there much longer."

Queens Park Rangers claimed their first points away from home this season with a 2-0 victory at Sunderland thanks to goals from Leroy Fer and Bobby Zamora.

Hull City climbed out of the relegation zone with a 2-0 victory at home to free-falling Aston Villa — courtesy of goals from Nikica Jelavic and Dame N'Doye — subjecting the Midlands side to a fifth successive league defeat in the process.

At Anfield, striker Daniel Sturridge, on his first Premier League start after a long-term injury, was one of Liverpool's liveliest players and could



Theo Walcott scores the second goal for Arsenal at Emirates Stadium on 10 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

have scored twice inside 13 minutes.

First the England international's tame shot was saved by Hugo Lloris before the France goalkeeper made a stunning, instinc-

tive save to keep out his rasping drive minutes later.

Liverpool were not to be denied in the 15th minute though when Markovic's low shot squirmed past Lloris.

Tottenham's Kane, fast becoming one the Premier League's most feared forwards, restored parity for the visitors in the 26th minute with a neat turn and low finish.—Reuters

Dortmund's Reus extends deal to 2019

BERLIN, 11 Feb — Borussia Dortmund winger Marco Reus signed a surprise two-year contract extension with the Bundesliga club until 2019 on Tuesday, ending persistent speculation about a move to Spain or England at the end of the season.

Reus, who had an injury-plagued 2014 when he also missed the World Cup which Germany won, looked to be on his way out after Bayern Munich revealed he had a buyout clause in his contract, angering Dortmund.

With his club hovering in the relegation zone after a dismal first half to the season, speculation had been rife he would leave.

"I am happy to have extended the contract," Reus said in a club video interview. "When I came here (in 2012) I said I wanted to do things. I have the feeling that it's not over even in this situation."

"We fall together and we win together, It is a decision for life. I did not think about it that long for no reason."

Dortmund did not reveal details of the deal but it reportedly does not include a buyout clause.

Dortmund, German champions in 2011 and 2012, are struggling this season, lying in the relegation playoff spot and the news of the deal will further boost their confidence after their first win of the year on Saturday against Freiburg.—Reuters

Ronaldo slump hurts Real as in-form Messi drives Barca



Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo sits on the pitch during their Spanish first division soccer match against Atletico Madrid at the Vicente Calderon stadium in Madrid, on 7 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

MADRID, 11 Feb — When Real Madrid forward Cristiano Ronaldo collected his third FIFA Ballon d'Or award last month he was enjoying a run of form that was spectacular even by his standards and the European champions were riding high.

Four weeks later and the Por-

tugal captain is mired in a rare slump, Real have been dumped out of the King's Cup by Atletico Madrid and their lead over Barcelona at the top of La Liga has been cut to a point after Saturday's humiliating 4-0 drubbing at their city neighbours.

Alarm bells are ringing at the

world's richest club by income and the sense that Real's season may be coming off the rails was heightened by the storm that blew up this week after Ronaldo threw a lavish 30th birthday party hours after the defeat at the Calderon.

The Madrid club's great rivals Barca, by contrast, are on a nine-match winning streak in all competitions led by club talisman Lionel Messi, who Ronaldo beat into second place in the Ballon d'Or vote.

Argentina captain Messi has scored or assisted 14 La Liga goals in 2015, at least twice as many as any other player, while Ronaldo has netted only four goals since the turn of the year.

He was sent off for kicking a Cordoba player in a La Liga match on 24 January and cut a forlorn figure when he returned for Saturday's derby after a two-match ban.

He had just one effort on goal, his joint fewest in any 90-minute La Liga appearance, as Real attempted fewer shots (four) and faced more shots on target (eight)

than in any other game this season in all competitions.

Ronaldo's poor form has prompted more speculation he may be carrying an injury and El Pais newspaper reported he is still suffering with the tendonitis in his left knee that hampered him at the World Cup finals in Brazil.

Spanish media reported Real president Florentino Perez held crisis meetings with coach Carlo Ancelotti and the squad this week.

To be sure, the team has been hampered by injuries to key performers including centre backs Sergio Ramos and Pepe and midfielders Luka Modric and James Rodriguez.

Saturday's reverse was their heaviest defeat since they were thrashed 5-0 at Barca in November 2010 and they will need a rapid improvement if they are to defend their European crown this term.

Their next outing is at home to Deportivo La Coruna on Saturday before they play their Champions League last-16, first leg at Schalke 04.—Reuters

Hewitt offered one last hurrah on London's grasscourts

LONDON, 11 Feb — Former champion Lleyton Hewitt will begin his preparations for his final bow at Wimbledon this year at the Aegon Championships after organisers of the Queen's Club grasscourt event guaranteed the Australian a wildcard.

The unusual move to hand out a wildcard before the entry list is known is reward for the 33-year-old former world number one who has won the Wimbledon warm-up event four times.

Hewitt, who will retire after next year's Australian Open, is winding down his career and will

only play two tournaments this year, Queen's and Wimbledon as well as the Davis Cup.

"It took us roughly two seconds to decide to guarantee Lleyton a wild card!" said tournament director Stephen Farrow.

Reuters

Benjamin Becker of Germany celebrates after defeating Lleyton Hewitt of Australia during their men's singles second round match at the Australian Open 2015 tennis tournament in Melbourne on 22 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS

