

President U Thein Sein observes construction of new wholesale market in Singaing Township, Mandalay Region after trip to Chin State



President U Thein Sein hears reports presented by Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Ye Myint on wholesale market to be established in Singaing Township, Mandalay Region.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 21 Feb— President U Thein Sein arrived at the proposed site of building wholesale market in Singaing Township in Mandalay Region on Saturday after he and his entourage looked into development programmes of electricity

supply in Chin State. On Friday evening, the President viewed performance of Chin traditional dance troupes in Haka township to mark Chin National Day. He also joined bonfire celebration held in the compound of Chin State government headquarters.

On Saturday, the President and government officials visited Kaba Nye-in Chan Yae pagoda and Than Thayar Aye pagoda in Haka to offer flowers, water and lights. He also paid homage to Dr Baddanta Tejo Sara, head of Jetavan Forest Re-

treat Buddhist Monastery and monks, with donation of offertories. Dr Baddanta Tejo Sara gave K10 million to General Hla Htay Win, Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) for the fallen soldiers in Laukkai area. President U Thein

Sein also met ministers of Chin State government, MPs and towns elders at the headquarters of Chin State government. At the meeting Chief Minister of Chin State U Hoang Ngai explained regional development programmes.

Union Minister U Khin Maung Soe, Ministry of Electric Power, presented the 24-hour electricity distribution to Haka Township and Htan Talan Township from national grid. The capital of state received 66 KV power lines (See page 3)

Tatmadaw never tolerates attempts to encroach upon Myanmar's sovereignty: Army holds press conference

NAY PYI TAW, 21 Feb—A press conference was held in Bayintnaung Yeiktha in Nay Pyi Taw to explain the background history of Kokang insurgents and its attack on Laukkai area on Saturday.

Altogether 27 news agencies at home and eight foreign news agencies based in the country attended the press conference chaired by Lt-Gen Mya Tun Oo of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) together

with senior military officers. Lt-Gen Mya Tun Oo said that Phon Kya Shin defected to Burma Communist Party in 1967; in 1989 Kokang group occupied the Northern Bureau in Mongko and seceded from BCP; and on 31 March 1989 Kokang leaders led 2706 troops, under the name of Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, bringing 1345 assorted weapons along with them, returned to the legal fold.

Under the reign of Tatmadaw government, Phon group led by Phon Kya Shin took the lead in politics and administration and Yan group led by Yang Mo Lian took charge in military affairs. As a result of the power struggles among them they became rivals. Phon Kya Shin cleverly controlled the region and engaged in drug trafficking, gambling and other black market businesses. According to the tip off that

Phon Kya Shin was running weapon factory in Yanglon-kyaing village, authorities concerned seized weapons and ammunitions in Laukkai. A notice was issued to transfer four suspects including Phon Kya Shin but he managed to escape. Displeased with the situation, they arrested Myanmar Police Force members and killed them brutally.

On 14 November 2011 U Sai Lin made an appeal to President to grant am-

nesty to Phon Kya Shin and the President agreed for the sake of national unity. But, Phon Kya Shin invested money received from drug trafficking and other businesses in China and Mongla. On 25 April, 2014, a combined team arrested 8 Chinese people together with weapons and ammunitions in 3-mile Checkpoint in Tamu. According to the investigation, they joined the Kokang insurgents because of incentives given by the group. As they were not given salary and allowance and were treated badly, they killed the deputy company commander and fled the group.

Kokang insurgents built their strength to regain their area with the help of UWSA, NDAA, KIA and TNLA. Kokang insurgents were equipped with numerous weapons including Type-81-1 assault rifle said to be manufactured by UWSA (Wa) group.

National Solidarity Army is formed with one unit with the strength of

300 from KIA, one brigade comprising 4 units from UWSA (Wa) group and Kokang insurgents totalling 1000. Their objective is to occupy the whole region of Kokang and then from Myanmar-China border to Myitkyina.

In early 2014, about 1000 troops led by Phon Kya Shin mobilized in Mongla and went under training. With the combined strength of SSA (Wang-hai), TNLA and KIA they tried to attack Laukkai and Mongko. But the Tatmadaw got a tip off and combed the area and thus their objective was spoiled and sneaked into villages as ordinary civilians. On 29 December 2014, Phon Kya Shin, in meeting with Global Time news agency, exposed that he had a plan to face Myanmar Tatmadaw.

Lt-Gen Mya Tun Oo continued to explain the current situation starting from 9 to 15 February 2015 saying that the Tatmadaw could spoil insurgent's (See page 3)



Seized weapons and ammunitions from Kokang insurgents.—MYAWADY

Myanaung Township observes 67th Anniversary of Chin National Day



MYANAUNG, 21 Feb — A ceremony to mark the 67th Anniversary of Chin National Day was observed in Yayta Village in Myanaung Township, Ayeyawady Region, on 20 February, with

an address by Chief Minister of Ayeyawady Region U Thein Aung.

Region Hluttaw MP U Aung Win Swe read out the message sent by Speaker of Region Hluttaw U Tin Soe.

Officials explained Asho Chin language, literature, culture and costumes, emergence of Chin National Day and emblem.

Daw Khin Htay Myint, wife of the Chief Minister,

presented mosquito nets and foods to Chin nationals.

On the occasion, region government and political parties made cash donations.

Win Bo (Township IPRD)

PYINOOLOWIN, 21 Feb — Mandalay Region Women's Affairs Organization and Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee donated cash for injured military servicemen who have been discharged from defence duty in Laukkai region.

The cash donation ceremony was held at the 700-bed Military Hospital in PyinOoLwin on 18 February.

Patron of the Region WAO and MCWSC Daw Myat Ngwe and party presented K1 million for the servicemen, while District WAO Daw Aye Aye Lwin and party gave K800,000. Commandant Col Myo Thant of the hospital accepted the cash donations and returned certificates

WAO, MCWSC donate cash for servicemen from Laukkai region



of honour.

The patron and party

comforted servicemen at the hospital and presented

K100,000 each to them.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

INRD staff explain process of Moe Pwint Special Project

MANDALAY, 21 Feb — Officials of Chanmyathazi Township Immigration and National Registration Department gave talks on implementation of Moe Pwint

Special Project at the hall of Tampawady Ward administrator on 19 February.

Daw Khin Myo Mon and party of Township Department explained about

the Moe Pwint Special Project and issued citizenship scrutiny cards to 108 eligible citizens.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)



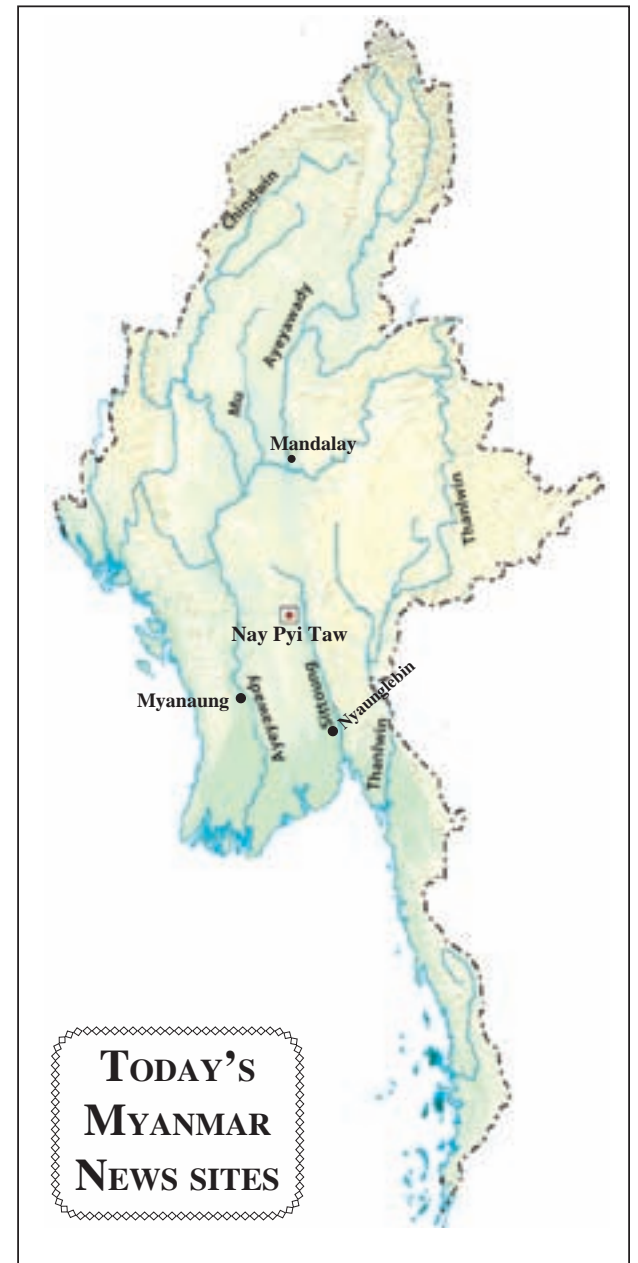
Health staff gave measles and rubella vaccines to children under 5 years

NYAUNGLEBIN, 21 Feb — Mass immunization for measles and rubella was held at the office of the Myoma Ward 2 administrator in Nyaunglebin, Bago Region, on 19 February.

Deputy Commanding Officer U Soe Win of Township Red Cross Battalion, Ward Administrator U Zarni Lin and Midwife Daw Sanda Moe vaccinated children against the two diseases in the second phase.

The immunization drive being conducted across the nation up to 28 February.

Nay Lin (Nyaunglebin)



TODAY'S
MYANMAR
NEWS SITES

4th and 8th standard students happily join examinations in Mandalay Region

MANDALAY, 21 Feb — The examinations for fourth and eighth standards were conducted in Mandalay Region under the arrangements of No 2 Department of Basic Education for 2014-15 academic year.

Altogether 102,596 students from 28 townships of the region set for the fourth standard examination and 72,202 students in the eighth standard examination as of 19 February.

Exam centres are opened at 398 basic education schools, 16 private schools and 28 monastic

education schools. With regard to the eighth standard, 72,202 students of 73,174 joined the examination, accounting for 98.67 percent.

The fourth standard examination will last up to 25 February and the eighth standard, till 26 February.

One male student and one female student sat for eighth standard examination at Mandalay General Hospital under the arrangements of Ministry of Education and Health Department.

Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)



NATIONAL

President U Thein Sein observes...

(from page 1)

and sub-power stations at the cost of US\$1.68 million and K5.52 billion.

Union Minister also said construction of power lines, small scale hydro-power stations and sub-power stations in Falam, Mindat, Matupi, Kanpetlet, Tiddim, Tonzang and Rih townships, while some towns and villages in far-flung areas will receive diesel generators and solar power system.

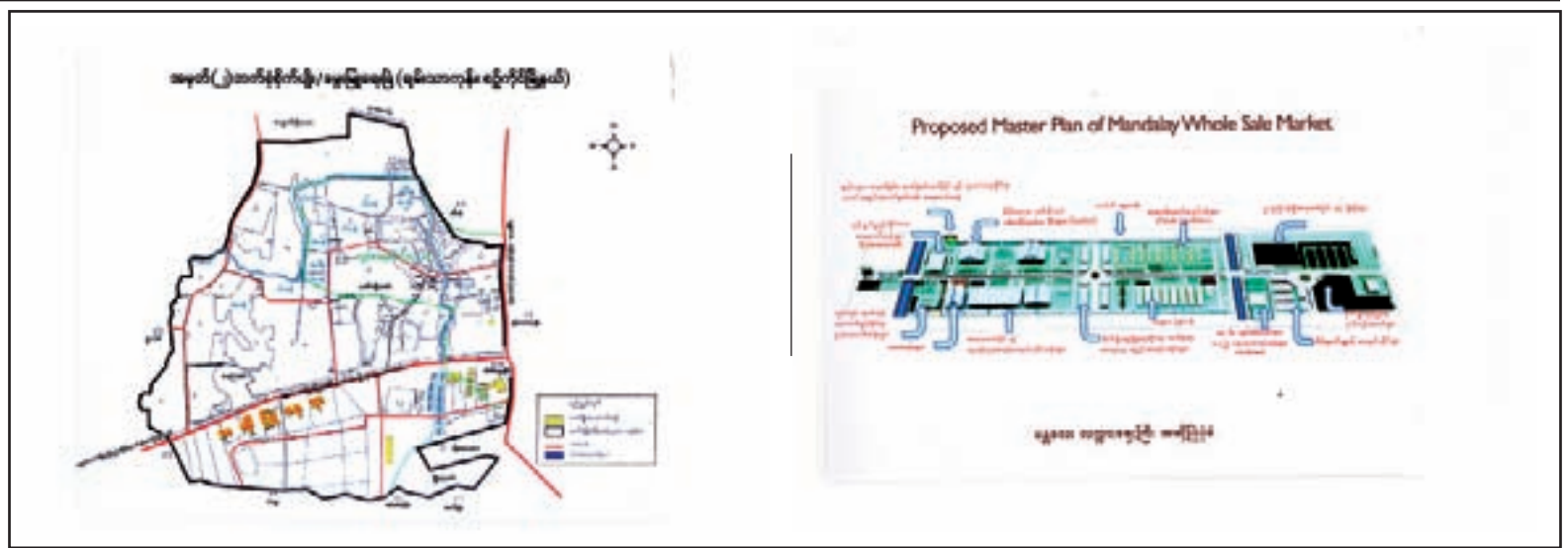
Union Minister U Hla Tun at President Office also discussed the plans of national unity and regional development.

President U Thein Sein reviewed the activities of government in politics, economy, administration,

NAY PYI TAW, 21 Feb —Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham comforted local people and workers victimized by incidents in Laukkai at Thiri Mingala Mansu Shan monastery in Lashio on Saturday.

Accompanied by Union Ministers U Maung Myint and U Win Myint, Shan State Chief Minister U Sao Aung Myat and deputy ministers, the Vice-President met with locals and workers who were making their way back homes under the arrangement of Presiding Sayadaw Bhaddanta Ponnyannanda and party and attended to their needs.

Next, the Vice-President offered provisions to the presiding sayadaw and donated K10 million for the locals who fled the recent attacks in Laukkai. Wellwishers including the Union ministers and deputy ministers also presented



No. 2 Multi-livestocks plan in Singaing Township, Mandalay Region.—MNA

Proposed Master Plan of Mandalay Whole Market in Singaing Township.—MNA

development of private sector to ensure peace, stability and development of the country. Chief Minister of Chin State then donated K10 million to General Hla Htay Win, Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy

and Air) for the fallen soldiers at Laukkai area.

President and senior government officials left Haka for Kalay Township, Sagaing Region, and then fled to Mandalay where they inspected the construc-

tion site of ancient capital's new wholesale market in Singaing Township.

The wholesale market is located to the south of Paleik-Sagain road section in Paleik village, Singaing Township. The purpose

of establishing the market is to gather items such as fish, meat, fruits, vegetables, flowers, rice, etc, to be put in one place for wholesalers for their convenience and to get more benefits, to conduct farm

shows to penetrate international markets, to found technology exchange centres, training schools and quality control centres to promote farming technologies and to ease traffic jams.

MNA

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham comforts locals, workers who fled from Laukkai



Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham greets local people and workers fled from Laukkai conflicts.—MNA

Tatmadaw never tolerates attempts to encroach upon Myanmar's...

(from page 1)

objective. He highlighted that the current situation involved toppling the elected government of self-administered zone and it is relating to the sovereignty. This is amounted to attacking the Government and Tatmadaw will never tolerate such a situation and never gives up. The Tatmadaw has warned Mongla group, Wa group, KIA, TNLA and SSA (Wanhai) as they involved in the incidents.

Now, administrative mechanism in Laukkai is paralyzed and Tatmadaw has to control the situation.

On 12 February, Phon Kya Shin spread a propaganda through Chinese online page that they were Han tribes and sought help as they were tortured by Myanmar government. On the other hand, he requested the President to show sympathy on them as they are one of the nationalities of 135 national people. On 16 February, he sent an open letter to the president stating that they want to discharge the duty of the state as a family members. Up to this date, seven officers, 48 other ranks sacrificed their lives with 12 officers and 96 other ranks injured. Now, Tat-

madaw is engaged in evacuation measures. Enemy's casualties were about 72 including one with the rank of Brigade Commander and one with the rank of Commanding Officer of Special Attack Force. The Tatmadaw could also seize 115 assorted weapons, ammunitions, landmines, and drugs.

Lt-Gen Mya Tun Oo concluded his explanation by saying that Tatmadaw will do its best to safeguard the lives and property of the people and curb the attempts of insurgents to take foothold along border areas.

Senior Officers replied to the queries raised by the journalists and they viewed round the documents displayed at the press conference room.—Myawady

Military columns still combating Kokang insurgents

NAY PYI TAW, 21 Feb—Kokang insurgents still continue their acts of cutting off line of communication to the town of Laukkai, attempting to wreak havoc with the town's administration, officials said.

In an effort to clear the town on Friday afternoon, the government troops had six engagements with Kokang insurgents stationed in the vicinity of the 18th Mile junction on the Kongyan-Laukkai road. The army could take a hill on which the rebels launched temporary defensive. The seizure of the hill resulted in capturing of

two bodies and three M-22s with three cartridges and 15 rounds. The army suffered one death, with eight others wounded, all of whom were flown to Lashio for medical treatment.

Heavy fighting broke out in the same area on Saturday as the rebels used machine guns, mortars and small arms, which led the army to launch two air strikes and send in reinforcements.

The fighting left the government troops with two dead and eight wounded. The army is reported to go on combating the Kokang insurgents.—Myawady

Australia prepares for floods in aftermath of major cyclones

ROCKHAMPTON, (Australia) 21 Feb — Australia braced on Saturday for heavy rains and floods after weather authorities downgraded two cyclones that lashed its north and northeast, damaging homes and snapping power links, but there were no reports of casualties.

Troops were on standby to help with clean-up efforts in the northeastern state of Queensland after heavy rains and winds in excess of 200 kph (125 mph) brought by Cyclone Marcia on Friday.

Weather authorities warned of destructive winds, heavy rains and abnormally high tides as rivers swelled, but officials said the storm's impact had been weaker than expected.

"At this stage, everyone is breathing a deep sigh of relief that there has been no loss of life," Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk told reporters in state capital Brisbane.

However, most prop-



Residents of the coastal town of Yeppoon step through fallen trees alongside a damaged home after Cyclone Marcia hit northeastern Australia, on 20 Feb, 2015.

REUTERS

erties in the northern Queensland towns of Rockhampton and Yeppoon had been left without power, she added.

The worst of the rain would pass by Sunday as the storm is moving quickly back out to sea, the weather bureau said. In Rockhampton, long queues snaked out of the

only fuel station left with the power to run its petrol pumps, as people flocked to refill cars and get fuel to operate generators.

Residents ducked fallen trees and power lines to gather at the few automatic cash machines still functioning. Heavy machinery was pressed into assist efforts to clear

debris on the road to Yeppoon, the coastal town hit hardest by Marcia, but fallen power lines left many roads impassable.

The fury of the cyclone drove Demelza and Shaun Bischoff out of their home, along with their three children.

"It felt like the whole house was going to crum-

ble," Demelza Bischoff told *Reuters*, describing how storm damage had forced the family to move from room to room of their home.

"It started getting really bad, the tin roof started lifting and the ceiling blew out," she said. "Then we took shelter under the kitchen table with mattresses all around us."

Now back home, they put furniture and clothing in their garden to dry out in the hot sun. In northern Australia, teams were heading to two communities on the remote islands of Goulburn and Elcho to weigh up damage after Cyclone Lam, packing wind speeds ranging up to 240 kph, began to lash the Northern Territory late on Thursday.

The weather bureau has also downgraded that storm, to a tropical low moving in a south-westerly direction, with warnings of heavy rainfall, flash flooding and some storm surges.

Reuters

Another Japanese national temporarily held by Kurds in northern Iraq

CAIRO, 21 Feb — Japan's Foreign Ministry said on Saturday another Japanese national has been temporarily detained as a suspicious person by authorities in the Kurdish autonomous zone in northern Iraq earlier this month. The national, whose sex and age were not disclosed, has already been released after the detention in mid-February near Arbil, a major city in the Kurdish region, after entering Iraq via Iran by land.

On 14 February, the ministry said a Japanese national had been detained by the Kurdish authorities near Arbil in early February as a suspicious person after entering Iraq via Turkey by land. A diplomatic source has said that person is male and was apparently a tourist. The source said he was detained for several days but has already returned to Japan. The Kurdish authorities have become increasingly vigilance toward foreigners travelling to areas controlled by Islamic State militants, according to the ministry.

Kyodo News

Bangladesh opposition calls 72-hour strike from Sunday morning

DHAKA, 21 Feb — Bangladesh's main opposition alliance on Friday called another round of nationwide strike from Sunday morning to press home its demands including a fresh election under a non-party caretaker government system. The strike announcement came just a day after it observed a five-day countrywide strike from last Sunday amid violent clashes, vandalism, arson and crude bomb attacks. Two-time ex-prime minister Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)'s spokesperson Salahuddin Ahmed made the announcement through a Press release on Friday.

Apart from this, he said the alliance will stage demonstrations across the country on Monday. The BNP and its allies have declared the 72-hour road, rail and waterway strike from Sunday morning amid its ongoing blockade campaign that entered 46th day on Friday.—*Xinhua*

Reuters

Kyodo News

Indonesia recalls envoy to Brazil amid row over execution

JAKARTA, 21 Feb — Indonesia has recalled its new ambassador to Brazil after the South American country postponed a ceremony sealing his appointment, Jakarta said on Saturday, amid a row over the execution of a Brazilian national for drugs trafficking.

Brazil and the Netherlands withdrew their ambassadors from Indonesia, which has some of the strictest drug traffick-

ing laws in the world, after two of their citizens were among six people executed for drugs offences last month.

Indonesia is also involved in a diplomatic spat with Australia over the fate of two Australian members of the "Bali Nine" drug trafficking ring due to be executed this month.

Toto Riyanto, who was chosen to be Indonesia's new ambassador to

Brazil in October, had been invited to present his credentials at a ceremony at Brazil's presidential palace on Friday which was postponed at short notice, an Indonesian Foreign Ministry statement said.

"The manner in which the foreign minister of Brazil suddenly informed (us of) the postponement ... when the ambassador designate was already at the palace, is unacceptable to

Indonesia," the ministry said.

In response, the ministry summoned Brazil's ambassador late on Friday before recalling Riyanto. Brazil's embassy in Jakarta could not be reached for comment on Saturday.

"As a democratic sovereign state with its own sovereign, independent and impartial justice system, no foreign country nor party can and may interfere with

the implementation of Indonesia's prevailing laws within its jurisdiction, including in the enforcement of laws to address drug trafficking," the statement added.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo has pledged no clemency for drug offenders, despite pleas from the European Union, Brazil, Australia and Amnesty International.

Singapore's ex-leader Lee Kuan Yew in intensive care for pneumonia

SINGAPORE, 21 Feb — Singapore's elder statesman Lee Kuan Yew is hospitalized in intensive care, after having been admitted more than two weeks ago with a severe case of pneumonia, the government said on Saturday.

"His condition has stabilized and he remains on mechanical ventilation

in the ICU," the Prime Minister's Office said in a short statement.

The 91-year-old, who was admitted to the Singapore General Hospital on 5 February, is "conscious and lightly sedated," it said.

His son, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, said on Facebook that he



Singapore's former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew

visited his father in hospital Saturday morning to wish him a Happy Chinese New Year and a smooth recovery. The 63-year-old junior Lee was himself in hospital earlier this month. He underwent surgery to remove his cancerous prostate gland, with doctors saying the operation was successful and he is

expected to make a "full recovery."

The senior Lee was Singapore's prime minister from 1959 until 1990 and has been credited for the small island state's transformation from a colonial backwater into Southeast Asia's wealthiest economy.

Kyodo News

Defence Ministry eyes law change to loosen civilian grip on SDF

TOKYO, 21 Feb — A law giving preference to civilians over uniformed personnel in decision-making in Japan's Defence Ministry is set to be changed, sources close to the ministry said on Saturday.

Ministry officials will

submit a proposal to amend the Act for Establishment of the Ministry of Defence to the Diet early next month, the sources said.

The amendment could arouse concern over the erosion of civilian control of the Self-Defence Forces.

According to the sources, pressure to change the law came from SDF personnel and former SDF personnel who are now lawmakers in the Diet.

The amendment would give uniformed personnel more control over SDF tac-

tical operations.

The notion of civilian control was enshrined in the law when the predecessor to the Defence Ministry law was enacted in 1954, reflecting a history of rebellion against the government by military personnel

in the lead-up to World War II.

Another check on the SDF's power was removed in 2009 with the scrapping of a system whereby senior civilian ministry officials directly aided the defence minister.—*Kyodo News*

WORLD

Police nab 2 Japanese at Bangkok airport with horde of exotic animals

BANGKOK, 21 Feb — Thai customs officials arrested two Japanese men at Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport on Friday as they tried to smuggle exotic and endangered animals onto a plane bound for to Japan.

The officials said the men from Shizuoka Prefecture had pig-nosed turtles, woodchucks, lizards and snakes packed into small boxes, cages and plastic bags inside large suitcases.

Among the cache were 110 turtles, four wood-

chucks, nine lizards and several exotic snakes.

One of the men was booked on a flight to Tokyo, the other on a flight to Nagoya. According to investigators, the men said they had been hired to buy the animals at Bangkok's weekend Chatuchak Market and carry them to Japan. Police said the men, who have been charged with smuggling wild animals, offered no other information about their plans or potential buyers in

Japan. They will also face charges under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

Pig-nosed turtles, woodchucks, and snakes are among species listed in CITES's Appendices 2 and permission is required to export any of them.

Conviction on the charges could result in fines and/or imprisonment for up to four years, a customs official said.

Kyodo News

Greece secures bailout deal from EU, extended by four months

BRUSSELS, 21 Feb — Eurozone finance ministers agreed on Friday to extend the soon-to-expire bailout deal for Greece by four months, according to the Greek prime minister's office.

Failure to strike an agreement could have

triggered a financial panic forcing Greece into default and a possible exit from the euro common currency. Greece was seeking a six-month extension of the financial aid set to expire at the end of this month.

The Greek government had indicated opposition to

continuing the existing aid framework, which requires austere fiscal programmes.

But it requested an extension on Thursday after the European Union gave Greece until the end of this week to make a decision on a bailout bid.

Kyodo News

International team inspects MH17 wreckage at Dutch air base

AMSTERDAM, 21 Feb — International investigators looking into the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 over Ukraine last July met for their first joint consultation this week, examining cracks and impact patterns on the jet's fuselage, Dutch officials said on Friday.

The Boeing 777 was flying from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur with 298 passengers and crew aboard when it crashed with no prior warning over the front lines of Ukraine's conflict between separatist and Kiev government forces.

Parts of the aircraft were brought to the Netherlands late last year because heavy fighting be-



Trucks carrying wreckage from Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 arrive at a Dutch airforce base in the southern town of Gilze-Rijen on 9 Dec, 2014. — REUTERS

tween separatist rebels and Ukrainian government forces had for months prevented safe inspection of the crash site in the country's east.

The United States has said rebels downed the airliner with a ground-to-air missile, while Russia says Ukrainian government forces shot it down

from the air. "In the past week the (team) conducted several investigations of the wreckage, including the fractures, failure mechanisms and impact

patterns," the Dutch Safety Board said in a statement.

Investigators will soon begin a three-dimensional reconstruction of parts of the aircraft at the Dutch air force base where the wreckage is stored, the Board said, adding that relatives of victims would be able to visit in early March.

In an initial report, Dutch investigators assessed that the airliner's fuselage was pierced by "high energy objects" — which could have come from the ground or the air. Prosecutors have said they are open to both possibilities but think it more likely the aircraft was shot down from the ground.

The Netherlands is leading the criminal and air

safety investigations into the disaster, since more than two thirds the victims were Dutch. Investigators from Ukraine, Malaysia, Australia, Britain, Belgium and Germany are also taking part.

A spokesman said the safety board's draft report into the circumstances of the MH17 crash would probably be ready after the summer, at which point the other countries involved could make their own submissions.

But the Dutch team will be under no obligation to change its report even if another country's authorities disagreed radically with its conclusions, the spokesman said.

Reuters



A protester holds up a poster of Yemen's former president Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi during an anti-Houthi demonstration in Sanaa on 21 Feb, 2015.

REUTERS

Yemen's former leader leaves Sanaa after house arrest

SANAA, 21 Feb — Yemen's former president Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi escaped his official residence after weeks of house arrest by the Houthi militia on Saturday and flew to his home town of Aden, a senior political source and a Houthi official said.

Hadi fled his residence in disguise, Houthi politburo member Ali al-Qahoum was quoted as saying by the local news website al-Akhar. But it added that it no longer mattered if the for-

mer president remained there or departed.

The United Nations, which oversaw a new power-sharing agreement between the Houthis and Yemen's other rival factions on Friday, helped him travel to Aden, a senior political source told *Reuters*.

Hadi's Sanaa residence was looted by Houthi militiamen after he left, witnesses said, but that was denied by Qahoum. The former president arrived at his home in the Aden district of

Khormaksar, sources told *Reuters*. Early on Saturday, Houthi militiamen opened fire on protesters in the central city of Ibb, killing one person and wounding another, activists said.

The crowd had gathered in a square to demonstrate against the Houthis' role in overturning the government last month.

Following the shooting, thousands more people took to the streets in protest. Witnesses said the Houthis were deploying more secu-

rity forces in response.

Yemen's rival parties agreed on Friday to create a transitional council to help govern the country and allow a government to continue operating with input from other factions after the effective Houthi takeover.

Western countries are worried that unrest in Yemen could create opportunities for al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) to plot more attacks against international targets.

Reuters

New US defence chief in Afghanistan seeking 'lasting' success



US Secretary of Defence Ash Carter (C) is greeted by Senior Military Assistant US Army Major General Ron Lewis (L) as they arrive to travel to Afghanistan from Joint Base Andrews, Maryland on 20 Feb, 2015.

REUTERS

KABUL, 21 Feb — New US Defence Secretary Ash Carter arrived in Afghanistan on Saturday on his first trip since taking over the job this week, saying he wanted to talk to Afghan and American officials to ensure a "lasting" success as US troops withdraw.

Carter, who was sworn in on Tuesday, has suggested he would be open to slowing US withdrawal

plans, if necessary. But he did not signal whether he was leaning in that direction in comments to reporters shortly before landing in Kabul. "We're looking for success in Afghanistan that is lasting, and the lasting accomplishment of our mission here," Carter said in his first news conference since taking the job. "How to do that, what the best way to do that is, is precise-

ly what I'm here to assess." President Barack Obama's plans call for cutting US troops from about 10,000 now to 5,500 by the end of this year and drawing down to a US Embassy presence in Kabul at the end of 2016. The drawdown strategy has also drawn sharp criticism from Republicans in Congress, who say that the hard-fought gains made against the Taliban could be lost in much the same way that sectarian violence returned to Iraq after the US withdrawal. Obama is weighing a request from Afghan President Ashraf Ghani to slow the withdrawal plans, and the top US commander in Afghanistan has also publicly signalled that he is seeking greater flexibility in the months ahead.

Carter, a former Pentagon No 2, said Obama wanted him to make his own assessment and did not rule out recommending "adjustments" if necessary.

Reuters

Iran nuclear talks to continue in Geneva on 22 February — EU



Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif attends a news conference with his Belarussian counterpart Vladimir Makei in Minsk on 17 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

BRUSSELS, 21 Feb — Representatives of Iran, Britain, the United States, Russia, China, France and Germany will hold talks in Geneva on 22 February to seek a solution to Iran's nuclear programme, the European Union's External Action Service (EEAS) said in a statement.

"This meeting will be preceded by a bilateral meeting between the United States and Iran with the participation of EEAS Political Director Helga Schmid who will then chair the E3+3 Political Directors' meeting on Sunday," it said.

Reuters

Ukraine foreign minister to visit Japan from 1 March to meet Kishida

TOKYO, 21 Feb — Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin plans to visit Japan for three days from 1 March to meet Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, sources close to the matter in Tokyo and Kiev said on Saturday.

The meeting is aimed at strengthening Ukraine's ties with Japan, after a cease-fire between Ukrainian government forces and separatists in the eastern part of Ukraine took effect on 15 February, although fighting continues in part of the region.

It will be the first visit by a Ukrainian minister to

Japan since the Ukrainian revolution in February 2014 and Russia's annexation of Crimea the following month.

Japan maintains its support for Ukraine, and has condemned Russia's annexation of Crimea in southern Ukraine, saying sovereignty and territorial integrity should be respected and any attempt to change the status quo by force or coercion cannot be accepted.

The two ministers are expected to discuss cooperation for a settlement of the conflict and a response to Russia's actions, according

to the sources.

Klimkin and Kishida are also likely to discuss ways Japan can help restore Ukraine's economy, which is in crisis, they said.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said in March last year that Japan will extend up to 150 billion yen (\$1.3 billion) in aid to Ukraine. Klimkin is expected to call for continued support from Japan.

In October during their meeting in Italy, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko invited Abe to visit Ukraine. The issue will also likely be on their agenda, the sources said.

The ministers are also expected to discuss Ukraine's help in reconstruction work following the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant disaster. Ukraine is home to Chernobyl, which experienced a nuclear accident in 1986.

The Ukrainian minister wants to visit the Fukushima plant but a tight schedule means it is unlikely, according to the sources.

Japan and Russia meanwhile are trying to arrange a visit by Russian President Vladimir Putin to Japan.—Kyodo News

US asst secretary of arms control to visit Asia

WASHINGTON, 21 Feb — The US State Department said on Friday that Frank Rose, assistant secretary for arms control, verification and compliance, will visit Japan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and India, starting from Monday. He

will hold discussions on issues including space security, nuclear deterrence and multilateral arms control to strengthen cooperation with these Asian countries, the department said. His tour comes amid concerns over the development of

satellite-killer weapons by China.

Starting in Japan, Rose will meet senior officials in Tokyo from Monday to Friday followed by bilateral talks in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 2 March.

The US official will

travel to Jakarta, Indonesia on the following day and from there to Singapore.

For five days from 5 March, he will visit India where he will hold the first bilateral space security dialogue between the two countries.—Kyodo News

"Self-censoring" scandal at newspaper roils UK press landscape

LONDON, 21 Feb — One of Britain's most storied newspapers has been accused of self-censoring for commercial gain, raising awkward questions about a centuries-old press culture which has prided itself on its no-holds-barred approach to truth telling.

The 160-year-old *Daily Telegraph* strongly denied accusations in a resignation letter by one of its best known writers, who said the paper had soft-pedalled coverage of a banking scandal to curry favour with an advertiser. Britain's press, known collectively as "Fleet Street" in reference to the London lane where newspapers were based for generations, is proud of its independence - able to make or break a political reputation with a merciless approach.

In his letter, Peter Osborne, known for caustic attacks on politicians as the *Telegraph's* chief political commentator, said the paper had curbed coverage of reports that the Swiss arm of Europe's biggest bank HSBC helped clients avoid taxes. *The Telegraph*, he wrote, wanted to keep the bank's advertising.

"(It) amounts to a form of fraud on its readers," he wrote. "If major newspapers allow corporations to influence their content for fear of losing advertising revenue, democracy itself is in peril."

The Telegraph came out fighting, denying it had pulled punches in covering HSBC and saying it had "no apologies" for journalism guided by a pro-business editorial line. "We are proud to be the champion of British business and enterprise," it wrote in an editorial. "In an age of cheap populism and corrosive cynicism about wealth-creating businesses, we have defended British industries including the financial services industry that accounts for almost a tenth of the UK economy, sustains two million jobs and provides around one in every eight pounds the Exchequer raises in tax."

It also lashed out at rival news sources that had criticised it: "None is the paragon of moral or journalistic virtue that their criticisms this week might suggest," it said. "All have their own self-serving agendas, both political and commercial."

Both the accusation and



A passenger reads the *Daily Telegraph* newspaper, featuring a front page interview with the ex-husband of accused Russian spy Anna Chapman, on the underground in London on 2 July, 2010. — REUTERS

the *Telegraph's* rebuttal are likely to sting for a newspaper industry struggling to adapt as readership declines and advertisers move online.

Fleet Street's reputation was sorely damaged in 2011 when Rupert Murdoch shut down the *News of the World*, a Sunday tabloid, after it emerged that its reporters had illegally eavesdropped on voicemails of countless celebrities and a murdered schoolgirl.

Lengthy public hearings were held into journalists' ethics, revealing uncomfortably close ties between press bosses and those who run

the country. Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron was forced to apologise for hiring as his spokesman a former *News of the World* editor who was later jailed. Labour former Prime Minister Tony Blair acknowledged that he had given advice to another former *News of the World* editor on how to deal with the scandal.

The right-leaning *Daily Telegraph*, nicknamed the "Torygraph" for its long-standing support for the Conservative — or Tory — Party, is chided by its critics for appealing to the middle classes and the middle aged.

But it is the biggest-selling of Britain's "broadsheets", the serious-minded national newspapers that distinguish themselves from the popular "tabloids" traditionally printed on paper half the size. It gained stature in 2009 for an expose of lawmakers' expense claims that resulted in resignations and prosecutions on all sides in parliament at Westminster.

However the paper, like its rivals, has cut staffing levels in recent years as it adapted to the tightened financial times. In Osborne's resignation letter he lamented what he described as a loss of standards, saying stories were chosen for the number of online visits they bring rather than the news value. The paper had recently run a story about a woman with three breasts, he complained. "*Telegraph* readers are a pretty loyal bunch but in terms of the paper's status I think it will cause enormous, long-lasting damage," Steven Barnett, communications professor at the University of Westminster, said of Osborne's letter. "It harms its ability to say 'We stand for truth and accuracy.'" — Reuters

Biden, in calls with Ukrainian leaders, condemns separatist offensive

WASHINGTON, 21 Feb — US Vice President Joe Biden, in phone calls with Ukrainian leaders on Friday, strongly condemned an offensive by separatists on the town of Debaltsevo in eastern Ukraine, the White House said.

In separate calls with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko and Prime Minister Arseny Yatseniuk, Biden discussed options for "effective monitoring" of a ceasefire and withdrawal of heavy weapons from eastern Ukraine, the White House said in a statement.

Biden also agreed with the Ukrainian leaders that Russia cannot continue to hide behind "the false claim" that the separatists are acting alone, the White House said.—Reuters



United Nations envoy Gordon Brown

Gordon Brown renews plea for release of Nigerian schoolgirls

NEW YORK, 21 Feb — United Nations envoy Gordon Brown urged the militant group Boko Haram on Friday to free the more than 200 Nigerian schoolgirls it has held for 10 months.

His appeal came after the reported release this week of women and girls kidnapped by the Islamist group in December.

“Now they have released some hostages, they should release them all,” said Brown, a former British prime minister, in a statement. He referred to 158 women and girls who local media said were released by the militants on Thursday after being taken during a raid on the village of Katarko.

The abduction of scores of schoolgirls from a government secondary school in the town of Chi-

bok in northeastern Nigeria on 14 April, 2014 sparked global outrage and offers of international assistance and a worldwide social media campaign with the Twitter hashtag #BringBackOurGirls. But the location of the schoolgirls, most of whom are believed to be between the ages of 16 and 18, remains unknown.

“Boko Haram are piling cruelty upon cruelty by failing to free the girls,” said Brown, who is the UN Special Envoy for Global Education.

He said there would be no let up in the campaign to find and free the girls.

If they are not released by the first anniversary of their captivity a vigil will be held at the United Nations in New York on 14 April.

Reuters

Sweden ends job-seeker programme accused of recruiting militants

STOCKHOLM, 21 Feb — The Swedish government is shutting down a job coaching programme for new immigrants after complaints that it was being used to recruit people for militant groups, a state official said on Friday.

The decision comes days after a gunman killed two people in neighbouring Denmark at a synagogue and an event promoting free speech, increasing concerns about the threat of home-grown militancy in the Scandinavia region.

“We have been alerted by participants that coaches have tried to recruit them to terrorist organizations,” said Patrik Svensson, spokesman for the National Labour Agency that runs the scheme, adding that the

government had passed on the information to the Swedish security service to investigate.

Svensson said the alleged recruitment drive might be linked to the Islamic State group that controls swathes of Iraq and Syria.

Around 32,000 job-seekers have a coach assigned under the scheme, which was introduced in 2010 to address high unemployment among new immigrants.

Sweden saw a botched suicide bombing in Stockholm four years ago and the conviction in 2012 of three Swedes for plotting to kill people at a Danish newspaper that had published cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad.—Reuters

US lawmaker pushes Obama to aid allies in Islamic State fight

WASHINGTON, 21 Feb — A senior Republican lawmaker has told President Barack Obama she was prepared to block foreign aid money if the administration did not provide fighter jets and tanks to Egypt and arms to other regional allies fighting Islamic State militants.

In a letter to Obama, Kay Granger, chairwoman of the House of Representatives State and Foreign Operations Appropriations subcommittee, said Egypt needs F-16 aircraft, M1A1 Abrams tanks and other weapons that have been held up since 2013. Granger has the power to place holds on foreign aid, including general assistance and weapons shipments.

Granger urged the administration to give Iraqi Kurds tools and training to fight Islamic State and to make providing weapons to Jordan a priority, according to the letter, seen by Reuters on Friday. Dated Thursday, the letter criticized the administration as Congress is about to consider Obama’s request for formal authority for a military campaign against Islamic State.

Republicans, who took control of the US Congress in January, have pressed for more robust US military involvement in fighting the militants, who have killed thousands of civilians while seizing territory in Iraq and Syria. “As Egypt, Jordan, and the Kurds retaliate and defend themselves



Militant Islamist fighters hold the flag of Islamic State (IS) while taking part in a military parade along the streets of northern Raqqa province in this 30 June, 2014 file photo.—REUTERS

against ISIL’s heinous acts, US security assistance is being held or delayed by bureaucratic processes and ill-advised policy decisions by your administration,” Granger wrote, using an acronym for Islamic State.

The US State Department referred requests for comment to the White House, where officials did not immediately respond.

Granger said she was calling on the White House to “immediately release” remaining weapons and funds to Egypt, provide Jordan with weapons it had requested and ensure the Kurdish Peshmerga have equipment they need. “I am prepared to do everything within my power to make sure this occurs, including placing holds on Congressional Notifications (spending plans) and drafting legislation to hold your Administration ac-

countable,” Granger wrote.

Egyptian warplanes bombed sites in Libya on Monday in response to the beheading of 21 Egyptian Christians by Islamic State militants there. Lockheed Martin Corp (LMT.N), which makes the F-16, said the aircraft built for Egypt were part of a foreign military sales agreement between the United States and Egypt. The Abrams tanks are made by General Dynamics Corp.

Twelve of 20 F-16s built by Lockheed under its last contract with Egypt are in storage at Lockheed’s Fort Worth, Texas, facility. They have been formally transferred to the US government, which is paying Lockheed to store and maintain them. The current US policy on Egypt is to hold up many shipments of big-ticket weapons until

Washington can certify that Cairo has made progress on human rights. Granger represents the district where Lockheed’s facility is based, but the company would not necessarily profit from a move to release the planes since the US government has already paid Lockheed for them. US officials said last week that planning was well under way to help replenish Jordan’s supplies of ordnance. Jordan’s King Abdullah visited Congress earlier this month, the same day Islamic State released a video of the murder of a Jordanian pilot. The administration has said it is supplying guns and ammunition to the Kurds, who are fighting Islamic State in northern Iraq, but it is channelling them through Baghdad. Some Republicans have said the supplies should go directly to the Kurds.—Reuters

Death toll from attack on Somali hotel rises to 25

MOGADISHU, 21 Feb — The death toll in Friday’s bombing of a hotel in the Somali capital has risen to 25, including two lawmakers and workers from the prime minister’s office, the government said on Saturday.

Police previously said at least 10 people had been killed in the attack on Central Hotel, near the presidential palace in the centre of Mogadishu.

Islamist al Shabaab rebels set off a car bomb inside the Central Hotel compound which also houses a mosque popular with government officials. After the car blast, a suicide bomber ran into the mosque during Friday prayers and blew himself up.

“The confirmed death toll is 25 civilians and officials, including two

lawmakers and deputy Mogadishu mayor,” the government said. “Among the dead are also officials and workers from the prime minister’s office.”

Some 40 people were wounded in the two blasts,

including two ministers who were lightly injured.

The cabinet met in the wake of the attack to discuss security and set up a committee to investigate the attack, the government said in a statement.



Photo taken on 20 Feb, 2015 shows the debris of a car outside the Central Hotel in Mogadishu, capital of Somalia. At least 20 people were killed including a minister and several others injured in double explosions that hit Somalia’s capital Mogadishu on Friday, according to police and witnesses.—XINHUA

Abdirisak Omar Mohamed, Somalia’s Internal Security Minister, told Reuters soon after the blasts it was unclear how a car laden with explosives managed to breach hotel security to park inside the compound. “(National intelligence) are going to interrogate the management of the hotel,” he said on Friday.

State run Radio Mogadishu on Saturday said 12 hotel staff had been arrested in connection with the attack.

Al Shabaab once dominated much of Somalia but it has been slowly pushed out of strongholds across the country. However, its guerrilla-style gun assaults and suicide bombings continue to exert pressure on the government to improve security.—Reuters

PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 22 February, 2015

A small plant cannot bear fruit overnightBy *Aung Khin*

A certain length of time is needed for any changes or developments. Smooth transition is not like a revolution. Most of global society prefers evolution to revolution. Nobody wants bloodshed or chaos to undermine the development of their society.

Evolution, however, needs a sound and sincere foundation for a better future of every society. Transition is a transformation process in which society

changes in a fundamental way over a generation or more. Society fundamentally chooses the goals of a transition, governments take crucial role in bringing about structural change in a stepwise manner. Governments have to make adjust of goals to overcome conflicts between long-term ambition and short-term concerns resulting from transition.

Change is everywhere. Within the contest of an organisation, the challenge is learning to handle change effectively, while adjustment and fine-tuning is inevitable. However, it is better for change to occur through evolution.

Evolutionary change is incremental and takes place step by step, over time. Commonly, it can ensure the survival of an organisation. However, such practice may have been prompted by outside pressure.

Supporters of revolutionary change envision complete overhaul, renovation and reconstruction. In addition, such type of change may lead to reshaping and realigning strategic goals and to radical breakthroughs

in beliefs or behaviours. It may be followed by radical transformations of products or services.

The second type of change is very difficult for a fledgling democratic society. It requires maturity, especially in knowledge and experiences, to be able to manage and control the impacts. Efforts and endeavours must be adjusted with the existing situations. A small plant cannot bear fruit overnight no matter how many buckets of water it receives.

Write for us

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

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

Transition in Indonesia and Myanmar: Variations in Regime Outcome*(The opinions expressed here are those of the author.)***Sonu Trivedi**

Regional variations in regime outcome have provided enormous opportunities for studying the process of democratization in Southeast Asia. One of the most important issues facing this region is that, the pattern of political development and economic growth has not been uniform for all the countries. While some have shown considerable level of political stability and growth (such as Indonesia in the past two decades) but, few on the other hand, still remain in the transition stage (like Myanmar). What explains variations in regime outcome and how do divergent paths develop? This is the critical question that this article tries to explore. Indonesia has been chosen as a model for comparing political developments in Myanmar because the latter's experience parallels that of former in a number of respects. In both Indonesia and Myanmar, the struggle for independence and later military campaigns against various insurgents led their armies to see themselves as "saviour" of their respective countries. This entitled them to play an active role in determining the fate of their nations. In both countries the military entered politics gradually, and assumed power only when civilian leaders appeared to be unable to provide sufficiently strong government. Another major similarity is that both countries are multi-ethnic states in which one ethnic group dominates. Problems of ethnic nationalism and quest for identity have been common in both countries, and for some of the smaller ethnic groups colonialism brought security against larger ones. Moreover, in both these countries it was armies—not civilian bureaucracies—that

experimented with political counter-insurgency strategies to coopt internal population that otherwise might support insurgents.

The authority structures that emerged in Indonesia and Myanmar have influenced the developmental model of state building and modernization in these countries. The institutional architecture of authoritarian regimes has largely shaped the nature of transition. This is particularly visible in the development of state apparatus, corporatist structure and political parties of both the countries. The authoritarian corporatist model which developed in Indonesia has demonstrated a close nexus between the 'military-bureaucratic and corporatist elite'. This was visible in the 'state corporatism of Suharto'. On the other hand, the autocratic military framework which developed in Myanmar was characterized by personalistic authoritarian rule of Ne Win and later by the 'junta'. Analysis of this dominant authority structure and developmental model in Indonesia and Myanmar would, perhaps, explain the reasons behind the divergent paths of democratic development in both the countries.

Elements of Regime Transition

At the outset, it can be argued that within military rule, splits and schisms tend to appear which results in growing number of opposition groups seeking democratic transition. Secondly, the role of elites, and how far the choices they make determine the process of regime transition. Finally, financial crisis and the consequent economic collapse has been a crucial factor determining the downfall of military in authoritarian

regimes. Although, it is possible to isolate these forces of regime transition, it becomes important to understand how and whether these factors interact in a consistent fashion across different cases. The two case studies undertaken here is an application of these factors, particularly, in reference to democratic transition in Indonesia and the road towards democratization in Myanmar.

Divisions within the military were a key element in the military exit from politics in Indonesia. Splits and schisms and regime disunity have been more perceptible in Indonesia and have contributed as a significant cause for regime transition. More common has been the intra-regime friction between elements in the military and the President, which has been accompanied by an increase in public criticism and dissent. This conflict within the ruling elite was eventually contributing to the weakening of the existing political system. Rivalries between officers frequently undermined regime's cohesion. There were divisions between hardliners and reformers, and even among the reformers themselves. This growing strife between President Suharto and armed forces resulted in widespread questioning of *dwi-fungsi* (dual role of military) by members of political society. This process not only reflected and facilitated intra-military rivalry, but also effectively eroded armed force's credibility, reaching a nadir at the time of Suharto's resignation. In Myanmar, when the military remained unified, politics tilted back into hard authoritarianism. Because of the isolation of the regime, existence of factions and splits within the regime has not been a visible rule in Myanmar. Although, there has been some displeasure

in the military, but, no group has come out in open. In the present stage of transition, the growing divide between the hardliners and reformists has added to the challenge of change in Myanmar.

One of the most immediate and significant explanatory variable for democratization has been the beliefs and actions of political elites. It has been argued that political elites alter or overthrow authoritarian regimes and install and consolidate democratic ones. Thus, elite factionalism within an authoritarian government has been a critical variable for change in Indonesia. The conciliatory actions and postures taken by different groups of elite officers further, intensified the internal conflict in Indonesia. Criticisms began to be heard, particularly from the middle class, directed at armed force's institutionalized political and socio-economic role. However, elite resistance and cohesion has been more in the case of Indonesia than Myanmar. In fact, elites in Myanmar were more concerned with amassing wealth and forging closer ties with the junta. They were a loose force united only on economic grounds and serving their selfish motives rather than representing a dynamic force as agents of regime transition. This has been a substantial factor for bringing about transition in the former and its delay in the latter.

Last but not the least, financial and the economic crisis triggered a period of institutional reform which has resulted in regime transition in Indonesia. The disastrous currency crisis, which started in Thailand in July 1997, soon affected Indonesia fatally. The value of *rupiah* dropped dramatically. Amid the economic meltdown, democratic transformation became inevitable. With the

President resisting IMF orders to dismantle the business empires of his family and cronies, the financial crisis became integrally bound up with the political crisis gripping the country. The worst hit was the middle class in Indonesia, who in turn constituted the largest segment in the movement that toppled Suharto, which was particularly led by university students. Thus, the financial crisis and the consequent economic collapse in Indonesia triggered the downfall of the military, thereby creating the ground for democratisation. But the crisis did not have a similar effect on the economy of Myanmar due to international isolation and western economic sanctions. Failure of regime performance in the economic front had delayed democracy in the country.

Variations in Outcome

In most liberal democracies political institutions and traditions have taken decades, even centuries to develop and have achieved high levels of legitimacy and public acceptance. By contrast, a country like Myanmar is still in a fragile state searching for political form and institutions favouring democratization. As compared to this, an emerging economy like Indonesia has seen political institutionalization and it is moving towards a more structured, legalized democratic system. In the past one decade, Indonesia has seen establishment of a democratic political system marked by competitive elections. It has also witnessed growth of political parties, with ideological variety, an increasingly free press and growing respect for human rights and civil liberties. Although, political stability in the early years of transition was tenuous (Habibie, Wahid and Megawati), but the subsequent establishment

of Yudhoyono's Presidential democracy and now with President Jokowi has reinforced public confidence in the legitimacy and stability of public institutions.

Almost five decades ago (in 1962), General Ne Win staged a coup that overthrew the civilian government of Myanmar. He declared that the country was on the brink of chaos and that it was the army's duty to prevent it from falling into disorder. Ne Win adopted socialist economic policies, centralising the nation's economy, and led Myanmar into a downward spiral from being one of the most prosperous nations in Southeast Asia during the 1960s to one of the poorest in the world by the 1980s. Similarly almost five decades ago, the Indonesian communist party, the strongest opposition party in that country, was crushed by anti-communist riots that resulted in the deaths of thousands of communist party members and ethnic Chinese. President Sukarno was forced to hand over political power to General Suharto in 1966, who established military dictatorship that lasted for over three decades. Suharto's New Order regime collapsed in the face of Asian financial crisis and popular riots in 1998 triggering an era of democratic transition and military reform.

During the 1998 uprising, Suharto's military followed a pattern similar to that of Ne Win in 1988. In order to suppress the demonstrators, the regimes have responded in a brutal manner. Nevertheless, both Suharto and Ne Win's regime was not formally 'toppled'; they just 'faded away' and only in the last ten months of his life Ne Win was put under house arrest by his former accomplice until he died in December 2002.

(See page 9)

ARTICLE

Transition in Indonesia and Myanmar: Variations . . .

(from page 8)

However, Suharto after serving as the public face of Indonesia for over 30 years has lived his post-presidential years in virtual seclusion. On May 29, 2000, Suharto was placed under house arrest when Indonesian authorities began to investigate the corruption during his regime. However, he died on January 27, 2008 due to his failing health, without facing justice.

Unlike the Suharto's regime in Indonesia, that of Ne Win achieved neither political stability nor economic progress. Ethnic conflict has threatened the state in Myanmar virtually since independence and its economy has deteriorated. The Indonesian military, however, recognised, as early as the late 1940s that economic development was the cornerstone of the nation-building and has consistently given high priority to economic goals. Suharto's regime was also authoritarian but its difference from military regime in Myanmar is that the Indonesian political system was operating through a constitutional façade whereas the junta in Myanmar was running through military orders and strictures. If one looks at the institutional developments in both Myanmar and Indonesia it appears that while the regime in Myanmar has failed to institutionalize its political system, the Indonesian regime achieved considerable success towards building of its political institutions. Historically situated at the core of the power structure, both militaries have an acute threat perception, categorizing any perceived challenge to the status quo as a threat to the

regime. However, with the end of the Cold War, economically and politically liberalizing forces of globalization have also been identified as a potential threat to the unity of the nation state and the preservation of the status quo in both the countries.

The political crisis that engulfed Indonesia in May 1998 and led to Suharto's resignation was a product of the contradiction between the 'political structure' of the New Order which flows from the complex history of colonialism and decolonization; great struggle between Indonesian communism and its enemies in the 1960s; and the growing integration of the country into the global economy in the post cold war era. Indonesia has moved away from arbitrary and personalized corporatist regime towards a more structured and democratic system. For 32 years, the army remained Suharto's principal power base. It provided him with the organizational, personnel, material and coercive resources he needed to control the civilian government, including both executive and legislative branches. Further, when the economic crisis spread to Indonesia, the government's announcement of cuts in fuel and electricity subsidies was followed by widespread riots. With the security forces resorting to coercive means and the regime literally unraveling on the streets, Suharto was forced to resign and transition to democracy began. The first free and fair election in Indonesia's history after 1955 was held in June 1999 followed by the first direct Presidential election in 2004.

The 2009 and 2014 elections corresponded to Indonesia's continued progress towards democratic consolidation. Indonesia is now a decentralised electoral democracy, in which parties and Parliaments have become salient institutions of political contestation. Economic recovery and stability has been achieved after years of turmoil as shown in the relative stability of the *rupiah* and the attainment of more than 6 per cent economic growth. In fact, the move from centralised authoritarianism to decentralised democracy has brought about momentous changes in Indonesian politics.

It has been observed that in every instance of democratic transition, the regime loses cohesion before it loses its power. The transition in Indonesia is an example of not negotiated agreement for exit, rather dramatic rupture generated by elite forces and bad economic and political performance. Asian financial crisis has been a crucial reason for losing legitimacy of the New Order regime. In Myanmar, throughout the four decades of military rule, though there have been instances of intra-military splits among officer factions, elite infighting between softliners and hardliners, infantry mutinies and soldiers' desertions, but this has operated at a submissive level. In spite of all these, military rule in a quasi civilian mode still endures in Myanmar. Despite several and consistent efforts made by the junta to manoeuvre the multi-party general elections in 1990 the NLD under Aung San Suu Kyi won majority of the seats. But, the SLORC

refused to relinquish power to the duly elected popular majority. The military junta's second major 'shake-up' since 1988 took place in 1997 when the SLORC was replaced by SPDC. Despite name change, democratic reforms and adoption of a National Convention and drafting of a new Constitution, political impasse continued in Myanmar until the November 2010 general elections, which was held after a gap of twenty years. But the fact that the polls were swept by the pro junta political party—Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) and its allies exposes the myth of democratisation in Myanmar. In the absence of any clear opposition with National League of Democracy (NLD) being disbanded, the election was seen as an attempt to legitimize military rule behind a mask of civilian government. International reaction also seems to be split-up in between its neighbours and supporters in the region and the critics in the Western World. Although, the struggle for power within the high ranks of the military and infighting between the hardliners and softliners in the regime continues to this date, political solidarity and cohesiveness of the armed forces and ruling elites are, thus, key to regime's future.

Conclusion

There are considerable similarities between the post-colonial processes in Indonesia and Myanmar. Both the countries have militaries that played a traditionally central socio-political role, and which have been the object of reform initiatives within a wider context of democratization. The militaries in both the countries have been persistently involved—in a

direct or indirect manner—in the political affairs of the countries since the inception. In both the countries, structure of authoritarianism represented a triangular axis representing party (Golkar and BSPP); armed forces (ABRI and Revolutionary Council-SLORC-SPDC); and a highly circumscribed state apparatus. The comparison also suggests one more significant finding—that the states which pursue coercive strategies to solve internal security and political crisis is more likely to see their militaries take on a range of functions in the socio-political affairs. This has involved, what Mary Callahan calls as the transformation of the 'military-as-institution' into the 'military-as-government'.

Thus, in the light of the above-mentioned facts, it can be said that different patterns of regime disunity and elite interaction with conflicting forces have characterized different types of interaction. This has been visible in the comparative study of Indonesia and Myanmar. Therefore, it is always seen that broad similarities displays different regimes at the same time, different set of factors have cumulated in quite similar political outcomes. In this context, we can say that no single factor can account for the contemporary surge towards democracy. The process is complex and follows different historical paths. Each country goes through a series of unique experience with its own dynamics, amidst the socio-economic and geo-political milieu of the region. It is impossible to draw up a general law to the effect that democracy will always emerge provided certain pre-conditions are

present. Each case involves a complex pattern of internal and external elements; in each various conditions interplay with different groups of actors. There is no single charted course for democratic development.

The differences in the aforesaid mentioned three factors of splits and schisms in military, role of political elites and the financial crisis are considered to be responsible for transition from authoritarianism to democracy in Indonesia and delayed democracy in Myanmar. Therefore, it must be remembered that same forces may not always result in similar outcomes. The collapse of an 'old order' and the beginning of a new one may result either in an 'authoritarian reversal' or a 'democratic breakthrough'. Much of this dynamic comes from changes in society and the analytic interpretations of the consequences of these changes. In order to make a comprehensive assessment of democracy, one must, therefore, carefully scrutinize the individual country especially the power of authoritarian institutions, such as state apparatus, military organisations, corporate structure and political parties in shaping the fate of non-democratic regimes because democratic systems vary greatly in their institutional patterns and along other social-economic, political and cultural dimensions. In addition, it is necessary to be aware of the international setting above and the regional and local factors below for having a comprehensive understanding of this dynamics of democratisation.

Sonu Trivedi teaches at University of Delhi.

Competency Based Training and Assessment

Kyaw Win (Labour)

Competency is the ability to perform duties and tasks within an occupation to the standard of performance expected in the workplace. Occupational Competency Standards, usually drawn up with the involvement of employer/industry representatives, sets standards of expected levels of performance within an occupation.

Occupational Competency Standards have several components. The first is a descriptor of the Occupation concerned. This is followed by 'Units of Competencies' which relate to

the 'duties' to be performed in the occupation. The 'Units' are divided into 'Elements' or 'tasks' to be performed and the 'Performance Criteria' for competent performance required of each of the 'tasks'. Then there is the 'Range Statement' which describes the context in which performance is undertaken. Next, the 'Evidence Guide' indicates what to look for in deciding whether the performer is competent or not yet competent. The 'Evidence Guide' includes statements of 'Underpinning Skills and Knowledge' required for competent performance. The

structure of the Standard may sound rather complicated. However the Standards incorporate all that is required to ensure competent performance and assessment of that performance.

Competency Standards are usually structured to correspond to levels of performance. Competency Standards for skilled workers are usually drawn up at four levels. Level 1 relates to a less-skilled worker who may be required to perform under supervision, in jobs requiring routine tasks that involve a narrow range of skills of the occupation. Level 2 relates to skilled worker who is able to perform a wide range of tasks in the occupation with minimum supervision, while Level 3 relates to high skilled worker who may be required to perform independently, in jobs requiring a wide range of the oc-

cupational skills including problem solving. Level 4 relates to workers who attain supervisor/technician status from the ranks of the skilled workers.

Competency Based Training is training imparted in accordance with curricula and teaching/learning materials developed based on the Competency Standards. It may be undertaken through a system of modular courses of suitable duration for each level. Dividing the training programs into levels according to the competency attainments mentioned above, enables trainees to acquire employable skills step by step with intervening periods of wage employment after each level. Also, Competency Based Training and Certification contributes to the process of life long learning.

Competency Based Assessment is in accordance with Com-

petency Standards laid down for the various levels of competency attainment. Competency based assessment and certification ensures that the certificate holder is competent at the level certified. Usually a period of experience is required after the course of training at each level for taking the assessment at the level trained. The Competency Standards could also be used for assessment and certification of skilled workers who have acquired skills in an occupation through experience on-the-job, but have no formal recognition of their skills.

The Employment and Skills Development Law enacted by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw in 2013, advocates Competency Based Training and Assessment for the development and certification of skills of the workforce.

Sumitomo Mitsui Banking to open Manila branch this year

MANILA, 21 Feb — Japan's Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp will open its first Philippine branch this year, becoming the first foreign bank to get government approval after foreign ownership restrictions in the local banking industry were lifted by a revised law last year, a Philippine government statement said on Friday. According to the statement, Takeshi Kunibe, president and chief executive officer of SMBC, visited Philippine President Benigno Aquino at the presidential palace on Friday to discuss the bank's operations in the country and its request for further liberalization of the Philippine banking sector.

SMBC, Japan's second largest bank, said on Monday that it received on 13 February the approval from

the Philippine central bank for the opening of its branch in the Makati financial district in Manila. The application was filed late last year.

"The opening of our Manila branch will enhance SMBC's ability to provide a wide range of banking services and support clients expanding their business in the Philippines," the bank said, noting that it has thus far been doing so through a representative office established in 1975 and via a partnership with a local bank.

The Philippine government statement said SMBC's Manila branch will have 40 to 50 employees who will handle basic services such as deposits, loans, foreign currency trading, trade financing and cash management services.

Under the revised law,

the bank can open up to six branches in the country.

"The opening of SMBC in Manila is expected to draw more Japanese investors to the country," the statement said, adding that the bank had taken notice of the Philippines' strong economic performance in recent years as well as the abundant, English-proficient workforce that appeal to investors and foreign companies. Aquino approved in July last year the law that allows the full entry of foreign banks in the Philippines, as endorsed by the central bank, seeing foreign banks as vehicles for foreign direct investments in the country, and cognizant of its positive contribution in the transfer of technology and enhancement of human resource skills.

Kyodo News

Mitsubishi Heavy, 4 others to build Qatar's 1st subway system

TOKYO, 21 Feb — A consortium of companies led by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd said on Friday they have clinched a deal to build Qatar's first subway system. Sources close to the matter said the deal to build the subway system in Qatar's capital of Doha is worth 400 billion yen (\$3.37 billion). The consortium, which also includes Mitsubishi Corp, Hitachi Ltd, Kin-

ki Sharyo Co and French defence contractor Thales Group said they have received the order from Qatar Railways Co to build "Doha Metro," with construction scheduled to be completed by October 2019.

The subway system will run through major areas of Doha including Hamad International Airport, which opened in 2014, and is hoped to be a vital transport

link between stadiums and facilities during the 2022 World Cup, which Qatar will host, the consortium said.

The deal on Qatar reflects Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's goal to triple Japanese firms' receipt of orders for infrastructure overseas to 30 trillion yen by 2020 as part of his country's economic growth strategy. — *Kyodo*

Incorrect tax forms sent to 800,000 US health exchange enrollees



People wait in line at a health insurance enrollment event in Cudahy, California on 27 March, 2014.

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 21 Feb — The Obama administration said on Friday that 800,000 people who signed up for health insurance under the Affordable Care Act received incorrect tax forms and should wait to receive new ones before filing their taxes.

Roughly 95 percent of those who received the erroneous 1095-A forms have yet to file taxes, officials said. New forms will be issued in early March.

The Treasury Department said it is weighing what to do about people who have already filed and will provide additional information "shortly."

Republican lawmakers pounced on the mistake.

"The White House tells us in a classic on Friday

news dump that nearly one million Americans could see their tax refunds delayed because of this president's inability to implement his own law," Tennessee Representative Diane Black said in a statement.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest said the glitch should have no impact on the ability of people to file their taxes by the 15 April deadline. He also said the issue affects "less than 1 percent of people who file taxes."

The administration also said it would extend a special enrollment period for tax filers who were unaware they could face penalties for missing the 15 February deadline to obtain health insurance through the federal marketplace at

HealthCare.gov.

The one-off special enrollment period will be extended from 15 March to 30 April. If consumers do not buy health insurance during this period, they will have to pay a penalty when they file their 2015 taxes. Eligible filers must live in one of the 37 states with a federally facilitated insurance marketplace.

State-based insurance exchanges can set their own policies, officials said.

To qualify for the special enrollment, consumers must attest that when they filed their 2014 tax return they paid the fee for not having health coverage that year and that they first became aware of the implications of not enrolling in a timely manner after they began preparing their 2014 taxes.

The IRS has estimated 2 percent to 4 percent of tax filers, or roughly six million people, may pay a fee for not having coverage in 2014, which is \$95 or 1 percent of income.

The fee increases to \$325 per adult or 2 percent of income for 2015. Those who enroll during the special period will still owe fees for the months they were uninsured in 2014 and 2015. The special period is to allow people to avoid additional fees for 2015.

Reuters

US health officials push for stricter 'superbug' defence



Carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE) bacteria is pictured in this medical illustration provided by the Centre of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). — *REUTERS*

NEW YORK, 21 Feb — The US government is close to finalizing instructions to prevent medical devices responsible for transmitting "superbugs" from spreading the potentially fatal pathogens between patients, the scientist leading the effort said. The new protocol for the reusa-

ble devices, called duodenoscopes, is being developed by the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), whose disease detectives have investigated duodenoscope-transmitted infections since 2013.

In the latest outbreak, duodenoscopes spread antibiotic-resistant bacteria

to seven patients at a University of California at Los Angeles hospital, contributing to two deaths.

The CDC's guidance would not be mandatory. Only the US Food and Drug Administration has authority to require a manufacturer to include more stringent safety instructions for medical devices. The FDA can also order products be redesigned.

The FDA has not taken either step, despite knowing since at least 2009 that duodenoscopes have spread pathogens among patients. But this week it warned the medical community that the devices can transmit superbugs. Though CDC protocols are not mandatory, they carry considerable weight because hospitals that ignore them could be vulnerable to lawsuits. Experts in infectious-disease control welcomed the CDC's involvement, though they said it raised a larger question about the FDA. "If

the CDC, which does not have regulatory authority, is doing more (to make duodenoscopes safe) than the FDA, which does have that authority, it raises the question of who's running the ship here," said Lawrence Muscarella, an endoscopy consultant and author of a 2014 paper on the device's pathogen-transmission risk.

FDA spokeswoman Leslie Wooldridge said the agency is "actively engaged with the manufacturers of duodenoscopes" and with the CDC "to develop solutions to minimize patient risk associated with" the devices.

Duodenoscopes are inserted down the throat during gastrointestinal procedures. Problems arise when the devices, which sell for upwards of \$40,000, are not properly disinfected before being used on subsequent patients.

The CDC is close to unveiling a detailed procedure aimed at preventing

more cases, said infectious disease expert Dr Alexander Kallen of the CDC. Called a "surveillance culture," the procedure involves swabbing the device after it has supposedly been disinfected and then allowing any microbes to grow into detectable colonies, much as doctors take throat swabs to determine if a patient has a strep infection.

The protocol has undergone pilot testing at Virginia Mason Hospital and Medical Center in Seattle with good results, Kallen said. The Seattle hospital reported a duodenoscope-related superbug outbreak last month.

"We feel right now that we have a protocol people could use," Kallen said. "Our goal is to have this available very soon if people think this is the right way to go."

The duodenoscopes are made by Olympus Corp (7733.T), Fujifilm Holdings Corp (4901.T) and Pentax.

The manufacturers have been criticized for failing to redesign the scopes six years after their potential to transmit infections came to the attention of physicians and regulators. Olympus and Fujifilm did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Pentax spokesman Mariano Franco said the company is working with the FDA and others "to determine potential approaches that would contribute to the mitigation of pathogen transmission with duodenoscopes," but had not yet identified one "that would address these concerns."

In an ironic twist, the CDC protocol would likely increase sales of the devices, according to Muscarella. Waiting for the results of the surveillance culture sidelines an instrument for days, so a hospital would likely need to have extra ones on hand to meet demand for the procedures.

Reuters

Sunbathers take heed: skin damage continues hours after exposure

WASHINGTON, 21 Feb — Here's a warning to sunbathers everywhere. Scientists have found that the skin damage caused by UV rays does not stop once you get out of the sun.

Researchers said on Thursday much of the potentially cancer-causing damage wrought by ultraviolet radiation from sunlight or tanning beds occurs up to three to four hours after exposure thanks to chemical changes involving the pigment melanin.

But there is some good news. The researchers said it may be possible to develop sunscreen that protects against this type of



A visitor enjoys the autumn sunshine on a deck chair in St James Park, central London on 30 Sept, 2014.

REUTERS

damage. Melanoma, closely linked to UV exposure, accounts for most skin cancer deaths. The role of melanin, responsible for our skin, eye and hair colour,

in promoting DNA damage was a surprise because melanin was previously known to play a protective role by absorbing much of the UV energy before it

penetrates the skin. "But the unusual chemical properties of melanin that make it a good UV absorber also make it susceptible to other chemical reactions that just happen to have the same end result as the UV," said Douglas Brash, a therapeutic radiology and dermatology professor at the Yale School of Medicine whose study appears in the journal *Science*. The researchers revealed this aspect of melanin in experiments involving human cells in a lab dish as well as lab mice and mouse cells in a dish.

UV exposure can cause DNA damage that may spur carcinogenic

mutations in melanin-producing cells called melanocytes.

The researchers exposed mouse and human melanocytes to radiation from a UV lamp.

The cells experienced DNA damage immediately but the damage also continued for hours. In fact, half of the damage occurred in the hours after exposure.

After a type of chemical reaction called chemiexcitation, also witnessed in bioluminescent creatures including fireflies, energy gets transferred to DNA to potentially cause mutations.

"People should be

aware of the chemistry initiated in the skin after the UV exposure so that they can take proper care of themselves whenever going out in the sun or to the beach," said Yale School of Medicine researcher Sanjay Premi.

"We'd like to find new ingredients for sunscreens that will block these reactions," Brash added. "But in the meantime, I tell people to enjoy the sun but just don't lie on the beach between 10 am and 2 pm, and wear a hat. Sunscreens are useful, too, so long as they block both UVB and UVA," two kinds of ultraviolet rays.—Reuters

Apple hiring big brains in car battery space



Apple's Stephen Chick displays the CarPlay programme at the Worldwide Developers Conference in San Francisco, California in this 2 June, 2014 file photo. — REUTERS

SAN FRANCISCO, 21 Feb — A year and a half ago, Apple Inc (AAPL.O) had applied for just eight patents related to auto batteries. Recently, it has hired a bevy of engineers, just one of whom had already filed for 17 in his former career, according to a Thomson Reuters analysis.

The recent spate of hires and patent filings reviewed by Reuters shows that Apple is fast building its industrial lithium-ion battery capabilities, adding to evidence the iPhone maker may be developing a car. Quiet, clean electric cars are viewed in Silicon Valley and elsewhere as a promising technology for the future, but high costs and "range anxiety", the concern that batteries will run out of power and cannot be recharged quickly, remain obstacles. Those challenges could also be seen as opportunities to find solutions to take the technology mainstream.

The number of auto-related patents filed

by Apple, Google Inc (GOOGL.O), Korea's Samsung (005930.KS), electric carmaker Tesla Motors Inc (TSLA.O) and ride-sharing startup Uber tripled from 2011 to 2014, according to an analysis by Thomson Reuters IP & Science of public patent filings.

Apple has filed far fewer of these patents than rivals, perhaps adding impetus to its recent hiring binge as it seeks to get up to speed in battery technologies and other car-building related expertise.

As of 18 months ago, Apple had filed for 290 such patents. By contrast, Samsung, which has been providing electric vehicle batteries for some years, had close to 900 filings involving auto battery technology alone.

The US government makes patent applications public only after 18 months, so the figures do not reflect any patents filed in 2014.

Earlier this month,

battery maker A123 Systems sued Apple for poaching five top engineers. A search of LinkedIn profiles indicates Apple has hired at least another seven A123 employees and at least 18 employees from Tesla since 2012.

The former A123 employees have expertise primarily in battery cell design, materials development and manufacturing engineering, according to the LinkedIn profiles and an analysis of patent applications. A123, which filed for bankruptcy in 2012 but has since reorganized, supplied batteries for Fisker Automotive's now-discontinued hybrid electric car.

"Looking at the people Apple is hiring from A123 and their backgrounds, it is hard not to assume they're working on an electric car," said Tom Gage, Chief Executive of EV Grid and a longtime expert in batteries and battery technology.

Reuters

US urges removing Superfish programme from Lenovo laptops

BOSTON, 21 Feb — The US government on Friday advised Lenovo Group Ltd customers to remove "Superfish," a programme pre-installed on some Lenovo laptops, saying it makes users vulnerable to cyberattacks. The Department of Homeland Security said in an alert that the programme makes users vulnerable to a type of cyberattack known as SSL spoofing, in which remote attackers can read encrypted web traffic, redirect traffic from official websites to spoofs, and perform other attacks.

"Systems that came with the software already installed will continue to be vulnerable until corrective actions have been taken," the agency said. Adi Pinhas, chief executive of Palo Alto, California-based Superfish, said in a statement that his company's software helps users achieve more relevant search results based on images of products viewed. He said the vulnerability was "inadvertently" introduced



A woman tries a Lenovo tablet on display during a news conference announcing the company's annual results in Hong Kong on 21 May, 2014.—REUTERS

by Israel-based Komodia, which built the application described in the government notice.

Komodina CEO Barak Weichselbaum declined comment on the vulnerability. Lenovo apologized late on Friday in a statement for "causing these concerns among our users" and said that it was "exploring every action we can" to address the issues around Superfish,

including offering tools to remove the software and certificate.

"We ordered Superfish pre-loads to stop and had server connections shut down in January based on user complaints about the experience. However, we did not know about this potential security vulnerability until yesterday (Thursday)," the Lenovo statement said.—Reuters

Orbital explosion probe said to find debris in engine

WASHINGTON, 21 Feb — Last October's explosion of Orbital ATK Inc's Antares rocket may have been triggered when debris inadvertently left in a fuel tank traveled into the booster's main engine, two people familiar with investigations into the accident told Reuters. The sources said the preliminary findings suggest that a simple assembly mistake by Orbital ATK could have caused the explosion, which destroyed a cargo ship bound for the *International*

Space Station.

Orbital initially linked the explosion to a problem with the turbo pump in one of the two Soviet-era NK-33 engines that power the rocket. GenCorp Inc's Aerojet Rocketdyne unit refurbishes the old motors and resells them as AJ-26 motors. Orbital ATK on Friday acknowledged that so-called "foreign object debris" was one of more than a half dozen credible causes of the explosion, but said it was not "a leading candidate as the

most probable cause of the failure."

Orbital spokesman Barry Beneski said the company-led "accident investigation board," which includes officials from NASA and the Federal Aviation Administration, had not identified any evidence of mishandling of the flight hardware by Orbital.

He said Orbital continued to compare data from the October explosion with a May 2014 test stand failure of a different AJ-26 engine,

and prior failures involving AJ-26 ground tests in 2009, 2011 and 2012.

No details have been released on the May 2014 test stand incident, but sources familiar with the earlier investigation said it was likely linked to faulty "workmanship" on the original motor, and additional inspections had been mandated to prevent mishaps with other engines. Orbital also successfully launched one Antares rocket in July 2014, after the May incident.—Reuters

Italy's Benetton to join fund for Rana Plaza victims

MILAN, 21 Feb — Italian fashion retailer Benetton will pay into a fund set up to compensate victims of the 2013 Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh that killed more than 1,100 people, the company said on Friday.

Benetton's decision to contribute to the Rana Plaza Donors Trust Fund came following a petition organized by international advocacy group Avaaz and containing more than 1 million signatures calling for such action.

The Donors Trust Fund was set up to pool resources from a number of public institutions and private companies to compensate 5,000 people affected by the Rana Plaza disaster. Benetton earlier said it did not want to take part in

compensation funds among companies that sourced clothes from the factory due to a "lack of clarity" around objectives and a lack of involvement by key stakeholders.

But in a statement on Friday, Benetton said it was working with "an independent and globally recognised third party" to work out a "fair and proportionate" compensation. It said it would announce how much it would pay into the fund before 24 April, which will mark the second anniversary of the Rana Plaza's collapse.

Known the world over for its colourful sweaters, Benetton said it had set up an aid programme one month after the disaster in May 2013 that had helped 280 victims and their families.—Reuters



A person receives medical treatment after an explosion in a market, in the University Teaching Hospital (HEU, for its acronym in Spanish), in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, on 20 Feb, 2015. According to local press, around 70 people, among whom many were children, were injured in an explosion of gas cylinders in a market in Tegucigalpa, and so far the causes of the accident are unknown. —XINHUA

Fukushima Pref to accept delivery of radioactively contaminated waste

FUKUSHIMA, (Japan), 21 Feb — The Fukushima prefectural government may approve next week the delivery of radioactively contaminated soil and other waste, collected during decontamination work following the 2011 nuclear crisis, to interim storage facilities under construction in the prefecture, sources familiar with the matter said on Saturday.

Fukushima Gov Masao Uchibori may declare the acceptance during a meeting with Environment Minister Yoshio Mochizuki, who plans to visit the prefecture around next Wednesday,

according to the sources.

The prefectural government has begun discussing the timing with Futaba and Okuma, the town hosting the sites, they said.

Work to build the facilities began earlier in February after the prefectural government agreed with the construction in August last year.

But the prefectural government has yet to approve the delivery, saying decisions on the two issues are separate.

The central government aims to begin such transportation by 11 March this year on the fourth anniversary of the disaster at the

Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station of Tokyo Electric Power Co. Under the government plan, the radioactively contaminated waste will be kept in the interim facilities in the towns of Futaba and Okuma in Fukushima Prefecture and will be permanently disposed of outside the prefecture within 30 years, as requested by the Fukushima prefectural government in accepting the storage.

The prefectural government has called on the state for legislation assuring the waste will be put to final disposal outside Fukushima Prefecture within 30 years.—Kyodo News



A woman holds a picture of her relative, a garment worker who went missing in the Rana Plaza collapse, as she waits for a mass prayer on the first year anniversary of the accident, at a school in Savar on 24 April, 2014. —REUTERS

Hundreds evacuated after fire at Dubai skyscraper

DUBAI, 21 Feb — Hundreds of people in Dubai were evacuated from one of the world's tallest residential buildings on Saturday when fire swept through The Torch, a 79-story skyscraper, residents said.

Dubai's police chief, General Khamis Mattar, said the fire appeared to be the result of an accident and did not suspect it was caused by any deliberate criminal act, in comments carried by state news agency WAM.

He added that an investigation had started to determine the cause of the blaze, WAM reported.

A witness said flames shot out from two sides of the building as glass and metal rained down from near the summit of the structure, which stands more than 330 metres (1,082 feet) tall.

Mattar said four people had suffered minor injuries. At least a dozen fire trucks extinguished the blaze several hours after the fire alarm went off around 2 am. (2200 GMT Friday).

Residents said the fire had been fanned by high winds, dislodging chunks of metal and glass onto the area below, including a nearby road more than 100 metres (330 feet) away.

Traffic in the area was diverted and residents of two other

nearby buildings in the emirate's Marina district, home to thousands of expatriate professionals, were also evacuated, the witness said.

Many of those standing outside the building were dressed in pyjamas, with others in evening dress as they returned from the city's many bars and restaurants on a weekend.

One woman, who did not give her name, stood on the street crying, saying she had rushed back fearing for her belongings after a friend contacted her about the fire. The lower floors where

she lived were not affected.

Residents of neighbouring towers were returning to their homes around 4:30 am, but residents of The Torch were told they would not be allowed back into the building until the fire officials gave approval later on Saturday.

Residents of upper floors that were most affected were told it would be days before they could return.

Dubai is one of seven emirates that make up the United Arab Emirates (UAE), a Gulf Arab trade and investment hub.

Reuters



Fire engines are seen after a fire broke out at "The Torch", a residential high-rise tower, in Dubai on 21 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS



French President Francois Hollande walks on the tarmac as he arrives for a visit about nuclear deterrence and strategic Air Force at the military base in Istres, southern France on 19 Feb, 2015. —REUTERS

France's Hollande says there is no Greek exit scenario

PARIS, 21 Feb — Greece belongs in the euro zone and there is no scenario envisaging its exit from the single currency union, French President Francois Hollande said after talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

"Greece is in the euro zone and it must remain in the euro zone," Hollande told a joint news conference with Merkel.

"I know of no scenario today involving a euro zone exit."

Hollande, who was talking ahead of a crunch meeting of euro zone finance ministers, said Greece must meet its commitments but its euro zone partners must also take into account the election that brought to power anti-austerity parties.

Reuters

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV KUO HSIUNG VOY NO (1029W)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KUO HSIUNG VOY NO (1029W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22.2.2015 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 CHINA SHIPPING LINES**
Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV SILVER FERN VOY NO (0001S)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SILVER FERN VOY NO (0001S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22.2.2015 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 CHINA SHIPPING LINES**
Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV ANAN BHUM VOY NO (124N)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ANAN BHUM VOY NO (124N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22.2.2015 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 MOL (S'PORE) PTE LTD**
Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (043N)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (043N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22.2.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S WAN HAI LINES PTE LTD**
Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV SHIBA VOY NO (ISC1002E)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SHIBA VOY NO (ISC1002E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22.2.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S LAND AND SEA
SHIPPING LINE**
Phone No: 2301185

WEATHER REPORT

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 22nd February, 2015: Light rain are likely to be isolated in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin State and weather will be partly cloudy in Chin, Kayin and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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

Advertise with us!

For inquiries to place an advertisement in the GNLM, **Please email wallace.tun@gmail.com**
(+95) (01) 8604532

Invitation of Expression of Interest (EOI) for Pharmaceutical Plants for No (1) Pharmaceutical Factory (Yangon), Pharmaceutical and Foodstuff Industries, Ministry of Industry

No (1) Pharmaceutical Factory (Yangon) under the Pharmaceutical and Foodstuff Industries, the Ministry of Industry intend to cooperate for Pharmaceutical Plants with Local and Foreign Entrepreneurs Companies.

As a first step, Companies who interest in those cooperation are required to submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) not later than 4 PM (Myanmar Standard Time), on March 5th 2015 to Planning Department, Pharmaceutical and Foodstuff Industries, Ministry of Industry, Office No (37), Nay Pyi Taw, The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Interested entities can take over the (EOI) Form and other indications at above office commencing from (23-2-2015) by presenting complete documents of company profile.

Document of Company Profile

- Valid Certificate of Incorporation
 - Records and Regulation of Company
 - Name of Foreign's Technical Cooperator
- (For more information : Phone no : +95 +67 408140, 408275
Fax no : +95 +67 408195)

Thai F-16 jet fighter crashlands, pilot killed

BANGKOK, 21 Feb — A Thai air force F-16 fighter crashlanded, killing the pilot, in Lopburi Province on Friday.

The F-16A Fighting Falcon pilot, identified as Flight Lieutenant Nopanon Nivasanond, had just finished an air-to-surface attack exercise and was returning to base in Nakorn Ratchasima Province when the incident occurred, according to air force spokesperson ACM Monton Satchukorn.

The United States-

made jet fighter caught fire as it crashlanded onto a tapioca field in Koksamrong district of the northeastern province, about 150 kilometres north of the Thai capital.

The authorities have inspected the wreckage of the fallen jet and are yet to find out the cause of the fatal mishap, ACM Monton said.

An air force command for tactical air exercises is about four kilometres from the crash site. Villagers were kept out of the area

where air force personnel thoroughly inspected and collected pieces of the aircraft's wreckage scattered in all directions.

The deceased pilot and his jet fighter belonged to the Wing 1 air base, the country's biggest.

In one last incident of its kind four years ago, two of the Thai air force's F-16 jet fighters crashlanded during a combat exercise in Chaiyapum Province four years ago, with both pilots managing to jettison to safety.—Xinhua

Bomb threat grounds Swiss aircraft in Zurich



An A330 aircraft is seen at a de-icing pad after a bomb threat was made against an aircraft operated by Lufthansa's Swiss International Airlines at Zurich airport, a spokesman for the airport said on 20 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

ZURICH, 21 Feb — A bomb threat was made on Friday against an aircraft operated by Lufthansa's (LHAG.DE) Swiss at Zurich airport, a spokesman for the airport said.

Swiss flight LX 146

had been due to depart for New Delhi at 12:45 pm (1145 GMT).

"The aircraft has been moved to a de-icing pad," the spokesman said, adding that the aircraft's passengers and crew were inside

the terminal.

Police declined to confirm they were investigating a bomb threat, saying only that police operation was in progress. Swiss was not immediately available for comment.—Reuters

Emmy Awards to feature more contenders in comedy, drama categories

LOS ANGELES, 21 Feb — New rules will expand the number of contenders for top honours in the comedy and drama categories in television's annual Emmy Awards this year, organizers said on Friday.

The Television Academy said it was making numerous revisions to the awards in order to reflect a changing television landscape. Both the comedy and drama series categories will now include seven nominees, up from six in previous years.

Comedy series will be defined by shows that are 30 minutes or shorter per episode, while drama series will be for shows over 30 minutes.

That means shows such as

Netflix's "Orange Is the New Black" will no longer be considered in the comedy series category. Producers will be able to petition for eligibility in an alternative category, the Television Academy said.

"Our over 17,000 voting members represents a dramatically changing television industry and we want to continue to make sure we honour their creativity in the most relevant and fair ways possible," Bruce Rosenblum, chairman of the Television Academy, said in a statement.

After switching the Primetime Emmy awards show from a Sunday in late September to a Monday in late August last year,

the Television Academy is going back to its late September weekend slot with this year's awards on 20 September.

The mini-series category will be renamed "limited series," and will reflect any shows that have two or more episodes running for at least 2-1/2 hours, that tell a "complete, non-recurring story" and will not continue the story or characters in following seasons.

This will mean shows such as BBC America's "Luther" and PBS Masterpiece's "Sherlock" will not be eligible in this category, as both feature same characters in ongoing seasons.

Other changes include splitting the variety series category



into Outstanding Variety Talk, to be awarded during the live Primetime Emmy telecast, and Outstanding Variety Sketch, which will be awarded at the separate Creative Arts Emmy awards.—Reuters

Dozens of Emmy Awards are lined up on the trophy table in the media center at the 62nd annual Primetime Emmy Awards in Los Angeles, California on 29 Aug, 2010.
REUTERS

Scott Free to produce 'The Burning Woman' with 'Anne Hathaway'

LOS ANGELES, 21 Feb — Scott Free has been signed on to produce "The Burning Woman", which is expected to star Oscar-winning actress Anne Hathaway.

The film, a drama with thriller elements, is based on an original idea by Brad Ingelsby, who developed the script with Pruss, and wrote it with Hathaway in mind, reported *Deadline*.

The story shows that the teen daughter of a 32-year-old woman in Pennsylvania goes missing and she is left to raise her infant grandson alone.

The story is told over the course of 11 years, from the time her daughter vanishes, through the trials-and-tribulations of subsequent years looking for closure, leading up the long-awaited discovery of the truth.—PTI



Actress Anne Hathaway

Singer Bruce Dickinson undergoes cancer treatment

LOS ANGELES, 21 Feb — Bruce Dickinson, the lead singer of heavy metal English band Iron Maiden, has undergone a seven-week course of chemotherapy and radiology treatment for tongue cancer.

The 56-year-old English singer was treated after doctors found a small cancerous tumour at the back of his tongue, reported *Aceshowbiz*. The course finished yesterday.

The band announced the news in a statement posted on its website yesterday.

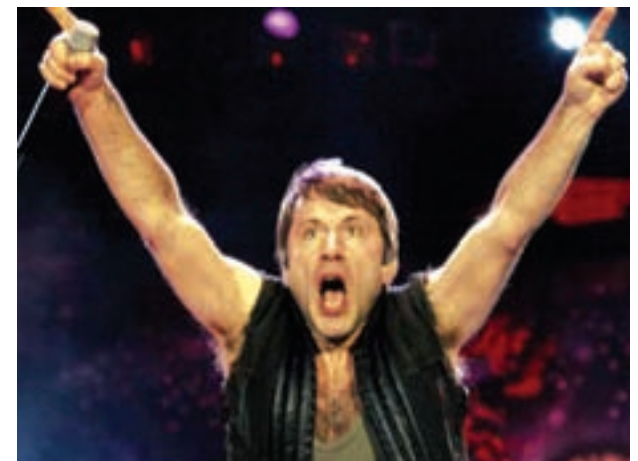
"Just before Christmas, Maiden vocalist Bruce Dickinson visited his doctor for a routine check-up. This led to tests and biopsies which revealed a small cancerous tumour at the back of his tongue. A seven week course of chemotherapy and radiology treatment was completed yesterday.

"As the tumour was

caught in the early stages, the prognosis thankfully is extremely good. Bruce's medical team fully expect him to make a complete recovery with the all clear envisaged by late May. It will then take a further few months for Bruce to get back to full fitness," the statement said.

The band asked for

privacy in this matter until May. "In the meantime we would ask for your patience, understanding and respect for Bruce and his family's privacy until we update everyone by the end of May. Bruce is doing very well considering the circumstances and the whole team are very positive," the band said.—PTI



Bruce Dickinson, the lead singer of heavy metal English band Iron Maiden, has undergone a seven-week course of chemotherapy and radiology treatment for tongue cancer.—PTI

I lost a friend: Amy Poehler remembers Harris Wittels

LOS ANGELES, 21 Feb — "Parks and Recreation" actress Amy Poehler, while mourning over the show's producer Harris Wittels' untimely demise, says she is pained at losing a 'dear friend'.

Wittels died yesterday at his home. He was 30. The executive producer died of an apparent drug overdose, reported *Variety*. Poehler, 43, while remembering Wittels at an event, which happened just hours after he was found dead, said, "Today, I lost a friend. I lost a dear, young friend in my life who was struggling with addiction.

"I'm sharing it with you because life and death live so close together, and we walk that fine line everyday. When things happen in our lives, we turn to the people that we love... and we lean on people, in a hope that we will ease our pain," she said.—PTI

'American Horror Story' actor Ben Woolf taken to hospital after accident

LOS ANGELES, 21 Feb — "American Horror Story" actor Ben Woolf was rushed to a hospital in critical condition after being struck in the head by the side mirror of a passing car in Hollywood, police said on Friday.

Woolf, who stands about four feet four inches (132 cm) tall and plays the character Meep on the FX channel show, was hit around 9 pm on Thursday, Los Angeles Police Department spokeswoman Jane Kim said.

He was rushed to a hospital in critical condition, Kim said, though his current condition was not known. The driver remained at the scene after the accident, Kim said.

The Emmy-nominated "American Horror Story," by "Glee" creators Ryan Murphy and Brad Falchuck, takes on an anthology miniseries format, exploring a new storyline and cast of characters each season.—Reuters

Misunderstanding led to my arrest: Vanilla Ice

LONDON, 21 Feb — Robert Van Winkle, better known as rapper Vanilla Ice, says his arrest in an alleged burglary, was due to a misunderstanding, which will soon be cleared. Ice, 47, faced arrest over accusations of breaking into and stealing from an abandoned Florida home sometime between December and February. He was released from custody on Wednesday, reported *BBC*.

The 47-year-old said it had been a misunderstanding and "it will all be cleared up". Lantana police said Ice had been renovating the house next to the property where items had been stolen.—PTI



GENERAL

Mourinho urges referees to protect Chelsea winger Hazard

LONDON, 21 Feb — Eden Hazard has asked Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho to find him shin pads that also protect the back of his legs after suffering a record number of fouls in the Premier League and European competition this season.

Mourinho, who urged referees to offer the tricky Belgium forward more protection, said Hazard suffered from dangerous fouls and from sneaky, tactical challenges to prevent him racing away from defenders on the counter-attack.

“He told me to speak with my friends that make carbon shin pads to try to make some for the back like a horse that does jumping because he also gets fouled

from behind,” the Portuguese told reporters ahead of Saturday’s home game against Burnley.

Hazard, 24, holds the record for the most fouls suffered in the Premier League, at 74 a full 14 more than second-placed Raheem Sterling of Liverpool.

Against Paris St Germain in the Champions League on Tuesday the Chelsea player was crunched nine times.

Mourinho bemoaned the fact that, because Hazard was an honest player who tried to stay on his feet, opponents often escaped sanction.

“He should be the player that creates more yellow cards from opponents but he doesn’t,” Mourinho said.

“Eden wants to play. Eden doesn’t want people to get a red card ... did you see a referee give a penalty for a player that didn’t go (down)?”

Mourinho said Hazard attracted strategic fouls because of his skill and quick feet. “Referees have to understand exactly that. Sometimes little fouls are big fouls in the context of the game ... it can be a small foul but it stops the counter-attack,” he added.

“I think Eden is punished in both ways. He’s punished by aggression. In Paris he had nine fouls but three of them are very bad fouls, very dangerous fouls and he can do nothing.”

Mourinho said it was perfectly normal that some



Eden Hazard of Chelsea celebrates scoring against Aston Villa during their English Premier League soccer match at Villa Park, Birmingham, on 7 Feb, 2015.

REUTERS

players attracted more attention from defenders and were double marked.

Reuters

Resurgent Halep ousts

Wozniacki to reach Dubai final



Simona Halep of Romania returns the ball to Caroline Wozniacki of Denmark during their women’s singles tennis semi-final match at the WTA Dubai Tennis Championships on 20 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

day, I’ve played better — I tried to be aggressive, I’m playing good tennis, I’m feeling relaxed,” Halep said in a courtside interview.

Halep, wearing a mauve skirt and purple vest, struggled to find her range in the opening exchanges as she surrendered the first set with a double fault.

But the Romanian, who feels she now has the big game experience to win grand slams following a breakthrough 2014, began the second set re-energized.

She broke Wozniacki immediately, taking advantage of a short second serve to slug a forehand crosscourt winner.

Halep’s finesse, power and speed over the court allowed her to level the match as Wozniacki, suffering from illness and a troublesome knee, wilted under pressure. The Romanian ended up claiming 12 of the last 14 games as she secured a place in the final.

Reuters



A man works in a tobacco leaves plantation, in San Luis municipality of Pinar del Rio Province, western Cuba, on 20 Feb, 2015. —XINHUA

Tiger Woods will not play Honda Classic

WASHINGTON, 21 Feb — Tiger Woods has confirmed that he will not play next weeks’ Honda Classic after he announced an indefinite leave from the PGA Tour.

Woods said last week he would leave the tour indefinitely because his game was not acceptable for tournament golf and that he would not play again until he felt like it was.

Woods has played only two tournaments this year.

He shot the worst round of his professional career in January, an 11-over-par 82 in the second round of the Phoenix Open.

The following week at Torrey Pines, he withdrew after 11 holes because of tightness in his back.

Woods is No 66 in the world and will not be eligible for the World Golf Championship at Doral. Woods has 14 major titles in his career.

Xinhua

mitv Myanmar International

(22-2-2015 07:00 am~ 23-2-2015 07:00 am) MST

- * News of Myanmar Own Tune
- * The Richly Blessed Songs (Episode-2)
- * Gem Land * Myanmar Masterclass
- * News “Aung Thiha”
- * A Visit to Kyauk Kyi * News
- * Sagaing: Youth Leader * Great Shwedagon —
- * News * The Planetary Posts
- * The Precious Lands of Myanmar * Amazing: Magician
- (Mandalay Region) * Sak Kaw Ma
- * News * Waso Charity Feast
- * Social & Charitable Association (EP-3) * Chinlone & The
- * News * Dreams of the players
- * Food Trip (EP-1) * News
- Part -2 * Natural Lake: Fish
- * Today Myanmar * Breeding Business
- “Myanma Quality * Size Does Matter
- Gold” (Episode - 4)
- * News * Shrinking Footprints
- * “Myanmar Music Icon” * Youth Filmmaker:
- Ko Nay Win, Creator * Lwin Ko Ko Oo

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(22-2-2015, Sunday)

- 6:00 am**
- Alinka Wutyi Music Troupe
- 6:20 am**
- Game for Children
- 6:50 am**
- Fashion Show Music
- 7:05 am**
- Myanmar Video
- 8:40 am**
- Sing & Enjoy
- 9:35 am**
- Pyi Thu Ni Ti
- 10:00 am**
- Myanmar Movie

MRTV News Channel in Brief

(22-2-2015, Sunday)

- 6:00 am**
- Paritta by Hill Region Missionary Sayadaw
- 6:30 am**
- Physical Exercise
- 7:00 am**
- News/ Weather Report
- 7:35 am**
- Business News
- 8:30 am**
- Head Line News
- 9:00 am**
- News/ International News
- 9:35 am**
- Weekly Entertainment
- 10:35 am**
- Documentary
- 11:35 am**
- Amazing World
- 12:00 noon**
- News / International News / Weather Report
- 12:35 pm**
- Round Up of The Week’s International News
- 12:50 pm**
- Myanmar Movies (Part-1)
- 2:35 pm**
- Myanmar Movies (Part-2)
- 3:00 pm**
- News/ International News
- 3:35 pm**
- Business News
- 4:20 pm**
- 2015 University Entrance Examination (Maths)
- 5:35 pm**
- Documentary
- 5:45 pm**
- People’s Talks
- 6:00 pm**
- News/ Weather Report
- 6:35 pm**
- Weekly Entertainment
- 7:35 pm**
- Documentary (Women in Myanmar Society)
- 8:00 pm**
- News/ International News/ Weather Report
- 9:00 pm**
- News
- National Sports Games
- Tasty Trip
- Sing & Enjoy

Philippines pledges to strengthen efforts to ensure conviction of drug suspects

MANILA, 21 Feb — The Philippine government vowed on Saturday to intensify efforts to ensure that those charged for illegal drugs get convicted as the number of drug cases filed in courts significantly increased last year.

Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA)

Director General Arturo Cacdac Jr cited in the agency’s consolidated report that a total of 17,074 drug cases were filed in different courts nationwide in 2014 compared to 10,502 in 2013, an increase of 62.57 percent.

He said internal support mechanisms have

been institutionalized to strengthen PDEA’s aggressive campaign against illegal drugs.

Capability enhancement trainings, such as anti-drug investigation courses, are regularly provided to enable agents to prepare air-tight cases in coordination with PDEA

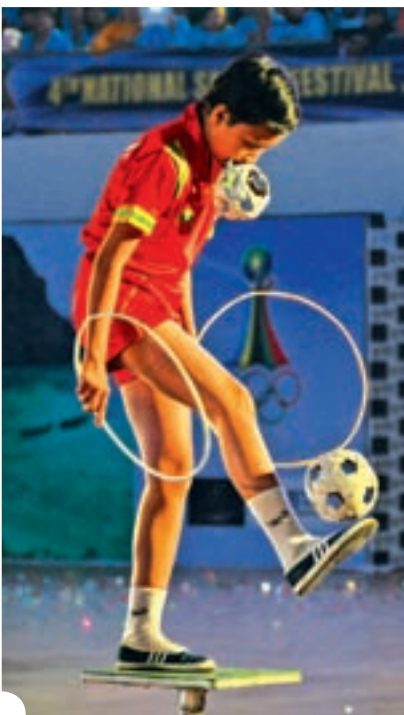
lawyers, he said.

“Moot courts are used to prepare PDEA agents and chemists who will stand as prosecution witnesses. Also, case monitors have been permanently assigned to all PDEA regional offices to regularly monitor status of drug cases,” Cacdac said.—Xinhua

Vice President U Nyan Tun attaches great importance to friendship among national brethren in his speech at opening of National Sports Festival



Vice President U Nyan Tun presents souvenir to one of the leaders of sports contingents taking part in the 4th National Sports Festival at the opening ceremony.—MNA



Young Chinlone (Caneball) player shows skill at the opening ceremony of the 4th National Sports Festival being held in Nay Pyi Taw on 21 February 2015.
MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 21 Feb — Vice President U Nyan Tun highlighted the aim of holding the national sports festival in his remarks at the opening of the Fourth National Sports Festival saying that the festival was organized to raise the standard of Myanmar's sports and to contribute to selection of athletes who will participate in the XXVIII SEA Games. He also attached great importance to friendship among national brethren from regions and states through this festival urging them to compete and discuss among athletes for the betterment of Myanmar's sports.

The vice president in his speech recalled the XXVII SEA Games in which Myanmar stood second and ASEAN ParaGames in which Myanmar stood fifth.

According to the vice president, the national sports festivals were held in 1992, 1994 and 1997. Now is the fourth event and it is a test for athletes to be selected to participate in XXVIII SEA Games. He urged the athletes to do their best in the games.

Before the vice president made a speech, the opening ceremony was held according to the agenda – sports teams took position and saluted the State Flag and carrying the flag of National Sports Festival to the sports ground.

After the vice president's speech, the athletes took oath. The vice president encouraged them and presented gifts to them. Songs and dances of the Ministry of Culture and skill demonstrations of sports federations were also presented on the occasion.

In the photo session, the vice president had documentary photos together with veteran sportsmen who took glory to the nation and players from Myanmar Chinlone (cane ball) Federation.

On the occasion,

Union Minister for Sports U Tint Hsan presented cash awards to those who contributed to successful holding of the festival.

Today's opening ceremony was attended by about 7000 people includ-

ing the chairman of the Union Election Commission, the chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal, union ministers, deputy ministers, members of Myanmar Olympic Committee and others.—MNA

Medal tally in 4 th National Sports Festival 2015 on 21-2-2015				
State/Region	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
Yangon	66	37	27	130
Mandalay	25	28	39	92
Bago	12	13	16	41
Rakhine	9	11	19	39
Nay Pyi Taw	6	6	10	22
Ayeyawady	5	8	21	34
Kayah	5	3	8	16
Mon	4	9	9	22
Kachin	4	5	7	16
Magway	3	5	7	15
Sagaing	3	5	5	13
Shan	2	10	16	28
Kayin	2	2	6	10
Chin	2	-	-	2
Taninthayi	1	7	12	20

Mayweather to clash with Pacquiao in mega fight

LOS ANGELES, 21 Feb — The long awaited mega bout between Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Manny Pacquiao, which has been more than five years in the making, will take place in Las Vegas on 2 May, Mayweather announced on Friday.

A duel between the defence-minded Mayweather and the aggressive Pacquiao, the biggest drawcards of their generation, has been savoured by boxing fans, if only to decide the mythical title of the world's best pound-for-pound fighter.

Showtime and HBO will jointly broadcast the bout, which is one of the most eagerly anticipated in boxing since the classic 1975 'Thrilla in Manila' between Muhammad Ali and

Joe Frazier. However, both Mayweather, 37, and Pacquiao, 36, are in the twilight of their respective careers and most pundits say they have lost some of their skills in the ring.

"What the world has been waiting for has arrived," American Mayweather, who has a perfect record of 47-0 with 26 knockouts, said on the social networking website Shots. "Mayweather vs. Pacquiao on 2 May, 2015 is a done deal.

"I promised the fans we would get this done, and we did. We will make history on 2nd May. Don't miss it!"

Mayweather made a late-night trip to Pacquiao's hotel in Miami last month to discuss the possibility of a



Manny Pacquiao (C) of the Philippines poses on the scales during an official weigh-in for his World Boxing Organization (WBO) 12-round welterweight title fight against Chris Algieri of the US at the Venetian Macao hotel in Macau on 22 Nov, 2014.

REUTERS

showdown, and the Filipino southpaw, an eight-division world champion, signed the contract for the bout on Thursday.

"I am glad my decision to meet with Manny and discuss making this fight happen helped get the deal done," Mayweather said in a

statement. "Giving the fans what they want to see is always my main focus.

"This will be the biggest event in the history of the sport. I am the best ever ... and this fight will be another opportunity to showcase my skills and do what I do best, which is win.

"Manny is going to try to do what 47 before him failed to do, but he won't be successful. He will be number 48."

Pacquiao, who has a 57-5-2 record with 38 knockouts, said in a statement: "I am very happy that Floyd Mayweather and I can give the fans the fight they have wanted for so many years. They have waited long enough and they deserve it.

"It is an honour to be

part of this historic event. I dedicate this fight to all the fans who willed this fight to happen and, as always, to bring glory to the Philippines and my fellow Filipinos around the world."

The welterweight showdown in Vegas is projected to be the most lucrative ever in boxing with Mayweather expected to have a 60-40 split advantage on revenues, earning a minimum of \$120 million and Pacquiao at least \$80 million.

"Everyone involved, including Floyd Mayweather and Manny Pacquiao, knows this fight simply had to happen," Stephen Espinoza, general manager for Showtime Sports, said in a statement.—Reuters