

## President U Thein Sein sends messages of felicitations to Kuwait

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Feb—U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent messages of felicitations to His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jabar Al Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, and His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al Mubarak Al Hamd Al Sabah, Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait, on the occasion of the National Day of the State of Kuwait, which falls on 25 February 2015.

MNA

## Pyidaungsu Hluttaw speaker receives Asia-Pacific Regional Director of HD Centre

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb—Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann received Singapore-based Asia-Pacific Regional Director Mr Mi-

chael Vatikiotis and party of HD Centre (Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue) at the hall of Pyithu Hluttaw Building, here, on Tuesday.

Also present at the

call were Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw International Relations Committee U Hla Myint Oo and officials of Pyithu Hluttaw Office.

MNA

## Defence Services donate computers, cash for UDNR, college

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb—Families of Defence Services (Army, Navy and Air) and well-wishers donated computers, accessories and cash for the University for the Development of the National Races and the Nationalities Youth Resource Develop-

ment Degree College on Tuesday.

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attended the donation ceremony held at the university in Sagaing.

The ceremony was also attended by the Sen-

ior General and his wife, Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win, the Chief Minister of Sagaing Region, senior military officers, academics and students.

The Senior General urged the students to (See page 3)

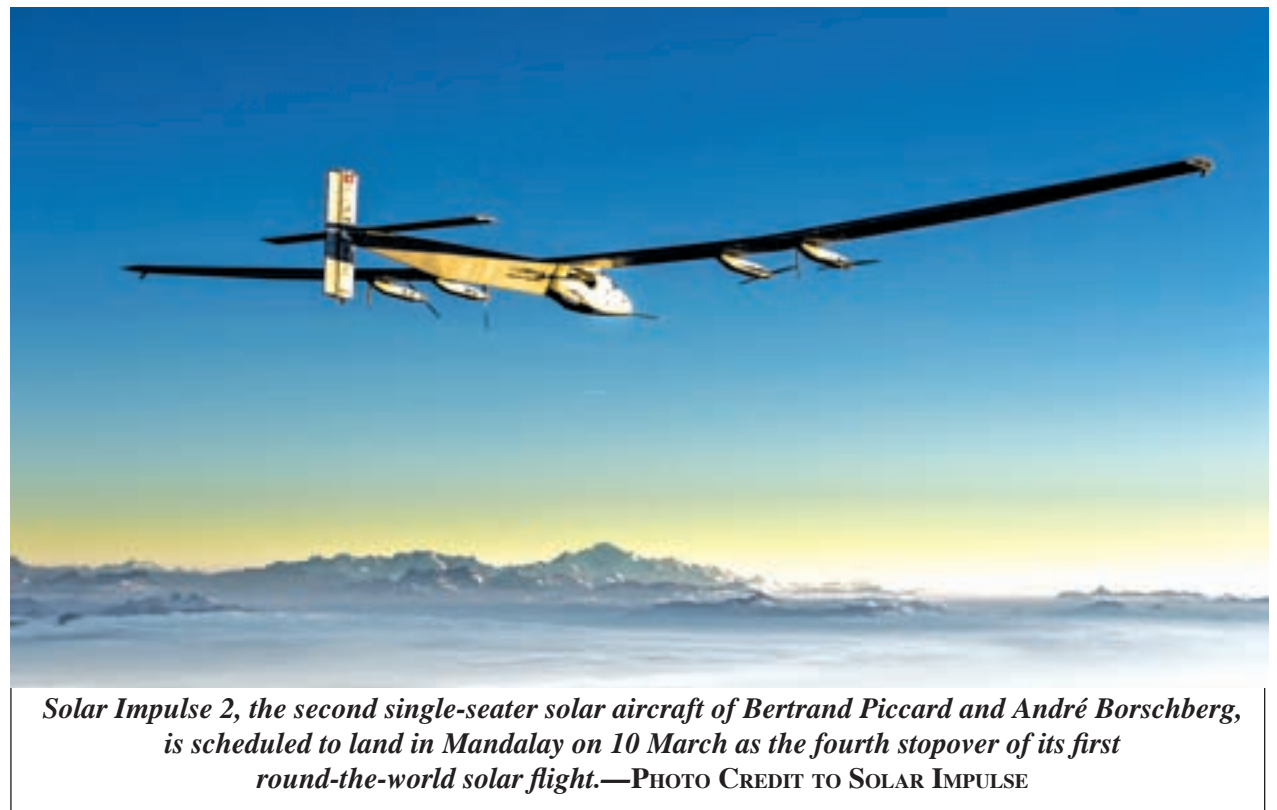
## Solar-powered aircraft, Solar Impulse 2, to land in Mandalay on 10 March

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 24 Feb — The first around-the-world solar flight, Solar Impulse 2 (Si2), is expected to make a stopover in Mandalay, central Myanmar, on 10 March, according to a pre-arrival press conference on the flight held Tuesday.

The solar aircraft, an idea born in Switzerland, will make its fourth stopover at Mandalay International Airport after taking off from Abu Dhabi of the United Arab Emirates in early March, with three earlier stopovers at Muscat of Oman and Ahmedabad and Varanasi of India. Abu Dhabi will be the start and (See page 2)

YANGON, 24 Feb — People who borrow money for building houses topped the list of borrowers of Construction and Housing Development Bank, which has offered loans to home buyers, builders and those who want to



Solar Impulse 2, the second single-seater solar aircraft of Bertrand Piccard and André Borschberg, is scheduled to land in Mandalay on 10 March as the fourth stopover of its first round-the-world solar flight.—PHOTO CREDIT TO SOLAR IMPULSE

## Middle-class people top list for borrowing loans for building houses

repair their buildings.

CHD Bank, which became the first bank in Myanmar to grant loans to people

who want to buy, build or maintain houses, offers long-term loans with a 12 per cent interest rate plus 1 per cent

service charge.

“This plan of CHD Bank benefits middle-class people and can create op-

portunities for the people to own houses,” an official of the bank said.

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THE DREAM TAKES FLIGHT

As the Solar Impulse plane sets out on its round-the-world journey, we wish André, Bertrand and the entire team favorable winds and plenty of sunlight as they fly into the future. OMEGA is proud to be a part of the adventure. The sun is truly rising on a new era in aviation.

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## FDI in Myanmar hit \$3.676 bn in April-Sept 2014



Representatives of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw discuss foreign direct investment in Myanmar from April to September 2014.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb — Chairman of Foreign Investment Commission U Zeyar Aung said foreign direct investment in Myanmar reached US\$3.676 bil-

lion in the first half of 2014 fiscal year started in April.

During 17<sup>th</sup> day of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session, MIC chairman said a total of 99 new foreign

firms were allowed for investments with \$3.584 billion and the four operating business companies were permitted for additional \$92.786 million

during this period.

Investment amount of 22 new local firms account for K583.441 billion and \$115.501 million, while the existing two businesses were allowed to add K3.828 billion and \$0.38 million into their capitals, totaling K587.269 billion and \$115.881 million.

From the local investments, the total amount of taxes and land rentals will be K20.235 billion and \$0.896 million each year.

Among foreign direct investments, transportation sector stood first with 36.83 percent, followed by energy sector with 21.90 percent and property development with 16.95 percent.

In local investments, property development reached 79.75 percent atop,

construction sector at the second with 9.29 percent and industrial sector at the third with 4.81 percent.

New foreign investors are from EU countries such as the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands and Sweden, with increasing investments from Singapore, Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, Hong Kong, India, Canada and Luxembourg.

Regarding the message from the President U Thein Sein about \$300 million loan from Exim Bank of China, Union Minister for Cooperatives U Kyaw Hsan said these loans will be used for micro-finance loans, agricultural items, tools for fishing farms and improvement of cooperative groups.

He also said micro-finance loan programme

could cover only 23,451 villages out of 63,983 villages across the country, accounted for K100,000 for each rural family in average.

Cooperatives Union Minister said the loans from Exim will be used \$220 for members of cooperatives who have not received loans and \$50 million for those who have got loans, plus over \$30 million for installment sales of agricultural machines.

He also noted that supports in these sector are believed to result in social and economic development of Myanmar people and help to reduce poverty rate of the country from 26 percent to 16 percent in 2015 in line with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.—MNA

### Pyithu Hluttaw

## UEC: Go through 'formalities' in political campaigns

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb — Union Election Commission has reiterated that Hluttaw candidates must abide by the existing laws and electoral laws during their political campaigns for 2015 general election.

U Pe Than, an MP from Myebon Township constituency, asked if Hluttaw candidates could use the words and the issues mentioned in private media for criticism of parliament, government, government department,

Tatmataw and individuals during their electoral campaigns.

UEC member U Win Ko said during Pyithu Hluttaw's 21 day meeting that actions will be taken against the candidates who breached the rules and regulations in their political campaigns.

Regarding workers' affairs, Daw Win Maw Tun, Deputy Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Welfare, said plans are being made to promote health

services for the workers in accordance with welfare programmes of the ministry.

She also said the ministry has issued licenses for 202 overseas employment agencies and licences are annulled if they breached rules and regulations.

The deputy minister also said Myanmar has appointed diplomats for migrant workers' affairs in Korea, Thailand and Malaysia, with one-stop-service centres in the neighbouring to help Myanmar people abroad and complaint mechanism centres in Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon.

She added that trainings are given to potential migrant workers with culture, customs and laws of their targeted countries.

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The bank has a plan to cooperate with overseas banks, he added.

There are currently few banks entering the real state sector in Myanmar, a representative of a worldwide real estate group said.

If other banks provide such services, Myanmar's real estate sector will be booming, he added.

Housing complexes worth millions of US dollars are mushrooming in Yangon, according to real estate agents.—GNLM

### Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

### Amyotha Hluttaw

## Health Department to raise health awareness for betel quid chewers

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb — Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) continued its 20<sup>th</sup> day session at its hall, here, on Tuesday.

U Phone Myint Aung of Yangon Region Constituency No 3 asked a question on keeping warnings at betel quid shops for raising customers' health awareness. Deputy Minister for Health Dr Win Myint replied that under the supervision of region and state Health Department, district and township Health

Department disseminate knowledge about danger of chewing betel quid to the people. Arrangements are being made for putting up vinyl and posters on danger and disadvantages of chewing betel quid at the public places.

U Aung Cho Oo of Bago Region Constituency No 5 asked whether departments and organization extract sand and gravel from Ayeyawady River or not. Deputy Minister for Transport U Han Sein replied that

Ministry of Transport does not have authority to allow extraction of sand and gravel from the river but it replies remarks of township and district authorities to the entrepreneurs.

U Ha Shein Bwe of Chin State Constituency No 8 submitted a proposal calling for implementing the small-scale dams to irrigate highland farming and terrace farming in less developed states and the Hluttaw approved the proposal.—MNA

gener.

"Change is possible, not only in technology but also in society and politics. One only has to be ready for a ground-breaking adventure", the ambassador added.

According to the press conference, a team of technicians and scientists from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL) worked together to design the solar-powered plan. The global partners Solvay, Omega, Schindler and ABB and local partner FMI made this cost-intensive project possible.

With the joint efforts of the government and Swiss Embassy, the first around-the-world solar flight to Myanmar is aimed at helping to inspire energy innovation in Myanmar.—GNLM

## Solar-powered aircraft...

(from page 1)

finish of the second zero-fuel aircraft's international flight over five months spanning 22,000 miles (35,000 km).

It is scheduled to stay for three days at Mandalay International Airport, officials said at the press conference. During the visit, around 1,000 students from surrounding universities will have the chance to meet the pilots of the aircraft and learn about the plane and renewable energies. Myanmar is the only Southeast Asian stop among the planned landings in China, USA and southern Europe or Northern Africa.

On its way from Varanasi to Mandalay, the plane will fly over Bagan, one of the most wondrous sights in

the world serving as home to religious edifices built from the 11th to 13th centuries, for taking aerial photographs by a helicopter.

While gliding at an altitude of around 1,500 feet over the ancient temple-studded plain of Myanmar's Bagan, the Si2 will make a scene depicting the meeting between the past, the future and the present, said U Win Swe Tun, director-general of the Department of Civil Aviation.

The message of the project a perfect example of Switzerland's philosophy driven by a vision and a passion for innovation, is to explore new ways of doing and thinking in order to achieve the impossible, said Swiss Ambassador to Myanmar Christopher Bur-

## Union FM sends message of felicitations to Kuwaiti counterpart

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Feb — U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Kuwait, on the occasion of the National Day of the State of Kuwait, which falls on 25 February 2015.—MNA

## Middle-class people top list for...



YCDC gives authority to township offices to grant permit for construction of buildings.

PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE



NATIONAL

## Defence Services donate...

(from page 1)  
reapply knowledge and education for the development of the country and people. Private donors and families of Defence Services donated 140 computers and K20 million for both university and college.

Myanmar Economic Corporation and Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd gave K40 million for the students.

Then the rector and the

principal of university and college donated K3 millions for the fallen and the wounded soldiers.

The Commander-in-Chief said unity was weak among national people due to colonialism, and urged the students to fill the gap for the welfare of the whole country.

The university and college have already turned out 13,635 graduates till now, and most of them are

working for stability of their respective areas.

Private donors for computers and cash include Zaykabar Company, Max, Htoo Foundation, Chan Hein Company, IGE Family, Jewelry Luck Production Company, Gateways Group of Companies, Asia world Company, Eden Company, Kyal Nilar Company, Sky One & Lucky Man, Amazing Company, Nawng Tong Company and Authentic Company.—*Myawady*



Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann holds talks with Singapore-based Asia-Pacific Regional Director Mr Michael Vatikiotis of HD Centre (Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue). (News on page 1)—MNA

## Workshop on Understanding International Standards on Freedom of Expression and Elections held



Union Election Commission Chairman U Tin Aye highlights freedom of expression and elections in meeting with media.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb — A workshop on Understanding International

Standards on Freedom of Expression and Elections, jointly organized by the

Union Election Commission and Myanmar Journalists Association, took

place at the office of the commission on Tuesday.

During the workshop,

Dr. Pierre and Mr. Oliver Spencer of Article 19 made presentations of international standards, relationship between elections and print and broadcast media, reporting fair and balanced election stories, media ethics, dispute resolution and the role of media in monitoring the elections.

Together with U Kyaw Swa Min, MJA's secretary-2, they answered questions raised by those present.

In his speech, Union Election Commission Chairman U Tin Aye pledged cooperation with political parties, civil society organizations, media

and observers for successful holding of upcoming elections which is scheduled to be held in late October or early November this year.

Highlighting the role of media to educate the people about elections, the UEC chairman stressed the importance of transparency, sincerity and trust between the commission and media and called for balanced reporting without having political partisan and cult of personality. He also called on respective sub-commissions to closely cooperate with the media.

MNA

## Myanmar reviews its implementation of anti-corruption activities

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb—An initial workshop took place here on Tuesday to review the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and facilitate activities required by the Convention.

Speaking to the workshop, Union Minister U Tin Naing Thein said that Myanmar, as a signatory to the UNCAC, has made the world known to its recognition of anti-corruption

as a national concern with the aim of paving the way for the emergence of clean government and good governance. Other objectives he said were to improve the image and accountability of public administration, to prevent erosion of state-owned property and protect the interests and rights of citizens, to bring those engaged in corrupt practices to justice, to reinforce rule of law and greater transparency in

administrative bodies, and to boost economy through foreign investments.

Myanmar has formed a commission to fight corruption in line with the anti-corruption law, with the union minister saying that anti-corruption is not just the responsibility concerned with a sole organization but with individuals.

U Mya Win, Chairman of the Anti-Corruption Commission, gave a

brief account of measures taken in accordance with the UN Convention. Previously, the control of corruption rested with the Attorney General's Office of the Union, but now the commission is responsible for it.

Myanmar held the workshop in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The workshop is scheduled from 24 to 26 February.—MNA

## Supreme Court of the Union introduces Judiciary Strategic Plan

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb—The Supreme Court of the Union held a workshop on Introduction to the Judiciary Strategic Plan (2015-2017) at its hall in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday.

Chairman of the Judi-

ciary Strategic Plan Implementation Committee Supreme Court Judge U Tha Htay made a speech.

Members of the strategic plan implementation committee discussed background history of the

plan, its vision, strategic programmes and plans to be implemented together with international partnership organizations within three years.

The Supreme Court of the Union has issued a

three-year plan on 17 December 2014.

The introduction was attended by directors-general who are members of the committee, deputy directors-general, directors, and officials of UNDP, UNICEF, USAID, USAID-PRLP, USAID-ERA, JICA and ICJ.

MNA

## Amyotha Hluttaw sets dates for discussion of amendments to education law

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb—The Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) has announced on Tuesday that its bill committee will hold discussions on a bill of amendment to the National Education Law with stakeholders.

The bill was brought before the Amyotha Hluttaw by the Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) on 20 February.

The bill committee will enter into discussions with 20 representatives each from the Leading Committee for Democracy Education Movement, 20 interested political parties and the National Network for Education Reform on 5, 6 and 7 March respectively.

It will meet with 20 delegates from 20 interested political parties on

8 March and 20 supporters of student protesters on 11 March, followed by 20 enthusiasts each from eager political parties and registered civil society organizations on 13 and 14 March respectively.

On 15 March, the committee will discuss with 20 representatives who have advised on the bill of amendment to the education law.

According to officials at the office of the Amyotha Hluttaw, transportation and accommodations will be provided to all the delegates in the capital city of Nay Pyi Taw.

Interested individuals are requested to contact the office, with discussions scheduled to start at 10am on set dates, the Amyotha Hluttaw said in its announcement.—MNA



## Buddhist monks recite Pathana treatise till 28 February at Uppatasanti Pagoda



NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb — The 62<sup>nd</sup> Maha Pathana recitation in commemoration of the seventh Buddha Pujaniya of Uppatasanti Pagoda was held at the

cave of the pagoda, here, on Tuesday. The recitation was supervised by Ovadaçariya of the pagoda's board of trustees Secretary of Nay Pyi Taw Sangha Nayaka Committee Maha Letisan Monastery abbot Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Indavudha and venerable monks.

At first, members of the Sangha recited Pathana Paççayuddesa three times.

The recitation will last up to 28 February.

Construction of Uppatasanti Pagoda began on 12 November 2006, and completed in March 2009.—*Shwe Kokko*

## Tourist caravan tours major destinations in Myanmar

MANDALAY, 24 Feb — A tourist caravan arrived in Mandalay from Inlay region of southern Shan State on 23 February afternoon.

Under the supervision of Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, a total of 153 tourists entered Myanmar through Myawady border gate with the use of 75 classic motorcars under the arrangement of Essence of Myanmar Travel @ Tours Co Ltd on 19 February.

The caravan stopped over in Mawlamyine on 20 February and arrived in Nay Pyi Taw on 21 February afternoon. On 22 February, they proceeded to Inlay region and visited Mandalay on 23 February. They were welcomed by officials of Directorate of Hotels and Tourism Development.

“They visit Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Myanmar by classic



car. Our company arranges smooth and convenient travels of their caravan in Myanmar. I have prepared this journey with the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism taking one year. Local authorities gave necessary assistance to the tourists for smooth processes. They

will visit Myanmar from 20 to 26 February,” said Ko Win Tun of Essence of Myanmar Travel @ Tours Co Ltd.

A citizen of England from the tourist caravan said that he took proud of opportunities to visit various countries by classic

motorcar. He enjoyed panoramic scenes of Myanmar with natural beauties.

The caravan spent a night at Hill Resort Hotel in Mandalay on 23 February and left for Bagan on 24 February.

*Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)*

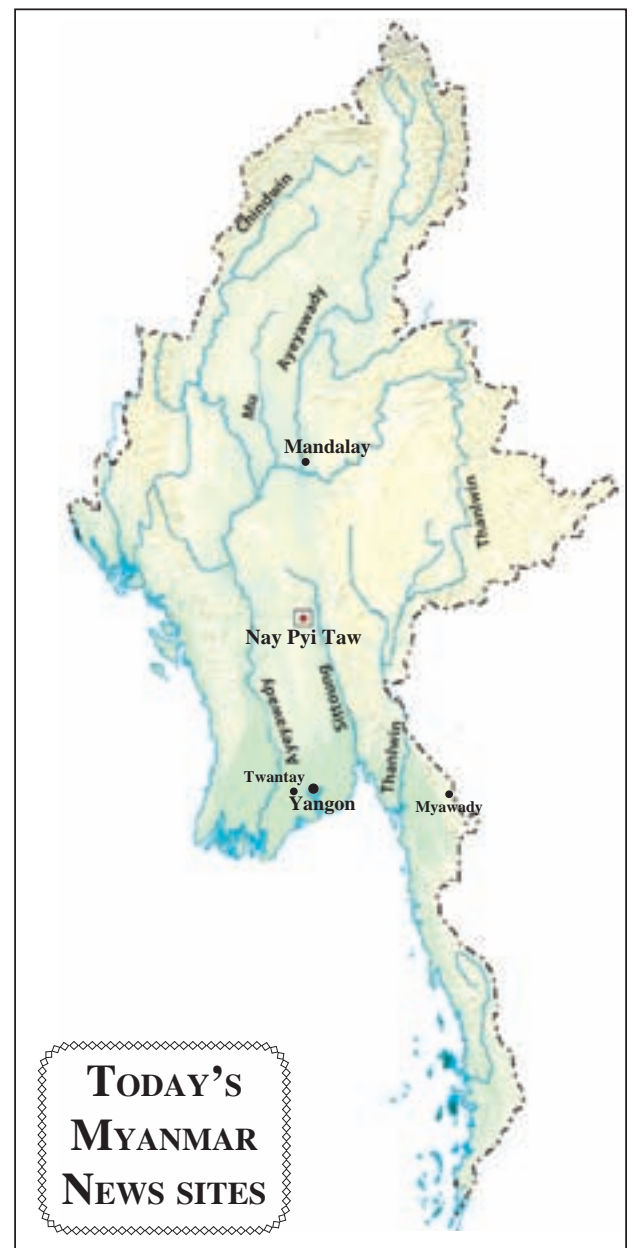
## Teachers from Laukkai arrive in Mandalay before proceeding to home



MANDALAY, 24 Feb — A total of 445 education staff who discharged duty of teaching in Laukkai region and its surrounding villages arrived at Mandalay Education College on 23 February afternoon. Mandalay Region

Minister for Social Affairs Dr Win Hlaing welcomed them. Mandalay Region Government and wellwishers served them with dinner and made arrangements for their trips to homes.

“We arrange delivery of two-month pay in advance to teachers. We open new examination centres in Lashio and Kunglong for matriculation and other students. Now, those teachers were allowed to return home because their holidays are getting nearer. We ordered over 800



## Information staff discusses advantage of reading habit



NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb — An educative talk on durability of village library and raising reading skill was given in Kyweshin Village, Ottarathiri Township, on 23 February.

U Salai Tong Si of

Ottara District Information and Public Relations Department disseminated public awareness for durability of library and advantages of reading for widening scope of people.—*Shwe Ye Yint*

departmental personnel and local people to move to base camp,” said Director-General U Tin Myo Kyi of No 2 Department of Basic Education (Upper Myanmar).

“We are worried about students who were left in Laukkai. There are two basic education high schools in Laukkai. We will go to Laukkai for examination of students before next

academic year. Now, we stop over in Mandalay and leave for home by car,” Senior Assistant Teacher Daw Than Htay of Laukkai Basic Education High School No 1 told media.

Those education staff who discharged duty in Laukkai region come from Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions.

*Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)*



LOCAL NEWS



Organized by Universities' (Yezin) Parahita Association, a total of 150 members of the Sangha led by Zaygon Monastery abbot Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Bhaddanta Kavisara offered lights to 108-Buddha Images Aungdawmu Pagoda, recited Paritta and shared merits gained for fallen military servicemen and for those fighting for the mother country in Laukkai region at Maha Withutayama Zaygon Monastery in Pyinmana Township on 23 February.—Ko MYO (SHWEPAAUKKAN)

## Bikers to choose motorcycles at showroom in Myawady

MYAWADY, 24 Feb — Honda Motorcycle Showroom was opened on Asia Road in Myawady Township, Kayin State, on Tuesday.

Deputy Commissioner U Lwin Ko Oo, U Thein Htwe Hlaing of JJ Motor Co Ltd and officials cut the ribbon to open the showroom. An official of NXC Myanmar Co Ltd

explained sales of Honda brand motorcycles, motor cars, power-tillers, lawn mowers, motorcycle parts, car parts and generators at showrooms in major cities of the nation.

He revealed that the company will extend more showrooms in major cities across the nation.

Tun Tun Oo  
(Myawady Town)



## MJA, Article 19 organize workshop on press freedom for 2015 election



MANDALAY, 24 Feb — Myanmar Journalists Association and Lon-

don-based Article 19 jointly organized the workshop on press freedom for 2015

Head of Mandalay Region Information and Public Relations Department U Kyaw Than Tun, Manager U Ye Tun Hnaung of Article 19 and Secretary 2 of Myanmar Journalists Association

U Kyaw Swa Min made speeches. Writer Kyaw Yin My-

int and foreign experts from Article 19 gave talks on freedom of expression and media, rights for joining the politics and casting votes, press freedom, role of private media, institutions to control media and monitoring of media over elections.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

## HIGER mini-bus introduced in Mandalay



MANDALAY, 24 Feb — A ceremony to introduce HIGER brand business-used mini-bus was held on the lawns of Swan

Hotel on 26<sup>th</sup> street in Mandalay on 21 February.

The mini-bus is manufactured in People's Republic of China with

Toyota technology. Enthusiasts from Mandalay, Monywa, PyinOoLwin and Shwebo viewed the vehicle.

Buyers may purchase K20 million per car with the linkage of private banks through installment. At present, HIGER mini-buses are used as passenger buses with 10/15 seats in giving transport services along Yangon-Mandalay route, Mandalay-Shwebo route and Mandalay-Monywa route.—Maung Pyi Thu (Mandalay)

## Rural primary school gets new building in Twantay Tsp

TWANTAY, 24 Feb — A ceremony to inaugurate new school building donated by Rotary International District 2620 Group 7 Shizuoka, Hamanako Rotary Club, Japan, was held at Basic Education High School in Kyaikthale

Village, Twantay Township, Yangon Region, on 19 February.

The Township Administrator, the township education officer, Japanese wellwishers, departmental officials, the headmaster, teachers, students and lo-

cal people were in attendance.

The school building was constructed by Shan Maw Myay Co., Ltd.

At the opening ceremony, Japanese wellwishers donated stationery to students.—GNLM





## Nepal army officer to be tried for torture in London

LONDON / KATHMANDU, 24 Feb — A Nepali army colonel is to go on trial at London's Old Bailey on Tuesday on charges of torture during a 10-year civil war, in a case the government of the Himalayan state has sought in vain to keep out of the courts.

Kumar Lama has been charged by British prosecutors with inflicting "severe pain or suffering" on Nepali citizens Janak Bahadur Raut and Karam Hussain in an army barracks in April and May 2005, according to court listings and lawyers.

Human rights groups have welcomed the prosecution — the first time a member of the Nepali army will have been tried in Britain for alleged war crimes. Nepal has condemned it, wanting it resolved through dialogue

with Britain.

Both state security forces and the Maoist rebels they battled have been accused of committing widespread human rights abuses during the decade-long conflict that ended in 2006. At least 16,000 people were killed.

Lama was arrested in the southern British town of St Leonards-on-Sea in January 2013 while on leave from a UN mission in South Sudan. He was arrested under Section 134 of the Criminal Justice Act, which gives British courts universal jurisdiction to pursue those accused of torture.

The Nepal government, however, has described Lama's arrest as "objectionable".

Lama has denied the charges, the BBC reported in 2013.

Reuters

## Indonesia says executions won't be delayed despite mercy pleas

JAKARTA, 24 Feb — Indonesia's president said on Tuesday the planned execution of 11 convicts on death row, most on drugs charges, would not be delayed, warning foreign countries not to intervene in Jakarta's right to use capital punishment.

President Joko Widodo has denied clemency to the convicts despite repeated pleas from Australia, Brazil and France, who have citizens due to be executed soon by firing squad.

"The first thing I need to say firmly is that there shouldn't be any intervention towards the death penalty because it is our sovereign right to exercise our law," President Joko Widodo told reporters.

Widodo said he took calls from the leaders of France, Brazil and the Netherlands about the death penalty but made no mention of Australia. Two Australians are among the 11 on death row.

Indonesia has harsh penalties for drug traffick-

ing and resumed executions in 2013 after a five-year gap.

Shortly before Widodo spoke, a court in Jakarta threw out an appeal by the two Australians against Widodo's rejection of their request for presidential clemency.

Australia has been pursuing an eleventh-hour campaign to save the lives of Myuran Sukumaran, 33, and Andrew Chan, 31, two members of the so-called Bali Nine, convicted in 2005 as the ringleaders of a plot to smuggle heroin out of Indonesia.

"According to the judge, the president's rejection of (the) clemency petition is not an administrative act so this court does not have the jurisdiction to accept our case," said Todung Mulya Lubis, a lawyer for the two men.

"We plan to appeal today's court decision. We have two weeks to file an appeal. If the law is respected, the execution should be postponed until



Todung Mulya Lubis, the lawyer for two convicted Australian drug traffickers on death row in Indonesia, speaks as he exits a Jakarta courtroom on 24 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

the legal process is over."

Australia, which has long had rocky relations with its northern neighbor, has said it would consider recalling its ambassador to Indonesia in protest if the executions take place.

Brazil and the Netherlands have already pulled their ambassadors after Indonesia executed two of their citizens on drug offences last month.

Brazil took the further step of refusing to allow In-

donesia's new ambassador to take part in a credentials ceremony, prompting the Southeast Asian country to recall him back to Jakarta in protest.

Indonesia was also re-evaluating the purchase of fighter jets and rocket launchers from Brazil due to the diplomatic row, the Jakarta Post reported earlier on Tuesday, quoting Indonesian Vice President Jusuf Kalla.

Reuters

## Geisha prepare for dance festival in Kyoto



Geisha pose for commemorative photos on 24 Feb, 2015, in Kyoto prior to the Miyako Odori traditional spring dance festival. They will give dance performances four times a day from 1 to 30 April.—KYODO NEWS

## Japan to extend stays for Filipino, Indonesian nurses by 1 yr

TOKYO, 24 Feb — The Japanese government decided on Tuesday to allow nurse and caregiver trainees from Indonesia and the Philippines to stay an additional year for further training and to give failed candidates another chance to sit for qualification exams to work in Japan under bilateral free trade agreements.

The Cabinet decision is aimed at giving the candidate nurses and caregivers from the two countries a better chance to pass the Japanese qualifying exams and eventually work in the country.

The move came in the

wake of a low pass rate for the tests due to language barriers, and calls from both the Indonesian and Philippine governments for an extension.

It is the third time the government has decided to give an extra year to prospective health-care workers from the Philippines and Indonesia. A one-year extension was given in 2011 and 2013, which a Japanese official said has helped boost the overall pass rate.

The latest extension applies to 93 nurses and caregivers from Indonesia who arrived in Japan in fiscal 2012 as well as 300 Filipi-

no and Indonesian candidate nurses and caregivers who came to Japan in fiscal 2013.

In fiscal 2013, the pass rate for the nurse exam was 10.6 percent, while the rate for the caregiver test was 36.3 percent.

The move will benefit those who failed the exams but were able to meet certain conditions such as having relatively good scores in the last qualifying exams they took.

Under the bilateral deals, the current length of stay for prospective nurses is three years and that of caregivers is four years. The candidates must pass the

exams within the designated period or return to their countries.

The candidates arrive in Japan and take language lessons for six months and receive on-the-job training. Candidate nurses are given three chances to take the exams and caregivers only one. An extension makes it possible for prospective nurses to sit for the test four times and for caregivers twice.

Around 2,200 trainees have so far come to Japan from the two Southeast Asian countries in line with the agreements.

Kyodo News

## S Korea, US to hold joint military drills

SEOUL, 24 Feb — South Korea and the United States will hold their annual Key Resolve command post exercise on 2-13 March, South Korea's Defence Ministry spokesman said on Tuesday.

The two countries will also hold the Foal Eagle field training exercise from 2 March to 24 April, Kim Min Seok said during a press briefing.

Each year, prior to the joint exercises, North Korea has urged the United States and South Korea not to hold the drills, threatening to strike back and claiming that they serve as rehearsals of an invasion into the North.

But Kim said, "The exercises have been held annually as part of regular joint exercises and are entirely defensive in nature, and thus

the exercises have nothing to do with North Korea's position."

He also said that a notice on the exercises was delivered to North Korea on Tuesday morning, adding that observers from five nations, including France and Britain, will take part in the exercises to check for any violation of the armistice agreement signed at the end

of the 1950-1953 Korean War.

The Key Resolve exercise will involve about 10,000 South Korean and 8,600 American troops while the Foal Eagle will mobilize about 200,000 South Korean and 3,700 American troops, mostly from overseas, according to Yonhap News Agency.

Kyodo News



## Maldives ex-president's detention extended; India, US concerned

MALE, 24 Feb — Former Maldives president Mohamed Nasheed will stay in police custody until his trial in a terrorism case is completed, a court ruled on Monday, prompting expressions of concern from neighbour India and the United States.

Nasheed was arrested on Sunday after a criminal court said he might flee the country to avoid hearings on terrorism charges stemming from the arrest of Criminal Court Chief Justice Abdulla Mohamed during his presidency in 2012.

He was brought to court on Monday, where he complained that police had dragged him there, injuring him in the process.

"I have been shoved to the ground and my arm has been broken," he told the court. "Take me to a doctor and then you can issue your verdict."

Judge Abdulla Didi gave Nasheed three days to appoint a lawyer and answer terrorism charges. He ordered police to hold him

for the length of the trial.

The treatment of Nasheed, the first democratically elected president of the Maldives, prompted comment from New Delhi and Washington.

"We are concerned at recent developments in the Maldives, including the arrest and manhandling of former President Nasheed," India's Foreign Ministry spokesman said, adding that political parties should resolve their differences within the constitu-

tional framework.

New Delhi views the Maldives, a group of 1,190 coral islands southwest of India, as part of its sphere of influence. It has been concerned about China's efforts to boost its strategic presence in the Indian Ocean, including a visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping to the archipelago last year.

The US State Department, which shares India's concerns about China's increasingly assertive pos-

ture in Asia, said US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Nisha Biswal had spoken to the foreign minister of the Maldives at the weekend to express US concern at Nasheed's arrest and other events in recent weeks.

"She urged the government to take steps to restore confidence in their commitment to democracy, judicial independence, and rule of law, including respect for the rights of peaceful protest and respect for due process," State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki told a regular news briefing.

Nasheed resigned as president in February 2012 after weeks of protests against his order to arrest Abdulla Mohamed. A year later he lost an election to the current president, Yameen Abdul Gayoom.

Nasheed's party called for India to intervene. "The situation has given a legitimacy for intervention through mediation," Hamid Abdul Ghafoor, a party spokesman said.—Reuters



Opposition leader and former Maldives' President Mohamed Nasheed arrives at Mal'e City with police officers, for the first hearing of the trial held at Criminal Court in Male on 23 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

## Afghan chief executive backs Taliban peace effort 'in coming days'



Afghanistan's Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah

KABUL, 24 Feb — The head of Afghanistan's power-sharing government lent his support on Monday to a tentative push to begin peace talks with Taliban insurgents, an effort he said "will begin in coming days".

Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah's backing of the nascent process to negotiate an end to the 13-year-old insurgency is crucial because many of his supporters represent the vehement anti-Taliban wing that fought against the hardline Islamists when they held power until 2001.

Last week, a Pakistani army delegation brought word to Afghan President Ashraf Ghani that Taliban leaders had signalled they are willing to open talks, according to senior Pakistani and Afghan officials. The demands of the insurgents are not yet clear.

Previous attempts to open talks have been fruitless, and no date or firm plan for talks has been set in the most recent effort. Ghani himself has made only oblique references in public statements to the process.

However, Abdullah's office late on Monday confirmed the effort, though it

gave no details.

"The process on peace negotiation will begin in coming days. I hope we achieve lasting peace which is our nation's desire," the statement quoted Abdullah as saying.

It went on to say that achievements since the fall of the Taliban in the 2001 US-backed intervention would not be given up in exchange for peace.

"I want to assure my people that the accomplishments are protected and there will be no compromise," Abdullah said.

He did not elaborate, but civil rights advocates fear that the Taliban would demand a rollback of women's rights and democratic elections in favour of a re-introduction of the strict interpretation of Islamic law they enforced during their five-year rule.

Ghani—who formed a power-sharing government with Abdullah last year after a bitterly disputed election—has been pushing hard for a peace process, lobbying regional players Pakistan, China and other countries to help persuade the Taliban leadership to open negotiations.—Reuters

## Japan plans to raise age limit of pilots to 67 amid pilot

TOKYO, 24 Feb — Japan's transport ministry plans to raise the age limit for airline pilots from 64 to 67 to address a pilot shortage following increasing demand for flights and the growth of low-cost carriers, ministry sources said on Tuesday.

The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism is expected to lift the age limit from late April, the sources said.

The age limit was raised to 64 from 62 in

2004.

Faced with the popularity of LCCs, a lack of pilots has led some budget carriers to cancel flights on some routes.

The ministry decided to raise the age limit given the time as well as the cost of several tens of millions of yen needed to train a pilot, the sources said.

Under the new rules, airlines must provide stricter health checkups to ensure that pilots aged 65 and over are in good shape,

they said.

The ministry also plans to limit these pilots' maximum flying hours to 80 percent of the usual amount—or 80 hours per month and 216 hours over a three-month period. It also intends to put pilots aged below 60 on board the same flights, the sources said.

Another step the ministry is considering taking to address the lack of pilots is hiring former Self-Defense Forces pilots and for-

eign pilots, according to the sources.

With the expected changes, the airlines' management and labour unions will study whether to extend the pilots' mandatory retirement age.

While the pilots' age limit in many nations is 64, as set by the International Civil Aviation Organization, some countries including Canada and Australia have no age restrictions.

Kyodo News

## US, Iran positive after nuclear talks, say much left to do

GENEVA, 24 Feb — The United States made some progress in talks with Iran on its nuclear programme and managed to "sharpen up some of the tough issues", a senior US official said on Monday, but both sides said much remained to be done.

Negotiators from Iran and six major powers agreed to resume talks next Monday at a venue to be decided, the official said, speaking after US Secretary of State John Kerry and Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif held two-day talks in Geneva.

Zarif told Iran's Fars news agency: "We had serious talks with the P5+1 representatives and especially with the Americans in the

past three days ... But still there is a long way to reach a final agreement."

As Kerry's plane touched down in Washington later on Monday, a senior State Department official said Kerry and Zarif would meet again next week and details were being worked out.

The P5+1 group—the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany—are seeking to negotiate an agreement with Teheran to address concerns that Iran is seeking nuclear weapons technology, something it denies.

"These were very serious, useful and constructive discussions. We have made some progress but we still



US Secretary of State John Kerry

have a long way to go. We did very much sharpen up some of the tough issues so we can work to resolution," the senior US administration official told reporters.

Negotiators hope to meet a self-imposed March 31 deadline for an initial political deal, but the US official said that would not "make us rush to an agreement that does not fulfill the

objectives that the president has given to us."

The aim of ensuring Iran does not acquire a nuclear weapon "has to be met and that is not about the deadline, it is about the purpose", the official said.

Iran, which denies having any nuclear weapons programme, hopes a deal will bring relief from international sanctions.

Diplomats say the six major powers aim for a deal lasting at least 10 years under which Iran would need a year or more to produce enough highly enriched uranium for a single nuclear bomb, the so-called "breakout" capacity.

"We have always said we will have a one-year

breakout time for a double digit number of years and that remains the case," the senior US official said on Monday.

Reflecting the technical nature of the latest talks, US Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz and Iran's atomic nuclear chief Ali Akbar Salehi took part. Helga Schmid, political director of the European Union's External Action Service, also attended.

The approaching deadline has caused divisions between the United States and one of its closest allies, Israel, which has called the talks "dangerous" and "astonishing". The United States has accused it of distorting Washington's posi-

tion.

Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon said in a statement on Monday: "The agreement with Iran as it is coming together now is a great danger to Western world peace and a threat to Israel's security."

Ya'alon said the deal would permit Iran to be freed from current economic sanctions on it while continuing to enrich uranium. He called Iran "the most dangerous regime" and a central factor behind instability in the Middle East.

Israel has the Middle East's only nuclear arsenal and has threatened to attack Iran if it is not satisfied over plans for Teheran's nuclear programme.—Reuters



## PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 25 February, 2015

**Who is responsible for equitable development?**By *Kyaw Thura*

Naturally, people show a propensity for leading an easy life and depend too much on their government to realize equitable development on their behalf. In fact, no form of government is capable of saying a mantra for equitable development to materialize on all fronts.

It goes without a question that people are

more inclined to take than to give. Everyone dreams of enjoying a higher socioeconomic status, but not everyone is willing to prepare themselves to achieve their goal.

Peace is of the essence when it comes to equitable development. For peace to prevail in a community, there must be economic growth. For business to grow, there must be reliable human resources. For human resources to be available, there must be sound education. The time is ripe for us to have the sense to understand that poor education leads to generating a massive waste of both human talent and economic potential. There is thus no better way to development than improving educational outcomes and securing long-term economic benefits.

A glance is enough to notice that all attempts to bring about higher educational achievement end in vain, especially in areas of conflict. Philosophically speaking, not a soldier nor an enemy is

killed or wounded in battle. Nor is a civilian. In layman's terms, they are all human beings! There is nothing worse than the fact of people killing people. Encouraging social integration and ending any form of discrimination will enable us to arrive at the ultimate human fantasy. Thus, the point is that all human beings are responsible for the dream of equitable development to come true.

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**Doctors on front lines for health and climate**By *Ms Helena Molin Valdes*

*Dr Arnico Panday*  
Senior Atmospheric  
Scientists at ICIMOD.



*Ms Helena Molin Valdes*  
head of the  
CCAC Secretariat.

Air pollution has become part of life for people across large parts of Asia. Thick smog chokes cities and their inhabitants as black exhaust from diesel engines clogs the air on daily commutes. In rural areas, views of mountains and valleys are often obscured by a haze that comes from distant urban and industrial sources as well as from local cooking and agricultural fires. Air pollution contributes to climate change, and it also threatens the health and quality of life of those forced to live with it.

Doctors now find themselves on the front lines of two increasingly connected issues: protecting human health and the earth's climate. This coming May, at the World Health Organization's 68<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly, countries are poised to adopt the first resolution on air pollution and health. This resolution will help mobilize the health sector to coordinate action to reduce the nearly 7 million premature deaths annually due to air pollution, including 2.6 million due to outdoor air pollution and 3.3 million due to indoor pollution in

the Asia-Pacific region alone. To do this there will have to be a concerted global effort to curb emissions of a variety of air pollutants from many different sources. Several of these pollutants have adverse impacts on both health and climate. Because they 'live' in the atmosphere for a relatively short time, they are called 'short-lived climate pollutants' (SLCPs). Unlike the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), which has an atmospheric lifetime of centuries, the concentration of SLCPs in the atmosphere drop rapidly after emissions are cut, leading to a quicker noticeable effect on the climate. In many cases, taking action to reduce SLCPs also reduces carbon dioxide, which is the most critical greenhouse gas in the long-term fight on climate change.

Two major short-lived climate pollutants that cause air pollution are black carbon and methane. More than half of the world's black carbon and methane emissions are from Asia.

Black carbon is emitted into the atmosphere as

tiny particles ('soot') that are created during incomplete combustion in sources such as cooking and heating stoves, heavy-duty diesel vehicles, open burning, and brick production. Black carbon is a key component of fine particulate matter (PM 2.5). When inhaled, PM 2.5 penetrates deep into our lungs, increasing the risk of respiratory infections, heart disease, stroke, and lung cancer. Black carbon particles also contribute to climate change by absorbing sunlight and warming the atmosphere. In the Himalayas, black carbon contributes to the melting of glaciers and to changes in monsoon cycles – with implications for water availability and agricultural production.

Reducing human exposure to black carbon from cookstoves alone could cut premature deaths in the Himalayan region by as much as three-quarters of a million people per year, possibly many more. Broaden the focus to include diesel engines, brick production, and other pollution sources and the number goes even higher. The effect on agriculture could be just as dramatic: more than 15 million metric tons of staple crops could be added to the region's food supply with the reduction of black carbon and other pollution.

Methane is a very powerful greenhouse gas, especially in the short term, with a warming potential up to 20 times that of carbon dioxide. About 60% of methane emissions are from human sources – primarily agriculture (livestock rearing and rice production),

fossil fuel production and distribution, and municipal waste and wastewater treatment. While methane itself does not directly affect health, it reacts in the atmosphere with other gases to create tropospheric ozone. When inhaled, ozone can worsen bronchitis and emphysema, trigger asthma, and permanently damage lung tissue. It also attacks plants, leading to substantial declines in agricultural productivity.

A global resolution on air pollution and health would put health profes-

raises blood pressure. In fact, globally chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases and lung cancer are not the number one air pollution-related killer; heart attack and stroke are responsible for more deaths. Doctors can also convince policy makers of the merits of lower-emitting systems of public transport, improved solid waste collection, clean cooking and heating stoves, and cleaner brick production.

Clinic and hospital administrators can play a leading role in promoting clean

mate benefits of reduced air pollution.

By doing so healthcare professionals will be supporting a growing coalition of countries and organizations working to reduce short-lived climate pollutants in a way that maximizes benefits to climate, health, and agriculture. The Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-Lived Climate Pollutants is a partnership set up in 2012. Today, the Coalition has more than 100 members representing countries, international organizations,



**Thick smog chokes cities in Asia.**

sionals at the forefront of air pollution reduction. Doctors are in the best position to advise patients on steps to reduce their exposure by doing things like wearing appropriate face masks while on the road or near emission sources and encouraging people to stop burning household waste in or near their homes and workplaces. Doctors can teach the public that exposure to air pollution does not only put lungs at risk, but it

air policies by reducing air pollution in their own facilities and vehicles as well as educating patients, policy makers, and other key stakeholders about the health and climate benefits from reducing air pollution. For example, heavy-duty diesel ambulance vehicles can switch to cleaner fuel, clinics can replace kerosene lamps with solar-powered ones, and hospitals can launch awareness campaigns on the health and cli-

NGOs, and private industry.

The Coalition has launched 11 initiatives, including in the Himalayan region, to address the main sources of air pollution. Specific initiatives focus on urban health, cookstoves, diesel engines, agriculture, municipal solid waste, and brick production. Organizations such as the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) are leading

(See page 9)



NATIONAL

## Myanmar Good Governance Forum kicks off

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb — The Myanmar Good Governance Forum, jointly organized by Ministry of Home Affairs and UNDP, kicked off at Myanmar International Convention Centre-2, here, on Tuesday.

Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Ko Ko explained reform processes in politics, economy and social affairs in Myanmar.

Country Director Toily Kurbanov of UNDP and Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Kyaw Zan Myint explained assessment on regional governance.

Union Minister at the President Office U Hla Tun explained salient points over regional governance.

The forum was aimed at establishing national level taskforce to discuss reform in regional governance, contributing to future role, duty and functions of regional governments in Myanmar, accelerating reform processes with studying and exchanging experiences of other countries and providing facts and figures for co-operation with developing countries. The forum will continue tomorrow.—MNA

## State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee sends suggestions for bill amending the NEL

YANGON, 24 Feb — State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee has suggested that the bill amending the National Education Law can endanger the future of the Buddhist universities in the country as the bill has allowed the unions of universities to govern their institutions by themselves.

The committee has also suggested not to amend the para (h) under the Section-4 of the National Education Law as a clause in the billing

amending the NEL allows the students to choose and decide the university they want to go is deviated from the international standard.

The committee has also pointed out that doing assessment of teachers by students is not in conformity with Myanmar traditional culture.

The committee has suggested to delete the sub-para (hh) of Section-5, Chapter-4, which allows teachers to apply the area they want to be

posted, warning that that can cause no teachers in far-flung areas.

The committee has suggested to substitute the word “mother tongue” in sub-para (aa) and sub-para (bb) under the Sub-section (e) with “ethnic language”.

The committee has suggested to delete the Sub-section (i) under the Section-34 of the Chapter-6 of the bill amending the NEL as it has given special rights to schools related to other religions.

Besides, the com-

mittee’s statement also mentioned that if schools are given rights for compiling curriculums by themselves, the quality of students can not be equitable and has suggested to delete the Sub-section (g) under the Section-39 of the Chapter-7.

The SSMNC has also supported the Sub-section (c) under the Section-49 of the National Education Law which guarantees that outstanding students would be honoured.

MNA

## Military columns seize arms and ammunition, stimulant tablets from Kokang insurgents

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb — Tatmadaw columns combed along Kongyan-Laukkai road for safety of the people. On Tuesday morning, Tatmadaw fought against some troops of Kokang insurgents and two military servicemen were injured in the incident. The injured were sent to military hospital for medical treatment.

In another clash between Tatmadaw column

and some troops of Kokang insurgents at a place two miles southwest of Laukkai on Tuesday morning, the military columns seized one China-made sub-machine gun, 38 rounds of assorted ammunition, TNT bar and mines from the insurgents.

The military columns arrested Shauk Law Han, 29, believed to be hardcore of Kokang insurgents near Malishuwah village and

seized 8,000 stimulant tablets to be sent to Kokang insurgents at Honzuhtan Village near China-Myanmar border post No 144.

In the afternoon, a clash occurred between Tatmadaw column and Kokang insurgents near Lonhtan Village.—Myawady

### A map shows clashes between Tatmadaw columns and Kokang insurgents in Laukkai region



## Doctors on front . . .

(from page 8)

efforts in our region. Given the potential these initiatives have to provide cross-cutting and practical solutions to some of our biggest health, development, and environmental issues, it is expected that more countries and organizations throughout Asia will see the multiple benefits of joining the Coalition.

The Coalition’s Working Group, its main governing body, will meet in Kathmandu, Nepal, from 22 to 27 February to discuss the work of the Coalition around the world as well as in the region. For more information, see the website: [www.ccacoalition.org](http://www.ccacoalition.org) or contact the Coalition’s secretariat at [ccac\\_secretariat@unep.org](mailto:ccac_secretariat@unep.org).

MsHelena Molin Valdes <[Helena.MolinValdes@unep.org](mailto:Helena.MolinValdes@unep.org)> is Head of the CCAC Secretariat and Dr Arnico Panday <[Arnico.Panday@icimod.org](mailto:Arnico.Panday@icimod.org)> is a Senior Atmospheric Scientist and Programme Coordinator of the Atmosphere Initiative at ICIMOD.

## Workshop on promoting road safety awareness on 25 Feb

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb — The Road Transport Administration Department under the Ministry of Rail Transportation with international brewer KEINEKEN is about to launch the first phase of a road safety awareness campaign using cartoons. The workshop will be held at the Lake Garden Hotel,

here, on 25 February.

Officials from relevant ministries such as the Home Affairs, Rail Transportation, Health, Construction, Information and Education as well as international experts, representatives of NGOs and of the private sector, and well-known cartoonists are expected at the work-

shop.

The workshop is the first phase of a road safety awareness campaign that brings 18 years old will be invited to take part in the cartoon competition on the topic of road safety. Details on how to enter the competition will be shared through Facebook and other media in the wake

of the workshop. The best cartoons will be awarded prizes during the UN Global Road Safety Week in early May 2015.

Road safety is a major issue in developing countries like Myanmar, where there were more than 3,700 deaths on the roads in 2014 according to the RTAD.—MNA

## Railway civil construction course kicks off

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb — Ministry of Rail Transportation and Sumitomo Corporation of Japan jointly conducted the railway civil construction course on Monday morning, with an address by Deputy Min-

ister for Rail Transportation U Myint Thein.

An official of Sumitomo Corporation of Japan extended greetings.

Altogether 34 trainees from various sections of Myanmar Railways attended the course.

MNA

## Students who came back from Laukkai sit for examinations

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb — Ministry of Education has arranged examination centres for students who fled from Laukkai region to various areas.

The ministry allowed examinations of one student at No 1 Basic Education High School in Tatkon, one at Kawkareik BEHS

No 2, one at Kawkareik BEPS No 231, and three at Hlegu BEHS (Mingon).

A total of 49 students will sit for matriculation examination at Lashio exam centre, one at BEMS No 9 centre, one at Hlegu BEHS (Mingon) centre, two at Kyaikmaraw BEHS centre and one at Mingaladon BEMS No 4 centre in addition opening Kunlong exam centre.



Maung Phyo Wai Yan Oo of Laukkai BEHS No 2 sitting for fourth standard exam at Tatkon BEHS No 1.

MNA

Those wishing to sit for the exam may contact township education officers and dial 01-653509 and 09-5061776 of Staff Officer U Myo Myint Aung of Department of Myanmar Board of Examinations and 067-430168 and 09-256088251 of Assistant Director Myat Soe Aung of the same department in Nay Pyi Taw.—MNA



## Hollande urges Internet firms to help fight online hate speech



**French President Francois Hollande delivers a speech during the 30th annual dinner held by the French Jewish Institutions Representative Council (Conseil Representatif des Institutions juives de France - CRIF) in Paris on 23 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS**

PARIS, 24 Feb — French President Francois Hollande urged Internet companies like Google and Facebook on Monday to fight hate speech online, but his address to a Jewish group was marred by a spat between leaders of France's Jewish and Muslim communities.

The row broke out after the head of the CRIF Jewish umbrella group said that young Muslims were the cause of all violent crime, prompting a leading Muslim group to boycott the Jewish group's annual dinner, at which Hollande

was due to speak.

It rekindled tensions in a country which is home to Europe's largest Jewish and Muslim minorities, just weeks after political leaders called for a spirit of 'national unity' in response to a series of attacks by Islamist militants that left 20 people dead, including three attackers.

"We need to say things clearly: all violence today is committed by young Muslims," Roger Cukierman told Europe 1 radio. "Of course, it's a tiny minority of the Muslim community and Muslims are the first victims."

Cukierman had been asked whether the far-right National Front party bore any responsibility for anti-Semitic acts. Five minors were arrested last week for having damaged hundreds of tombs earlier this month in a Jewish cemetery

in eastern France.

Hollande, who did not address the spat directly in his speech at the CRIF dinner, called upon public representatives to measure their words carefully.

In an address focused on discrimination, he said a new law against jihadism would be unveiled in March. He also pressed major Web firms Google and Facebook to agree on how to fight the spread of hate speech online at a conference in April.

"There is no such thing as virtual hatred when it is spreading," he said, referring to racism, anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial. "Major Internet firms must face up to their responsibilities." Hollande added that criminal courts should handle cases of hate speech rather than those specializing in press freedoms.

Reuters

## Ex-Panamanian supreme court chief pleads guilty to corruption



**Alejandro Moncada Luna**

PANAMA CITY, 24 Feb — A former president of Panama's supreme court has pleaded guilty to charges of illicit enrichment as well as falsifying documents and will serve a five-year jail sentence, authorities said on Monday.

Alejandro Moncada has been under house arrest since October and accepted the charges as part of a deal struck between his defence team and the prosecution, congressman Pedro Miguel Gonzalez, the prosecutor in the case, told a news conference. Under Panamanian law, supreme court judges can only be investigated by members of the country's Congress.

He will serve a jail term of 60 months, Gonzalez said, although it was not yet clear whether he would have to go

to prison or could see out the sentence under house arrest.

Moncada came under investigation after media reports said he had bought apartments for some \$1.7 million in cash without being able to justify where the money came from. Separate charges of money laundering against Moncada were dropped.

Defence lawyers told reporters that Moncada, who had long denied the charges against him, accepted the deal because of his health, which has deteriorated in recent months.

Moncada, due to sit in the supreme court until 2020, was appointed by former Panamanian President Ricardo Martinelli, a bitter rival of current President Juan Carlos Varela.

Gonzalez is himself wanted in the United States on charges he shot and killed US Army Sgt Zak Hernandez in June 1992. He was acquitted at a 1997 trial in Panama. US authorities said Gonzalez's trial was marred by jury-rigging, witness intimidation and government harassment.—Reuters

## Turkey criticises Britain over missing schoolgirls

ISTANBUL, 24 Feb — Turkey criticized Britain on Monday for taking too long to inform it about three London schoolgirls who travelled to Turkey last week possibly en route to join Islamist militants in Syria.

Deputy Prime Minister Bulent Arinc said he hoped the girls would be found, but that it would be Britain, not Turkey, to blame if they were not.

"It is an condemnable act for Britain to let three girls ... come to Istanbul and then let us know three days later ... They haven't taken the necessary measures," Arinc told reporters after a cabinet meeting.



**British teenage girls Shamima Begun, Amira Abase and Kadiza Sultana (L-R) walk through security at Gatwick airport before they boarded a flight to Turkey on 17 Feb, 2015, in this combination picture made from handout still images taken from CCTV and released by the Metropolitan Police on 22 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS**

The three London schoolgirls arrived at Istanbul airport on 17 February and British authorities, con-

cerned that they were travelling to join Islamic State fighters, informed Ankara on 20 February, Arinc said.

Turkey was able to do little to track the movements of three people who had entered as tourists, he said.

"The search is ongoing. It would be great if we can find them. But if we can't, it is not us who will be responsible, but the British."

Thousands of foreigners from more than 80 countries have joined the ranks of Islamic State and other radical groups in Syria and Iraq, many crossing through Turkey.

Turkey has said it needs more detailed and faster information from Western intelligence agencies to intercept them.—Reuters

## British spies in US terror trial must be faceless in sketches: judge

NEW YORK, 24 Feb — Five British MI-5 officers expected to testify anonymously in wigs and makeup in the US trial of an accused al-Qaeda operative may be portrayed in courtroom sketches with only "blank faces" and "generic hair," a federal judge said on Monday.

US District Judge Raymond Dearie in Brooklyn, New York, ordered media sketch artists at the trial of Pakistani-born Abid Naseer to refrain from detailed portrayals of the officers with Britain's domestic counter-intelligence agency, calling them "committed, lifelong operatives." "The situation is

grave," Dearie said in a court hearing.

The MI-5 officers are expected to testify on Tuesday in the trial of Naseer, who the US government says took part in a plot to carry out bombing attacks in the United States and Europe.

Prosecutors have called their testimony essential, saying their surveillance of Naseer from 2009 made them the only witnesses to activities he undertook to prepare for an attack in Manchester, England, which ultimately was never carried out. Dearie had previously at prosecutors' urging approved a variety of

steps aimed at protecting the officers' identities, including identifying them only through numbers and the use of wigs and "light" make-up.

Dearie's order that artists draw Naseer with "blank faces, generic hair," came despite objections from some members of the media who called the wigs protection enough. But Zainab Ahmad, a prosecutor, said not all of the officers would be wearing wigs.

Naseer, 28, faces up to life in prison if convicted of providing and conspiring to provide material support to al-Qaeda and conspiring to use a destructive device.

Prosecutors say Naseer

was leader of an al-Qaeda cell plotting an attack on Manchester. Another cell conspired to bomb the New York City subway system, while a third planned to attack a Copenhagen newspaper.

Naseer was initially arrested in Britain in 2009 along with a dozen men on suspicion of plotting the Manchester attack.

No charges were brought, and a British court blocked Naseer's deportation. Naseer was re-arrested by British authorities in 2010 after the United States indicted him, leading to his extradition in 2013.

Reuters

## US Senate Democrats invite Netanyahu to meeting during visit

WASHINGTON, 24 Feb — Two senior US Senate Democrats invited Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday to a closed-door meeting with Democratic senators during his upcoming visit to Washington, warning that making US-Israeli relations a partisan political issue could have "lasting repercussions."

Senators Richard Durbin and Dianne Feinstein extended the invitation "to maintain Israel's dialogue with both political parties in Congress," according to a letter to the Israeli leader obtained by Reuters.

Netanyahu has faced criticism at home and abroad for his plans to address Congress on Iran's nuclear programme on 3 March, just two weeks before Israeli elections. He accepted the invitation from Republican leaders in the US Congress, who consulted neither Democrats in Congress nor Democratic

President Barack Obama's administration.

"This unprecedented move threatens to undermine the important bipartisan approach towards Israel — which as long-standing supporters of Israel troubles us deeply," the two senators wrote.

"It sacrifices deep and well-established cooperation on Israel for short-term partisan points — something that should never be done with Israeli security and which we fear could have lasting repercussions," they said. Durbin is the No 2 Democrat in the US Senate. Feinstein, who has been in the Senate since 1992, is the top Democrat on the Senate Intelligence Committee and a senior member of the Appropriations and Judiciary committees.

The letter was sent on Monday evening. Officials at the Israeli Embassy could not immediately be reached for comment.

Reuters



## WORLD

## Gunmen in Afghanistan halt buses, seize 30 passengers

KANDAHAR, 24 Feb — Unidentified gunmen in southern Afghanistan stopped two buses traveling to the capital, Kabul, and seized around 30 people belonging to the ethnic Hazara minority, a bus company official said on Tuesday.

Hazaras, who largely follow the Shi'ite sect of Islam, were persecuted by the Taliban during the 1990s, when the militant Sunni Islamists ruled most of Afghanistan.

Outbreaks of sectari-

an violence have been rare since the Taliban were ousted by an American-led invasion in 2001, but many Hazaras continue to complain of discrimination and harassment by majority Sunni Muslim groups.

The passengers were forced to leave the buses late on Monday night, after producing documents that showed they belonged to the Shi'ite minority group.

"Our drivers stopped for the gunmen because they were in army uni-

form. They asked for documents," Nasir Ahmad, one of the bus company's managers, said in the southern city of Kandahar.

"According to other passengers, most of the people abducted were Hazaras."

The Taliban, now leading an increasingly violent insurgency against the government and its foreign backers, did not immediately claim responsibility but said they were investigating.

The fate of the missing

passengers was unknown, said Ghulum Jilani Sakhi, the deputy police chief of Zabul province, where Monday's abduction took place.

"We are investigating where these people have been taken," he added.

In a similar incident last July, Taliban militants stopped two minibuses in the central province of Ghor and shot dead 14 passengers identified as belonging to the Hazara group.

Reuters

## NZ to send over 100 military personnel to train Iraqi forces

SYDNEY, 24 Feb — New Zealand will deploy over 100 military personnel in noncombatant roles to Iraq as part of an international coalition fighting the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, Prime Minister John Key announced on Tuesday.

"The Iraqi government has requested support and Cabinet has agreed this week to deploy personnel to Taji Military Complex north of Baghdad to train units within the Iraqi Security Forces," Key said in a statement, adding that it would likely be a joint mission with Australia.

The personnel will ful-

fill a noncombat, "behind the wire" role to train Iraqi Security Forces so that they will be better prepared to fight ISIL, according to the statement.

Up to 106 personnel will be deployed to Taji and others including staff officers will be sent to coalition headquarters and support facilities in the region. The total deployment for the two-year mission, expected to begin in May, will come to a maximum of 143 personnel.

New Zealand is one of about 62 countries united in the international coalition against the ISIL movement.—Kyodo News

## Islamic State in Syria abducts at least 90 from Christian villages

AMMAN, 24 Feb — Islamic State militants have abducted at least 90 people from Assyrian Christian villages in northeastern Syria, a monitoring group that tracks violence in Syria said on Tuesday.

The British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the militants carried out dawn

raids on rural villages inhabited by the ancient Christian minority west of Hasaka, a city mainly held by the Kurds.

Syrian Kurdish militia have renewed their assault on the militants, launching two offensives against them in northeast Syria on Sunday, helped from US-led air strikes

and Iraqi peshmerga who have been shelling Islamic State-held territory from their side of the nearby border.

This part of Syria is strategically important in the fight against Islamic State because it borders territory controlled by the group in Iraq, where last year the ultra-hardline

group committed atrocities against the Yazidi community.

Tel Tamr, a town near the Assyrian Christian villages where the abductions occurred, has witnessed heavy clashes between Islamic State fighters and the Kurdish YPG militia, the Observatory said.—Reuters

### Gunmen kidnap French woman, Yemeni escort in Sanaa

SANAA, 24 Feb — Armed men kidnapped a French woman and her Yemeni escort in the centre of the Yemeni capital Sanaa on Tuesday, security sources said.

No further details were immediately available on the identity of the woman or what she was doing in Yemen, a country that has been plunged deeper in turmoil after Shi'ite Muslim militias seized control of the capital last September.—Reuters

## Separatists say they start withdrawing weapons in east Ukraine

DONETSK, (Ukraine), 24 Feb — Separatists said on Tuesday they began withdrawing heavy weapons from the front-line in east Ukraine under a ceasefire deal, but the Ukrainian military, which says it won't pull back until fighting stops, reported further shelling.

Fighting has eased in eastern Ukraine in recent days after the rebels initially ignored a ceasefire that was due to start on 15 February and stormed a government-held town.

After taking the town, the Moscow-backed rebels have consistently indicated they want the truce to take effect. Kiev says the rebels are still shooting, which the rebels deny.

Western countries have not given up on the ceasefire deal to end fighting that has killed more than 5,600 people, but have warned of new economic sanctions against Moscow if the rebels ad-

vance deeper into territory the Kremlin calls "New Russia".

"Today at 9 in the morning (0600 GMT) the planned withdrawal of heavy equipment started," rebel commander Eduard Basurin told Reuters.

"We're pulling it back 50 km from the boundary line ... Of course we won't say exactly where we're pulling it back to."

Basurin denied Ukrainian military reports of fighting in southeast Ukraine, saying there had

been "provocations" from the government side but no serious clashes.

Kiev says the rebels have launched attacks on villages near Mariupol, a port of 500,000 people, which Ukraine fears could be the next separatist tar-

get.

"There's been quite intense shelling since the morning. The situation is tense but under control," Dmytro Chaly, spokesman for the Ukrainian military in Mariupol, said on television channel 112.

Among the areas Kiev said had been shelled were the village of Shyrokyne near Mariupol, and the area near Debaltseve, the town the rebels captured last week.

Separatist press service DAN reported ten incidents of government shelling near the rebel-held stronghold of Donetsk.

In a first step towards implementing the truce, the sides exchanged prisoners late on Saturday. On Sunday they said they had agreed to start the withdrawal of heavy weapons. But on Monday Kiev said it would not pull back until shooting stopped.

Reuters

## Japan to extend \$6 mil in emergency aid for Syrian refugees

TOKYO, 24 Feb — Japan will extend \$6 million in emergency aid for people displaced by war in Syria, including those seeking refuge in neighbouring countries, the Foreign Ministry said on Tuesday.

The measure is part of a recent pledge by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to expand humanitarian assistance to the Middle East in the fight against terrorism in partnership with the international community.

With the aid, Japan will offer blankets, stoves and food to such people in Syria, Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon following a cold snap in January, according to the ministry.

Japan will extend the aid through the UN World Food Programme and five other international organizations, it said.

Kyodo News



Military vehicles of the Iraqi security forces make their way on the outskirts of Baiji, north of Baghdad on 8 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS



A military truck transports a destroyed tank near Artemivsk, eastern Ukraine on 22 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS



## Ice storm hits parts of Texas, cancelling flights, crippling traffic



Ice and sleet covers the road, postponing the murder trial of former Marine Cpl Eddie Ray Routh, in Stephenville, Texas on 23 Feb, 2015. —REUTERS

DALLAS, 24 Feb — An ice storm battered parts of Texas on Monday, cutting off power to thousands of homes and leading to hundreds of traffic accidents and more than 1,500 airline flight cancellations. The storm, packing high winds and freezing rain, coated highways with sheets of ice, and author-

ities advised commuters to stay off the roads. The cold was expected to last another day, keeping road surfaces slick.

Snow and freezing rain fell in parts of New Mexico and Colorado, while Utah and northern Arizona were also under winter storm warnings, the weather service said.

At Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, one of the busiest in the United States and a hub for American Airlines, nearly 1,100 flights were canceled by Monday afternoon, according to tracking service FlightAware.com.

At Love Field in Dallas, a major airport for Southwest Airlines, more than 100 flights were canceled, it said.

On Monday night, an American Airlines plane slid off a taxiway at Dallas/

Fort Worth due to the icy conditions, though none of the 63 passengers or five crew members aboard were injured, an airline spokeswoman said.

In Tennessee, at least 22 people have been killed in the past few days because of icy winter conditions, the state's Emergency Management Agency said. Eleven people have died in Kentucky from the snow and ice that began pummeling the state on 16 February, officials said.

In Colorado, an avalanche killed a skier outside the boundaries of the Aspen Mountain resort on Monday, marking the season's fifth fatality from a snowslide, authorities said.

Texas schools were closed on Monday around Dallas and Fort Worth, amid thin traffic on highways. Iced-over trees

knocked down power lines, leaving thousands without electricity, officials said. Texas police reported hundreds of car accidents.

BreeAnna Moore, 27, skipped driving to work in Fort Worth after watching live traffic camera footage.

"I really can't afford to miss a day, but then again I don't think it's worth my life or my car trying to make it in," she said.

The trial of the man accused of killing Chris Kyle, the former US Navy SEAL who was the subject of the movie "American Sniper," was postponed on Monday because of ice in the Texas city of Stephenville, southwest of Fort Worth.

Salt trucks were deployed in Oklahoma, where roads were covered in about an inch of ice and snow.—Reuters

## Japanese A-bomb comic gets published in Egypt

CAIRO, 24 Feb — An Arabic version of "Hadashi no Gen" (Barefoot Gen), a Japanese comic series about the 1945 atomic bombing of Hiroshima, has recently been published in Egypt, the Japan Foundation said.

The first of the 10 volumes of the series, about a boy who survived the US atomic bombing, was published in January, with Arabic becoming the 22nd language in which it has appeared. The translator, Maher El-Sherbini, a professor at the department of Japanese and Japanese literature at Cairo University, said at a signing event Monday that he wants people in Arab countries to learn not only about economic development but also peace from Japan. He added that pictures can be more expressive than books and that he hopes eventually to translate all 10 volumes of the series.



Maher El-Sherbini, a professor at the department of Japanese and Japanese literature at Cairo University, speaks on 23 Feb, 2015, at a signing event in Cairo to commemorate the publication of an Arabic version of "Hadashi no Gen" (Barefoot Gen), a Japanese comic series about the 1945 atomic bombing of Hiroshima, in Egypt. — KYODO NEWS

He completed his master's and doctorate's degrees at Hiroshima University and has translated experiences of A-bomb survivors and Japanese novels.—Kyodo News

## Belongings of Japanese killed by Islamic State returned

CAIRO, 24 Feb — A Syrian rebel group with whom a Japanese man was travelling when he was seized by Islamic State militants who later killed him has sent his belongings to the Japanese Embassy in Turkey, according to a senior member of the group.

The items left by Haruna Yukawa at one of the group's bases, such as

his passport, cameras and clothing, are expected to be returned to his family in Japan.

Yukawa is believed to have been captured in northern Syria by Islamic State militants last August while travelling with the Syrian group, which is fighting the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Earlier this year,

the captors released images online showing the decapitated bodies of Yukawa and another Japanese hostage, Kenji Goto.

The member of the rebel group told *Kyodo News* in a telephone interview that the group hopes Yukawa's belongings will be returned to his family through the embassy.

*Kyodo News*

## Reuters journalist Maria Golovkina dies in Pakistan aged 34

LONDON, 24 Feb — Maria Golovkina, *Reuters* bureau chief for Afghanistan and Pakistan who was widely loved and admired for her courage, compassion and professionalism, died in Islamabad on Monday.

Maria, 34, was found collapsed and unconscious in the bureau and was rushed to hospital, but medical teams were unable to save her. In a career spanning more than a decade with *Reuters*, Maria was always on the move, reporting from some of the world's most dangerous places with a calm authority that other, more experienced journalists could only admire.

She was driven by a hunger to understand what made human beings tick, be it during the throes of revolution in Libya or in the pre-dawn calm of southern Pakistan as Sufis cleansed a revered shrine with rose water before their ecstatic rituals began.

As friend and colleague Peter Graff put it: "Empathy wasn't just a skill she deployed for her craft. It burned in her white hot. It is what sustained her legendary stamina for work, play and learning."

The daughter of Russian expatriates, raised in Japan and writing in her third language, English, Maria joined *Reuters* in Tokyo in 2001 and subsequently worked in London, Singapore and Seoul as part

of the graduate trainee programme.

She was posted to Russia from 2002 to 2005, where she covered the early years of the Putin presidency, the Moscow theatre siege and a spate of bomb attacks by Chechen rebels across the region.

She became Chief Correspondent in Central Asia, in 2005, reporting on Uzbekistan's crackdown on opposition protests, Kyrgyzstan's revolutions and instability in Tajikistan.

Maria did a stint in Afghanistan during the 2009 presidential election and later went on assignment to Iraq. Her eye for telling details helped her to build understated yet powerful accounts of complicated and distressing events.

She moved to the London editing desk in 2010, where fellow editors remember her as an open, engaging friend who combined warmth with a fierce commitment to getting news out quickly and accurately. Maria spent much of 2011 covering the war in Libya, putting her hand up to travel to Tripoli despite the attendant risks.

*Reuters* correspondent Michael Georgy, who first met her during one of those assignments, recalls her as being "tough as nails, very funny, sweet and crazy."

When the NATO bombs fell, there was no panic. Instead Maria was at



Reuters reporter Maria Golovkina

her computer with urgent news ready to file, eager to be one step ahead of the competition.

"Downtown, we took great delight in outfoxing (former Libyan leader Muammar) Gaddafi's agents so that we could get critical quotes from a terrified population," Georgy writes. "It was wonderful teamwork and Maria was like a tsunami."

Maria became UK chief correspondent and, having lived on the road for so long, put down roots of a kind by buying a flat in London. One problem was that she barely had any furniture of her own, and was thrilled when a colleague gave her an Afghan stool as a present. The roots did not tie her to London for long, however, as curiosity and compassion drove her overseas again, this time to her final assignment based in Pakistan.—Reuters



ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST  
(CONSULTING SERVICES — FIRMS SELECTION)**

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
Electric Power Project  
Credit No.; IDA-53060-MM

Assignment Title: Implementation Consultant of CCGT power plant at Thaton, Mon State, Myanmar  
Reference No.: MEPE-CS-8

The Ministry of Electric Power has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Electric Power Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services plans to build a 105 MW Combined Cycle Gas Turbine (CCGT) Power Plants at Thaton, Mon State, Myanmar. MEPE invites eligible consulting firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. The consulting services (“the Services”) include the following scopes:

1. Project Management
2. Design Audit and Construction Supervision
3. Testing and Commissioning
4. Training and Capacity Development
5. Environment and Social Management
6. Contract Administrative/Financial management

The Myanmar Electric Power Enterprise (MEPE) now invites eligible consulting firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

**The shortlisting criteria are:**

1. The firm should have the general experience in power plant engineering and construction management for at least twenty five (25) years.
2. The firm should have provided consulting services involving design audit and construction supervision for at least two CCGT projects with the capacity of 100MW or over that the firm has successfully competed in the last 10 (ten) years; and
3. The firm should have experience of working in the Client’s country or similar country environment.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank’s Guidelines: *Selection and Employment of Consultants [under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants] by World Bank Borrowers January 2011 (“Consultant Guidelines”)*, setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Quality Cost-based Selection (QCBS) method set out in the Consultant Guidelines.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours [09:30 to 16:30 hours].

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail or by e-mail) by the close of business of **16<sup>th</sup> March, 2015**.

Myanmar Electric Power Enterprise (MEPE)  
Attn: U Win Myint, Chief Engineer,  
Thermal Power Department  
Myanmar Electric Power Enterprise  
Ministry of Electric Power  
Building No. 27, Nay Pyi Taw  
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
Telephone: +95 67 410443, 410557  
Email: gtceoffice@gmail.com



A photo displayed at the Newseum in Washington, an interactive museum of news and journalism, shows freelance Japanese journalist Kenji Goto carrying a video camera. He was killed by the Islamic State militant group earlier this year after being taken hostage. —KYODO NEWS

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE  
MV WEST SCENT VOY NO (071N)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV WEST SCENT VOY NO (071N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25.2.2015 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 INTERASIA LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE  
MV VEGA FYNEN VOY NO (1507)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV VEGA FYNEN VOY NO (1507) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25.2.2015 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 MCC TRANSPORT  
(S’PORE) PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE  
MV MOROTAI VOY NO (YF257R)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MOROTAI VOY NO (YF257R) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25.2.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

**MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY  
HOLIDAY NOTICE**

As the wharves, warehouses and chellan Offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> MARCH 2015 (Peasant’s DAY) and 4<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2015 ( Full Moon day of Tabaung), Loading, Unloading and delivery for Goods will be received on Payment as Holiday Fees.

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**INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND  
INTERPRETER/TRANSLATOR  
MYANMAR — ENGLISH  
ASSIGNMENTS IN MYANMAR**

The International Monetary Fund is seeking Myanmar-based **interpreter/translators** to work under short-term contracts for its missions to Yangon and/or Nay Pyi Taw as well as under long-term contracts for its technical assistance (TA) experts in Nay Pyi Taw. Candidates must be professional interpreters with knowledge of economic terminology, capable of interpreting **into Myanmar and English** and producing final written translations into both languages in electronic format. Assignments with TA experts may also involve office support and administrative duties. Short-listed candidates will be interviewed and asked to take interpretation and translation tests in Yangon. Please send your CV listing your qualifications, interpretation and translation experience, and your complete contact information **by March 20, 2015 to [languagecandidates@imf.org](mailto:languagecandidates@imf.org)**.

**Attn: Mrs. Susana Eri, Chief Interpreter  
(Subject line should contain MMR-missions”, “MMR-long-term projects”, or both)**

**Slain Japanese journalist remembered at US news museum**

WASHINGTON, 24 Feb — Japanese freelance reporter Kenji Goto, murdered by Islamic State militants, is the subject of an exhibit at a US museum along with three other journalists also slain by extremists.

The exhibition at news and journalism museum Newseum describes Goto,

who smiles in a photo holding a TV camera, as a veteran war reporter who entered Syria in October 2014 “to cover the civil war and seek the release of a friend.”

Goto’s photo was exhibited at a specially created corner together with those of the other three journalists — Americans

James Foley, Steven Sotloff and Luke Somers.

The museum commemorates more than 2,000 journalists from various countries who died while working at the Journalists Memorial exhibit showing their names on a glass monument. Jonathan Thompson, a Newseum spokesman, said Goto’s

name would eventually be engraved on it. The Islamic State group earlier this year posted a video online of the purported murder of Goto following a similar online movie apparently showing the beheading of Haruna Yukawa, the Japanese man whose release Goto had hoped to secure.

*Kyodo News*

**WEATHER  
REPORT**

**BAY INFERENCE:**

Weather is partly cloudy in the Southwest Bay and generally fair in the Andaman Sea and elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2015:**

Light rain are likely to be isolated in Kachin State and weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, 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.



## I thought I was replacing Judi Dench in new 007 film

LONDON, 24 Feb — Monica Bellucci, who has been cast alongside Daniel Craig in the latest Bond movie ‘Spectre’, initially believed she was auditioning to replace Judi Dench.

Bellucci, 50, said she had been summoned to meet director Sam Mendes to discuss a role in the upcoming film, reported *Daily Telegraph*. “I just blurted out: I’m not a girl,

I’m a woman, I’m a mature woman. Do I have to replace Judi Dench? ‘Why do you call me? I’m 50 years old. What am I going to do in James Bond?’,” she said. “He said, ‘For the first time in history, James Bond is going to have a story with a mature woman. The concept is revolutionary,’” she

added. Bellucci added she had told Mendes he would be a “hero among women” for taking a stand for older actresses, after deciding her wanted a woman of a similar age to Bond to play alongside him.

PTI



## Lady Gaga’s 1600-hour Oscar dress

LOS ANGELES, 24 Feb — Pop sensation Lady Gaga’s white gown at Oscar Awards took 1600 hours to make.

The ‘Applause’ hitmaker stood out on the red carpet at the Dolby Theater in Los Angeles in her white crystal-embellished gown, which she’d accessorised with red gloves.

And she took to her Instagram account on Sunday evening to share with her fans how long the stunning dress took to make.

She wrote alongside a photograph of her on the red carpet. “I will never forget tonight. #Oscars thank you Azzedine Alaia for this stunning piece. It took 1600 hrs of embroidery and 25 people in Paris, he’s never before made a dress for the Oscars.

“What an honour. The gloves were hand dyed Crimson, baby orchid blooms hand painted in my hair and killer pear shaped diamonds by Lorraine Schwartz. (sic),” she wrote. The 28-year-old singer, who got engaged to her beau Taylor Kinney on Valentine’s Day, took to the stage at the glamorous ceremony to perform a medley from ‘The Sound of Music’.

PTI



The ‘Applause’ hitmaker stood out on the red carpet at the Dolby Theater in Los Angeles in her white crystal-embellished gown, which she’d accessorised with red gloves and she took to her Instagram account on Sunday evening to share with her fans how long the stunning dress took to make.—PTI

## Jennifer Lopez, Marc Anthony reunite for twins’ birthday

LOS ANGELES, 24 Feb — Former couple Jennifer Lopez and Marc Anthony came together to celebrate their son Max and daughter Emme’s seventh birthday. “Party time! Happy 7th Birthday to the coconuts!!” Lopez, 45, captioned an Instagram photo of the foursome.

Anthony, 46, leaned his head on Lopez as the pair smiled big for a selfie with their adorable children.

Lopez and Anthony split in 2011 after seven years of marriage. They both filed divorce papers asking for joint legal and physical custody of the twins. The ‘American Idol’ judge went on to date backup dancer-turned choreographer Casper Smart, whom she split from in June 2014 after two years together. Anthony is engaged to model girlfriend Shannon De Lima.—PTI

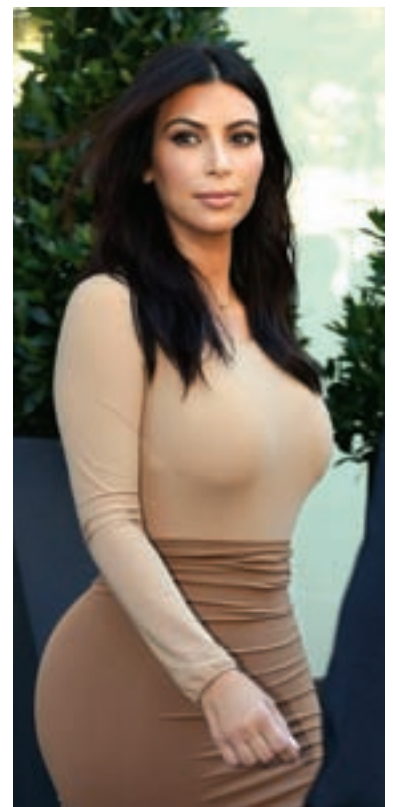
Former couple Jennifer Lopez and Marc Anthony came together to celebrate their son Max and daughter Emme’s seventh birthday.—PTI



## Kim Kardashian taking piano lesson

LOS ANGELES, 24 Feb — Reality TV star Kim Kardashian, who is taking piano lessons, has planned to surprise rapper husband Kanye West by learning to play one of his songs.

Kardashian, 34, took to Twitter to share the news with fans. “Just finished my piano lesson in time to watch the Oscar’s red carpet!!” Shortly thereafter, she added, “I’m going to surprise Kanye by learning one of his songs! He’s hardly on social media so he won’t know I’m tweeting this.”—PTI



## ABC’s Oscars telecast draws smallest audience in six years

LOS ANGELES, 24 Feb — Sunday’s Academy Awards telecast on ABC drew its smallest audience in six years with 36.6 million average viewers, according to Nielsen figures, in what critics deemed a long, lacklustre show and limited box office appeal among top nominees.

Nielsen data on Monday showed a 16 percent decline from last year, a significant drop for Walt Disney Co’s ABC since the programme is its biggest annual draw.

ABC banked on actor Neil Patrick Harris, who has earned plaudits as host of TV’s Emmy Awards and theatre’s Tony Awards, to build on the momentum of comedian Ellen DeGeneres, who helped last year’s show attract 43.7 million viewers, its biggest audience since 2000.

The Oscars annually attracts the biggest non-sports TV audience in the United States, but the show this year drew the lowest viewership since

2009. ABC is signed on to broadcast Hollywood’s biggest awards show through 2020.

Harris, 41, who has a strong following among younger viewers as the star of sitcom “How I Met Your Mother,” was seen as a bridge between older viewers and the younger audiences advertisers covet most. The telecast reached 60 million US viewers overall, according to Nielsen figures.

Producers Craig Zadan and Neil Meron, in

their third straight year running the Oscars telecast, gambled on big musical numbers with the likes of Lady Gaga’s tribute to “The Sound of Music” and an opening song-and-dance routine that failed to garner a strong ovation from the star-studded crowd.

Critics faulted the show, which ran about 40 minutes longer than its three-hour schedule, for poor writing and bland bits. Harris ventured into the audience like DeGe-

neres did last year, but failed to spark a popular moment on social media as when the comedian took a selfie with several stars.

Mary McNamara, television critic at the *Los Angeles Times*, faulted the show for its emphasis on how Martin Luther King Jr biopic “Selma” seemed to have gotten snubbed for some awards and the resulting debate about diversity among Oscar voters.

“As if trying to make up for ‘Selma’ being overlooked in many catego-

ries, the camera sought out and lingered on nonwhite members of the audience whenever ‘Selma’ or the Rev Martin Luther King Jr was mentioned,” McNamara wrote.

Additionally, besides “American Sniper,” which made \$320 million at box offices in the United States and Canada, the other seven best picture nominees failed to surpass \$85 million, and few A-list Hollywood stars earned acting nominations unlike last year.—Reuters



GENERAL

## Middle East investment boosts European shirt revenue

LONDON, 24 Feb — Middle East investment is swelling the coffers of Europe's top football clubs whose income from shirt sponsorship has soared to over 687 million euros (503.73 million pounds) this season — 20 percent up on 2013-14, according to analysts Repucom.

The German-based global strategy company says in their European Football Jersey Report that companies in the United Arab Emirates and Qatar invested about 160 million euros this season, almost a quarter of the total spent by companies worldwide sponsoring the shirts in Europe's top six leagues.

The figure is a 20 percent rise on the 570 million euros revenue of last season but sponsorship in the English Premier League has jumped by 36 percent, while clubs in Spain's top division have also seen their revenues rise by 30 percent.

The increase in Eng-



FC Barcelona's Luis Suarez holds up his jersey during his presentation at the Nou Camp stadium in Barcelona on 19 Aug, 2014.—REUTERS

land's figures were largely driven by Chevrolet's deal with Manchester United, worth at least 54 million euros a year.

"The rise in foreign money in European football is nothing new, however investment in shirt sponsorship is increasing more rapidly than ever," said Glenn Lovett, the president of Repucom.

"With investment in 2014-15 growing 20 percent over last season, the invest-

ment in shirt sponsorship has increased faster than at any time in the last 15 years."

Although the rise in revenue for the English clubs is the biggest across the top six leagues, there is more foreign investment in Spain's Primera Liga than anywhere else.

Approximately 86 percent of all revenue spent on shirt sponsorship there comes from outside Spain.

The report says that apart from the major European Leagues, the MLS in the United States "is starting to attract big business" with sponsorship deals there of 45 million euros, making it larger in terms of revenue than the Eredivisie in the Netherlands, whose market share has slipped to 42 million euros.

The report says that individually UAE companies comprise the biggest shirt sponsor from one nation, followed by revenues from German companies (112 million euros) and US companies (82 million euros).

While England's revenues have soared 36 percent and Spain's 30 percent, there have also been increases in Italy (21 percent), France (13 percent) and Germany (nine percent).

The only major European league to see a fall in revenue was in the Netherlands, which saw a five percent drop in its income to 42 million euros.

Reuters

## Chelsea to appeal against Matic red card v Burnley

LONDON, 24 Feb — Chelsea are to appeal against the red card shown to Nemanja Matic during Saturday's 1-1 Premier League home draw with Burnley, according to Sky Sports.

Matic was sent off in the 70th minute at Stamford Bridge for his violent reaction to a studs-up challenge from Burnley's Ashley Barnes.

But the FA said on Twitter on Monday that no action would be taken against Barnes as the incident was seen by the officials.

"A criminal tackle. Matic is a very lucky guy," said Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho after his mid-field player escaped injury.

The 26-year-old Serbian international rushed at

Barnes and pushed him to the ground but he was defended by his manager.

"Football is about emotions and clearly Nemanja Matic had a reason to lose his emotions," Mourinho said.

"What are the consequences of his push? Nothing. The consequence for Matic from the tackle? It could have been the end of his career."

The FA added on Twitter: "In the vast majority of challenges for the ball, no retrospective action is taken as the incident has been seen by the match officials."

"Retrospective action introduced as deterrent for 'off the ball incidents' (for example kicks, stamps etc) committed out of sight of officials."

"Whole game in agreement that, in vast majority of cases, match officials are



Chelsea's Nemanja Matic is shown a red card by referee Martin Atkinson at Stamford Bridge on 21 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

best-placed to deal with incidents to avoid re-refereeing."

Chelsea must submit their appeal to the FA by 1300 GMT on Tuesday. Unless it succeeds, Matic

will miss Sunday's League Cup final against Tottenham Hotspur at Wembley.

He will also be banned for Premier League matches against West Ham United and Southampton.—Reuters

## Conjoined twins separated at Texas hospital after marathon surgery

HOUSTON, 24 Feb — In surgery lasting more than 24 hours, a Texas hospital medical team has separated nearly 1-year-old twins who were joined at the abdomen and shared a liver, diaphragm, pelvis, intestines and the lining of the heart, officials said on Monday.

The girls, Knatalye Hope Mata and Adeline Faith Mata, born in April 2014, were separated on 17 February at Texas Chil-

dren's Hospital, with a team including 12 surgeons, six anesthesiologists and eight surgical nurses.

"This surgery was not without its challenges with the girls sharing several organ systems," said Dr Darrell Cass, pediatric surgeon and co-director of Texas Children's Fetal Centre. He said this was the first successful separation surgery for conjoined twins with this particular configuration.

The team had been preparing for months for the

complicated surgery, drawing up three-dimensional models of their organs and holding simulations of the surgery that was carried out in carefully choreographed stages, he said.

The team worked for about 23 hours on Knatalye and 26 hours on Adeline with the official separation occurring approximately 18 hours into the surgery, the hospital said.

Conjoined twins occur once every 200,000 births

and most do not survive. About 40 percent to 60 percent of conjoined twins arrive stillborn, and about 35 percent live only one day, according to the University of Maryland Medical Centre.

Mortality rates for twins who do live and then undergo separation vary, depending on their type of connection and the organs they share, it said.

The girls remain hospitalized and no release date has been set.—Reuters

## mitv Myanmar International

(25-2-2015 07:00 am~ 26-2-2015 07:00 am) MST

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| * News  | * Up Against The Tide   |
| * Product Of Myanmar - Power Ring   | * News  |
| * News  | * Insight Myanmar "Beyond Access Libraries Powering Development"        |
| * The Writer: Chit Oo Nyo (Part - II)   | * Myanmar Alternative Medicine (Aloe Vera)                              |
| * News  | * News  |
| * Serene and Happy Rural Life in Myanmar                                      | * The Writer: Chit Oo Nyo (Part - I)                                    |
| * We'll Leave After 12 Passengers Are On Board...                             | * News  |
| * News  | * A Pretty Custom of Kandayawady Asia Vut A @ Rice Pounding Competition |
| * Kayin Child Boxer Made of Jade  | * Lucrative Myanma Rattan Industry                                      |
| * News  | * News  |
| * Short Trip with Steve (Mon State)   | * Chanmyay Yeiktha Meditation Centre-Hmawbi                             |
| * Today Myanmar "YUFL"  | * Inlay Lake: The Challenges  |
| * News  |   |
| * Myanmar Delicate Artistic Handy Creations-The Making Procedure Of Goldsmith |   |

## MRTV News Channel in Brief

(25-2-2015, Wednesday)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>6:00 am</b>                               | <b>2:35 pm</b>                                   |
| • Paritta by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw | • Traditional Boxing                             |
| <b>6:50 am</b>                               | <b>3:00 pm</b>                                   |
| • Documentary                                | • News/ International News                       |
| <b>7:00 am</b>                               | <b>3:35 pm</b>                                   |
| • News/ Weather Report                       | • One Vision (Part-2-A)                          |
| <b>7:35 am</b>                               | <b>4:35 pm</b>                                   |
| • National Sports Games                      | • 2015 University Entrance Examination (Physics) |
| <b>8:35 am</b>                               | <b>5:35 pm</b>                                   |
| • People's Talks                             | • Documentary (Bicycle)                          |
| <b>9:00 am</b>                               | <b>6:00 pm</b>                                   |
| • News/ International News                   | • News/ Weather Report                           |
| <b>9:35 am</b>                               | <b>7:30 pm</b>                                   |
| • Science and Technology Programme           | • Head Line News                                 |
| <b>10:35 am</b>                              | <b>7:45 pm</b>                                   |
| • Documentary (Weather Report)               | • Documentary                                    |
| <b>11:35 am</b>                              | <b>8:00 pm</b>                                   |
| • MRTV's Youth Programme                     | • News / Weather Report                          |
| <b>12:00 noon</b>                            | <b>9:00 pm</b>                                   |
| • News / International News / Weather Report | • News / Weather Report                          |
| <b>12:35 pm</b>                              | • Documentary                                    |
| • Hluttaw Image                              | • Hluttaw Image                                  |
| <b>1:50 pm</b>                               | • National Sports Games                          |
| • Culutral Show (Part-5)                     | • Fine Arts-Boson of Dramatic Performance        |

## MRTV Entertainment Channel

(25-2-2015, Wednesday)

- |                          |                             |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>6:00 am</b>           | <b>8:40 am</b>              |
| • Wut Hmone Music Troupe | • TV Drama Series           |
| <b>6:20 am</b>           | <b>9:30 am</b>              |
| • TV Drama Series        | • Musical Programme         |
| <b>6:45 am</b>           | <b>9:45 am</b>              |
| • TV Drama Series        | • Pyi Thu Ni Ti             |
| <b>7:10 am</b>           | <b>10:00 am</b>             |
| • Fashion Show           | • ORCHESTRA CONCERT MYANMAR |
| <b>7:25 am</b>           | <b>10:15 am</b>             |
| • Myanmar Series         | • Myanmar Movie             |
| <b>8:00 am</b>           |                             |
| • TV Drama Series        |                             |



## Athletes actively participate in martial arts, boxing, indoor sports events



Players taking part in women's volleyball tournament at Wunna Theikdi volleyball training hall.

MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb — Union Minister for Sports U Tint Hsan watched competition of athletes in martial arts and Bando (attack) events at Wunna Theikdi Gymnasium (C) with participation of 188 athletes on Tuesday.

He also enjoyed semifinal match of basketball between Mandalay and Sagaing regions at Wunna Theikdi court, a match between Yangon and Magway regions and another one between Bago region and Shan State in the women's

volleyball tournament at Wunna Theikdi volleyball training hall, women's boxing event at the boxing hall, and men's Futsal semifinal match between Sagaing and Bago regions at Wunna Theikdi Futsal indoor stadium.

The union minister also viewed the above-50 men's tennis event at Cluster 3 of Nay Pyi Taw Sports Training Centre.

MNA

Two athletes participate in martial arts event.

MNA



Medal tally in 4 <sup>th</sup> National Sports Festival 2015 on 24-2-2015					
State/Region	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total	
Yangon	71	46	34	151	
Mandalay	39	39	50	128	
Bago	19	21	25	65	
Magway	16	9	13	38	
Ayeyawady	12	13	25	50	
Rakhine	11	13	23	47	
Kayin	11	7	6	24	
Nay Pyi Taw	10	7	13	30	
Mon	8	19	19	46	
Sagaing	6	11	12	29	
Kachin	6	7	12	25	
Taninthayi	5	10	20	35	
Kayah	5	9	9	23	
Shan	3	13	22	38	
Chin	2	1	1	4	

## Monaco's Berbatov seeks goals on London return

LONDON, 24 Feb — Dimitar Berbatov will be hoping for a goalscoring return against his former arch-enemies Arsenal when AS Monaco come to the red half of north London for their Champions League Round of 16 first leg match on Wednesday.

The Bulgarian is still remembered with affection for the 46 goals he scored for Arsenal's local rivals Tottenham Hotspur in a two-year spell at White Hart Lane before a 30 million pounds (\$46.05 million) move to Manchester United in September 2008.

He scored twice for Fulham at the Emirates in a 3-3 draw in November 2012 and, though he turned 34 in January, the Bulgarian heads back to London as Monaco's top scorer this season.

Monaco head to Arsenal buoyed by their 1-0 derby win at Nice on Friday which sees them fourth in Ligue 1 with just one defeat in their last 17 matches in all competitions.

They also won 1-0 at the Emirates last August

when Radamel Falcao, now on loan at Manchester United, scored the only goal in the pre-season Emirates Cup tournament against the hosts.

But there will be very little similarity between that warm-up summer run-out and the real business of the Champions League on Wednesday.

Monaco's Belgian

winger Yannick Carrasco is having treatment on a bruised right thigh while their France defender Layvin Kurzawa is also being treated for bruised quadriceps.

Monaco coach Leonardo Jardim told Britain's *Sunday Sun* newspaper: "Everyone considered us a gift, a lucky draw, so the luck fell to Arsenal.

"It's normal that everyone thinks Arsenal will qualify. I too think Arsenal are favourites but in football sometimes money and the favourites don't win."

Arsenal's French manager Arsene Wenger, who coached Monaco between 1987 and 1994, has warned his players not to underestimate the visitors

as his current team, in the last 16 for the 15th consecutive year, attempt to end a run of four successive exits at this stage.

"The last 16 in recent years has been super tough," Wenger said. "This is a 50-50 game. We know that Monaco are very tight defensively -- they didn't concede in the group stage against good teams.

"They came back into a good position in the league and their confidence level will be high" he told the club's website (www.arsenal.com).

Like Monaco, Arsenal are also on a good run of form with eight wins in their last nine games despite injuries to Aaron Ramsey, Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain, Mikel Arteta and Mathieu Debuchy. They also have history on their side, having lost just twice to French teams in 20 competitive matches.

Monaco have played English sides 10 times, winning five and losing two, but this is their first competitive game against Arsenal.—Reuters



Monaco's Dimitar Berbatov (C) heads the ball during their Ligue 1 soccer match against Lyon at Louis II stadium in Monaco on 1 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

## Vietnam's top tennis players prepare for int'l events

HO CHI MINH CITY, 24 Feb — Vietnam's top tennis players have been called to join the national team for preparation of the coming international events, said the Vietnam Tennis Federation (VTF) on its website on Tuesday.

Former national champion Do Minh Quan, who is undergoing a training course to become a coach in the United States, will join the five-member men's team. The 10-time national champion will take charge as the captain of the team for the Davis Cup Asian Zone 3 matches in April. The squad will also include Vietnam's top player Ly Hoang Nam, who performed superbly in the second round of the Australian Open's junior championships in January.

Six female players will also be regrouped at the same time for training ahead of the upcoming Southeast Asian Games in Singapore this June, said VTF.

Reuter