

President inspects dredging at Kyee Ni lake in Yamethin Township

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March — President U Thein Sein, accompanied by Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Aung Myint and union ministers, went on an inspection tour of the dredging of Kyee Ni lake in the township of Yamethin, Mandalay Region, on Sunday.

The president oversaw the construction of spillways and sluice gates, with engineers giving progress reports of the project.

The lake, which dates back 712 years, is now
(See page 3)



President U Thein Sein cordially meets with local people in Yamethin.—MNA

UPWC, KIO commit to achieving nationwide ceasefire

By Aye Min Soe

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March — Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham, the chairman of the Union Peace-making Work Committee, and Kachin Independence Organization (KIO), sat at the negotiation table Sunday, pledging to continue political dialogues till both sides achieve success in making a nationwide ceasefire.

In his address at the talks, Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham expressed his delight for achievements in building trust between the government and KIO, urging KIO to continue to make its efforts with patience and far-sighted vision making the best use of current achievements to reach the goal of an eternal peace of the country as it is within the arm's length.

Regarding today's talks,



Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham greets Maj-Gen Guan Maw of KIO at negotiation table.—PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

U Aung Min, Vice Chairman of the UPWC, said it is significant that the vice president sat at the negotiation

table face to face with KIO for the first time and the KIO delegation comprises both representatives from politi-

cal and military wings.

The talks is considered as a step forward
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The Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Press Release

It is learnt that five Chinese nationals were killed and eight injured during the incidents occurred with Kokang insurgent group in Dashulsansu Village, Lin Chang District, Yunnan Province on 13th March 2015.

Regarding the said incidents, direct contacts between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and also the Ministries of Defense of Myanmar and China have been made to investigate. Primary investigation on this incident have been made by the Myanmar Armed Forces and it is found that Myanmar Armed Forces has been instructed to maintain their operations within the territory of Myanmar respecting the territorial integrity and the friendly relations between Myanmar and China and they are fully obligated to the instruction.

(See page 3)

Indonesia's fuel giant eyes Myanmar market

YANGON, 15 March — Indonesia's state-owned oil and gas giant PT Pertamina has planned to expand its business into Cambodia and Myanmar.

The firm is currently carrying out a feasibility study regarding its expan-

sion plan in both countries.

Pertamina marketing and commercial director Ahmad Bambang said the firm is considering two or three gas filling stations in both ASEAN countries to strengthen its
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Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham hosts dinner to KIO delegates

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Educationalists and legal advisors share opinions on education amendment bill

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Exclusion from education has impacts on society

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The endless havoc or chaos or pandemonium or mayhem caused by hostility, egocentrism, barbarity, injustice and inequality in human societies

PAGE-8



A bridge spanning Pazi Creek in Ngaphe Tsp

NGAPHE, 15 March — Local authorities allowed construction of a bridge across Pazi Creek in Nyaungkaingyi Village, Ngaphe Township, Magway Region.

The bridge will be 160 feet in length and 18 feet in width, through K35 million from rural development fund in 2014-15 fiscal year.

Township Administrator U Naing Win Zaw and Head of Township Department of Rural Development U Yu Naing Lin viewed round progress of construction tasks and instructed officials to place emphasis on timely completion of tasks.

Than Naing Oo (Ngaphe)

Ottara District IPRD improves capacity of rural librarians



POBBATHIRI, 15 March — A multiplier librarian course, conducted by Ottara District Information and Public Relations Department, concluded at the district combine office on 13 March, with a speech by Assistant Director U Soe Paing of Nay Pyi Taw

Council Area IPRD.

Deputy Head of District General Administration Department U Thein Zaw Oo urged the trainees to apply experiences obtained from the training course in their works and to maintain the rural library for their durability.

Librarian Ma Myint Myint Win of Good Friend library in Setkon Village, Pobbathiri Township, pledged to give good services to the readers and maintain her library for durability.

Tin Soe Lwin (IPRD)

Fire engulfs house; destroying property worth K7.2 million



MANDALAY, 15 March — A fire broke out at JJ Car Audio Decoration shop on Ngu Shwe Wah Street in Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay, on 13 March morning.

Fire from a mosquito coil engulfed the mattress of shop owner U Sai Aung. The fire destroyed all pieces of property upstairs and car audio decorations downstairs, worth more than K7.2 million in total amount.

More than 100 firefighters from Township Fire Services Department and Auxiliary Fire Brigade led by township officials put out the fire within 20 minutes. Thanks to their utmost efforts, fire did not engulf other houses and caused no casualty.

Police took action against the house owner for negligent act over outbreak of fire under the law.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Upgrading roads to develop rural areas in Aunglan Tsp

AUNGLAN, 15 March — Aunglan Township, located in dry area in Magway Region, needs smooth transport facilities both in rural and urban areas. Department of Township Rural Development has spent funds on development tasks till last month of fiscal year.

Aunglan Township Department of Rural De-

velopment in Magway Region assigned duty to U Lwin News Generation Company for upgrading of a one-mile long section to a concrete one and building one concrete bridge and six box culverts on Pyaloh-Phagyi-Inywaygi earthen road and, one wooden bridge and one conduit on Aunglan-Kyauk-

padaung-Shwepandaw road in the township.

The township department allotted the development fund to the construction company for 2014-15 fiscal year.

Township Administrator U Thein Hseint, officials and Assistant Engineer Daw San San Nu of Public Works inspected

progress of construction along the road.

Upon completion, the inter-village road will benefit people from 15 villages while Aunglan-Kyauk-padaung-Shwepandaw road will give smooth transport to people from 20 villages along the road.

Thein Thein Lwin (Aunglan)



Earthen road benefits local residents from 16 villages in Hinthada Tsp

HINTHADA, 15 March — Department of Rural Development in Hinthada

An earthen road passing Beikyoe and Thebwet village to benefit local people for smooth transport.

da Township, Ayeyawady Region, supervises construction tasks for development of the township, spending the fund on various sectors.

Phyo Htet and Associates Company constructed the Beikyoe-Thebwet

earthen road in Talokhtaw station in Hinthada Township in February. The earthen road is four miles long and 18 feet wide to serve smooth transport of local people from 16 villages.

Win Bo (IPRD)

NATIONAL



President inspects . . .

(from page 1) According to historical records, it was dug by King Kyaw Swa of Bagan in

1303 A.D. Officials said the lake, after being restored, is expected to irrigate 8,129 acres of monsoon and summer paddy plantations and provide water to the people of nearby areas. The lake will also protect housings and farmlands from flooding.—MNA

President U Thein Sein views progress in construction of irrigation facilities at Kyee Ni Lake with the use of heavy machinery in Yamethin Township.—MNA

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham hosts dinner to KIO delegates

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March — Chairman of Union Peace-making Work Committee Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham hosted a dinner to General Secretary Dr La Ja of KIO delegation at Nay Pyi Taw Hotel Zone on Sunday evening.

Before the dinner, the vice president cordially greeted the KIO delegates. After the dinner, the vice president presented gifts to the KIO delegates.

Also present at the dinner were Vice Chairmen of the work committee U Aung Min and U Thein Zaw and union ministers.—MNA



Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham hosts dinner to KIO delegates after peace negotiation.—MNA

UPWC, KIO commit to achieving. . .

(from page 1) taken by both sides to ending more than six decades-long armed conflicts, U Aung Min said.

Dr La Ja, General Secretary of KIO, said in his opening remarks at the talks that the delegation is there to discuss preventing conflicts, future plans and remedy measures, and they will cooperate in the peace process.

Both sides have committed to achieving a national ceasefire agreement, said Maj-Gen Guan Maw of the Kachin Independence Army and the second leader-2 of the Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team.

The eight-member KIO

delegation has also demanded to meet the top leaders of the Tatmadaw (Defence Services) during their stay in Nay Pyi Taw, he added.

The UPWC and the NCCT which represents 16 ethnic armed groups will meet in Yangon on Tuesday for 7th time, according to U Aung Min.

Regarding the question raised by reporters on current fighting between the Tatmadaw and the Kokang renegade insurgents, Maj-Gen Guan Maw said he believed that it is necessary to work with the Kokang group through political means because the Kokang group is a member of the NCCT.

GNLM

Press Release

(from page 1)

However, we would like to express our deep sorrow for death and injuries of Chinese nationals living in border areas as a consequence. A delegation from the Myanmar Armed Forces and the local authorities from China and another delegation led by responsible officials from the Foreign Affairs Office of Yunnan Province and the Consul-General of Myanmar in Kumming are making visits to the area where the incidents occurred. Necessary investigation in detail will be continued.

Thorough investigation will also be made whether Kokang insurgent group is involved in this incident to have negative impact on the friendship between Myanmar and China and to create instability along the border area.

The two Ministries of Foreign Affairs are cooperating closely through diplomatic channels and the two defense forces also make close collaboration in maintaining the peace and stability of the border area by upholding the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence.

Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Dated: 15 March 2015

Educationalists and legal advisors share opinions on education amendment bill

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March — The Amyotha Hluttaw on Sunday continued its debate on an education law amendment bill, with interested individuals making comments on the bill.

Any motion to be tabled to parliament must have approval from the education union minister or a person the union minister assigns, the bill committee said, adding that MPs must agree to discuss it too.

“We need to take a thoughtful approach to the education amendment bill so as to make it complete,” said the chairman of the



A debate on bill amending national education law in progress.—MNA

bill committee. He expressed his delight at seeing different groups and individuals come together to work to-

ward a shared goal of creating a better education system in the country.

According to officials, 14 people from education-

al and legal backgrounds shared their opinions and suggestions on the national education amendment bill.

MNA

Dredging earthen lake to prevent outbreak of fire

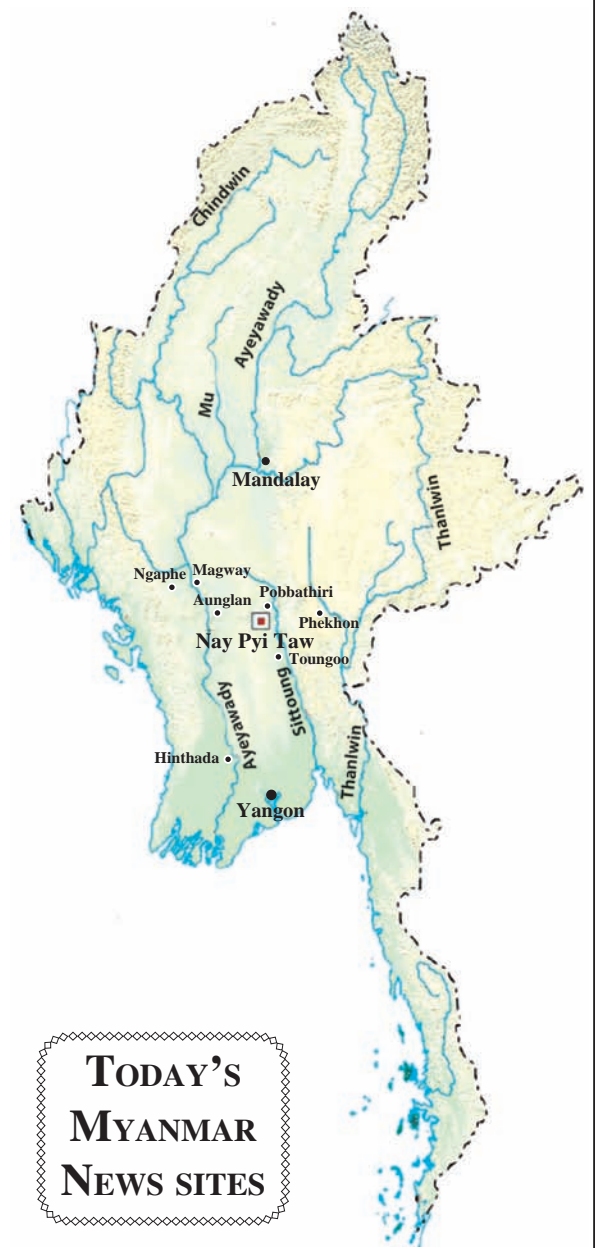


TOUNGOO, 15 March —With the concerted efforts of local people, an earthen lake is being dredged in Ketumati, Toungoo Township, Bago Region, as of 9 March.

“Dwellers of Ketumati town contributed K3 million to dredging the lake. Upon completion, we can use water from the lake as part of prevention against fire in summer,” chairman of the township fire prevention committee U Myint Oo told media.

The people dredge a 120 square feet lake with the use of heavy machinery.

Ko Lwin (Swa)



Dwellers invited to enjoy Ayeyawady Literary Festival

MANDALAY, 15 March — The Third Ayeyawady Literary Festival will take place at Mandalay Hill Resort Hotel from 28 to 30 March.

Resource persons may send their papers to Dr Aung Myint of No 38, 31st street in Mawragiwa Ward in Mandalay, on 092001747; writer Nyi Say Min, Ludu House, 84th street in Mandalay, on 092035136; U Tun Oo, Tun Oo Literary House, 092005828 and Otara Lwinbyin, 81st street, 0991010931.

Volunteers may contact the organizing committee for holding the paper-reading session and discussions at the literary festival.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Local authorities, well-wishers provide assistance for fire victims



MAGWAY, 15 March — Chief Minister of Magway Region U Phone Maw Shwe on 12 March provided assistance to fire victims from Sakhankan Village in Yenangyoung Township where they faced outbreak of fire recent day.

At the Affiliated Basic Education Middle School

in the village, the chief minister presented rice, edible oil, salt, gram and clothes donated by Magway Region government, Magway Development Foundation, and Union Solidarity and Development Party to the fire victims.

He gave words of encouragement that the re-

gion authorities will carry out security measures, health and resettlement for the fire victims.

He viewed sinking a tube-well by Department of Rural Development in front of the school for supply of potable water to the fire victims.

Than Naing Oo (Ngaphe)

Process of Special Moe Pwint Project appears on LED billboard

MANDALAY, 15 March — A digital LED billboard has been put up in front of Shwe Ingyin Hotel on the opposite site of Mandalay Railway Station at the corner of 30th and 78th streets in Chanayethazan Township. Mandalay Region Immigration and National Registration Department puts its advertisement about implementation of Special Moe Pwint Project on the billboard to widen scope of

city dwellers as of 12 March night.

People watch appearance of information about the special project on issuance of citizenship scrutiny cards to the eligible people and household registration certificates to the families.

The department is giving services to the people through the special project from 1 January to 30 June this year.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Needy people to get rural houses in Phekhon Tsp



PHEKHON, 15 March — Koe Khayaing Thar Company assigned duty by Department of Rural Development is building rural housings in Lower Mongphyat Village and Lonka Village in Phekhon Township, Shan State, spending the fund in 2014-15 fiscal year.

The company constructs five houses each in two villages to be allotted to poor families from the villages so as to uplift their

living standard under the poverty alleviation plan of the government.

The department allotted K29.5 million to the construction company to build 10 houses with 24 feet in length, 18 feet in width and 12 feet in height.

Head of Township Department of Rural Development U Zaw Min Tun and officials inspected progress of construction at housing project sites.

Ko Htwe (Phekhon)



Japan to lend \$160 mil to Cambodia to boost regional connectivity

SENDAI, 15 March — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told his Cambodian counterpart Hun Sen on Sunday that Japan will extend 19.2 billion yen, or about \$160 million, in low-interest loans to Cambodia to improve a major road, a move that would increase transportation capacity and efficiency in the Mekong region.

Together with the opening in April of a Japan-funded bridge in Cambodia spanning the Mekong River, improvement of National Road No 5 that runs between Phnom Penh and the Thai border is expected to boost regional connectivity and stimulate economic development.

In a meeting with Hun Sen in the northeastern Japan city of Sendai, Abe said, “By investing in such high-quality infrastructure, Japan would like to contribute to Cambodia’s efforts to significantly strengthen connectivity with neighbouring countries and achieve sustainable growth,” ac-

ording to the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

The two leaders hailed the completion of the Tsubasa Bridge, a 2,200-metre suspension bridge in Neak Loeung, southeast of Phnom Penh, that locals say will remove a traffic bottleneck between the Cambodian capital and Ho Chi Minh City in southern Vietnam.

Hun Sen was quoted by the ministry as saying, “The Tsubasa Bridge is an important bridge that connects Mekong countries,” and he “appreciates Japan’s assistance for National Road No 5.”

The road and the bridge, whose name means bird wings in Japanese, are part of the Southern Economic Corridor, a transportation route linking Ho Chi Minh City to Dawei in southeastern Myanmar via Bangkok. Governments and businesses expect it to serve as a major industrial artery in the Mekong region.

Japan has been promoting ties with Cambodia and other members of



Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen (L) shakes hands with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in the northeastern Japan city of Sendai on 15 March, 2015. They met on the sidelines of the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction that started in Sendai on 14 March. — KYODO NEWS

the Association of South-east Asian Nations, where barriers to the flow of people, goods and money across the borders of its 10 member states will be lowered when a more integrated ASEAN Economic Community is launched at the end of this year.

In Sunday’s talks,

Abe and Hun Sen affirmed cooperation toward a July 4 summit in Tokyo between Japan and five ASEAN states along the Mekong River, at which the leaders are expected to craft a new strategy for Tokyo to contribute to sustainable development of the Mekong region be-

yond 2015.

The five Mekong states are Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. The five other ASEAN members are Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore.

Abe and Hun Sen also expressed a mutual desire to begin direct flights between the two countries soon in line with a bilateral aviation agreement signed in January.

Japan inked bilateral aviation pacts with Cambodia and Laos in January to allow airlines to operate regular direct flights between Japan and those two countries. Tokyo now has such accords with all 10 ASEAN member states.

And with the number of Japanese companies investing in Cambodia tripling to about 150 in 2014 from the 2011 level, Abe asked Hun Sen to take additional measures to improve investment conditions in the country.

Among major Japanese investments in Cam-

bodia was the opening in Phnom Penh last June of a large shopping mall by Aeon Co, Japan’s largest operator of general merchandise stores.

On the political front, Abe offered “maximum support” for electoral reform in Cambodia through measures such as the continued dispatch of experts. Hun Sen appreciated Japan’s support and said that in the wake of a recent agreement between the ruling and opposition parties, Cambodia plans to formulate a bill on elections.

Abe requested Cambodia’s participation in an international seminar that Japan will host in June on peace-building, national reconciliation and democratization in Asia.

Hun Sen was visiting Sendai for a UN meeting on disaster risk reduction. Speaking at the start of the five-day meeting Saturday, Abe pledged \$4 billion in aid for disaster management measures in developing countries.

Kyodo News

Chinese premier says 2015 test for Sino-Japanese relations

BEIJING, 15 March — Chinese Premier Li Ke-qiang on Sunday urged Japan to squarely face its past militarism and said this year, marking the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, will be a test for bilateral relations.

“The crux of the issue is how the war and that part of history are viewed. We need to take history as a mirror and look to the future,” Li said at a press conference in Beijing to wrap up an annual meeting of the National People’s Congress, the country’s top legislature.

“The war of aggres-

sion imposed on the Chinese by the Japanese militarists brought so much suffering. This year will be a test and an opportunity for China-Japan relations,” Li said.

Li said the purpose of a series of events, including a military parade, this year in China to mark the anniversary of the conflict, or what it calls the war against Japanese aggression, is “to bear in mind the lessons of the past and ensure history will not repeat itself.”

Li said he believes bilateral relations and trade will grow further if Japanese political leaders have

the same spirit to learn from the past.

During China’s most important public political event of the year, the rubberstamp parliament approved the Communist Party-controlled government’s set of policies for 2015.

Li delivered the major policies at the opening of the meeting on 5 March, which include a target of around 7 percent for economic growth and a plan to increase military spending by 10.1 percent.

This year’s annual parliament session was held at a time when the government is grappling

with a slowdown in the economy while, at the same time, trying harder to boost its global influence under President Xi Jinping’s campaign to achieve the “dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.”

The slowing growth, as evidenced by the new GDP target — the lowest in 11 years — has been termed as a “new normal” by the Chinese leadership, which is saying the time is ripe for the world’s second-largest economy to transition from the quantity to the quality of development.

Kyodo News



Photo taken from a Kyodo News helicopter shows a bullet train on the Hokuriku Shinkansen Line, running in the countryside of Imizu, Toyama Prefecture on 14 March, 2015, the day of the launch of the new bullet train service directly linking Tokyo with the Hokuriku region on the Sea of Japan coast.—KYODO NEWS

Philippine gov’t asks Filipinos to leave war-torn Libya, Yemen

MANILA, 15 March — Philippine President Benigno Aquino III on Sunday urged the Filipinos in Libya and Yemen to immediately leave the war-torn countries via the government’s repatriation programme. Aquino said his administration has been

focused on the safe release of seven Filipino workers who were seized by armed groups in Libya.

“Those countries have been placed under alert level 4. That means, the situation there is too dangerous that’s why we are implementing mandatory repa-

triation to ensure the safety of our citizens,” he said in a speech at the Philippine Military Academy in Baguio city.

He noted over 4,000 Filipinos in Libya and 900 others in Yemen need to be repatriated immediately.

Xinhua

Two Indonesian planes crash at LIMA air show practice

KUALA LUMPUR, 15 March — Two airplanes of Indonesia’s Jupiter aerobatics team crashed on Sunday during a practice session at the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace (LIMA) exhibition, local media reported. According to the local *Star* newspaper,

the KT-1B planes grazed each other and crashed at 2 pm local time (0600 GMT), with smokes seen near the Langkawi International Airport.

The four pilots aboard the aircraft reportedly ejected before the crash, but their fate remained un-

known.

The planes were part of a formation of six when the mishap occurred.

All practices and aerial displays were halted as helicopters had been dispatched to search and rescue the pilots.

Xinhua

China willing to build new type of major-country relations with US: Li



Chinese Premier Li Keqiang speaks at a press conference after the closing meeting of the third session of China's 12th National People's Congress (NPC) at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China on 15 March, 2015. —XINHUA

BEIJING, 15 March — China is willing to build a new type of major-country relations with the United States featuring no conflict, no confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation, Premier Li Ke-

qiang said on Sunday.

Chinese President Xi Jinping's planned US visit in September will inject new impetus into the development of China-US relations, added the premier at a press conference after

the conclusion of the annual session of the National People's Congress, China's top legislature.

It is true that China and the United States have divergences, but they also share broad common interests, stressed the premier.

"The ongoing China-US investment treaty negotiations have sent a clear signal to China, the United States and the whole world at large that Sino-American economic and trade relations, a ballast of bilateral ties, will become closer," said Li.

Xinhua

Kerry says it is possible to reach an interim deal with Iran

SHARM EL-SHEIKH, 15 March — US Secretary of State John Kerry said on Saturday he hoped "in the next days" it would be possible to reach an interim deal with Iran if Tehran can show that its nuclear power programme is for peaceful purposes only.

Speaking on the eve of fresh talks with Iran in Lausanne, Switzerland, on Sunday, Kerry appeared more upbeat about the possibility of a framework agreement by a deadline at the end of the month. A final accord would then be negotiated by 30 June.

Earlier on Saturday he told a news conference on the sidelines of a conference in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh that it was unclear whether an interim deal was within reach.

A deal would curb Tehran's most sensitive nuclear activities for at least 10 years in exchange for the gradual easing of some

sanctions.

"We believe very much that there's not anything that's going to change in April or May or June that suggests that at that time a decision you can't make now will be made then," Kerry told CBS News.

"If it's peaceful, let's get it done. And my hope is that in the next days that will be possible," he added.

The White House is furious about a letter written by 47 Republican senators to Iran last week threatening to undo any Iran deal once US President Barack Obama leaves office.

Kerry has slammed the letter as a "direct interference" in the nuclear negotiations and warned that it could jeopardize efforts to reach a deal.

The letter was written by Tom Cotton, a first-term senator from Arkansas, who has often criticized Obama's foreign policy.

Asked whether he would apologize for the

letter when he meets with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Jawad Zarif on Sunday, Kerry retorted: "Not on your life."

"I'm not going to apologize for an unconstitutional, un-thought out action by somebody who's been in the United States Senate for 60-something days," Kerry said. "That's just inappropriate."

He said he would ex-

plain to Iran's negotiators and other world powers involved in the talks that Congress does not have the right to change an executive agreement. "Another president may have a different view about it, but if we do our job correctly, all of these nations, they all have an interest in making sure this is in fact a proven, peaceful programme," he added. — *Reuters*



US Secretary of State John Kerry speaks at a news conference in Sharm el-Sheikh on 14 March, 2015.

REUTERS

UN forum calls for action on climate change to reduce disaster risks

SENDAI, 15 March — Representatives from countries across the world at a UN conference on disaster risk mitigation on Sunday underscored the urgent need of addressing the issue of climate change to reduce the impact of disasters and promote sustainable growth.

At the day's plenary session of the five-day gathering that began on Saturday in the northeastern Japanese city of Sendai, Annick Girardin, minister of state for development and Francophonie from France, said climate change is responsible for more than 80 percent of damage caused by natural hazards.

The UN conference is the first in a series of meetings this year around the globe on development goals and climate change, including the 21st Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change to be held in Paris at the end of the year.

The Sendai conference is "above all a call for lucidity, because it is no longer possible to ignore climate chaos" in the context of disaster risk mitigation, Girar-

din said.

The situation will worsen if the international community cannot agree in Paris on a post-2020 regime for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, she added.

The Sendai conference is also seen as a significant opportunity to enhance global solidarity in the run-up to the UN summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda to be held in September in New York.

"Disaster risk reduction must be closely integrated with development," Park In Yong, South Korean minister of public safety and security, told the plenary session.

"For developing countries in particular, a vicious cycle may develop in which disasters roll back years of developmental achievement, leading to a further extension of poverty," he added.

On the sidelines of the plenary meeting, a ministerial session was held to discuss how to rebuild communities better following disasters. Working sessions on various issues, including early warning and evacuation tools for disabled people, are taking place. — *Kyodo News*

South African minister killed in car crash

JOHANNESBURG, 15 March — South African cabinet minister Collins Chabane was killed in a car crash on Sunday, President Jacob Zuma said.

Chabane was a minister in the President's office and a member of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) National Executive Committee.

"We are deeply

shocked and saddened by this untimely death of an outstanding cadre of our liberation struggle and a competent, accomplished and dependable member of my cabinet," Zuma said in a statement.

Chabane, in his capacity as minister, had lead the planning for the funeral of former President Nelson Mandela. — *Reuters*

Japan, China agree to keep cooperating over disaster management

SENDAI, 15 March — The Japanese minister in charge of disaster management and her Chinese counterpart agreed on Sunday to continue to cooperate in tackling disasters and reaffirmed a plan to hold a ministerial meeting with South Korea on the issue.

Eriko Yamatani, Japan's minister for disaster management, and China's Civil Affairs Minister Li Liguang said they will boost their countries' disaster prevention work and continue

such efforts, a Japanese official said.

It is the first visit to Japan by a Chinese Cabinet member in three years and reflects a Japan-China accord last year under which the two Asian neighbours will make continued efforts to gradually improve bilateral ties. Last November, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Chinese President Xi Jinping, who took office in 2012 and 2013, respectively, held their first meeting in Beijing.

Meeting on the sidelines of the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, Yamatani extended an invitation to Li to attend a disaster management meeting at the ministerial level that Japan will host this year and also invite South Korea, the official said.

In response, Li said it might be difficult for him to attend but Beijing will send an appropriate person, according to the official.

The trilateral ministerial meeting on disaster manage-

ment has been held every two years since 2009 alternately in one of the three countries. The Yamatani-Li meeting took place as the two countries seek ways to mend their strained bilateral relations over territory disputes and differing views on wartime history.

The meeting was strictly about disaster management, and no other issues such as perception on wartime history were discussed, the official said.

Kyodo News

Ferguson activists press ahead, undeterred by latest shooting

FERGUSON, 15 March — As the hunt for suspects in the shooting of two police officers in Ferguson, Missouri, extended into a third day, activists took the first steps on Saturday to force the mayor out of office while residents awaited signs of progress in the investigation.

A group called Organization for Black Struggle (OBS) said it is starting a petition to recall Mayor James Knowles. He is one of the few senior city officials remaining after the police chief, a municipal judge and others resigned following a US Department of Justice report on 4 March depicting a Ferguson police force mired in racial bias.

An uneasy quiet prevailed in the St Louis suburb, in contrast with the mayhem that erupted near midnight on Thurs-

day when gunshots rang out during a protest rally, wounding a pair of officers.

Police arrested two people on Saturday night in neighbouring St Louis when about 70 protesters tried to block a street, a *Reuters* witness said. They were later released.

The shooting on Thursday sent a fresh jolt of tension through a city that has become a symbol of racial conflict since a black teenager was killed by a white police officer last August and a grand jury returned no criminal charges.

“There has been a lot of outrage here over the past seven months,” Montague Simmons, executive director of OBS, explaining why activists were determined to press ahead with their demands. “We feel this could be a moment of transformation where people go from being out-



A protester wears tape over her mouth during a silent demonstration against what they say is police brutality after the Ferguson shooting of Michael Brown, an unarmed black teenager, by a white police officer, in St Louis, Missouri on 14 March, 2015. — REUTERS

raged to being involved.”

Knowles, a Republican who was 31 when he was first elected in 2011 in a non-partisan election, said on Friday that it would be up to voters to remove him from the part-time job.

Residents will have 60 days to gather signatures from 15 percent of registered voters in the last may-

oral election to prompt a special election, OBS said in the statement.

Steve Moore, owner of the Celebrity Soul Food Restaurant, said that when he moved to his current location, Knowles was one of his first customers, asking if there was anything the city could do to help.

“He’s continuing to

make changes and if people get behind him and hold him accountable he’s a good leader for the city,” said Moore. He added that he had lost about 80 percent of his business since the unrest began in August. Some Ferguson residents said they were growing weary, especially after the latest spasm of violence, despite sympathy for protesters who have been out in force since the killing of 18-year-old Michael Brown.

“It’s been emotional here. We all want justice for Mike Brown, but we also have to heal,” said Jerome Parker, 26, who lives in the area and works in a store. “I support the protests, but I need to make a living.”

Parker also worries about the impact the shooting of the officers will have on the push for reforms in

Ferguson. Authorities had nothing new to add to the scant information disclosed about the manhunt for suspects in the police shootings.

A day earlier, St Louis County Police Chief Jon Belmar said investigators had dozens of leads and authorities had “a pretty good idea” where the gunshots had originated, but said no arrests were imminent. He had nothing to say about the kind of gun used, the shooter’s motivation and any connection to the protesters.

In Thursday’s shooting, a 41-year-old county police officer suffered a shoulder wound and a 32-year-old colleague from a nearby police department sustained a facial wound that left a bullet lodged near his ear. Both were treated and released from hospital.—*Reuters*

Obama jokes about Clinton email, knocks Republicans at dinner



Secret Service agents guard US President Barack Obama as he greets neighbours of US Army Ranger Sgt First Class Cory Remsburg, who was injured while fighting in Afghanistan, after stopping to visit Remsburg in his new home in Gilbert, Arizona on 13 March, 2015. — REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 15 March — President Barack Obama took aim at his Republican opponents and his gaffe-prone vice president on Saturday in a satirical speech that included a roast of his former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton over her recent problems with email.

Obama joined Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker, a potential Republican contender for the 2016 presidential election, and Democratic Governor Terry McAuliffe of Virginia for the annual Gridiron dinner, an evening of song and skits making light of major players in US politics. Obama joked that his reputation for being a tech-savvy president had now been eclipsed by his one-time foe Clinton, who has come under fire for using a private email account for her work as the

nation’s top diplomat.

“If you think about how things have changed since 2008, back then I was the young tech-savvy candidate of the future. Now I’m yesterday’s news and Hillary’s got a server in her house!” “I am so far behind,” he said to laughter.

Walker also had some fun with Clinton’s email controversy, tying her to wealthy Wall Street donors. “I even have Hillary’s private email,” Walker said. “It goes right to her campaign headquarters. You know, it’s hillaryclinton@wallstreet.com,” he said.

Walker quipped that the joke was written by Democratic Senator Elizabeth Warren, who is known for crusading against Wall Street, and who some Democrats hope will challenge Clinton. Obama, feeling

loose with less than two years left in office, noted criticism that he had taken a “selfie” photo in a viral video promoting his health insurance programme, but he turned the tables on Republican senators who sent a letter to Iran warning them against a nuclear deal Obama hopes to secure.

“You don’t diminish your office by taking a selfie. You do it by sending a poorly written letter to Iran,” Obama said.

Obama also ribbed Vice President Joe Biden for his touchy-feely habits. Biden drew criticism for massaging the shoulders of the wife of incoming Defense Secretary Ash Carter at his swearing-in ceremony. “Joe rubs my shoulders, too,” Obama said.

Obama jabbed Walker for dodging a question during a recent trip to London on whether he believed in evolution.

“I absolutely believe in the theory of evolution — when it comes to gay marriage,” Obama said to laughter. Obama came out in favor of gay marriage in 2012 after many years of what he described as a personal evolution in his thinking about the subject.

The Gridiron Club and Foundation, founded in 1885, is the oldest organizations of journalists in Washington. Membership is by invitation only.—*Reuters*

Germany wants Russia to comply with Ukraine peace deal before sanctions eased

FRANKFURT, 15 March — Germany and other countries want European Union leaders to endorse a declaration saying that EU sanctions on Russia will not be eased unless Moscow complies with a Ukraine ceasefire deal, two officials said on Saturday.

EU leaders, who meet in Brussels next Thursday and Friday, will discuss the sanctions imposed on Russia’s financial, energy and defence sectors last July

over Russia’s annexation of Crimea and support for separatists in Ukraine.

The ceasefire deal, which was signed last September in Minsk, called for an end to hostilities between Ukrainian forces and Russian-backed separatists and the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the front line.

“It is the plan to have a political declaration to link sanctions to fulfilment of Minsk,” said one of the two

officials, who asked not to be named.

Germany and some others EU countries were in favour of such a declaration, the officials said, without giving further details. If EU leaders decide to back this stance, it would effectively extend the sanctions, which expire in July, to the end of the year, as the ceasefire deal requires the restoration of Ukrainian border controls with Russia by year-end.—*Reuters*

Venezuela stages military exercise to counter US ‘threat’

CARACAS, 15 March — Venezuela on Saturday staged a military exercise to counter an alleged US threat, deploying soldiers and partisans across the country to march, man shoulder-fired missiles and defend an oil refinery from a simulated attack.

Socialist President Nicolas Maduro has framed recent US sanctions on seven Venezuelan officials as a bid to topple him, and on Saturday his government mobilized 80,000 soldiers and 20,000 civilians as part of a 10-day military drill.

“The United States has declared Venezuela a threat,” said General Vladimir Padrino, Venezuela’s defence minister.

“And that means an imminent danger for us,

so we have to use the National Bolivarian Armed Forces (FANB) as part of our constitutional mission to guarantee independence and sovereignty.”

Opposition leaders labeled the exercise a farce

and accused Maduro, increasingly unpopular as a result of an economic crisis, of seeking to distract Venezuelans from long queues for scarce products, sky-high inflation and rampant crime.—*Reuters*



Militia members take part in a defensive military exercise in conjunction with the general public in La Guaira on 14 March, 2015. — REUTERS

PERSPECTIVES

Monday, 16 March, 2015

Exclusion from education has impacts on societyBy *Myint Win Thein*

Every human being has equal opportunities to quality education regardless of sex, ethnic origin, language, religion, nationality, social origin, economic condition, ability and so on, according to many education experts.

This means that even poor or underprivileged

children wherever they live also have the same opportunity to quality education as the children of social elites in cities. However, many children drop out of their primary schools, middle schools and high schools and join the workforce to help support their parents or just simply because their parents can no longer afford education for them.

Such tragedies are common even as the government has been building more schools and increasing the education budget to make education available for all children in the country. This suggests that just making schools available to children is not enough to ensure that all children have equal access to quality education and that there are many other barriers and obstacles that exclude children from education.

Most common barriers and obstacles to educa-

tion include economic conditions, ethnic origin and language. It is time to remove all the barriers and obstacles that prevent some of our children from acquiring the same quality education as the children of social elites since exclusion from education has many undesirable impacts on the society as a whole.

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The endless havoc or chaos or pandemonium or mayhem caused by hostility, egocentrism, barbarity, injustice and inequality in human societiesBy *Tommy Pauk*

Man is normally superior to any other creatures on this planet earth. The destiny of the earth and mankind mainly depend on man's conduct and behavior. Man should cherish his mother earth and sustain humanity. The sympathy, love, and compassion or benevolence should prevail in human society. These humane characteristics create the peaceful environment and situations among human beings. The essence of the religious teachings concentrates on loving-kindness indeed. The vast majority of people around the world profess the respective religious faith and they affirm or commit or vow themselves to avoid committing any sinful deeds. The rest are free-thinkers or atheists in human society. We humans wish to enjoy peace and happiness in human society.

Nevertheless, some people do not comply nor practice the religious doctrine and ethical principles. Besides, they violate human rights brutally and cruelly. As a result, injustice and inequality arise in some regions in the world and these situations cause chaos or pandemonium or mayhem and man-made disasters. Apparently, the aforesaid acts or behaviors are derived or originated from the hostility, egocentrism and barbarity. Brazenly, they commit crimes against humanity with intention to gain ridiculous or extreme goals that the civilized people do not accept or agree. The greatest issue in the world is man-made disasters. The natural disasters cause

calamities and which are inevitable for humans in the world. However, as for man-made disasters, humans can protect or eliminate or solve the problems and issues of man-made disasters unanimously.

If the people or a person or the society is hostile, the people or a person or the society will have enemies. As we all know, social dealing is compulsory among human beings in any society in the world and international relations are of great importance for international communities to build trust and cooperation. Hostility is a threat to peace. e.g. if a certain leader of country is hostile, it is a threat to a country which does not have good relations with that country. Hostility causes chaos not only in the hostile country but also the in the opposing country. Normally, the hostile leader or country possesses the military power or super power. The aggressive leader of such country tries to dominate the opposing country militarily or politically. Due to the leader's aggression, the countries with peace loving people do not associate with the said country. At the same time, animosity, hatred and abhorrence create violence acts.

The hostile country usually invades militarily weak countries or defenseless countries. The war broke out and the people from the militarily weak country encounter the misery of war. The innocent people lose their homes, lives and their properties. The people from both sides are in chaos terribly. Even then the worsening chaotic situations deteriorate the

economy of both countries. On the other hand, when the hostile country is attacked or defeated by superpower countries and their allied countries, its people are in mayhem and the infrastructure is severely damaged or destroyed. The practice or behavior of hostility leads towards total destruction in any society or country. Conspicuously, the globalization makes a certain benefit or better achievement to all global communities. The wise leaders of the respective countries deal with each other wittingly and harmoniously nowadays in the world. The hostility is a fuel which acts to sustain or inflame passion, argument, or other intense emotion. It even incites wars or disasters. The hostile leaders of the countries are responsible for this man-made disaster indeed. They have to pay for their sins or to be punished by peace-loving countries. Therefore, people around the world denounce the acts of hostility and help those who are victims of hostility with humanitarian aids. Hostility turns to hegemony or violence or terrorism viciously. As a result, mayhem or pandemonium or chaos occur utterly. Unfortunately, the innocent and ordinary people become the victims of such man-made disaster. They need protection, humanitarian aids and rehabilitation. They are the preys of the conflicts caused by two hostile countries or hostile leaders. They are the ones who create problems, conflicts and wars deliberately and recklessly. For example, long and endless conflict between Palestine and Israel. This issue is derived from hostilities of

both sides. They could not control their aggression and wrath. Both people frequently encounter chaos, fatality and insecurity. They cannot enjoy peace of mind. They are on hostile alert all the time. The frequent attack or missile-strikes or air strike from Israel territory into Palestine territory threatens the Palestinians. As retaliatory actions, the Palestinians kidnap Israelis or Israeli soldiers or fired the missiles into Israel territory. Obviously the violent retaliation is based on hostility.

Actually, the act of hostility does not find means and ways to solve the problem. Thus, it is not possible to make any peace process. No one wishes to visit any war-torn country or hostile country as the country cannot provide a guarantee for the security of the visitors as well as its own citizens there. In the hostile conflict zones, the massacre, bomb blasts, suicide-car bomb-blast and acts of terrorists occur frequently in the capital cities, big and crowded cities. E.g. In Iraq, Syria, Nigeria and Somalia. Thousands of people have been killed vainly in those areas. The fighters among them are so callous that a huge number of innocent people are being killed. Nigeria's Bokoharam and Syria-and-Iraq-based IS, the world's best known and brutal terror or violent extremist groups, commit genocide and homicide brutally and inhumanely. International communities are deeply concerned about these issues and pledge to cooperate in eliminating these terror groups with military might. Therefore, hostility threatens global peace and causes mayhem

in the societies concerned.

When there are many egocentric persons in a society, organizing for the unity or solidarity is totally impossible. Consequently, prosperity and progress cannot be generated due to lack of solidarity and unity in that society. The more egocentric persons, the less economic progress results in the society. The egocentric persons never prioritize the common interests of the society concerned. Instead of concentrating on the common interests, the egocentric persons think and do for their own benefits and own interest first. That practice causes tension and conflict within their society. Egocentrism is a disgusting practice or inhumane act which is socially unacceptable. Since man is a social animal, he or she should not seek personal gain and benefit only for him or her. He or she ought to be compulsorily involved with social welfare by any means. He or she must work with other humans for the welfare and prosperity of humanity. Unless the social welfare is progressed, the society will certainly encounter mayhem. Due to the acts and behavior of the egocentric persons, the ordinary or simple people show their displeasure, and later the conflict arises between egocentric persons and the vast majority of people in the society. Maybe those egocentric persons are public officials or administrators who are responsible for serving the public affairs. Egocentrism undermines the socio-economic development for a certain society and eventually the people from that society falls into mayhem. Egocentric persons

never consider the common interest and other peoples' need and want in their society. Besides, they usually try to escape from chaos caused by them. Even if the society is in trouble, they selfishly ignore and refuse to take responsibilities. So, the people from society concerned displease the actions done by egocentric persons who are of top public officials. Then tension and devastating conflict happen in that society. Egocentric persons should not be appointed or selected or elected for public administration so that we can protect any conflict leading to mayhem in our society.

Barbarity causes havoc in human societies. The savagely cruel act is wide spread in some region in the world. The extreme ideologies and radicalization make them become barbarians. Some people from the different societies in the world are brainwashed by extreme religious groups systematically. The civilized people were greatly shocked to learn the beheading of humans and burning-a-man-alive to death (A Jordanian jet fighter pilot) by violent extremists known as IS militants and Bokoharam terror groups based in Iraq-Syria border and in Nigeria. They threaten the global peace and challenge the civilized people across the world indeed. The barbaric acts are abominable and callous on earth. They kill the innocent people or different nationalities recklessly and savagely. The havoc or mayhem is immense in those areas. The people around are insecure, unhappy and scared to struggle their daily lives as the devilish acts committed by

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NATIONAL

Myanmar's real estate market expected to be cool this year: experts

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 15 March—The local property market is expected to be cool this year, but if the trend continues until July, it may boom again in 2016, Daw Moh Moh Aung, secretary of the Myanmar Real Estate Services Association, said Friday.



An aerial view of Yangon City with high-rise buildings.—PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN

The market cooling may be linked to the country's political situation, Daw Moh Moh Aung told the Global New Light of Myanmar.

She said apartment rental prices in downtown are normal, with apartments selling in the range between K30 million and K50 million, but the condominium market is still cool.

An agent said, "Apartment selling and rental prices near Pazundaung market in downtown have become a bit high, as contractors eye detached houses and buildings there."

According to the data of Myanmar real estate website House.com.mm, only 18 percent of people

searched the site for houses to buy in February.

The property market had boomed over the years. Since then, room, house, land and apartment prices have skyrocketed. Since late 2014, the market has been in decline due to low demand.

Property markets in suburban areas are also seeing excess supply. Real estate experts have advised land owners there should not rely only on sale of their lands, but look to the rental market and other means of earning.

Those experts estimate that the country may see a massive influx of foreign investment into the real estate market if the condominium law comes into effect this year.—GNLM

Appointment of Ambassador agreed on

NAY PYI TAW, 16 March — The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of H.E. Mr Jaroslav Dolecek as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Czech Republic to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar with residence in Yangon.

Mr. Jaroslav Dolecek was born on 17 March 1956. He obtained Master Degree in Civil Engineering from the Czech Technical University in Prague and Master Degree in Business Administration from the Milton Keynes University in the United Kingdom. From 1980 to 1990, he worked in various projects in the field of constructions and investment. In 1991, he joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic and served in various capacities up to the post of a director and head of the Technical Departments. He then served as the Director of the Investments from 1998 to 2000 and Director of the Finances and Investment Department from 2000 to 2001. He was appointed Consul General at the Consulate General of the Czech Republic in Sydney in 2001. He then served as an Ambassador and Head of Mission at the Czech Economic and Cultural Office in Taipei from 2006 to 2009. From 2009 to present, he has been serving as the Director of the Property Management Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. He is married.—MNA

Diabetes comes under spotlight at health seminar

YANGON, 15 March—Diabetes has come under the spotlight at a health seminar that took place at the Myanmar Medical Association on Saturday, according to participants.

In a bid to take preventive measures to curb the deadly disease, Myanmar Diabetes Association

joined KALBE International Company to conduct the health seminar on nutrition advice, with nutritionist Dr Wei Wei Myint giving a talk on medical nutrition therapy, regular medication and physical exercise.

She responded queries raised at the seminar.

A study alarms that the

disease has touched 246 million all over the world, causing a death every six seconds, a factor that raises concern over diabetic complications.

According to a survey conducted in Myanmar in 2013, diabetic patients accounted for 6.11% of the whole population.—MNA

Indonesia's fuel giant . . .

(from page 1)

markets in the region.

"If the study is completed this year, we are going to make the expansions [this year]," Ahmad said as quoted by kompas.com, adding that there was a chance that Pertamina would increase the number of gas stations it planned to build.

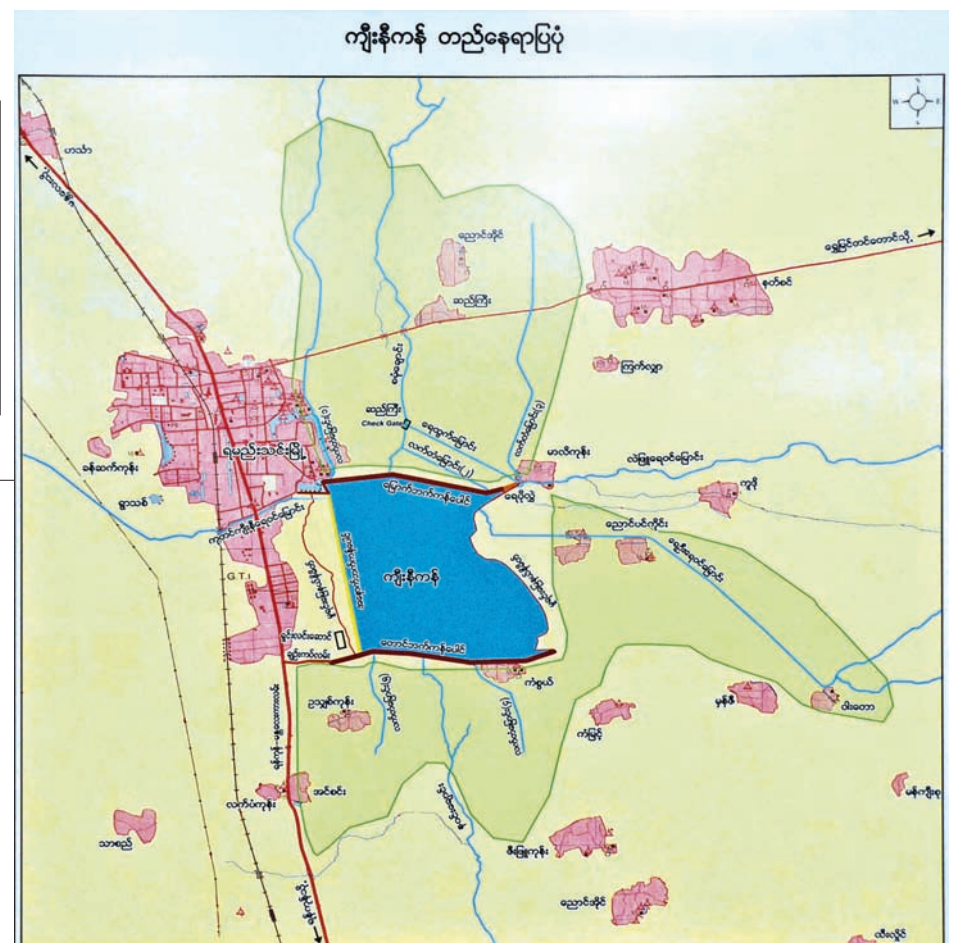
"We see a lot of oppor-

tunities in Cambodia and Myanmar and the process to get the business permits is easier [than in Indonesia]."

Pertamina will also develop fuel storage facilities in Singapore to help supply fuel in the Malacca Strait area which is, in term of fuel market, dominated by Singapore and Malaysian companies.—GNLM

A map shows location of Kye Ni Lake and its irrigated area in Yamethin Township, Mandalay Region. (News on page 1)

MNA



The endless havoc or chaos or . . .

(from page 8)

extremists known as neo-barbarians. The horrendous and frightening situations are detrimental to global trade, transportation and tourism as well. This is a global issue and we must eliminate those who commit acts of barbarity and those who support the barbarians with finance and weapons. In addition, international communities must combat or crush the organizations hand to hand so that the pleasant and peaceful human societies may exist firmly in the world.

If a society has no justice and equality, there will be chaos or mayhem in it. Justice is handled by man and man is protected by justice from any unfair behavior, harm or trouble or ill-treatment or chaos or mayhem in human societies. Justice justifies the conflicts or crimes or human affairs who is right or who is wrong and punishes anyone who violate laws or who is above the laws. The bench and bar must be credible so that the general public or innocent people can defend the harm and injure made by

perpetrators or culprits. The scoundrels, thugs, perpetrators and culprits must be brought to justice. Otherwise, there can have no equality in that society. Everyone has equal rights before the justice. If the judicial system is corrupt and biased or partial, the vast majority of people will condemn it. Thus, a bitter conflict between the administrators and the ordinary people arises violently. People disgust the partiality of a certain judicial system and do not trust it. In this case, the government concerned is

responsible for serious-taking-action against those who commit malpractice in judicial system. Naturally the ordinary people in that society demand the unbiased jurisdiction. Besides, those corrupt judges and jury must be removed from judiciary or bench. Not only lack of rectitude or integrity in the judicial system, but also the inequality among the citizens trigger public rage in some countries. Thus, unfortunately the situation turns to chaos or mayhem or pandemonium within the particular countries. When

fairness and justice prevail in a society, there will be no tension, no conflict and no unrest. The general public can enjoy happiness and security in their society peacefully. Eventually that society will certainly prosper and develop its economy. To analyze or infer aforesaid situations and circumstances, we can say these are totally

man-made disasters in human societies in the world.

We should understand and know who creates causes and who suffers the bad effects. We do not want to encounter the utter devastation caused by man-made disasters. May justice, humanity and compassion prevail in the human societies forever!!!!

Tommy Pauk is the pseudonym of U Thein Swe, who is B.A (English) and (Registered Law) R.L.I. degrees holder. He has English Teaching experience at Yangon University English Department and Workers' college in Yangon, and now is working as freelance writer and English Teacher cum Translator/Interpreter for foreign firms.

Afghanistan gave CIA money to al-Qaeda for diplomat's ransom

WASHINGTON, 15 March — About \$1 million provided by the CIA to a secret Afghan government fund ended up in the hands of al-Qaeda in 2010 when it was used to pay a ransom for an Afghan diplomat, the *New York Times* reported on Saturday.

Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden had at first been concerned about the payment, fearing the CIA knew about the money and had tainted it with poison, radiation or a tracking device, the *Times* said, and suggested it be converted to another currency.

The newspaper said letters about the ransom payment were found in the 2011 raid by US Navy SEALs who killed bin Laden at his compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. The communications were submitted as evidence in the trial of Abid Naseer, who was convicted this month in New York of supporting terrorism and plotting to bomb a shopping centre in Manchester, England.

The *Times* said Abdul Khaliq Farahi was the Afghan consul general in Peshawar, Pakistan, when he was kidnapped in 2008 and handed over to al-Qaeda. He was released two years later after Afghanistan paid al-Qaeda \$5 million, a fifth of which was CIA money that came from an Afghan government fund that received monthly cash deliveries from the agency, the *Times* said. The newspaper said an al-Qaeda official wrote bin Laden that the ransom money would be used for weapons, operational needs and payments to families of al-Qaeda fighters held in Afghanistan.

The *Times* said the cash the CIA delivered to the Afghan presidential palace under President Hamid Karzai was used to buy the support of warlords, legislators and others, as well as expenses for clandestine diplomatic trips and housing for senior officials. Afghan officials told the newspaper the payments have slowed since Ashraf Ghani became president in September. In addition to the al-Qaeda correspondence, the *Times* said its story was based on conversations with Afghan and Western officials but that the CIA declined to comment.—Reuters



An Afghan National Army soldier holds a Rocket Propelled Grenade at an army checkpoint in Kabul, Afghanistan on 14 March, 2015. Some nine militants have been killed in Afghan army operations since early Thursday, said the country's Defence Ministry on Saturday morning. — XINHUA

Iraqi Kurds say Islamic State used chlorine gas against them

ARBIL, (Iraq), 15 March — Iraqi Kurdish authorities said on Saturday they had evidence that Islamic State had used chlorine gas as a chemical weapon against their peshmerga fighters in northern Iraq in January.

The Security Council of the semi-autonomous Kurdish region said in a statement to *Reuters* that the peshmerga had taken soil and clothing samples after an Islamic State car bombing attempt on 23 January.

It said laboratory analysis showed “the samples contained levels of chlorine that suggested the substance was used in weaponized form.” The Kurdish allegation could not be independently confirmed. Chlorine is a choking agent whose use as a chemical weapon dates back to World War One. It is banned under the 1997 Chemical Weapons Convention, which prohibits all use of toxic agents on the battlefield. Peter Sawczak, spokesman for the Dutch-

based Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, said: “We have not had a request from Iraq to investigate claims of use of chemical weapons in Iraq, and the OPCW cannot immediately verify the claims.”

Chlorine has been used “systematically” in the civil war in neighbouring Syria, an OPCW fact-finding mission found last year. The OPCW would have to get its own samples to confirm the use of chemical weapons in a member state. The Kurdish statement said the car bombing attempt happened on a highway between Mosul and the Syrian border. A Kurdish security source said that the peshmerga fired a rocket at the car carrying the bomb so there were no casualties, except for the suicide bomber.

About a dozen peshmerga fighters experienced symptoms of nausea, vomiting, dizziness or weakness, the source said.

The statement said the analysis was carried out in

a European Union-certified laboratory after the soil and samples were sent by the Kurdish Regional Government to a “partner nation” in the US-led coalition that is fighting Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria.

The source described the samples as “leftovers from the suicide bomber”, but declined to identify the laboratory. The White House said in a statement it could not confirm the allegations but found them “deeply disturbing” and was monitoring the situation “very closely.”

A US defence official said the use of chlorine as a weapon was a possible sign of “growing desperation due to the pressure being applied by coalition air power and Iraqi ground forces.”

Iraq's Kurds were the victims of the deadliest chemical attack of modern times when Saddam Hussein's air force bombed the town of Halabja in 1988, gassing at least 5,000 people to death.—Reuters



Multiple mortar weapons is seen in frontline against Islamic State militants in the Bashir Turkmen village of Taza district in the south of Kirkuk city, Iraq on 14 March, 2015, one dead and five injured. —REUTERS

South American nations reject US measures against Venezuela officials

QUITO, 15 March — South American nations on Saturday rejected the US decision to label Venezuela a security threat and sanction seven officials, lending President Nicolas Maduro regional support in the diplomatic dispute with Washington. Foreign Ministers of the twelve-country Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) called for a revocation of the measures, which Maduro has blasted as an attempt to unseat him.

“It constitutes an interventionist threat to sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries,” UNASUR said in a statement from Ecuadorian capital Quito.

The regional backing is further evidence the US action against Venezuela has benefited Maduro, whose popularity has tumbled in hand with a severe economic recession. “Long live the South American nation!”

Twin blasts at churches in Lahore kill 10, wound 55

LAHORE, (Pakistan), 15 March — Bombs outside two churches in the Pakistani city of Lahore killed 10 people and wounded more than 55 during Sunday services, rescue workers said, and witnesses said quick action by a security guard prevented many more deaths.

A Pakistani Taliban splinter group claimed responsibility. The blasts went off minutes apart in a majority Christian suburb of the eastern city. Police said it seemed they targeted two churches, one Catholic and one Protestant, that are very close to each other.

After the blasts, enraged resident lynched two suspects, police said.

“I was sitting at a shop near the church when a blast jolted the area. I rushed towards the spot and saw the security guard scuffle with a man who was trying to enter the church, after failing, he blew himself up,” said witness Amir Masih. “I saw his body parts flying through the air.” The guard died as well, he said. It was not clear if the first blast was also triggered by a suicide bomber, Masih said. At least 10 people were killed and 55 wounded, said Khawaja Rafiq, the health adviser to the provincial chief minister. “The rescue operation is still underway and the death toll may increase,” rescue services spokesman Sajjad Hussain

Maduro exclaimed in celebration on Saturday night, flanked by members of the military who had just led a defense exercise in the face of an alleged US threat. Venezuela's opposition says Maduro is amplifying the bilateral tensions to distract from shortages of everything from toilet paper to chicken, inflation of around 70 per cent, and sky-high crime.

The leader has revved up his revolutionary rhetoric this week to rally supporters at home and around Latin America. The region remains deeply scarred by Washington's backing of coups during the Cold War and is sensitive to any hints of meddling from the superpower to its north.

Maduro's adversaries, however, accuse fellow Latin American states of turning a blind eye to what they deem human rights violations and a crackdown on dissent in Venezuela.

Reuters

said. Taleban faction Jamaat-ul-Ahrar claimed responsibility.

Following the blast, enraged residents lynched two men they suspected of involvement, a police official said. Journalist Riaz Ahmed said he had seen the two burnt bodies at an intersection. Militants in Pakistan have attacked Christians and other religious minorities often over the last decade or more. Many blame the government for doing little to protect them. Pakistan's police are notoriously poorly trained and under funded.

Lahore is the capital of Punjab, Pakistan's wealthiest and most populous province and the political heartland of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. The city is generally considered peaceful compared with many other areas of Pakistan, but violence there has been increasing after the government's failed attempts to hold peace talks with the Taleban last year. After the talks failed, the military launched an offensive in the remote northwestern region of North Waziristan along the Afghan border to push the Taleban from the last major region they controlled. The military now holds the major urban centres there, but residents say many militants fled before the offensive began and others remain in rural areas.

Reuters

Blackberry launches new secure tablet



The BlackBerry sign is pictured in Waterloo on 19 June, 2014.—REUTERS

WATERLOO, (Canada), 15 March — Seeking to extend its range of secure mobile devices, BlackBerry Ltd (BB.TO) said on Saturday it was launching a high-security tablet, developed with International Business Machines Corp (IBM.N) and Samsung Electronics Co Ltd (005930.KS).

The SecuTABLET, based on Samsung's Galaxy Tab S 10.5 and being presented by BlackBerry unit Secusmart at tech fair CeBIT 2015 in Germany, reflects the Canadian company's stress on secure connections for governments and businesses as it seeks to preserve a niche market after a drubbing in recent years at the hands of emerging smartphone makers such as Apple Inc (AAPL.O).

"Security is ingrained in every part of BlackBerry's port-

folio, which includes voice and data encryption solutions," said Dr Hans-Christoph Quelle, chief executive officer of Secusmart GmbH, in a statement on the new device.

The device was undergoing certification by the German Federal Office for Information Security for secure rating, the statement said, adding that the new tablet used the same security technology as the Secusmart Security Card.

"Working alongside IBM and Samsung, we have added the last link in the chain of the Federal Security Network. Subject to certification of the SecuTABLET, German government agencies will have a new way to access BlackBerry's most secure and complete communications network in the world," Quelle said.—Reuters

Ancient teeth reveal early human entry into rainforests

WASHINGTON, 15 March — People adapted to living in tropical rainforests thousands of years earlier than previously known, according to scientists who found crucial evidence in 20,000-year-old fossilized human teeth discovered in Sri Lanka.

The researchers said there has been a debate over when our species first began living in rainforests, with some experts arguing such habitats may have been too daunting for early human hunter-gatherers.

In a study published on Thursday in the journal *Science*, the scientists examined teeth from 26 people found at various archaeological sites in Sri Lanka for evidence of whether their diet consisted of rainforest plants and animals.

They obtained small tooth enamel samples using a diamond-tipped drill and analyzed them with an instrument called a mass spectrometer.

Almost all the teeth, including the oldest ones from about 20,000 years ago found at the Batadomba-lena rock-shelter in southwestern Sri Lanka, indicated a diet primarily of food from the rainforest.

"Humans have been manipulating and living within dynamic rainforest environments for at least 20,000 years and probably even longer," said University of Oxford archaeologist Patrick Roberts, who studies early human adaptations.

"The lifestyle, as we can see, was dedicated rainforest subsist-

ence," Roberts added.

Scientists previously had not found direct evidence of human occupation of rainforest regions before about 10,000 years ago.

Compared to open habitats, rainforests present difficulties such as dense vegetation that makes it tough to get around, small, nimble and often arboreal prey animals and a bewildering array of plants and fruit, including poisonous ones.

"However, it is clear that hunting and gathering communities in Sri Lanka figured out how to adapt to such settings," said Oxford archaeologist Mike Petraglia, another of the researchers.

The researchers said these people hunted monkeys, giant squirrels, mouse deer, porcupines and other mammals, as well as

freshwater and forest snails, while also eating nuts and starchy rainforest plants.

"These results further the picture that our species was incredibly adaptive, and it is arguably this that made us the first species to expand across the diversity of the globe's ecologies and environments," Roberts said.

While the study provides the earliest direct evidence for human reliance on rainforest resources, the researchers said other evidence suggests people may have taken to Sri Lanka's rainforests as early as 38,000 years ago.

Roberts said archaeological work in Africa, Southeast Asia and Melanesia also suggests humans may have used rainforest resources at least 45,000 years ago.

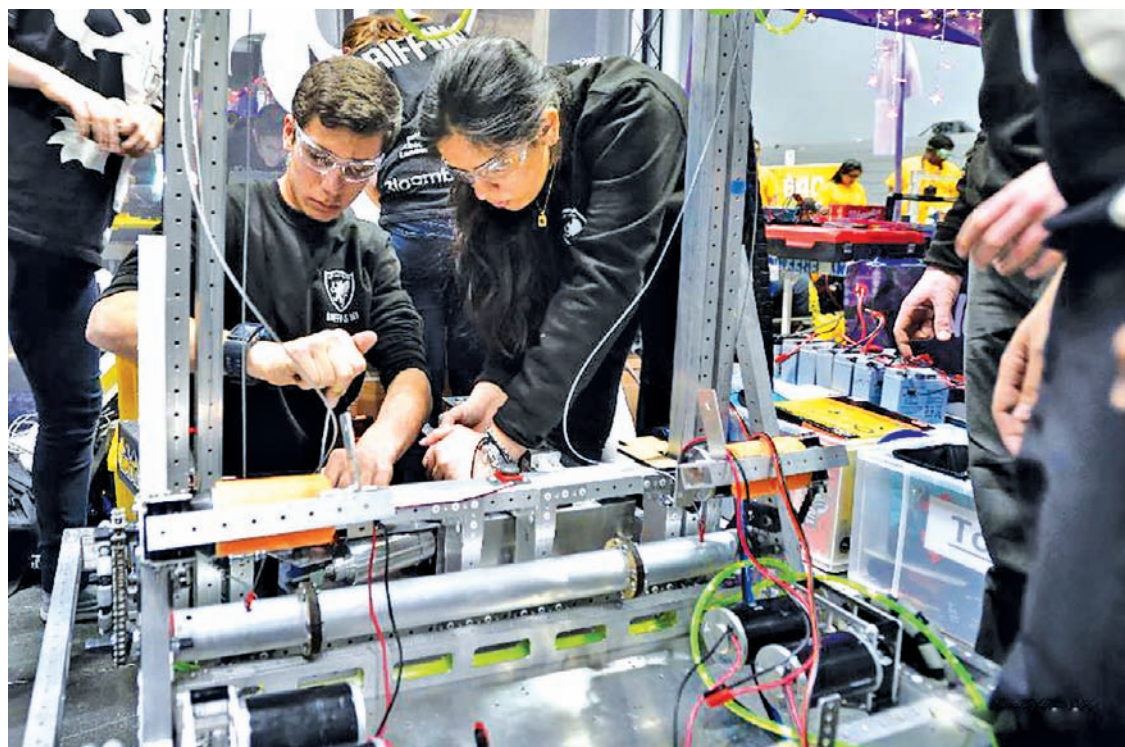
Reuters



The site of Batadomba-lena in Sri Lanka, where human teeth dating back 20,000 years old were excavated, is pictured in this undated handout photo obtained by Reuters on 11 March, 2015.

REUTERS

Students set to battle for NYC robotics regional competition



Students take part in the NYC FIRST 15th Annual Robotics NYC Regional Competition & Expo in New York, the United States, on 13 March, 2015. The NYC FIRST 15th Annual Robotics NYC Regional Competition & Expo kicked off here on Friday, attracting more than 160 teams from the United States, Brazil, China, Turkey and other countries for participation.—XINHUA

NEW YORK, 15 March — The annual Robotics Competition opened on Friday as more than 160 teams of students from New York Tri-State and other countries are going head-to-head with

their impressive robotic creations at the New York City regional tournament. The NYC Regional Competition features three robotics programmes — designed for three age groups from 6 to 19 years old students. It is hosted by NYC FIRST, the local nonprofit affiliate of FIRST, an international nonprofit that inspires students to get involved in science and technology and prepare them for jobs of the future.

The NYC tournament will include a series of competitions, expos, and career fairs, with participation of 2,500 students to battle with their custom-built robots, as high school students compete in a three-on-three sports-style tournament, and elementary and middle-school students put their robots to the test against designated challenges.

The three-day event is the last stop before the FIRST World Championship Tournament to be held in St Louis, the US state of Missouri, in April. Winners from this weekend's competition will move on, but not without putting up a tough fight against

their peers.

"These students have worked so hard to get to where they are, from researching real-world programs to designing new inventions through robotics and using the engineering skills they've acquired," said Pat Daly, executive director of NYC FIRST.

In addition to students from three states of New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, international students from Britain, Brazil, Turkey, and China will also be participating.

Li Yangge, a member with the robotic club with Wuhan Foreign Language School, central China's Hubei Province, is among Chinese students to take part in this year's robotics competition in NYC tournament.

"We're confident and passionate to take part in this event," said Li. "It provides us with a good opportunity to enjoy the thrill of hands-on robotics, research, teamwork and inquiry-based problem solving in order to spark a lifelong passion for science and technology."

Xinhua

US ambassador attack renews focus on contentious South Korean security law

SEOUL, 15 March — Efforts by South Korean police to charge a nationalist over a knife attack on the US ambassador have renewed debate about the use of a state security act as a political weapon and an attempt to gloss over security shortcomings.

Kim Ki-jong, 55, could face charges including attempted murder over the 5 March attack as well as violating the National Security Act, a 67-year-old statute that critics say has long outlived its purpose.

Many contend it is used by conservative governments to gag liberal political opponents by painting them as supporters of North Korea, with whom South Korea technically remains at war.

Kim, who has a long history of violent protest, made seven trips to North Korea between 1999 and 2007. Police seized literature at his home they described as “beneficial to the enemy” as part of their investigations.

“During interrogation,

he said there are no leaders in the South comparable to Kim Il Sung,” Kim Cheol-joon, a police official leading the investigation, told a briefing on Friday, referring to the North Korean state founder.

Critics say trying to charge Kim under the security law politicises the case and attempts to distract from possible shortcomings by police. US Ambassador Mark Lippert was slashed in the face, a wound requiring 80 stitches, while he attended a forum on Korean reunification at a government theatre across the street from the heavily guarded US embassy.

The attack shocked Koreans but quickly turned into a highly charged debate that highlights an ideological divide between conservatives and liberals in South Korea over the reclusive and impoverished North.

President Park Geun-hye and the conservative party’s leader labelled the case an attack against South



US ambassador to South Korea Mark Lippert waves as he leaves a hospital in Seoul on 10 March, 2015.

REUTERS

Korea’s alliance with the United States. Lippert’s face was slashed days after annual US-South Korean military drills began, exercises the North routinely calls preparation for war.

Under the National Security Law, first enacted in 1948 and last revised in 2012, possessing literature supporting entities that threaten state security is subject to prosecution and two or more years in jail. North

Korea is considered such an entity.

“The clause on praising and encouraging anti-state entities is the most problematic, and the most politically abused one,” said political analyst Yu Chang-seon, referring to the part of the statute that the police want to apply to Kim.

Kim has yet to be charged formally under the security law but police have been focusing on his possi-

ble links to North Korea.

“The Lippert attack has turned into a security crackdown,” said Lee Kwang-cheol, a defence attorney and a member of the liberal group Lawyers for a Democratic Society.

“This is being handled as a political case and (politicians) are giving some kind of guideline to the police,” Lee said.

The attack on Lippert is the latest in a string of recent applications of the National Security law.

In December, the Supreme Court upheld a sedition conviction against a former parliamentarian and member of a party already outlawed for pro-North activities.

Authorities deported in January a South Korean-born American who had spoken positively of life in North Korea, and jailed another woman who joined her in giving speeches. President Park said at the time the security law was needed because North and South Ko-

rea remained at war.

In 2004, the then-ruling liberal party and the conservative opposition, led by Park, agreed to remove the problematic clause about praising and encouraging non-state entities to make the security law less politically subjective. The revision, however, failed when hardline liberals insisted the law be abolished altogether.

“Today the atmosphere is completely different, so that nobody can even mention the idea of revising this law, let alone abolishing it,” said analyst Yu.

On Monday, a large crowd of older men in military uniforms held a rally two blocks from where Lippert was attacked, calling for authorities to weed out pro-North factions, derisively called “jong-buk”.

“The National Security Law is the right law to ensure the continued existence of this country,” said Park Tae-young, 67.

“I think it should be strengthened.”—Reuters

Probe launched into cause, responsibility for chopper crash



BELGRADE, 15 March — Two commissions have been set up to determine the causes of and the responsibility for the crash of a military helicopter that killed seven people, the Serbian Armed Forces Chief of Staff, General Ljubisa Dikovic, said on Saturday.

The helicopter was flying into Belgrade from Novi Pazar late Friday, carrying a five-day-old baby whose life was in danger due to respiratory problems.

Initially, an attempt was made to rescue the newborn with an ambulance vehicle, which became trapped on a road due to a rockslide, after which the Serbian Armed Forces sent a Mi 17 helicopter to the rescue operation.

Speaking at a press conference at Dom Vojske, Brigadier General Predrag

Bandic said that the meteorological situation was complex — but not unfavourable — when he gave the order to go ahead with the operation.

The weather worsened abruptly over the Belgrade municipality of Mladenovac, visibility was low and the crew made two unsuccessful attempts to land at the Nikola Tesla Airport, and all contact with the crew was lost at 22.31 pm.

General Dikovic said that the aircraft was found at 2 am on Saturday and noted that he and his aides feel personally responsible for the tragedy.

The extent of everyone’s responsibility needs to be established by 18 March, with the cause of the crash to be determined by 30 March, he said.

Tanjug

Rescue effort begins in Vanuatu after powerful Pacific cyclone

SYDNEY, 15 March — Rescue workers began a massive relief operation in Vanuatu on Sunday following a devastating cyclone that killed at least six people, sent thousands into emergency shelters and disrupted communications in the Pacific island nation.

A nine-member UN team was due to arrive on Sunday to carry out an initial assessment of the damage from the category 5 cyclone named Pam, which at its peak covered the entire country on satellite maps and brought houses crashing down with winds of more than 300 kilometres per hour (185 miles per hour).

Several other neighbouring countries also were affected.

Officials said the airport in Vanuatu’s capital, Port Vila, remained closed, though they hoped it might partly reopen later on Sunday to allow in the first relief planes.

As Cyclone Pam finally moved off to the southeast, more people left homeless by the disaster flooded into evacuation centres filled with thousands of evacuees, government officials said.

Fears remained high that outlying islands, where there are few support services, may have been especially hard hit by flash flooding

and cyclone-related damage. Officials said they were still unable to contact any region outside the capital.

“Our communication link is still down,” Paolo Malatu, an official at the country’s National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), told Reuters. “We have not got any information from outside Port Vila.”

“The biggest need at the moment is shelter and food and wash kits,” Malatu said.

With President Baldwin Lonsdale at a conference in Japan and unable to fly into Vanuatu, the government was being led temporarily by Charlot Salwai, acting

minister for climate change, government officials said.

Officials on Sunday confirmed six fatalities, a toll that is expected to increase amid unconfirmed reports of dozens of dead in the nation’s remote northeast region. At least 20 others were injured.

“We anticipate that (death toll) will go higher, particularly as information comes from the remote islands. We are talking about islands that are remote and really small, with none of what we would call modern infrastructure,” said Colin Collett van Rooyen, Oxfam’s country manager in

Vanuatu.

He added that the government had declared a state of emergency for Shefa province, where Port Vila is located, adding that he anticipated it would eventually be extended to the entire nation.

Formerly known as the New Hebrides, Vanuatu is a collection of around 83 islands with a population of 260,000. It experiences frequent earthquakes and storms, and aid officials regard it as one of the world’s poorest nations.

Aid agencies in nearby Australia and New Zealand were preparing to send help.

Reuters



Local residents walk past debris as a wave breaks nearby in Port Vila, the capital city of the Pacific island nation of Vanuatu on 14 March, 2015.—REUTERS

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WEATHER REPORT

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 16th March, 2015: Weather will be partly cloudy in Taninthayi Region and Kachin State and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Generally fair weather in the whole country.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 16th March, 2015: Generally fair weather.

Up to 51 dead after bus
crash in southern Brazil

RIO DE JANEIRO, 15 March — As many as 51 people died on Saturday when a passenger bus drove off a cliff in the southern Brazilian state of Santa Catarina, police said.

The bus, en route from the neighbouring state of Parana, swerved off a curve and fell dozens of metres before crashing in a wooded area. Rescue crews were still trying to rescue survivors and recover the bodies of the victims late in the day.

Initially, police had reported 32 killed, but later said recovery crews believed an additional 19 were dead. Police did not know how many passengers in all were aboard the bus or whether the driver was one of the victims, but said that at least six survivors were being treated for injuries.

The bus was about 10 km (6 miles) from its destination in the city of

Joinville when it crashed. Highway and weather conditions at the time were good, a police spokesman said.

Though no immediate cause for the crash had been determined, police said it appeared the brakes on the bus failed.

Brazil has some of Latin America's deadliest roads.

Despite nearly a decade of sustained economic growth that only slowed in recent years, the country has done little to improve or expand its creaky infrastructure.

The country averages more than 18 highway deaths per 100,000 people per year, compared with only about 10 in high-income countries, according to a report by the Inter-American Development Bank. The tolls in nearby Argentina, Colombia and Chile average only about 13.—Reuters

Chinese province imports
saline tolerant plant to
improve environment

SHIJIAZHUANG, 15 March — North China's Hebei Province has imported a saline tolerant plant in a move to better use its large areas of alkaline land, authorities said on Sunday.

Cangzhou City has ordered Szarvasi 1, a grass used in power production, from Hungary, which can be planted on saline and alkaline land, the local bureau of foreign experts affairs said.

Cangzhou has nearly 3.8 million mu (about 250,000 hectares) of saline and alkaline land in the city's eastern regions. They are left uncultivated since trees planted on it only live two to three years at most.

"Cangzhou City and Hungary are at a similar latitude, so the grass can grow well in the city," said Yang Qingrong, head of the bureau.

Yang said the city's

academy of agricultural sciences has signed an agreement with a Hungarian company to import such grass in a move to restore local vegetation, improve regional ecosystem and economy.

The grass proved to grow well in the city's saline and alkaline land after two years of trial, he said, adding that it can be used to feed cows and goats, replace coal as a renewable fuel, and work as additive in paper making and chemical engineering.

Wang Lijing, a staff of Beijing Branch with Corvinus University of Budapest, said the grass can improve soil conditions and ease air pollution.

Szarvasi 1 is a fast-growing, high yield and low cost plant that can adapt well to different environments.

Xinhua

Heat wave hits
S California, LA breaks
heat record

LOS ANGELES, 15 March — A heat wave came to Southern California on Friday and the temperature in downtown Los Angeles rose to a new record high on Saturday.

Just before 1 pm local time, the temperature in downtown area reached 93 fahrenheit degrees (about 33.9 celsius degrees), well above the previous record of 88 fahrenheit degrees (31 celsius degree) set on 14 March, 1951, according to the National Weather Service (NWS).

In Long Beach, the highest temperature on

Saturday afternoon hit a record 94 fahrenheit degrees (about 34.4 celsius degrees), nine degrees above the previous record of 85 fahrenheit degrees (29.4 celsius degrees) set in 1994, according to the service.

The heat was expected to drive over 1 million people to beaches, according to local media reports. The NWS expressed concern for those who will take part in Sunday's LA Marathon. The organizers announced they will start 30 minutes earlier than originally scheduled in an effort to beat the heat.—Xinhua

Five die in
small plane
crash in
northern
Mexico

MEXICO CITY, 15 March — Five people were killed when their small plane crashed in the northern Mexican state of Chihuahua on Saturday, according to local media reports.

The cause of the crash, which occurred in a town about 250 km south of the state capital, was due to mechanical failure, media reports said, quoting a local official.

Reuters

Two killed, five injured in central
China plant blast

ZHENGZHOU, 15 March — Two people were killed and five others were injured after a factory blast in central China's Henan Province on Sunday, local authorities said.

The blast happened while workers were applying corrosion protection at storage facilities in Julong Bioengineering Company in Ruzhou City at around 10:48 am. The

injured have been sent to hospital, according to the local publicity department.

The cause of the accident is under investigation.—Xinhua

Airliner lands safely in Denver
after blowing tire on takeoff

DENVER, 15 March — A United Airlines turbo-prop plane landed safely after it returned to Denver International Airport on Saturday when the Kansas City-bound flight blew a tire on takeoff, officials said.

United Express Flight 4870 reported the mishap as it took off from Denver about 10:30 am MDT,

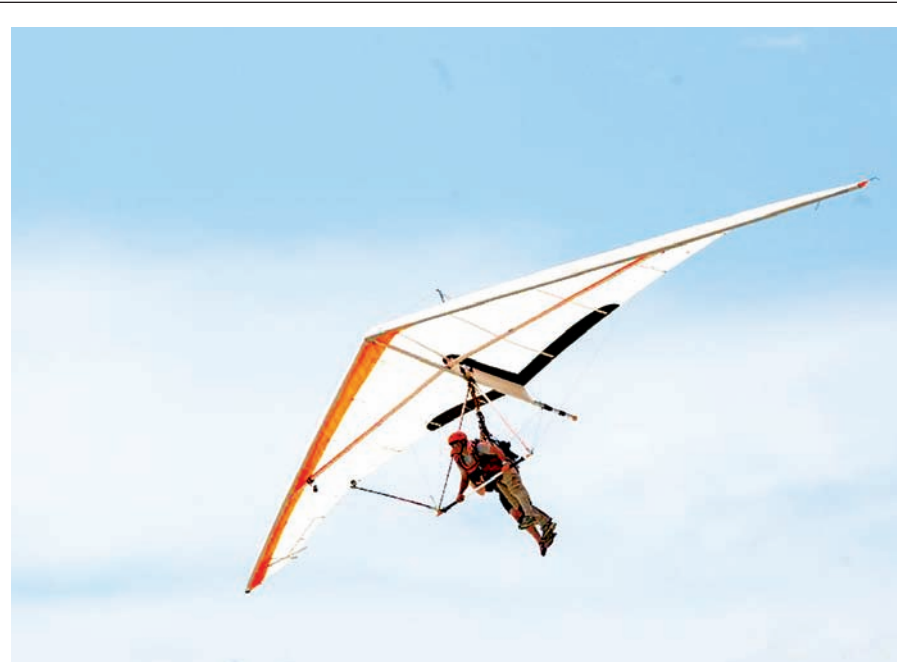
said airport spokeswoman Laura Coale.

She said the plane circled for about 30 minutes to burn off fuel before returning to Denver and landing safely. There were no reports of injuries.

The passengers were evacuated and bused to the airport concourse, she said.

The aircraft, a Bombardier Dash 8-Q400, is operated by Republic Airlines, United said on its website. The flight to Kansas City was delayed for four hours.

The runway where the plane landed was closed as the aircraft was towed, Coale said. The closure did not affect airport operations.—Reuters



A gliding enthusiast flies with a delta wing in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 14 March, 2015. Gathering at a dedicated platform located at the Pedra Bonita of Mountain Gavea in Rio de Janeiro, gliding enthusiasts, equipped with delta wings or paragliding gears, jump off the cliff of Mountain Gavea, fly up in the air, and land on the beach of Sao Conrado.

XINHUA

M4.3 quake hits eastern China, 1 killed

BEIJING, 15 March — A moderate earthquake with a magnitude of 4.3 on Saturday struck Fuyang City in China's eastern

province of Anhui, killing one person and injuring around 10 or so others, according to China News Service.

The quake struck at 2:13 pm, and its epicenter was monitored at a depth of 10 kilometres.

Kyodo News

Tom Hanks thanks man for returning his lost credit card



Tom Hanks

LOS ANGELES, 15 March — Hollywood star Tom Hanks has voiced his gratitude to a stranger who returned his credit card which was lost in New York City. The 58-year-old Oscar-winning actor dropped his card, but within hours it was back in his possession, rather than being taken on an extensive tour of Manhattan's finest stores, reported ABC News.

Hanks turned to twitter to voice his gratitude to his benefactor, named Tony. "A guy named Tony found my credit card on the street in NYC and returned it! Tony! You make this city even greater! Thanx. HANX (sic)," Hanks tweeted.—PTI

Justin Hires joins Warner Bros' pilot "Rush Hour"

LOS ANGELES, 15 March — "21 Jump Street" actor Justin Hires has been cast on "Rush Hour", the one-hour pilot from CBS and Warner Bros Television, based on New Line's comedy of the same name.

Hires will play the irreverent and wildly confident bad-boy Los Angeles Police Department detec-

tive originally portrayed by Chris Tucker, reported Entertainment Weekly.

"Cougar Town" duo Bill Lawrence and Blake McCormick will write and executive-produce with original director Brett Ratner along with Arthur Sarkissian, Jeff Ingold and Jon Turteltaub.



PTI

Justin Hires

BRITNEY SPEARS working on new album

LOS ANGELES, 15 March — Pop star Britney Spears is "slowly" working on her next album and is in no rush to complete the record. The "Toxic" hitmaker last released a studio album in 2013 with Britney Jean, and fans are eager for her to come out with new music, reported *Billboard* magazine.

"There's a lot going on with my kids and schools and, you know, adding new sports and stuff like that. I'm gonna try to do my best to do an amazing album, but it's not my full priority right now," said the mother of two.

Spears' longtime manager, Larry Rudolph, added, "Right now we're just concen-



trating on putting out a few great singles as they come... Albums just aren't as important in the

digital age as they used to be. Britney will get to one eventually, but not right now."—PTI

"Fantastic Four 2" to release on 9 June, 2017



Release date of "Fantastic Four 2" has been pushed back by one week to 9 June, 2017.—PTI

LOS ANGELES, 15 March — Release date of "Fantastic Four 2" has been pushed back by one week to 9 June, 2017.

20th Century Fox had first decided on 2 June, 2017 as the release date, reported *Aceshowbiz*.

The decision comes in the wake of Disney's announcement to release its "Star Wars Episode VIII" on 26 May, 2017 and it has been considered by many as a smart decision as "it does give the superhero sequel a bit more breathing room."

PTI

Dwayne Johnson to return as host for "Saturday Night Live"

LOS ANGELES, 15 March — Dwayne Johnson, WWE wrestler-turned-actor, has been booked to host popular comedy sketch "Saturday Night Live".

The 42-year-old 'Furious 7' star will host the NBC sketch series for the fourth time on 28 March with singer George Ezra as the musical guest, reported *Aceshowbiz*.

Dwayne The Rock Johnson, the WWE Superstar-turned-actor, also tweeted on Saturday:

The Luke Hobbs of the "Fast and Furious" film series has hosted the NBC sketch series three times before, most recently in March 2009.

This will be Eza's first performance on the show. The 21-year-old British songwriter is currently on tour after releasing his debut studio album "Wanted on Voyage" in June last year.—PTI

Hugh Grant is very annoying: Elizabeth Hurley

LOS ANGELES, 15 March — Model-actress Elizabeth Hurley has revealed her ex-flame Hugh Grant is annoying at times.

The model, 49, who was stopped by Bravo's "Watch What Happens Live", said they ended their longterm relationship amicably. "I love him, but he's very annoying," Hurley told host Andy Cohen.

Hurley said the bothersome personality trait that led to the end of their 13-year relationship in 2000.

"My friends used to call him Grumpelstiltskin. He is grumpy," she added.

But Hurley said the British hunk is a hands-on father.

"He's a spectacular father... He sees all three of them every single day...

All the kids have come to stay with me before and he's really come into his own." Grant is the father of three children.—PTI



Elizabeth Hurley on Hugh Grant: I love him, but he's very annoying.—PTI

Andy Samberg to host Primetime Emmys

LOS ANGELES, 15 March — Comedian and 'Brooklyn Nine-Nine' star Andy Samberg will be the host of the 67th Primetime Emmys in September.

The 67th annual edition of the awards ceremony will be broadcast on Fox on 20 September, live from the Nokia Theatre in Los Angeles, reported *Variety*.

Bruce Rosenblum, chairman and CEO of the Television Academy, reacted to the news by saying, "It is wonderfully fitting that we have Andy Samberg, an Emmy Award winner himself, as our host for this year's Primetime Emmy Awards, his

humour, insights and charisma will be an exciting addition to our annual celebration of television's best and brightest."

Samberg was recently a part of the Oscars performance of "The Lego Movie" theme song "Everything Is Awesome". It was widely acknowledged as one of the few highlights of a mostly dull Oscars night, so perhaps it was this that clinched the decision for the Emmys to appoint Samberg.

Reacting to his appointment as the host, Samberg said: "Buckle your seat belts, Emmy viewers! Like, in general,



Comedian and 'Brooklyn Nine-Nine' star Andy Samberg

you should buckle your seat belts in your car. In fact, even if you're not an Emmy viewer, you should buckle your seat belt. It can be dangerous on the road."

The nominations for the awards are due to be unveiled on 16 July.—PTI

GENERAL

Barca march four points clear at the top

MADRID, 15 March — Barcelona ensured they will be at least a point clear of Real Madrid at the top of La Liga when they host their arch rivals in next weekend's 'Clasico' after Lionel Messi struck twice in a 2-0 win at Basque minnows Eibar on Saturday.

Barca leapfrogged stuttering Real, who host Levante on Sunday, into first place last weekend and produced another dominant performance inspired by the talismanic Messi to move on to 65 points with 11 games left.

With Xavi and Andres Iniesta on the bench, Messi captained the side and put the Catalan giants ahead in the 31st minute at Eibar's Ipurua stadium when he converted a penalty after Borja Ekiza handled the Argentina forward's shot.

Messi made it 2-0 with a rare header from an Ivan Rakitic corner 10 minutes into the second half, his 32nd La Liga goal of the campaign and his 43rd in all competitions, two more than he managed in the whole of an injury-disrupted 2013-14.

Two goals clear of Real's Cristiano Ronaldo as La Liga's leading marksman this term, Messi has scored at least twice in 120 matches for club and country, 112 for Barcelona and eight for Argentina.

To their credit, Eibar, playing in La Liga for the first time this season, refused to capitulate to their illustrious visitors and for-



Barcelona's Rafael Alcantara (L) and Lionel Messi celebrate a goal by Messi during their Spanish first division soccer match against Eibar at Ipurua stadium in Eibar on 14 March, 2015.—REUTERS

ward Federico Piovaccari struck a shot against the crossbar late on.

"It was a very good, solid performance against a team that caused us a lot of problems," Barca coach Luis Enrique told a news conference.

"We will go into the game (against Real) as leaders and in perfect shape."

Messi's scintillating recent form bodes well for Wednesday's Champions League last 16 return match at home to Manchester City when Barca will defend a 2-1 lead from last month's first leg.

Barca's game at Eibar was also noteworthy for midfielder Xavi making a club record-extending 750th appearance when he came

on as a second-half substitute for Rakitic.

La Liga champions Atletico Madrid, by contrast, are struggling for goals before last season's beaten finalists seek to overturn a 1-0 deficit against Bayer Leverkusen in Europe's elite club competition on Tuesday.

Atletico surrendered third place in La Liga to Valencia when they had Miranda sent off for a brutal challenge in first-half added time and were held to a 0-0 draw at mid-table Espanyol.

The Madrid side had the better chances at the Cornella-El Prat stadium in Barcelona before centre back Miranda was shown a straight red card when he felled Abraham with an

arm as the pair jumped for a bouncing ball.

Forward Fernando Torres had forced a fine save from Espanyol goalkeeper Kiko Casilla in the 11th minute and midfielder Koke fired narrowly wide a minute later.—Reuters

Japan's Suzuki breaks men's 20-km race walk world record



Japan's Yusuke Suzuki poses by an electric clock showing his world record for the men's 20-kilometre race walk in the city of Nomi, Ishikawa Prefecture, on 15 March, 2015. KYODO NEWS

TOKYO, 15 March — Japan's Yusuke Suzuki broke the men's 20-kilometre race walk world record in a meet on Sunday.

The 27-year-old Suzuki marked 1:16:36 at the All-Japan Race Walking meet in his hometown of Nomi, Ishikawa Prefecture. The previous record was 1:17:02, set a week earlier in Arles, France, by Frenchman Yohann Diniz.

Suzuki competed in the 2012 London Olympics and took silver at last year's Asian Games in Incheon, South Korea.

Lee joins six-way tie for lead at Tshwane Open



Craig Lee of Scotland tees off on the third hole during the Abu Dhabi Golf championship on 18 Jan, 2014. REUTERS

PRETORIA, 15 March—Scotland's Craig Lee produced three birdies on his back nine for a third-round 66 to join a group of six players at the top of the leaderboard in the European Tour's Tshwane Open on Saturday.

Lee is nine under par

for the tournament, along with South Africans Wallie Coetsee, George Coetsee and Trevor Fisher Jnr, England's David Horsey and overnight leader Adrian Otaegui from Spain, who carded a two over-par 72. There are 15 players within three shots of the lead,

setting up the potential for a thrilling finish on Sunday.

Lee managed six birdies in all, but was pegged back by dropped shots on the first and sixth holes to deny him the outright lead.

His 66 was the joint low round of the day to boost the 37-year-old's bid for a first European Tour victory.

Otaegui carded a remarkable 62 on Friday, but found none of that rhythm in his third round with five bogeys allowing the chasing pack to catch him. Coetsee and Coetsee both carded 68s, while Fisher Jnr bogeyed four out of five holes on his front nine but recovered well with five birdies for a 69, the same score as Horsey.

Reuters

Kyodo News

mitv Myanmar International

(16-3-2015 07:00 am~ 17-3-2015 07:00 am) MST

- * News
- * Marketable Goods (Myanmar Arts & Handicrafts)
- * Ywar Thit's Monhinkhar
- * News
- * Hanlin, A Treasure Trove of The Ancient Pyu City
- * Talented Musicians
- * News
- * Lawka Nandar Wildlife Sanctuary And Its Rare Star Tortoises
- * Products of Myanmar — Kachin Traditional Knife
- * News
- * Youth Filmmaker
- * Caves of Myanmar
- * News
- * A Day Out With Sarah (Ep-4)
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- * Taste of Myanmar (Noodle With Fermented Soya Bean)
- * Myanma Pioneer Female Bodybuilder
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- * Short Trip With Steve (Mon State)
- * Kay Tu Mar Lar "The Decision"
- * News
- * Indonesia — Myanmar Bilateral Ties
- * Kambawzathardi Golden Palace — A Treasured Legacy of Golden Days

MRTV News Channel in Brief

(16-3-2015, Monday)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6:00 am • Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw 6:25 am • Physical Exercise 7:00 am • News/ Weather Report 7:35 am • Weekly Entertainment 8:00 am • News / International News 8:35 am • Documentary (Women in Myanmar Society) 9:35 am • Documentary (ASEAN) 10:35 am • People's Talks 11:35 am • MRTV's Youth Programme 12:00 noon • News / International News / Weather Report 12:35 pm • Tasty Trip | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1:10 pm • Gitadagale Phwintbarohn 2:30 pm • Head Line News 3:00 pm • News / International News 4:35 pm • University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) — Second Years (History) 5:00 pm • News / Weather Report 6:35 pm • Socio Economic Scenes 7:00 pm • News 8:00 pm • News / International News / Weather Report 9:00 pm • News / International News / Weather Report • Hluttaw Image • TV Drama Series |
|--|---|

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(16-3-2015, Monday)

- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6:00 am • Mono Classical Songs 6:25 am • TV Drama Series 6:50 am • TV Drama Series 7:15 am • Cultural Show for Soldiers 7:40 am • Fashion Show | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:55 am • Myanmar Series 8:25 pm • TV Drama Series 9:10 pm • TV Drama Series 10:00 pm • Musical Programme 10:15 pm • Myanmar Video |
|--|--|



Myanmar cruise into second round qualifiers of Women's Olympic Football Tournament Rio

MANDALAY, 15 March — Asian Qualifiers round 1 of the Women's Olympic Football Tournament Rio 2016 continued at Mandalay Thiri Stadium in Mandalay on Sunday.

Myanmar and India ended at 7-0 in the third match of the round one.

Myanmar and Indian players attempt to control football in first round qualifier.—MFF

Myanmar's midfielder Khin Moe Wai scored an opening goal for her team in the 7th minute. Seven minutes later, striker Khin Marlar Tun translated her chance into second goal for Myanmar through a wonderful long kick. In the 21st minute, striker Naw Ar Lo Wah Phaw added one more as third for Myanmar. Yee Yee Oo netted the fourth for her team in the 28th minute. The match ended

with a 4-0 result between Myanmar and India with much football possession of Myanmar women.

In the 60th minute, striker Khin Marlar Tun seconded her own scores for fifth goal of Myanmar team. 17 minutes later, striker Yee Yee Oo added one more for Myanmar. Before final whistle, Myanmar striker netted last and seventh goal for Myanmar.—GNLM

By George! City are beaten by battling Burnley

LONDON, 15 March — Manchester City's faltering attempts to retain their title suffered a huge blow on Saturday when they lost 1-0 at Burnley, giving Chelsea the chance to open an eight-point lead when they host Southampton on Sunday.

Second-placed City have now won only three of their last nine Premier League matches and remain five points behind Chelsea who now have two games in hand.

George Boyd scored the only goal after 61 minutes with a superbly-controlled half-volley from 20 metres that not only dented City's title hopes but also helped Burnley's chances of avoiding relegation.

Chelsea have 63 points from 27 games, City have 58 from 29 while Arsenal, who beat West Ham United 3-0 at the Emirates, are a point behind on 57.

At the other end of the table Burnley are still in the bottom three but have moved on to 25 points, one behind 17th-placed Sunderland who lost 4-0 at home to Aston Villa.

Burnley manager Sean Dyche told Sky Sports: "Our will and desire to be in the Premier League is all on show but we won't get too carried away.

"We know there's a long way to go — the players are grounded. We haven't been broken from defeat — we've been dented a few times — but this win reinforces our confidence and belief."

City manager Manuel

Pellegrini said things are not right with his team because they are not winning.

"It was a normal performance and I don't think we played very badly," he added. "We created more chances, they had one shot on target and got a beautiful goal.

"We didn't create enough to score but we were very unlucky. Of course we're doing something wrong as we are not winning the games we normally do.

"I don't want to focus on two or three players. We are a team, a squad of 22 players, and I'm sure they're giving the most they can. It's important to continue trusting what they are doing."

While City have gone off the boil, Villa have come to life and their revival under new manager Tim Sherwood produced the day's other eye-catch-

ing performance.

The 4-0 romp boosted Villa's hopes of avoiding the drop while turning up the heat on Sunderland boss Gus Poyet.

The visitors scored all four goals before halftime with Gabriel Agbonlahor and Christian Benteke netting twice to give Sherwood bragging rights over his former Tottenham Hotspur team mate Poyet.

The Sunderland boss was grim-faced at the final whistle, staring out at a half-deserted stadium following the exits of thousands of home fans long before the end.

"We are delighted to get four goals in one game and for the strikers who have come under a little bit of criticism this year," said Sherwood who took over last month following the sacking of Paul Lambert.

"We had the game won at halftime so it was

important we didn't give it away. There's still a long way to go but we're dragging people in with us."

Arsenal tightened their grip on a top-four spot, continuing an impressive run of form with goals from Olivier Giroud, Aaron Ramsey and Mathieu Flamini sinking West Ham. Leicester City remained bottom after a 0-0 draw against Hull City, who had Tom Huddlestone sent off in the second half, while Queens Park Rangers are four points from safety after a dismal 3-1 defeat at Crystal Palace.

The only bright spot for QPR, who have now lost 13 of their 14 away games, was a contender for goal of the season from Matt Phillips who scored with a 45-metre shot late in the game. In the day's other match West Bromwich Albion beat Stoke City 1-0 at The Hawthorns.—Reuters



Manchester City's Wilfried Bony shoots against Burnley during their Barclays Premier League at Turf Moor on 14 March, 2015.—REUTERS

Arsenal give Wenger hope of overturning Monaco deficit



Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger

LONDON, 15 March — Arsene Wenger believes Arsenal can overturn their Champions League deficit against Monaco after having watched his side's free-flowing 3-0 victory over West Ham United on Saturday.

The Londoners will again need to be at their attacking best in the French principality on Tuesday after Monaco bullied their way to a 3-1 win in last month's last-16 first leg tie.

"We have a massive challenge but we will give absolutely everything to try and go through," manager Wenger told Sky Sports television.

"(A poor pitch) is one of the problems, there is a lot of rain down there and when it rains, it rains. It's not absolutely fantastic but we won't have any excuses, they are favourites now but we can reverse it.

"We just have to make sure the spirit, the belief and the desire is there."

Arsenal, in third spot and hoping to qualify for the Champions League

next season for the 16th successive campaign, have a four-point lead over fourth-placed Manchester United who host Tottenham Hotspur at Old Trafford on Sunday.

Goals from Olivier Giroud, Aaron Ramsey and Mathieu Flamini against West Ham earned Wenger's men an eighth straight home league win for the first time since they moved to the Emirates in 2006.

After knocking Manchester United out of the FA Cup on Monday, victory for Arsenal capped a fine week for Wenger and the Frenchman was pleased with their attacking swagger.

"It was a good performance, we were weaker at the start of the second half but overall we kept going and created many chances," he said.

"It was a convincing win and a very important one as well. That's the kind of game we want to play. When it doesn't work it is questioned but that is the game we love."—Reuters