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# EARLY RELEASE

## PRESIDENT GRANTS AMNESTY TO 6,966

YANGON, 30 July — The Union government released almost 7,000 prisoners in an amnesty Thursday including more than 200 foreigners and former military-intelligence officers.

In its announcement, the government said President U Thein Sein granted pardons on humanitarian grounds to 6,966 prisoners who had served part of their sentences and shown good behavior in prisons.

The amnesty is aimed at furthering stability and the peace process, and allowing the pardoned prisoners to participate in national reconciliation and political processes, it said.

Presidential pardons with repatriation were also granted to 210 foreign prisoners in view of maintaining bilateral relations, the announcement said.

Among the foreigners released were 153 Chinese loggers who had been sentenced to life imprisonment last week, according to an official of the prison in Myitkyina where the men were being held on charges of illegal logging.

Three journalists and two publishers from the Bi Moon Te Nay, or Bi-Midday Sun, were also freed under the amnesty from Insein prison in Yangon.

Thursday's amnesty was one of the largest that Myanmar has seen in recent years.—GNLM



Prisoners walk out of Insein prison after being released during an amnesty in Yangon on 30 July, 2015.—MNA



### 2015 Magsaysay Awards honor advocates of culture, charity in Asia

MANILA, 30 July — The recipients of this year's Ramon Magsaysay Awards, dubbed Asia's Nobel Prize, were announced Wednesday, with two women among the winners.

In a statement, the Manila-based Ramon Magsaysay

Awards Foundation identified this year's awardees as Kommy Chanthavong, 71, from Laos; Ligaya Fernando-Amilbansa, 71, from the Philippines; Anshu Gupta, 44, from India; and Kyaw Thu, 55, from Myanmar. (See page 5)

**WEATHER NEWS**

### Heavy rain, landslides likely due to cyclone, weather bureau warns

YANGON, 30 July — The weather bureau warned of heavy rains, strong winds and landslides across Myanmar on Thursday as tropical

cyclone "Komen" was set to cross the southern coast of Bangladesh near Chittagong area.

(See page 5)

## UEC chairman receives former Australian prime minister

NAY PYI TAW, 30 July — Chairman of the Union Election Commission U Tin Aye received former Australian prime minister and President of Asia Society Policy Institute Mr Kevin Rudd in Nay Pyi Taw on 28 July. They discussed election issues including compilation of voters' list, voter's education and inviting local and international observers to the general election. —MNA

## KBZ Bank donates cash for flood victims



UMFCCI President U Win Aung presents K150 million for flood victims to officials.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 30 July — Kanbawza Bank Ltd donated K150 million for flood victims across the country Wednesday to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Yangon.

On behalf of KBZ Bank Chairman U Aung Ko Win, Senior Executive Director U Nyo Myint and Executive Director U Aung Kyaw Myo presented the cash donation to UMFCCI President U Win Aung. Recently, Kanbawza Bank Ltd donated K200 million for flood victims in Kawlin, Wuntho, Kanbalu, Kyunhla, Chatthin, Budalin and Mogaung and K380 million to the Wailukyaw Foundation, which is providing relief for victims. —MNA

## Appointment of ambassador agreed on

NAY PYI TAW, 30 July—The government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of H.E. Mr Karel Johannes HARTOGH as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, with residence in Bangkok. Mr Karel Johannes HARTOGH was born in Paris, France, on 31 October 1956. He obtained a High School Diploma from Van Maerlant Lyceum, The Hague, in 1967. Then he studied international law at the University of Amsterdam in 1985 and got a Master's Degree in Law in 1987. He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands in 1985 and served at the European Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs up till 1989. From 1990 to 1999, he served in various capacities at the European Union Department, Export Controls Department, Strategic Affairs Department of the Ministry of Economic Affairs including the post of the secretary of Minister for Foreign Trade. He then served as Deputy Director of Southern Africa Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from 1999 to 2001. Afterwards, he served as Principal Private Secretary of Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2001 to 2005. Before he assumed his duties as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the Kingdom of Thailand, he served as Director of Asia Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. He is married.—MNA

## Flash flood causes damage to farmlands

NAY PYI TAW, 30 July—Flooding caused by heavy rains in June and July caused damage to farmlands across the nation, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation. Among 395,656 acres of inundated farmlands, flash flood placed 116,500 acres of farmlands under water and caused damage to 23,102 acres in Sagaing Region.—MNA

## Worsening traffic congestion frustrates Yangon commuters

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 30 July — For office worker Ko Maung Oo, hours spent traveling to and from work by bus each day are a source of “anxiety and frustration.” His experience is common among Yangon commuters, whom a recent survey found spend an average two hours each day in traffic. “Traffic moving at a snail’s pace in the congested spots makes us feel despondent,” Ko Maung Oo, who commutes from his suburban home to an office downtown, told The Global New Light of Myanmar on Thursday. “Our precious time has been stolen on the buses stranded in daily rush hour congestion.” The Yangon Traffic Report released by auto trading site Motor.com.mm found 44 percent of bus commuters spent between 1-2 hours a day on their daily commute, while 35 percent spent

twice as long commuting. The survey, conducted in late 2014 and early 2015, received responses from about 500 commuters. It found 65 percent of road users were caught in severe traffic jams at least six times a month, 35 percent were affected three to six times a month. Urban commuters face the most drawn-out journeys due to traffic woes, the report pointed out. Statistics show 3.7 million, or 79 percent, of Yangon’s almost 6 million people use buses for their daily commute, with 7 percent catching ferries, 4 percent riding circle trains and 2 percent taking taxis. Taxi driver Ko Lin Phyto said he and fellow drivers were losing money while stuck in traffic. “Heavy congestions in Yangon reduces our potential earnings as it is unavoidable to be stuck in traffic for several minutes every day,” Ko Lin Phyto, 28, said. Since the introduction of a scheme to replace old



A pedestrian moves faster than stationary cars Thursday near Myaenigone in Yangon, where commuters spend an average two hours per day in traffic, according to a recent study. —PHOTO: YE MYINT

vehicles with imported autos, Yangon has seen an influx of cars, with vehicle numbers rising on roads downtown, as well as in suburbs and satellite towns. According to figures compiled last December

by the Department of Road Transport Administration, 433,788 registered vehicles are running on Yangon roads, accounting for about 80 percent of the country’s 643,719 cars. The report listed Pyay Road between Myaenigone

and Hanthawady roundabout, Hledan Junction, Tamway Junction, areas near Bayintnaung flyover and Theingyazay market among the worst places for congestion. Some 26 percent of respondents to the Yangon

Traffic Report blamed bad drivers for the city’s traffic problems, while 16 percent cited the dramatic increase in vehicle numbers. Another 15 percent pointed to insufficient road infrastructure. —GNLM

# Planning, field visits keys to flood relief operations: President U Thein Sein



People wade through flood water on their way to highland in Kalay.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 30 July — President U Thein Sein urged ministries to make all-out efforts during flood relief operations Thursday, stressing the importance of proper planning and field visits to inundated areas.

The president made the comment during a speech at the National Natural Disaster Prevention Central Committee held at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw.

In his speech, the president said some areas of the country were inundated while farmland,

roads, railroads, bridges and houses were destroyed due to continuous rains since 16 July.

Although it is impossible to prevent natural disasters, their impact can be reduced by providing accurate weather reports, the president said.

After the president's speech, Chairman of the Central Committee Vice President U Nyan Tun explained the objectives of the central committee.

Later, members of the committee, ministers, deputies and officials reported to the president

on measures being taken to provide assistance to flood victims and rehabilitation efforts.

Earlier in the morning, President U Thein Sein received France's Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Thierry Mathou, who is leaving the country on expiry of his tour of duty, at the Presidential Palace.

They discussed promotion of bilateral relations, cooperation in the financial sector of Myanmar, investment in electricity and energy sectors and the success of the peace process. —MNA

## Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker talks election at Toungoo town meeting

NAY PYI TAW, 30 July — The general election scheduled for 8 November is a key event for the country, the speaker of the Pyithu Hluttaw said Thursday in a meeting with local people in the town of Toungoo, Bago Division.

Thura U Shwe Mann stressed the need to choose worthy candidates who will devote themselves to the interests of the region and the country as a whole.

The speaker urged local management committees to make combined efforts to ensure that

elections are free and fair.

Local officials and parliamentarians took part in discussions on regional development.

Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann also met local people in the town of Yeni and gave instructions on regional development activities.

Before the meeting, the speaker paid homage to the Presiding Sayadaw of Shwezeti Monastery and offered robes and monastic items to the members of the Sangha.

MNA



Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann cordially converses with local residents in Toungoo.—MNA

## Myanmar, India pledge greater cooperation in defence, security

NAY PYI TAW, 30 July — Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing paid a courtesy call on Indian Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi at his official residence, officials said Thursday.

During their meeting Wednesday they discussed matters related to defence and security cooperation between the two armies, construction of roads and railways linking East Asian countries and maritime transport services.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing later visited India's Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha, PVSM, AVSM, VM, at his office.

In the afternoon, the commander-in-chief met Chief of the Army Staff of the Indian Army General Dalbir Singh, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, VSM, ADC. After the meeting, General Singh hosted a luncheon for Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the Army Battle Honour Mess.

At the briefing hall, the commander-in-chief was briefed on the integration of the Indian army.

He also met Chief of Naval Staff of the Indian Navy Admiral RK Dhowan, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, ADC at his office.

In the late afternoon at the South Block of the Defence Ministry of India, he was briefed on the federal system of governance.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing also signed the book of condolence for late former Indian President Mr APJ Abdul Kalam at this residence in New Delhi.—Myawady



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing shakes hands with Indian Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi.—MYAWADY

## U Ko Ko Latt concurrently accredited Ambassador to Oman

NAY PYI TAW, 31 July — The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Ko Ko Latt, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, concurrently as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Sultanate of Oman.—MNA

## Tornado destroys more than 30 households in Myanaung Tsp



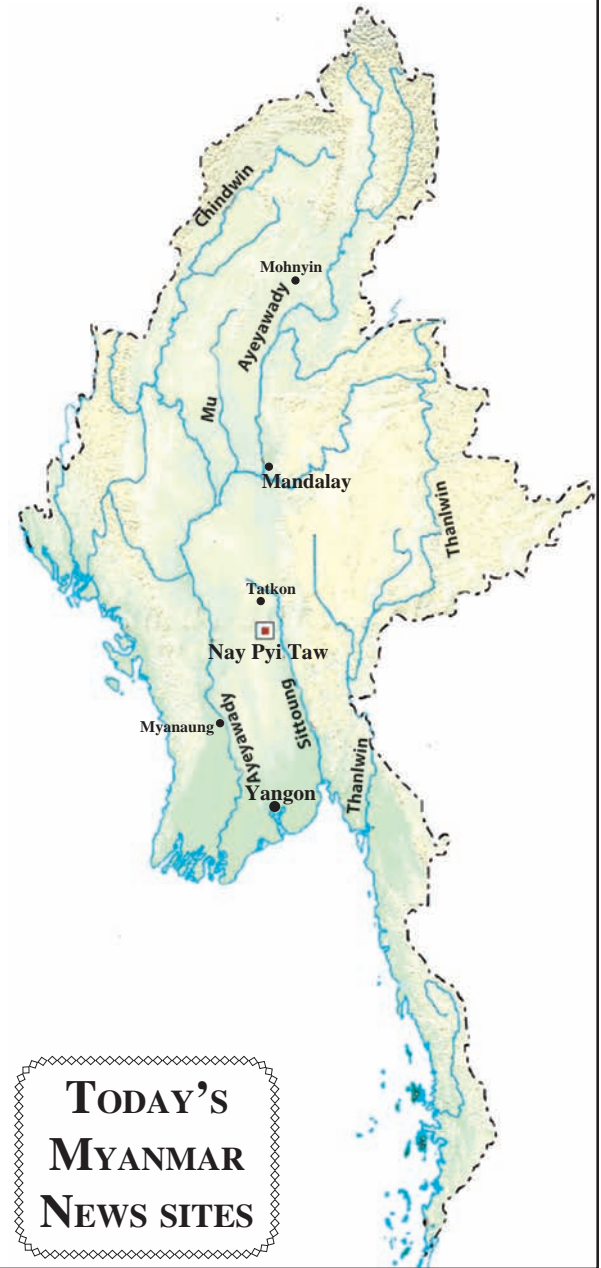
MYANAUNG, 30 July — A tornado damaged more than 30 households Wednesday including one religious building worth K23.5 million in Ayeyawady Region, vil-

lage-tract Administrator U Zaw Moe reported. The tornado hit Nandawgyun Village in Maekhinchauung Village-tract in Myanaung Township of the region



around 1:45 pm and lasted roughly five minutes. There are 87 households in the village, with residents also facing flooding from the Ayeyawady River. Evacu-

ees are being accommodated at a relief camp in the compound of the basic education school in the village.  
*Nay Win Zaw (Myanaung)*



## Kalay University provides cash assistance for flood victims

KALAY, 30 July — Students and faculty of various departments from Kalay University including staff

of administration section on Wednesday donated more than K1 million to help flood victims in Kal-

ay Township, Sagaing Region. Many people in Kalay Township moved to relief

camp due to flash flooding caused by heavy rain that began falling Tuesday evening.—*Dr Than Win*

## MPF launches officer training school in Mandalay

MANDALAY, 30 July—The Police Officer Training School (Mandalay) officially opened in Chanayethazan Township, here, on 29 July, with Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Ye Myint in attendance.

Police Quartermaster-General Pol Brig-Gen Than Tin Aung, Commander of Mandalay Region Police Force Pol Col Han Tun and Commandant of the school Pol Col Min Aung formally opened the training school, while Chief of Myanmar Police Force Maj-Gen Zaw Win gave an address. In com-



memoration of the opening of the school, senior police officers

donated provisions to Buddhist monks. Construction of the train-

ing school began in September 2014.—*Tin Maung (Mandalay)*

## Clashes in Kachin State raise concerns ahead of election



MOHNYIN, 30 July — Armed clashes in Kachin State not only threaten peace talks but also the 2015 general election, said Dr Tu Ja, Chairman of Kachin State Democracy Party (KDP) on 28 July.

Nshang San Awng from the Myitkyina-based Peace-talk Creation Group (PCG) on 27 July said some fighting broke out in Sumprabum Township between Myitkyina and Putao townships in July. Local residents without access to Sumprabum's urban area fled to the area controlled by the Kachin Independence Army.

For security reasons, the Union Election Commission cancelled the 2012 by-election in Kachin State's Mogaung, Phakant and Bhamo townships three days before the scheduled polling day.—*GNLM-001*



## School building upgrades ready to begin in Tatkon Tsp

TATKON, 30 July — The Tatkon Township Education Office has received approval to construct new buildings at 38 basic education schools this academic year.

Plans have been drawn for 37

single-storey and one two-storey concrete school buildings. The buildings represent a significant upgrade for many of the basic education schools in the township.

*Tin Soe Lwin (Township IPRD)*

NATIONAL

### Heavy rain, landslides likely . . .

(from page 1)

The Meteorology and Hydrology Department rated the weather system an orange stage cyclonic storm, warning Chin and Rakhine states, as well as Magway Region, to be on high alert.

Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon, Taninthayi and Ayeayawady regions, as well as Chin, Rakhine, Shan, Kayin and Mon states were forecast to see heavy falls, strong winds, flash floods and landslides within 12 hours from Thursday morning due to the cyclone, the announcement said.

Maximum wind speeds of 60 to 90 miles per hour are forecast for Maungtaw District and 50 to

70 miles per hour in Sittway District while “Komen” is crossing the coasts of Bangladesh, the announcement said.

Frequent squalls with rough to very rough seas were forecast off and along Myanmar coasts with surface wind speeds reaching 50 to 60 miles per hour.

The cyclone was centered over the Northeast Bay of Bengal about 50 miles Southwest of Chittagong in Bangladesh and 135 miles northwest of Sittway at 1:30 p.m. Thursday.

The department advised trawlers, vessels and ships off and along Myanmar coasts to avoid the path of the cyclone.—GNLM

### 2015 Magsaysay Awards honor advocates of culture, charity . . .

(from page 1)

The recipient for Emergent Leadership is Sanjiv Chaturvedi, 40, from India.

Chanthavong is being recognized for her “indomitable spirit” to revive and develop the ancient Laotian art of silk weaving, Fernando-Amilbansa for her “single-minded crusade” in preserving the endangered artistic heritage of the southern Philippines, Gupta for his enterprising leadership in treating cloth as a sustainable development resource for the poor, and Kyaw Thu for his “compassion in addressing

the fundamental needs of both the living and the dead in Myanmar.”

In addition, the prestigious award’s special category for emergent leadership will be conferred this year to an Indian government employee who fought corruption from within.

“The Magsaysay awardees of 2015 are truly stoking fresh hopes for a better Asia. Clearly, they are creating bold solutions to deeply rooted social problems in their respective societies, problems which are most damaging to the lives of those trapped in poverty, ignorance, prejudice, and

unjust systems,” said Carmencita Abella, president of the foundation.

The awardees will receive a certificate, a medallion, and a cash prize during a formal ceremony in Manila on Aug. 31.

Since its establishment in 1957, more than 300 individuals and organizations from Asia have been conferred with the Ramon Magsaysay Award for addressing “issues of human development with courage and creativity, and in doing so, have made contributions that transformed their societies for the better.”—Kyodo News



## UN envoy Angelina Jolie visits IDP camps in Myitkyina

MYITKYINA, 30 July — UNHCR special envoy and goodwill ambassador Angelina Jolie met Kachin State Chief Minister U Lajohn Ngan Hsai at Myitkyina airport Thursday to discuss the situation in camps for internally displaced people in the state and the 2015 general election. The goodwill ambassador and party later visited Jamaikaung and Saint Joseph IDP camps and spoke to camp residents about the welfare of people in the camps.—State IPRD

UNHCR special envoy and goodwill ambassador Angelina Jolie meets internally displaced persons at St Joseph IDP camp in Myitkyina.—MNA

## Recruitment firms pay life insurance to Russian trawler victims’ families

By Ko Moe

YANGON, 30 July — Families of four Myanmar sailors who died in the sinking of a Russian trawler on April 1 received life insurance payments Thursday from seafarer recruitment and placement companies.

Asia Wave paid US \$30,000 each to the families of three men it placed on the ship, while firm Top Choice paid the amount to the family of the seafarer it recruited,

Asia Wave director U Kaung Htoo Khaing Win said.

Out of 10 Myanmar sailors placed by the two companies on the Dalniy Vostok, which sank in Russian waters with 132 crew members about, four died in the tragedy.

The Russian government paid US \$15,000 compensation for each victim of the tragedy to their families last week.—GNLM

## 75% completed Nampaw bailey bridge in Hsipaw Township



A bailey bridge is under construction across Nampaw Creek in Hsipaw Township, Shan State, with 75 percent complete on 30 July.—SAI TUN THEIN (HSIPAW TOWNSHIP IPRD)

## Indian Ocean debris almost certainly from a Boeing 777 - Malaysia

French gendarmes and police inspect a large piece of plane debris which was found on the beach in Saint-Andre, on the French Indian Ocean island of La Reunion, on 29 July, 2015. REUTERS



KUALA LUMPUR/ PARIS, 30 July — Malaysia is “almost certain” that plane debris found on Reunion Island in the Indian Ocean is from a Boeing 777, the deputy transport minister said on Thursday, heightening the possibility it could be wreckage from missing Flight MH370.

The object, which appeared

to be part of a wing, was being sent to offices of France’s BEA crash investigation agency in Toulouse to verify if it was indeed the first trace of the lost plane to be found, Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak said.

Malaysia Airlines was operating a Boeing 777 on the ill-fated flight, which vanished in March

last year while en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing in one of the most baffling mysteries in aviation history. The plane was carrying 239 passengers and crew.

Search efforts led by Australia have focussed on a broad expanse of the southern Indian Ocean off Australia. Reunion Island, where the debris was found washed up

on Wednesday, is a French overseas department roughly 3,700 km (2,300 miles) away, east of Madagascar. “The location is consistent with the drift analysis provided to the Malaysian investigation team, which showed a route from the southern Indian Ocean to Africa,” Najib said in a statement.

There have been four serious accidents involving 777s in the 20 years since the widebody jet came into service. Only MH370 is thought to have crashed south of the equator.

“No hypothesis can be ruled out, including that it would come from a Boeing 777,” the Reunion prefecture and the French Justice Ministry said in a joint statement on Thursday. Aviation experts who have seen widely circulated pictures of the debris said it may be a moving wing surface known as a flaperon, situated close to the fuselage. “It is almost certain that the flaperon is from a Boeing 777 aircraft. Our chief investigator here told me this,” Malaysian Deputy Transport Minister Abdul Aziz Kaprawi told Reuters. Abdul Aziz said a Malaysian team was heading to Reunion Island, about 600 km (370 miles) east of Madagascar. Australia’s Deputy Prime Minister Warren Truss said the object had a number stamped on it that might speed its verification.

“This kind of work is obviously going to take some time although the number may help to identify the aircraft parts, assuming that’s what they are, much more quickly than might otherwise be the case,” he said.

Investigators believe someone deliberately switched off MH370’s transponder before diverting it thousands of miles off course. Most of the passengers were Chinese, and Beijing said it was following developments closely. For the families of those on board, lingering uncertainty surrounding the fate of the plane has been agony. “Even if we find out that this piece of debris belongs to MH370, there is no way to prove that our people were with that plane,” said Jiang Hui, 41, whose father was on the flight. Zhang Qihuai, a lawyer representing some of the passengers’ families, said a group of around 30 relatives had agreed they would proceed with a lawsuit against the airline if the debris was confirmed to be from MH370. The plane piece is roughly 2-2.5 metres (6.5-8 ft) in length, according to photographs. It appeared fairly intact and did not have visible burn marks or signs of impact. Flaperons help pilots control an aircraft while in flight.—Reuters

## 23 confirmed dead in army helicopter crash in Laos

VIENTIANE, 30 July — No survivors have been found from a military helicopter crash that took place earlier this week, Lao defense ministry confirmed Thursday.

The Mi-17 helicopter of the Lao Army’s aviation wing crashed on a slope of Mt. Phou Bia in the Lao province of Xaysomboun while en route to the northern provinces of Xiengkhuang and Huaphan Monday

afternoon local time.

The Lao Ministry of National Defence issued a statement Thursday confirming the loss of all four crew members and the remaining 19 personnel onboard.

Accident due to poor prevailing weather conditions has been identified as the probable cause in preliminary findings, the statement confirmed.

Meanwhile, search and rescue teams continue to undertake

investigation and recovery work at the difficult-to-access crash site.

Local conditions featuring heavy seasonal rains and high humidity are serving to hamper efforts in the rugged jungle-covered terrain, with storms forecast for Thursday afternoon local time.

The highest peak in Laos at an elevation of 2,819 meters, temperatures experienced on the densely forested Mt Phou Bia are typically several degrees cooler

than those recorded in most locations across the tropical Southeast Asian nation.

Inaccessible by road and deemed unsafe for air access, accident response crews have been chiefly focused on on-ground efforts to reach the site, a source quoted by state-run media Vientiane Times was reported as saying Thursday.

The latest Lao military aviation accident follows another

incident in May 2014 in the province of Xiengkhouan where the crash of an airplane resulted in the deaths of 16 of 17 crew members and passengers onboard, including several of the nation’s high-ranking officials.

Meanwhile, an accident involving the civilian national flag carrier Lao Airlines saw all 49 crew and passengers perish when the plane pitched into the Mekong River while on approach to the southern city of Pakse during poor weather in October 2013.

Xinhua

## 26 killed, 42 missing in landslides in western Nepal

KATHMANDU, 30 July — At least 26 people have been killed and 42 others missing following landslides in western Nepal on Wednesday night, officials said.

Some 20 dead bodies have been recovered from Lumle Village Development Committee (VDC) and Bhadaure Tamaghi VDC in Kaski District so far, according to officials involved in the rescue operation.

Lumle, some 30 kilometers west of Pokhara, has been a famous tourist destination in Nepal which attracts thousands of domestic as well as international tourists every year. Lumle VDC is a gateway to the nature trek reaching the Annapurna Base Camp (ABC) in western Nepal. However, no foreigner is found killed or injured in the

landslide so far.

“We have recovered 15 dead bodies in Lumle alone and another 28 people have gone missing as 14 houses were buried in the landslide,” chief district officer of Kaski District, Krishna Bahadur Raut, told Xinhua by phone from the site.

He also said that five people were killed and 14 others injured in Bhadaure Tamaghi VDC after villages were hit by the landslide.

Five houses were completely destroyed while some schools and temples in the remote villages are said to be partially damaged, according to local officials.

Rescue operations are currently underway, the officials said.

Xinhua



Local residents take water from a dried river in Bekasi, West Java province, Indonesia, on 30 July, 2015. Indonesian Agency for Meteorology Climatology and Geophysics (BMKG) said, trend of El Nino phenomena intensity is moving towards to strong moderate, which means that the start of the rain season in Indonesia will withdraw to November.—XINHUA

## Russia vetoes UN resolution on tribunal for Malaysian jet crash

NEW YORK, 30 July — The UN Security Council failed to endorse a draft resolution that would have established a tribunal to prosecute people responsible for the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 in eastern Ukraine last July, after Russia used its veto to prevent its passage.

The draft resolution was proposed by Malaysia,

currently sitting as a non-permanent member on the 15-member council. After the vote, the country's transport minister Liow Tiong Lai said, "We are deeply disappointed" by the council's failure to adopt it.

One year after the unanimous adoption of a resolution condemning the downing of the passenger jet and demanding an international

investigation, "the council is now taking a step back by sending the wrong signal to the victims' family and loved ones," the minister said. Russian Ambassador Vitaly Churkin said, "Our position (is) that this is premature; it hasn't been elaborated carefully."

Russia proposed a separate resolution seeking to bring the perpetrators to jus-

tice without establishing a tribunal. While it was put on the table for scrutiny among council members, it was not reconciled with the Malaysian proposal.

In Wednesday's vote, 11 countries supported the resolution, while China, Venezuela and Angola abstained. The Malaysia Airlines jet bound for Kuala Lumpur from Amsterdam was shot down July 17 when it was flying over Ukraine's Donetsk region held by pro-Russian separatists. All 298 people aboard were killed. The Netherlands and Australia, where many of the passengers came from, also sent their foreign ministers to Wednesday's Security Council meeting.

Malaysian Transport Minister Liow said the vote result was regrettable but said "we are resolute that justice will be delivered and we won't let the veto weaken our resolve," adding that they will start focusing on other options to seek prosecution of those responsible.—*Kyodo News*



Dutch investigators and an Emergencies Ministry member work at the site where the downed Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 crashed, near the village of Hrabove (Grabovo) in Donetsk region, eastern Ukraine November 16, 2014. —REUTERS

## Western delegations visit Iran one after another to seek cooperation opportunities

TEHRAN, 30 July — After a landmark deal on Iran's nuclear program, Tehran has received various senior officials from the West, with the latest being French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius.

Fabius arrived here Wednesday at the invitation of his Iranian counterpart Mohammad-Javad Zarif on the first such visit in over a decade.

The agreement reached in Vienna benefits both Iran and the P5+1 (Britain, China, France, Russia, the United States, and Germany) group and serves as a major step in converting threats to op-

portunities, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said at a meeting with Fabius.

Iran and France should take advantage of the post-deal mood to improve their long-term relations, he said.

Fabius echoed the upbeat sentiment, saying, "Today is the launch of a new chapter in Tehran-Paris relations, and the prospect for the relations is quite positive following the nuclear deal."

France will do its best to implement the nuclear deal so that Iranians can benefit from the removal of sanctions, he added.

Iran and France agreed

Wednesday to start discussing bilateral cooperation, and priorities for potential cooperation include fighting terrorism, campaigning against drugs and cooperating on environmental issues, Zarif said following a meeting with Fabius.

Both countries may also cooperate on nuclear programs for they had collaborated in this field before, he said. Both countries may also further cooperate in economic sectors, such as energy, transportation and the auto industry, he added.

According to information reaching here from Par-

is earlier, France will send a delegation of 80 French companies to Tehran at the end of September.

A day before Fabius' arrival, Rouhani received here another guest from the European continent — EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini. During her meeting with Rouhani, Mogherini expressed the hope that the implementation of the nuclear deal would open a new chapter in the economic, trade and political relations between Iran and the EU, and would help expand Iran's relations with European countries.—*Xinhua*

## India set to become world's most populous country by 2022 — UN

LONDON, 30 July — India is set to overtake China and become the world's most populous country in less than a decade - six years sooner than previously forecast, the United Nations said on Wednesday.

Fast-growing Nigeria is on course to outstrip the United States by about 2050 to become the country with the third largest population, the United Nations predicted.

The current global population of 7.3 billion is forecast to reach 9.7 billion

in 2050 and 11.2 billion in 2100, slightly above the last set of UN projections. Most growth will happen in developing regions, particularly Africa, according to the report World Population Prospects.

The demographic forecasts are crucial for designing and implementing the new global development goals being launched later this year to replace the Millennium Development Goals.

John Wilmoth, head of the UN population division,

said the concentration of growth in the poorest countries would make it harder to eradicate poverty, combat hunger and expand schooling and health systems.

The world's two largest nations, China and India, have well over 1 billion people each and are likely to switch places by 2022 - six years earlier than previously forecast. Experts predict Africa will account for more than half the world's population growth in the next 35 years. Ten African countries — Angola, Bu-

rundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Somalia, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia — are projected to increase their populations five-fold or more by 2100. Future population growth is highly dependent on the path of future fertility, as relatively small changes in fertility can, projected over decades, generate large differences in total population, the report said. In recent years, fertility has declined in almost all parts of the world, while life expectancy has increased

## US democratic presidential hopeful Clinton to call for lifting Cuban embargo



Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton speaks during a campaign stop at Beech Hill Farm in Hopkinton, New Hampshire July 28, 2015.—REUTERS

HOPKINTON, (New Hampshire), 30 July — Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton this week will call on US lawmakers to lift the long-standing economic embargo against Cuba, her campaign announced on Wednesday.

The former US secretary of state will say on Friday during an appearance at Florida International University in Miami that "Republican arguments against increased engagement are part of failed policies of the past," her campaign said.

President Barack Obama's administration has formally restored diplomatic ties with the island nation and dropped Cuba from a list of state sponsors of terror.

But Congress has the authority to remove restrictions that prevent Americans from owning property in Cuba or travelling there freely. So far, it has not done so.

Before the Obama administration's chang-

es, Clinton had asserted the policy toward Cuba, in place for more than 50 years, was not working. She wrote in her memoir that she had urged Obama to move away from the tough stance.

Clinton's position lines up with that of many younger voters but could frustrate older Cuban-Americans in South Florida, many of whom believe the United States should not have relations with the Communist government of Cuban President Raul Castro.

Floridians Jeb Bush and Marco Rubio, both of whom are seeking the Republican nomination for president in the November 2016 election, have sharply criticized Obama for restoring relations with Cuba. "Hillary Clinton and President Obama claim that our Cuba policy is a relic of history, but it's the Castro regime that is stuck in the Cold War," Emily Benavides, a spokeswoman for Bush, said in a statement.

Reuters

significantly in the poorest countries, rising from 56 to 62 since the beginning of the century.

Declining fertility and rising life expectancy mean the world is getting greyer, and most regions will have an ageing population, starting with Europe where one third of the population is projected to be over 60 by 2050, the report said.

Globally, the number of people aged 80 or over - currently 125 million - is projected to more than triple by 2050 and to increase

more than seven times by 2100.

But populations in many regions are still young. In Africa, children under 15 account for two fifths of the population.

"The large number of young people (in Africa) who will reach adulthood in the coming years and have children of their own, ensures that the region will play a central role in shaping the size and distribution of the world's population over the coming decades," the report said.—*Reuters*

## PERSPECTIVES

Friday, 31 July, 2015

## Sound judgement more important than good luck

By Kyaw Thura

IT is imperative for Myanmar to maintain its political stability in order to ensure a free and fair election on 8 November. Activists have warned that simmering religious tensions and ethnic conflicts might become a source of instability with potential to avert the country from its path

toward democratic reforms.

Political parties registered to contest the polls are permitted time to express their standpoints and future plans before the polling day. They will spend the time canvassing and campaigning for majority support in their constituencies. In addition, each party will be allowed an equal length of time to persuade voters through political broadcasts.

This means that we, the electorate, must open our eyes and ears wider than ever before while listening to their political broadcasts. The more we hear, the more we learn. The more we learn, the easier it is for us to make sensible decisions.

Experience has taught us how wrong decisions have had negative impacts on the future of both the persons involved and the people around them. As members of society, we are all responsible for be-

queathing a safer and better society to posterity. In a sense, our votes are not just for our own future but for our children too.

Otherwise, posterity will point the finger of accusation at us and our names will be mud throughout the history. All in all, we must realise that great achievements are more by sound judgement than good luck.

## Write for us

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

## Fullmoon of Waso, Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta Day

Ba Sein

(Religious Affairs)

The Fullmoon of Waso, the Dhammacakkapavattana Day falls on 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2015. The Fullmoon Day of Waso associates with the four great noble and significant events related to the precious life of the Omniscient Gotama Buddha. On that holy day, the Buddha-to-be (the Gotama Buddha) took pregnancy in the womb of Queen Maya, wife of his Majesty Sudhodana of Kapilavasthu Kingdom, and also on that holy day at the age of 29, the Buddha-to-be renounced the world, and after having full attainment of the Buddhahood, the Gotama Buddha preached His first great sermon, Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta to His five disciples, in which He explained the Four Noble Truths and the Noble-Eightfold Path, on the Fullmoon Day of Waso. All five disciples received

ordination and formed the first nucleus of the holy brotherhood of disciples known as the Sangha.

And also, on the Fullmoon Day of Waso, the Omniscient Buddha performed the great miracle called the Twin Miracle. The reason for this was to dispel the wrong views of heretics and to prove that He possessed the attributes of a Buddha. It is miracle of water and fire.

## The Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta Day

Over 2559 years ago, the unrivalled Omniscient Buddha preached His first great Sermon, the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta to His five disciples (Kondanna and other four) in the Deer park, now known as Saranath, India, on the Fullmoon Day of Waso. In commemoration of this significant and holy event associated with the precious life of the Buddha, the Buddhist peoples across the Buddhist world celebrate the Dhammacakka-

vattana Sutta Day on this Fullmoon Day of Waso by observing precepts delivered by members of the Sangha and respectfully listening to the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta recited by members of the Sangha.

And also, the generous Buddhist peoples perform meritorious deeds as offering Waso robes, alms and other offertories to members of Sangha on the Fullmoon Day of Waso, the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta Day.

## Rains-retreat period, Vassavasa

Observing the rains-retreat period; confining oneself to a specific monastic dwelling for the three-month rainy period.

During the three months of monsoon rains, Bhikkhus go into retreat at a monastery designated before hand at the start of the rainy season. This practice was introduced during the life time of the Buddha. Before the Buddha decreed

the rains-retreat period, Bhikkhus walked across fields under cultivation. People started to criticize them as some people believed that plants and even drops of water were living beings. Why is it that the disciples of the Buddha go on travels all the year round and trample young plants and insects into oblivion while even members of other sects do not go on journeys during the rains? Even birds and animals

have the good sense to stay in their nests or dens during the rains, people complained. To put an end to this controversy, the Buddha decreed that the rains-retreat period be observed. Rains-retreat period may be observed by taking up the designated residence during one of the two-periods:-

(1) Earlier rains-retreat period (purimavassavasa), commencing from the day after the

Fullmoon of Waso (roughly corresponding to July) and ending on the Fullmoon day of Thadingyut (roughly) corresponding to October);

(2) Later rains-retreat period (pacchimavassavasa), commencing from the day after the Fullmoon day of Tazaungmgon (roughly corresponding to November).

## Supermarket chain offers free health checkups to public

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 30 July—Members of the public are invited to undergo a free health assessment at City Mart supermarket in South Dagon Township on 8 and 9 August, an official from the retail chain said Thursday.

The programme aims to provide medical examinations free of charge to residents in the township, a heavily populated suburban area of Yangon with few high-income residents, City

Mart Holding Ltd corporate social responsibility officer U Aung Soe said.

Under the programme, people may undergo tests for handgrip strength, bone mineral density (BMD), body mass index (BMI) and blood pressure on site from 1 to 6 p.m., with the organizer preparing hundreds of books to disseminate knowledge on first aid treatment. As part of its corporate social responsibility ac-

tivities, City Mart Holding Ltd has carried out the health check programme since 2013 and provided free monthly medical check-ups to more than 10,000 people including foreigners.

The company is scheduled to conduct the programme at Ocean Supercentre in Mandalay Region in mid-August, planning to provide five kinds of medical check-ups including free eye tests, U Aung Soe said.—GNLM

## Philanthropy and human value

Poe San

Located in the village of Kyauktan at the entrance to Bago Region, the Green Thumb school has taught orphans and children of poor families since 2004.

Sayadaw Dr Ashin Panjobhasa runs the school with the intention of implanting Buddhist teachings and ethics in young minds so that they will become productive members of society when they grow up. Nearly 500 children attend the school.

Apart from providing underprivileged children

access to education, the venerable monk is engaged in other philanthropic works including computer courses, free funeral services, free medical care, libraries, environmental conservation, provision of organic farming methods, and establishment of botanical gardens.

Inspired by the Sayadaw's efforts, a group including the reporter visited the school with the aim of making a contribution to its works. The cleanliness and quietness of the monastery compound has a lot to offer visitors. It offers a haven of peace and serenity away

from the hustle and bustle of the city. We felt so pleased with our donations that our minds were filled with desires for more future contributions.

Words of wisdom delivered by the Sayadaw still echoed in my ears.

"If you really hope for national prosperity, stop exchanging words and trading blame. Instead, giving a helping hand where you can is the best way to attain that goal." In our short lives all what we should do is to devote ourselves to philanthropic services to the best of our ability.



An old man receives free eye test under City Mart's Health Check Programme.—CITY MART



## ARTICLE

# Keep Our Moral Conduct Clean

Htun Tin Htun

(continued from 30-7-2015)

“Calm is his thought, calm his speech and calm his deed, who, truly knowing, is wholly freed, perfectly tranquil and wise.” (Dhammapada Verse No. 96). The father hates the child disobedience, the child hates the parents for not providing what he considers are his essential needs. In society, a person would show hate to another person because of the feeling, rightly or wrongly, that the particular person was a stumbling block to one’s aspiration and so on. In national and international relationships, one country would express hate for another country because of certain action against it. The hatred goes on. It leads to reprisals and in many instances, may even lead to war causing untold misery and destruction in lives and property.

“One should do what one teaches others to do, if one would train others, one should be well controlled oneself. Difficult, indeed, is self-control.” (Dhammapada Verse No. 159). The Buddha’s Noble Eight-fold Path or the middle way is projected into all our day-to-day human relationships, together with the exercise of Patience, Tolerance and Understanding. It will be observed that the word “Right” is contained in all the eight constituents of Ariya Path. Hence, if we follow the Noble Eight-fold Path, it will be the right path that we are taking to achieve peace and tranquillity. The Eight-fold Path is :- 1) Right Understanding; 2) Right Thought; 3) Right Livelihood; 4) Right Effort; 5) Right Speech; 6) Right Action; 7) Right Mindfulness; 8) Right Concentration.

“Not by mere eloquence nor by beauty of form does a man become accomplished, if he is jealous, selfish and deceitful.” (Dhammapada Verse No.262). Closely associated with the Noble Eight-fold Path, are the Five Precepts which are normally observed by all the Buddhist devotees in any religious meeting. They are:- 1) To abstain from killing; 2) To abstain from stealing; 3) To abstain from adultery; 4) To abstain

from lying and loose speech; and 5) To abstain from intoxicants and drugs. These precepts are simple in their presentation and are likely, at times, to be taken for granted by devotees, without giving deep thought to the serious impact on our daily lives and to the peace and harmony of our society and country.

“Difficult is life for the modest one who always seeks purity, is detached and unassuming, clean in life, and discerning.” (Dhammapada verse No. 245). When these precepts were enunciated by the Buddha, He had in mind the unsettled conditions of society prevailing nearly twenty-six centuries ago in India. These conditions were caused by human failings such as anger which leads to killing, greed which leads to stealing, undue sexual impulses that lead to adultery, egoistic feelings that lead to telling falsehoods and the absence of self-control that leads to undue consumption of intoxicants or drugs.

Under the guidance of the teachings of the Buddha, we can definitely make our Right Living. From a Buddhist perspective, morality is based on purification of the mind. As our minds are purified, our actions are purified. As a result, not only do mental attitudes that are dissonant or harmful to the natural world disappear, but new mental states lead directly to more enlightened actions in relation to the natural world and more enlightened influence on others about the natural world. This was already apparent in the Buddha’s time. Buddhist monks and nuns vow to follow moral precepts that prohibit harming of the environment, including all the sentient beings who live in it. Buddhist monastic make vows for protecting the purity of the water; for not killing sentient beings who live in the earth; for not killing insects, birds, and animals; for not starting forest fires; and for respecting the life of trees, particularly ancient ones.

“Clearly understanding this excellence of heedfulness, the wise exult therein and enjoy the resort of the Noble Ones.” (Dhammapada Verse No. 22). For the peaceful co-existence of our human race, that every follower of

Buddhism is requested to repeat these precepts (moral conduct), again and again as a daily habit to stay clear from the five evils that would cause pain and harm to anyone who fails to follow the precepts. These are norms for a good society. As human beings, we all value our lives, hence we should refrain from taking the lives of other beings. At times we may be subjected to very grave provocation, but despite whatever tribulations may be poured on us, we should maintain our cool and never allow our emotions, particularly anger, to get the better of us. Angry emotions can lead to deadly action. By instilling the noble spirit of love and compassion in our hearts, we should be able to maintain the precept to abstain from killing – to abstain from taking lives of other beings.

“The wise are controlled in thought, controlled in speech and controlled in bodily action. They are truly well-controlled.” (Dhammapada verse No. 234). One of the codes of a harmonious human society as taught by the Buddha and as contained in the second precept is to refrain from stealing. In our human society, each of us has to work to earn our living. With the money that we earn, we buy the necessities of life for our sustenance. We treasure these necessities because we obtained them through our own sweat and labour. We can part with them, if necessary, to help others in need, but we certainly would strongly object if our requirements were forcibly taken away from us through thieving or other means. Just as we do not like others to steal our possessions, we should all adopt the precept to “refrain from stealing” under any circumstances.

Clearly understand that “The doer of good delights here and hereafter; he delights in both the worlds. The thought, “Good have I done,” delights him, and he delights even more when gone to realms of bliss.” (Dhammapada Verse No. 18). In traditional cultures, taking what is not given was personal and direct. Everyone could identify it and see it happening, clearly and dis-

tinctly. The complicated nature of contemporary society, with its long, twisted, and often hidden chains of causes and effects, very often makes it difficult to identify this category of exploitation directly and personally. Buddhist teachings can act as an aid in clarifying and magnifying such muddled situations and can encourage us to try to clarify and shorten the causal chains of the everyday transactions of contemporary daily life.

“Let a man guard himself against irritability in bodily action; let him be controlled in deed. Abandoning bodily misconduct, let him practise good conduct in deed.” (Dhammapada Verse No. 231). From the past to the present day, many happy families have been broken up or disrupted due to man’s inordinate sexual desires. Man should control his animal passions and behave in a decent and ethical manner. Hence the Buddha enjoined all human beings to refrain from committing adultery. Every man must know the fact that “Four misfortunes befall the reckless man who consorts with another’s wife: acquisition of demerit, disturbed sleep, ill-repute and (rebirth in) states of woe.” (Dhammapada Verse No. 309). In film, on video, and on the Internet, the norm has become portrayal of casual sex without mention of its dangers — pregnancy, disease, social disruption, and deep personal suffering. Clear explanation by Buddhist teachers of the meaning and importance of this precept for the Buddhist laity and exhortation for them to make vows to follow this precept can be a strong force to heal this dangerous rent in the social fabric.

Everybody must learn the verse that “Let a man guard himself against irritability in speech; let him be controlled in speech. Abandoning verbal misconduct, let him practise good conduct in speech.” (Dhammapada Verse No. 232). One of the most difficult precepts to follow in this modern era is the precept to abstain from lying or telling falsehoods. For fear of punishment, a child would at once deny that is has committed a misdeed. In a court of law, a witness would be prepared to tell a deliberate lie in order to

save a friend or a relative. However, lying is an obnoxious deed, particularly if a person were to create deliberate lies in order to put someone in trouble. Another very distasteful act of lying is to slander by spreading unfounded lies in order to smear the good name of another person. The Buddha has enjoined us as good Buddhists to refrain from telling lies. We should uphold the truth. We should honour this precept and refrain from indulging in falsehoods.

“All tremble at violence; life is dear to all. Putting oneself in the place of another, one should not kill nor cause another to kill.” (Dhammapada Verse No. 130). Profound personal honesty is absolutely essential for progress on the Buddhist Path. If we cannot be true to ourselves, we cannot be trustworthy in social relationships. Yet deception and dishonesty is the widespread currency of contemporary society. This begins with deceiving others about the appearance of our bodies, includes phony representations of people and products in advertising, and is exemplified by widespread cheating on examinations, lying on resumes, and falsifying data in scientific papers. Given recent technological developments, documents, photographs, and videos can now be easily altered in ways that are extremely difficult if not impossible to detect. People are routinely deceived and harmed

by other people who use false identities and misrepresentations on the Internet. Using the lens of this precept, it easily becomes clear where corrective action needs to be taken.

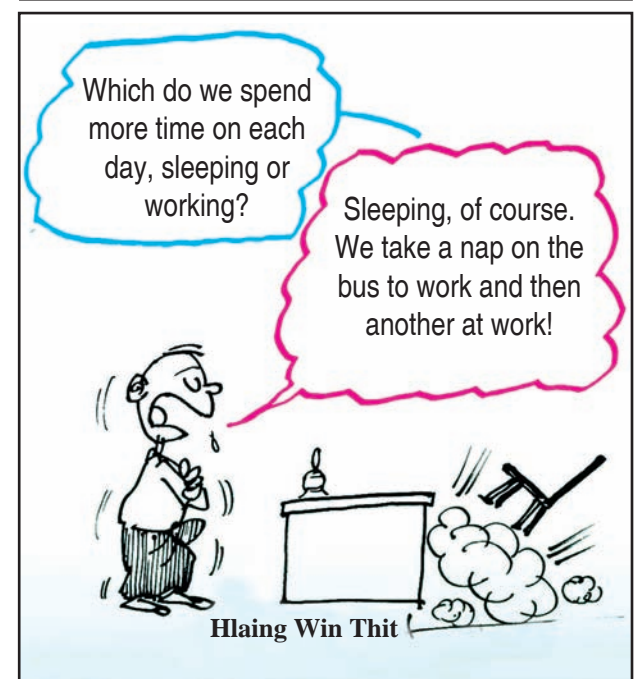
“Not the sweet smell of flowers, not even the fragrance of sandal, tagara or jasmine blows against the wind. But the fragrance of the virtuous blows against the wind. Truly, the virtuous man pervades all directions with the fragrance of his virtue.” (Dhammapada verse No. 54). Many good families have been broken and upset through the inordinate use of intoxicants and drugs. Intoxicants or drugs have the effect of lulling the consumer into a state of false happiness. A drunkard loses his self-control and does not realise what he is doing. He becomes boisterous and is prepared to challenge everybody to a scuffle. A drunkard often loses his self respect. Under the influence of liquor, a drunkard would do things which he would normally do if he is sober. The drug addict is also a curse to the society. Many crimes in the country are caused by drug addicts. We should all observe the precept to refrain from taking liquor and drugs.

**Reference:** Morality (Sila), by Kaba-Aye Sayadaw Ashin Panna Dipa, 4.4.85; MORAL AND ETHICAL CONDUCT OF A BUDDHIST by Ven Dr K Sri Dhammananda.; Dhammapada SARPAY-LAWKA (The Literary World) January 2007.

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## New Italian opposition group pledges support for Renzi reform



*Italy's Prime Minister Matteo Renzi attends a joint news conference with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in the West Bank city of Bethlehem on 22 July, 2015.*

REUTERS

ROME, 30 July — A new Italian opposition splinter group said at its debut on Wednesday that it would back Prime Minister Matteo Renzi's plan to make Italy more politically stable by changing the constitution to streamline the law-making process.

Denis Verdini said he was leaving former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi's centre-right Forza Italia party to form a group of 10 senators that could give Renzi support on the legislation that is due to be voted in parliament in the autumn. The law, a major plank of Renzi's reform platform, would strip regional governments of some

powers they now hold and make the Senate an unelected body whose support would no longer be needed to seat a government.

In combination with a new electoral law passed in May, Renzi says the constitutional reform will make Italy, which has had 64 governments since 1945, more stable and more efficient.

Renzi's centre-left coalition has only a 9-vote majority in the Senate and about 20 senators from his Democratic Party (PD) have said they would not vote the reform if it is not revised, meaning Verdini's new group could be pivotal.

Renzi has a broad majority in the lower house. While the new group may help the premier pass the reform, it could also deepen a split within the PD where left-wing members of the party are asking for a greater role in policy making.

Verdini, who was one of Berlusconi's top lieutenants, told reporters his new group, the Liberal Popular Autonomous Alliance (ALA), would not automatically support Renzi on other issues.

Forza Italia had backed the reforms until a dispute over the election of President Sergio Mattarella in January prompted Berlusconi to withdraw his support for Renzi's institutional reforms.—Reuters

## Top US general says Iran deal lowers near-term atomic arms risk

WASHINGTON, 30 July — The top US military officer supported a proposed nuclear deal with Iran on Wednesday, saying it reduced the risk of Tehran developing atomic arms while buying time to work with allies to confront the Islamic Republic over other "malign activities."

Army General Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a Senate hearing he had advised the White House to keep sanctions on Iran's ballistic missile programme and arms trafficking for "as long as possible."

The deal between Iran and the United States, China, Russia, Britain and France would lift the ban on ballistic missile technology for eight years and retain an arms embargo for five.

Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee asked Dempsey how he squared his backing for the deal with his statement to the panel earlier this month that "under no circumstances" should pressure be eased on Iran over ballistic missiles and arms trafficking.

"My recommendation was to keep pressure on Iran on the other malign activities for as

long as possible," Dempsey told the panel. "I will say that I think time works for us as well as Iran ... and so with the agreement made and having the opportunity to give my advice, I support it."

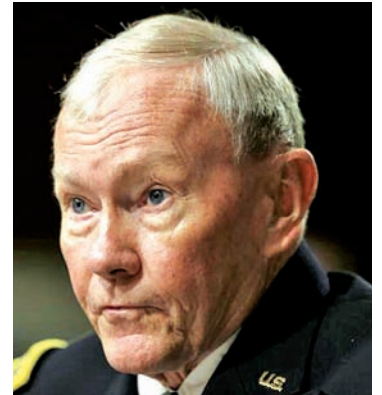
Dempsey appeared alongside Defence Secretary Ash Carter, Secretary of State John Kerry, Treasury Secretary Jack Lew and Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz to discuss the military implications of the deal.

Iran agreed to stop producing highly enriched uranium and submit to UN inspections in exchange for an end to international economic sanctions.

The deal would free up \$50 billion to \$60 billion in Iranian funds frozen in bank accounts in other countries, Lew said.

He said Tehran needed much of that money as foreign reserves to settle purchases made in other countries and it would be "highly exaggerated" to think it all could be used to support militant groups and other "malign purposes" in the Middle East.

Iran supports Hezbollah, Hamas and Houthi rebels in regional conflicts against US partners such as Israel and Yemen.



*The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, US Army General Martin Dempsey, appears before the Senate Armed Services Committee in Washington 29 July, 2015.*

REUTERS

"There is clearly the opportunity for Iran to use some of the revenue that they gain for malign purposes, and that bears watching and collaboration with our regional partners, including Israel," Dempsey told the hearing.

He said the deal would reduce the near-term risk of Tehran acquiring nuclear arms but increase the need to strengthen collaboration with partners in the Middle East.

Reuters

## Pressed by left, Greece's Tsipras vows 'thus far and no further'

ATHENS, 30 July — Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, struggling to contain a revolt in his left-wing Syriza party, said on Wednesday that his government would not implement reform measures beyond those agreed with lenders at a euro zone summit this month.

Tsipras faces a tough Syriza central committee session on Thursday with many activists angered by his acceptance of bailout terms more stringent than those voters rejected in a July 5 referendum.

In a clear warning to Syriza rebels, Tsipras said he could be forced to call early elections if he no longer had a parliamentary majority, and suggested an emergency party congress could be held in early September.

At the same time, he is under pressure from Greece's creditors to go beyond the two packages of so-called prior actions passed by parliament and include unpopular steps to curb early retirement and tax breaks for farmers, EU sources say.

"I know well the framework of the deal we signed at the euro zone summit on July 12," Tsip-

ras told Sto Kokkino radio. "We will implement these commitments, irrespective of whether we agree with it or not. Nothing beyond that."

With Greece close to the financial abyss last month, the government closed the banks for three weeks and Tsipras was forced to make the major concessions on reform and austerity to open negotiations on a third bailout of up to 86 billion euros (£60.7 billion).

In a setback for government efforts to restore more economic normality, the Athens stock exchange will stay closed probably until the end of a fifth week because banks need to adapt IT systems to enforce limits on trading by Greeks.

A European Commission spokeswoman declined to say what additional measures Athens was expected to take before the conclusion of the new bailout, although she said earlier this week more reforms were due before the first aid is disbursed.

Tsipras said Greece's primary budget balance before debt service would break even at best or show a deficit this year, depending on a financial situation



*Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras looks on as he attends a meal of the Greek political party leaders at the Presidential Palace, hosted by President Prokopis Pavlopoulos (not pictured) to commemorate the 41st anniversary of the Restoration of Democracy after the fall of the military junta in 1974 in Athens, Greece July 24, 2015.—REUTERS*

that has deteriorated sharply since the imposition of capital controls on June 28.

The Brussels summit agreement did not specify fiscal targets but Athens had previously been expected to achieve a primary surplus equivalent to 1 percent of annual Greek economic output this year and 2 percent in 2016.

Germany's Der Spiegel magazine reported that the creditors were willing to allow a gentler fiscal path taking account of Greece's return to recession, provided Athens pursued economic and administrative reforms more

energetically.

With the banking squeeze easing, the European Central Bank kept its cap on emergency funding for Greek banks unchanged on Wednesday after Athens did not request another increase, a source familiar with the decision said.

The Athens Stock Exchange has been shut since June 29 after the government closed the banks, rationed cash withdrawals and imposed capital controls to stop a run on deposits by savers and companies.

The ECB gave Greece the go-ahead on Tuesday to

reopen the stock market without restrictions for foreign investors, but with limitations for local investors to avert the risk of further capital outflows.

"The Greek banks need to resolve some IT issues regarding the restrictions," a spokeswoman for the exchange said.

European Commission spokeswoman Nina Andreeva, keen not to add to Tsipras's domestic woes, praised the conduct of the bailout talks so far, brushing aside security and access issues.

"We are satisfied with the smooth and constructive cooperation with the Greek authorities and that should now allow us to progress as swiftly as possible," she told reporters.

Intensive talks with officials from the Commission, the ECB, the International Monetary Fund and the euro zone's rescue fund, the European Stability Mechanism, began on Monday.

On Wednesday, the two sides opened technical talks on energy issues, including the fate of power grid operator ADMIE, an energy ministry official told Reuters.

Under the Brussels

deal, Greece committed to selling ADMIE unless replacement measures that would open up competition in the market can be found.

The leftist government halted the sale of a 66 percent stake in the grid operator, fully owned by the biggest electricity utility PPC, when it came into power in January. Newly appointed Energy Minister Panos Skourletis said last week the state should take over ADMIE due to its strategic importance and the government would look to alternatives to privatising it.

Tsipras faces an uncertain vote in the 200 member Syriza central committee with sacked former energy minister Panagiotis Lafazanis leading a leftist faction that rejected the July 13 deal and is demanding a tougher line with the creditors.

Compounding his problems, former finance minister Yanis Varoufakis continues to denounce the agreement in daily media interviews and articles, accusing the creditors of trampling on Greek sovereignty and justifying his own secret planning while in office to set up an alternative currency.

Reuters

## Sony first-quarter operating profit rises 39 percent, beats estimates

TOKYO, 30 July — Sony Corp on Thursday reported a 39 percent rise in quarterly profit on strong sales of camera sensors and PlayStation 4 videogames, beating analyst estimates and helping to reassure investors a recent stock offering would pay off.

April-June operating profit rose to 96.9 billion yen (\$780.8 million), compared with the 73.3 billion average estimate of 18 analysts polled by Reuters.

The result comes after Sony last month announced its first capital raising in a quarter of a century. Sony



Visitors try out Sony Corp's digital cameras at its headquarters in Tokyo in this 4 Feb, 2015 file photo.

REUTERS

has said it would use the funds to boost production of image sensors, which are now among Sony's

strongest-selling products.

Sony shares fell more than 8 percent on the day of the announcement due to fears of stock dilution, although they have since recouped much of those losses and are double their year-earlier price.

Chief Executive Kazuo Hirai is banking on image sensors to anchor Sony's turnaround, while pulling back from weak-selling goods such as smartphones and TVs which suffer competition from both cheaper rivals in Asia and industry giants like Apple Inc and Samsung Electronics Co

Ltd. Sony said first-quarter operating income at its devices business, which includes image sensors, rose 164 percent from a year earlier to 30.3 billion yen, helped by growing demand from smartphone makers.

Its gaming business' quarterly operating income rose 351 percent to 19.5 billion yen on stronger sales of PlayStation 4 software as well as insurance recoveries on previously incurred losses related to a cyber attack on Sony's network services.

Its mobile division reported a 22.9 billion yen

quarterly loss, and now expects a full-year operating loss of 60 billion yen, worse than the 39 billion yen loss it expected in April.

The more bullish outlook for gaming and sensors helped Sony maintain its full-year forecast, and it reiterated its view for operating profit to more than quadruple in the current year through March to 320 billion yen.

Shares of Sony closed 2.1 percent lower ahead of the earnings release, compared with a 1.1 percent rise in the broader market.

Reuters

## Lithium find in exploding star could help solve astronomy puzzle

SANTIAGO, 30 July — Astronomers have discovered lithium in a type of stellar explosion known as a nova for the first time, a find that helps clear up a longstanding mystery in astrophysics about the quantity of the element that has been observed in stars.

Using two telescopes in Chile, astronomers detected tiny amounts of the chemical element lithium in Nova Centauri, which exploded in 2013 - the brightest nova so far this century, the European Southern Observatory said this week.

That could be the first step in solving the so-called lithium riddle. Models of the Big Bang at the birth of the universe 13.8 billion years ago al-

low astronomers to calculate quite accurately how much lithium should be present.

But older stars do not have as much lithium as the models suggest, while younger ones have more.

Astronomers have long speculated that the latter part of the problem could be explained by novae expelling the element, "seeding" space with lithium and enriching the interstellar medium from which new stars are born.

But no clear evidence to date has been found of lithium in novae.

The discovery of lithium being expelled at some 2 million kilometers (1.24 million miles) per hour in Nova Centauri could, when extrapolated to the billions of other novae that have ex-

ploded in the Milky Way's history, explain the unexpectedly large amount of lithium in our galaxy, the ESO said.

"If we imagine the history of the chemical evolution of the Milky Way as a big jigsaw, then lithium from novae was one of the most important and puzzling missing pieces," said Massimo Della Valle, a coauthor of the study. The mismatch between the observed amount of lithium in older stars and the abundance estimated from the Big Bang, however, still remains an open problem, said Della Valle and team leader Luca Izzo.

Results of the study were published in the *Astrophysical Journal Letters*—Reuters

## Microsoft hopes Windows 10 will unlock the gates

BEIJING, 30 July — Microsoft Corp introduced Windows 10 on Wednesday, hoping the latest addition to its 30-year-old operating system family will catapult it from a losing position to the top slot in the mobility software market.

The latest version of its operating system is a mixture of similarity and freshness. For starters, it has brought back the task bar and the iconic start button, making the system easier for existing users to handle.

The United States software giant has also introduced an array of new features. A new browser called Edge will replace the Internet Explorer although the IE is still available for use. Microsoft's Siri-like voice assistant tool Cortana is also available for users.

And the company has installed Xiaobing, a chat

robot/voice assistant tailored for Mandarin speakers, in the Chinese version of Windows 10.

"I like the design of Windows 10, it looks stunning and has a lot of new features that I would love to try out," said Qiu Lin, a Windows 7 user in Beijing.

But Qiu was puzzled why the new system came with two similar voice assistants. "If Cortana understands Chinese and can help me set schedules, then why would I need Xiaobing? It confuses me," she said.

Microsoft said Xiaobing, which collects snippets of real-life online dialogue on Chinese blogs and forums, will give users a more real-person-like using experience.

Shen Xiangyang, Microsoft's senior vice-president, called Windows 10 a milestone for the company

which is rapidly embracing the mobile Internet.

"It is the best Windows system we have ever made. It is not only a software, it is also an ecosystem that can help China's booming Internet economy," Shen said. "China is important to us because it hosts a large number of hardware manufacturing partners."

Windows 10 is also compatible with tablets and smartphones the modern day platforms that Microsoft's CEO Satya Nadella said will determine the future of the company.

Nadella has been attempting to transform Microsoft from a software maker into a cloud-based service provider targeting mobile device users since he replaced Steve Ballmer as the head of the world's largest software company in early 2014.—Xinhua

## Uber launches car leasing unit, makes entry into financial services

SAN FRANCISCO, 30 July — Uber Technologies has launched its own auto leasing subsidiary in an effort to sign up more drivers, injecting the fast-growing ride services company directly into the financial services sector for the first time.

The move by Uber, announced as a pilot project on Wednesday, follows the end of its partnership with Banco Santander's US lending unit earlier this year.

Uber announced the initiative but disclosed few financial details, though it said it would offer both new and used cars.

Uber launched a program in November 2013 to arrange manufacturer discounts and lenders for prospective drivers who lacked

cars in the hopes it would boost vehicles driving for the app-based service.

At the time, Uber said it hoped to finance 100,000 drivers. Nearly 20,000 drivers have participated in the program so far, Uber said.

Santander Consumer USA Holdings declined to comment last week on why the Uber leasing deal ended. Uber continues to partner with other lenders for car purchases.

Andrew Chapin, head of vehicle solutions for Uber, this week said Uber wants to provide drivers with more flexibility than traditional leasing companies can offer. Participants in Uber's program can return their vehicle with two weeks notice and "limited



An illustration picture shows the logo of car-sharing service app Uber on a smartphone next to the picture of an official German taxi sign in Frankfurt, September 15, 2014.

REUTERS

additional costs," the company said.

One of the fastest-growing sharing-economy companies, Uber operates in 57 countries, with an estimated value of more than \$40 billion. It has also tangled with

transportation authorities across the globe, along with attorneys seeking to deem Uber drivers employees entitled to benefits. Uber's entry into auto leasing brings it into contact with yet another set of regulators in a contro-

versial business. The US Consumer Financial Protection Bureau last month said it would oversee non-bank auto lenders who process at least 10,000 loans or leases per year.

The CFPB said it seeks

to ensure such leases are marketed accurately, and that debt collectors operate fairly. Santander has been criticized for its subprime auto loan business. The company disclosed a civil subpoena from the US Department of Justice and other regulatory agencies for documents related to underwriting and securitization of such loans.

Uber's leases will be held on the subsidiary's books during the pilot program, Chapin said, but that will change longer term. The company itself will not be a party to any lease between a driver and the subsidiary, so any change in driver rates would not alter the terms of a lease.

Reuters

## U.S. Coast Guard investigates oil slick off California coast

LOS ANGELES, 30 July — The U.S. Coast Guard was investigating a large, patchy oil sheen that appeared off the Southern California coast west of Santa Barbara on Wednesday, not far from the site of a petroleum pipeline spill in May, officials said.

The slick, spanning approximately 3 square miles (8 square km) of the Pacific about 1,000 yards (meters) from shore, was spotted off Goleta State Beach, but the origin of the sheen was unknown, said Coast Guard spokeswoman Petty Officer Sondra-Kay Kneen.

The Coast Guard, which dispatched a marine safety crew to the scene by vessel and a surveillance team by helicopter, described the slick as a “thin layer of rainbow sheening” that was considered “non-recoverable” and was expected to dissipate from



*An oil sheen is pictured in the water off Goleta Beach, west of Santa Barbara, California in this July 29, 2015 Coast Guard handout photo. The slick, stretched about 2 miles (3 km) along the coast about 1,000 yards (meters) from shore, but the origin of the sheen was unknown, said a Coast Guard spokesperson.—REUTERS*

the water on its own.

In May, as much as 2,400 barrels of crude oil

was spilled onto a pristine beach and into the Pacific about 15 miles (25 km)

west of Goleta when a pipeline ruptured along the coast. There was no imme-

mediate indication the two incidents were linked.

“We don’t have a definite source yet,” Coast Guard Petty Officer Andrea Anderson said of the latest oil sheen.

David Zaniboni, a Santa Barbara County Fire Department spokesman, told local KABC-TV his department also had not identified the source and was not calling the incident an oil spill.

The Coast Guard urged the public to stay away from the sheen, though no beaches were closed. County health officials said the slick posed no immediate risk to the public.

Zaniboni told KABC the Santa Barbara Channel, dotted with some two dozen offshore drilling platforms, regularly experiences natural oil seepage, but that firefighters were called when two kayakers came ashore after crossing into

black oil in the water.

“All I can go by is what we were told by the kayakers, and they were saying this was more than they’ve ever seen,” he said.

Three oil companies that own and operate offshore platforms in the area - Exxon Mobil Corp and Chevron Corp and privately owned Venoco Inc - all denied that the oil came from their operations, as did Plains All American, the company whose onshore pipeline ruptured in May.

The Center for Biological Diversity said the slick adds to environmental concerns raised by offshore energy development.

“We’ll see spill after spill if we don’t shut down these aging oil platforms and pipelines,” said Miyoko Sakashita, a spokeswoman for the conservation group.

Reuters

## U.S. mulls scrapping tariffs on Japanese beef in Pacific trade deal

LAHAINA, 30 July — The United States is arranging to abolish its tariffs on imports of Japanese beef over a period of around 10 years under an envisioned 12-country Pacific Rim free trade agreement, negotiation sources said on Wednesday.

Washington is also planning to expand its low-tariff quota to 3,000 tons — a 15-fold increase — as soon as the pact takes effect, the sources said.

Before the second day of a Trans-Pacif-

ic Partnership ministerial meeting on the Hawaiian island of Maui, Japanese Economic and Fiscal Policy Minister Akira Amari told reporters, “The important thing is that tariffs (on Japanese beef) will be abolished in the end. Our demand is taking shape.”

Amari, who is in charge of Japan’s TPP talks, held a two-way meeting with U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman on Tuesday.

The United States levies a tariff of 4.4 cents per kilogram on Japanese beef. The tariff rate goes up dras-

tically when the amount of imports exceeds 200 tons.

On the back of the growing popularity of the Japanese “wagyu” beef brand, Japan exported 153 tons of beef to the United States in 2014.

The TPP, which would cover around 40 percent of global output, involves Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States and Vietnam.

Kyodo News



*People visit a Vietnamese company booth at the 6th Vietnam International Advertising Equipment and Technology Exhibition (VietAd 2015) in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam, July 29, 2015. The exhibition is held from July 29 to August 1.—XINHUA*

## Rome airport fully operational after forest fire affects flights

ROME, 30 July — Rome’s Fiumicino airport resumed full operations after smoke from a forest fire on Wednesday forced Italy’s busiest hub to suspend takeoffs and restrict landings.

Airline Alitalia announced the resumption of services in a Tweet several hours after the blaze broke out in one of several forests

of pine trees near the airport.

Forest rangers said in a statement that the blaze had affected about 40 hectares of a nature reserve that totals some 16,000 acres. Whipped by high winds, the fire was brought under control by fire-fighting planes that dropped water on the area.

The blaze “appears” to have been set intentionally and is under investigation, an Interior Ministry official said. It is the second fire to have hindered airport operations since May.

A fire in a terminal on May 7 affected services for

more than two months before the airport fully opened on July 17.

Prime Minister Matteo Renzi commented that if the fire was set intentionally, it would be a “very grave” attack on the country’s “tourism and economy”, according to sources in his office.

Fiumicino is on the Mediterranean Sea, west of the capital. It is close to a number of parks and nature reserves of forests of pines native to the area.

Rome’s Fiumicino airport is owned by ADR, a unit of Atlantia.

Reuters



*A Canadair firefighting aircraft from Italy drops water over a forest near Fiumicino International airport in Rome, Italy, on 29 July, 2015. REUTERS*

## ADVERTISEMENT &amp; GENERAL

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE  
MV PAZEH WISDOM VOY NO (3)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PAZEH WISDOM VOY NO (3) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.8.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.I.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY  
AGENT FOR: M/S TOKO KAIUN KAISHA  
LTD. JAPAN**

Phone No: 2301191/2301178

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE  
MV E.R. TURKU VOY NO (077W)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MVE.R. TURKU VOY NO (077W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 31.7.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE  
MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO (129W)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO (129W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 31.7.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

**WEATHER REPORT**

**BAY INFERENCE:** According to the observations at (13:30) hrs MST today, the Cyclonic Storm "Komen" over Northeast Bay of Bengal is centered at about (150) miles Southeast of Kolkata (India), (50) miles Southwest of Chittagong (Bangladesh), (105) miles Northwest of Maungdaw (Myanmar) and (160) miles Northwest of Sittwe (Myanmar). Monsoon is strong to Vigorous in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2015:** Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in the whole country with likelihood of regionally heavy falls in Sagaing, Magway, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyarwady Regions, Chin, Rakhine and Mon States and isolated heavy falls in Mandalay Region and Kayin State. Degree of certainty is (100%).

**STATE OF THE SEA:** Frequent squalls with rough to very rough seas will be experienced off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (50 - 60) m.p.h.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Continuation of Strong monsoon.

**FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2015:** Some rain or thundershowers which may be heavy at times. Degree of certainty is (100%).

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2015:** Some rain or thundershowers which may be heavy at times. Degree of certainty is (100%).

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2015:** Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).



*File Photo taken on 15 May, 2015 shows models display the TCL Quantum Dot TV in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam. To gain big market shares in the global market and the Vietnamese market in particular, Chinese electronics giant TCL has focused on all-round localization strategies to tap deeply into Vietnam's economy for joint development. Right after setting foot on Vietnamese soil in 1999, TCL set targets of developing its own brands, distribution networks and technologies. Now, TCL Vietnam has over 200 authorized dealers and distribution networks of more than 3,000 outlets throughout the country. The firm also has over 150 facilities nationwide to provide after-sales services. Founded in 1981, TCL is one of the largest consumer electronics enterprises in China with a global presence.—XINHUA*

## Australian entrepreneurs discuss on AIIB loan

SYDNEY, 30 July — The co-chairman of the Australia- China Senior Business Leaders Forum said that Australia has been challenged to become the first successful applicants for a developmental loan from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

"There was real talk in the senior business leaders forum that Australia makes the first successful application for a major loan from the AIIB," Australian entrepreneur Andrew Forrest said on the sidelines of the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA) in Sydney on Thursday.

Forum for Asia (BFA) in Sydney on Thursday.

"That actually, I think would be welcome."

Funding for infrastructure development is a key discussion point at the Sydney BFA conference on Thursday and Friday.

The conference host, New South Wales Premier Mike Baird, told the delegates in his welcoming remarks that he is looking for partners, particularly in the engineering, construction and financial services sectors, in the significant infrastructure program his government

has undertaken. "My strong belief is Asia will play an important role in the development of the infrastructure that will improve (Sydney)" and the state, Baird said.

Former Australian ambassador to China, Geoff Raby, told reporters on the sidelines of the BFA that if Australia can unlock and harvest the vast water resources in northern Australia in conjunction with Chinese capital, there is a tremendous future for the development of northern Australia.

Xinhua

## Interpol search for Mexican drug lord in Dominican Republic

SANTO DOMINGO, 30 July — The International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) is currently searching for the escaped Mexican drug lord, Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, in the Dominican Republic, on reports that he may have sought refuge there.

According to a Dominican newspaper, over 100 Interpol agents have carried out a range of operations in different tourist attractions in the north and east of the country as part of the search for Guzman, who escaped from a Mexican maximum security

prison.

Local intelligence sources revealed that Guzman may be in the country under a fake name, the Listin Diario newspaper said.

The Listin Diario reported on Wednesday that the Interpol operations were being directed by the head of Dominican police, Major General Manuel Castro Castillo, who demanded the Interpol personnel in the country be doubled.

It was also reported that the order to hunt Guzman in the Dominican Republic came on July 17, provided with information

about fake names he might have used to enter the country, including Rene Clarin and Max Aragon.

The Interpol investigation was conducted in hotels and tourism centers in some big cities as well as the capital of the Dominican Republic. Control posts were placed along highways to aid the search operations.

"We have distributed pamphlets with recent photographs of the drug dealer at toll booths and have deployed special searching units," said a police official participating in the search.

Xinhua

## At \$90 million, Garth Brooks tops Forbes big earning country acts



**Milestone Award recipient Garth Brooks performs "All American Kid" at the 50th Annual Academy of Country Music Awards in Arlington, Texas on 19 April, 2015.—REUTERS**

NEW YORK, 30 July — Country music veteran Garth Brooks on Wednesday topped the annual Forbes list of the world's highest paid country acts, raking in an estimated \$90 million in earnings over the past year.

Brooks, 53, who resumed touring last year after 13 years off the road, also notched up the biggest pay day in a single year ever recorded by Forbes for a country music act.

The double Grammy-winning singer-songwriter has been playing arenas across the United States to meet demand after his long hiatus from performing, selling more than 2.5 million tickets.

Toby Keith, best known for more pop-driven hits like "Red Solo Cup" and "How Do You Like Me Now?!", ranked No 2 on Forbes list with \$53 million.

Jason Aldean, 38, came in at No. 3 with an estimated \$43.5 million, much of it from his pyrotechnic "Burn it Down" nationwide tour that is more associated with rock and heavy metal than traditional country music fare.

Luke Bryan, who at 39 is also a relative newcomer, earned \$42.5 million, while Kenny Chesney, 47, rounded out the Top 5 list with \$42 million thanks mostly to his continuing "Big Revival" stadium tour and endorsement deals with beer and sunglasses companies, Forbes said.

Forbes looked at estimated income from June 2014 to June 2015, including concert tickets, merchandise sales, recorded music and publishing, endorsement deals and other business ventures.

Reuters

## Venice Film Festival marks 72<sup>nd</sup> edition with star lineup

ROME, 30 July — The Venice Film Festival revealed a star-studded lineup for its 72<sup>nd</sup> annual edition on Wednesday with top Hollywood names center stage in a wide selection of US and international movies. The world's oldest film festival will open with "Everest", starring Jake Gyllenhaal and Keira Knightley and based on the 1996 climbers' disaster on the world's highest mountain.

In competition are 21 films, including Tom Hooper's "The Danish Girl" starring Academy Award winner Eddie Redmayne as one of the first known people to undergo a sex change operation, and performance artist Laurie Anderson's "Heart of a Dog".

Drake Doremus' "Equals", a romantic science fiction movie starring Kristen Stewart and Nicholas Hoult, also competes as does

"Beasts of no Nation", a war drama with Idris Elba.

Italian director Luca Guadagnino comes to the festival with "A Bigger Splash" starring Tilda Swinton, Dakota Johnson and Ralph Fiennes, while Charlie Kaufman, writer of the 1999 cult fantasy-comedy "Being John Malkovich", brings stop-motion movie "Anomalisa". Also in competition are Argentine director Pablo Trapero's "El Clan", Chinese director Zhao Liang's "Behemoth", Polish director Jerzy Skolimowski's "11 minut", and "Looking for Grace" from Australia's Sue Brooks.

"The program is very varied," festival artistic director Alberto Barbera told reporters.

"The line-up goes from small films which are almost experimental to documentaries and great auteur films as well as great films

which seek to innovate the forms used in contemporary cinema. All in all, there's a bit of everything."

"Black Mass", starring Johnny Depp as criminal turned FBI informant Whitey Bulger, will screen in the out-of-competition line-up.

"Go with Me" with Anthony Hopkins, Julia Stiles and Ray Liotta, also features in that line-up as does "Spotlight" with Michael Keaton and Mark Ruffalo about how the Boston Globe revealed a Roman Catholic clergy sexual abuse scandal. Martin Scorsese's short film "The Audition" with Robert de Niro, Leonardo Di Caprio and Brad Pitt, is also included. Mexican director Alfonso Cuarón, known for "Gravity", will head the jury, which includes Hollywood actresses Elizabeth Banks and Diane Kruger. The festival runs 2-12 September.—Reuters

## Chris Columbus on featuring Taj Mahal in "Pixels"

NEW DELHI, 30 July — Hollywood disaster movies usually opt for Empire state building or Statue of Liberty but in "Pixels", Taj Mahal is the first iconic structure to get destroyed.

The comedy film revolves around a bunch of former arcade game champions who get a chance to save the world when aliens misinterpret video games footage that NASA sent them and attack the Earth using these games as their models.

Director Chris Columbus said he had a certain image while designing the special effects of the comedy film and that



included Taj Mahal.

"When these pixelated characters come to life, there is certain edge to them. They are lit from within and they are hauntingly beautiful in a weird sort of way. It is not normal destruction, it is

insanely pixelated. Taj Mahal seemed like the perfect place to first see that," Columbus told PTI in an interview during the recent Summer of Sony press event in Cancun, Mexico.

"It is the first real iconic thing to get destroyed in the film. There is a destruction scene prior to that but with Taj Mahal, you see

that it is actually a game breakout. I had this visual image while designing these effects. It had nothing to do whether it was India or anywhere else. I just thought it will look really cool and awesome," he said.—PTI

LOS ANGELES, 30 July — A big name in his native France, Omar Sy has had a successful foray into Hollywood with several blockbusters but the actor and comedian says mastering English as a new language remains a challenge.

Sy, who shot to fame with comedy TV roles, won a Cesar award — France's equivalent of the Oscars - for his portrayal of a caregiver to a quadriplegic man in "The Intouchables".

He relocated to Los Angeles and appeared in "X-Men: Days of Future Past" and this summer's box office hit "Jurassic World". "The hardest part for me is the language that I don't speak ... it blocks me a little on certain things," he said in an interview.

"In France, I already have a career and a name that give me access to certain things and here I have to reconstruct all of that. That makes it interesting to work here, to start from zero again."

The actor teamed up with

"The Intouchables" directors Eric Toledano and Olivier Nakache for "Samba", in which he portrays a Senegalese immigrant trying to make a living in Paris. The film, in French cinemas late last year, was put out on limited release in the United States last week.

"It means a lot for me to play Samba and to tell that story because of my own story of course," said Sy, whose parents emigrated from West Africa to France in the 1960-70s.

Sy also stars in the upcoming "Adam Jones" with Bradley Cooper and also has a role alongside Oscar winner Tom Hanks in "Inferno", based on "The Da Vinci Code" author Dan Brown's book. "Being French, I really admire Marion Cotillard's work and her journey. She's French and she speaks excellent English," Sy said of the Oscar-winning actress.

"For example, I want to speak perfect English and when I see her speaking, it inspires me and encourages me."—Reuters

## Despite Hollywood roles, France's Omar Sy says English a challenge



**Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo (R) and French actor Omar Sy (L) attend the ceremony to inaugurate the Christmas holiday lights on the Champs Elysees in Paris 20 November, 2014.—REUTERS**

GENERAL

## Californians divided along party lines on combating climate change

SACRAMENTO, (Calif), 30 July — Two-thirds of Californians link the state's ongoing catastrophic drought to climate change, and most support Governor Jerry Brown's efforts to combat it — but that's also because most Californians are Democrats, a new poll shows.

The survey released on Wednesday by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) shows that 64 percent of the state's residents believe that global warming has affected the state's drought, now in its fourth year. But that masks deep divisions along party lines, with 78 percent of Democrats saying they believe global warming has contributed to the drought, compared to 62 percent of Republicans who said it has not contributed.

Similarly, a majority of Democrats and independents in the state say they are concerned about droughts becoming more severe,

compared to just 33 percent of Republicans.

Democrats dominate politics in the most populous US state, where they hold wide majorities in both houses of the legislature and all statewide elected offices. Among registered voters in California, just 29 percent are Republicans, according to the state.

It adds up to strong support for the recent push by Brown, a Democrat, to make climate change strategy a centerpiece of his second term, said PPIC President Mark Baldassare.

"Californians connecting climate change with the drought is creating a context in 2015 where there is very strong support for what the state is doing in form of climate change policy," Baldassare said.

Sixty-one percent of Californians said they thought it very important for the state to pass regulations and spend money now to combat global warming,



A dry ditch is seen on Gless Ranch in Kern County, California, United States, on 23 July, 2015.—REUTERS

compared to 53 percent two years ago, the survey showed. Still more, 65 percent, said the state should make its own policies separately from those developed by the federal government.

Among policies aimed at combating climate change, California has enacted strict curbs on vehicle emissions and backed numerous efforts to develop sources of energy other than fossil fuel, such as solar and wind power.

A large majority — 69

percent — said they support following through with a state law requiring California to reduce total vehicle emissions to levels last seen in 1990 despite a huge increase in population and the number of cars on the road.

A proposal to reduce emissions even further by 2050 was also supported by 69 percent of those polled.

To conduct the poll, the PPIC interviewed 1702 adult California residents from July 12 to 21, 2015.

Reuters

## mitv Myanmar International

(31-7-2015 07:00 am~1-8-2015 07:00 am) MST

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- \* Farming: Duck Breeder
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## Kaka leads MLS All-Star side to win over Tottenham

DENVER, 30 July — Former Brazil international Kaka made the most of his first appearance in the Major League Football All-Star Game as he helped lead his team past English Premier League side Tottenham Hotspur 2-1 on Wednesday. Kaka, who enjoyed a long career in Europe before signing with Orlando City last year, opened the scoring with a penalty in the 20th minute in Denver and went on to earn the MVP honour.

Former Spain forward David Villa added a goal for the MLS side in the 23rd minute while Harry Kane scored for Spurs in the 37th minute. "Not bad for my first (All-Star Game),"

Kaka told reporters.

"This was much more than I expected. I'm so happy for this night. I hope in the next years I can enjoy (more) All-Star Games." The All-Star game has involved a selected team of the best MLS players facing an international side since 2005. The MLS team beat Bayern Munich a year ago. MLS goalkeeper Nick Rimando had a big impact on the game as he kept his side in the game with three crucial saves.

"It's good whenever you beat these big clubs," Rimando said. "It shows that our league is growing and we have the talent to win these big games."

Reuters



All Stars midfielder Kaka (22) of Orlando City SC works the ball ahead of Tottenham Hotspur midfielder Nabil Bentaleb (42) during the first half of the 2015 MLS All Star Game at Dick's Sporting Goods Park on 29 July, 2015.—REUTERS

## Tourism boom drives Japan to convert offices into hotels



'Business-class' cabins are seen at First Cabin hotel, which was converted from an old office building, in Tokyo, on 3 July, 2015.—REUTERS

TOKYO, 30 July — Record tourists to Japan are stretching the ability of hotels to accommodate them in a sector constrained by high costs, forcing developers to think out of the box for means to quickly increase lodging options without breaking the bank.

Japan is on target this year to beat the record 13.4 million visitors in 2014, helped by a weak yen and easier visa requirements for some Asian countries. The government is aiming to attract 20 million visitors by 2020, when Tokyo hosts the Olympics, to revitalise the world's third-biggest economy.

The rising influx of

tourists is already squeezing existing accommodation supply in Tokyo, which has about 100,000 hotel rooms. Just 7,600 rooms are scheduled to be added in the next three years, according to STR Global, a research firm for the hotel industry.

The slow pace of growth is due to rising land prices and construction costs. One quick solution: convert old office buildings into hotels with tiny but stylish rooms that can rent for under \$30 a night, less than half the rate for a cheap business hotel.

"Converting an office building into a hotel is an ideal way to respond to the immediate need for hotel rooms," said Yukari Sasaki,

senior managing officer at property developer Sankei Building Co. "Building a hotel from scratch costs too much money now because of high construction costs."

Sankei, a unit of Fuji Media Holdings Inc (4676.T), which owns the conservative Sankei newspaper, converted a 35-year-old office building in Tokyo's electronics-geek district of Akihabara into a hotel in under a year and for less than \$8 million.

The hotel, called Grids, charges 3,300 yen (\$27) a night per person for a bunkbed and up to 5,000 yen (\$40) for premium rooms with tatami mats.

By comparison, the average room rate at Tokyo's lowest-ranked business hotels has risen 11.7 percent from a year earlier to 9,500 yen, according to STR Global.

"The market for this type of hotel is still tiny, but it has potential to grow bigger in major cities where hotel demand is strong," said Tomohiko Sawayanagi, managing director for Jones Lang LaSalle in Tokyo.

Also, as more office towers are being built, older and smaller office build-

ings become less attractive. Such properties could be better used as hotels, industry people say. "Some office buildings can generate higher returns when converted into hotels because we can expect further increases in foreign visitors to Japan," said Yuji Sakawa, deputy general manager at B-lot Co (3452.T), a Tokyo-based real estate investor.

Last year, B-lot converted a 28-year-old office building near Tokyo's popular Tsukiji fish market into a hotel called First Cabin, where 5,500 yen will get you a "business-class cabin" with a single bed.

Another 1,000 yen buys you space to open a suitcase.

In March, B-lot sold First Cabin to Hong Kong-based property investor SIS International Holdings Ltd (0529.HK), and is now converting a 30-year-old office building in Shinjuku, a popular destination for Asian tourists, into a bunkbed hotel.

Competition will come from the likes of home rental website Airbnb, which has listed thousands of properties, even at the risk of running afoul of the law.

Reuters

## Entertainment Channel to broadcast artists' football tournament

NAY PYI TAW, 30 July — The quadripartite football tournament with participation of artists, arranged by Myanmar Media 7, will be held at Mandalay Thiri Sports Ground in Mandalay on 1 and 2 August.

The tournament with sponsorship of Ve Ve soft

drink will hold two matches a day.

Entertainment Channel of MRTV, broadcast sponsor of the tournament, will broadcast live the football matches as of 2 pm for first one and 4 pm for the second one.—MNA

## Federer withdraws from Rogers Cup in Montreal



Switzerland's Roger Federer

MONTREAL, (Canada), 30 July — World number two Roger Federer has withdrawn from next month's Rogers Cup in Montreal, though he gave no reason for his decision in a statement released by organizers on Wednesday.

Federer, a 17-times grand slam singles champion, has twice won the elite ATP World Tour Masters event — in Toronto in 2004 and 2006.

"I am disappointed that I won't be playing in Montreal because it's a tournament and a city that I really enjoy and has incredible fans," Federer,

33, said.

"My family and I have always received first-class treatment from tournament director, Eugene Lapierre, and his team and I hope to be back in the future."

Federer, who lost to Serbian world number one Novak Djokovic in the Wimbledon final earlier this month, will be preparing over the coming weeks for the August 31-September 13 US Open, the year's final grand slam, in New York.

Jerzy Janowicz of Poland will take Federer's place in the main draw for the 10-16 August Rogers Cup.—Reuters

## Tokyo Olympics emblem found to look like Belgian theater logo

PARIS, 30 July — A Belgium-based designer has expressed surprise on social media that the emblem for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games unveiled last week closely resembles the logo for a theater in Liege, eastern Belgium that his studio crafted.

"I cannot judge whether it was stolen or inspired by my work. I'm consulting with my lawyer," Olivier Debie, 52, told *Kyodo News* on Wednesday, adding that he expects to decide within this week whether to take legal action.

Debie posted on Facebook a photo of the two works side by side a few days earlier, expressing his amazement when he saw them. In a separate post, his studio also commented, "There is a striking resemblance between the two logos."

The emblem for the Tokyo Olympics, produced by Kenjiro Sano, a 43-year-old Japanese art



THÉÂTRE DE LIÈGE



Supplied photo shows the emblem for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games (R) and the logo for a theater in Belgium. The designer of the theater logo said the two closely resemble each other.—KYODO NEWS

director, was unveiled Friday. It features a central column in black, which the organizing committee says was inspired by the letter T, representing Tokyo, Team and Tomorrow. The logo for Theatre de Liege has a similar shape in white against a black background. Debie's studio says it has been involved in the theater's logo design pro-

ject since 2011.

This could prove to be another embarrassment for the Tokyo games organizers as some social media posters and media reports suspect plagiarism, although the organizers deny such an allegation. The Japanese government and the organizers have also been challenged by the skyrocketing cost of building

the main Olympic stadium. Masanori Takaya, publicity chief of the Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee, said, "We announced the emblem after going through the international trademark registration process. We are not particularly worried about this."

Toshiro Muto, director general of the committee, also said at a press conference Friday, "We decided (on the emblem) following approvals of the International Olympic Committee and the International Paralympic Committee after completing a vetting process of international trademarks."

Debie said that he received an email from a friend about a "look-alike" Olympic logo after Friday's unveiling. He started consulting with his lawyer after the Liege theater said to him earlier this week that some action should be taken.

*Kyodo News*

## Southampton sign Caulker on loan after Gardos blow

LONDON, 30 July — Premier League Southampton signed central defender Steven Caulker on a season long loan from relegated Queens Park Rangers on Wednesday with an option to make the deal permanent.

The arrival of the 23-year-old helps Southampton cover a defensive hole left by Romanian Florin Gardos, who faces seven months out due to a knee injury, while also reducing QPR's wage bill as they adjust to life in the Championship.

"It's a good opportunity for the player," said Saints manager Ronald Koeman. "We need more competition in the centre-back position."

Koeman said Caulker could ultimately have a longer term future at

Southampton, who are paying QPR more than one million pounds for the player's services according to media reports.

"It depends on what the player brings," he said.

Caulker, who has made one appearance for England and played

for Tottenham Hotspur, Swansea City and Cardiff City in the Premier League, said it was a chance to prove himself under a great manager.

Gardos made only 11 league appearances for Southampton last season but was expected to play

a bigger role following the departure of Toby Alderweireld — who was on loan from Atletico Madrid — to Tottenham Hotspur.

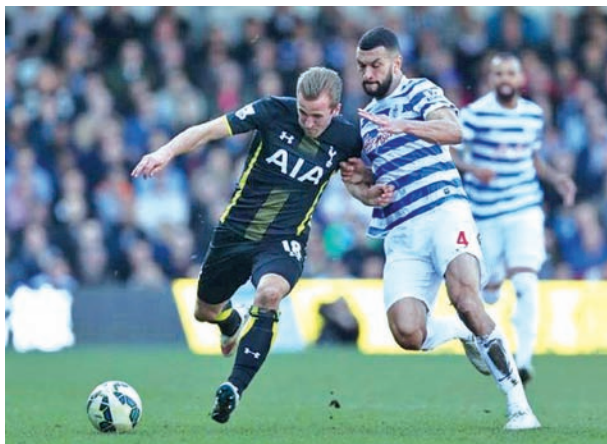
Caulker, who has age and height on his side, will now be in the frame to compete with Maya Yoshida to partner captain Jose Fonte in the defence.

Koeman also told reporters he was looking for more players to build up a squad that plays Vitesse Arnhem, a club he once coached, in the third qualifying round of the Europa League on Thursday.

"I think we need some more players," he said. "We have real competition in our squad."

We are working on it. But sometimes you need more time. We are not in a hurry."

*Reuters*



Tottenham's Harry Kane in action with QPR's Steven Caulker.—REUTERS

## English FA back Platini's FIFA presidency bid

LONDON, 30 July — The English FA have thrown their weight behind Michel Platini's bid to succeed Sepp Blatter as FIFA president.

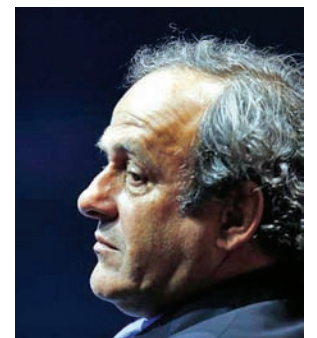
"We support Michel Platini's candidacy," FA chairman Greg Dyke said in a statement.

"We have a good relationship with him and hope he can gain the necessary global backing to lead a new FIFA during the most difficult period in its history."

"We understand there will be a number of candidates, which should result in a strong and healthy debate. However, we should not underestimate how challenging it will be for anyone to lead an organization that has been so tainted. The whole structure of FIFA must be reviewed and fundamentally changed."

Platini ended weeks of uncertainty on Wednesday when he announced that he would stand for the presidency of FIFA in place of outgoing Swiss Blatter.

The former France



UEFA President Michel Platini

captain, the UEFA president since 2007 and a FIFA executive committee member since 2002, has written to the 209 member associations of FIFA, who each hold one vote in the presidential election, to inform them of his decision.

Dyke said Platini was the best man to bring about reform at world soccer's scandal-plagued governing body.

"With FA vice-chairman David Gill newly-appointed to the FIFA executive committee and the level of worldwide scrutiny on the reform process, the opportunity is there to bring about positive change," Dyke added.

*Reuters*