

President U Thein Sein, ethnic leaders eye preparations for NCA signing

NAY PYI TAW, 3 Aug — President U Thein Sein met Monday with leaders of four ethnic armed groups that are signatories to the Union Day deed of commitment, at a fruit cold storage and processing factory in the capital.

They discussed preparations for signing the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) before the 8 November general elections.

Also present at the meeting were union ministers U Soe Thane, U Aung Min, U Myint Hlaing, U Khin Maung Soe, U Ohn Myint and U Ye Htut, KNU Chairman General Saw Mutu Sae Po and party, Quartermaster-General Brig-Gen Saw Yin Nu and party of KNU/KNLA (Peace Council), Vice Chief of Staff Maj-Gen Saw Mo Shae of DKBA, Col Sai La and party of RCSS and officials of the Myanmar Peace Centre.—MNA



President U Thein Sein cordially greets leaders of armed ethnic groups.—MNA

DEATH TOLL HITS 46



Relief aid arrives by air in An, Rakhine State, one of the four worst-hit zones.—MNA

FLOOD DISASTER AFFECTS MORE THAN 200,000: GOV'T

By Aye Min Soe

YANGON, 3 Aug — The death toll from severe flooding across the country stood at 46 on Monday, with more than 217,000 people affected by the disaster, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement said.

The ministry said it had so far provided more than K1.5 billion worth of emergency aid to flood victims, including rice, construction materials and cash assistance for families of the dead.

UNICEF warned Monday that vulnerable children in Myanmar face a “double catastrophe” as floods added to the hardship faced by those already living in poverty or affected by violence and conflict.

“The floods are hitting children and families who are already very vulnerable, including those living in camps in Rakhine State,” UNICEF Deputy Representative in Myanmar Shalini Bahuguna said in a press release. “Beyond the immediate impact, the floods will

have a longer term impact on the livelihoods of these families.” The government has declared natural disaster zones in four states and regions — Chin, Magway, Sagaing and Rakhine.

President U Thein Sein travelled to the worst-hit areas in Sagaing Region, promising that the government would provide rations to the flood victims for six months and assist in reconstruction of homes and farms.

Victims in Kalay, Sagaing Region, blamed local authorities for insufficient flood warnings. “Flash flooding submerged my 23-foot-high two-storey home,” said flood victim Swe Moe Tun.

“We managed to escape from the flash floods but lost our property.”

Meanwhile, evacuees sheltering at Taungphilar Monastery in Kalay face a lack of toilets and are at risk of disease, a Buddhist monk of the monastery said.

Many of those sheltering at the monastery were traumatized after the once-

in-a-century flash flood destroyed their homes and properties overnight, the monk said.

The government’s response to the floods has been limited in the face of such a huge disaster, with its flood warnings not reaching all the people, said U Yet Htut, Union Minister of Information and spokesman for the president.

The government’s weak response to the disaster led to misunderstandings about evacuation efforts, he added.

Information on the number of people affected in the worst-hit states, including Rakhine, is still limited, as assessment teams have been unable to reach some townships due to flooding, road blockages and landslides, according to UNICEF.

The flooding has inundated more than 1 million acres of farmland nationwide, damaging more than 426,000 acres and destroying more than 56,000 acres, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation.

GNLM

Pregnant teacher rushed to military hospital

NAY PYI TAW, 3 Aug—Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win who accompanied the vice president met with families of regiments and units in Cikon station on 2 August and attended to the needs.

On their way back, they arranged to transport a pregnant teacher from Kalay University of Computer Studies to the military hospital in Kalay.

Commander of North-West Command Maj-Gen Min Naung and party provided foodstuff and drinking water to faculty members,



students and staff at University of Computer Studies (Kalay).—Myawady

A pregnant faculty member arrives in Kalay to be sent to Kalay military hospital.—MYAWADY

Floods force suspension of Hluttaw sessions

NAY PYI TAW, 3 Aug—The resumption of Hluttaw sessions, scheduled for 10 August, will be postponed in light of the flood disaster affecting the country, according to an announcement Monday by the joint parliament, as well as the Upper and Lower houses.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw sessions had been adjourned until 10 August, but with Hluttaw members now engaged in

flood relief operations in their constituencies and elsewhere, resuming at that date would be difficult, the announcements said.

The resumption date will be announced later, according to the announcements signed by Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and the Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann and Speaker U Khin Aung Myint of the Amyotha Hluttaw.

MNA

PRESS RELEASE

Heavy monsoon rains during the previous weeks have caused flooding, flash floods and landslides in several states and regions across the country. The Office of the President issued a statement declaring natural disaster zones in Chin State, Sagaing Region, Magway Region and Rakhine State on 31 July, 2015.

In order to facilitate providing humanitarian assistance including rehabilitation to the victims in the flood affected States and Regions, international humanitarian organizations including United Nations Agencies and donor countries are kindly requested to contact the following officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar:

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Malaysian lender opens first branch in Yangon

YANGON, 3 Aug—Malaysia's Maybank opened its first Myanmar branch Monday in Yangon, becoming the latest foreign lender to launch operations in the country.

U Kyaw Kyaw Maung, governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar and Mr Mohd Hanif Abd Rahman,

Malaysian Ambassador to Myanmar, attended the opening ceremony for the branch, located in Central Point Tower on Sule Pagoda Road.

After an opening speech by Maybank CEO Mr Soon Su Long, CBM Governor U Kyaw Kyaw Maung in an address said

Myanmar had granted operating licenses to foreign banks capable of helping improve the country's financial sector.

The bank donated USD 11,000 to the Myanmar government via the ambassador to help victims of flash floods and landslides in the country.—MNA



Governor of Central Bank of Myanmar U Kyaw Kyaw Maung and officials formally open Yangon branch of Maybank.—MNA

Chinese Embassy plans US \$300,000 donation for disaster-hit areas

YANGON, 3 Aug — Recently-accredited Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar, Mr Hong Liang, on Monday traveled to Kalay in the country's northwestern Sagaing Region to donate relief goods to flood victims.

The Chinese Embassy in Yangon said it is planning to donate about US \$300,000 worth of relief assistance to flood victims in Sagaing Region, Magway Region and

Rakhine State.

The embassy plans to donate relief assistance for

Rakhine State on Wednesday, it said.

MNA



Youths mobilize to help disaster victims



Seeking helping hand: A young man holds a sign that reads "Lend your helping hand to flood victims" near Bahan 3rd Street bus-stop in Yangon on Monday. Young volunteers have been collecting donations of cash and goods from commuters near busy roads downtown and in nearby areas to help victims of severe flooding in four of Myanmar's regions and states and other parts of the country.—PHOTO: YE MYINT

Severe weather shuts more than 1,000 schools

NAY PYI TAW, 3 Aug—Flooding and landslides caused by months of torrential rain across the country have forced the temporary closure of more than 1,000 schools across the country, the Ministry of Education said Monday.

To support disaster-affected schools, the Basic Education Department under the ministry began distributing emergency stationery supplies on Sunday, including hundreds of thousands of notebooks and tens of thousands of pencils.

A total of 1,387 schools in 10 regions and states remain closed because of natural disasters.—MNA



President U Thein Sein addresses speech at coordination meeting on rescue, relief and resettlement of flood victims.—MNA

Saving lives takes priority in emergency operations

NAY PYI TAW, 3 Aug — Priority will be given to saving lives during natural disasters, President U Thein Sein said Monday at a coordination meeting on rescue, relief and resettle-

ment of flood victims in Nay Pyi Taw.

In his speech, the president said it was vital to ensure rescue operations were timely and to provide victims with medicine,

food, clothing and blankets.

He also said it was important to rebuild school buildings damaged during disasters and to provide students with textbooks and stationery.

The union government will cooperate with state and region governments to resettle evacuees in their houses as soon as possible, he said.

After the president's

speech, Vice President U Nyan Tun, who also chairs the Natural Disaster Prevention Central Committee, reported to the president on relief efforts.

MNA

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham cordially converses with teachers and students at BEHS No 9 in Lashio. IPRD



Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham visits schools in Lashio

NAY PYI TAW, 3 Aug — Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham, together with officials, arrived in Lashio on Monday morning and met with teachers, members of parent-teacher associations and school trustees from No.8 and No.9 basic education high schools separately.

Also present were Chief Minister of Shan State U Sao Aung Myat, state ministers, Hluttaw representatives, officials and town elders.

Headmasters, members of parent-teacher associations and officials reported to the vice president on requirements for the schools.

After hearing reports, the vice president urged officials and town elders to make concerted efforts for success of the school and presented K 5 million for each school.

After meetings, the vice president posed for documentary photos with attendees.—MNA

Vice President meets flood victims in Kalay, Haka

NAY PYI TAW, 3 Aug—Chairman of National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee Vice President U Nyan Tun presented relief aid to flood victims in Kalay, Sagaing Region and Haka, Chin State on 2 August.

Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win who accompanied the vice president met with families of regiments and units in Cikon station on 2 August and attended to the needs.—Myawady

Armed forces chief urges cooperation with military in relief works

NAY PYI TAW, 3 Aug—Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on Sunday inspected flood preparations in response to rising waters at View Point in Sittway, Rakhine State.

The senior general later went to Sittway Airport and looked into arrangements for mobile clinics, food, clothing, boats and other relief items for flood victims.

He later traveled to MraukU by helicopter and delivered relief assistance to flood victims at the People's Playgrounds.

The senior general said the Tatmadaw is transporting rice to Rakhine State with three planes and urged local people to cooperate with military personnel to overcome natural disasters.

On his return to Sittway, the senior general attended a ceremony to receive a K4.5 billion donation by Kanbawza Bank, Gate Way Company and hoteliers at the airport.

In the afternoon, the senior general and party traveled to Pwintbyu in Magway Region, which has been severely hit by floods.—Myawady



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presents foodstuff to flood victims in Sedoktara Township.—MYAWADY

Agriculturists, farmers sow Palethwe hybrid paddy seeds



NAY PYI TAW, 3 Aug — Agriculturists, staff of New Ayeya Company, students of Yezin University of Agriculture and farmers participated in sowing Palethwe paddy seeds on

a 100-acre farmland for production of quality paddy seeds in Dekkhinathiri Township, here, Sunday.

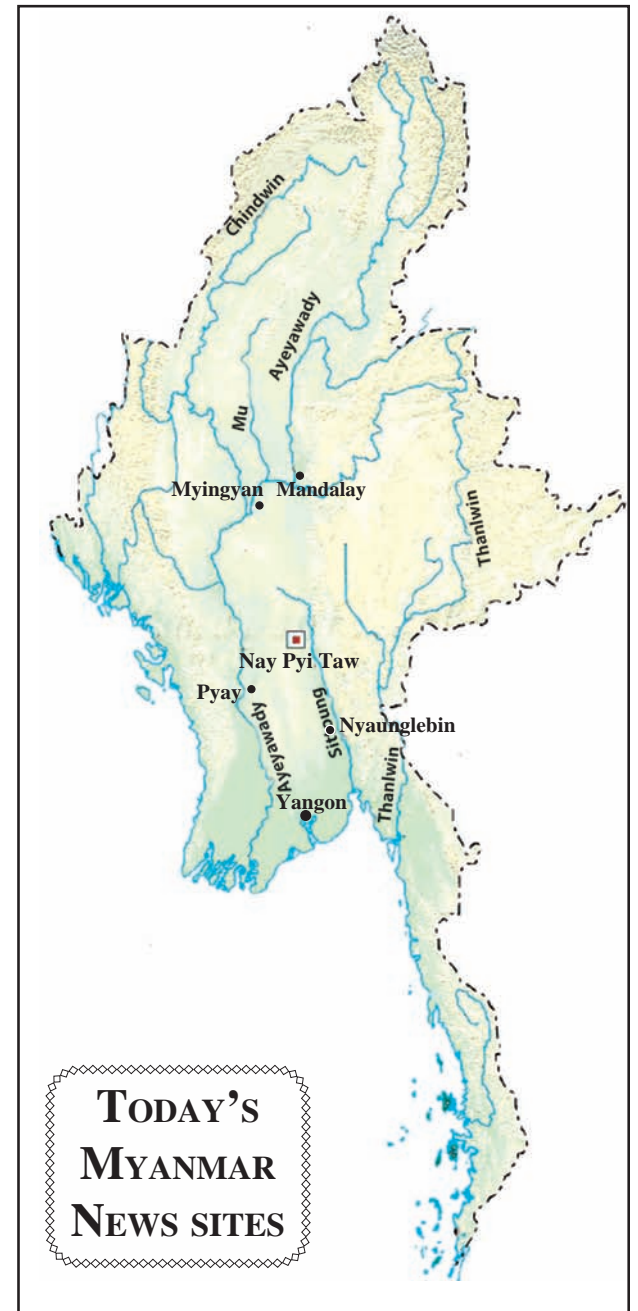
Deputy Director-General U Naing Kyi Win of Department of Agriculture

and officials supervised paddy seeding ceremony.

They produced quality Palethwe paddy seeds twice last cultivation season and two more times this season. The Department of

Agriculture could produce 108,000 kilos of Palethwe hybrid paddy seeds to local farmers for cultivation of summer paddy.

Ko Pauk (Okkar Myay)



Volunteers distribute food and water for flood victims in Pyay Township, Bago Region, on 2 August.—U SHWE WIN

Myingyan Tsp evacuees move to emergency camps

MYINGYAN, 3 Aug — Flood evacuees from Myingyan Township, Mandalay Region, began moving to relief camps Sunday.

District deputy commissioner U Myint Thin Aung and officials visited four camps where 1,967 people and 351 animals were being accommodated.

Medical teams provided health-care, while purified water suppliers donated drinking water to the evacuees.

Local authorities have 40 motor-boats for carrying out rescue and relief works for flood victims from 26 villages.—Zaw Min Naing (Myingyan)



Social organizations donate cash for flood victims

MANDALAY, 3 Aug — The Mandalay Region Interfaith Friendship Group, the Myanmar-China Friendship Association and the Restaurant Entrepreneurs Association donated cash to the fund for rescue and relief of flood victims, at the Oriental House, here, Sunday.

Well-wishers donated K51.5 million, including K10 million each from Mandalay Region Interfaith Friendship Group, U Maung

Maung-Daw Khin San Yi (Yee Shin Holding Co Ltd) and Kyintawyan Buddhist temple.

Prospective donors may contact Dr Thudhamma U Kyaw Win (Mann Myay Yazar Company Ltd) on 72nd Street on 09-2001007 and Daw Khin Saw Oo, Oriental House, at the corner of 64th and 27th streets on 09-2007200 and 02-30008.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)



Madauk opens three relief camps for flood victims

NYAUNGLEBIN, 3 Aug — Madauk town in Nyaunglebin Township, Bago Region, encounters flash flooding caused by overflow of Sittoung River in July.

Township authorities opened three relief camps where flood victims are accommodated at Taingtaya, Wuntha and Dagundaing monasteries.

On 1 August, local authorities donated rice, cooking oil and foodstuffs to the flood victims.

Medical teams led by Head of Township Public Health Department Dr Khin Zaw and social organizations provided health-care services to 489 people at three relief camps.

Nay Lin (Nyaunglebin)



The deputy prime minister, Wisanu Krea-ngam.

Thai election could be delayed to 2017 if charter rejected - minister

BANGKOK, 3 Aug — A general election in Thailand could be delayed until April 2017 if a newly drafted constitution is rejected by a national reform assembly due to convene next month, a deputy prime minister said on Monday. The military government established after a coup last year initially said it wanted an election to restore democracy in late 2015 but later said it had to be delayed until 2016 to give more time for reforms which the military says should bring stability after a decade of factional rivalry.

The United States and other allies are keen to see democracy restored as quickly as possible but

the deputy prime minister, Wisanu Krea-ngam, raised the possibility of a further delay if proposed reforms meet opposition.

“If the reform assembly votes down the newly drafted charter, new constitutional drafters are to be set up followed by a referendum,” Wisanu told reporters.

“It would delay the election by about 19 months (from next month)”.

If the new draft won approval from the council, a referendum on whether to promulgate it would be held on Jan. 10, followed by the election in September 2016, Wisanu said. The military government has most recently said an

election would be held in September 2016. It agreed recently to put the draft constitution, which would be Thailand’s 20th since becoming a democracy in 1932, to a referendum to seek a public mandate and ward-off criticism that it was forced upon the country. The constitution is expected to be another divisive issue in Thailand’s long turbulent politics.

Some critics saying the latest draft is designed to weaken elected governments and neuter the power of parties controlled by the dominant Shinawatra family, which have won every election since 2001 and have twice been overthrown by the military. —Reuters

Cambodian PM says no early national election in 2018

KANDAL, (Cambodia), 3 Aug — Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen said Monday that there will be no early national election in 2018 because the political agreement on July 22, 2014 between him and opposition leader Sam Rainsy did not state such an early vote.

“The next national election will be on schedule — on Sunday in the fourth week of July 2018, there will be no early election because the political agreement on July 22 did not state an early election,” he said in a speech during the inauguration ceremony of a China-funded Takhmau Bridge here. The prime minister acknowledged that he used to verbally agree with Sam Rainsy, president of the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), on April 9, 2014 to hold the next election in February 2018, five months earlier than the schedule, but during the political negotiations on July 22, 2014, the CNRP leader did not include the point in the agreement.

“All old and new parties can prepare themselves for the July 2018 national election,” he said.

Meanwhile, Hun Sen, who has been in power for 30 years, warned that the country would fall into instability again if the future ruling party was not his Cambodian People’s Party (CPP).

“Peace is very important for the country. I still continue to say that besides the leadership of the CPP, the other parties will bring instability,” he said.

Hun Sen and Sam Rainsy struck a political agreement on July 22, 2014 that saw the opposition CNRP end its 10-month boycott of parliament following the disputed election in 2013. Under the deal, Hun Sen agreed to CNRP’s proposals for electoral reform and power sharing in the parliament.

Dispute between the two parties have heated up in the last few months after CNRP’s lawmakers repeatedly accused the government of using fake maps to demarcate border line with Vietnam. However, Hun Sen said the maps his government is using to demarcate border line with Vietnam are authentic ones, which were deposited at the United Nations in 1964.—Xinhua

N. Korean foreign minister departs for ASEAN forum

PYONGYANG, 3 Aug — North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Su Yong left Pyongyang on Monday, bound for a regional security forum meeting of ASEAN ministers in Malaysia.

The ASEAN Regional Forum is taking place in the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur on Thursday. ARF meetings involve ministers from the countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, as well as Japan, North Korea and the United States, and

are the only multilateral ministerial meetings participated in by North Korea. Japan is reportedly seeking sideline talks at the forum between Ri and Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida on the subject of Pyongyang’s promised report into the abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korea in the 1970s and 1980s. Tokyo is hoping to push North Korea to release the report by September, government sources said.

Kyodo News



The eighth China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week is opened in Guiyang, capital of southwest China’s Guizhou Province, Aug. 3, 2015.—XINHUA

Singapore needs to balance foreign labour inflow: Lee

SINGAPORE, 3 Aug — Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong has said it is the government’s duty to grapple with the “very difficult issue” of getting the inflow of foreign labour right in Singapore and at the same time maintaining the unique identity of the nation.

“It is an issue where honestly speaking, there are no easy choices. There are trade-offs,” said Lee in a television interview with Ambassador-at-Large Chan Heng Chee, chairman of the Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities.

The interview “A Conversation with the PM: Our Future, Our People” was telecast last night.

Lee said “I would like to keep

this a Singapore-Singapore ... It has to maintain that Singapore character,” addressing the concerns about the economy, anxiety over job competition with foreigners and a possible identity crisis in the future.”

“I would like to just make one more point about the population. We argue the merits and the reasons and the logic of it and the trade-offs. But finally, this is a very difficult issue and it is one of those things which as a government we have a responsibility to deal with,” he said.

“First, we do have to watch to see how the foreign workers and immigrants are fitting in with

our community, and you have to watch them mix so that you don’t overbalance the numbers or the tone of our society. So it is not populist to take cognisance of these real problems and to deal with them and to calibrate the inflow (of foreigners)”, he added.

“Secondly, I would say apart from any sentimental reactions or emotional reactions, we do have to look at the overall population size in Singapore and you cannot say that if I want X million and the economy wants that, therefore I will have it. There is a trade-off in terms of the space and infrastructure, the carrying capacity of this island and we have to decide

how far we can go,” Lee said.

“And so I think what we have tried to do over in the last 10 years when in the earlier phase, when the opportunities were there, we needed the growth, we were more generous in bringing in foreign workers and the immigrants,” he added.

The Prime Minister pointed out the government has calibrated in the last five to seven years and brought the rate (of foreigners’ inflow) down. Last year, the inflow was the slowest, the increase in foreign employment excluding maids was 26,000, down from 80,000 in 2011.

He further said during the

interview that, “If we have no foreign workers, our economy suffers, our own lives suffer. (If) we have a lot of foreign workers, the economy will do well, (but) we have other social pressures, other problems with our society which are going to be very real and which we have to take very seriously and which we cannot accept”.

The increasing number of foreigners, about 1.3 million, is among the serious issues in Singapore which is expected to hold general elections in the upcoming months. The city-state’s population is over five million.

PTI

Kerry seeks to convince Gulf Arabs on Iran deal

DOHA, 3 Aug — U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry began talks with Gulf states in Qatar on Monday, seeking to convince them of the merits of last month's nuclear deal with Iran and to discuss the battle against Islamic State militants and the war in Syria.

Most Gulf Arab states are worried that Iran's July 14 accord with the United States and other powers will hasten detente between Tehran and Washington and embolden Tehran to support paramilitary allies in the region.

Last month, world powers agreed to lift sanctions on Iran in return for curbs on a nuclear programme the West suspects was aimed at creating an atomic bomb, but which Tehran says is peaceful.

Speaking in Egypt on Sunday, Kerry said the United States had labelled Iran the world's number-one state sponsor of terror, but this was precisely why it was so important to ensure Tehran did not obtain a nuclear weapon.

"There can be absolutely no question that if



U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry speaks during a news conference after a meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Cairo August 2, 2015. —REUTERS

the Vienna plan is fully implemented, it will make Egypt and all the countries of this region safer than they otherwise would be or were," he said, adding that he would discuss ways to ensure the future security of the region in Doha.

In Doha, Kerry will meet members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, which groups Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and Qatar.

He will also hold a trilateral meeting with his Russian counterpart Sergei

Lavrov and Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir, which U.S. officials say will focus on the war in Syria.

Russia has been trying to bring about rapprochement between the Syrian government and regional states including Saudi Arabia and Turkey, to forge an alliance to fight Islamic State.

Kerry said last month that with Lavrov he planned to discuss combating Islamic State militants and the role Iran could play.

U.S. officials say Kerry's diplomatic outreach in Doha is a follow up to a summit with Gulf Arab leaders called by President Barack Obama at Camp David in May, which was snubbed by the leaders of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

At that meeting Obama responded to anxieties among Gulf states about the nuclear deal with Iran by vowing to back them against any "external attack" and pledging that the United States would consider using military force to defend them.

Obama stopped short of offering a formal defence treaty that some Gulf countries had sought. Instead he announced more modest measures, including integrating ballistic missile defense systems and beefing up cyber and maritime security.

On Wednesday, the U.S. State Department approved the sale of 600 Patriot anti-missile missiles to Saudi Arabia at an expected cost of \$5.4 billion as well as \$500 million worth of ammunition for various weapons systems.

Reuters

Japan demands U.S. explanation over alleged spying

TOKYO, 3 Aug — Japan said Monday it is seeking an explanation from Washington over alleged U.S. spying on the Japanese government and Japanese companies.

"We are strongly asking U.S. Director of National Intelligence (James) Clapper to check the facts," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told reporters when asked about documents the WikiLeaks website said show the U.S. National Security Agency spied on Japanese officials and companies. "If (the alleged spying) were true, Japan, as an ally (of the United States), would find it extremely regrettable," Suga said.

Asked about Japan's security measures for secret information, the top government spokesman said, "I believe such secrets will never be leaked because (the government) is taking all possible measures (to prevent leaks)." On Friday, WikiLeaks posted what it says are NSA reports and a list of 35 Japanese targets for telephone intercepts including the Japanese Cabinet Office, the Bank of Japan, and the country's finance and trade ministries, as well



Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga speaks during a daily press briefing in Tokyo on Aug. 3, 2015. Suga said Tokyo is seeking an explanation from Washington over alleged U.S. spying on the Japanese government and Japanese companies. KYODO NEWS

as major Japanese trading companies.

The telephone intercepts dated back at least to the time of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's first government launched in 2006, and targeted internal Japanese discussions on international trade and climate change policy, according to WikiLeaks. WikiLeaks has also released similar reports about the United States spying on Germany, France and Brazil, which have strained diplomatic relations with those countries.—Kyodo News

Rouhani says nuclear deal a "third way" for Iranian foreign policy

DUBAI/BEIRUT, 3 Aug — President Hassan Rouhani affirmed his confidence in Iran's nuclear deal with world powers on Sunday, tackling the criticisms of hardliners and highlighting the achievements of his two-year-old presidency.

With one eye on a likely run for re-election in 2017, Rouhani used a live interview on state TV to tout the deal as a new "third way" for Iranian foreign policy, dismissing hardliners' criticism that he had capitulated to the West.

"This idea that we

have two options before the world, either submit to it or defeat it, is illogical: there is also a third way, of constructive cooperation with the world in a framework of national interests," he said.

"We worked with the United Nations without war or pleading or surrender, but with logic, negotiation and diplomacy in a legal path," he said, avoiding any direct mention of the United States or other Western powers.

He also touted the economic achievements of his government, which has brought inflation down from highs above 40

percent and restored economic growth, trends that should be maintained by the promised sanctions relief.

Rouhani downplayed the risk that nuclear inspections could jeopardise Iran's state secrets and defensive capabilities, a key line of attack by hardliners in the security establishment who fear a military attack by Western powers.

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei had forbade giving U.N. inspectors access to military sites, and it was only with delicate wording that this sticking point was resolved in the deal.

"We will not give away even the smallest national secret, whether military, scientific, commercial or societal ... our defensive capability won't be diminished at all," Rouhani said.

He invoked popular support for the diplomatic opening, casting his election victory two years ago as a "referendum" on how Iran should conduct itself on the world stage.

"From their perspective, yesterday we were a threatening country and now we are a country with which a deal needs to be struck."

Reuters



Iran's President Hassan Rouhani (L) attends a welcoming ceremony upon his arrival in Ufa, Russia, the early hours of July 9, 2015. — REUTERS

Japan, S. Korea to hold 1st working-level defense meeting in 2.5 years

TOKYO, 3 Aug — Japan and South Korea will hold a meeting of their working-level defense officials in Seoul Wednesday for the first time in nearly two and a half years, Japan's Defense Ministry said Monday.

Such a meeting has not been held since March 2013 as bilateral relations have soured over territorial and historical issues, including wartime Korean "comfort women" procured for Japanese troops. Japanese participants in the Seoul meeting will include Atsuo Suzuki, deputy director general of the Defense Ministry's Defense Policy Bureau. Among South Korean participants will be Yoon Soon Gu, director general of the National Defense Ministry's International Policy Bureau.

At the meeting, the Japanese side is expected to explain Japan-U.S. defense cooperation guidelines revised in April and Japan's pending national security bills, Japanese officials said.

The Japanese and South Korean defense officials are also expected to share their views on the North Korean nuclear and missile problems and bilateral exchanges.—Kyodo News

Republicans begin pivotal debate week with New Hampshire forum

WASHINGTON, 3 Aug — Republican presidential candidates will test their messages in New Hampshire on Monday, with the exception of Donald Trump, in a pivotal week on the 2016 campaign trail that will be dominated by their first head-to-head debate on Thursday.

Fourteen of the 17 candidates are to face off in Manchester, N.H., for the Voters Issues Forum, a two-hour event at Saint Anselm College in which each candidate will be asked questions by a moderator based on a random draw.

Most of the leaders in the Republican field are to participate, including Jeb Bush, Scott Walker and Marco Rubio, but not poll leader Trump, who declared he would not attend in outrage over an editorial published by the Union Leader, the Manchester newspaper that is one of the sponsors of the event.

Others not planning to attend are former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee and former Virginia Governor Jim Gilmore, who just jumped into the race last week.

The event will serve as a way for each candidate to see how they do against each other ahead of the first official Republican debate of the 2016 season, on Thursday night in Cleveland.

The first debate has been controversial because under rules set up by the sponsor, Fox News, and backed by the Republican National Committee, only the top 10 candidates based on an average of recent national polls will be allowed on stage at the 9 p.m. event. The remaining seven will face off earlier in the day, at 5 p.m., a time when far fewer viewers will be tuning in.

Sparks are already flying in anticipation of that event. Kentucky Senator Rand Paul, expected to be one of the top 10, told CNN on Friday that Trump's rise to the top of the polls reflected a "a temporary sort of loss of sanity, but we're going to come back to our senses and look for someone serious to lead the country at some point." South Carolina Senator Lindsey Graham, not in the top 10, said he would be participating in what he called the "happy hour debate."

"You've got the Donald Trump debate. Everybody's going to be, 'How will he perform? What will he say?' Well, when I'm in the first debate, which is the 'happy hour debate,' at five o'clock, start drinking. By nine o'clock, Donald may make sense to you, if you drink enough," he told NBC News.

Reuters

Russia says kills six suspected militants in North Caucasus

MOSCOW, 3 Aug — Russian law enforcers killed six people suspected of involvement in "international terrorism" in the city of Nalchik, the capital of Russia's North Caucasus region of Kabardino-Balkaria, the national Anti-Terrorist Committee (NAK) said on Monday.

"The militants refused to put down their arms and opened fire on law enforcement officials. Six bandits were

neutralised in the ensuing shootout," NAK said in a statement.

It added it believed those killed were involved in a number of terrorist crimes including the killing of a police officer last week.

But it gave no further details on what kind of group those it killed came from. It also said the process of identifying those killed was still continuing.

Russia is struggling to quell a sim-

mering Islamic insurgency in the North Caucasus, where some rebels have sworn allegiance to Islamic State.

Rights activists and Kremlin critics accuse Russian security services of heavy-handed tactics in the North Caucasus, saying they target not only militants but any dissenters and drive bitter resentment among locals.

Reuters



Journalists, photographers and activists hold up pictures of photojournalist Ruben Espinosa during a protest against his murder at the Angel of Independence monument in Mexico City, Mexico August 2, 2015.—REUTERS

Mexico City prosecutor confirms killing of news photographer

MEXICO CITY, 3 Aug — A prominent Mexican news photographer was among five people found dead in a middle-class neighbourhood of the capital on Friday, the city's prosecutor told reporters at a Sunday press conference.

Ruben Espinosa, who a month ago claimed in interviews that he felt threatened by the governor of eastern Veracruz state, was the lone male among five victims that police discovered bound, beaten and shot in the head in the capital's Narvarte neighbourhood.

The murders prompted hundreds of photographers, other journalists and activists to gather at the capital's Angel of Independence monument, many holding signs or cut-out photos of Espinosa with cameras slung over their shoulders.

One sign said "Violence is the language of the state," another called for Veracruz Gov. Javier Duarte to resign.

Protestors in Xalapa, the capital of Veracruz, and Guadalajara, Mexico's second biggest city, also took to the

streets to mourn Espinosa's death.

Mexico City prosecutor Rodolfo Rios said at a press conference that Espinosa's family members told investigators that the photographer had been residing in the capital for two months and had moved to the city to look for work following eight years living in Veracruz.

Rios said his office was working together with the division of the federal attorney general's office dedicated to crimes against freedom of expression.

"All lines of investigation are open," he said in response to a question about Espinosa's early June statements that he felt threatened by Duarte, a member of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) of President Enrique Pena Nieto.

The governor said in a brief press release on Sunday that he "lamented" the deaths, including Espinosa's, and voiced his support for the investigation led by the Mexico City prosecutor's office.

The prosecutor said robbery and the deliberate targeting of the women were also possible motives being considered.

Espinosa, who was 31 years old, had specialised in documenting local social movements in Veracruz, many of which are critical of the PRI and Duarte in particular.

He shot a cover photograph of Duarte for an issue of leading Mexican news magazine Proceso in February of 2014 that was accompanied by the headline, "Veracruz, lawless state."

Espinosa worked for Proceso as well as the Cuartoscuro photo agency.

Veracruz is one of Mexico's most dangerous states for journalists, with 17 killed since 2000 according to journalism advocacy group Article 19. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, 11 have been murdered since 2010 during Duarte's term as governor.

The prosecutor's office said three of the women found killed lived in the apartment where they were found, one of whom was a native of Colombia, while the fourth was a domestic worker.

Reuters

PERSPECTIVES

Tuesday, 4 August, 2015

Community-based disaster preparedness essential for saving lives

By Myint Win Thein

Every village and ward should have community-based disaster preparedness plans in place, as they are the most effective means of

minimizing damage when catastrophe strikes.

A CBDP outlines how to effectively cope with a natural disaster before, during and after it. It may include evacuation routes and list essential supplies. A proper CBDP equips local people with the knowledge to reduce the impact of natural disasters.

When local people are properly prepared for disaster, they can evacuate to safety without waiting for outside help. In times of danger, it is sometimes very difficult to help others. It is therefore in the best interests of local people to be able to move to designated safe places by themselves.

With many parts of the country currently

reeling from flooding caused by torrential rains, it is more important than ever that villages and wards have proper disaster planning in place.

Write for us

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

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

Recognition of Prior Learning

Lokethar

Recognition of prior learning is the process of recognizing knowledge and skills acquired no matter how and when they were acquired, whether through formal learning in an educational school/institution or non-formal learning outside the "school system", or learning "on-the-job" through experience or through "in-formal learning". It involves the 'comparison of the previous learning and experience of a learner howsoever obtained against the standards required for a specified qualification (certificate)'.

The ILO Human Resources Development Recommendation, advocates Recognition of Prior Learning for the benefit of workers who did not have an opportunity to learn a trade or occupation in the formal school system prior to being employed.

In Myanmar, as is learnt from surveys undertaken by some Myanmar researchers over the years, a large proportion of workers in long term employment, especially in the SMEs of the private sector, acquired skills of their jobs through 'learning-on-the job'. Though 'skilled', they lack recognition or certification of their professional competencies. Many of such workers are in wage employment and many are self-employed (after leaving employment) and earning their living by their "acquired" knowledge and skills. Many such skilled workers providing service to the general public are not 'certified' as well. With the enactment of the Employment and Skills Development Law of 2013, workers may now seek recognition of their competencies through the National Occupational Competency Assessment and Certification System established under the ESD Law.

The system is based on Occupational Competency Standards drawn up for assessment and certification of skilled workers at four levels namely; Semi-skilled (National Certificate Level 1), Skilled (National Certificate Level 2), Advance Skilled (National Certificate Level 3) and Supervisors-cum-Technicians (National Certificate Level 4). The system has been designed based on the levels of skilled worker certification among the majority of the ASEAN States and also aligned to the four lower levels of the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework.

The Ministry of Labour in 2007 had formed the National Skills Standards Authority with the approval of the Cabinet. The NSSA had drawn up Occupational Competency Standards for some 170 priority Occupations among which about 60 had been approved by the Cabinet.

The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (MOLES) of the new Government which administers the ESD Law (2013) and the NSSA, with the support of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and Swisscontact, has been implementing the 'Pilot Fast-track Skills Assessment and Certification Program' since 2014 giving priority to assessment of the skills and knowledge of the existing skilled workers who have no formal recognition of their skills, based on reviewed Occupational Competency Standards of priority occupations.

The 'Pilot Fast-track Skills Assessment and Certification Program' aims to establish sound procedures and organizational structure, capacity development of the personnel and training of assessors so as to be able to replicate the Assessment and Certification Process at all the levels for the occupations for which Occupational Skills Standards have been drawn up or recognized by the NSSA.

The program of assessment and certification of existing skilled workers starting with National Certificate Level 1 began in 2014. The co-operation of private and public training/testing centres as well as actual workplaces were sought for the practical assessment and the suitable ones accredited by the NSSA to conduct the assessments based on the Occupational Competency Standards of

the NSSA. The assessors, both from the public and private sectors, were trained and certified by local and foreign experts. To start with, the Occupations of Arc Welding, Electrician (buildings), Air-Con Installers, Carpenters (Construction), Cabinet Makers (Furniture Carpenters) and Waiters (Food and Beverage) were prioritized and assessments conducted of workers from private and public sector enterprises. The responsible personnel of the Ministries concerned as well as the Employers' Associations participated and assisted in implementing the Pilot Fast-track Skills Assessment and Certification Program.

The assessments were conducted under the supervision of the Assessment and Certification Committee of the NSSA and National Certificates Level 1 were awarded to (34) Welders, (43) Electricians, (28) Air-Con Installers, (132) Carpenters, (30) Cabinet Makers and (48) Waiters after assessment of their competencies. The program will continue with assessment and certification at Level 1 in (19) other 'priority occupations' earmarked for the Pilot Fast Track Skills Assessment Program.

From the experience of the program thus far, it is found that quite a number of experienced skilled workers performed well in the 'Underpinning Skills' areas in the practical skills assessment, but some were rather weak in the 'Underpinning Knowledge' area so that they were judged 'Not-Yet-Competent'. This in spite of the fact that 'refresher courses' of 2 to 3 days regarding the 'knowledge assessment' in the various occupations, were conducted prior to the assessment as well as the fact that marks given during assessment for practical skills to knowledge was in the ratio on the average of 3:1.

The knowledge area of course, cannot be downplayed if the workers aspire to move up in the qualifications levels. Hence it would be helpful if various vocational training centres/schools, all over the country in both the private and public sectors, could of-

fer short (modular) courses on related knowledge of the concerned occupation required at the level to be assessed (initially Level 1) on a fulltime or part time basis, so that the experienced skilled workers contemplating to submit to assessment and certification may attend such courses. That way, the certification at various levels of skills of the existing workers may be much facilitated.

The majority of employers, fully realize that systematic training and certification of their existing skilled workers will enhance

their productivity in the long run. However many of the employers of the private sector are reluctant to send their skilled workers for assessment and certification for fear of losing them to higher paying competitors-both at home and abroad. With increasing numbers of skilled workers seeking recognition of their skills, perhaps a change in attitude by the employers concerned will evolve in favour of assessment and certification of the competencies of the workforce.

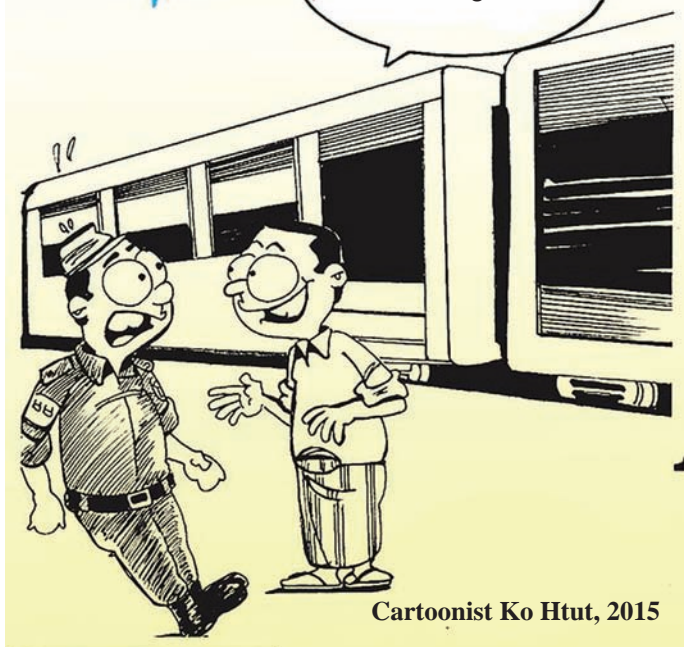


Chairman of Myanmar Young Entrepreneurs Association U Wai Phyo and party seen at Yangon International Airport on Monday before departure for Vientiane, Laos, to attend 7th ASEAN-China Young Entrepreneurs Forum from 5 to 7 August.—MYEA

It smells awful in air-conditioned railway carriages.

Really! Says who?

A man smoking in the carriage.



Cartoonist Ko Htut, 2015

NATIONAL

Nomination for Hluttaw candidates continues

NAY PYI TAW, 3 Aug — A total of 58 candidates for Pyithu Hluttaw, 31 candidates for Amyotha Hluttaw, 108 candidates for state/region Hluttaws and 5 candidate for state/region ethnic affairs submitted their nomination for 2015 General Election on 2 August. From 20 July to 2 August, 1,067 candidates including 308 for Pyithu Hluttaw, 155 for Amyotha Hluttaw, 564 for state/region Hluttaws and 40 for ethnic affairs constituencies. They represent 39 political parties while 44 of them are individual candidates. Detailed nomination process is available at www.uecmyanmar.org.—MNA



Deputy Minister U Thant Kyaw being welcomed by Charge d'Affaires of Swiss Embassy Peter Tschumi and wife at the reception to mark National Day of Switzerland at Novotel Hotel in Yangon on 3 August.—MNA

Air Force ready to transport emergency relief supplies

NAY PYI TAW, 3 Aug — Yangon area residents wishing to send relief supplies to flood evacuees can bring donations to Mingaladon Airbase for airlifting to disaster-affected areas, the Air Force said Monday. Senior officers of the Air Force, Yangon Command Headquarters and officials of Yangon Region Government and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement are accepting the donations at the airbase to send to flood victims by aircraft. Donors may call Lt-Col Zaw Zaw Tun on 031-27051 and Lt-Col Aye Lin on 09-73206644 to arrange delivery. The Tatmadaw is preparing to ship paddy seeds for cultivation and rice for consumption to farmers in Kalay Region. —MNA

Artists raise funds for flood victims through exhibition of their works



Artwork by Ni Po Oo will be showcased at fund raising event for flood victims at River Ayeyawady Gallery.—Photo: Ko Latt

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 3 Aug—River Ayeyawady Gallery will organize an art exhibition to raise funds for flood victims in conjunction with a book sale from 5 to 7 August, the gallery's founder U Nay Min Latt said Monday.

“Donors can make contributions for flood victims by buying any work displayed at the gallery for only K100,000 (around US\$100) per painting,” said the event organizer, who expects to raise at least K3 million through this event.

All money earned from both events will go to funds for flood victims in need of emergency supplies through a social organization led by writer Daw Than Myint Aung, U Nay Min Latt said.

Torrential monsoon rains during June and July have caused severe floods

UEC extends candidate nomination period due to flood emergency

NAY PYI TAW, 3 Aug — The Union Election Commission has extended the period for nomination, scrutiny and withdrawal of Hluttaw candidates in the 8 November general election because of the flood and landslide disaster affecting the country, the UEC said Monday. Candidates will now be allowed to submit their nominations until 14 August and to withdraw their nomination until 17 August. Candidate nomination forms will be scrutinized from 18 to 27 August, the announcement said. Candidates who have difficulty for nomination are also invited to seek help from the UEC, according to the announcement.—GNLM

Ngamoeyeik Dam releases no excess water

NAY PYI TAW, 3 Aug — The water level in Ngamoeyeik Dam in Hlegu Township remains below capacity and there has been no outflow from its spillway or overflow from its embankment, an official said Monday. As of noon Monday, there were 177,000 acres of water in the dam with a capacity of 180,000 acres. The water level in the dam was 107 feet, 3 feet below the brim. Ngamoeyeik Dam normally supplies more than 90 million gallons per day to the Yangon Region, including more than 30,000 acres of farmlands in Hlegu, Mingaladon and Dagon Myothit townships.—MNA



Photo shows water level at Ngamoeyeik Dam in Hlegu Township.—MNA

and landslides across wide parts of the country, especially in the four regions and states of Chin, Rakhine, Sagaing and Magway.

“The gallery could collect more than 30 original contributions from partner artists, some of whom promised to provide their works via Facebook and phone,” he told The Global New Light of Myanmar.

He went on to say that the works may cover a wide range of subjects including modern art, with roughly 100 paintings being featured. “Currently, about 20 oil and acrylic artworks have already been received.”

The gallery founder said: “This is an opportunity for both local and foreign collectors as artists normally sell their handiworks at a higher price.”

The River Ayeyawady Gallery is located on 35th Street (middle block) in Kyauktada Township in downtown Yangon.

GNLM

Rice traders agree to halt exports until mid-September

YANGON, 3 Aug — Myanmar rice traders agreed the Myanmar Rice Federation to suspend exports until mid-September to maintain price stability and local self-sufficiency, at the urging of the peak industry body.

Following an extraordinary meeting in Yangon on Monday, industry stakeholders decided to ensure local sales at a stable price and suspend exports until 15 September, when the harvesting of monsoon paddy is set to begin, according to the Myanmar Rice Federation.

Dr Soe Tun, vice-president of the MRF, said the almost one-and-a-half-month export freeze would help ensure an adequate supply of rice for the domestic market and avoid unwanted price swings. Some 600,000 metric tons of rice have been exported this year, added the MRF vice-president, saying Myanmar sent 1.83 million metric tons overseas last year.

In an announcement Sunday, the federation pledged to take steps to avoid high prices and rice shortages in flood-hit areas and offered to help those in need of rice supply. According to sources, concerns over recent flooding in some parts of the country have spurred demand for rice, thereby causing price instability in the local market.

GNLM

U.S. to defend Syrian rebels with airpower, including from Assad

WASHINGTON, 3 Aug — The United States has decided to allow airstrikes to defend Syrian rebels trained by the U.S. military from any attackers, even if the enemies hail from forces loyal to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, U.S. officials said on Sunday.

The decision by President Barack Obama, which could deepen the U.S. role in Syria's conflict, aims to shield a still-fledgling group of Syrian fighters armed and trained by the United States to battle Islamic State militants — not forces loyal to Assad.

But in Syria's messy civil war, Islamic State is only one of the threats to the U.S. recruits. The first batch of U.S.-trained forces deployed to northern Syria came under fire on Friday from other militants, triggering the first known U.S. airstrikes to support them.

U.S. officials, speaking on condition of anonymity to confirm details of the decision, first reported by the Wall Street Journal, said the United States would provide offensive strikes to support advances against Islamic State targets.

The United States would also provide defensive support to repel any attackers.

U.S. officials have long played down the idea that Assad's forces — which have not fired on U.S.-led coalition aircraft bombing Islamic State tar-



Rebel fighters ride a motorcycle near Al-Shaar bridge, which according to activists has been closed off by rebels as it is a target for snipers from the forces of Syria's President Bashar al-Assad, near Hanano barracks in Aleppo, August 1, 2015.—REUTERS

gets in Syria — would turn their sights on the U.S.-backed Syrian rebels. But they cannot rule out the possibility, perhaps in an unintentional clash.

The Pentagon and the White House declined to discuss the decision on rules of engagement or confirm comments by the unnamed U.S. officials.

White House National Security Council spokesman Alistair Baskey said only the U.S.-trained forces were being provided a wide range of sup-

port, including “defensive fires support to protect them” and pointed to Friday's U.S. airstrikes as proof.

“We won't get into the specifics of our rules of engagement, but have said all along that we would take the steps necessary to ensure that these forces could successfully carry out their mission,” Baskey said.

Pentagon spokeswoman Commander Elissa Smith also declined comment on the rules of engagement, saying only that

the U.S. military's programme focuses “first and foremost” on combating Islamic State militants.

“We recognise, though, that many of these groups now fight on multiple fronts, including against the Assad regime, (Islamic State) and other terrorists,” Smith said.

The U.S. military launched its programme in May to train up to 5,400 fighters a year in what was seen as a test of Obama's strategy of getting local partners

to combat extremists and keep U.S. troops off the front lines.

The training programme has been challenged from the start, with many candidates being declared ineligible and some even dropping out.

Obama's requirement that they target militants from Islamic State has sidelined huge segments of the Syrian opposition focussed instead on battling Syrian government forces. The United States has sought to avoid a direct confrontation with Assad.

Once the Syrian rebels have returned to the battlefield, the U.S. recruits and other fighters aligned with them have turned into targets of rival militants.

Al Qaeda's Syria wing is suspected of being behind the attack on Friday against them at a compound in Syria, which was also being used by members of a Western-aligned insurgent group, known as Division 30.

U.S. recruits have hailed from Division 30. Nusra Front last week claimed to have abducted Division 30's leader but U.S. officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said he had not undergone U.S. training

One of the most powerful insurgent groups in northern Syria, Nusra Front has a record of crushing rebel groups that have received support from Western states, including the Hazzm movement that collapsed earlier this year.—Reuters

Nigeria's army says rescued 178 captives of Boko Haram

ABUJA, 3 Aug — Nigeria's army said late on Sunday that it rescued 178 people held by Islamist militant group Boko Haram in Nigeria's Borno state, the heartland of the insurgency.

Spokesman Colonel Tukur Gusau said in an emailed statement that 101 of the those freed were children, 67 were women and the rest were men. He added that a Boko Haram commander had also been captured and several militant camps were cleared around the town of Bama, about 70 km southeast of the state capital Maiduguri.

Boko Haram has been waging a six-year insurgency in the northeast of Africa's biggest

economy in an attempt to establish an Islamist state adhering to strict sharia law.

Nigeria's airforce also said that it helped ground troops repel an attack by Boko Haram around the village of Bitta on the southern edge of the Sambisa forest reserve, a stronghold of the militant group. Bitta is also west of Gwoza, a town near the Cameroon border that was believed to be the militants' headquarters until a major offensive was launched earlier this year by combined Nigeria, Nigerian and Chadian forces.

Boko Haram was pushed out of most of the vast swathes of territory it controlled at the start of the year but they have dispersed and returned to

their guerrilla tactics of hitting soft targets with bombs and raiding towns.

President Muhammadu Buhari has vowed to crush the group and a multi-national joint taskforce made of 8,700 troops from Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger, Chad and Benin is being set up in the Chadian capital N'Djamena to tackle Boko Haram.

The force was supposed to start operations on July 31 but has been dogged by a lack of funding and political will.

Buhari visited Cameroon this past week in an effort to smooth over differences over cross-border pursuit and then to Benin.—Reuters

Afghan Taliban kill five civilians including pro-gov't elder

AYBAK, (Afghanistan), 3 Aug — A group of Taliban militants raided the house of a pro-government tribal elder in Samangan province with Aybak as its capital 215 km north of Kabul early Monday, killing him along with four of

his family members, provincial police chief Mohammad Baqir Masoud said.

“Several armed Taliban insurgents raided the house of pro-government elder Damullah Abdul Karim in Dara-e-Suf

district and killed him along with four of his family members in the wee hours of Monday,” Masoud told reporters here.

Two militants were also killed during the firefight, the official added.

Xinhua

Warplane crashes into residential area in NW Syria, killing 25

DAMASCUS, 3 Aug — At least 25 people were killed and tens of others wounded when a Syrian warplane crashed over a residential area in Syria's northwestern province of Idlib, activists reported.

The war jet crashed over a residential area in the town of Ariha in the countryside of Idlib, much of which fell to the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front and

likeminded groups in recent months.

Further information about the plane crash is still forthcoming.

The incident is the latest in a series of violence that engulfed Idlib, where the Syrian army backed by pro-government militiamen unleashed a large scale offensive to recapture areas in the western countryside of Idlib and the ad-

acent central province of Hama.

Both sides suffered losses during the raging battles.

The rebels have stormed much of Idlib province over the past few months. The Syrian government has repeatedly accused Turkey of rendering support to the rebels in their push toward Idlib.

Xinhua

Asian stocks near 2015 lows on China worry, dollar steadies

HONG KONG / TOKYO, 3 Aug—An index of Asian shares outside Japan fell close to this year's lows on Monday thanks to a deepening selloff in commodities and fresh concerns over slowing growth in China, while the dollar held its ground against a basket of currencies.

In line with weaker Asian stocks, financial spreadbetters expected a slightly lower open for Britain's FTSE, Germany's DAX and France's CAC.

In a blow to risk sentiment, a private survey showed China's factory activity shrank more than initially estimated in July, contracting by the most in two years as new orders fell.

"We believe the stock market panic in early July chilled economic activity, which is what the manufacturing PMIs picked up," ING economist Tim Condon said in a research note ahead of the Caixin PMI release.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan fell more than 1 percent before paring losses to be down 0.9 percent. The biggest losers were financials and cyclicals. The index's low for this year was on July 8.

Closely-watched Shanghai shares shed 1.9 percent. Japan's Nikkei slid 0.3 percent and South Korea's Kospi fell 1 percent. Australian stocks dropped 0.4 percent. "We believe the macro environment remains challenging for emerging market assets amid headwinds of low commodity prices, concerns over China and a looming Fed tightening cycle," Barclays strategists wrote in a daily note in clients.

Recent flows data confirmed that trend. Net foreign selling from emerging



Investors react as they look at computer screens showing stock information at a brokerage house in Fuyang, Anhui province, China, July 28, 2015. —REUTERS

Asia has reached nearly \$10 billion over the past two months with only India seeing some tiny inflows.

Although outflows have pummeled stock markets from Korea to Taiwan, valuations suggest more downside is likely.

On Wall Street on Friday, the Dow lost 0.3 percent and the S&P 500 shed 0.2 percent, due to a drop in energy shares. In currencies, the dollar held broadly steady after sliding Friday on disappointing U.S. wage growth data. The greenback was firm at 123.97 yen. The euro was little changed at \$1.1097.

While recent dollar moves have been buffeted by U.S. economic data, the broader trend was seen staying on the upside after the Federal Reserve last week left the

door open for a possible interest rate increase in September. The U.S. dollar has rallied 7.75 percent so far this year against the world's main trading currencies, after a 12.8 percent rise last year.

And "the dollar's recent rally may just be getting started," according to research from the BlackRock Investment Institute. "Since the 1970s when the Bretton Woods fixed-currency regime ended and currencies began floating, a typical dollar rally has lasted roughly six to seven years," according to Russ Kosterich, BlackRock global investment strategist, who noted dollar rallies tend to be self-reinforcing, leading to greater inflows into U.S. assets in expectation of further dollar appreciation.—Reuters

Mosquitoes released in fight against dengue fever

BEIJING, 3 Aug — More than half a million specially bred male mosquitoes are being released on an island in southern China every week to fight dengue fever.

The mosquitoes produced at a science park "factory" in Guangdong province can make their female mating partners infertile.

Scientists have managed to reduce the number of mosquitoes in some areas of the island by more than 90 percent, Guangzhou-based Southern Metropolis Daily reported.

Last year, China reported about 46,000 dengue fever cases compared with around 1,000 in previous years, mostly in Guangdong. Guangzhou, the provincial capital, reported more than 35,000 cases of dengue which causes fever and joint pain last year, accounting for more than 80 percent of all reported cases in the province, including five deaths.

The mosquito "factory" was opened on July 17 and can produce 10 million male mosquitoes every week that are infected with wolbachia, a bacteria that exists widely in many insects, including mosquitoes, the report said.

Research shows that eggs produced by mosquitoes that mated with wolbachia-infected male counterparts are infertile. This will cause a decrease in the number of mosquitoes living in the wild after a certain period. Between 500,000 and 600,000 mosquitoes are produced every week at the factory and released on Shazai, a 3-sq-km island in a Guangzhou suburb, the report said.—Xinhua

Bitcoin operator Mt. Gox CEO likely padded account more than reported



Police officers enter the home of Mark Karpeles, chief executive officer of the bankrupt Mt. Gox bitcoin exchange, in Tokyo on Aug. 3, 2015, for a house search. Karpeles was arrested on Aug. 1 on suspicion of manipulating his cash account in a scandal that badly damaged the reputation of the virtual online currency. He has denied the allegation. KYODO NEWS

TOKYO, 3 Aug — The arrested chief executive officer of the bankrupt Mt. Gox bitcoin exchange is believed to have manipulated and padded his own cash account by tens of millions of dollars, far more than the \$1 million on his arrest warrant, investigative sources said Monday.

Mark Karpeles, 30, who was arrested last Saturday, has denied the allegation

that he increased his dollar account twice by a total of \$1 million (124 million yen), blaming the matter on hacking, according to an acquaintance of his.

But he was quoted as having told the acquaintance that he used to manipulate the system for tests and increased his account by up to tens of thousands of yen each time, and traded bitcoins with cus-

tomers after making those changes to the data.

Police believe Karpeles manipulated the system and padded the outstanding balances of cash and bitcoins at least 30 times since around 2011, when he opened the Mt. Gox exchange, based on analysis of the server and other computers involved, the sources said.

The Frenchman's purchases of bitcoins with the padded sum are believed to have contributed to the Tokyo-based exchange's collapse in February 2014, they said.

Once the world's biggest bitcoin exchange, Mt. Gox went bust after announcing a loss of about 850,000 bitcoins, worth around 48 billion yen at the time, from customers' accounts and its own reserves. Karpeles found some 200,000 of the lost bitcoins the following month, but about 650,000 bitcoins and some 2.8 billion yen in customer cash remain uncounted for.

The Metropolitan Police Department searched Karpeles' home on Monday afternoon.

Kyodo News

Indonesia's inflation unchanged at 7.26 pct in July

JAKARTA, 3 Aug — Indonesia's inflation in July stood at 7.26 percent on year, compared with that in June, as demand for food and transport cost up, national statistic bureau announced on Monday.

The Muslim country witnessed the Islamic festivity of Eid el-Fitr on July 17 and 18, during which the demand for food regularly hikes before the festivity and transport cost is commonly up before and after it.

"This (the annual inflation in July) is similar with that in June. The cause is high demand of food before the festivity. On transportation, its affect is also big," Suryamin, head of the bureau, told a press conference.

On month, the consumer price index (CPI) accelerated at 0.93 percent in July from 0.54 percent in June, he said.

Xinhua

**THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(12 / 2015)**

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

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-037(15-16)	Derrick Shaker Screens (6) items Ex 7J 50D Drilling Rigs	US\$
(2)	IFB-038(15-16)	Gun Drill Reammer (2) Nos	US\$
(3)	IFB-039(15-16)	Spares for EMSCO Drive Group (3) Items	US\$
(4)	IFB-040(15-16)	Spares for HDD Rig (19) Items	US\$
(5)	IFB-041(15-16)	Spares for Rotating Accessories (13) Items	US\$
(6)	IFB-042(15-16)	Spiral Integral Blade Stabilizer and Inside BOP (3) Items	US\$
(7)	IFB-043(15-16)	Assorted Sizes of Rotary and Hydraulic Hoses (11) Items	US\$
(8)	DMP/L-006(15-16)	Oil Suction and Discharge Hose Pipe (2) Nos	Ks

Tender Closing Date & Time - 1-9-2015, 16:30 Hr
Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 3rd August, 2015 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

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

Welthungerhilfe Myanmar

Call for Consultancy Applications

Reference: **Assessment of a Community Based
Emergency Health
Fund (community run micro-insurance)**



Objective

To assess an Emergency Health Fund (EHF), run by a Village Development Committee Federation, on overall management, effectiveness of services provided to members, risks and financial sustainability as well as potential models for expansion of services offered.

Expected Outputs

- A report, of no more than 50 pages, addressing the above issues and providing recommendations for future cooperative actions.
- An analysis of the current system- focusing on the benefits, risks and financial sustainability- and potential models to expand membership, funds and services (if possible)- ie beyond its current very basic coverage of a limited range of emergency issues.
- A "road map" specifying the chosen potential model and what needs to be done organizationally to implement the model.

Timeframe

Eight Days (8) in September (dates to be specified)

Please include in the application a breakdown of the costs, CV of the personnel to be assigned and experience in community run micro-insurance schemes. Transport to and from a designated point in Yangon and the project sites will be provided by Welthungerhilfe. Closing date for applications is 16th August 2015.

Applications/proposals should be sent electronically to: Bryan.Berenguer@welthungerhilfe.de

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV VEGA LUPUS VOY NO (1513)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV VEGA LUPUS VOY NO (1513) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.8.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT (S'PORE)
PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV IRRAWADDY STAR VOY NO ()**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV IRRAWADDY STAR VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.8.2015 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 RK SHIPPING LINE PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV KOTA TAMPAN VOY NO
(TPN-649)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA TAMPAN VOY NO (TPN-649) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.8.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV BEHSHAD VOY NO (SCY1001)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BEHSHAD VOY NO (SCY1001) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.8.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S LAND AND SEA SHIPPING
LINE**

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV ANAN BHUM VOY NO (136N)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ANAN BHUM VOY NO (136N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.8.2015 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 COSCOS CONTAINER LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV KANG MAN VOY NO (1504)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KANG MAN VOY NO (1504) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.8.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S BRIGHT SAIL SHIPPING CO
LTD.**

Phone No: 2301186

SEOUL, 3 Aug — South Korean President Park Geun-hye on Monday met with visiting Japanese opposition leader Katsuya Okada, having held no summit talks so far with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe amid soured bilateral relations.

Okada, head of the main opposition Democratic Party of Japan, has said he wants to supplement the government's efforts in diplomacy

**S Korea President Park meets Japan
opposition party head Okada**

with South Korea, and is slated also to meet with Foreign Minister Yun Byung Se in the afternoon.

Prior to his three-day visit through Tuesday, Okada told a press conference Friday in Tokyo, "This year marks the 50th anniversary

of Japan's normalization of relations with South Korea and the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, yet bilateral relations are regrettably not in a good condition."

Okada was invited to visit South Korea by Yun

when the two met on June 22 during the latter's visit to Japan.—*Kyodo News*

South Korean President Park Geun-hye and Katsuya Okada, leader of Japan's main opposition Democratic Party of Japan



ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV DYNAMIC OCEAN-09 VOY NO (-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV DYNAMIC OCEAN-09 VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.8.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W (6) 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 G LINK EXPRESS PTE LTD.
Phone No: 2301191/2301178

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV MATHU BHUM VOY NO (1005W)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MATHU BHUM VOY NO (1005W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.8.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MOL (S'PORE) PTE LTD
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV MALTE RAMBOW VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MALTE RAMBOW VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.8.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T./M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT (S'PORE)
PTE LTD
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV WEST SCENT VOY NO (086N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV WEST SCENT VOY NO (086N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.8.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S INTERASIA LINES
Phone No: 2301185

UN states agree post-2015 sustainable development agenda

UNITED NATIONS, 3 Aug — The United Nations 193-member states agreed on Sunday on an agenda for the world's sustainable development over the next 15 years that pledges to leave no-one behind and is now due to be formally adopted by world leaders at a summit in September.

After two weeks of final negotiations and several all-night sessions, the sustainable development agenda of 17 goals and a declaration that covers implementation and review were agreed by consensus to replace eight Millennium Development Goals. There was a standing ovation and cheering by

diplomats when the agenda was agreed. U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Chef de Cabinet Susana Malcorra described the agreement as "historic" but warned that the work ahead is immense. "The sheer size, the depth and the complexity of this agenda challenges all of us, challenges the United Nations," she said.

The eight Millennium Development Goals had helped focus attention on the needs of poor nations for the past 15 years.

The new Sustainable



Development Goals will aim to eradicate hunger and extreme poverty, reduce inequality within and between states, achieve gender equality, improve water management and energy, and take urgent action to combat climate change.

Meeting the goals would cost between \$3.3 trillion (£2.11 trillion) and

\$4.5 trillion a year in state spending, investment and aid, analysts say, an amount roughly equivalent to the United States 2016 federal budget of \$3.8 trillion. More than 100 countries agreed on a framework in Ethiopia last month to bankroll the sustainable development goals by mobilizing domestic resources such as taxes, leverage private investment and channel foreign assistance.

World leaders will meet from Sept. 25-27 at the United Nations in New York to formally adopt the new sustainable development agenda. Pope Francis will address the United Nations before the summit starts.—Reuters

WEATHER REPORT

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS RECORDED AT 09:30 hrs M.S.T: During the past (24) hours, rain or thundershowers have been isolated in Sagaing and Magway Regions, Chin State, scattered in Mandalay Region, Shan and Rakhine States, fairly widespread in Bago and Ayeyawady Regions and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with regionally heavy falls in Kayin and Mon States and isolated heavy falls in Mandalay and Bago Regions. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Paung (5.67)inches, Hpa-an (5.35)inches, Hlaingbwe (5.04)inches, Thaton (4.10)inches, Belin (3.82)inches, Bago (3.03) inches, Minesat (2.72)inches and Naypyitaw (Zabuthiri) (1.65)inches.

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is strong in the Andaman Sea and South Bay and moderate elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 4th August, 2015: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Lower Sagaing and Magway Regions, Chin State, fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing and Mandalay Regions, Shan and Rakhine States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavy falls in Yangon and Taninthayi Regions, Shan, Kayin and Mon States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough sea are likely at times Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon – Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35 - 40) m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of decrease of rain in the Central Myanmar areas.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4th August, 2015: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4th August, 2015: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4th August, 2015: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

Pittsburgh doctor linked to second Zimbabwe lion hunt probe

NEW YORK, 3 Aug — Zimbabwe has linked a Pennsylvania doctor to an investigation into illegal lion hunting, naming him on Sunday as a client of a safari operator accused of breaching regulations, a week after an American dentist was accused of illegally killing the country's most famous lion, Cecil.

Dr. Jan Seski, who runs a women's health practice in Pittsburgh, was named by Zimbabwe as a client of Nyala Safaris, owned by a landowner who has been arrested on accusations of conducting an illegal hunt.

The doctor was in Zimbabwe in April, according to a statement issued by Prince Mupazviriho, permanent

secretary in the ministry of environment, water and climate.

The statement spells the doctor's name as Jan Sieski but the address provided and other details indicate the doctor is Jan Seski. It did not say if the doctor was being accused of any wrongdoing.

In July, Minneapolis dentist and trophy hunter Walter Palmer killed a rare black-maned lion known as Cecil that ruled over a pride in Hwange National Park in Zimbabwe. The slaying of the lion triggered global outrage on social media, protests, and petitions calling for Palmer to be extradited to Zimbabwe.

Referring to Palmer as a "foreign poacher", Envi-

ronment Minister Oppah Muchinguri said last week that Palmer should be handed over to Zimbabwean officials to face justice.

On Sunday, Seski did not reply to telephone messages left at his home and office. The Horns of Africa Safaris website pictures a man identified as Seski posing with animals it says he killed with a bow and arrow, including a zebra, cape buffalo and ostrich.

A website for Alaska Bowhunting Supply pictures a man identified as Seski with an elephant carcass and a caption that reads, "This Zimbabwe elephant is the sixth African elephant shot by Dr. Jan Seski."

A Facebook page for Dr. Jan Seski Women's Health was racking up comments on Sunday afternoon.

"Kudos on lion kill recently. You are a fine speci-

men of the human race. I see that you also murdered an elephant ..." one comment read.

The government of Zimbabwe has said that in the aftermath of the killing of Cecil it has directed Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority and other law enforcement agencies to undertake an industry-wide investigation to "crack down and weed out any illegal hunting activities." Stewart Dorrington, operator of Melorani Safaris in South Africa, said Seski had hunted on his property and all his actions there were "perfectly legal."

"Jan Seski contributed greatly to our wildlife management and costs of running our reserve as well as to the rural community that is dependent on us for their livelihoods," Dorrington said in an email.—Reuters

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“Mission: Impossible Rogue Nation” tops North American box office



Actor Tom Cruise poses on the red carpet for a screening of the film “Mission Impossible: Rogue Nation” in New York 27 July, 2015.—REUTERS

LOS ANGELES, 3 Aug — Paramount’s “Mission: Impossible Rogue Nation” debuted this weekend, snatching the first place in North American box office with 56 million U.S. dollars.

Opening at 3,956 locations, the Tom Cruise-led action film pulled in 20.3 million dollars Friday, marking the best opening

day in the history of the series.

Without adjusting for ticket price inflation, the 56-million-dollar opening weekend ticket sale is the second largest opening weekend take of the five “Mission: Impossible” series, which kicked off with “Mission: Impossible” in 1996.

The film earned an

“A-” grade from audience polling firm CinemaScore and a 93 percent positive rating from critics on RottenTomatoes. The audience breakdown for the film skewed towards male moviegoers (62 percent) and towards moviegoers over the age of 25 (81 percent).

Warner’s R-rated comedy “Vacation” debuted in a distant second place this

weekend with 14.8 million dollars. Opening at 3,411 locations, the film got a modest “B” rating from first-night moviegoers on CinemaScore, but it received a poor 23 percent of approval rating from critics on RottenTomatoes. About 53 percent of the audience was female, and 52 percent younger than 35.

Marvel’s “Ant-Man” finished third in its third weekend, adding 12.6 million dollars to its total gross. In the first 17 days since it was released, “Ant-Man” has made about 132 million dollars in the U.S. and Canada. The overseas market contributed another 159 million dollars to its total revenue. Rounding out the rest 10 top movies this weekend in the United States and Canada were “Minions” (12.2 million dollars), “Pixels” (10.4 million), “Trainwreck” (9.7 million), “Southpaw” (7.5 million), “Paper Towns” (4.6 million), “Inside Out” (4.5 million) and “Jurassic World” (3.8 million).—Xinhua

Madonna’s son David Banda shows off musical skill

BEIJING, 3 Aug — American pop star Madonna’s son David Banda recently showed off his musical skill while singing and playing his mother’s song “Devil Pray”.

Madonna, the 56-year-old singer, adopted David, a Malawian orphan, in 2006.

Like most parents, Madonna couldn’t help sharing a video of his performing. She said lately in her social media account that she felt proud when her son picked up some musical talent.

The nine-year-old boy sings while playing an acoustic guitar. “Devil Pray” is one of the songs in Madonna’s most recent album.—Xinhua

Paul McCartney pays tribute to ‘good friend’ Cilla Black



“The Beatles” star Paul McCartney, while remembering singer good friend Cilla Black, has said her spirit was infectious and it was his “privilege” to know her.—PTI

LONDON, 3 Aug — “The Beatles” star Paul McCartney, while remembering singer good friend Cilla Black, has said her spirit was infectious and it was his “privilege” to know her.

Black, best known for

her 1964 single “You’re My World”, died on Saturday.

The 73-year-old musician, who is currently in LA, expressed his grief through an statement, reported the Daily Mirror.

“Such a shock to hear

about Cilla’s passing. She was a lovely girl who infected everyone with her great spirit. From first meeting her as a cloakroom girl at the Cavern in Liverpool, to seeing her many times since, she always had a fun loving dignity that made her a great pleasure to be around.

“She had a fine distinctive voice and was always a bit of a laugh. It was a privilege to know and love her,” the statement read. During the early days of her career the singer became close friends with The Beatles and her first single “Love of The Loved” was by late John Lennon and McCartney.

PTI

Never felt I was gone from Bollywood : Aishwarya

NEW DELHI, 3 Aug — Aishwarya Rai Bachchan is all set to return to the big screen after a gap of five years with Sanjay Gupta’s “Jazbaa” but the Bollywood diva says she does not understand the hue and cry about it as she never felt being absent from films.

The 41-year-old actress’ last movie outing was Sanjay Leela Bhansali’s “Guzaarish” in 2010.

Aishwarya says she is enjoying being in front of the camera again and looking forward to the release of “Jazbaa”, which also stars Shabana Azmi, Irrfan, Chandan Roy Sanyal and Jackie Shroff. “So far the experience has been great. Sanjay has been so nice. The whole cast— Irrfan, Shabana ji, Chandan, Jaggu Dada (Jackie)—everyone has been great. I am glad to be working with them. I do not feel like there has been any gap. I am really enjoying,” the actress said. The film, which is set to release on October 9, is a remake of the 2007 South Korean movie “Seven Days”. The



“Guru” star was in the capital last night to walk the ramp for ace designer Manish Malhotra’s show “The Empress Story” at the just concluded Amazon India Couture Week.

Despite being unwell, the former model looked resplendent in a chocolate brown floor length gown.

The show was also attended by her mother-in-law Jaya Bachchan and other B-Town stars like Azmi, Aditi Rao Hydari, Kriti Sanon, among others. “It is great to be in Delhi and be cheered on by so many industry friends, colleagues and my mother-in-law,” she said.—PTI

Beyonce suffers wardrobe malfunction

LONDON, 3 Aug — R&B star Beyonce suffered wardrobe mishap during a trip in New York with family, when a gust of wind caused a shirt tied around her waist to lift up.

Beyonce, 33, was stepping out of a car as she made her way to the Hamptons when the windy weather got the better of her, reported the Daily Mirror.

The singer remained composed as she pulled down her top and continued to make her way across the heliport.—PTI



GENERAL

FC Tokyo beaten by Frankfurt in friendly



Eintracht Frankfurt's Makoto Hasebe (L) and Kento Hashimoto of FC Tokyo tussle for the ball in a preseason friendly in Frankfurt, Germany, on Aug. 2, 2015. Frankfurt came back from a two-goal deficit to win 3-2. KYODO NEWS

FRANKFURT, (Germany), 3 Aug — FC Tokyo squandered a two-goal lead and were beaten 3-2 away to Eintracht Frankfurt in a preseason friendly for the German Bundesliga side on Sunday.

Former Japan striker Ryoichi Maeda volleyed Tokyo in front on 20 minutes and Australian forward Nathan Burns added the second two minutes later following a misplaced pass.

But Eintracht hit back with two goals before the break. Japan captain Makoto Hasebe, playing at right-back, provided a cross from the right for Haris Seferovic to head in on 41 minutes and Marc

Stendera then hammered home to equalize moments later.

Frankfurt created several chances and they completed the comeback in the 59th minute when Bastian Oczipka crossed for Stefan Aigner to head home.

“We played really well for the first 30 minutes but conceding those goals at the end of the first half was a psychological blow,” said FC Tokyo manager Massimo Ficcadenti.

Hasebe played until midway through the second half while teammate and fellow Japan international Takashi Inui played the first just the first 45 minutes.

Kyodo News

mitv Myanmar International

(4-8-2015 07:00 am~5-8-2015 07:00 am) MST

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Selfies and six packs to derail Arsenal's title hopes: Keane

LONDON, 3 Aug — Arsenal are not capable of winning the Premier League title this season because they have too many players interested in selfies and six packs rather than winning football matches, according to former Manchester United captain Roy Keane.

Keane, a fire and brimstone midfielder, won seven Premier League titles as a player and enjoyed particularly competitive relationship with Arsenal and their similarly combative captain Patrick Viera.

The current Ireland assistant manager, how-

ever, said he saw little in the current Gunners side to convince him that they are poised for a first league title since their Viera-led ‘Invincibles’ team in 2004.

“Arsenal have some really good players — some good characters who roll their sleeves up,” Keane told the Mail on Sunday.

“But they also have one or two players who are more interested in selfies and six-packs, guys who are trying to get their pictures taken every day of the week.

“Every year we hear the same thing about Ar-



Republic of Ireland's assistant manager Roy Keane

senal being contenders. Instead of focussing on the Premier League, it's all about how their bodies look, how their hair is, more so than winning foot-

ball matches.”

Arsenal, under manager Arsene Wenger, have become one of the most dazzling attacking sides in Europe but a perceived

lack of leadership has undermined their ability to make a sustained title challenge for a number of years. Back-to-back FA Cup triumphs ended their nine-year trophy drought but for too long the north Londoners have not been relevant during the intense 38-game toil of a Premier League season.

Last season, under Jose Mourinho, Chelsea -- built around a strong spine of hard-working, physical players -- stifled their closest rivals to canter to the league title and Keane said the Stamford Bridge side remained the benchmark in

the upcoming season.

“For me, Chelsea remain the team to beat,” the 43-year-old added. “Their team is the one with the strongest spine -- John Terry, their goalkeeper (Thibault Courtois), Eden Hazard -- and if they can add (Everton's England defender) John Stones to their team then they will be even harder to beat.

“The bottom line is that if Chelsea's players show the same hunger and desire that they did last year then they'll win the league. They will only be in trouble if they are complacent.”—Reuters

California wildfires expand after death of firefighter

SAN FRANCISCO, 3 Aug — Firefighters rushed to contain a pair of fast-moving wildfires in Northern California on Saturday as they mourned the death of a U.S. Forest Service firefighter killed this week in the battle against one of the blazes, officials said.

The largest blaze has forced hundreds of people to evacuate and destroyed two dozen homes. Experts have predicted a long and volatile summer wildfire season in California in its fourth year of crippling drought. Firefighter David Ruhl, 38, a married father of two from Rapid City, South Dakota, died on

Thursday while on assignment at the Frog Fire in the Modoc National Forest near California's border with Oregon.

No one else was with Ruhl when he was killed, and he was the incident commander on the fire at the time, said Modoc National Forest spokesman Ken Sandusky. It is common for a leader on a fire to travel alone, Sandusky said, but he declined to release more details on the death.

The Frog Fire, which broke out on Thursday and is about 5 percent contained, has grown to 3,000 acres (1,214 hectares) and erratic winds have pushed it

in all directions, according to the U.S. Forest Service's InciWeb online fire information center.

A red-flag warning, designating the threat of gusty winds that risk fanning flames, was expected to remain in effect until late Sunday in the area of the Frog Fire. InciWeb said the flames are not expected to be fully under control until Aug. 12.

The Rocky Fire, in the foothills and canyons on the inland flanks of California's northern coastal range in Lake County north of San Francisco, has also ballooned in size and now covers 25,750 acres (10,420



Firefighters work to dig a fire line on the Rocky Fire in Lake County, California July 30, 2015.—REUTERS

hectares).

Nearly 2,000 firefighters are working on the fire, which broke out on Wednesday and is only 5

percent contained, according to a state fire information website.

“It's making some good runs right now,” said

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) spokesman Captain Ron Oatman.

Reuters

Film FC crowned in Ve Ve Cup football tournament



MANDALAY, 3 Aug—Film FC won the championship trophy in the final match of the Ve Ve Cup quadripartite football tournament at Mandalay Thiri Stadium in Chanmyathazi Township, here, Sunday. The Film FC beat Model FC 5-4 in the final match. ACE Company Chairman

Dr U Phyo Ko Ko Tint Hsan awarded K5 million and medals to champion Film FC while Vice Chairman of Green Circle Company U Naing Phyo Kyaw gave K3 million and medals to the second prize winning Model FC. Deputy Director U Wai Zin of Mandalay Region Sports and

Physical Education Department and officials presented prizes to other winning teams and best players in respective places. Mandalay Region Minister for Social Affairs Dr Win Hlaing presented championship trophy to Film FC. *Tin Maung (Mandalay)*

Australia beat Myanmar 4-0 in AFF U-16 Championship

PHNOM PENH, 3 Aug—AFF U-16 Championship continued its group matches in Phnom Penh, Cambodia Monday. In the group (B), Australian U-16 thrashed

Myanmar U-16 4-0. Up to now, Australia stands on the table with nine points in three wins while Myanmar secures six points in two wins and one loss, followed

by Cambodia with three points in one win, Singapore with three points in one win and the Philippines with nil in Group (B). *MFF*

CECH unnerved his former Chelsea team mates, says Wenger



Arsenal's Petr Cech celebrates after winning the FA Community Shield against Chelsea during FA Community Shield at Wembley Stadium on 2 August, 2015. —REUTERS

LONDON, 3 Aug — Petr Cech broke a few Arsenal hearts down the years during his glittering Chelsea career but helped the Gunners enjoy a rare victory over Jose Mourinho's side on Sunday. The 33-year-old shut out his former team mates at Wembley as Arsenal drew first blood in the English season with a 1-0 victory in the Community Shield at Wembley.

Signing a keeper of such pedigree, especially from a main rival, was a coup for Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger and the Frenchman was quick to laud Cech's influence on his first competitive appearance for the Gunners. "He did well. Maybe he had an influence on the Chelsea players as well because they felt that to score against him they had to

score the perfect goal," Wenger, who enjoyed a first victory over a side managed by Mourinho in 14 attempts, told reporters. "When you have that sometimes you want to try too hard. "It happened especially with Eden Hazard when he had that chance in the box." Cech's clean sheet completed a satisfying day for Wenger but he said the real business be-

With British Open in the bag, Park looks for new goals

SEOUL, 3 Aug — South Korea's Park In-bee had once hoped to win all the top tournaments in women's golf before her career came to an end. After winning the British Open on Sunday, the 27-year-old now finds herself searching for new goals.

Park's three-shot win over compatriot Ko Jin-young at Turnberry gave her a seventh major championship and confirmed her status as one of the greatest players of all time. She needs just three more majors to join greats Annika Sorenstam and Babe Zaharias at fourth on the all-time list, and is almost halfway to the 15 achieved by the legendary Patty Berg between 1937 and 1958.

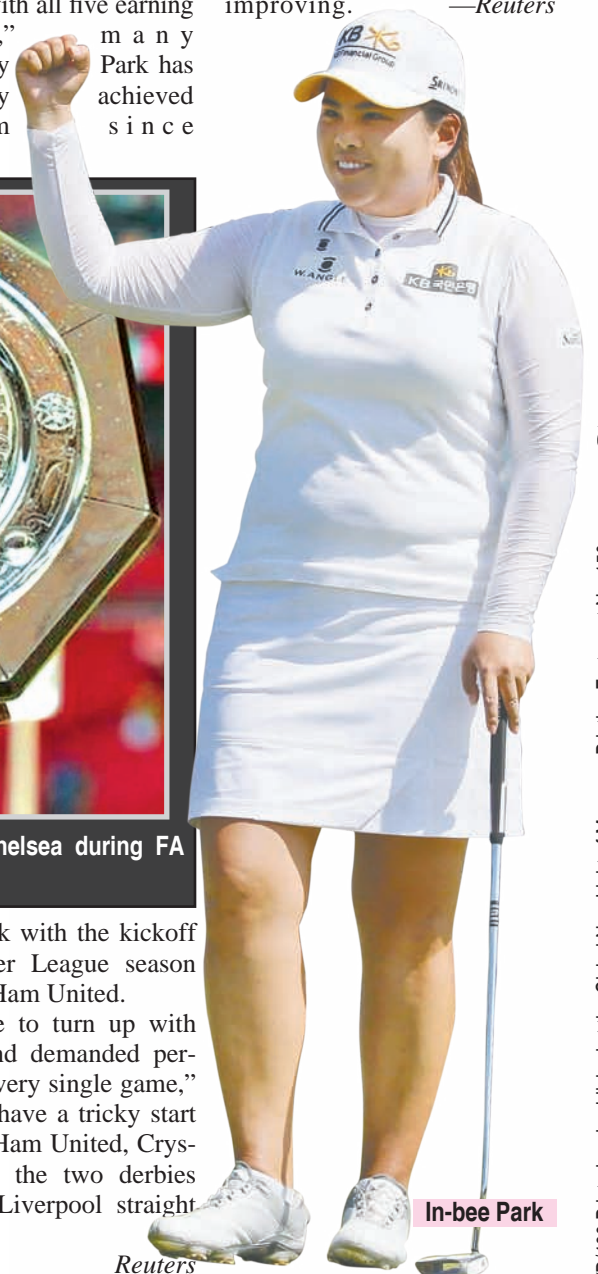
The Seoul native has now won six of the last 14 majors and will be looking to cap a terrific season with victory at the year's last major — the Evian Championship. Park won the tournament in its previous incarnation as the Evian Masters before it became the LPGA's official fifth major two years ago.

While the LPGA has said winning any four of the five majors is enough to earn the 'career grand slam', with all five earning a 'super slam,' many observers say Park has not technically achieved the career slam since

her Evian win came before it was afforded official major status.

Regardless of the debate, Park said she had achieved the "greatest goal as a professional golfer".

"I always thought this would be the last goal of my career," she told Korea's Yonhap news agency. "I am honoured to my have my dream come true when I'm this young." 'The Silent Assassin' was at her stoic, unruffled best in south Ayrshire as Scotland's wind and rain battered the players over four difficult days. While the testing course and brutal conditions saw players recording eights and nines, with Spaniard Beatriz Recari even carding a 10 in the second round, Park kept her composure throughout and never scored worse than bogey. "This week with the win and the rain it was so tough mentally and physically," she added. "But I feel like I've received a great gift. I am so happy I can't fully express it with words." Park, who will be vying for a spot on South Korea's team for the 2016 Rio Olympics, said the level of talent being produced back home meant she had to keep improving. —Reuters



In-bee Park

Reuters