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PRIORITISE KIDS' RIGHTS POLITICIANS PLEDGE TO PUT CHILDREN FIRST

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 28 Aug — Representatives from political parties on 28 August made commitments to put children at the centre of their policies and to further their best interests if elected.

The statements were made during an event titled "Let's call for one clear winner at the 2015 elections: Children," which was jointly organized by UNICEF and the NGO Child Rights Working Group (NCRWG), in cooperation with the Union Election Commission and held in Yangon.

UNICEF and the NGO Child Rights Working Group said in a joint statement that children make up a third of Myanmar's population and that investing in their futures and meeting their current needs is vital for the country's development.

During the event, children aged from 12 to 18 voiced their hopes, dreams and concerns about the future to an audience of political hopefuls.

The children urged them to adopt child-focused policy platforms in the lead up to the 8 November general elections.

(See page 3)



Event attendees raise their hands in support of calling on politicians to put children at the heart of their policies.—PHOTO: UNICEF

Minimum wage set at K3,600

NAY PYI TAW, 28 Aug — The government has approved a proposed minimum wage of K3,600 (US\$2.80) for a standard eight-hour work day across all sectors and industries, the National Minimum Wage Committee announced on Friday.

The national minimum wage will take effect from 1 September.

The committee carried out a survey of 22,000 households in 108 townships across the country to determine average living costs of individual low-income workers before proposing a minimum wage of K3,600 on 29 June.

Since then the committee had held several rounds of negotiations with the government, labour organisations, employers and workers.

The committee said in a statement that the minimum wage will apply to all workers other than small and family-run businesses with a workforce comprising less than 15 people.—MNA

Wandering wild elephants pushed back towards habitat

KYAUKPADAUNG, 28 Aug— A herd of wild elephants are being gently driven back to their usual Bago Yoma habitat with the help of tamed elephants, according to the Forest Department.

The herd is thought to have wandered over 100 miles away from their usual territory. There have been sightings of them passing through Natmauk township in Magwe Region and NyaungU town-

ship in Mandalay Region before they came into close proximity with Lunpingon village in Bago's Kyaukpadaung township.

On 27 August, witnesses said that they spotted the six roving elephants resting in a valley. As the herd began to move on, one appeared to be stranded due to illness.

Local authorities have warned curious locals not to approach the animals or do an-

anything that could make the herd change direction.

"The tamed elephants have been a huge help in redirecting the elephants away from the village. We're hoping that they will continue to travel in the general direction of Sanpya and Mehtee villages. But it's too soon to know whether everything will go according to plan," said U Win Htike of the township's Forest Department.—Naing Lin Kyi

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Union Parliament) Roundup



MPs attend final day in 12th regular session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.—MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

NAY PYI TAW, 28 Aug — The 12th regular session of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw came to a close on Friday. Representatives discussed a Yen 99.850 billion loan for the Ministry of Rail Transportation and the Ministry of Electric Power from JICA during the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Session on Friday.

Some representatives supported the loan in principle but maintained it is important to spend the funds in the most beneficial way. One representative suggested that ministries provide updates to parliament every six months on the work being carried out using foreign loans.

Another representa-

tive pointed out that despite the benefits the loan may offer, Myanmar's current economic slowdown means that the debt will also be a burden. The representative urged ministries to hold themselves accountable for the spending of the funds.

Members ultimately approved the plan to accept a loan from JICA, as well as the monogamy law and the signing of the Maritime Labour Convention 2006.

Later, Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Daw Su Su Hlaing explained ongoing disaster management efforts in flood affected areas. She said that disaster relief efforts could be considered a success overall

despite some weaknesses in management. She commended the high level of cooperation between experts, civil society organisations and the government and added that state and region governments will be responsible for the reconstruction of flood-hit areas.

Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann explained the achievements of the 12th Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, which includes the passing of 185 laws, 10 motions and approvals for foreign loans. The speaker concluded the 12th regular session by saying that parliament has served the interests of the country and its people.

MNA

INTERNATIONAL AID FOR REHABILITATION

China's PLA sends relief supplies to Myanmar's flood victims by flight

NAY PYI TAW, 28 Aug—The Chinese People's Liberation Army on Friday donated relief supplies for flood victims in Myanmar.

Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Hong Liang officially dispatched the items to Lt-Gen Ye

Aung of Commander-in-Chief (Army) Office during a ceremony, after the two Ilyushin-76 aircrafts carrying 54.62 tons of relief materials arrived at Nay Pyi Taw Airport.

The supplies donated include tents, generators and blankets and further

items will arrive on 29 and 30 August.

Also present at the ceremony was Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Brig-Gen Moe Myint Tun and senior military officials, as well as Chinese Embassy officials.

Myawady



Tatmadawmen unloading relief supplies from aircraft of Chinese People's Liberation Army at Nay Pyi Taw Airport.—MYAWADY

Contemporary Asian artwork to go on display

By Aye Min Soe

YANGON, 28 Aug — Artists from Thailand, China, Japan, and Myanmar are taking part in a group exhibition at Beikthano Gallery from 29 August to 4 September.

The eight artists, five of whom are from Myanmar, are showcasing 40 contemporary works as part of the Oriental Friendship exhibition in Bahan Township.

"I decided to organise this exhibition as part of an ongoing cultural exchange between Myanmar art masters and their foreign counterparts. I'd like to see more oppor-

tunities for art students to take part in art exchange programmes in the future," said Mon Thet, who is the ex-principal of the Yangon State School of Fine Arts.

He added that during various trips abroad he encountered a great deal of interest in Myanmar's contemporary art scene, which inspired him to invite international and local artists to combine their works in a group exhibition.

Along with Mon Thet's work, the other Myanmar artists being featured are Tin Win (Beikthao), Lun Pe, CNK and Thar Gyi.

Foreign artists include Assistant Professor of the Fine and Applied Arts De-

partment of Visual Arts (Painting) Khon Kaen University of Thailand Kanaid Silsat, the award-winning Chinese artist He Si'en and Katsumi Mukai, a Japanese painter and sculptor who

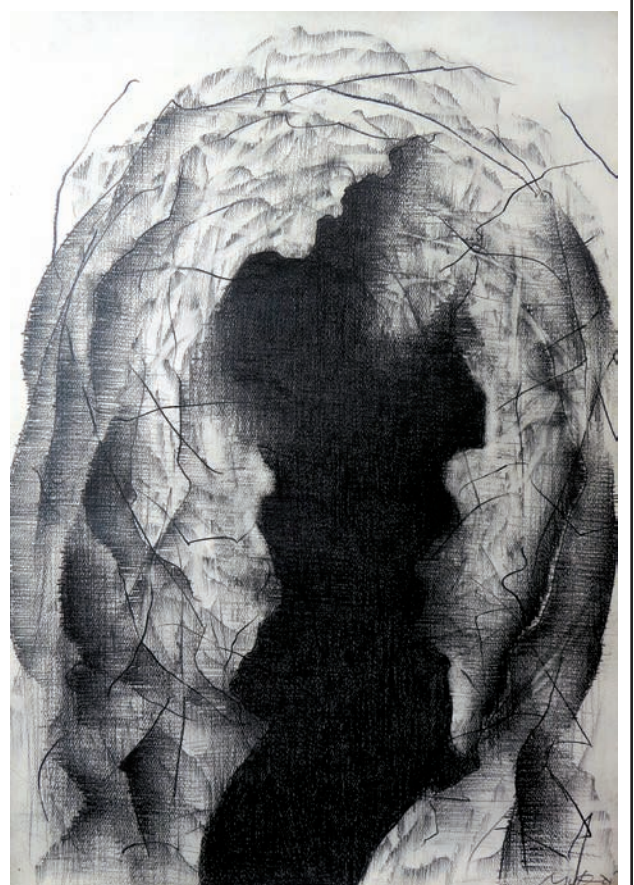
is well-known for his nature-inspired creations.

Beikthano Gallery is located at No. 113/3 (b), Kaba Aye Pagoda Road, Bahan Township.

GNLM



Art work created by Chinese artist He Si'en.



Art work of Japanese painter and sculptor Katsumi. Mukai.

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham meets Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency head

NAY PYI TAW, 28 Aug — Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham met Mr Soichi Noguchi, an astronaut and chief of Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on Friday to discuss future aerospace cooperation between the two countries.

Other discussion points included Japan's assistance to Myanmar for disaster prevention in Myanmar and delivering long-term aerospace education programmes.

Also present at the meeting was Union Minister Dr Ko Ko Oo and deputy ministers U Tin Oo Lwin and Dr San Lwin.—MNA



Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham receives with Mr Soichi Noguchi, an astronaut and chief of Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA).—MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw speaker holds talks with Indian Ambassador

NAY PYI TAW, 28 Aug— Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint received Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Gautam Mukhopadhyaya at the hall of the Hluttaw complex, here, Friday.

Also present at the meeting were Chairman of Amyotha Hluttaw Political, Economic and Legal Affairs U Myint Thein and member U Kyaw Sein.—MNA

Myanmar hosts Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund Caravan

NAY PYI TAW, 28 Aug—The 1st JAIF Caravan Workshop, jointly organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and JAIF Management Team (JMT) of ASEAN Secretariat, was held on 27 and 28 August at Grand Amara Hotel, here.

The workshop was officiated by Deputy Minister U Tin Oo Lwin with a keynote address. Mr Koichi Aiboshi, Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN and Dr Lim Hong Lin, Deputy Secretary General of ASEAN Secretariat made their keynote addresses.

The caravan aims to serve as a platform to share achievements of JAIF-supported projects for best practice, boosting effects and further support schemes for ASEAN member states (AMSs) under JAIF, particularly exploring and creating working-relationships between relevant ministries and JAIF public sector partners.

The workshop focused on seven presentations of JAIF-supported success cases by representatives from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry, and Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. The JAIF caravan exchanged views on ways and means to develop project proposals, effective implementation and completion procedures for JAIF-supported programmes.

On Friday, the programme was handed over to Lao People's Democratic Republic.—MNA

Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends Thailand-Myanmar high level meeting

NAY PYI TAW, 28 Aug— High Level Committee meeting in Bangkok on Friday. Senior General Min Aung Hlaing Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services attended the third Thailand-Myanmar High Level Committee meeting. Co-chairman of Myanmar High Level Committee Senior General Min Aung Hlaing led

the Myanmar delegation comprising Lt-Gen Yar Pyae from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) and party, and Myanmar's military attaché

to Thailand. The Thai delegation included the co-chairman of Thailand High Level Committee Thai Supreme Commander of Royal Thai Armed Forces General Worapong Sanganetra, as well as officials.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing emphasised that both countries were keen to engage in mutual trust building and enjoy close ties. He expressed his firm belief that the third meeting would further cement mutual understanding and friendly relations between the two armed forces.

The meeting decisions were subsequently confirmed and signed by both Commander-in-Chiefs.

The three-day talks took place from August 24 to 26 in Bangkok and focused on issues such as drug elimination, exchange visits, joint sporting competitions for Myanmar and Thailand armed forces, counter-terrorism and border security.—Myawady



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and Thai Supreme Commander General Worapong Sanganetra sign agreement of the meeting.—MYAWADY

Politicians pledge to put children first

(from page 1)

During the roundtable discussions, participants focused on strengthening understanding and adherence to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CROC), improving children's health and access to education, building a drug-free society and eliminating all forms of child labour.

The issue of corporal punishment at schools was also raised, as it contravenes the

principles laid out by CROC.

"I would be happy if CROC was incorporated into our school curriculum because it is teachers who interact the most with students and they should do so in a positive way," said Mg Hlwan Moe Aung, a 16-year-old Grade 10 student from Shwepyitha Township.

"Putting children at the top of the political agenda is good for political parties, good for voters, good for children,

and good for the country. It is a clear winning strategy," said Mr Bertrand Bainvel, UNICEF Representative to Myanmar.

The revised Child Law was also among the topics discussed during the event, with participants calling for heightened awareness of children's legal rights. Some said that many parents know little about the legal framework surrounding children's rights, while children tend to know even less.

"I want to see the rights of all children in Myanmar protected, regardless of geography, ethnicity and religious beliefs," said Ma Shwe Yee Hnin, a 13-year-old student in Grade 8 from Shwepyitha Township.

Although poverty rates have been declining since 2010, more than 4.4 million children in Myanmar between 5 and 18 years of age do not attend school, while 10 million children live in poverty.—GNLM

Paddy donated as floods ebb in Myanaung Tsp

MYANAUNG, 28 Aug—Water levels have dropped significantly in more than 30,000 acres of farmland in Myanaung Township, Ayeyawady Region, however another 20,000 are still waiting for the flooding to ebb.

The Township Agricultural Supervisory Committee recently compiled a list of damaged farmlands.

Government departments in the township donated 200 baskets of paddy seeds, while Htoo Foun-

dation has delivered 500 baskets, the secretary of the committee said.

The secretary of Township Rice Federation pledged to donate 100 baskets of quality paddy seeds to local farmers and rice millers have announced plans to donate paddy seeds shortly.

Goldsmiths and a local social association donated cash to the Township Agricultural Supervisory Committee.—*Nay Win Zaw (Myanaung)*



Thousands of flood victims receive rice donations



TAUNGTHA, 28 Aug—The township natural disaster management committee delivered 243 bags of rice donated by Mandalay Region Department of Relief and Resettlement to flood victims in Taungtha Township on 27 August.

There is enough rice to

feed 3,064 flood victims from Thayaaye, Kyungyi, Aungzabu, Ywalaygon, Yabe, Ngapinsin and Hsinmin villages for three days.

Township administrator U Aung Kyaw Nyunt oversaw the distribution activities.—*Kyaw Myo Naing (Taungtha)*

Kanbawza's Foundation donates over K6 billion to landslide victims

HAKA, 28 Aug—Kanbawza Brighter Future Myanmar Foundation, together with Chin State Chief Minister U Hong Ngai and State Education Officer Daw Win Kyi, donated relief supplies and K1 million each on 27 August to victims of the recent landslides in Chin State's Haka Township.

A total of 517 houses in Haka collapsed in the landslides.

The foundation also donated K582.5 million for the reconstruction of 10 basic education schools through Chin State Education Officer Daw Win Kyi.

Moreover, the foundation provided K30,000 in cash assistance for 67 patients at Haka People's Hospital and donated two ECGs, 10 suckers, 10 air sep (oxygen concentrator), four nebulizers, four refrigerators and a washing machine to Kalay



People's Hospital.

In Kalay, the foundation donated construction materials, fuel, school uniforms and stationery.

To date, the foundation has donated more than K6 billion

to flood victims in Sagaing, Magway, Bago and Ayeyawady regions and Rakhine and Chin states.

Air KBZ has transported relief supplies to flood victims 49 times at its own expense.—*KBZ*

Palethwe hybrid paddy seeds supplied to five villages in Myaing Tsp

MYAING, 28 Aug—Magway Region Department of Agriculture has distributed packets of Palethwe hybrid paddy seeds to local farmers in Myaing Township.

“Myaing Township authorities arranged the provision of Palethwe paddy to one-acre areas of farmland in five different

villages with the aim of enabling farmers to store quality paddy seeds for next year.” Staff Officer of the Township Agriculture Department U Khin Oo said.

“Department staff also provided instruction on improved cultivation techniques to local farmers,” he added.

MOI Webportal



Thai opposition slams draft constitution week before vote

BANGKOK, 28 Aug — Thailand's main opposition party denounced a military-backed draft constitution on Friday saying it "totally disregards the sovereignty of the Thai people", a week before a junta-appointed council is due to vote on it.

The army seized power in a bloodless coup in 2014, toppling the remnants of the Puea Thai Party-led government of ousted Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra. Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, who as army chief led the coup, has ruled largely unchallenged since.

"This charter totally disregards the sovereignty of the Thai people," the Puea Thai Party said in a statement. "The true power belongs to agencies and mechanism which are designed to maintain the junta's power without checks and balances."

The National Reform Council (NRC) will vote on the draft on Sept. 6 and if it passes, it will be put to a referendum in January. It needs the support of just over half the NRC's 247 members.

Of particular concern is a proposal for a 23-member National Strategic Reform and Reconciliation committee dominated by the military that allows security to intervene in a time of crisis.



An anti-government protester waves a Thai national flag under a picture of Thailand's Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra during a rally outside the Puea Thai party in Bangkok March 5, 2014.—REUTERS

"Many provisions are contrary to international democratic principles and the rule of law," Puea Thai said.

Many politicians say they expect the charter to pass the vote but to be rejected in the referendum, which would mean the drafting process has to begin

again, delaying an election the junta has promised for next year.

Some groups have held peaceful protests against the junta but opposition activists have largely gone to ground in recent weeks after authorities arrested some student activists.

Prayuth has, however, had to contend with criticism levelled at his administration's handling of Thailand's flagging economy and, more recently, slow progress in an investigation into a Bangkok bomb attack that killed 20 people, more than half of them foreigners.—Reuters

Border firing kills nine on India-Pakistan war anniversary

SRINAGAR, India/Lahore, Pakistan, 28 Aug — Cross-border firing between India and Pakistan killed at least nine people on Friday, the day India marked the 50th anniversary of a war between the two South Asian nations.

On the Pakistani side of the frontier, six civilians were killed and more than 40 were treated for wounds in hospital in the town of Sialkot, the media wing of the Pakistani military said.

India's Border Security Force (BSF) said three civilians had died and 22 were wounded in firing across the frontier in the northern Jammu region. Both said the other side had opened fire first.

The accounts could not be independently verified, but tensions have been running high between the nuclear-armed neighbors since peace talks that were due to be held last weekend were called off at the last minute. The talks had been agreed on at a meeting last month in Russia between prime ministers Narendra Modi of India and Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan, but fell apart over whether the disputed territory of Kashmir should be put on the agenda.—Reuters

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Ending standoff with North Korea boosts South's President Park

SEOUL, 28 Aug — Beset by crisis, scandal and a sluggish economy in the first half of her single five-year term, South Korean President Park Geun-hye's approval rating soared in a poll released on Friday after a pact with North Korea brought back the rivals from the brink of conflict.

Park's rating in a Gallup poll climbed a remarkable 15 percentage points from a week earlier to 49 percent, the highest in nearly a year, after the accord early on Tuesday ended an armed standoff in one of the world's most dangerous flashpoints and cleared the ground for further engagement with Pyongyang.

She also scored points for talking tough in the midst of the negotiations, insisting that North Korea had to apologize for landmine blasts along their border.

"This is a beginning to pierce through clogged-up South-North ties, but we don't yet have a legacy," said Choi Jin, the head of the Institute for Presidential Leadership in Seoul, referring to Park's ambition for a lasting peace, and eventually reunification.

"How she can continue to achieve outcomes to live up to this higher expectation is the next challenge." Park, the daughter of a former president who came to power in February 2013, has made improving relations with nuclear-armed and unpredictable

North Korea the top aim of her administration.

Ties between the rivals have been all but frozen since 2010, when Seoul blamed Pyongyang for sinking a South Korean naval ship.

Park has lived under the shadow of the North since her youth. Her mother was shot and killed in 1974 by a North Korean agent attempting to assassinate her father, then President Park Chung-hee.

Nevertheless, she has said her ambition is to engage North Korea and eventually bring the rivals close enough to make unification feasible for most on both sides.

Many in South Korea credited Park's tough stance for bringing Pyongyang to the negotiating table and forcing it to express regret for the mine blasts.

The two sides also agreed to work towards resuming the meetings of families divided by the 1950-53 Korean War, an emotional issue given the advancing years of surviving family members, and to talk towards improving bilateral relations.

There seems to be no immediate likelihood of a summit between Park and the North's Kim Jong Un, but the atmosphere between the two sides appears to have significantly improved after the pact.

In a meeting with his top



South Korean President Park Geun-hye

military aides, Kim called the accord a landmark that should pave the way for defused tension and improved ties, the North's official media said on Friday.

The leaders of the two Koreas have held just two summit meetings since the 1950-53 Korean War, the last in 2007.

Park came to office with a strong electoral mandate but has been bogged down by a weak economy, the sinking of a ferry last year that killed more than 300 people, mostly school students, and graft scandals engulfing a prime minister who later resigned. South Korea's one-term presidency means its leaders take on lame-duck status relatively early.

Relations with North Korea, however, are less constrained by domestic politics, which should give Park more room to maneuver for the remainder of her term.

Still, she is not likely to rush into a summit as her style is cautious and she prefers an incremental approach.

Relations between the Koreas are characteristically volatile and could be set for another downturn if Pyongyang conducts a ballistic missile test on Oct. 10 to mark the 70th anniversary of the ruling Workers' Party, as it has hinted it will do.

Lee Junhan of Incheon National University said Park could take advantage from the engagement with the North, but in the end, she would be judged by how the economy fared.

"If we have more outcomes in the follow up to the talks, such as family reunions and more working-level meetings, then the ratings can remain high, but if economic recovery is slow, then her ratings will decline again," he said.—Reuters

Japan to offer 42 bil. yen in 3-year ODA for women's empowerment

TOKYO, 28 Aug — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Friday that Japan will extend more than 42 billion yen (\$347 million) in official development assistance over the following three years to promote the education of women and girls, as the government aims to push forward its agenda on women's empowerment as host of next year's Group of Seven summit.

In a speech at an international symposium in Tokyo on the empowerment of women, Abe also said his government will draw up by year-end a policy package to enhance support for female-headed households in Japan.

"Over the next three years, we will implement ODA of more than 42 billion yen toward high-quality education for women and girls so that they will be economically independent and able to determine the course of their own lives through their own volition," Abe said.

Around 140 female political and business leaders from over 40 countries and international organizations attended the World Assembly for Women, including Abe's wife Akie, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, executive director of UN Women, and Marilyn Hewson, president of US aircraft giant Lockheed Martin Corp.

Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said in her speech that it is important to remember "the great social and economic benefits that come with women's active participation in public life and society." The first democratically elected female president in

Africa received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011. US first lady Michelle Obama called in a video message for investment in girls' education.

"Our goal is very clear. We want to ensure that every girl on this planet can develop her potential and contribute fully to her family, community and country," she said.

The Japanese government launched the conference last year to discuss ways to promote women's social advancement and protect their human rights, with Abe touting it as a "women's Davos" modeled on the World Economic Forum meetings held annually in the Swiss resort.

Abe has placed women's empowerment as a key pillar of his economic growth strategy, setting a goal of raising women's share of leadership positions in the country's workforce to 30 percent by 2020. During the speech, Abe noted the greatest barrier preventing women from participating in society is "a working culture that endorses male-centered long working hours."

Japan "wants to emulate" successful attempts by the Nordic countries to "reconcile economic growth and rising birth rates under the banner of active participation by women," he added.

Japan as host of next year's meetings of the G-7 countries — also comprising Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and the United States — will "push the agenda on women forward vigorously at the Ise-Shima Summit as well," Abe said.—*Kyodo News*

US, China stress positives ahead of Xi trip



U.S. National Security Advisor Susan Rice (L) shakes hands with Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing, China August 28, 2015.—REUTERS

BEIJING, 28 Aug — China and the United States stressed the positives in their complex relationship on Friday during meetings between US National Security Adviser Susan Rice and Chinese officials ahead of a US visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping next month.

While the world's two largest economies have important mutual interests, like trying to rein in North Korea's nuclear programme, deep disagreements exist over everything from

Internet security to China's claims in the South China Sea. "We have seen our bilateral relationship evolve and strengthen in recent months. And we have found areas of broadened and deepened cooperation that we are certainly looking forward to building upon," Rice told China's top diplomat, State Councilor Yang Jiechi, who outranks the foreign minister.

"At the same time, we have been able to discuss frankly our differences, which we both

acknowledge need to be addressed effectively."

Yang said that both countries had cooperated closely over the Iran and North Korean nuclear issues.

"With shared efforts on both sides, China-US relations have maintained a trend of overall positive development recently," he added.

Rice also met Fan Changlong, one of the vice chairmen of the Central Military Commission, which Xi heads and which controls the Chinese armed forces, the world's largest.

Fan said that his meeting with Rice was the fourth in one year, which showed the importance the two countries attach to military-to-military relations.

Rice said the United States was committed to developing healthy and stable ties with the People's Liberation Army, and praised cooperation between the two over the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and efforts to fight piracy in the Gulf of Aden.

There was no mention in any of the comments in front of reporters of cyber issues or the South China Sea.

The United States has repeatedly expressed concern about Chinese reclamation work in the South China Sea. China says the United States is not a claimant nation in the dispute and should stay out of it.

China claims most of the South China Sea, through which \$5 trillion in ship-borne trade passes every year, and rejects the rival claims of Vietnam, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Taiwan.—*Reuters*

Thailand issues arrest warrant for suspect in second blast

BANGKOK, 28 Aug — An arrest warrant has been issued for an unnamed suspect in a bomb blast at a Bangkok pier that took place a day after Thailand's worst ever-bombing killed 20 people at a popular shrine, Thai police said on Friday.

Police spokesman Prawut Thawornsiri said a court issued the warrant based on grainy video footage of a man in a blue shirt kicking a bag into the water near the pier on the night of Aug. 17, soon after the blast at Bangkok's Hindu Erawan Shrine.

"We issued an arrest warrant for the suspect in the Sathorn pier incident," police spokesman Prawut Thawornsiri told Reuters, referring to a pier near Bangkok's Chao Phraya

river.

The suspect faces charges of unauthorized possession of explosives, exploding a bomb that could cause harm and attempted murder, according to the warrant.

The pier explosion caused no casualties.

Police have not definitively linked the two blasts and have offered few answers as to who could be behind the attacks.

In the shrine bombing investigation, police are focusing on a man seen in blurry security camera footage.

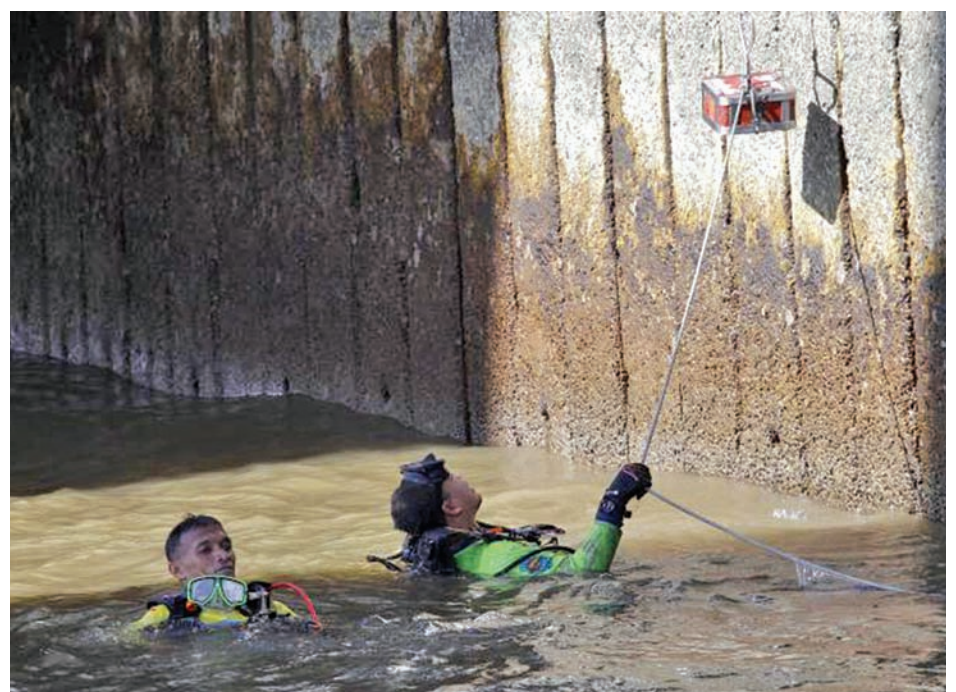
The footage shows a man in a yellow shirt and dark hair removing a backpack after entering the packed shrine and calmly walking away from the scene before the explosion.

Last week police issued an arrest warrant for an "unidentified foreign man" seen in the video footage along with an image of the suspected bomber.

Prawut said police were unlikely to issue a picture of the suspected pier bomber. "We're unlikely to make a sketch of the suspect as his face is not clear," he said.

The Erawan shrine bombing has taken a toll on tourism and caused a 17 percent fall in tourist arrivals, Thailand's tourism ministry said on Wednesday.

Fourteen foreigners were among the 20 people killed in the attack at the famous Hindu shrine in Bangkok's bustling commercial heart.—*Reuters*



Divers recover pieces of evidence, for members of the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), after a man threw an explosive from a bridge at Sathorn pier in central Bangkok, Thailand, August 18, 2015.—REUTERS

WORLD

Cancer, transplant patients protest over Venezuela's medicine shortages

CARACAS, 28 Aug — Venezuelans with chronic medical conditions such as breast cancer, hemophilia and transplants protested in Caracas on Thursday, the latest demonstration to demand urgent medicines in a country beset with shortages. Around 13,000 people with chronic issues are at risk of severe harm if they do not find chemotherapy or medicines, including those that prevent organ transplants being rejected, according to organizer CodeVida, a non-profit umbrella health group.

A combination of currency controls, slumping domestic production and cross-border smuggling have caused acute shortages of medical supplies in socialist-led Venezuela. With an estimated seven in 10 drugs currently unavailable, rights groups are warning the situation is increasingly untenable. “The word ‘wait’ doesn’t exist for transplant patients. The medicines are daily. If we don’t have them, we collapse,” said Alfredo Quintero, 52, who has a transplanted kidney but has medicines to last only until Sept. 6.

“What do they want us to be, a statistic?” he said alongside a few dozen protesters outside a social security pharmaceutical branch meant to supply free medicines.

Demonstrators brandished posters reading “S.O.S. — Venezuelan health is dying.” Earlier this month, children suffering from cancer also protested in front of a Caracas hospital over intermittent supply of chemotherapy medicines.

“In the last few months the supply of medicines for people with chronic health issues has worsened. Without these medicines we could see irreversible harm,” said CodeVida director Francisco Valencia.

“We’re receiving calls from across the country and we don’t know what to say because we don’t have medicine.”

President Nicolas Maduro has framed shortages as part of an “economic war” led by businessmen he accuses of hoarding and smuggling goods.

The government did not reply to requests for comment but Venezuela’s Social Security Institute said in a



Protesters hold placards during a gathering in demand for medicines in Caracas, Venezuela August 27, 2015.—REUTERS

tweet to Reuters later on Thursday that to date this year its high-cost programme “has invested 169 million bolivars (\$27 million) at strongest exchange rate; \$243,000 at black market rate) in treatment for transplant patients. We guarantee treatment for these cat-

astrophic illnesses.”

Maduro’s predecessor, Hugo Chavez, harnessed an oil boom to build free clinics in the slums and health issues such as maternal mortality improved.

But many health statistics have not been published since shortages worsened.

Hospitals are overloaded, doctors have left the public sector or the country, and equipment including thermometers and catheters are scarce.

Around 230 breast cancer patients are unable to undergo surgery due to lack of blood, said Luisa Rodriguez,

the president of breast cancer group FUNCAMAMA.

“These women are going to see their tumor double in 100 days. There’s a risk of death or treatment being extended unnecessarily,” said Rodriguez, waving a sign listing a dozen missing medicines.—Reuters

Greece's Syriza to win election but face setback, poll shows



Greek outgoing Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras leaves his party's headquarters in Athens, Greece, August 21, 2015.—REUTERS

ATHENS, 28 Aug — Former Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras’ leftist Syriza will emerge as the biggest party after next month’s election but without the sizeable margin it was hoping for, the first major opinion poll since he resigned last week showed.

The poll also found that almost two thirds of voters felt Tsipras should not have sought a fresh mandate and that his favored coalition ally would not make it into parliament, suggesting his gamble to call early elections to consolidate his power base

could backfire.

Syriza was supported by 23 percent of those polled, with the conservative New Democracy party second on 19.5 percent, according to the survey, carried out by pollsters ProRata and published in Friday’s Efi-merida Ton Syntakton newspaper. The previous ProRata poll in early July showed a wider gap in Syriza’s favor, putting the party on 26 percent compared with 15 percent for New Democracy.

Based on the survey, 64 percent of Greeks believe Tsipras’s move to call snap

polls was wrong, while 68 percent agreed that Greece must stay in the euro zone at any cost, even if that meant further austerity.

“The answers to these two questions lead to the conclusion that early elections may cost the (former) prime minister and Syriza,” the newspaper said.

Early elections are expected on Sept. 20, a date the president is likely to confirm later on Friday after a caretaker government is sworn in. Tsipras abruptly resigned last week days after clinching an 86 billion euro

China says will report pollution information from Tianjin blast site

(\$97.2 billion) bailout package from European and International Monetary Fund lenders, hoping to crush a rebellion by far-left lawmakers and tighten his grip on power. Popular Unity, the party formed last week by Syriza rebels who oppose the bailout, was backed by 3.5 percent in Friday’s poll - just above the 3 percent threshold needed to enter parliament.

But the Independent Greeks, the ally in Tsipras’ former coalition government, scored just 2 percent, meaning Syriza would be forced to seek another coalition partner.

Tsipras this week ruled out cooperating with the main pro-euro opposition parties - New Democracy, the Socialist PASOK and the centrist To Potami. The poll’s result suggested that, in that event, the country would face a second round of elections.

One third of those who supported Tsipras’ party in the January 2015 elections that took him into office said they were unsure if they will do so again, the poll said.

It also showed 25.5 percent of voters were still undecided, making them the biggest bloc.—Reuters

ensure people’s right to know about environmental information”.

BEIJING, 28 Aug—China’s Environment Ministry has put in place a 24-hour monitoring system for pollutants from explosions this month at a port and will report accurate and timely data to the public, it said on Friday.

The blasts at a warehouse storing chemicals in the port city of Tianjin, not far from Beijing, killed at least 145, and stirred public anger about persistently poor work safety standards and possible health risks from the incident.

Speaking at a meeting, Environment Minister Chen Jining said environmental monitoring would not let up, with 24-hour checking for air, soil and water pollution.

The ministry would “release monitoring data to the public in a timely manner and accurately,” the official China Environment News cited Chen as saying.

Chen added that the ministry would “accurately respond to focus points and hot topics for society,

China has a poor reputation for transparency, especially when it comes to embarrassing incidents like disasters which could reflect badly on the ability of the ruling Communist Party to ensure public safety.

A new environmental protection law, effective from Jan. 1, grants the public the right of access to environmental information and also stipulates that officials directly responsible for illegal behaviour will be fired.

China has formally detained a dozen people over the explosions and accused 11 officials and port executives of dereliction of duty or abuse of power.

The party has also sacked the head of the work safety regulator, a former vice mayor of Tianjin, for suspected corruption, but without making an explicit link to the Aug. 12 chemical blasts.—Reuters

PERSPECTIVES

Saturday, 29 August, 2015

The fight against poverty should prioritise the youth

By Kyaw Thura

IT is encouraging to see the government put its commitment to lifting Myanmar out of least developed to middle-income status into action. Over the past two years, it has spent K9.3 billion on some 2,000 development projects across the country, with a particular focus on tackling poverty in rural areas.

The success stories that sprung out of these projects have spurred foreign governments and international financial institutions to pump hun-

dreds of millions of dollars into future projects in Myanmar. There is a shared vision of eradicating poverty by developing socio-economic infrastructure through community-based development projects. Such projects will benefit not thousands, but millions of people across the country's states and regions.

These combined efforts have resulted in a gradual drop in rural and urban poverty rates in Myanmar. Ten years ago, poverty rates stood at 32 percent. By 2010 that figure had dropped to 26 percent and the government is targeting a further reduction to 16 percent by the end of 2015. Achieving this will put Myanmar well on track to meet the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

Nevertheless, the majority of our people remain trapped in poverty. It is heartbreaking to see children born to poor families shouldering the burden of trying cover daily living expenses. Children ought not to be breadwinners. They ought to be students, so that they can break the vicious cycle of

poverty when they enter adulthood. Yet for many families, education is a luxury they simply cannot afford.

There is no greater national asset than its youth. After all, it is they who will lead the country when we no longer can. As adults, the onus is on us to protect them and nourish their talents in the knowledge that their success is a powerful indication of national prosperity.

Write for us

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

Dealing with Yangon's growing canine and feline population

By Myo Myint

ONE distinct feature of Yangon that you will notice wherever you go, whether it is the city centre, or the suburbs, is the hordes of dogs. You find them on streets, you find them in markets, you find them in monasteries and nunneries, you find them in schools, colleges, universities, and government offices and you even find them in some hospitals. You will also find them living in grand mansions, spacious houses and humble multi-storied apartments. Just as there is an influx of alien men and women, from the east, west, north and south, due to a the development of a better money-making environment in the country, so also there is an influx of exotic looking dogs from abroad due to the emergence of a more prosperous class of people. Alsations, Labradors, Dalmatians, and Dobermans, Terriers and Spaniels no longer merit a second glance in Yangon. There are now more popular breeds like Chihuahuas, Shih Tzus, Beagles, Pugs, Bull Terriers, Rottweilers, and numerous other exotic and expensive breeds that converge on the roads of Yangon every morning with their owners on tow for a call of nature and a bit of exercise. After finishing their business, they return to their havens to emerge again with their adoring owners in the evening.

On the other hand, the local streetwise dogs known as Bama dogs of various colours, shapes and conditions, brown, black, white, tanned, spotted, striped, brawny, scrawny, short, tall, clean, dirty and mangy looking, patrol their territories at all hours of the day in search of scraps of food, gang fights and equally unprepossessing mates. Cats, on the other hand, are too haughty and they try to stay out of public sight as much as possible. Nevertheless, their presence is very much felt in the wards of Yangon,

especially where there are monasteries because these serve not only as a refuge for new migrants from towns and villages but also as a haven with plenty of food for stray and unwanted cats. Like Western comic figures Superman, Batman and myriad others, they parade on top of walls, leap from one roof to another, stalk the alleyways, and stealthily enter houses to whet their appetite. They are wily creatures, pretending to be as pitiful and innocent as an infant when encountering an adoring cat lover and as ferocious as a tiger when faced with a dangerous foe. If they find a house which they feel have all the right conditions – adoring hosts, plentiful food, comfortable seats for catnaps, they will move in and soon rule over the inhabitants of house. If they become disenchanted with the place, they do not hesitate to look for a more comfortable home.

To my knowledge, nobody has as yet done a research on the number of dogs and cats with owners, nor the number of stray dogs and cats in Yangon. But from the frequent sightings in streets and public and private buildings, one can guess that their number must surely be enormous. Why such a large number? The answers are not difficult to find. Although Myanmar is not a land of dog or cat lovers, most Myanmar people are very reluctant to take the life of any creature, human being or non-human, even that of one as small as an ant or a mosquito. Secondly, Myanmar people feel great pity for any beings that are in trouble, even a sworn enemy, as foreign soldiers of the retreating army that occupied the country during the Second World War will testify. Thirdly, Myanmar people believe in reincarnation and the power of charity to improve one's chance for a better existence in one's next life. They would rather look for an animal, bird, cat, or dog, to feed them

with the left-over of a meal, rather than put it in the rubbish bin. There are also people who would cook extra food to feed the stray cats and dogs living near the house, or those living near their places of work. There are also people who take the trouble to daily cook large amounts of food and take it by light truck to where there are stray dogs in order to feed them. There are also a few generous persons who have set up shelters for stray cats and dogs much to the annoyance of their neighbours. On the other hand, there are self-centred people who have no qualms about abandoning their pets after losing interest in them.

Those who adore cats and dogs have many good things to say about them. Indeed, they are intelligent animals and make good companions, friends and entertainers for the lonely, the young, the sick and the handicap and they may even be more loyal than some human beings. In the case of dogs, they make excellent guards and they can also be used to assist human beings in doing various kinds of tasks, such as hunting animals, herding cattle, rescuing people, sniffing out narcotic drugs and landmines, etc. There are also many instances where dogs have saved adults and young children from harm, such as by killing snakes that are about to attack them. Cats, though not as versatile as dogs, can be used to control rodents. However, there are also the negative aspects of these two animals. Some aggressive cats and dogs have even turned on their owners, causing them serious injuries, and with strangers they can be even more dangerous. Moreover, both cats and dogs can carry the deadly rabies virus that can pass to humans causing an agonizing death and they may also transmit other less serious diseases such as canine influenza and cat scratch disease. In addition, dogs that have owners

as well as those that are strays cause annoyance and inconvenience to pedestrians by dirtying the pavements with their excrement. Furthermore, during their mating season these animals also keep people awake the whole night with their howling, barking, screeching and yowling. Stray dogs at government offices also cause fear and annoyance to the public who come there on business.

Due to the easy availability of food provided with the compliments of kind-hearted people, and the food at local garbage dumps and because of little attempt to control the population of cats and dogs, their numbers are increasing year by year. Many city dwellers feel that the danger and annoyance posed by these animals demand some kind of swift action to limit their numbers. In addition to decimating them, there are less cruel ways of keeping their population under control. One such action is using sterilization. Another means is using suitable methods of birth control. It is to be welcomed that a foreign social organization has offered to assist the city development

council in this very serious matter. Those who keep dogs and cats as pets should be charged license fees and made to follow the rules and regulations prescribed by the city development council such as restricting the number of animals that are allowed to be kept in a house, the vaccinations that their pets must be given to make sure that their cats and dogs do not pose a danger to the community or cause public nuisance by allowing their dogs to excrete on pavements, roads and parks.

There is no doubt that the number of stray cats and dogs will need to be reduced drastically through systematic and sustained means, not only because they pose a danger to the health and safety of the public, but also as it would contribute to making our city of Yangon, a clean, beautiful a high standard place. But, for the successful implementation of this scheme, the full cooperation of pet keepers, the general public and the administrators of the city and the assistance of local and international social organizations are indispensable.



POEM & NATIONAL

POEM:

The Floods

End July Two Thousand and Fifteen to Myanmar in it's yearly Monsoon Season cyclonic storm in the Northern part of Bengal Bay brought dark rain clouds rumbling all the way driven on to the Western shores, the Rakhine State, by strong winds in full fury and spate crossing over the Rakhine Yoma eventually to the middle and northern parts of the Country bringing torrential rainfalls unheard of before causing the streams and rivers to overflow flooding the land they pass through, for miles around inundating fields, villages and towns triggering landslides, destroying huts and buildings driving people and animals from their dwelling to higher ground to escape the flooding and widespread destruction, leaving their belongings. The awesome natural forces in their devastation caused, to the roads and bridges extensive destruction and overflowing of some of the dams resulting in discharge of excess water to prevent them rupturing threatening villages and towns downstream with flash floods, sometimes in the extreme. Thousands were left devastated and destitute lands filled with the 'muck' of topsoil brought down from the sides of hills on high ground damaging thousands of acres of crops around. There is however 'A Silver Lining to the Dark Clouds' as goes the saying. In the aftermath of the floods, like never before people from all over the country by the score and members of the Armed Forces and Religious Orders, the Civil Societies, the Cultural Groups and others came together as one, to lend helping hands to the victims to assuage their misfortune and, together with the Government Agencies and Local and Foreign Non-Governmental Organizations to help them put them back on their feet to attain their normal lives and their woes mitigate. Another 'Blessing in Disguise' of the floods again is that it has showered the 'Dry' Region with enough rain for life giving waters that will sink into the ground helping in the Region's 'Greening' all round and the 'muck' brought down by the flooding rivers will along all the way and in the delta gather enriching the soil, thus contributing to higher yields of the ever golden crops of the paddy fields. All in all, the legacy of the floods may haply be one of bountiful crops in the years to come.

Lokethar

Incessant rains burst river banks in Chin State

NAY PYI TAW, 28 Aug—Hours of incessant rain in Tunzang township of Chin State on Friday caused the banks of a river to burst above Twikeinzan village.

The floods swept away 60 homes in Hakalay village, forcing some 300 people to take shelter at a

rescue camp near Nankyin-saung village. Two villagers narrowly escaped death by drowning, while no animal deaths were reported.

Chin State Chief Minister U Hong Ngai, together with local military personnel, rushed to the scene to oversee the response operation. —MNA

Receding water levels are little cause for joy

Dropping water levels in flood-hit farmland are proving to be a bittersweet relief, says the Agriculture Department.

Many farmers must wade through waist-height mud as they attempt to inspect the extent of the damage. The majority are discovering that there is no chance of revitalising their fields in the short term.

According to data, more than 1.2 million acres of paddy fields were affected by floods in 184 townships. The department estimates that 0.7 million acres will not recover. From last June, Cyclone Komen triggered heavy rains, causing floods and landslides across the country, including Sagaing and Magway regions and Shan and Rakhine States.

"The presence of silt can improve the health of the soil," said U Naing Kyi Win, deputy director-gen-



Local farmers replant paddy saplings at flood-hit farmland.

eral of Agriculture Department, adding that the floods deposited silt across most of the farmlands to an extent.

However an excess of sandy components will make replanting very difficult and requires the use of

heavy machinery, said an official from the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation.

"It is getting late for us to resume the monsoon season paddy cultivation," said U Aung Saw Maung of Maung-hnama village in Maungdaw Township.

U Hla Aung, farmer from Nat Chaung village in Maungdaw Township of Rakhine State, also expressed concern.

"These floods have had a terrible impact on the livelihoods of Myanmar's farmers." —Nanda Win

National Library to launch literati talks

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 28 Aug—Plans are underway to promote the role of the national library and celebrate Myanmar's rich literary heritage by hosting seminars every two months, said the library's Director Daw Mya Oo.

The lectures will cover a wide variety of topics and will aim to appeal to young people as well as to "instill national values into their minds", Daw Mya Oo told *The Global New Light of Myanmar*.

The first seminar is scheduled to take place on 25 September at the Yangon branch of the National Library, which is located on the first floor of the National Museum on Pyay Road.

It will feature renowned musician D Yar Mo and a professor from the National Culture and Fine Arts University, who will share their insights on music and drama during the half-day event, Daw Mya Oo said.

"Nowadays, youths

are more interested in pop culture and lack awareness of Myanmar's traditional arts and culture. The aim of these seminars is to address that," she said.

"Disseminating knowledge about our country's literary heritage is one of the main functions of the National Library."

Sir Charles Edward Bernard, a British Commissioner of Lower Myanmar

established "Bernard Free Library" as the first free public library in Myanmar in 1883. It was transferred to the Ministry of Culture in 1952 and renamed as the "National Library" in 1964.

The library's collection boasts more than 1,000 rare publications, ancient manuscripts, and palm-leaf printed works, along with a wide selection of academic and general interest books.

Library members are not entitled to borrow books and must instead use the library's photocopying services. However Daw Mya Oo said the policy may change in the future as the Ministry of Culture is drafting a new law that aims to promote the role of the National Library – if the law is passed it is likely to include borrowing rights, she said. —GNLM



Hundreds die as desperate migrants head for Europe

TRIPOLI / EISENSTADT, (Austria), 28 Aug — Libya on Friday recovered the bodies of 82 migrants washed ashore after their overcrowded boat sank on its way to Europe while Austria said 71 refugees including a baby girl had been found dead in the back of an abandoned freezer truck.

Three people were arrested in Hungary in connection with the truck deaths and Austrian police said they suspected a Bulgarian-Hungarian trafficking ring was responsible.

The victims — 59 men, 8 women and four children, including a girl estimated at 1-2 years old — were probably from Syria, police said.

At least 180 were either dead or missing in the Libyan disaster. Both tragedies were a result of a renewed surge in migrants seeking refuge from war and poverty that has confronted Europe with its worst refugee crisis since World War Two.

The UN refugee agency said the number of refugees and migrants crossing the Mediterranean to reach Europe had

passed 300,000 this year, up from 219,000 in the whole of 2014.

More than 2,500 have died making the crossing this year, the UNHCR said, compared with 3,500 who died or went missing in the Mediterranean in 2014.

A security official in the western Libyan town of Zuwara, from where the doomed migrant boat had set off, said there had been around 400 people on board. Many appeared to have been trapped in the hold when it capsized on Thursday.

“About 100 people are still missing,” said Ibrahim al-At-toushi, a Red Crescent official, and about 198 had been rescued.

The migrants were from sub-Saharan Africa, Pakistan, Syria, Morocco and Bangladesh, the security official said.

The Italian coast guard said 1,430 people had been rescued in various operations off Libya on Thursday, and a merchant ship sent to the aid of a small boat carrying 125 people recovered two bodies.

The Libyan coast guard has limited capabilities, relying on



A truck in which up to 50 migrants were found dead, is prepared to be towed away on a motorway near Parndorf, Austria August 27, 2015.—REUTERS

small inflatables, tug boats and fishing vessels.

Zuwara, near the Tunisian border, is a major launchpad for smugglers shipping migrants to Italy.

Libya is a major transit route for migrants hoping to make it to Europe. Smuggling networks exploit the country's lawlessness and chaos to bring Syrians into Libya via Egypt while Africans

arrive through Niger, Sudan and Chad.

In Europe, refugees and migrants have swept north through the Balkans in recent days, with thousands of Syrians, Afghans and Pakistanis crossing from Serbia into EU-member Hungary, where authorities said more than 140,000 had been caught entering the country so far this year.

Almost all hope to reach the

more affluent countries of northern and western Europe such as Germany and Sweden.

Hungary, which is part of Europe's Schengen passport-free travel zone, is building a high fence along its border with Serbia to confront what it says is a threat to European security, prosperity and identity.

Austrian police had originally put the death toll in the truck found abandoned near the Hungarian border on Thursday at about 50, but later raised the figure to 71.

The refrigerated vehicle was found by an Austrian motorway patrol with fluids from the decomposing bodies seeping from its back door. It had been abandoned on the side of the highway that leads from Hungary to Vienna.

The truck is at a customs building in the village of Nickelsdorf, which has refrigeration facilities and where forensic specialists in white protective suits and yellow rubber boots could be seen wheeling body bags away.—Reuters

Coalition poised to retake capital, but Yemen risks grow



A boy looks through the window grills of a house that was damaged by a Saudi-led air strike in Yemen's capital Sanaa August 26, 2015.—REUTERS

SANAA / RIYADH, 28 Aug — Weeks after seizing Yemen's southern port, Aden, members of a Saudi-led military coalition and the local fighters it supports say they are poised to oust Iranian-allied Houthi forces from the capital Sanaa.

But al Qaeda militants appear to be using the coalition's gains against the Houthis in the south to entrench their position, as fractures start to show between local groups of fighters with the departure of their common enemy.

The prospect of returning exiled President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi remains distant, five months after an advance on his Aden bolthole by the Houthis, who overran the capital a year

ago from their northern base, triggered the Saudi-led intervention.

At stake is not just who will rule Yemen, which regional power will hold sway and whether its persistent jihadist threat can be ended, but its future as a single state after centuries of tribal disputes and regional divisions.

Saudi Arabia and its allies want to maintain the state created in 1990 by the merger of the old north and south Yemen, say informed diplomats, but as anger grows over the humanitarian cost, the possibility of division appears to be growing.

“In the absence of a political settlement the battle for Sanaa will be long, brutal, and

deadly with no obvious winner. A failure to retake Sanaa by Hadi's camp is likely to lead to a de facto partition of Yemen,” said Ibrahim Fraihat, senior political analyst at Brookings Doha Centre. Such a settlement still looks elusive, with each side attempting to escalate the fighting since the fall of Aden.

In the north, the Houthis have pounded the Saudi border, determined to ensure coalition victories and continued airstrikes come at a cost. In southern Taiz, fierce fighting, and the bombardment of civilians, continues.

Attention has increasingly turned to Marib, a dry tribal region across the arid hills east of Sanaa, where Saudi-linked media and local sources report a build-up of coalition-backed forces preparing for a concerted thrust towards Yemen's capital.

The dozens of Emirati troops guarding Aden's smashed-up airport and their helicopters, tanks and armoured cars lined up on the apron during a recent Reuters visit to the city were ample evidence of the ground role played by Gulf states.

It was the direct involvement of Emirati ground forces, alongside Yemeni troops trained in Saudi Arabia and equipped with sophisticated heavy weapons that allowed the coalition to break months of stalemate to take Aden, informed diplomats say.—Reuters

UN chief sets out framework for Syria poison gas investigation

UNITED NATIONS, 28 Aug — Success of a new international inquiry aimed at assigning blame for chemical weapons attacks during Syria's four-year-old civil war will require full cooperation of all warring parties, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said on Thursday.

The remarks were included in a letter to the UN Security Council outlining his plans for an investigation into alleged gas attacks, to be conducted by the United Nations and Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

“Success will ... depend on the full cooperation from all parties, including the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and other parties in Syria,” Ban said in the letter, seen by Reuters.

The aim is “to identify to the greatest extent feasible individuals, entities, groups, or governments who were perpetrators, organizers, sponsors or otherwise involved in the use of chemicals as weapons, including chlorine or any other toxic chemical.”

Ban said the inquiry will be chaired by an assistant secretary-general and two deputies. Earlier on Thursday he said in a statement that “continuing reports of the use of chemical weapons, as well as the use of toxic chemicals as a weapon in the Syrian conflict are deeply disturbing.”

He did not say who will chair the inquiry.

Ban's letter is in response to

the Aug. 7 adoption of a council resolution calling for an investigation. The council is expected to respond to Ban within five days.

The investigation will have a one-year, renewable mandate.

Syrian government and opposition forces have denied using chemical weapons. Western powers say the government has been responsible for chemical attacks, including chlorine attacks.

The Syrian government and Russia have accused rebel forces of using poison gas.

Ban was asked to set up the investigation after the United States struck a deal with Russia, a strong backer of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, to demand an investigation.

Syria agreed to destroy its chemical weapons in 2013 in a bid to avoid US military strikes threatened over a sarin gas attack that killed hundreds of civilians.

The OPCW has since found chlorine has been “systematically and repeatedly” used as a weapon, though it is not mandated to lay blame.

A separate UN investigation had previously determined that sarin gas was used repeatedly in Syria to deadly effect, but that inquiry was also barred from assigning blame.

Chlorine's use as a weapon is prohibited under the 1997 Chemical Weapons Convention, which Syria joined in 2013. If inhaled, chlorine gas turns to hydrochloric acid in the lungs, which can be deadly.—Reuters

Uber China closes \$1 billion fundraising round: sources



A taxi is reflected in a window at the office of taxi-hailing service Uber Inc in Hong Kong, China August 12, 2015. —REUTERS

BEIJING/SHANGHAI, 28 Aug — Uber Technologies Inc's China arm has closed its \$1 billion fundraising round early, according to two people with knowledge of the matter, with investors still hopeful for the US-based ride service despite strong domestic competition.

Investors in Uber's Chinese unit include Internet giant Baidu Inc, China CITIC Bank Corp Ltd and China Life Insurance Co Ltd, among others, said one of the people, requesting anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly.

Chinese financial conglomerate Ping An Group's investment arm and Hillhouse Capital, which has a stake in the main US-based Uber business, also took part, the person said.

However, a representative of Ping An's investment team said they did not invest in the

China unit. Hillhouse was also not an investor, said a third source who declined to be identified because of the sensitivity of the subject.

A spokeswoman for Uber declined to comment.

With the close of the \$1 billion round, Uber is re-lining its war chest for a drawn-out battle with Chinese car-hailing app rival Didi Kuaidi, which last month raised \$2 billion.

The two are locked in a turf war, spending heavily on subsidies to lower the cost for users and inflate the money earned for drivers of their services.

The deal was oversubscribed, said the second source directly familiar with the fundraising. According to a fundraising document seen by Reuters last week, this round values Uber China at \$7 billion, with the unit planning to list on the mainland by 2020.—Reuters

Nikkei retakes 19,000 on hopes for global economic recovery

TOKYO, 28 Aug — Tokyo stocks advanced 3.03 percent on Friday, with the Nikkei index retaking the 19,000 line on hopes for global economic recovery in the wake of positive US economic data and gains on Wall Street overnight.

The 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average ended up 561.88 points from Thursday at 19,136.32. The broader Topix index of all First Section issues on the Tokyo Stock Exchange finished 49.39 points, or 3.29 percent, higher at 1,549.80.

Opening sharply higher on strong European and US stock markets overnight, Tokyo stocks extended their gains in the afternoon session on a weaker yen and rises in other Asian stocks, brokers said.

"Global sentiment has begun to brighten, with investors starting to take hints from economies other than China," said Toshihiko Matsuno, chief strategist at SMBC Friend Securities Co.

The US economy's growth rate in the April to June quarter was revised upward overnight to

an annualized real 3.7 percent, a broader upgrade than most in the market expected, indicating "the strength of the US economy," said Hiroichi Nishi, assistant general manager of investment research at SMBC Nikko Securities Inc.

"Solid performances in other Asian bourses, particularly Shanghai, provided support" to Tokyo stocks, as well, Nishi added. Meanwhile, Japanese government data released just before the opening painted a broadly positive picture of the domestic economy. The core consumer price index was flat in July, beating market forecasts of a narrow decline. Advancing issues overwhelmed declining ones 1,822 to 61 on the First Section, while 11 closed unchanged.

All but the air transport section finished higher, with the non-ferrous metal, steel and automaker sections ranking among the day's best performers.

Mining stocks and oil and coal issues were in demand as crude oil futures leaped by the biggest margin since August 2012 in

New York overnight. Oil and gas producer Inpex climbed 65.00 yen, or 5.6 percent, to 1,229.50 yen, and oil refiner JX Holdings gained 25.50 yen, or 5.7 percent, to 469.00 yen.

Major trading house Mitsubishi jumped 134 yen, or 6.2 percent, to 2,296 yen on its announcement in the morning to acquire a 20 percent stake in Singapore food giant Olam International Ltd. with an aim of boosting its food business in Asian and African regions.

Construction firm Taisei rose 31 yen, or 3.9 percent, to 818 yen a day after Central Japan Railway Co. said it has made a contract with a consortium, including Taisei, in developing a massive tunnel for the railway operator's planned high-speed magnetically levitated train line. Midsize general contractor Zenitaka, one of the consortium participants, soared 80 yen, or 21.2 percent, to 458 yen.

Trading volume on the main section totaled 2,959.77 million shares, compared with 2,820.17 million shares Thursday.—Kyodo News

Domestic output of Toyota, Honda falls in July, Nissan sees growth

TOKYO, 28 Aug —The vehicle output in Japan of Toyota Motor Corp. and Honda Motor Co. dropped in July amid the lingering effects of the country's tax hike on minivehicles, but Nissan Motor Co. saw a year-on-year rise thanks to the popularity of its X-Trail sport utility vehicle, data showed Friday.

Japan's major automakers have been struggling to shore up domestic demand as consumers

remain reluctant to buy new cars following the increases in the consumption tax in April 2014 and the ownership tax on minicars a year later.

Toyota's domestic production fell 3.2 percent from the previous year to 297,492 units, while Honda's declined 27.9 percent to 61,244 units. Nissan manufactured 82,668 cars in the month, up 4.3 percent.

Toyota, which surrendered

its top spot in global sales to Volkswagen AG in the first half of 2015, sold 137,366 cars in Japan, down 6.6 percent. Its exports fell 12.6 percent to 153,889 units.

Honda's domestic sales dropped 15.4 percent to 60,045 cars, while its exports nearly tripled to 8,248 units.

Nissan sold 51,075 cars in July, down 8.3 percent, shipping 48,037 cars overseas, up 10.6 percent.—Kyodo News

Facebook's Instagram adds new photo sizes to keep users, attract ads

SAN FRANCISCO, 28 Aug — Instagram has added new layout options in addition to its signature square for pictures and videos in a bid to attract more advertisers and to stop users defecting to more flexible services such as Snapchat.

The move is the first major alteration to the photo-sharing, social media service since Facebook Inc bought it for \$1 billion in 2012, and addresses the wishes of many of its 300 million users, who have been constrained by the square format.

"It boils down to giving advertisers and users more options," said Debra Aho Williamson, a social media marketing and advertising analyst. "You want people to be able to see more of your ad. It's

something advertisers are definitely going to be interested in."

One in five photos and videos posted on the service do not fit the square format, Instagram said in a blog post.

"Friends get cut out of group shots, the subject of your video feels cramped and you can't capture the Golden Gate Bridge from end to end," it said.

From Thursday, Instagram's web-based service and its mobile apps running on Google Inc's Android system and Apple Inc's iOS will allow portrait and landscape formats, giving both users and paying advertisers more options.

The move should help Instagram in its battle with newer rivals such as Snapchat for users in the

fast-moving messaging and media-sharing market.

At the same time, it should attract more advertising revenue for Instagram, which said in June it would open its platform to all advertisers by the end of the year, rather than just to select brands.

Instagram is expected to generate nearly \$600 million in advertising revenue by the end of this year and \$2.8 billion in 2017, according to projections from research firm eMarketer.

By comparison Facebook, the world's most popular online social network, generated more than \$12 billion in revenue in 2014. The growing service hit one billion users in a single day for the first time on Monday.—Reuters

Apple may launch new iPhones at Sept. 9 event

SAN FRANCISCO, 28 Aug — Apple Inc (AAPL.O) on Thursday invited journalists to a Sept. 9 event, where it is expected to unveil new iPhones and potentially a new version of its Apple TV set-top box.

The email invitation includes a colorful Apple logo with the sentence "Hey Siri, give us a hint," referring to Apple's popular digital voice assistant.

The company traditionally announces its new iPhones in September. Apple is widely expected to unveil the iPhone 6S and the iPhone 6 Plus S. Typically, the company launches upgraded versions to existing phones under the "S" range.

Media reports have indicated that Apple is preparing for the

largest initial production run for its next iPhones by the end of the year. The new iPhones are also said to feature Force Touch technology, which can distinguish between a light tap and deep press.

Cross Research analyst Shannon Cross said she was also expecting a faster processor on iPhones. "We assume that they may come out with a new iPad at the event as well," Cross added.

When users posed the question in the invitation to Siri on their iPhones, Siri threw back responses such as "You're cute when you're desperate for information" and "You'll have to wait until Sept. 9. I bet you were one of those kids who snuck downstairs to open presents early, weren't you?"—Reuters

Pension fund not responsible for stock market bail-out: official

BEIJING, 28 Aug — A move to allow China's pension fund to invest in the stock market is not intended to bail out the market but to create long-term and stable returns, said a vice minister of human resources and social security on Friday.

The change will have a positive effect on China's real economy and support a healthy capital market, but the core purpose is to gain long-term and stable yields for the fund, vice minister You Jun said at a press conference.

The fund's management must prioritize safety, and the timing of the fund's entry into the stock market will be decided by the market, You added.

The State Council finalized guidelines on Sunday allowing the country's pension fund to invest in new products, including the

domestic stock market.

The new policy came as China's stock markets continue to decline, beset by shrinking turnover and greater volatility. The key Shanghai index plunged more than 30 percent from its June peak, wiping out most of this year's gains.

Under the new guidelines, up to 30 percent of the pension fund's net assets can be invested in stocks and equities. The fund has assets of around 2 trillion yuan (326.8 billion U.S. dollars) that could be invested, meaning up to 600 billion yuan could theoretically go into the stock markets.

The pension fund has been mainly parked in banks or invested in treasury bonds with low yields, which has long spurred calls for change as China faces the challenge of caring for its growing elderly population.—Xinhua

Deported Iranian national arrested in India

NEW DELHI, 28 Aug — Indian authorities have arrested a deported Iranian national at the international airport in the southern city of Bengaluru, a senior police official said Friday.

"Farzad Jafari Oulia, a disk jockey by profession, was deported from India in March 2014. He was arrested at Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport in the wee hours of Thursday," he said, on condition of anonymity.

"He was heading to Turkey, interrogations have revealed." A probe has been ordered into how the Iranian national managed to slip into India, despite being deported last year and blacklisted for 10 years, the official said.—Xinhua

Thousands march in Guatemala to pressure president to resign



A cab driver looks at pinatas depicting former Vice President Roxana Baldetti (L) and Guatemalan President Otto Perez Molina during a demonstration demanding the resignation of Perez Molina in Guatemala City, Guatemala, August 27, 2015.—REUTERS

GUATEMALA CITY, 28 Aug — Tens of thousands of Guatemalans took to the streets on Thursday to demand the resignation of President Otto Perez, who has refused to quit in the face of accusations by his attorney general that he was involved in a lucrative customs racket.

Carrying banners proclaiming, "Guatemala has no president," demonstrators staged marches from the capital to the regions while businesses ranging from

McDonald's restaurants to brewery Cerveceria Centro Americana closed in support of the protest.

"It can't be that he looks the other way and ignores the fact the people don't want him any more," one marcher, publicist Felipe Flores, 25, said of Perez.

Perez, a 64-year-old retired general, reiterated that he would not resign and pledged instead to submit to the legal process against him, which has engulfed the country in crisis

just days before presidential elections due on Sept. 6.

The Supreme Court of Guatemala this week accepted Attorney General Thelma Aldana's request to impeach Perez, but it must still pass Congress to be successful.

Perez has already survived one attempt by Congress to strip him of his presidential immunity as a two-thirds majority is required for the decision to go against him.

Congress has named

a five-strong panel to decide if there is enough evidence to warrant prosecuting Perez.

Pressure for him to resign is mounting, but if he does, he may suffer the same fate as former Vice President Roxana Baldetti, who was arrested last week for her alleged part in the customs fraud enveloping Perez, which is known as La Linea.

While saying he planned to stay on, the president conceded to Guatemalan radio that resignation was an option.

"It's a personal decision, I have asked God for great wisdom so I can be enlightened and take the best decisions for the Guatemalan people," Perez said.

The accusations against Perez are part of a series of graft scandals that have rocked the nation in the last four months, and probes against opposition lawmakers have also dented their hopes of taking the presidency in the upcoming elections. Opinion polls suggest no candidate will secure the 50 percent of votes required to win outright on Sept. 6 so that the vote is likely to go to a second round run-off on Oct. 25.—Reuters

Supreme Court head becomes Greece's 1st female PM



Vassiliki Thanou(L) takes an oath during a swearing in ceremony at the Presidential Palace in Athens, Greece, on Aug. 27, 2015. Greece's Supreme Court chief judge Vassiliki Thanou was appointed on Thursday to head the transitional government that will lead Greece to snap general elections in September, becoming the country's first female prime minister.—XINHUA

4 killed, 45 injured in attacks by wild animals in northern Indian state

NEW DELHI, 28 Aug — At least four persons have been killed and 45 others injured in attacks by wild animals in the northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh since April this year, a senior minister has reportedly said.

"Some four persons were killed, 45 injured and

one rendered permanently disabled in separate incidents of attacks by wild animals from April 11 to July 31 in Himachal Pradesh," the state's Forest Minister Thakur Singh Bharmauri was quoted as saying in the state Assembly Wednesday.

He added: "A total of

97 incidents of attack on domestic animals by wild animals were reported in which 203 animals were killed."

The minister has also said that the state government has paid compensation to the families of those affected by attacks by wild animals.—Xinhua

Australian surfers mourn death of surfer in Indonesia

SYDNEY, 28 Aug — Surfers on the east coast of Australia are holding vigil on Friday after an Australian man was killed while surfing in Indonesia's Mentawai Islands.

Ronald Stephen Schneider, 54, passed away at 6 p.m. local time on Tuesday after being slammed into rocks by a wave off the Mentawai Islands in Western Sumatra. The Menta-

wai Islands are a popular destination for Australia's surfing community, though only the experienced dare surf the dangerous waves found there.

Local media reported on Friday that Schneider was a "quiet and gentle soul" who was "deeply loved" within the close-knit Sawtell community on the New South Wales mid north coast.

Schneider's brother-in-law, Michael Greenwood, posted a tribute to social media, "You went out in the best way possible. Surfing in a beautiful tropical location, you always had a way about you." Australian officials are providing support to Schneider's family in Australia while Indonesian authorities prepare to repatriate the man's body.—Xinhua

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Consignees of cargo carried on MV FORTUN TIGER VOY NO (1504) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30.8.2015 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.

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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.

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WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (13:30) hrs M.S.T today, the low pressure area over West Central Bay and adjoining Northwest Bay of Bengal still persists. Monsoon is weak in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 29th August, 2015: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions, scattered in Shan and Kayah States, fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin and Chin States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with isolated heavy fall in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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

India to import 1,000 tons of onions to check retail prices

NEW DELHI, 28 Aug — India has decided to import 1,000 tons of onion at 685 US dollars per ton, in a bid to rein in retail prices of the commodity. A government committee held a meeting, where it has been decided that a tender will be floated for the import of onions Saturday, a senior official said Friday. "The committee has approved the offer for import of 1,000 tons of onion at 685 US dollars per ton," Indian Agriculture Additional Secretary Avinash K Srivastava told the media. The imported onions would be supplied to state governments after seeking their requirements, the official said. Onions prices have touched sky-high rates in retail markets across India.—Xinhua



Archaeologists examines wares unearthed from a Han-dynasty tomb in Damazhakou Village of Jiucheng Township in Huanghua City, north China's Hebei Province, Aug. 26, 2015. Exquisite examples of decorative bricks have been discovered at an archeological dig in Hebei Province. The bricks, found in tombs dating from around the Eastern Han Dynasty (24-220 AD), feature rhomboid patterns; carriages and horses; dragons; and clouds, according to Lei Jianhong, a researcher with the Hebei Provincial Cultural Relics Research Institute. In addition, more than 20 pieces of pottery have been found.—XINHUA

Construction of Japan-funded power plant starts in Indonesia

JAKARTA, 28 Aug — After four years of delays, construction of a controversial, \$4 billion thermal power plant funded by an Indonesia-Japan consortium on the main island of Java kicked off Friday.

The groundbreaking ceremony, attended by Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo, took place in Central Java Province's Batang Regency amid objections from some villagers there whose land was forcibly taken by the government to build the plant.

In his speech, Jokowi described how the islands of Java and Bali are badly in need of electricity and warned the country would face an energy crisis in 2018 if the project fails to proceed.

"This power plant is for Java and Bali so that our children can study well, our fishermen can buy freezers," he said.

The 2,000-megawatt coal-fired power plant, meant to supply electricity to 13 million people in Central Java, has been promoted by PT Bhimasena Power Indonesia, a consortium of Japan's Electric Power Development Co., J-Power, which is owned by Sumitomo Electric Industries Ltd., Itochu Corp. and Indonesian coalmining company Adaro Energy.

Construction of the power plant, one of the biggest

of its kind in Southeast Asia, was initially slated to start in 2012, with commercial operation expected to commence by 2016.

But land acquisition for the project has been delayed amid on-again, off-again negotiations with local residents dominated by concerns over its environmental impact.

On June 30, the Central Java provincial government issued a decree allowing the state electricity company PLN to take over the land from the residents even as villagers owning a total of 12.51 hectares of land were still trying to defend their land.

The project itself needs 226 hectares of land straddling three sub-districts in Batang Regency.

"We farmers, who rely on our livelihoods on agricultural land to feed our families, pay our children's school fees and meet other daily necessities, strongly oppose the Batang power plant's construction," said Karomat, a landowner in Ujungnegoro village.

According to Arif Fiyanto, climate and energy campaigner for Greenpeace Indonesia, Ujungnegoro and four other villages in Batang Regency — Karanggeneng, Roban, Wonokerso and Ponowareng — will be affected by the project, threatening the livelihoods of more than

15,000 small-scale fishermen and farmers and their families.

The consortium claims the power plant will be built on land that is unproductive from the agricultural point of view.

But Fiyanto said the area in question has approximately 300 hectares of productive farming land, including irrigated paddy fields, rain-fed rice fields and jasmine plantations that will be affected.

Greenpeace Indonesia also issued a statement that the power plant will also pump 10.8 million tons of carbon into the atmosphere a year, as well as air pollutants including neurotoxins such as mercury that will bring deadly consequences to Indonesia's environmental and human health.

Supporting the consortium, the government says the power station will feature high generation efficiency using an ultra-supercritical coal-processing system that has a low impact on the environment.

In July last year, the consortium declared force majeure over the construction of the project, citing "the instability of the situation at the site," an allusion to sometimes daily protests and occasional clashes between residents and security forces.—Kyodo News

ABBA piano seen raising money, money, money at auction

LONDON, 28 Aug — The piano used to play the glissando that kicks off ABBA's disco hit "Dancing Queen" will be one of the star attractions at a rock and pop auction at Sotheby's next month where it is expected to sell for up to 800,000 pounds (\$1.24 million).

The instrument comes with a certificate of authentication from ABBA co-founder Benny Anders-

son, who describes it as "one of a kind and a great source of inspiration".

It was designed by Swedish instrument-maker Georg Bolin and comes from the collection of Atlantis Grammofon, formerly known as Metronome Studios, in Stockholm where ABBA recorded the song released in 1976, Sotheby's said on Thursday.

Bolin's piano was built for the American jazz



Stains are seen on the a grand piano made by Georg Bolin and used by the Swedish pop group ABBA to recorded many of their hit songs, at Sotheby's auction house in London, Britain, August 27, 2015.—REUTERS

pianist and composer Bill Evans, who died in 1980.

It was described in the New York Times in 1964 as a "Space-Age piano" that "gives the pianist the sensation of playing 'directly on the strings' as a guitarist would," Sotheby's said. "The piano itself is an instrument of real importance and with the added ABBA provenance we expect it will have worldwide appeal," Philip Errington,

Sotheby's Specialist in Books and Manuscripts, said in a statement. The London sale is scheduled for Sept 29.

Sotheby's said John Lennon's Steinway upright piano, on which he composed "Imagine", sold for 1.67 million pounds in 2000 while the upright piano in Rick's Cafe in the movie "Casablanca" sold for \$3.4 million in 2014.—Reuters

Spike Lee, Gena Rowlands, Debbie Reynolds to receive honorary Oscars



Director Spike Lee accepts the President's Award at the 46th NAACP Image Awards in Pasadena, California February 6, 2015.—REUTERS

LOS ANGELES, 28 Aug — Director Spike Lee and actresses Gena Rowlands and Debbie Reynolds will receive honorary Oscars for their filmmaking legacies, the organizers of the world's most coveted movie awards said Thursday.

Lee and Rowlands will receive the Honorary Award while Reynolds will be given the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award by the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences.

"We'll be celebrating their achievements with the knowledge that the work they have accomplished — with passion,

dedication and a desire to make a positive difference — will also enrich future generations," Academy President Cheryl Boone Isaacs said in a statement.

The recipients will be celebrated at the Academy's annual Governors Awards on Nov. 14.

Lee, 58, rose through the ranks of independent film to deliver work such as 1989's "Do The Right Thing" and 1992's biopic "Malcolm X," earning two Oscar nominations along the way, including a best documentary nod for 1997's "4 Little Girls." The African-American

director is also an outspoken voice for the black community, often exploring race relations in his films.

Rowlands, 85, has a career spanning nearly seven decades with 40 feature films including 1974's "A Woman Under the Influence" and 1980's "Gloria," both directed by her husband, John Cassavetes, and earning her Oscar nominations.

Reynolds, 83, who rose to fame with her starring role in 1952's "Singin' in the Rain," has campaigned for raising awareness and treatment of mental health issues and is a founding member of charity organization the Thaliens. She earned an Oscar nomination for 1964's "The Unsinkable Molly Brown."

Previous recipients of the Honorary Awards include Steve Martin, Lauren Bacall and Robert Redford, while Hollywood humanitarians such as Angelina Jolie, Elizabeth Taylor and Oprah Winfrey have received the Jean Hersholt award.—Reuters

'Labyrinth of Lies' to be Germany's Academy Award entry

LOS ANGELES, 28 Aug — Filmmaker Giulio Ricciarelli's debut feature "Labyrinth of Lies" will represent Germany as its entry for the Foreign Language film at Oscar.

The movie, which is distributed in the US by Sony Pictures Classics, centers on a young public prosecutor, Johann Radmann, who sets out in the 1950s to expose the full story behind the mass killings at Auschwitz, reported Variety.

Alexander Fehling plays Radmann, for which he won the Bavarian Film Award for best actor.

The decision was made by an independent nine-member jury appointed by German Films, and announced by representative Dagmar Hirtz in Munich.

In a statement, the jury described the film as a "precisely researched" drama that is both "gripping and touching".

"Alexander Fehling convinces with his intensive performance as a public prosecutor searching for truth and justice in the film," it added.

The film had its world premiere at the Toronto Film Festival last year. Beta Cinema, which is handling international sales, has sold the film to 118 countries. Sony Pictures Classics is planning a theatrical release on September 30.

The five movies nominated in the Foreign Language film Oscar will be revealed on January 14. The Oscar awards ceremony will take place on February 28.—PTI

Adele to release next album in fall?

LOS ANGELES, 28 Aug — Oscar-winning singer Adele will reportedly release her much-awaited follow-up to 2011's album "21" will hit stores this winter.

The record may or may not be called "25", reported Entertainment Weekly. The magazine appears to make the revelation on the Lady Gaga-featuring cover of its latest issue.

Above a picture of the bloodied Mother Monster, there's a headline that reads, "Fall Music Preview: New Albums From Adele / Prince / Disclosure / Lana Del Rey."

"21" was a massive success, both critically and commercially. It spent multiple weeks atop Billboard 200 and won multiple Grammys including the coveted AI-

bum of the Year Award. On her 26th birthday last year, she hinted that the LP's follow-up would be titled "25" and would arrive before 2015. So far, no new music from the British beauty has arrived.—PTI



Clive Owen makes Broadway debut in Pinter's 'Old Times'

NEW YORK, 28 Aug — British actor Clive Owen swaps Hollywood for the stage in "Old Times", making his Broadway debut in a revival of Nobel Laureate Harold Pinter's 1971 play.

The "Children of Men" and "Closer" actor, who has London theater credits to his name, will appear alongside fellow Britons Eve Best, who previously starred in Pinter's "The Homecoming", and "True Detective" actress Kelly Reilly.

In the play, Owen's character Deeley and his wife Kate receive a visit from her longtime friend Anna, an encounter where

memories are soon viewed as threats amidst building emotions.

"... It's a really stunning piece of writing and three great parts. I love the part and I love the fact that Doug (Hodge) our director has worked with Pinter a lot," Owen said at a photo call for the play on Wednesday night.

"I feel very comfortable with him at the helm because he understands the world so well."

British actor and Tony Award winner Douglas Hodge has starred in several of Pinter's plays. He also makes his Broad-

way directorial debut with "Old Times".

"I've worked with Pinter for more or less 10 years, almost exclusively really ... He was a great mentor, a great friend, almost a father figure to me," he said of the playwright who died in 2008. "I've loved this play ... I think it's probably one of the best plays in the last 50 years."

Radiohead singer and songwriter Thom Yorke has written the music for the play. "Old Times" officially opens on Oct. 6 at the American Airlines Theatre, running until Nov. 29. Previews start on Sept. 17.—Reuters



Cast members Kelly Reilly (L), Clive Owen (C) and Eve Best pose together during a photo call for the Broadway revival of 'Old Times' at American Airlines Theater in New York, August 26, 2015.—REUTERS

GENERAL

PICTURE OF THE DAY



Artists of a theater company take part in the inaugural parade of the 10th International Street Theater Festival "Al Aire Puro" in Bogota, Colombia, on Aug. 27, 2015. The festival is held from Aug. 27 to 30 and about 60 performances will be held in various parts of the city.—XINHUA

Cat Café! New vocabs join Oxford Dictionary

BEIJING, 28 Aug — Ever wonder WTF is a proper vocabulary? Well it is. Check out the latest Oxford Dictionaries online version. A list of new words have been added to the online dictionary on Thursday.

The list includes: Cat café: "A cafe or similar establishment where people pay to interact with cats housed on the premises."

Manspreading: "The practice whereby a man, especially one traveling on public transportation, adopts a sitting position with his legs wide apart, in such a way as to encroach on an adjacent seat or seats."

Awesomesauce: "Extremely good; excellent"

Al Desko: "While working at one's desk in an office (with reference to the consumption of food or meals)." Cupcakery: "A bakery that specializes in cupcakes." Beer o'clock —Xinhua

Gareth needs goals as Real Madrid entertain Betis

MADRID, 28 Aug — Real Madrid's players know they have to find their scoring boots when they play their first home game of the new season at home to newly promoted Real Betis on Saturday night.

Last weekend's 0-0 draw against Sporting Gijon (another side that has just returned to the

top-flight) highlighted the problem which has haunted Rafael Benitez's side over the pre-season: although they have created chances, so far those chances have not ended up in the back of their rivals' net.

Gareth Bale is one player who has had the finger of blame pointed at him by Real Madrid's

ever demanding fans and the press and although he has been active in a new role behind the striker, Bale has yet to produce the goods in terms of goals and any misses on Saturday are likely to be seized on by supporters in the Santiago Bernabeu, although he defended their attitude on Friday in an interview on Real Ma-

drid TV. "The fans treat me well and it's a dream to be able to wear the Real Madrid shirt," commented the Welshman.

Other options open to Benitez are midfielder's Isco and James Rodriguez and James especially will be looking to return to the first team after playing in the Copa America. The Colombi-

an has a good record in front of goal and could be pressing for a return.

Another player who could be back is striker Karim Benzema, who has recovered from the injury he picked up in pre-season and he could provide the extra creativity which has been missing from his side.—Xinhua

mitv Myanmar International

(29-8-2015 07:00 am~30-8-2015 07:00 am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:27	Am	Great Shwedagon- The Exhibition Hall Of The Great Chronicle Of Buddha
07:53	Am	Kayah
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Myanmar Traditional Festival
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Home Grown Treasure
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Taung Byone Nat Festival (Ep-4)
10:43	Am	A Myanmar Tapestry

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Monday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	Ngapali, Unique Spot To Relax
07:44	Pm	Myanmar Puppet
07:51	Pm	Today Myanmar: Rising Insurance Infrastructure
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Hanthawaddy U Win Tin "A Fearless Man" (Episode-1)
08:50	Pm	Myanmar Masterclass: Artist Khin Maung Zaw

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm)-Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am)-Monday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) -Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

(For Detailed Schedule – www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)

MRTV News Channel in Brief

(29-8-2015, Saturday)

6:00 am	• Paritta by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw	12:35 pm	• Hluttaw Image
6:45 am	• Documentary (Min Gun Sayadaw)	12:50 pm	• Round Up Of The Week's Local TV News
7:00 am	• News/ Weather Report	1:50 pm	• Teleplay
8:00 am	• News/ International News	2:35 pm	• Documentary
8:30 am	• Head Line News	3:35 pm	• Hyper Sports
8:35 am	• The Farmer	4:35 pm	• University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) — First Year (Zoology)
9:00 am	• News/ International News	5:30 pm	• Head Line News
9:35 am	• MRTV Youth Programme	6:00 pm	• News / Weather Report
10:00 am	• News/ International News	7:35 pm	• Business News
10:35 am	• Science & Technology Programme	8:00 pm	• News/ International News/ Weather Report
11:35 am	• Game For Children	9:00 pm	• News
12:00 noon	• News/ International News/ Weather Report		• Gitadagale Phwintbaohn

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(29-8-2015, Saturday)

6:00 am	• Classical Songs
6:05 am	• Teleplay
6:40 am	• Musical Programme
6:55 am	• Myanmar Series
7:10 am	• Cassette Drama
8:30 am	• Dramatic Arts
10:00 am	• Fashion Show (Music)
10:15 am	• Myanmar Video
6:20 pm	• AFF U-19 (Championship 2015) Football (Live) (Malaysia U-19 Vs Myanmar U-19)



Professional, amateur golfers participate in Myanmar Golf Tour

MYINOO LWIN, 28 Aug — The 5th Myanmar Golf Tour kicked off at PyinOoLwin Golf Course on 27 August.

Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Soe Htut, Commandant of Defence Services Academy Maj-Gen Myint Maw, Vice Chairman of CB Bank U Yan Aung and President of Myanmar Golf Federation and

Myanmar PGA U Ko Ko Aye teed off at the opening ceremony.

Altogether 34 professional golfers and 119 amateur golfers, totaling 153 participate in the golf tour up to 30 August. The gold tour was sponsored by CB Bank Ltd for turning out talented new generation golfers.—GNLM

Warriors defeat Home Affairs in basketball championships

By Ko Moe

YANGON, 28 Aug—The Warriors took home the trophy at this year's basketball championships after scoring a 69-53 victory over Home Affairs in the final played at Yangon's Aung San Gymnasium on Friday.

Blank Club won the men's U-19 event, which was won by Sagaing Region in the women's U-19 competition.

Home Affairs women's team won the championship trophy in the open class, with runners-up going to the Ladies Club.

A cash prize of K600,000

and the championship trophy went to the Warriors club, while K500,000 went to the Home Affairs women's team, K400,000 and trophy to the Blank men's U-19 team and K300,000 and trophy to the Sagaing Region young women's team.

Best player awards went to Jason from the Warriors in the open event, Aung Aung from Sagaing Region in the men's U-19 event and Su Sandi Tun from Sagaing Region in the women's U-19 event.

Altogether 19 teams participated in the men's open event, three in the women's open event, 11 in the men's U-19 event and four in the women's U-19 event.—GNLM



Bolt and Gatlin headed to Brussels, but will not meet

BEIJING, 28 Aug — Usain Bolt and Justin Gatlin will race again in Brussels next month, but not against each other, organisers of the Van Damme Diamond League meeting said on Friday.

"No chance for re-match," meeting director Wilfried Meert told Reuters in an email. "Will be Gatlin in the 100 and Bolt in the 200."

Bolt ended American Gatlin's two-year unbeaten streak with victories in both the 100 and 200 metres at the Beijing world championships, though his participation at the Sept. 11 meeting in Brussels is contingent on fitness, his agent said.

"Usain's only sched-

uled race this year after Beijing is Brussels provided he comes through this meet fit and healthy," Ricky Simms said in an email to Reuters.

"When he gets back to Europe next week we will see how he recovers from the exertions of the past week.

"The big goal is Rio." Bolt is expected to seek his third consecutive set of triple Olympic gold medals in Brazil next year.

Prior to Beijing, Bolt and Gatlin had not met since September 2013 when the Jamaican won the 100 metres and Gatlin finished fourth in Brussels. Overall, Bolt holds an 8-2 advantage in career clashes.—Reuters

Chelsea pursuing China defender Zhang

LONDON, 28 Aug — Chelsea have made an offer for China and Guangzhou Evergrande defender Zhang Linpeng. Chinese media reported on Friday.

The Premier League champions sent a contract on Wednesday and hope to secure the 26-year-old right back before the summer transfer window closes on Sept. 1, Titan said.

"I'm very happy and very excited to finally have this formal invitation," the newspaper quoted Zhang as saying. "I've worked hard and waited these five-six years for my dream of playing overseas, and finally have recognition from the English Premier League."

Chinese Super League champions Guangzhou were not contactable to verify the report.

Zhang and the clubs were working through the terms of his transfer, Titan said. Even if were to go ahead, Zhang said he did

not expect to get straight into Premier League football.

Players from non-European Union countries are subject to tighter work permit requirements in Britain, and Chelsea might elect to loan the defender to a European side for a period of time to pave his way into the league.

"Although I'm unable

to play Premier League directly, I believe (Chelsea) will have the most professional arrangements regarding my permit," Zhang added.

"I have no worries at all about the negotiations."

Technically proficient and solidly built, Zhang has been a key player in Guangzhou's success in China

and their run to the 2013 Asian Champions League title. He carries the nickname 'Zhangmos' in China in a nod to Real Madrid's stalwart defender Sergio Ramos. Chelsea have endured a sketchy start to their English title defence, shipping an unusually high seven goals in their first three matches.—Reuters



China's Zhang Linpeng challenges South Korea's Jang Hyun-soo (front) during their East Asian Cup soccer championship match in Hwaseong, south of Seoul July 24, 2013.—REUTERS