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DON'T DELAY THE MOVE

Nearly 3,000 homes in Chin State need to be relocated by mid-October



President U Thein Sein assists in relocation of nearly 3,000 homes to a safer areas in Chin State. PHOTO: MNA

A total of 2,987 homes that were damaged or destroyed by recent landslides in Chin State must be relocated to safer areas before the cold season begins in mid-October.

During a visit to one of the worst hit areas in the mountainous state, President U Thein Sein urged local authorities to invest every effort in completing the task.

According to the Chin State Government, 1,162 homes were completely destroyed and another 1,825 deemed unsafe fol-

lowing landslides caused by torrential rains in July and August. Five people were killed during the bout of unusually severe weather.

The president also called on local authorities to swiftly develop a strategy for providing the relocated community with adequate infrastructure and basic amenities, such as water supplies.

Japan has offered to fund the construction of new schools to replace those hit by landslides, local authorities said.

Paletwa sustained the worst

damage in Chin State, with 940 homes either destroyed or in need of repair. The capital of Haka was also badly affected, with 870 homes caught by the landslide.

During the president's visit to Chin State, the Sitagu missionary group of Sagaing donated K1.5 billion (US\$1.15 million) to the Ministry of Religious Affairs to rebuild the pagodas that were destroyed by the disaster. The group also donated K1.5 billion (US\$1.15 million) to the All Christian Denomination in Chin State, K2 billion (\$1,536) to the

Chin State Government and medical equipment worth US\$80,000 to hospitals in the state.

During his visit to Chin State, President U Thein Sein presented clothes, blankets and lamps to the local people affected by the disaster.

Five disaster-related deaths were reported in Chin State from the mid-July to early August.

Haka, the capital city, was left facing food shortages after the Haka-Gangaw Road, a vital route for supplies, was severely damaged by a landslide in early August. — GNLM

QUICK FACTS ABOUT THE LANDSLIDES IN CHIN STATE

- 2,987 homes destroyed or damaged
- Five people were killed
- Worst damaged township was Paletwa, with 940 homes affected
- Torrential rains caused the landslides in July and August

Japan's deputy prime minister discusses army's role with Commander-in-Chief

NAY PYI TAW – The Tatmadaw (Myanmar Defence Forces) is ready to sign the national ceasefire accord, said Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing during a meeting with Japanese Deputy Prime Minister Mr Taro Aso on Tuesday.

Mr Taro Aso, who is also Japan's Finance Minister, said that the role played by the armed forces is important to national development and stability. He praised Myanmar's armed forces for being involved in rescue and rehabilitation tasks in flood-hit areas and said that these types of activities

bode well with the public.

The Commander-in-Chief said that Myanmar's armed forces have long been engaged in welfare activities, but that the public had no knowledge of this because the media was rarely invited to cover military activities. He said that the armed forces are now actively

engaging with the media as part of its bid to improve its public standing.

He also pledged to help ensure that the upcoming general election is free and fair and expressed his willingness to promote relations between the country's armed forces.

Also present at the meeting

was Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Khin Aung Mynt, Chairman of Japan-Myanmar Friendship Association Mr Hideo Watanabe, Chairman of Nippon Foundation Mr Yohei Sasakawa and Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Tateshi Higuchi.

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Exhibition to raise funds for flood victims

YANGON — A charity will host an exhibition of works by local artists and photographers on 25-27 September.

The fundraising show will be held from 25 to 27 September at

River Ayeyawady Gallery on 36th Street in downtown Yangon.

Around 35 paintings and 10 photographs donated by artists using a variety of media and styles will be featured during the three-

day event, said U Ko Htike from the Poet, Music, Artist Member Organisation.

Subjects will include traditional themes, still life, landscapes and ethnic diversity in Myanmar.

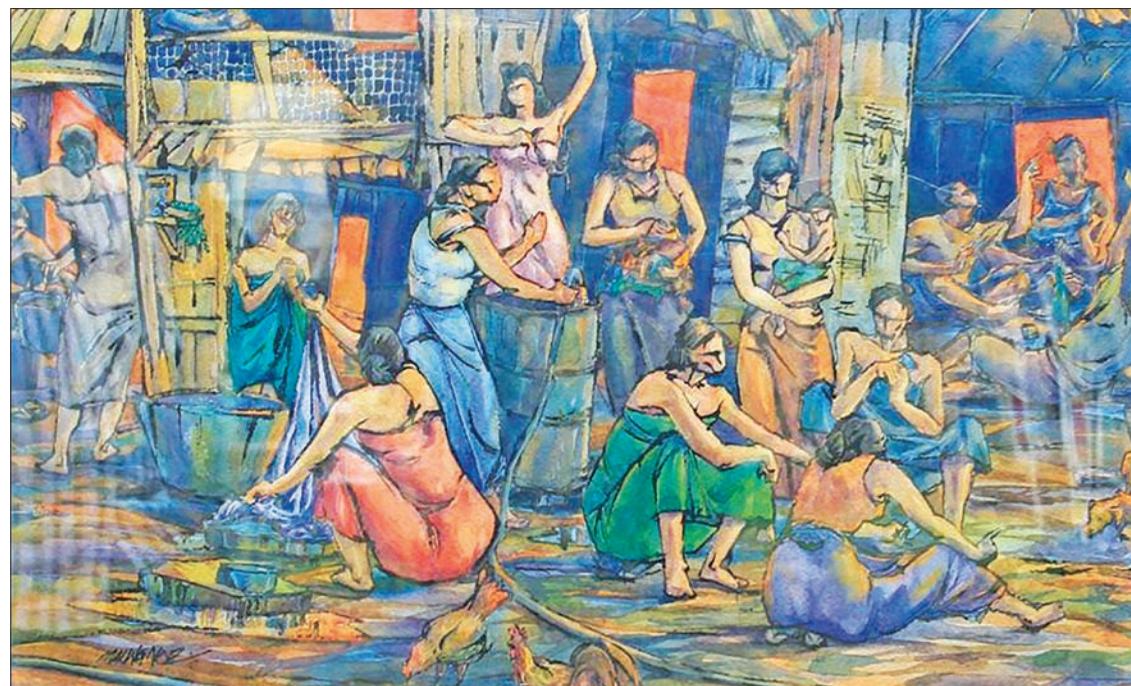
Exhibited paintings will be for K100,000 (US\$75) per work, while the prices of photographs will range from K10,000 (\$8) to K50,000 (\$38), U Ko Htike told The Global New Light of Myanmar.

“All the money earned from the show will go to charity. We plan to donate to rehabilitation facilities for flood victims from villages in Bago Region, where about 200 households and 1,000 residents are housed,” said U Ko Htike.

The organisation was founded after Cyclone Nargis in 2008 to help victims of natural disasters and needy artists.

He added that villagers are in urgent need of water supply facilities, as their tubewells were badly damaged in the flood.

River Ayeyawady Gallery founder U Nay Min Latt said the gallery will also host a series of art events in the coming months, including a solo exhibition next month.—GNLM



Works to be displayed at the River Ayeyawady Gallery. PHOTO: KO HTIKE

Students honoured in Tatkon

TATKON — Eleven students of Anawyahta ward who passed the 2014-2015 matriculation exam were presented with certificates and cash awards at the Ywathit-Ahmannthit Library in Tatkon, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on Monday.

The ceremony was conduct-

ed by Aungthayaphu Boarding School and attended by township education officer U Tint San, library patron U Kyaw Aye, town elders, and the students' families.

Tatkon's library contains 7,200 books and 1,200 journals and is visited by up to 45 visitors every day.—Tin Soe Lwin - IPRD



An outstanding student accepts certificate of honour. PHOTO: TIN SOE LWIN (IPRD)

Veterans receive grants

MYAWADDY — Children of veterans were provided with stipends for the 2015-2016 academic year on September 20 from the Myawaddy township veteran organisation committee.

Cash amounting to K500,000 was given to 15 veterans over 75 and K1.1 million went to 44 men with serious physical impairments. Township Administrator U

Khin Maung Zaw presided over the ceremony, in which another 203 students were provided with K3.76 million.

The total amount of money provided in grants was K5.36 million, with donations coming from Kayin State and veteran organisations in Myawaddy township as well as private donors.—Tun Tun Oo, Myawaddy

Landmines threaten lives in Kachin State

U Tun Aye, a 30-year-old man from Moe Nyin District, was injured by a landmine explosion while hunting in the forest on 18 September.

Six soldiers from Kachin Independence Army brought him to Nang See Aung village and he was then taken to Moe Nyin District hospital for treatment.

One man was killed by a landmine on 14 September while another was injured by the same landmine.

The number of people injured by landmines in Kachin State is rising, according to local police records.

Cattle treated for foot-and-mouth disease in Nay Pyi Taw

LEWE — A research team treated cattle for foot-and-mouth disease in Ward 6 of Lewe Township, Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory, on Sunday.

The team also provided educational talks and printed materials to farmers about the disease, which first emerged in late August. Cases have been confirmed in Popa Thiri,

Pyinmana, and Lewe townships. Most of the infected cattle in the latter three townships received treatment in time, officials said.

The team was led by Dr Aung Kyaw Moe, an officer from the Nay Pyi Taw Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department, and by Dr Sein Lwin, the deputy director of

the Tatkone Epizootic Research Laboratory.

Dr Aung Kyaw Moe said that restricting the movement and trade of cattle is important in containing the disease.

The team placed ear-tags on cattle to help farmers identify those which have been immunised and those that are still being monitored.—Ko Pauk



Restricting the movement and trade of cattle is important in containing the foot and mouth disease. PHOTO: KO PAUK

President sends message to Saudi Arabia

NAY PYI TAW — U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Majesty Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on the occasion of the National Day of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which falls on 23 September 2015. — MNA

Vice Presidents send messages to Saudi Arabia

NAY PYI TAW— Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun, vice presidents of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, have sent messages of felicitations to His Royal Highness Mohammad Bin Naif Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on the occasion of the National Day of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which falls on 23 September 2015. — MNA

Workshop to preserve cultural heritage in Bagan



Workshop participants are pictured exploring the ancient city of Bagan on Tuesday.

NAY PYI TAW— A workshop aimed at preserving Bagan's cultural heritage will be held on 23 September in Bagan's archaeological zone.

The workshop is titled Ancient Cities Network: Preservation and Conservation Management of Bagan Ancient City and it is organised by ASEAN Culture and

Information Committee.

Participants will share information about the conservation of historical sites and link member states, enabling them to collaborate in the research and management of cultural heritage sites.

The initiative was first proposed by Myanmar at the 14th meeting of ASESAN Cultural

Sub-committee in Yangon in 2013. Workshop participants also spent time exploring the ancient city of Bagan, including some of its best known archaeological gems, such as Shwezigon pagoda which was built during the reign of King Anawrahta and Ananda Temple, built during King Kyan-sitha's reign.— MNA

What they stand for: campaigns aired

Mro National Party and the Tai Lai (Red Shan) National Development Party broadcast campaign speeches on Tuesday.

Mro National Party



Chairman U Aye Tun explained the history of the Mro ethnic group and said the party was founded with the purpose of helping Mros to participate in nation building. The party places emphasis on the preservation of Mro culture and language, which the chairman described as being on brink of extinction.

Tai Lai (Red Shan) National Development Party



Chairman U Sai Htay Aung said that party was founded to allow the voice of Tai Lai ethnic group to be heard after it nearly lost its identity during the post-independence era due to weaknesses in the 1947 constitution. The party aims to promote peace, equality and self-determination.

Media slots for three political parties announced

NAY PYI TAW – MRTV, Hluttaw channel, MWD (Variety), Myanmar Radio and Shwe FM will broadcast campaign speeches by representatives from Asho Chin National party, Shan National League for Democracy party and Danu Nationalities Democracy party on 23 September.—GNLM

Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann receives Japanese delegation

NAY PYI TAW — Lower House Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann received Japanese State Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr Minoru Kiuchi and the Chairman of the Nippon Foundation Mr Yohei Sasakawa on Monday.

Mr Yohei Sasakawa is also Japan's Special Envoy for National Reconciliation in Myanmar.

The meeting focused on Myanmar's reform process,

national reconciliation and the internal peace process, rehabilitation assistance from Japan in flood-hit areas and cooperation between the parliaments of Myanmar and Japan.

The meeting was also attended by Parliament Health Promotion Committee Secretary Dr Ne Linn, Members of Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission U Khin Maung Tun and Daw Aye Aye Mu.— MNA

UEC, UNDP discuss measures for free and fair election

NAY PYI TAW— Chairman of the Union Election Commission U Tin Aye met with representatives from the United Nations Development Programme in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday to discuss strategies to ensure a free and fair election on 8 November.

UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Myanmar Ms Renata Lok-Dessallien exchanged views on issues concerning the election, such as the scrutiny of candidates, advance voting, election observers, the issuance of voter's registration cards and arrangements

for those living in internally displaced people's (IDP) camps to cast their votes.

Earlier that morning, the UEC chairman attended the opening ceremony of a training course for poll station officers in Nay Pyi Taw.

He said that if voting station officers are equipped with the right skills, they can prevent conflict occurring during the election process. He called on the trainees to abide by the law at all times.

Ms Robyn Whitney of the Australian Electoral Commission then outlined the purpose of the course, which involves 51 trainees from state and region election sub-commissions.—MNA

Japan's deputy prime minister discusses army's role with Commander-in-Chief

>>from page 1

In the afternoon, the commander-in-chief left for Loikaw, Kayah State, and met military personnel and their family members.

He elaborated on importance of national unity and advised them to cast a favour vote to the one who can best serve the national interest. — Myawady



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing welcomes Japanese deputy Prime Minister Mr Taro Aso. — PHOTO: MYAWADY

ELECTION COUNTDOWN Make your voice count. Cast your vote. **46** DAYS



Traditional ceramic pots on display at a store in Kyitaungkan (1) ward in Pobbathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area. The shop owner said that traditional pots, which have a natural cooling system, remain in high demand despite the introduction of cheaper, plastic varieties. PHOTO: SHWE YE YINT

Preventive measures taken against dengue

ZABUTHIRI — To minimise the spread of seasonal dengue fever, preventative measures were taken in Aungzabu ward by a medical team from a Zabuthiri Township Hospital on September 22.

Township Health Of-

ficer Dr Lei Myintzu and public health personnel gave advice to the local community about how to properly seal off drain sieves and water containers stored in homes. They also disinfected wells and residential water tanks.—*Chit Ko Ko*



Health personnel carry out preventive measures against dengue fever in Zabuthiri township. PHOTO: CHIT KO KO

Zeya Thiri Township to get steel bridge

ZEYA THIRI — A steel bridge that will connect Kyautphyu and Ywathit-gone villages in Zeya Thiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area is being built

with funding from the Othaya District's Rural Development Department. Its construction is being undertaken by Best Asia Myanmar Construction Com-

pany. The 50 foot long and 12 foot wide bridge will link of local communities, said the department's district head U Win Myint.—*Shwe Ye Yint U Aung Ko Ko*



Personnel from Rural Development Department inspects construction of an iron-reinforced bridge linking Kyauphaya and Ywathitgone villages. PHOTO: SHWE YE YINT

Hilton Hotel's diploma course improves job prospects: Union Minister



Minister U Htay Aung visits Hilton Hotel's vocational training course. PHOTO: MOHT

NAY PYI TAW — Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Htay Aung paid a visit to Hilton Hotel's vocational hotel training diploma course on September 21.

The course is being held at the Hilton's hotel school in Nay Pyi Taw. The two-year course includes cooking, food and

beverage serving, cleaning and pastry making. The 40 trainees were selected after sitting an exam and they are provided with lodging and a monthly stipend. The union minister said that as a world class hotel of great repute, Hilton Hotel trainees will have greatly improved job prospects. In addition to

the new skills being taught, he urged trainees to practice their English language skills, as it is a necessity for international hotel staff. On completion of the course, trainees will receive a certified diploma from the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and Hilton Worldwide Group.—*MOHT*

Deputy Minister for Finance discusses stock exchange in Mandalay

MANDALAY — Deputy Minister for Finance and Chairman of Securities and Exchange Committee of Myanmar Dr Maung Maung Thein gave a talk on the Yangon Stock Exchange on September 21 at Hotel Mandalay.

He spoke about its functions and organisation as well as stock exchanges across ASEAN and the world. The audience comprised senior personnel from Myanmar Economic Bank, Myanmar Insurance, private insurance compa-

nies and university students.

Myanmar plans to open its first stock exchange this December. Expertise from Japan is being provided to its steering committee and six sub-committees.—*Thiha Ko Ko*



Deputy Minister Dr Maung Maung Thein gives talks on Yangon Stock Exchange. PHOTO: THIHA KO KO

Vice-Senior General Soe Win discusses border affairs, military cooperation in China



Vice-Senior General Soe Win inspects the Guard of Honour of Chinese People's Liberation Army. PHOTO: MYAWADY

NAY PYI TAW — The Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Service Vice-Senior General Soe Win travelled to China on Sunday to meet the Chinese People's Liberation Army Deputy Commander-in-Chief Admiral Sun Jiangou.

The delegation from Myanmar was greeted by Rear Admiral Guan Youfei, director of Foreign

Affairs Office of Ministry of National Defense of the People's Republic of China, Myanmar Ambassador to China U Thit Lin Ohn and Attaché Colonel Myint Thit.

Vice-Senior General Soe Win received a guard of honour welcome from the military before beginning talks with Deputy Commander-in-Chief Admiral

Sun Jiangou on bilateral military cooperation and peace and stability in border affairs.

Vice-Senior Soe Win and Minister of Defence and State Councilor of China General Chang Wanquan discussed military ties, bilateral cooperation and border trade.

Later, Vice-Senior Soe Win

and Deputy Commander-in-Chief Admiral Sun Jiangou signed a donation agreement worth 10 million yuan (approximately US \$1.5 million) for Myanmar flood victims.

After the signing ceremony, Vice-Senior Soe Win visited National Defence University in Beijing. — *Myawady*

LIFT to lift more out of poverty in rural areas

Aye Min Soe

Luxembourg becomes the newest member of the rural poverty reduction fund, which has helped six percent of Myanmar's population since 2009

The Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) is planning six new programmes in Myanmar to reduce the poverty in rural areas, which has been made possible by new and extended commitments from donors. According to a press release issued on Friday, LIFT's new programmes will take place in Upper Myanmar, the Ayeyarwady Delta and the Dry Zone. The programmes will cover financial inclusion, migration issues and an upgrade of LIFT's support to livelihoods development in central Rakhine State through the Tat Lan Programme.

"These new programmes will significantly extend the reach of LIFT activities to the rural poor, supporting government efforts to reduce poverty and advance smallholder farmer-driven rural economic growth," LIFT's Lead Technical Officer Steve Dow-

all told The Global New Light of Myanmar on Tuesday.

Luxembourg donated US\$1.12 million to the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) on Friday through LIFT, which is managed by UNOPS, becoming a LIFT donor alongside the European Union and the governments of Australia, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. Within the private sector, Mitsubishi Corporation is a donor.

"To increase efficiency, the funds are pooled, and LIFT's current expenditure is \$210 million," Mr Dowall told *The Global New Light of Myanmar*.

"Our contribution to LIFT complements the other funding that Luxembourg is providing to the rural sector in Myanmar; particularly our upcoming support to people living in remote and poor areas in eastern Shan State," said Mr Jentgen, the Charge' d' Affaires for the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg at the Embassy's Development Cooperation office.

Luxembourg signed shortly



The agreements of Luxembourg's donation are exchanged by LIFT Fund Director, Andrew Kirkwood, and Mr Claude Jentgen, the Charge' d' Affaires for the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, of the Embassy's Development Cooperation office. PHOTO: SUPPLIED BY LIFT

after Italy, who joined the fund last week. Mr Dowall said that LIFT has been able to significantly scale up its work this year, which has already provided assistance to more than three million people in Myanmar – which is roughly six per cent of the country's population. It has also improved food security for 1.1 million people and its microfinance loans have reached 243,000

families, for both farming and non-farming purposes.

"The contribution comes at an important time when LIFT is extending its programmes to ensure that poor rural communities are included in Myanmar's economic growth. We thank Luxembourg and welcome them to the Donor Consortium," LIFT Fund Director, Andrew Kirkwood said on Friday. — *GNLM*

Funding for cultural groups in northern Shan State

KYUATMAE — The Shan State government provided solar-powered light bulbs and funds to ethnic minority organisations in Kyuatmae Township in northern Shan State on September 20.

The culture organisations were presented with K3 million (\$2,300) and nine villages that lack electricity were provided with 178 solar bulbs.

The occasion was attended by Shan State Minister for Forestry and Mining U Sai Aik Paung and Kyuatmae Township Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) representative—*U Myint Aung*

Myanmar, Japanese firms gather at networking event

More than 40 companies and three state-owned enterprises attended a business networking event with Japanese firms on Tuesday in Yangon.

The business-matching between Japan and Myanmar firms was jointly organized by the Ministry of Industry and the Japan-Myanmar Association (JMA), which focuses on the development of small and medium-sized enterprises in Myanmar. It was the third such event of its kind, with the first taking place in July and also involved Thai companies.

Currently, Myanmar is cooperating with international organisations to promote the country's SME sector, said U Maung Myint, the Union Minister for Industry, during the event.

Participants discussed how to promote trade, the service industry and technology.

It may take 20 years for Myanmar's SME sector to deliver real job growth and prosperity, said JMA's chairperson Mr Yoshito Sengoku. — *Min Thit*

Abstain from the use of narcotic drugs; Stay healthy and stay active.

Indonesia starts legal action against companies linked to SE Asia haze

JAKARTA — Indonesia has ordered four companies to suspend operations for allegedly causing forest fires that have sent smoke across a swathe of Southeast Asia, an environment ministry official said on Tuesday.

Indonesia has launched investigations against more than 200 companies as it scrambles to bring the fires on Sumatra and Kalimantan islands under control by the end of November, amid complaints from neighbouring Singapore and Malaysia. Previous government efforts to halt the seasonal slash-and-burn practices have failed to tackle the problem due to a lack of policy coordination and legal wrangling that can take years to resolve.

“These suspensions will be in effect until the criminal proceedings undertaken by the police are finished,” environment ministry secretary general Bambang Hendroyono said.

Three plantation companies have had their permits frozen and one forestry company has had its licence revoked, he added. All the companies were Indonesian-owned.

Plantation company PT Langgam Inti Hibrindo, which is owned by small listed firm PT Provident Agro, was among the companies to



The root of a tree is seen in a burnt palm plantation area near Tanjung Siapi Api port in Palembang, on the Indonesian island of Sumatra. PHOTO: REUTERS

have its permit frozen. Last week, police named an official overseeing operations at Langgam Inti Hibrindo as a suspect for allegedly starting fires on the company's land. The company could not be reached for comment and Provident Agro did not immediately respond to an emailed request for comment.

President Joko Widodo has ordered thousands of security per-

sonnel backed by helicopters to help fight the fires, and has threatened to revoke land permits from companies found responsible.

Thick smoke has blanketed the region in recent weeks, pushing pollution levels to unhealthy levels in Singapore, Malaysia and northern Indonesia.

Underscoring the difficulties for the Indonesian government, the Supreme Court this month upheld

for the first time a 366 billion rupiah (\$25.26 million) fine against PT Kallista Alam for illegally burning peatland, a case that took three years to be resolved.

Green groups say that the Indonesian government needs to put in place a longer-term plan to tackle the annual burning, and that a greater proportion of budgeted funds should be spent on prevention.—Reuters

Three more Thai military officers wanted for human trafficking

BANGKOK —

Thai authorities said Tuesday arrest warrants have been issued for three more military officers over human trafficking, as part of a crackdown that sparked a regional migrant crisis earlier this year.

Previously only one senior officer — Lieutenant-General Manas Kongpan — had been charged over the smuggling of Muslim and Bangladeshi migrants through southern Thailand, after successive Thai governments largely ignored the brutal trade.

People-smugglers abandoned thousands of migrants at sea or in jungle camps after a Thai clampdown on the multi-million industry in May, a crisis that eventually forced a belated Southeast Asia-wide response. Arrest warrants have now been issued for “four military officers — three from the army and one in the navy”, Paween Pongsiri, a southern deputy regional commander, told AFP.—AFP

Malaysia PM involved in US corruption inquiry



Malaysia's Prime Minister Najib Razak. PHOTO: REUTERS

KUALA LUMPUR — A US federal grand jury is examining allegations of corruption involving Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak and individuals close to him, the New York Times reported on Monday, quoting anonymous sources. The inquiry, run by a unit of the Justice Department that probes international corruption, is centered on US properties bought in recent years by Najib's stepson and properties relating to “a close family friend”, the newspaper said.

It is also examining an allegation that \$681 million was deposited into Najib's personal bank account, the New York Times added.

Calls for comment from Najib's office went unanswered.

The alleged \$681 million deposit had surfaced in July in a report in The Wall Street Journal, which said it had been uncovered

by Malaysian investigators probing allegations of graft and mismanagement at sovereign wealth fund 1Malaysia Development Bhd [TERRN.UL] (1MDB).

Reuters has not verified the Wall Street Journal report.

Najib has denied taking any money for personal gain, and 1MDB has denied transferring funds to him. An interim government report found nothing suspicious. The US investigation is still at an early stage and could take years to determine if any federal laws were broken, the New York Times said.

Najib faces pressure at home to step down from his post over the 1MDB scandal. He chairs the fund's advisory board.

1MDB is seeking to cut its \$11 billion debt by selling power and property assets.—Reuters

Three foreigners and Filipina abducted from Philippine resort

MANILA — Gunmen have kidnapped two Canadian tourists, a Norwegian employee and a Filipina from a luxury resort island in the conflict-racked southern Philippines, police said Tuesday.

The suspects sailed two motorboats into a marina on Samal island and seized the four from aboard yachts just before midnight on Monday, said Superintendent Antonio Rivera, a local police spokesman.

Law enforcement boats and helicopters were scouring the waters around the island on Tuesday to try to stop the kidnappers from leaving the area, according to Rive-

ra. “They appeared to target the foreigners. They went straight for the yachts,” Rivera told AFP.

“(But) we still don't have anything. We're blank. No group has taken responsibility and there is no demand for ransom.”

A police report identified the Canadian tourists as John Ridsdel, 68, and Robert Hall, 50. The Norwegian, who was working at the marina, was identified as Kjartan Sekkinstad, 56.

The 40-year-old Filipina, identified only as Tess, was a companion of one of the foreign tourists, Rivera said. A Japanese couple was nearly abducted but they

fought back, he said. A woman working at the Holiday Ocean View resort, which operates the marina, confirmed the incident to AFP but declined to comment further. The Canadian and Norwegian embassies in Manila declined to comment. A Norwegian foreign ministry spokeswoman in Oslo, Lothe Salvesen, told AFP the government was investigating the reports of the abductions, but could not confirm any details.

Samal island, a short boat ride from the southern commercial centre of Davao on Mindanao island, is famed for powdery white sand beaches and dive spots, with re-

sorts there charging up to \$500 a night. The area, about 800 kilometres (500 miles) southeast of Manila, is a popular stop for foreign tourists who sail around the nation's many tropical islands.

But the Philippines' southern region has endured decades of conflict, with Muslim rebels waging a separatist conflict that has claimed tens of thousands of lives. Parts of Mindanao are also home to more extreme Muslim militants, the most infamous of which are the Abu Sayyaf. They engage in frequent kidnappings of locals as well as foreigners in often successful efforts to extort ransoms.—AFP

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Japan, Russia foreign ministers agree to resume talks in Oct



Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida (L) and his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov shake hands in Moscow on 21 September, 2015. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

MOSCOW— Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida and his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov agreed Monday to resume high-level talks in October between their diplomats to make progress over a long-standing bilateral dispute.

Kishida and Lavrov struck

a deal during their talks at the Russian Foreign Ministry in Moscow for their nations to restart sub-Cabinet level talks in Moscow on 8 October.

The deputy ministerial talks solely focused on the isles dispute have been suspended since January last year due to tensions

over the Ukraine crisis.

Kishida is also expected to have renewed Japan's protest over Russian Cabinet members' repeated visits to the disputed islands since July. The visits included that of Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev to Etorofu Island on 22 August.

Kishida's meeting with Lavrov during his four-day trip to Russia from Sunday comes amid tensions between Tokyo and Moscow due to such visits by top Russian officials to some of the Russian-held, Japanese-claimed islands, which are at the heart of a territorial dispute that has prevented the two countries from concluding a post-World War II peace treaty.

Japan also hopes that the Kishida-Lavrov talks will set the stage for Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to Japan within the year and can arrange for a possible meeting between Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Putin on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York in the coming days,

Japanese officials said.

"I want to hold constructive discussions about bilateral ties (on concerns such as) the issue of the peace treaty," Kishida said at the outset of their meeting.

Lavrov said there is "potential" for bilateral cooperation across the fields and expressed his readiness to improve Russia-Japan relations.

"We want to make efforts to resolve issues that have remained from the past as well as issues that have emerged recently," he said.

Resumption of the sub-Cabinet level talks is a key step to help resolve the territorial spat.

Diplomatic ties between Japan and Russia have been affected as a result of economic sanctions imposed on Russia by Japan, in step with the United States and European nations, following Moscow's annexation of Crimea in southern Ukraine in March last year.

The islands comprising four islands off Hokkaido — Kunashiri, Etorofu and Shikotan

as well as the Habomai group of islets — were seized by the Soviet Union following Japan's surrender in the war on 15 August, 1945. They are called the Northern Territories in Japan and the Southern Kurils in Russia.

After their roughly three-hour talks, Lavrov was quoted by Itar-Tass news agency as saying that Japan and Russia reaffirmed their eagerness to have better ties in all areas, but big differences remain in their countries' stances on the signing of the peace treaty.

It will be the first time a Japanese foreign minister will visit Russia since the administration of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was launched in December 2012.

Foreign ministers of Japan and Russia last met in February 2014.

Aside from Medvedev, several other Russian cabinet members traveled to Etorofu and Kunashiri islands, prompting protests from Japan each time.—*Kyodo News*

Australians welcome new PM Turnbull, poll shows

SYDNEY — New Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull received a clear tick of approval from voters Tuesday, with a poll suggesting he is the nation's most popular leader in more than five years.

One week after the 60-year-old multi-millionaire toppled Tony Abbott as leader in a Liberal Party coup, a Newspoll of 1,645 voters found 55 percent

of them rated Turnbull as their preferred prime minister.

It is the highest rating for a prime minister since July 2010, when former Labor leader Julia Gillard was in power.

Turnbull's Trade Minister Andrew Robb said the Newspoll showed that voters backed the leadership change.

"It certainly must confirm that a significant majority of the

community supported change. I think that's a big message out of the poll today," Robb told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

"I don't think we should get ahead of ourselves, but it is certainly much better to be in this position, and it is a reinforcement within the community of what happened last week, their support for it."—*AFP*

US businesswoman held in China for 'espionage'

BEIJING — A US businesswoman has been held for six months in China over alleged espionage, her supporters said, revealing a case that could complicate Chinese President Xi Jinping's state visit to the United States, beginning Tuesday.

China's ministry of state security detained Sandy Phan-Gillis in March and she is being investigated on accusations of "spying and stealing state secrets", according to the website savesandy.org, which provides information on her and her case.

Phan-Gillis was held while crossing the border to Macau at the end of a visit to China by a trade delegation from the Texas oil capital Houston, where she is a member of the mayor's International Trade and Development Council, the site said.

The five-member group had visited other Chinese cities including Beijing, Guangzhou and Shenzhen and only Phan-Gillis was detained, it added.

"Sandy is not a spy or a thief," her husband Jeff Gillis said on the website.

It was not clear why the case had not been publicised until Monday, when the first an-

nouncements were posted to the site.

But the news came as Xi embarked on a visit to the United States beginning with a stop in Seattle before heading to Washington for talks with President Barack Obama.

"Sandy has now been detained for over six months, and she has not been allowed to see or speak with friends, family, or even her lawyers in that time," the website says.

"Sandy is not a spy or a thief."

—husband Jeff Gillis

She was formally arrested at the weekend, the website said, but added that no charges had been filed and earlier appeals for her release had received no response.

"Chinese authorities have conceded that they don't have sufficient evidence to file formal charges against Sandy, yet they have not released her," it added.

Phan-Gillis has family origins in southern China but was born in Vietnam, the website says, leaving the country in the late 1970s as part of the exodus of "boat people" who fled Commu-

nist rule. Other foreign citizens have run afoul of China's powerful security officials. Feng Xue, a Chinese-born US geologist who spent more than seven years in a Chinese prison after being convicted on state secrets charges, was released in April and deported. Australian national Stern Hu, an executive with the mining giant Rio Tinto, was sentenced to 10 years in prison in 2010 on bribery and trade secrets charges.

A Canadian Christian couple who ran a coffee shop in the Chinese border city of Dandong, and had aided Christians fleeing North Korea, were detained on espionage charges last year.

China announced that the wife was released on bail in February though her husband had been placed under formal criminal detention.

Phan-Gillis has been visited once a month by officials from the US Consulate in Guangzhou, the website said.

The website describes her as in "very poor health" and suffering from ailments including high blood pressure. The US embassy in Beijing referred inquiries to consular affairs officials in Washington.—*AFP*

US and India begin high-level commercial talks

WASHINGTON — Senior officials from the world's two biggest democracies, India and the United States, launched a high-level "strategic and commercial dialog" on Monday ahead of a US visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Trade in goods and services between the two powers amounted to more than \$100 billion last year, but Modi's administration hopes to rapidly multiply this by five while attracting US inward investment.

India's economy has developed rapidly in recent decades, dragging tens of millions of people out of poverty, but services have far outstripped manufacturing and the government is seeking US capital and technology.

The bulk of the discussions, hosted by US Secretary of State John Kerry and Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker, were to take place Tuesday, but the dialog opened Monday at a dinner attended by Vice President Joe Biden.

The Indian side will be represented by Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj and Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Nirmala Sitharaman.

"This in my view is a propitious moment in the US-India relationship," Biden told the dinner, hosted by the US-India Business Council.

"This relationship will go a long way towards defining the 21st Century, and that is not hyperbole," he said, dubbing the first meeting last year between Modi and President Barack

Obama the most productive the administration has held.

"Our goal is to become India's best friend," he said.

Both sides have been upbeat about the possibility for increased cooperation in the run-up to the latest talks, but there are some sticking points surrounding issues such as tariffs and intellectual property protection.

The United States will also pressure India on climate change ahead of world emissions negotiations in Paris in December.

India has been reluctant to commit to limits on its own emissions just as it turns a corner in industrial development, arguing that the already rich world must bear the burden for prior damage to the environment.

Modi's visit will begin this week in New York, where he hopes to meet Obama ahead of the United Nations General Assembly, and continues at the weekend to the US tech hub on the West Coast.

In California, he will hold a public meeting with Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg at the social network's headquarters, and visit tech giant Google and electric car and battery innovator Tesla.

And in San Jose, California he will hold a large-scale event with members of the Indian diaspora, a growing part of the American population that is strongly represented in the high-tech sector.—*AFP*

PERSPECTIVES

When praise hurts

Myint Win Thein

PRAISING the praiseworthy is advisable, according to Buddhist philosophy. However sometimes praising an individual can mean judging others who are going about the same thing differently, or sweeping the real problem under the carpet.

A story emerged recently on social media about a young high-school headmaster who has

been praised by authorities, for his ongoing efforts to improve conditions at his school in Mandalay. This man is considered very hardworking and he never complains about the lack of funds (which seems to be one of the reasons authorities like him very much). He asks for parents to donate money to improve the contents of the library and laboratories and he waters the plants that he has planted in the compound. The place looks like an oasis in the dry and dusty city of Mandalay! Since the headmaster was assigned to the school, virtually everything there looks better — even the toilets. The school has even won a few environmental prizes from the international community.

There is nothing wrong with praising this hardworking headmaster. But does it mean that

we should blame all the other school headmasters and headmistresses for not following suit? And is praising him misguided, in that it allows authorities to continue to underfund schools? This is a situation where praising one person can prop up a system that needs to be fixed.

Write for us

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

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

High-tech and Our Life

San ShweAung

MY grandfather, U Ba Sein is 85-year-old pensioner who worked more than 3 decades with General Administration Department (GAD). Last week I paid a visit to my grandfather in order to pay homage to him during the Buddhist Lent period. Having offered him with foods and others suitable items for the retiree, I, as usual, was having conversation with him. He at one point said "My grandson, during our time in the Government service, we had no IT equipment nor any high-tech communication gadgets. We used hard copies, files, mechanical typewriters, postal services. But we managed all matters handled properly and performed our duties in good time and met the targets set. In this time nevertheless, new generation are so accustomed to IT, internet and it seems that all Government departments and all companies and entities are to cease their operation and services if they do not have internet, IT & web sites." That is true. In our time not only the Government departments and companies, almost all individuals have at least one email account. In addition, people, old & young, are using Facebook, Twitter as well. Then internet based Viber, Tango, Skype and Pingo provide voice, text, message, photos & videos communication from one person to another in any part of the world. In our country, too, thanks to the electronic Government

systems developed lately, all kinds of public services are available to the public at a click of a computer mouse. People are so happy to get all services very efficiently without losing their time and effort. No need to queue, no hassle any more. For one instance, one can apply a passport on line, by downloading the forms from the official website of the concerned Government department. Fill up the form attach a soft copy recent photograph, pay the cost specified the concerned Government from the own bank account to department bank account and submit online. The concerned department will process and reply through online within 24 hours. You will receive your passport within 3 days by Government post right to your home. Likewise, we can buy air tickets, train and highway bus tickets, vessel tickets to any domestic destination as well as for air travel to any country in the world. In addition, agricultural and poultry farmers, traders can have access latest technologies, prices & market information, foreign exchange rates etc. on line to be able for them to be competitive worldwide.

Especially, national identification cards have been changed to the smart ID cards for all nationalities. Therefore everyone in our country with smart ID card has access to all online Government services efficiently, correctly and effortlessly. My grandfather U Ba Sein continued that "During old days, national identity card is pink color card with a photograph

glued to it. If lost or damaged, it is very gruesome to reapply the ID card. I had also personal experience to have gone through the process. When I was assigned in Taungyi, Shan State, I lost my ID card, which was originally issued in my native town of Yay, Mon State. I had to reapply to get an ID card back, which took 3 to 4 months. Now a days, I have been told that to replace a smart ID card takes only 3 to 4 days since the concerned Government department has maintained a database for every person in the country. So it is no wonder everybody is currently happy to get that kind of efficient Government services, with peace of mind.....". Having read an article in one online journal recently, I asked my grandfather a question about an issue which I did not understand fully. "Grand Pa, I read in online journal two days ago that some 25 years ago our country held a general election. Before the election-day there were a lot of confusion regarding incorrect names, ID numbers, father names, address etc. of the list of voters all over the country. The election commission had to correct, re-correct again and again, was that true, Grand Pa?" I asked. Then my grandfather explained that "That is true. By then people all over the country were very eager to cast votes to the political parties they liked. The lists of voters all over the country were incorrect and the commission had to reissue several times, I don't remember how many times. But just compare

with current time.....there is no need to prepare voter lists.....anyone who live in the village or the quarter in any town or city, can come to the voting house on the election day to cast their votes with their smart ID cards only and the election authorities need to keep 2 to 3 computers to check online with population database maintained by Immigration Department nationwide. Your generation is very lucky. What a hassle free election and voting, my grandson! Ha HaHaHa ...". So I asked my last question to my grandfather "Exactly Grand Pa! You are also very knowledgeable and advanced minded. By the way Grand Pa, when was that election, with incorrect voter lists, took place in our country?". Then immediately my grandfather raised his hands and shouted very loudly "That was in 2015!" My grandfather's very loud voice shook and startled me,then I woke up from my daily nap after my lunch.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

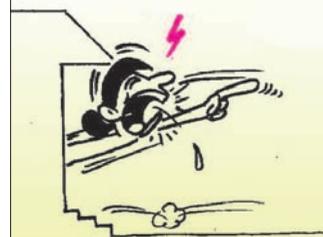
Recently Nepal completed the successful promulgation of her long awaited draft constitution and adopted for the model of a sovereign and secular nation. The small, land locked Himalayan nation celebrated the first phase of a newly emergent democracy although plagued by several challenges. However, the lack of cooperation and coordination among various political fractions; and numerous feuds between political parties of the nation has been worrying all major international political observers and analysts. The political parties of Nepal need to work towards strengthening the democratic pillars of the nation for establishing a progressive, modern, democratic and sovereign nation. Without active cooperation between the political parties the chances of successfully establishing a stable democracy may be jeopardized. The political parties of Myanmar should learn from Nepal's experience and must cooperate with one another during the crucial pre- and post-national election phases for facilitating the establishment of a stable, peaceful and progressive democracy in Myanmar. One must learn from the bad experiences of other older democracies of the subcontinent such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Maldives that has significantly suffered and are currently suffering due to continuous lack of cooperation between the regional governments and their static opposition. Myanmar has to stand apart from these regional economies and demonstrate to the whole world that she is capable of establishing a long standing and stable democracy for the sake of her national interests and the socio-economic progress of her people. I humbly request all political parties of Myanmar to come and work together for the development and progress of this ancient nation and grandeur civilization of South East Asia. Long live democracy! Long live Myanmar!

Thanking you
Sincerely yours
Saikat Kumar Basu

Don't drive in the wrong lane.
Don't drive through red lights.
Don't park where you're not allowed to and don't speed.
Comply with all the rules, my dear husband!

Motor Vehicle
Law 2015

Public
transport bus
driver



Cartoonist Bahan Aye Min

Providing sea access to China's hinterlands under the 'One Belt and One Road' Initiative

(Opinions expressed here are those of the author.)

Dr. Puyam Rakesh Singh

CHINA signed a 43 years lease agreement with the Gwadar Port Authority for developing a special economic zone (SEZ). Spreading across an area of 2,300 acre, this SEZ could shape a new political and economic climate. The Gwadar port in Balochistan Province, however, falls under the shadow of instability. However, the two countries reached understanding on security cooperation to ensure stability along the Pakistan-China Economic Corridor. Undeniably, the completion of the port and the joint declaration issued on 20 April 2015 affirmed their commitment to greater economic integration.

Under the 'One Belt and One Road' (OBOR) Initiative, the Chinese dragon lays eggs on the shores of the Red Sea. From Egypt to the Gulf of Aden, China's increasing economic and strategic interests are expanding. In this age of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, China would strengthen its presence in the region where Africa and Europe meet Asia. It is because the 'Chinese dream' is depended on maintaining stability and freedom of navigation. Moreover, Beijing knows that the Strait of Malacca and the Suez Canal are vital communication lines.

In fact, China has strong interests in the political stability and energy market of Middle East making the stretch of maritime route from the South China Sea to the Horn of Africa strategically important.

As part of the strategy, the Chinese hinterlands will be connected to sea ports in the neighbouring countries. For China, Pakistan is a key player in the whole game plan. A narrow strip of land in Afghanistan called Wakhan corridor touches Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) in China but it is not opened for security reasons. With increasing economic presence, infrastructure developments in XUAR along the Wakhan corridor and the need for safeguarding its interests in the Afghan-Pakistan region will guide the policy.

Protecting China from ter-

rorist groups active in these Islamic countries and their joining hands with the home grown separatists in XUAR continue to shape China's policy. Therefore, a closer relationship with Pakistan is a necessity for security and strategic reasons. This is further corroborated when President Xi Jinping expressed the "unique role" of Pakistan on Afghanistan during his Pakistan visit in April 2015. China called for joint efforts with Pakistan to push the peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan. The joint declaration also pledged to make "concerted efforts" to crack down on the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM).

Under the policy of opening-up, the XUAR, Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) and Yunnan Province of China are aiming at opening their borders to the neighbouring countries. As a result, China approached Pakistan, India and Myanmar for various connectivity projects. Although Beijing stepped up opening of the TAR through Nepal and India, the projects to get

the sidelines of the Asian-African summit in Jakarta, Indonesia. In addition to border stability, the two sides talked about creating "new bright spots" in the bilateral relationship. They discussed issues such as China-Myanmar strategic partnership, the 'OBOR' Initiative and the BCIM Economic Corridor. Besides connectivity, cooperation on agriculture, electricity and finance were also deliberated during the meeting.

Expressing support to the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the 'OBOR' Initiative, Myanmar President U Thein Sein invited Chinese companies to take part in infrastructure construction. Not long after this high-level meeting, the then Chairman of the Union Solidarity and Development Party U Shwe Mann visited China and appreciated the OBOR Initiative. Following such positive remarks, in May, Chinese State Councillor and Secretary General of State Council Yang Jing visited Myanmar to engage Nay Pyi Taw on the AIIB, investment in the energy sector, the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and development of the Kyaukpyu special eco-

drug, human trafficking and illegal logging.

China is holding painstaking negotiation with Myanmar to push ahead the plan for constructing an economic corridor connecting Yunnan to Kyaukpyu port in Rakhine State (formerly Arakan). Interestingly, on 4th September, Myanmar Vice President U Nyan Tun interacted with the members of the Central Work Committee for Myanmar SEZs. He expressed the need for 'one stop service centres' to attract foreign investors. Reportedly, tenders have been called to develop the Kyaukpyu SEZ and proposals are being scrutinised by a team of experts. It is most likely that the pace of economic reform will catch up after the November 2015 general elections. For China, the moment calls for attention to corporate social responsibility, environmental and social impact assessment and people-to-people exchanges to neutralise any anti-Chinese feeling in Myanmar.

If successfully implemented, these economic corridors and SEZs will boost China's reform and opening up policy. The Yun-

ning-Kyaukpyu railway and road connectivity. This project is not moving since then though then Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar denied scrapping of the project in July 2014. There was report of cancellation of the railway project. Not long after this, during Chinese Premier Li Keqiang's visit to Myanmar in November 2014, interconnectivity, the 'OBOR' Initiative and the Kyaukpyu SEZ were on the agenda. Interestingly, in August 2015, the two sides talked about the Ruili-Kyaukpyu economic corridor. So China persuades Myanmar to establish the Kyaukpyu SEZ and the economic corridor for Yunnan Province to become a hub of regional trade and financial services.

Unlike Pakistan and Myanmar, India has not shown enthusiasm to make similar arrangement with China. There is no talk about an economic corridor to connect Lhasa to Kolkata port. A road connecting Gyangze (also written Gyantse) to Kolkata Port in West Bengal will closely integrate the TAR into India and South Asia. Unfortunately, there is no serious discussion about such a corridor across the Himalayas. The crossing through the Nathu La pass is the best linkage agreed so far. Nevertheless, the Xigaze prefecture (also written Shigatse) will long to touch the water of Bay of Bengal. To set the record straight, without resolving the territorial dispute and the Dalai Lama issue, only geo-economics will find it hard to build bridges across the Himalayas.

China has found Pakistan and Myanmar to open its landlocked XUAR and Yunnan Province to get access to the Indian Ocean. However, TAR is not so lucky compared to XUAR and Yunnan Province. By constructing these economic corridors and investing in the SEZs, China can take part actively in shaping the geo-politics and geo-economics of the Afro-Asian and European regions. Undoubtedly, the Gwadar SEZ and the Kyaukpyu SEZ would be the bright spots in China's neighbourhood diplomacy.

"The crossing through the Nathu La pass is the best linkage agreed so far. Nevertheless, the Xigaze prefecture (also written Shigatse) will long to touch the water of Bay of Bengal. To set the record straight, without resolving the territorial dispute and the Dalai Lama issue, only geo-economics will find it hard to build bridges across the Himalayas."

access to the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal through Pakistan and Myanmar respectively, are moving at fast pace.

The Pakistan-China Economic Corridor connecting Gwadar Port to Kashgar in Xinjiang is in progress. Again, the negotiation for the Ruili-Kyaukpyu corridor for connecting landlocked Yunnan Province to the Kyaukpyu Port on the western coast of Myanmar is moving in the right direction lately. Together with the Hambantota port in Sri Lanka, these ports form a triangular maritime route that encloses India. These projects would change the economic landscapes of the landlocked Chinese provinces/autonomous regions. It will also be accomplishment of the 'Two-Ocean' strategy of China.

Like Pakistan, Myanmar is another key player that China cannot disparege. In April 2015, the heads of the two States met on

economic zone (SEZ).

Again, in August 2015, during a meeting between Myanmar Vice President Dr. Sai Mauk Kham and Chinese Ambassador Hong Liang, rural development, agriculture, border areas stability and the Ruili-Kyaukpyu economic corridor were on the agenda. Furthermore, during U Thein Sein's meeting with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang on the sidelines of the 70th Anniversary of the Victory of the World Anti-Fascist War, the two sides discussed prospects for enhancing China-ASEAN ties, promotion of youth exchange programmes and development of the Kyaukpyu SEZ. On the return journey via Kunming, Thein met with Yunnan's party general secretary Li Zhihan in Kunming. The provincial authorities advocated promotion of trade, implementation of Ruili (Shweli)-Muse Economic Zone, cooperation on narcotic

nan provincial authorities have been demanding to develop railway and road links to Myanmar's western coast. The oil and natural gas dual pipeline projects have strengthened Chinese presence along the Rakhine coast. Ruili, a border town in Yunnan province bordering Myanmar's Muse town, will see larger volumes of trade with the opening of the Ruili-Muse economic zone. This border economic zone will find greater vitality when the Kyaukpyu SEZ comes into operation.

However, it has not been a smooth sail. In April 2011, China and Myanmar signed a memorandum of understanding on a joint rail transport project. It was a part of the plan to establish

About the author

The author has completed his PhD from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and his research area is China-Myanmar bilateral relations.

Netanyahu, Putin agree plan to avoid Syria clashes

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Russian President Vladimir Putin have agreed on a plan to avoid “misunderstandings” in Syria amid an apparent military build-up by Moscow to support President Bashar al-Assad.

The two leaders reached an agreement on Monday during talks in Russia, with Israeli media reporting that the discussions involved avoiding clashes between the two militaries’ jets over Syria.

“The conversation revolved, first of all, on the issue that I raised regarding Syria, which is very important to the security of Israel,” Netanyahu said after the meeting, according to a statement from his office.

“The conversation was substantive. A joint mechanism for preventing misunderstandings between our forces was also agreed to.”

Israeli military officials reportedly fear that any Russian air presence could cut their room for manoeuvre after several purported strikes on Iranian arms transfers to Hezbollah through Syria in recent months that were not officially acknowledged by Israeli authorities.

Israel opposes Assad’s regime but has sought to avoid being dragged into the conflict in neighbouring Syria. It also fears that Iran could increase its support for Hezbollah and other militant groups as international sanctions are gradually lifted under a July nuclear deal that Moscow helped negotiate between Tehran and world powers.

Before his talks with Putin, Netanyahu said he was determined to stop arms deliveries to Lebanon’s Shiite Hezbollah movement and accused Syria’s army and Iran of trying to create a “second front” against Israel.

Putin said Russia’s actions in the Middle East “always were and will be very responsible” and downplayed the threat by Syrian forces to Israel. The United States says Russia — one of the few remaining allies of Assad — is deploying personnel and military hardware to Syria, sparking fears Moscow is preparing to fight alongside government forces. Russia contends any such support falls in line with existing defence contracts.—AFP

Russia deploys 28 combat planes in Syria: US officials

WASHINGTON — Russia has deployed 28 combat planes in Syria, US officials said Monday, confirming the latest move in Moscow’s increasing military presence in the war-torn nation.

Washington in recent weeks has expressed growing concern over Russia’s moves to support Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and warned that militarily backing his regime risks further hampering efforts at bringing peace.

Experts said the buildup is likely a prelude to military action.

“There are 28 fighter and

bomber aircraft” at an airfield in the western Syrian province of Latakia, one of the officials told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity.

A second official, also speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed the figure and added there were also about 20 Russian combat and transport helicopters at the base.

That official also said Russia was operating drones over Syria, but did not give additional details. According to the officials, Russia has sent 12 SU-24 attack aircraft, 12 SU-25 ground attack

aircraft and four Flanker fighter jets.

Analyst Jeffrey White of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy said: “They are not going to sit around and defend the airfield or maybe even the province of Latakia.

“This kind of aircraft suggests that the Russians intend to exert their combat power outside of Latakia in an offensive role.”

Moscow has been on a diplomatic push to get the coalition of Western and regional powers fighting the Islamic State group in Syria to join forces with Assad

against the jihadists.

US Defence Secretary Ashton Carter spoke with his Russian counterpart Sergei Shoigu on Friday, ending an 18-month freeze in military relations triggered by NATO anger over Moscow’s role in the Ukraine crisis.

They agreed to continue discussions, which are crucial to lessen the risk of incidents involving coalition forces and Russian forces operating in the same air space.

The US-led coalition is carrying out almost daily strikes against the jihadists in Syria.—AFP

German police raid suspected Islamists in Berlin



German special police members search a mosque association property in Berlin, Germany on 22 September, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

BERLIN — German police said they raided eight properties in Berlin early on Tuesday that they believe are being used by suspected Islamists supporting fighting in Syria.

It was unclear if they had made any arrests in the raids, which included one on a mosque association.

The police said they had been investigating a 51-year-old man from Morocco suspected of inciting others to join armed Islamist groups fighting Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. They are also investigating a 19-year-old Macedonian believed to be in Syria already.

“There is no reason to believe that the suspects have prepared attacks in Germany,” said Berlin police in a statement.—Reuters

Britain urges closer China ties despite economic risk

SHANGHAI — Britain’s finance chief George Osborne will urge closer business ties with China as he visits the country’s commercial hub Shanghai on Tuesday, according to a speech text, despite slowing growth and a stock market slump in the world’s second-largest economy.

Osborne, Britain’s Chancellor of the Exchequer, will visit the Shanghai stock exchange, which has seen its benchmark index plummet nearly 40 percent since June as a bubble bursts, while worries over flagging Chinese growth have shaken world markets.

A day earlier, Osborne agreed with top Chinese officials in Beijing to study linking trading on the London and Shanghai bourses and for China’s central bank to issue short-term bonds denominated in the yuan currency in London. The two countries’ central banks will also increase the size of bilateral currency swaps, though no details were given. “Whatever the headlines, regardless of the challenges, we shouldn’t be running away from China,” Osborne said in excerpts of a speech provided to media.

“Let’s stick together to grow our economies,” he said, adding he deliberately chose to visit the Shanghai bourse which he called the “epicentre of the volatility in financial markets.” China recently revised downward its 2014 economic growth figure to 7.3 percent, the weakest in 24 years. In both the first and second quarter this year, growth remained stuck at 7.0 percent, slower than all of last

year. Valuations on the Shanghai exchange alone have dropped by more than \$2.4 trillion since mid-June, after a 150 percent surge in the previous 12 months, lifted by a borrowing-driven rally encouraged by authorities.

Chinese officials responded with a rescue package, whose hallmarks include banning big shareholders from selling and government buying of shares, which has raised questions over Beijing’s management and drawn criticism for running counter to pledged economic reforms.

“Whatever the headlines, regardless of the challenges, we shouldn’t be running away from China.”

—British Chancellor George Osborne

Britain and China have agreed to conduct a feasibility study on connecting stock markets, which London believes will offer more opportunities for investors from both countries and provide Chinese firms with financing, according to a statement from Britain’s Treasury on Tuesday.

Shanghai and China’s special administrative region of Hong Kong, a former British colony, have already linked their markets — allowing investors in each location to trade select shares on the other exchange.—AFP

German railway halts key Austria, Hungary services until 4 Oct

BERLIN — German rail operator Deutsche Bahn said Tuesday it would suspend key services to and from Austria and Hungary until 4 October, citing border controls introduced to manage a record migrant influx.

The route from Budapest via Salzburg, Austria to the southern German city of Munich has been taken by tens of thousands of refugees in recent weeks.

Overwhelmed by the record influx, and seeking to register the asylum-seekers as they enter the country, Germany on 13 September temporarily reintroduced border controls.

Deutsche Bahn said in an online message that due to the border controls, “the long-distance routes of Deutsche Bahn will be suspended, initially until 4 October, 2015, between Munich-Salzburg (Austria) and Budapest (Hungary)”.

All regular passenger services would be cut between Salzburg and Munich, DB said, although passengers could travel via other routes to the Austrian capital Vienna.

Europe’s top economy may receive one million people seeking refugee status or political asylum this year, up from the record 800,000 arrivals predicted so far, said Vice Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel this month.—AFP

Syrian regime air strikes kill IS fighters

BEIRUT — At least 38 Islamic State group fighters were killed in air strikes by the Damascus regime against three jihadist-held towns in central Syria, a monitoring group said on Tuesday.

Monday's strikes hit Palmyra and two other towns in Homs province, Syrian Observatory for Human Rights director Rami Abdel Rahman told AFP.

The Syrian air force has been increasing its strikes against IS in recent days as it received reinforcements from Russia, he said.

"The number of raids is growing and the strikes are more precise after the Syrian air force received arms and more efficient planes from Moscow," said Abdel Rahman, whose group relies on broad network of civilian, military and medical sources inside Syria. Ex-

perts close to the regime have told AFP that Russia has sent advisers to train Syrian troops in the new weapons, in particular short-range air defence systems and tanks.

US military officials told AFP on Monday that Russia had deployed 28 combat planes in Syria, in the latest move in Moscow's increasing military presence in the war-torn country.

Washington in recent weeks has expressed growing concern over Russia's moves to support Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and warned that military backing for his regime risks further hampering efforts at bringing peace.

Moscow has been on a diplomatic push to get the coalition of Western and regional powers fighting IS in Syria to join forces with Assad against the jihadists.—AFP

US-trained rebels enter Syria

WASHINGTON — About 70 US-trained Syrian rebels have graduated from America's much-criticized "train-and-equip" program and are fighting in Syria, military officials confirmed Monday.

AFP reported Sunday that the rebels had crossed from Turkey into northern Syria, where they were expected to fight Islamic State jihadists.

"With support from the coalition, the NSF (New Syrian Forces) will fight alongside vetted opposition forces and employ their training and equipment acquired through the T&E (train-and-equip) program to enhance the efforts of these larger units already in the fight," the US Central Command said in a statement. The statement noted that the fighters had re-entered Syria "complete with their weapons and equipment."

Before the fresh batch of fighters, the US-led train-and-equip program had only managed to vet and train some 60 rebels to fight IS jihadists on the ground. The \$500 million program run out of Turkey has been fraught with problems.

Shortly after 54 fighters embedded with Division 30 in July, they suffered a devastating assault by Al-Qaeda's Syria affiliate, Al-Nusra Front. On Wednesday, US General Lloyd Austin told the Senate Armed Services Committee that only "four or five" US-trained rebels were on the ground fighting in Syria. The program, which had originally aimed to train around 5,400 vetted fighters a year for three years, has come under fire from US lawmakers.—AFP

No peace until foreign troops leave Afghanistan: Taliban chief

KABUL — The Taliban's new leader told Afghanistan's government on Tuesday it must cancel a security deal with the United States and expel all foreign troops if it wants peace.

Mullah Mansour made the demand in a message marking the Muslim festival of Eid-ul-Adha, his first such message since he formally took charge after the death of founder Mullah Omar was confirmed in July.

"If the Kabul administration wants to end the war and establish peace in the country, it is possible through ending the occupation and revoking all military and security treaties with the invaders," Mansour said in the message.

Washington and Kabul

signed a deal in September last year allowing around 13,000 foreign troops, including 10,000 US soldiers, to stay on after NATO's combat mission ended in December 2014.

The residual force is not engaged in day-to-day fighting with the Taliban militants but focuses instead on training, support and counter-terrorism operations.

"The Islamic Emirate (Taliban) believes if the country is not under occupation, the problem of the Afghans can be resolved through intra-Afghan understanding," Mansour said in the message posted in English on the Taliban's website.

The Taliban, fighting a

bloody insurgency since a US-led invasion ousted them from power in 2001, have long said the departure of "occupying" foreign troops is a necessary condition for meaningful peace talks.

But Afghan military analyst General Atiullah Amarkhil said the demand for the cancellation of the security pact was new.

"By issuing such messages Mansour is trying to boost support among his followers and to get more concessions during negotiations," Amarkhil told AFP.

"Also Mansour wants to show the Afghan people and the world that the Taliban are capable of continuing the war."—AFP

At least 80 killed in bomb blasts in Nigeria

MAIDUGURI — At least 80 people were killed and about 150 injured in multiple bomb attacks in northeastern Nigeria's Borno state on Sunday evening, police and witnesses said on Monday.

The state is the birthplace of the insurgency waged by Boko Haram and has been the focus of attacks by suspected members of the militant Islamist group that have killed more than 800 people since President Muhammadu Buhari took office on 29 May.

Three bomb blasts in the state capital Maiduguri around 7:30 pm (1830 GMT) left at least 54 people dead and 90 injured. Around two hours later, two bombs exploded at a checkpoint some 135 km away at a market in the town of Monguno.

Locals residents and a hospital source said that attack killed 27 people and injured 62 others.

No one has claimed responsibility for the attacks but they bore the hallmarks of the jihadi sect, which has been trying to carve out a state in the northeast of Africa's most populous country since 2009.

"A suspected Boko Haram suicide bomber detonated IEDs (improvised explosive devices) at a mosque in Ajilari and some insurgents also threw IEDs at a viewing center," Victor Isuku, a police spokesman in Maiduguri, said of the first attacks.

"Total casualty figure is now

54," he said. A Nigerian army spokesman said on Sunday that three bombs had gone off.

Local residents said a suicide bomber hit a market at Monguno, killing at least 27 people.

"I counted 27 dead bodies from the scene," said Malum Sunoma, a local resident who helped with rescues. He was speaking on the phone from a hospital where his brother was being treated.

"Five vehicles conveyed 62

injured persons from the Monguno attack to the specialist hospital in Maiduguri," said a doctor, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Boko Haram insurgency has killed thousands and displaced 2.1 million people.

Buhari's March election victory owed much to his vow to defeat the insurgents, but there was a spike in attacks across northern Nigeria in the two months following his inauguration and Maiduguri was hit on a near

weekly basis. A new offensive launched by the Nigerian army to clear Boko Haram out of more towns over the last month has led to a sharp drop in the frequency of attacks in Borno, the worst affected by the insurrection, and neighboring states. Maiduguri has been free of attacks for about a month. It was last hit by a bomb at the end of July and there was a skirmish with suspected Boko Haram militants on the outskirts of the city in mid-August.—Reuters



A Somali government soldier walks at the scene of an explosion in front of the presidential palace in the capital Mogadishu. PHOTO: REUTERS

Bombings kill 13 in Shiite areas of Baghdad

BAGHDAD — Bombs exploded in two Shiite-majority areas of Baghdad on Monday, killing at least 13 people, security and medical officials said.

A car bomb detonated near a market in the Ameen area of eastern Baghdad, and a roadside

bomb exploded near a restaurant in Shaab in the north of the city.

The two attacks wounded at least 44 people, the officials said. The Islamic State jihadist group, which overran swathes of Iraq in June last year, claimed responsibility for the Ameen car bombing

in a statement posted online. IS frequently targets members of the country's Shiite majority, whom it considers heretics. But bombings in Baghdad are much less frequent than they were before the 2014 jihadist offensive, probably because the militants

are occupied with operations elsewhere.

Iraqi forces backed by a US-led coalition and Iran have managed to regain significant ground north of Baghdad from IS, but much of western Iraq remains outside government control.—AFP

Sri Lanka rejects int'l war crimes probe

COLOMBO — Sri Lanka's prime minister on Tuesday rejected a UN call for international involvement in an investigation into alleged war crimes.

Ranil Wickremesinghe said talks were under way to establish a credible domestic mechanism to investigate abuses during the decades-long conflict with Tamil separatist rebels that ended in May 2009.

"There is nothing to be got from abroad," Wickremesinghe said, after a damning UN report recommended Colombo allow international experts to assist its domestic investigation.

"The media says hybrid (inquiry), but it is not hybrid," said Wickremesinghe, after UN rights chief Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein asked the government to establish "a hybrid special court, integrating international judges, prosecutors, lawyers and investigators".

Members of Sri Lanka's Tamil minority say they do not trust a local inquiry to reach the truth about the conflict, in which more than 100,000 people died.

It ended in 2009 with the defeat of rebels who had waged a long fight for a separate homeland for the Tamils.

President Maithripala Sirisena's new government has vowed to punish war criminals, in contrast to his hawkish predecessor Mahinda Rajapakse who had insisted that not a single civilian was killed by troops

under his command.

Sri Lanka became an international pariah after repeatedly resisting calls for a credible probe into the horrendous crimes, including the killing of at least 40,000 Tamil civilians in the final months of the war.

But in a major shift Washington last month announced it would support Colombo's plans for a domestic inquiry, which is also supported by neighbouring India.

When Sirisena came to power in January — backed strongly by the Tamils — he promised to restore human rights and the rule of law as well as mend fences with regional power India and the West. His government has proposed a series of new measures to promote reconciliation and accountability after accusing the previous administration of breaking promises to deliver justice.

Wickremesinghe said he expected the United States to move a resolution at the ongoing UN rights council sessions backing his administration.

"Discussions are going on in Geneva so I don't want to talk about it, but we hope the US will bring a consensus resolution on Sri Lanka," he said.

The new government announced last week that it would set up a South African-style truth commission, a war reparations office and a commission on missing people.—AFP

California fires destroy over 1,500 homes

LOS ANGELES — More than 1,500 homes have been destroyed in two immense fires that have torn through California over the last week, causing millions of dollars in damage, state officials said Monday.

The Valley and Butte fires, about 100 miles (160 kilometers) from San Francisco, will cost "in the tens of millions, if not in the hundreds of millions," Brad Alexander, spokesman for the state's Office of Emergency Services, told AFP.

He said the exact economic cost "will take a long time to assess" and will include clearing debris, rebuilding homes and other structures, and reimbursing lost wages for residents displaced by the flames.

The two fires have started to come under control in recent days, allowing damage assessment to begin and evacuation orders to be eased.

The fires have killed at least six residents so far and Alexander said that tally could

rise as damage assessment continues.

In total, 2,600 structures have been destroyed by the two blazes so far, including the 1,500 homes, according to the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC), which said six large fires remain in California and the state is their "top priority."

On Sunday, California's Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) said the Valley and Butte fires had become, respectively, the sixth and seventh most destructive ever in the state.

Both are approximately 70 percent now contained.

But new fires continue to start in the drought-parched state. CalFire spokesman Daniel Berlant said that firefighters responded to 150 new wildfires just last week.

The largest current fire in the state, the Rough Fire, has alone burned 141,600 acres, though mainly in federally operated forests with little threat to homes or residents.—AFP

India clears \$2.5 bn military chopper deal



A CH-47 Chinook helicopter files in the Paktia province of Afghanistan. PHOTO: REUTERS

NEW DELHI — India cleared on Tuesday a \$2.5 billion deal to buy 37 military helicopters from aviation giant Boeing, on the eve of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the United States.

Modi's government is in the middle of a multi-billion dollar upgrade of its Soviet-era military hardware, partly to keep up with neighbouring rival Pakistan and big-spending China.

The cabinet cleared the purchase of 22 Apache helicopters and 15 heavy-lifting Chinook choppers, a long-pending deal that was discussed during US Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel's visit to India last August.

"The cabinet committee on security has given the green signal for the helicopters. The deal

is worth \$2.5 billion," a government source told AFP.

Since his sweeping election victory last May, Modi's government has approved a string of military projects that had stalled under the previous left-leaning Congress government, in part over corruption scandals.

Modi has also worked to shore up regional alliances since he came to power in India, which has a longstanding territorial dispute with China over a remote Himalayan region.

Modi, a hardline nationalist premier, wants to end India's status as the world's number one defence importer by instead manufacturing defence equipment locally.

His government has lifted

the cap on foreign investment in the defence industry to 49 percent and pushed tie ups between foreign and local companies.

The deal comes as Modi heads this week to New York, where he hopes to meet US President Barack Obama ahead of the United Nations General Assembly.

He also travels to Silicon Valley on the West Coast, seeking to promote his country as open for business to help revive the Indian economy. The deal for the Apaches was "hybrid", with one contract to be signed with Boeing for the helicopters and the other with the US government for its weapons and radars, according to the Press Trust of India news agency.—AFP

Europe can cope with unprecedented migrant crisis

PARIS — The sheer number of migrants coming to Europe make this year's crisis unparalleled in recent times — but Europe has the capacity and an "obligation" to absorb them, the OECD said Tuesday.

"The current humanitarian crisis is unprecedented with an appalling and unacceptable human cost," the Paris-based body said in its annual report on migration.

The OECD said up to one million asylum applications could be made in Europe this year and between 350,000 and 450,000 people could be granted the status of refugee or similar — and it warned that the flow of migrants was unlikely to end anytime soon.

"Given the complexity of its main driving forces, there is unfortunately little hope that the sit-

uation will improve significantly in the near future," the report said.

Compared with previous years, migrants are flowing in from more countries and along a wider range of routes, the report said.

Last year, Syrians fleeing the war in their homeland accounted for 21 percent of asylum seekers, while people from Kosovo represented nearly 10 percent of the applications and Eritreans 6.4 percent.

"More than in previous crises, asylum seekers are very diverse in terms of country of origin, profile and motivation," the OECD said, adding that this "increases the pressure on asylum systems in different countries."

It also noted that advances in communication technology that allowed migrants to find out about new routes faster, coupled with the emergence of new smuggling routes "lead to rapidly changing situations".

The influx of asylum seekers is "a new experience" for several European countries, such as Hungary, which has taken the hardest line to prevent migrants entering the country. It is essential for European Union leaders to reach agreement soon on how the ref-

ugees will be distributed among member states, the OECD said, because the current systems in place "have not ensured a fair burden-sharing between countries."

Overall, however, Europe has the economic resources and the ability to absorb hundreds of thousands of migrants, it said.

"The key message is that Europe has the means and the experience to respond to this crisis," said Jean-Christophe Dumont, head of the OECD's International Migration Division.

Given time, migrants can become valuable contributors to the economic and social health of the countries where they make their homes, the report said.

"The facts are there — migration does not have a negative impact on the labour market, it does not deepen budget deficits. Immigrants contribute more than they receive in individual benefits," Dumont said.

However, European leaders have a serious challenge in convincing voters that migrants could be a good thing, he warned.

"(Migration) does not threaten our identity. But of course it's a message that you can't get across quickly, you have to explain it and repeat it."—AFP

"The current humanitarian crisis is unprecedented with an appalling and unacceptable human cost."

—OECD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV UBC CHILE VOY NO (74)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV UBC CHILE VOY NO (74) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.9.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY

AGENT FOR: M/S THALAMAR SHIPPING AG:

Phone No: 2301186

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MCC HA LONG VOY NO (1501)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MCC HA LONG VOY NO (1501) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.9.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA TENAGA VOY NO (303)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA TENAGA VOY NO (303) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.9.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV ANAN BHUM VOY NO (141N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ANAN BHUM VOY NO (141N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.9.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY

AGENT FOR: M/S COSCOS CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

MINISTRY OF RAIL TRANSPORTATION

MYANMA RAILWAYS

INVITATION TO OPEN TENDER

1. Open Tender is invited for supply of the following items in Euro:

Sr No.	Tender No	Description
1.	15(T)1/MR(E)	Raw Material for Concrete Sleeper Production (3)Items
	2015-2016	(a) 3 mm Ø 3ply HT Steel Strand (200) M.Ton
		(b) 3.6 mm Ø 3ply HT Steel Strand (470) M.Ton
		(c) 18mm Ø Spring Steel (100) M.Ton

Closing Date & Time - 19.10.2015(Monday)(12:30)Hrs

2. Tender documents are available at our office starting from 18.9.2015 during office hours and for further detail please contact: Deputy General Manager Supply Department, Myanmar Railways, Corner of Theinbyu Street and Merchant Street, Botahtaung, Yangon. Phone:95-1-291985, 291994,

WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE:

Monsoon is weak in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 23rd September, 2015:

Rain or thunder-showers will be widespread in Kachin and Rakhine States, fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing Region and Mon State, scattered in Naypyitaw, Mandalay, Bago, Yangon, Aye-yawady and Taninthayi Regions, Chin and Kayin States and isolated in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA:

Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:

Continuation of thundery activities in the Central Myanmar areas.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 23rd September, 2015:

Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 23rd September, 2015:

Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 23rd September, 2015:

Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).



Myanmar International

(23-9-2015 07:00 am~24 -9-2015 07:00 am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	19 Hours
07:51	Am	Pyin Oo Lwin Sweater
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	A Street Vendor "Spreading Knowledge"
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Entrepreneur "Soe Nyi Nyi"
09:35	Am	Lawka Nandar Wildlife Sanctuary And Its Rare Star Tortoises
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Myanmar Traditional Instruments - Myanmar Harp (Episode-1)
10:50	Am	Orchid Lover

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Tuesday 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	A Visit To Today's Along-Daw-Katthapha
07:42	Pm	Gardener: Rose Plantation
07:50	Pm	Today Myanmar: Scraps to Products
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Innovative Handiworks Based On The Art Of Line Drawing
08:45	Pm	Chef Life: Avi Bitton (Israeli Chef)

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



MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER

Open tenders are invited for construction of a 75m 2 extension to existing TB Ward at our Tharketa Clinic

Tender No: YP2015TKT

Tender Closing Date and Time: 09 October 2015, 17h30

Tender Opening Date and Time: 12 October 2015, 09h00

Tender documents and detailed information are available Mon-Fri 08h30-17h30, 23 Sept - 02 Oct 2015 at our office at No 4, Highland Avenue Lane (1), 6 Quarter, 7 Mile, Mayangone Township, Yangon.

Project Coordinator
Médecins Sans Frontières
(+95) (01) 966 0147

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY HOLIDAY NOTICE

As the wharves, warehouses and chellan Offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the 25th SEPTEMBER 2015 (BAKRI EID DAY), Loading, Unloading and delivery for Goods will be received on Payment as Holiday Fees.



(23-9-2015, Wednesday)

6:20 am	8:45 am
• Myanmar Series	• Catch Asia News (Part-9)
6:50 am	8:55 am
• Teleplay	• Teleplay
7:00 am	9:30 am
• TV Drama Series	• Myanmar Video (Black & White)
8:35 am	
• Musical Programme	

Myanmar beauty comes second in pageant



Ma Tin Aye Khaing won second prize in the 11th China-ASEAN Beauty contest, which was held in Nanning, China on 20 September. A contestant from China came first, while Thailand took third place. Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia and Singapore also took part in the contest. PHOTO: MNA

Hundreds protest in South Africa against US star Pharrell Williams

CAPE TOWN — About 500 people demonstrated outside a Cape Town venue where Pharrell Williams was due to perform on Monday, in protest against the US pop star's promotional deal with South African retailer Woolworths and its trade ties with Israel.

The Grammy award-winning producer and performer's concert was scheduled to go ahead despite the protest, launched by the South African branch of the international Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel (BDS) movement.

"By working with Woolworths, Pharrell supports Israel, a country that supports the oppression of Palestine, a country that is the new apartheid state," said Ashraf Salie, standing amongst a crowd waving Palestinian flags at the entrance to the GrandWest

Casino where Williams was performing.

Pro-Palestinian marches often attract large crowds in South Africa, especially in Cape Town which has a large Muslim community.

Some passing motorists hooted support to protesters, who held up placards saying "Pharrell is welcome if Gaza is free" and "Pharrell and Woolworths have blood on their hands" as local musicians and artists entertained the crowd from a stage.

Protesters were allowed to gather under a heavy police presence after the City of Cape Town lost a court case seeking to limit attendance to 150 protesters.

Williams is collaborating with Woolworths as its style director on several fashion projects as well as fundraising for education. —Reuters

Faith is the most motivating force

MUMBAI — Megastar Amitabh Bachchan feels faith is the biggest motivating force in the universe, with its presence felt in every corner of life.

"Faith must have been and still is the most motivating unseen force within the universe of the human... How else can one explain its power of presence, at every corner of our life..." Bachchan wrote on his blog.

Talking about Ganesh Chaturthi celebration in the city, the 72-year-old "Piku" star said it is the spirit of devotion, which has the power to awe anyone, who witnesses it. "A visitor from across the seas, walking about the city of Mumbai would be in bewildered awe at the atmosphere of gaiety and well being... The spirit of devotion and celebration has never been so pronounced

and voluble as in our part of the world... "The sounds of dance and drum, of smiling happy faces, young and old, of the pride in carrying each their homed Ganapati, now ready to be put away where each year it belongs... He belongs to them, in any circumstance... Just as much they celebrate His presence, they move themselves emotionally in His absence too..." he wrote.—PTI

Emmy awards show draws record low TV audience

LOS ANGELES — The Emmy Awards show, television's biggest night, drew the smallest TV audience on record, despite big wins for HBO's (TWX.N) popular medieval fantasy series "Game of Thrones."

Preliminary Nielsen ratings data on Monday showed that just 11.9 million Americans watched Sunday's Emmy Awards telecast which was broadcast live on Fox (FOXA.O) television in competition with NBC's (CMC-SA.O) "Sunday Night Football."

The Emmys TV audience was some 4 million fewer than the 2014 event, and the smallest in the award show's history.

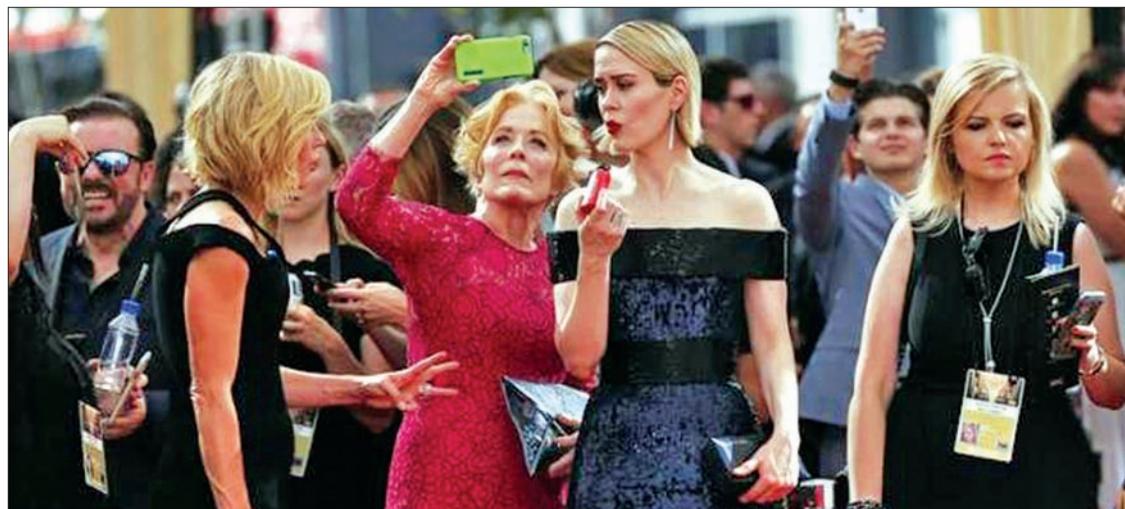
The top-rated Emmys in recent years was the 2013 show, where comedies "Modern Family" and drama "Breaking Bad" won the top awards and which drew 17.76 million viewers overall.

Sunday's ceremony brought surprise best series wins for both "Game of Thrones" — one of the most popular dramas on US

television — and HBO's satirical White House show "Veep."

It also made history when Viola Davis, star of "How To Get Away With Murder," became the first black woman in the 67-year history of the Emmys to take home the statuette for lead actress in a drama series.

The National Football League game between the Green Bay Packers and Seattle Seahawks on "Sunday Night Football" drew 23 million viewers.—Reuters



Actress Holland Taylor takes a photo as actress Sarah Paulson (2nd R) prepares for the red carpet at the 67th Primetime Emmy Awards in Los Angeles, California September 20, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

The Weeknd keeps new albums off top spot on Billboard 200 chart

LOS ANGELES — Canadian R&B singer The Weeknd held steady at the top of the weekly US Billboard 200 album chart on Monday for a third consecutive week, keeping off five new entries in the top 10.

"Beauty Behind the Madness," the second studio album by The Weeknd which features the hit "Can't Feel My Face," sold 48,000 albums, 245,000 songs and was streamed 39 million times, tallying 99,000 units in the week ending Sept 17, according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan.

British alt-rockers Bring Me The Horizon entered the chart at No 2 this week with its latest record "That's The Spirit" selling 62,000 units, while country music singer Brett Eldredge's "Illinois" debuted at No. 3 with 51,000 units. The Billboard 200 chart tallies album sales, song sales (10 songs equal one album) and streaming activity (1,500 streams

equal one album).

Other new entries in the top 10 of the Billboard 200 chart this week includes metal group Slayer's "Repentless" at No. 4, singer-songwriter Gary Clark Jr.'s "Story of Sonny Boy Slim" at No 8 and veteran British rockers Duran Duran at No 10 with "Paper

Gods."

On Billboard's Digital Songs chart, which measures online download sales, Canadian pop star Justin Bieber retained his hold on the top spot for a third week with his latest single "What Do You Mean?" selling 128,000 digital copies.—Reuters



Canadian singer The Weeknd performs during the second night of the 2015 iHeartRadio Music Festival at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada. PHOTO: REUTERS

Afghan paragliders soar through Kabul's skies

KABUL — Zakia Mohammadi, a woman in Afghanistan's first national paragliding team, waited on a hilltop on the outskirts of Kabul for a wind to lift her craft into the sky, as dozens of watching teenagers clapped and cheered.

She is one of a group of young Afghans taking to the skies of a capital where military helicopters and surveillance balloons are a far more familiar sight.

"When I went up to the sky, I thought I was a bird which had just been freed from a cage," said Mohammadi, one of two women in the newly established team of 15 that includes two trainers. "I really enjoyed it."

Women in Afghanistan's conservative Muslim society are increasingly entering areas such as education, sports and the workplace, but most still wear the head-to-toe garment, the burqa.

"When women see me they don't believe that an Afghan woman can do this," said Leeda Ozori, the other woman in the team. "The situation is not good, there is no security, but I am brave and I can do it."

During the rule of the militant Islamist Taliban in the 1990s, Afghan women were kept out of schools, universities and public life. They could not leave their homes unless accompanied by a male family member.

"When we first came



Afghan paraglider Zakia Mohammadi, 21, flies in Kabul, Afghanistan. PHOTO: REUTERS

here, children were pelting us with stones," paragliding trainer Mehran Rahbari told Reuters at the top of the hill in Kabul.

"But later, when they found out that we were coming here for sports, they stopped throwing stones at us. Now they love us."

Paragliding is an expensive pastime, however, in a city where the average wage is about \$200 a month.

Even a middle-class Afghan will find it tough to afford the \$500 cost of two weeks of training, while paragliding equipment costs \$5,000.

Getting to the tops of hills takes hours of climb-

ing in a four-wheel drive vehicle, in the absence of proper roads. An army vehicle carries the team's equipment, with a police escort to fend off possible attacks.

But the team's biggest concern is their vulnerability when aloft. "We fly for around 20 minutes in the sky and sometimes we fly over people's houses," said Naweed Popal, who pooled his cash to set up the group just over three years ago.

"We are concerned if something happens and we find ourselves with no means of defence."

Each craft has a steering mechanism to avoid collisions, and every team

member is given a radio to maintain contact.

Although the team hopes to expand operations to other Afghan provinces, security worries now restrict it to Kabul.

"We cannot go anywhere outside Kabul," said Iranian trainer Rahbari. "We are afraid if we go out and get attacked, one bullet can end all our efforts."

But the women on the team are undeterred.

"Our idea is to show to the world that Afghan women, although living in war and insecurity, have the ability to improve and become developed," said Mohammadi.—Reuters

Kitakyushu city hoping for tourism boost from new Thai TV drama

BANGKOK — The city of Kitakyushu in Japan's Fukuoka prefecture has sponsored a Thai television series, allowing it to be filmed in key locations in the city amid hopes of attracting tourists from Thailand, said the city's mayor at a press conference on Monday.

It is hoped that "Devil Lover," a romantic sci-fi action drama series which has used Kitakyushu as its main location, will bring many Thai visitors to the city, said the mayor of Kitakyushu, Kenji Kitahashi, at the drama's launch at the Japanese ambassador's residence in Bangkok. "Kitakyushu is an industrial and port city with a richness of beautiful nature and mountainous scenery which are suitable to be used as filming locations," said Kitahashi. Local residents' cooperation with staff filming the series has also proved to be strong in the city, he said. "Six thousand people have registered to volunteer as unpaid extras for filming in Kitakyushu," said the mayor. "They have cooperated very well."

With Kitakyushu's resemblance to Thailand's port province of Rayong and the popularity of the TV drama, the mayor also hoped the city would be chosen as a pre-training camp for Thai athletes who qualify for the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo. TV drama-driven tourism strategies have

proved to be effective, as the number of Thai tourists to Fukuoka jumped 90 percent since last April after the broadcast of a Thai TV drama, Kolkimono (Kimono's Trap), which was filmed in Fukuoka, according to Shiro Sadoshima, the Japanese ambassador to Thailand and a native of Fukuoka. Additionally, Devil Lover's 28-year-old protagonist and producer, Pitchaya Nitipaisankul, known by his nickname "Golf," said the variety of locations available in Kitakyushu helped it to become the main location for the drama. "We tried to find many locations, but only Kitakyushu could completely match all of the story's themes. The cultural scene is also a highlight. We tried to cover all of the varied aspects of the city," said Golf.

Among 30 filming locations, the actor said the Hiraodai karst plateaus — a natural rock formation — and Kokura castle were his favorite spots during the 11-day schedule of filming in the city.

At the launch event, Golf, a regular visitor to Japan and a student of the Japanese language, was also appointed as Kitakyushu's cultural ambassador to Thailand, a role which he hopes can help promote good relations between the two countries. "Devil Lover" will be aired on Thailand's GMM 25 channel nationwide from 7 October.—Kyodo News

Ride-sharing apps vie to replace private car ownership in Vietnam

HO CHI MINH CITY — A young, tech-savvy population short on cars but big on smartphones is driving double-digit growth for ride-hailing apps Uber and GrabTaxi in Vietnam, and inspiring some executives to dream of replacing private car ownership altogether.

Uber launched its service in Vietnam last year and says Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi already have the highest average numbers of trips per user out of the 300 cities in which it operates, double the rate in New York.

Ride-sharing apps have taken off among Vietnam's rapidly expanding middle class as they provide four-wheeled comfort in a country better known for chaotic swarms of scooters and Southeast Asia's most expensive taxi fares.

"The price is good, the service is good," said

Uber user Nguyen Phi Yen, who runs a career counseling firm in Ho Chi Minh City.

"Uber drivers have good taste in music. Even the cars smell better than taxis."

With less than three people out of every 100 owning cars in Vietnam, a country of 90 million people, and one of the fastest-growing smartphone markets in the region, ride-sharing executives are thinking big.

"Our goal is to replace private car ownership," San Francisco-based Uber Technologies' [UBER.UL] general manager for Vietnam, Dang Viet Dzung, told Reuters in an interview.

"If Uber is available everywhere, so cheap, so reliable, why do you need to buy a car?"

Uber charges 8,000 dong (27-36 cents) per kilometer compared with

11,000-15,000 dong for taxis in Ho Chi Minh City. The city's taxi rates are more than double those in Bangkok, Manila and Jakarta, according to Vietnam's Association for Consumer Standards and Protection.

Nguyen Tuan Anh, GrabTaxi's general manager for Vietnam, said Vietnam's young population — more than two-thirds of people are under 30 years of age — was "eager to learn new things".

But he cautioned that many still yearned to own their own car regardless of the cheaper alternatives now available through ride-sharing.

"If our service is good enough to provide the convenience that surpasses the need for showing off, then they eventually may take it," Tuan Anh told Reuters in an interview.

Both operators de-

clined to reveal how many Vietnamese users they had because it could impact market competition.

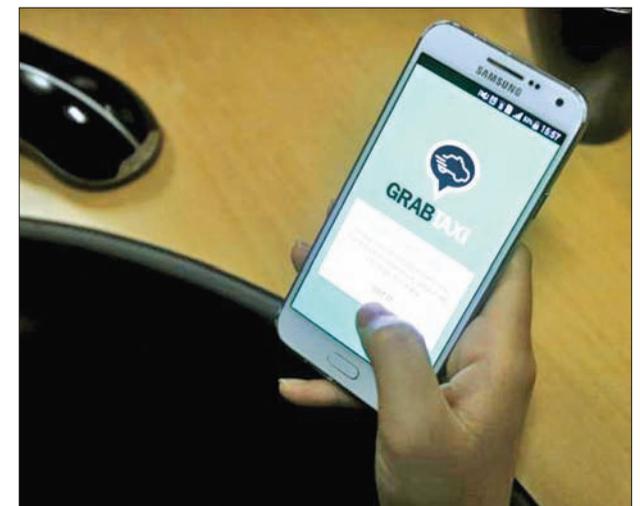
Uber and Singapore-based GrabTaxi won't get their own way in Vietnam as local outfits muscle in on the action.

Leading Vietnamese cab firms Mai Linh and Vinasun will soon launch smartphone apps, adding to those of Xe Cua Toi, LiveTaxi and iMove, which debuts this month.

"It will replace, in a couple of years, the conventional system of calling a taxi," said iMove's Truong Trong Hao.

But in an effort to gain an edge, the domestic players are tailoring their services to fit the Vietnamese market.

GrabTaxi has introduced a GrabBike motorcycle service, while Uber last month started accepting cash from Vietnamese to get around the lack of



A customer uses the GrabTaxi app on her smartphone to book for a taxi in Hanoi, Vietnam 9 September, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

credit cards - only 2.5 million in circulation - following similar moves in India and Kenya.

Clear laws aren't here yet, either. Uber isn't illegal, but policymakers are working out how to regulate it. Khat Viet Hung of Vietnam's National Traffic Safety Commit-

tee said smartphone apps were permitted to work with "commercial transport service providers," but not offer rides themselves. But the apps' unhindered growth suggests that rule isn't being enforced and authorities are warming to the technology.—Reuters

South Korea's Park training in Japan



South Korea's Olympic swimming champion Park Tae-hwan. PHOTO: REUTERS

SEOUL — South Korean Olympic swimming champion Park Tae-hwan, who is currently serving a doping suspension, will continue his training in Japan and remain there until December, his management company said on Tuesday.

Park, who won 400 metres freestyle gold at the 2008 Beijing Olympics and is one of the country's most popular athletes, tested positive for testosterone ahead of the Incheon Asian Games last September.

The 25-year-old attributed the failed test to an injection he received at a local clinic where

he said he was being treated for a skin complaint and where he also had some vitamin shots and chiropractic treatment.

Park received an 18-month doping ban from swimming's world governing body FINA, leaving his chances of competing at next year's Rio Olympics hanging by a thread. The doctor who administered the injections has pleaded not guilty to charges of professional negligence during the ongoing trial. "Park left for Tokyo yesterday (Monday) afternoon with his manager and fitness trainer," Yonhap news quoted Park's Team GMP as saying in a statement. Park would begin training at Hosei University in Tokyo on Thursday and remain in Japan until December, GMP added. Park's ban means he is not allowed to train at facilities operated by the government or the Korea Swimming Federation. He had previously been training at a public pool in Seoul.—Reuters

2015- 2016 AFC Women's Olympic Qualifying Tournament

(22-09-2015)

THAILAND 0 - 2 VIETNAM

MYANMAR 3 - 1 CHINESE TAIPEI

Myanmar sixth in global ssireum rankings



Athletes competing in the final day of Asian Ssireum Championship and the World Ssireum Championship. PHOTO: MIN HTET

YANGON — After hosting the Asian Ssireum Championship and the World Ssireum Championship for the first time, Myanmar has emerged as the third best performing nation in Asia and the sixth globally.

The competitions were held in Thuwanna in Yangon and came to an end on Tuesday.

Myanmar's ssireum athletes won one gold, six silver and seven bronze medals.

Myanmar's male athletes

fared well in the 80 and 120 kilo weight division and female athletes took home medals in the 50 and 70 kilo weight division.

In the 80 kilo weigh division for male Ssireum athletes, Khudayberdi Ev Alisher from Uzbekistan won the gold medal and Zaw Moe Aung from Myanmar won silver and compatriot Zin Min Soe won bronze.

In the 120 kilo weight division for males, Darmmaa Tamir from Mongolia won gold, Minkel Allikmae from Estonia won silver and Zaw Zaw from Myanmar won bronze.

In the 50 kilo weigh division for female athletes, Zhang Yueping from China won gold, Tin Tin Win from Myanmar won silver and Kyi Tin Khaing won bronze. In the 70 kilo division, Batbaatar Khulan from Mongolia won gold, Viktoriia Sukretna won silver and Hnin Hnin Moe from Myanmar won bronze.—Maung Sein Lwin (Myanma Alinn)

Three foreign coaches quit Yangon United FC by mutual agreement

Ko Moe

YANGON — The head coach and two other foreign coaches have left Yangon United Football Club by mutual agreement, according to a press release issued by the football club on Tuesday.

Head coach Mr Miodrag Ješić, assistant coach Mr Srđan Tekijaski and fitness coach Bo Jan have quit the team for undisclosed reasons.

The current senior coach U Tin Maung Tun has been appointed to lead the team as head coach during upcoming matches. He will be supported by other team coaches will be U Thin Wai, U Myo Min Tun and U Win Khaing.

Yangon United said in the statement that it appreciates Mr Ješić's efforts and achievements during his time with the club.

He was appointed as head

coach of Yangon United FC before the National League season began in the middle of the year.

"He is a great coach - his work was terrific. We wish him well in his next endeavour," Yangon United FC Chief Executive Officer U Min Swe Oo said.

Yangon United FC won 17 matches and lost just the once, to Yadanarbon Football Club on September 17, while he was head coach.—GNLM

Costa and Gabriel charged by FA after Stamford Bridge battle



Chelsea's Diego Costa clashes with Arsenal's Gabriel Paulista at Stamford Bridge. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Chelsea striker Diego Costa and Arsenal's Gabriel have both been charged by the Football Association after incidents in Saturday's bad-tempered Premier League derby at Stamford Bridge.

The FA said on its website that Costa had been charged with an alleged "act of violent conduct" after television replays showed him catching Arsenal defender Laurent Koscielny with his arm in an incident not spotted at the time by the referee.

"Off the ball incidents which are not seen at the time by the match officials are referred to a panel of three former elite referees," an FA statement said.

"For retrospective action to be taken, and an FA charge to follow, the decision by the panel must be unanimous."

Brazilian defender Gabriel, who was sent off after

tangling with Costa shortly after that incident, was charged with "improper conduct" following his straight red card which Arsenal have since appealed against.

Spain international Costa has until 1700 GMT on Tuesday to respond to the charges while Gabriel has until 1700 GMT on Thursday to respond.

Both Chelsea and Arsenal were also charged by the FA for failing to control their players.

Chelsea won the fractious game 2-0 with Arsenal ending the match with nine men after Santi Cazorla was also dismissed for a second yellow card after a foul on former Arsenal midfielder Cesc Fabregas.

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger was critical of Costa after the derby, saying he is "always involved in provocation."—Reuters