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FIRE CAUSES ALMOST US\$ 100,000 DAMAGE AT COCA-COLA WAREHOUSE

A FIRE broke out at a warehouse storing raw materials used to make Coca-Cola bottles on Thursday morning, causing almost a million dollars in damage.

More than 400 fire-fighters and 45 fire engines rushed to the scene and battled the blaze for five hours before it was extinguished at noon. One fire-fighter was injured and the damage caused by the fire is estimated to be more than K1.1 billion (US\$854,950).

The warehouse is located in the industrial zone in Mingaladon Township and stores large quantities of the soft-drink giant's plastic pellets.

Authorities are investigating the cause of the blaze.

"A neighbouring family saw the fire after they smelled the burning plastic, and they called us at around 7am. They estimated that the fire started around 6:30am," said U Thaw Dar, the deputy director of the Yangon Region Fire Services Department.

"No one was in the warehouse when the fire began. The guards locked the door of the warehouse and went home at around 8pm the previous night," said the official, quoting one of the neighbours who first spotted the blaze.

"The fire fighters also used cranes and towers, finally getting



Fire-fighters battle the flames engulfing a warehouse storing plastic pellets used to make Coca-Cola bottles in Myanmar. PHOTO: YE NAUNG (PEKHON)

the flames under control at around 8:30am. The warehouse is not easily accessible because it is surrounded by mud," U Thaw Dar said.

Heavy winds were blowing

during the fire. The main reason why the fire lasted so long is that fire engines could not access the scene simultaneously because the warehouse is not easily accessi-

ble," said witness U Tun Win.

Coca-Cola opened its bottling plant in Hmawbi Township in Yangon in June 2013, after an absence from Myanmar of more

than 60 years.

No one at Coca-Cola was available for comment at the time the story went to print.—Zaw Gyi (Panita)/Aye Min Soe

Labour unions push for stronger presence

Foreign and local representatives discuss weak laws, dangerous working conditions and unfair dismissals

Aye Min Soe

THE Confederation of Trade Unions Myanmar held talks this week with international union federations and trade union support organisations to discuss their challenges and future activities.

The two-day conference titled "Achievements and Futures of Sectoral Organisation of Trade Unions in Myanmar" concluded on Wednesday in Yangon. The main points of discussion were weaknesses in Myanmar's labour laws and the impact the new min-

imum wage has had in the short period since it came into effect on 1 September.

Representatives from Myanmar trade unions pointed out employment contracts between factory bosses and workers do not provide sufficient recognition of the role of labour unions.

"We have a plan to discuss the [generic] employment contract paragraph by paragraph with government officials," said assistant general-secretary of CTUM Phyo Sandar Soe. The government issued an announcement in

late August urging owners of factories to sign employment contracts with their workers within 30 days of their employment.

Participants also discussed the Settlement of Labour Dispute Law, one of 19 labour laws enacted in Myanmar. Phyo Sandar Soe said the law's penalty for factory bosses who violate collective bargaining agreements, which imposes a fine but not a prison sentence, is too weak.

Meanwhile, U Thaw Nyunt, the president of the Mining Workers Federation of Myanmar,

decried the lack of occupational health and safety at small mining sites around the country.

"Causalities are found on a near-daily basis at small mines in Myanmar," he said.

The main challenge for workers in small mines located deep in the forest is that workers do not feel free to express their grievances, he added.

Myanmar's mining sector employs about 30,000 miners, according to the federation.

Unions from the construction, logging, mining, industrial,

agricultural, transport, logistics and education sectors also attended the conference.

The attendees unanimously welcomed the government's initiative to form a committee to probe staff layoffs in order to ensure that they are reasonable.

The CTUM invited personnel experienced in labour union affairs from international organisations to the conference with the aim of broadening the horizon of labour union members in Myanmar, said CTUM president U Maung Maung.—GNLM

Dr Sai Mauk Kham attends China's 66th anniversary

VICE PRESIDENT Dr Sai Mauk Kham attended a ceremony commemorating the 66th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China in Nay Pyi Taw on Thursday. The vice president was accompanied by his wife at the event.

Air Force Commander-in-Chief General Khin Aung Myint also attended the ceremony, along with union ministers, deputy ministers, permanent secretaries, departmental officials and officials from the Chinese embassy.

After perusing the photo exhibition at the event, China's ambassador to Myanmar Mr Hong Liang and the vice president gave speeches.

"The Chinese embassy plans to move to Nay Pyi Taw and become the first embassy in the city; this year is also the 65th anniversary of Myanmar-China diplomatic relations, which have never been disturbed by international issues. China supports Myanmar's transition into a democratic country and its reconciliation efforts with

ethnic minority groups. China supports improvements to the livelihoods of Myanmar people and maintains an open-door policy to Myanmar," said the ambassador in his speech.

The ambassador also expressed his wish for a smooth transition following the 2015 general election.

After the speeches, the vice president's wife Daw Nan Shwe Hmon and Ambassador Hong Liang's wife cut a cake in honour of the anniversary.—MNA



Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham and wife Daw Nan Shwe Hmon celebrate 66th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China together with Ambassador Mr Hong Liang and wife. PHOTO: MNA

Post-flood recovery plans discussed



National Disaster Management Committee and officials discuss post floods and landslide needs assessment framework. PHOTO: MNA

NAY PYI TAW — A needs assessment workshop on post floods and landslide needs assessment framework in Myanmar took place in Yangon on Thursday.

Vice President U Nyan Tun oversaw the workshop in his capacity as the chairman of Myanmar's National Natural Disaster Management Committee.

"The main objective of the meeting is to carry out next stage of recovery efforts by inviting development partners to contribute to a post-floods and landslides needs

assessment to inform the national framework. This will guide both ongoing recovery efforts and long-term recovery plans."

Participants discussed the key functions of establishing the recovery framework, the approximation of damage, organisational structures, data collection system and the tasks to be prioritised for rehabilitation.

The floods caused damage in 12 out of 14 states and regions and directly affected 1.6 million people, with knock-off effects felt by

millions more.

U Nyan Tun said that the long-term economic and social consequences are yet to be fully understood and that the recovery task is one of the most challenging in recent times. He emphasised the need for prevention to play a large role in ongoing recovery efforts.

He said that every level of government, as well as civil society groups, have striven to respond to the needs of those affected as swiftly as possible.—MNA

Vice-Senior General visits Shanghai's naval port

THE Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Service Vice-Senior General Soe Win visited Shanghai Garrison Naval Port on Thursday and was welcomed by China's deputy naval commander Senior Colonel Liu Zhao Hui.

After being saluted by a na-

val honour guard, Chinese naval captain Zhang Chung Puo briefed the delegation on China's naval frigates. The vice-senior general then visited the city's famous landmark, the Oriental Pearl Radio & TV Tower, before learning about plans to develop the new city of Pudong and Shanghai's

historic city centre of Puxi.

Vice-Senior General Soe Win flew to Wuhan City on a chartered People's Liberation Army flight and were welcomed at Hian Hua Airport in Wuhan by Hubei Province Commander-in-Chief General Yang Wan Jun.—Myawady

Illegal timber trade tarnishes national image: Union Minister

NAY PYI TAW—Union Minister of Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Win Tun said on Thursday that the impact of the illegal timber trade has a catastrophic impact on the environment and tarnishes the image of both China and Myanmar.

He made the remarks during the opening ceremony of the Stakeholder Workshop on Myanmar-China Timber Trade, which is being organised by Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry and the Centre for International Forest Products Trade under

China's State Forestry Administration. "It is important for both governments to take action and to cultivate forestry products for sustainable trade," he said.

The union minister said that illegal logging results in deforestation, reduced biodiversity and contributes to climate change.

"Since 2011, 50,000 tonnes of illegal timber have been seized at the Myanmar-China border. Both Chinese and Myanmar citizens were arrested in an attempt to trade 4,500 tonnes of timber in Kachin State. It is essential to revive the

reputation of both countries by taking action [against the illegal timber trade]."

"The government and the private sector should collaborate in tackling illegal trade. Experts should also work to establish a value-added system to the timber industry," the union minister said.

The meeting was also attended by Mr Fu Gui, the deputy director general of China's State Forestry Administration, and Mr George Dura, the EU deputy head of cooperation, Myanmar.—MNA

UEC clarifies advance voting system

THE Union Election Commission clarified the rules for advance voting for the November 8 election to departmental officials on Thursday in Nay Pyi Taw.

UEC chairman U Tin Aye said voters who are eligible to cast advance votes in the upcoming election must submit form No. 15 to township election sub-commissions.

People who are not in their constituencies on election

day, including military personnel and their families, students, trainees, prisoners and patients who are receiving treatment at intensive care units are entitled to cast advance votes, he said.

Myanmar citizens living abroad can also apply to vote in advance.

Advance votes need to be received in their respective election sub-commissions no later than 4pm on election day, the chairman said.—MNA

C-in-C calls for religious harmony

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visited Christian and Buddhist religious sites in Kayah State on Wednesday and Thursday to discuss the importance of interfaith relations.

He paid homage to a 91-year-old monk in Loikaw on Wednesday during his tour of Kayah State. He also paid homage to Taungkwe Pagoda in Loikaw and Yan Aung Myin Pyi Taw Aye Pagoda in Mawchi on Thursday.

On Thursday afternoon, he met Father Richard Thura Tun at the Catholic church in Loikaw.

"No matter what religion one follows, it is important to live in harmony, and this concept will help develop the nation," he told the priest.

In return, Bishop Stephen Tjeph of the Loikaw Diocese expressed his belief that the Tatmadaw will continue helping the country in its transition to democracy in cooperation with the people.



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presents a gift to a Christian priest in Loikaw. PHOTO: MNA

During his tour, the commander-in-chief and his wife visited patients at the local military hospital. The commander-in-chief told military personnel in Hsiseng and Banyin that he hopes a multi-party democracy system will take root in the country and stressed that the Tatmadaw will act in accordance with the law.—Myawady

President U Thein Sein highlights reform achievements

SINCE coming to power in 2011, the government has worked hard to combat poverty and boost rural development, President U Thein Sein told the Leading Committee for National Reform's meeting on Thursday.

The president, who is the Chairman of the Leading Committee for National Reform, stressed that his government's commitment to reform has yielded tangible results over the past five years, citing Community-Driven Development projects initiated by the World Bank in a bid to enable poor rural communities to benefit from improved infrastructure.

Political reforms have seen the emergence of political parties and social organisations, new press freedoms, the release of political prisoners and ongoing

peace talks, the president added.

The government has strived to improve socioeconomic standards across Myanmar as part of the fundamental framework of its economic and social reform programme.

The revised tax system has become more effective, generating tax revenue of up to 5.9 trillion kyats (nearly US\$4.58 billion) in the 2015-16 fiscal year, up from 1.69 trillion (\$1.3 billion) in 2011-12, he said.

Regarding educational reforms, the government provides free primary and secondary schooling alongside presidential scholarship awards. Under the scholarship programme, a total of 116 students are studying in Australia, Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States, China and Thailand.

President U Thein Sein also spoke of ongoing efforts geared at improving healthcare, including the opening of district hospitals and new medical universities in large cities. He stressed the need to increase productivity in order to attract greater foreign investment in the sector.

The government has borrowed \$6.75 billion from foreign countries and financial institutions, of which \$1.5 billion has been spent on development projects across the country, he said, adding that K46 billion (\$35.7 million) have been used in projects for affordable housing and rental housing.

The number of mobile phone users has soared to 52 per cent in 2015, up from less than five per cent in 2011, with the president adding that the number of tourists



President U Thein Sein addresses Leading Committee for National Reform's meeting. PHOTO: MNA

is expected to hit five million next year.

He stressed the need of government staff to enhance their capacity and change the mindset in a march toward to the people-centred governance and expressed some dissatisfaction about a lack

of progress made in developing transparent governance.

Also in attendance were Union Ministers U Aung Min, U Soe Thane, U Hla Tun, U Win Shein, Dr Kan Zaw and Vice Presidents U Nyan Tun and Dr Sai Mauk Kham. —MNA

Singaporean students visit Pyithu Hluttaw

NAY PYI TAW — The 14-member group comprising MBA students from National University of Singapore on Thursday visited

the Pyithu Hluttaw here and met with Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann. Also present at the call were Daw Aye Aye

Mu, member of Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission, and officials from the Pyithu Hluttaw Office.—MNA



MBA students from National University of Singapore have photo taken together with Thura U Shwe Man, the Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw. PHOTO: MNA

What they stand for: campaigns aired

The Mon National Party, Zomi Congress for Democracy and Shan State Kokang Democratic Party broadcast campaign speeches on Thursday.

Mon National Party



MNP General Secretary Nai Lei Tama pledged that his party would ensure full democratic and human rights to all citizens and an emergence of a federal system that guarantees equality and the right to self-administration. He expressed his party's firm commitment to restoring lasting peace and preventing the resurgence of tyrannical government. He vowed that his party would put the people's desires first in the political, economic, education, health and social sectors.

Zomi Congress for Democracy



Pugin Kam Lian, the General Secretary of ZCD's Central Executive Committee, said his party would be determined to introduce a free-market economic policy to encourage competition. He also promised to further cement the Panlong Spirit for the emergence of a federal union. He continued that his party would emphasise human rights in conformity with democratic practices and ensure a "government of the people, by the people and for the people".

Shan State Kokang Democratic Party



SSKDP's General Secretary U Myint Khaing said his party would ensure that the legislative, executive and judicial branches are in the hands of the people, while making efforts to establish a federal system that is acceptable to all ethnic groups. He said the party would ensure that farmland ownership would not be monopolised by the privileged class. He also said the party would prioritise environmental conservation efforts and better international relations.—GNLM

U Aung Thein Appointed as Dy Minister of Information

NAY PYI TAW—The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed Deputy Minister U Aung Thein of the President Office (4) as Deputy Minister of Ministry of Informa-

tion under Section (234), subsection (a) and subsection (d), of the Constitution and Section (16), subsection (b), para (9) of the Union Government Law on 24 September 2015.—GNLM

Heads of Services Organisations Transferred, Appointed

NAY PYI TAW — The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on 24 September 2015, has transferred Rector Dr Daw Saw Sandar Aye of University of Computer Studies (Pyay), Department of Technology Promotion and Cooperation under the Ministry of Science and Technology, as the rector of University of Information Technology (Yangon) from the date she assumes charge of her duties.

The President on the same day has appointed the following persons as heads of service organisations shown against each on probation from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name	Appointment
(a) U Tin Soe General Manager (Production) Myanma Shipyards Ministry of Transport	Managing Director Myanma Shipyards Ministry of Transport
(b) Daw Aye Aye Win Deputy Director General Supervisory & Inspection Department Ministry of Industry	Director-General Supervisory & Inspection Department Ministry of Industry

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 Myanmar Farmer's Development Party and Democracy and Human Rights Party on 25 September.

Although three political parties each are allowed to broadcast daily, the TVs and radios cannot broadcast talks of National Unity Congress Party due to its absence.—GNLM

ELECTION COUNTDOWN

Make your voice count. Cast your vote.

44 DAYS



Boat race at Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda festival begins

MEIKTILA — A traditional boat race will be held as part of the Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda festival in Meiktila, which begins on 24 September. Eighty teams will participate in the five-day contest, which is a highlight of the annual festival. Nearly 1,000 shops will be selling their wares — including farming tools — during the 132nd festival, which has not been held for the past two years. — *Chan Thar*

Paddy seed production training in Ottwin Township

OTTWIN — Agriculture Department deputy director general U Naing Kyi Win trained 45 department personnel in Ottwin Township, Bago Region, on the cultivation of Pearl Thwe paddy seeds on 20 September. The training used Pearl Thwe paddy seeds and took place on a 222-acre plantation in Badauk Khin village.

The training aims to boost the socio-economic development of farmers across Myanmar.

The seeds were planted back in July and their growth remains steady. The pollination process will begin in the last week of October, with harvesting beginning one month later. The reproduced seeds will be distributed to farmers.

In Toungoo District, 528,908 acres were set aside for a paddy plantation and the entire crop was successfully cultivated.—*Ko Pauk*



In Toungoo District, 528,908 acres were set aside for a paddy plantation. PHOTO: KO PAUK

Fisheries need organic bait

YANGON — The deputy chairman of Myanmar Fishery Federation said that a shortage of organic bait is holding back fisheries from diversifying their produce.

“Myanmar cannot produce organic bait, so we cannot breed organic fish. [In order to be considered organic] organic fish feed is required from the fishes’ fry age. The only organic product we have is rice,” U Hnin Oo said.

“If we import organic bait from abroad, it won’t be profitable for our business,” he added. Organic bait generally contains organic soy beans and ground sesame.

Currently, rice products such as bran and broken rice are available, but firms still need other organic feed products.—*Ko Moe*

First Myanmar-Thai energy cooperation meeting held

NAY PYI TAW — Representatives from Thailand and Myanmar took part in the first joint working group meeting on energy cooperation in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday.

The meeting comes in the wake of a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the two countries in Nay Pyi Taw on 15

June. The Myanmar-Thai Energy Cooperation agreement calls for meetings between the two countries to take place several times per year. The meeting was attended by energy ministers and deputy secretaries from Thailand and Myanmar and discussions included upgrading cross-border gas pipelines, sus-

tainable energy strategies, energy security, energy production, liquefied natural gas (LNG) import processes, oil refinement and distribution, technology transfer schemes and human resource development.

The two sides also agreed to set up a technical vocational school.—*GNLM*



Joint Secretary of Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs’ Association Da Khin Thet Maw (c) seen at the airport before her departure for Japan to attend the Emerging Women Entrepreneurs Forum from 25 to 29 September. She was invited by the Nippon Foundation to attend the forum. PHOTO: GNLM



Myanmar and Thailand agree to set up a technical vocational school. PHOTO: ENERGY

Mandalay Hill Art Gallery to commemorate 14th anniversary



Artists explain holding of 14th anniversary of Mandalay Hill Art Gallery. PHOTO: TIN MAUNG

MANDALAY — Mandalay Hill Art Gallery will commemorate its 14th anniversary with an exhibition featuring 45 works by 19 artists.

The exhibition will start on 18 October and end on 13 November. Six artists from Yangon, two from Bagan's Nyaung Oo, one from Pyin Oo Lwin, and ten from Mandalay will participate in the exhibition.

The price of paintings is ranging from K500,000 to K2 million, according to the gallery. The anniversary commemoration also includes recitation of poems.—*Tin Maung*

Chinese traders donate to Myanmar flood victims

MUSE — Guangzhou Industrial Trade Association donated packets of instant noodles and bottled water for Myanmar flood victims on Wednesday.

The donation worth nearly K30 million was made at the Nandaw Gate in Muse, the border town with China. After the donation ceremony the items were transferred to Lashio.—*L Soe*

Nanhtaik Yadana nursery organizes talent show

NAY PYI TAW — Nantaik Yadana nursery under the Social Welfare Department in Zabuthiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, organised a children's talent show on Wednesday.

Contestants sang songs, told

stories and recited poems. Chairperson Daw Khin San Win of the Maternal and Child Welfare Association from the ministry of industry presented awards to the winners and donated K820,000 to the nursery.—*Than Naing*



Children of the Nantaik Yadana nursery will get beds. PHOTO: THAN NAING

Health clinic held in Tatkon



Health staff attend to the needs of their clients in Tatkon. PHOTO: TIN SOE LWIN

TATKON — The Tatkon Township Maternal and Child Health Centre in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area opened a health clinic on Tuesday. A medical team led by Township Health

Officer Dr Tun Tun provided treatment and disseminated knowledge about elderly care, maternal health and breastfeeding and health issues for children under five and teenagers.

Nutritious foods were also provided. The team carried out medical checks on 15 elderly people, 20 breastfeeding mothers, 23 pregnant women and 30 teenagers.—*Tin Soe Lwin*

Anti-human trafficking course opens in Muse

MUSE — An awareness course on human trafficking began in Muse on Wednesday, which is being organised by Muse Township Social Welfare Department.

With the town of Muse being located close to the border with China, Myanmar citizens are being trafficked into the other country at an alarming rate, said Principal Daw Win Win Maw of the Temporary Sheltering and Rehabilitation Home.

The course covers issues such as re-sheltering, laws, counseling, reunion and rehabilitation and is part of ongoing efforts to tackle the illegal trade in humans, which has been stepped up since July.—*Muse IPRD*



Muse being located close to the border with China, Myanmar citizens are being trafficked into the other country at alarming rate. PHOTO: MUSE IPRD

Singapore air quality 'very unhealthy' over Indonesia fires

SINGAPORE — Singapore's air quality reached "very unhealthy" levels on Thursday as thick smog from forest fires in Indonesia's neighbouring island of Sumatra choked the city-state.

Thick grey smoke blown in by southerly winds smothered the island, shrouding the skyline and creeping into homes, with many residents avoiding going outdoors.

"The hazy conditions in Singapore have further deteriorated since last night, as denser haze from Sumatra has been blown in by the prevailing southerly winds," the National Environment Agency said in an advisory.

It showed the Pollutant Standards Index, which measures the air quality, as reaching the "very unhealthy" range.

The agency advised healthy persons to "avoid prolonged or strenuous outdoor physical exertion" and urged the elderly, pregnant women and children to minimise outdoor exposure.

Housewife Asnah Mohamad, 62, said she and her friend used their headscarves to cover their face as they travelled to a mosque to celebrate the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha. "My husband cannot



The Fullerton Hotel is blanketed with thick smog in Singapore on 24 September, 2015. PHOTO: AFP

leave the house because he has a heart condition so I represented him to collect the meat offerings," she told AFP, referring to the festival in which Muslims share the meat of a goat or sheep slaughtered as sacrifices.

"We hope it gets better soon. But what can you do? Go over there (to Indonesia) and pour water on the fire?"

The city-state, which prides itself for its clean environment, has been cloaked in the haze in varying degrees for about three weeks, the worst such episode since mid-2013. But Southeast Asia's worst bout with haze was in 1997-1998 when the smog caused an estimated \$9 billion in losses in economic activity across the region. The haze situation has

been made worse this year by an El Nino weather system, which produces tinder-dry conditions in Indonesia and increases the risk of fires. Under pressure from its neighbours to stop the annual haze, Indonesian President Joko Widodo has pledged to crack down on companies and individuals behind the burnings, which are a cheap but harmful way of clear-

"We hope it gets better soon. But what can you do? Go over there (to Indonesia) and pour water on the fire?"

— Singapore resident

ing vast tracts of land for plantations. During a visit to the haze-affected islands of Borneo and Sumatra this week, Widodo called on local communities to do their part in helping contain the scourge.

"I'm taking this opportunity to ask the community not to carry out burning, whether at the farms, in their own yards or on the streets," Widodo told reporters. He said the government was trying its best to extinguish the fires by dropping water from helicopters and inducing rain through cloud seeding. Indonesia's National Disaster Management Agency told AFP that 2,081 fire "hotspots" were recorded in the worst-affected region of Indonesia's Kalimantan and 290 in Sumatra on Thursday.—AFP

Defence asks Thai court for more time in British backpacker murders

KOH SAMUI — Lawyers for two Myanmar migrant workers accused of killing two British tourists on a Thai island appealed for more time on Thursday to prove they were scapegoats innocent of the brutal, high-profile murders.

Hannah Witheridge and David Miller, both in their 20s, were beaten to death a year ago on the southern holiday island of Koh Tao, causing outrage in Britain. Witheridge was also raped, a post-mortem examination showed.

Lawyers are trying to convince the judge that Zaw Lin and Win Zaw Htun were framed by police under pressure to solve a case that has caught international attention and hurt Thailand's image as a tourism haven.

The defense tentatively had until Friday to wrap up its case, but chief lawyer Nakhon Chomphapat said there were problems convincing witnesses to testify as some feared retribution.

"I don't think we can have all of the witnesses (before Friday)," he told reporters outside the court on Samui island.

"There's a problem, our informers lack courage to stand as witnesses because some of them still work on Koh Tao." Central to the defense is disproving what it sees as a patchy investigation marred by disputed forensics, a contaminated crime scene and selective use of surveillance video to implicate the accused.

A human rights expert was due to testify on Thursday about his own investigation, which

lawyers said showed the suspects had suffered police abuse under interrogation. Another witness, a former lawyer, was expected to testify that false confessions were forced from the suspects.

Police have stood by their probe and Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha has ruled out foul play.

Allegations of torture and

police misconduct have caused a stir in Britain and its Prime Minister David Cameron raised concerns during a meeting with Prayuth, who agreed to allow London police to carry out their own internal investigation.

They have refused to disclose their final report to anyone other than the victims' families, as a pre-agreed condition.

Many people from Myanmar,

known also as Burma, work on the Thai holiday islands of Koh Tao, Koh Phangan and Koh Samui, just a short trip from southern Myanmar across a narrow mainland peninsular.

The estimated 2.5 million Myanmar workers in Thailand provide vital remittances. Many complain they suffer maltreatment, including extortion, from Thai police.—Reuters



Two workers from Myanmar (wearing helmets and handcuffs), suspected of killing two British tourists on the island of Koh Tao last month, stand near Thai police officers during a re-enactment of the alleged crime, where the bodies of the tourists were found on the island October 3, 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

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Xi hopes Chinese community in US contributes more to Sino-American friendship



SEATTLE — Chinese President Xi Jinping voiced hopes here Wednesday that the Chinese community in the United States can contribute more to the Sino-American friendship.

Speaking at a reception hosted by the Chinese community, Xi praised the unremitting efforts of the Chinese Americans to advance the relations between China and the United States since the two countries forged diplomatic ties over three decades ago.

The president expressed wishes that they can actively integrate themselves in the US mainstream society, abide by local laws, respect local customs, get along well with people of other races and help promote the social and economic development of local communities. He hoped they can help boost China-US cooperation and lend positive momentum to the bilateral relations.

In addition, he hoped they can popularize the Chinese culture, deepen American people's understanding about China and consolidate public support for bilateral ties.

He said that the China-US relationship is one of the most important bilateral relations in the world, and the two sides will make their "cake of common interests" bigger and bigger so as to bring more benefits to the peoples of the two countries.

The president also briefed the overseas Chinese about domestic situation, saying that Chinese people are now closer to the goal of achieving great national rejuvenation than in any period in history.

"I believe the Chinese community in the United States can surely make unique contributions to this great process," he stressed. —Xinhua

N Korea blames 'evil' US for Europe's migrant crisis

SEOUL — North Korea on Thursday offered its verdict on the migrant emergency facing Europe, blaming the "evil empire" United States for triggering the continent's worst refugee crisis since World War II.

In a lengthy screed denouncing "intolerable" criticism of Pyongyang's human rights record, a North Korean foreign ministry spokesman argued that Washington should be the real focus of censure.

"The US is an evil empire... committing all sorts of human rights abuses," the spokeswoman said in a statement carried by the North's official KCNA news agency. As an example, the spokesman cited the plight of the hundreds of thousands of migrants from war zones like Syria and Afghanistan who are seeking shelter in European countries.

"It is the US which caused the serious refugee issue sweeping the whole of Europe," he said. "As the US started wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria and other parts of the world, and fostered civil wars under the pretexts of 'war on terrorism' and establishment of 'democracy,' refugees have been on a sharp increase," he added. North Korea, by contrast was a "cradle of happy life", the spokesman said.

The statement was a response to a recent discussion of North Korean rights violations at the Human Rights Council in Geneva.—AFP

Asia hit hardest by natural disasters in 2014

GENEVA — Asia was the continent hit hardest by natural disasters in 2014, with China getting the worst of it with 58 million people affected, according to an annual report released Thursday in Geneva.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) said in its 2015 World Disasters Report that while there were 317 natural disasters reported worldwide in 2014, it was ac-

tually the lowest number of the decade.

Disasters caused 8,186 deaths worldwide in 2014, but that mortality rate is the lowest since 1986 (7,303), and 90 percent lower than the decade average.

According to the report, 48 percent of all disasters occurred in Asia.

"Over 85 percent of those killed and 86 percent of those affected globally were also in

Asia," the report said.

The earthquake in China's Yunnan province last August that killed 731 people was the deadliest disaster in 2014, and drought, storms and flooding affected some 58 million people in the country.

Continuing a 20-year-long trend, nearly nine out of ten disasters were climate related -- 87 percent in 2014.

The IFRC report also focused on "local actors", and the

need to fund more local humanitarian aid.

"Local actors are always the first to respond," IFRC said.

It said that local actors are effective because "of the perspective they bring, their understanding of language and cultural norms, and because they are permanently present in communities and able to accompany them to address risks before disaster strikes."—AFP

Gunmen kill Pakistan prison official, brother

PESHAWAR — Gunmen on Thursday shot dead a prison official and his brother in northwestern Pakistan, a week after a Taliban attack on an air force base which killed 29 people, police said.

Zahir Shah, the deputy superintendent of Peshawar prison, where hundreds of militants have been locked up, was shot at home at Hari Chand village, some 60 kilometres (40 miles) northeast of Peshawar, when he was meeting friends and relatives as part of Eid al-Adha, the Islamic festival of sacrifice. Local residents said that four gunmen came on motorcycle and two went inside the premises posing as visitors to exchange Eid greetings with Shah and when they were sitting in a compound adjacent to his house, they opened fire on him.

Shah's brother who was nearby and rushed to the scene with a gun was shot dead by two assailants standing outside, they said. "Unknown gunmen shot dead Zahir Shah and his brother and fled

on motorcycles," local police station chief Hassan Khan told AFP.

District police chief Shafi Ullah confirmed the incident.

Nobody immediately claimed responsibility but Taliban militants have targeted police, politicians and government officials in the past. Last Friday up to 14 Taliban militants entered an air force base outside Peshawar and killed 29 people, in the deadliest attack in Pakistan since December when Taliban killed 154 people, most of them children, at an army-run school in Peshawar.

Friday's attack was also the deadliest attack on a Pakistani military facility since the Pakistani Taliban rose up against the state in 2007.

The tribal badlands that lie just a short drive from Peshawar have been the scene of a major military offensive against Taliban and other militants over the past year.—AFP

Hungry brown bears terrorising Siberian villagers

MOSCOW — Famished brown bears are terrorising villagers in Siberia as drought and wildfires force the animals to search for food closer to built-up areas, an official told AFP Wednesday.

"Over the past two weeks, we have recorded 10 cases of hungry bears entering the outskirts of villages in the Irkutsk region," Alexander Kayankin, an official with the region's wildlife watchdog agency, part of the Russian environment ministry, told AFP.

Wildfires that ravaged some 2,000 square kilometres (750 square miles) of woodland as well as a drought have wiped out the bears' principal foods such as berries and nuts.

Kayankin said there are an estimated 13,000 wild bears in the Irkutsk region, which straddles Lake Baikal, the world's largest body of freshwater.

He said an old bear was recently "shot on the spot" as locals in a village found him looking for food in dustbins.

Authorities have sought to reassure local residents and remind them of safety guidelines in case



There are an estimated 13,000 wild bears in the Irkutsk region of Siberia. PHOTO: AFP

of a bear encounter. "Do not run away from the animal, climb up on a tree stump to show it your superiority and make a noise to scare it until it goes away", Kayankin said.

"It is useless to look him straight in the eye, as some people incorrectly claim."

Foraging bears regularly make incursions into villages and towns in Russia. In July police started patrolling a cemetery in a far eastern city and escorting mourners after two bears strayed from the woods in search of food.—AFP

PERSPECTIVES

All teachers are equal

Kyaw Thura

In Myanmar culture, teachers are considered our first mentors in life and they are regarded in high esteem because they often possess traits such as kindness, dedication and sacrifice. Unfortunately however, there is a misguided assumption that a kindergarten teacher is somehow a lesser equal to a high school teacher. In truth, the job of a kindergarten teacher requires at least as much passion and skill to carry out the job of being a kindergarten teacher.

Most people think that kindergarten is all about teaching the ABC's and telling stories. What they don't understand is that kindergarten takes place during a child's formative years and that experiences acquired that period lay the foundation for the rest of the child's educational career. It is also the time when vital life skills, such as sharing, self-help and responsibility are first introduced.

It is undeniable that teachers play a pivotal role in the type of adults children grow up to become and that most students view most of their teachers as inspirational role models. Students in Myanmar often turn to their teachers in times of challenge and need.

The onus is on the teachers to provide their young students with an education that will prepare them to use their full potential once their formal education is over. It is therefore impera-

tive to recognise teachers all along the educational timeline as playing an integral role in shaping future generations. Teachers are emblematic of the passion to rise to the challenge do what is right for their students and to help them develop physically, mentally and emotionally. They ought to be appreciated as such.

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JOURNALIST'S DILEMMA

Maung Hlaing

Regarding a journalist, a story that I read about four decades ago is still fresh in my mind. It may be the type of a humorous story ironically depicting the plight of a journalist who found himself between the devil and the deep sea.

Editors of newspapers and magazines often go to extremes to provide their readers with unimportant facts and statistics. Once, a journalist had been instructed by a well-known magazine to write an article on the president's palace in a new African republic.

When the article arrived, the editor read the first sentence and then refused to publish it.

The article began, "Hundreds of steps led to the high wall which surrounds the president's palace". The editor at once sent the journalist a telegram instructing him to find out the exact number of steps and the height of the wall.

The journalist immediately set out to obtain these important facts, but he took a long time to send them. Meanwhile, the editor was getting impatient, for the magazine would soon go to press. He sent the journalist two urgent telegrams but received no reply.

He sent yet another telegram informing the journalist that if he did not reply soon, he would be fired. When the journalist again failed to reply, the editor reluctantly published the article as he had originally been written.

A week later, the editor

at last received a telegram from the journalist. Not only had the poor man been arrested but he had been sent to prison as well.

However, he had at last been allowed to send a cable in which he informed the editor that he had been arrested while counting 1,084 steps leading to the fifteen-foot wall which surrounded the president's palace.

It happened nearly forty years ago before the Internet came into use. However, the

"Accuracy first, accuracy second and accuracy third"

— Joseph Pulitzer

story reminded me of Joseph Pulitzer who said "Accuracy first, accuracy second and accuracy third". In the media world, there were many journalists who were in trouble while they were following the "Accuracy".

If an ordinary reader happens to read the story, he or she may conclude that journalists are very peculiar or they may be far from comprehension. In making efforts to obtain scoop news, they may use several ways. Sometimes they may be aggressive. Sometimes they may be gentle. Sometimes, they may be all smiles in a flattering manner when they want something they badly need. In doing so, a journalist becomes an eyesore to the authorities or responsible personnel.

No matter how difficult the situation is, journalists are to pay heed to an accu-

rante, thorough, impartial and timely account of events before they get into print.

I once worked as a journalist in the times of the previous governments that took a tight grip on the media. Everything had to be in accordance with the instructions that came from above and any criticism of the government or some government organization led to punishment. (i.e. We were not allowed to write even a letter to the editor of a

daily about the cinema-halls where bugs kept biting the movie-lovers. It was because both the cinema-halls and newspapers were under the same Ministry of Information.)

In those days, when an assignment was given to me to compile or write a report or a paper, I had to go to the related departments under some ministries.

Then my trouble began. The major challenge was that almost every department's officials were (very, very) reluctant to provide us with information let alone some facts and figures. So I had to seek some ways and means by myself to obtain facts and figures as my duty was to obtain them by hook or crook. Because I worked for a government organisation, the "deadline" always threatened me.

Although I obtained

facts and figures for my work, my trouble was not over. When I contacted the responsible officials for confirmation, I was used to hearing such clinches as "I'm as busy as a bee." "I'm not authorized to speak" "Authorities concerned are in conference" and so on. To make matters worse, some officials wanted to avoid me, making excuses.

The major ethic of the journalist is that the report must be accurate. Authorities concerned should understand that the journalists are facing time challenges to get high-quality, fair and accurate news reports.

What would happen if there were no journalists? Without them, we, the people in society, would be cut off from the rest of the world. The flow of information is important for the expansion of communities and journalists aid this. Without a wide range of information, people's opinions and views would be bounded.

People say that they are now in the Information Age. Mass media has become an integral part of our lives and

cannot be separated from our lives. Particularly for the urban people, the need for information is more important than ever. Our values and ways of life in the society in this information era are strongly influenced by the mass media like newspapers, television, radio, video and the Internet.

It is worth remembering that there have been three important revolutions in the world history--Agrarian Revolution in farming, Industrial Revolution in mass production, and Information Revolution that provides global access.

Due to the Information Revolution, the media surrounds us--from the shows we watch on TV and the music and the music we listen to on the radio, the books, magazines and newspapers we read each day.

As times have elapsed, the differences what we have seen in the media world today is quite different from what we did in the past. Due to the continuing developments in media technology, we are flooded by a huge volume of non-stop information. Doubtlessly, access to the Internet is easy and inexpensive almost everywhere. We can find many

kinds of information using the Internet technology.

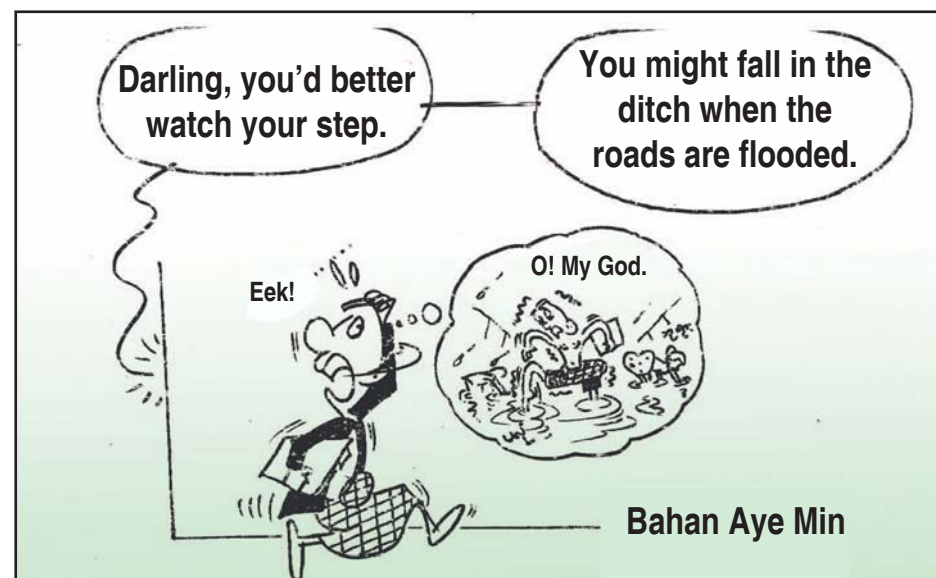
Though media is not the only communication means used to distribute the flow of information, its significance in developed countries is worth mentioning as it is the main source of informing the people on political issues or current affairs.

Everyone will say that media is the most powerful tool of communication. It helps promoting the right things on the right time. It gives a real exposure to the mass audience about what is right and wrong.

You can raise a question: "Who makes the media alive?" My only and single answer is nothing but the very fact that it is the journalist who makes the media arena alive.

Journalists sometimes may be viewed as being overly violent and greedy in their plight for the latest and hottest news. Sometimes, authorities and journalists may play tag. Sometimes, they lead the life of the crow and the brown hawk-owl.

However, we are looking forward to seeing the time when the crow shows respect to the crow-peasant, the latter will do the same to the former.



Bahan Aye Min

From the Window of My Bed-room

Dr. Saw Mra Aung

My house is located in a market street in Kaba Aye. So there is a flurry of activities of sellers and buyers in the street from sun-rise to sun-set. My house is constantly exposed to different levels of noises. But, luckily, my bed-room happens to occupy the rearmost part of the house. So it is distanced from the noises. Except the time spent on having on guests and watching television, I am confined to my bed-room, enjoying its privacy. Next to my bed-room in the same compound stands a two-storey brick building where my parents live. There is a clump of trees in front of that house. Apart from my bed-time, I always keep the only window of my bed-room open so that light and air can come into my room. As my bed-room and my parents' house face to the same direction, the trees in front of my parents' house form a regular sight to me. The trees are not many but only three in total — a tall mango tree, a neem tree and a creeper of unknown species climbing up the front fence.

Whenever I am tired of reading, writing and doing my household chores or my mind is overtaxed with a heavy load of duties, I deliberately throw my gaze out of the open window. What then come into my view are these trees. I find myself unable to evade my look from them. Never am I sick of their sight, for every time I see them, I feel that their sight refreshes my tired mind and that I am part of nature. This is what I experience daily. So I can visualize the details of these trees in mind's eyes — their trunks, stems, branches, leaves, buds, flowers, fruits, etc. Of the three, the mango tree is the tallest, with branches over the roof of my parents' house. The neem tree, despite not being as tall as the mango-tree, can afford good shade, especially its outspreading branches sheltering the balcony of the house. The mango-leaves

are deep green, bigger, sprouting out from their stems randomly and neem-leaves yellowish green, smaller, coming out from both sides of the stems symmetrically. The way the neem-leaves sprouting out from the stems is so systematic and artistic that I am amazed at the creativity of nature. What is more, it is a miracle for me to see neem-leaves quiver like big bellows rising in the ocean, when gusts of wind come sweeping through the trees on windy days. These trees are quite inured to weather. So although seasons change, their appearances remain unchanged, except the mango-leaves greener and more luxuriant in the rainy season and neem-leaves glossier and brighter in summer. The mango tree flowers in April and bear fruits in May. Neem-flowers, small and white, blossom abundantly in clusters in winter and summer. The fragrance of the neem-flowers is not strong but is pleasing to my mind. It is said the fragrance of the neem has potency to cure blood-pressure, heart-disease, etc. The fragrance of the neem-flowers is more perceptible to me at night when breeze is fanning softly.

I am aware that these trees help harmonize the rhythm of my daily life activities, for I wake up with the chirpings of the sparrows which caper about amongst the branches of these trees almost every morning. Often, when I sleep late into the night, I am awakened the next morning by the loud caws of the crows which perch on the branches of these trees with curious eyes, looking restlessly at different directions. I find myself too much dependent upon the trees to wake up regularly, for I, being a country-man, have a phobia for the alarm-clock or other electronic devices to wake me up. So I feel as if there were an invisible interconnection between them and me and that I were part of theirs and vice versa. Sparrows usually come in pairs — male and female — to the trees but often alone. They do not rest on a branch for a long time

but flit from one branch to another, flapping their wings and chirping continuously. They sometimes catch insects and worms on the branches with their beak. Crows usually come in groups, fluttering their wings noisily. But they do not stay either on the trees for a long time. They tend to swoop down upon the meat being prepared by some neighbours for lunch under the trees. So they are unwelcome guests for the angry neighbours. My neighbours become disenchanted with them and shoo them away in a disgusting manner. These trees are home to some small animals like squirrels, chameleons, geckoes, lizards, red-ants and other smaller insects. Of these animals, the chameleons are such peculiar ones that their colours are erratic and they can camouflage themselves with leaves and branches. I often see some kites wheeling around the tops of these trees to prey down on these small animals. These trees are also the stop-over of some migratory birds, especially on the cusps between the different seasons. So I often find herons either individually or in groups on the trees. On some moon-less nights, I hear the hoots of owls from the clump of the trees. But on the following mornings, I do not see any trace of their presence. So transient is their stay. They might be on their way to their shelter in a new season.

Mother waters the trees on some summery mornings. She often ban young people in the quarter from bringing down the mangoes with stones when the tree is laden with fruit and a few elders from breaking or felling one or two branches of the neem-tree to employ them as tooth-cleaners. Sometimes, I observe some sparrows, lizards and chameleons picking at the pests and insects. While looking them, I notice the interdependency between man, trees and animals. The trees provide animals with shelter and food and man with shade and food. Man protects trees from vandals and nourishes them with water and

fertilizer. Animals annihilate insects and pests to help the trees grow well and harmonize the rhythm of man's daily activities. If one of the three fails to do his own bit, the interdependency circle will come to a halt, resulting in loss of optimum balance between man, trees and animals.

I am often, at the sight of the lush green leaves rich in chlorophyll, dangling mangoes and clusters of white neem flowers, compelled to think about the photosynthesis of the trees. To me, this food-making process is a wonder of nature, for getting the sun-rays coming from its source about 93 million miles from the earth, the water lying in aquifers some hundred feet deep underneath the earth-surface (which is pumped through the tap-roots of the trees), the carbon-dioxide in the earth's atmosphere and the nutrient in the top-soil of the earth everyday would be a job impossible to man. But the trees can do it daily to make their food. Should it be called a miracle or coincidence or the law of nature (Sabhava Dhamma)? I have no idea about that. During the photosynthesis process, trees issue oxygen, which is the life of all earth-bound living beings including man. Without oxygen, man can die within a few minutes. How grateful the trees are for man! Really, they are man's life-givers. Moreover, trees absorb carbon-dioxide which can deplete the protective ozone layer. If the ozone layer is depleted, the earth temperature would increase, resulting in climatic aberration. What is worse, in the absence of the trees which retain the top-soil, the soil would be eroded and the land infertile and marginal, yielding no crop and cereal. The earth would turn into deserts, making man difficult to survive. Surely, no end of miseries and ills would ensue. If so, why do some people irrationally fell down the trees, our life-givers and our benefactors? Isn't it an act of sheer folly? The blame is to be put on no one specific. Personally, I prefer remaining a poor man in good conscience to becoming con-

Correction

The caption on the top left side of Page 9 published on 24 September 2015 should have read: President U Thein Sein discusses plans to build an embankment to prevent flooding in Pinyintha village in Kalay Township as well as the expansion of Myittha River near the village.—MNA

science-stricken rich one.

My mind's eyes often follow the sparrows, crows and migratory birds which perch on these trees. I am carried away beyond the horizon, enjoying the bird-eye's view of wide fields, rolls of hills, ranges of mountains, dark green forests, greenery meadows, low-lying plains, endless deserts, snow-capped mountains, meandering rivers, towering cliffs, wide expanse of oceans, etc, being left behind kaleidoscopically. How beautiful and pleasant our earth is! Nowhere in the universe can be found such a beautiful planet like our earth! It has taken some million years to shape these geographical features and to form minerals underneath them. Trees and animals growing in these forests have evolved through some aeons. These landscapes, minerals, water, animals and trees are natural resources bequeathed to us by nature. If these non-renewable resources are today used excessively, future generations will have to wait some million years to recover them. Then will our children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, etc in the meantime have to be left underfed and ill-housed? Anyhow, Isn't it up to the present generation to sustain these natural resources including trees? The author would like to conclude his article with such mottos — Let wild animals in deep forests live in wilderness! Let minerals underneath the earth lie intact! Let fishes swim freely in oceans! Let the trees on the earth grow green and lush! Let the ozone layer be protective! Let future generations be affluent!

May the earth be green and pleasant with trees for eternity!



Samsung is working with Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) to provide over USD100k in cash and USD30k worth of Samsung TVs to support the schools and public areas from flood affected regions. PHOTO: MRCS

Samsung launches flood relief campaign

SAMSUNG have started a new Flood Relief campaign named #SaveMyanmar #BetterTogether to support the people affected by floods and landslides in recent memory in Myanmar.

Starting from 21 September, Samsung will contribute a sum for every authorized Samsung product (Mobile and Consumer Electronics) sold in Myanmar.

“Samsung Myanmar will not collect any amount from our customers, but we will support the fund from our sales. When customers purchase our product, there will notice a Campaign stickers on the product packaging with #SaveMyanmar # BetterTomorrow. Customers will also receive

a token sticker from Samsung. All amount collected will be provided to respective aid agencies in Myanmar”, said Mr Richard See, Head of Marketing, and Samsung Myanmar.

With this campaign both Samsung and its customers will be able contribute positively to the Flood Relief efforts, he added.

They are working with Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) to provide over USD100k in cash and USD30k worth of Samsung TVs to support the schools and public areas from flood affected regions with the intention of to know the information of weather forecasting in a timely manner, Mr Richard said.—GNLM

Croatia bans entry of Serbian citizens as dispute escalates

ZAGREB — Croatia has banned Serbian citizens and cars from entering the country, Croatian border police told Reuters on Thursday, after Serbia banned Croatian cargo traffic in a growing dispute over the huge flow of migrants across their joint border.

“Serbian passport holders and cars registered in Serbia cannot enter Croatia until further notice,” a police officer told Reuters by telephone from Bajakovo, the main crossing point between the two ex-Yugoslav republics.

Serbia banned Croatian cargo traffic and goods late on Wednesday, helping plunge bilateral relations to their lowest point since the overthrow of late Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic in 2000.

Belgrade imposed its embargo in retaliation for border restrictions levied by European Union member Croatia, which has hit out at its eastern neighbor for directing the flow of migrants coming up through the Balkan peninsula over their joint border.

Zagreb had banned all trucks but those carrying perishable goods from entering the country



Migrants wait for transport at a transit camp in Gevgelija, Macedonia, after entering the country by crossing the border with Greece, 24 September, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

from Serbia and shut seven of eight road border crossings, saying Serbia should direct the migrants to Hungary and Romania too.

“I am sorry about this. We had planned to open the border today but now we have to react to this,” Croatian Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic, whose centre-left cabinet faces a parliamentary election this year, said after Serbia imposed the ban.

“There will be no war or violence, everything will be calm, but this is not normal behavior (by Serbia),” Milanovic said on television from Brussels, where he was

attending a summit of EU leaders. More than 40,000 migrants, many of them Syrian refugees, have entered Croatia from Serbia since Tuesday last week when Hungary, both countries’ neighbor to the north, barred their entry to the EU by sealing its southern border with Serbia with a metal fence.

Both Serbia and Croatia were part of communist Yugoslavia but Croatia broke away in 1991 and fought a war against Belgrade-backed Serb rebels until 1995.

Croatia joined the EU in 2013, and Serbia wants to follow suit. Serbia has been

bussing migrants straight to the Croatian border after they enter Serbia from Macedonia.

Croatia is sending migrants north across its own border with Hungary, which in turn sends them to Austria, but Zagreb says it cannot cope with the numbers and wants Serbia to send some of the migrants to Hungary and Romania.

“I cannot allow that the people who travel in an uncontrolled way become organized at the end of their journey, that’s when the Serbian authorities come in, and end up at Croatia’s border,” Milanovic said.—Reuters

Argentine drug smugglers busted for cooking up cocaine-rice

BUENOS AIRES — Creative drug smugglers in Argentina fused rice with cocaine and tried to ship nearly 1,000 bags to Europe marked as donations for a UN food programme in Africa, police said Wednesday.

Authorities seized 920 bags of the special rice in the city of Rosario, north of the capital Buenos Aires, and arrested the gang behind the unusual ruse. Drug traffickers planned to ship the rice to Brazil first, en route to Europe, but police derailed their plans.

Experts said that the shipment would have hidden 20-30 kilos (44-66 pounds) of cocaine.

“Most likely, this was a test run. And if it had gone through, they would have followed through with larger volume,” customs chief Guillermo Michel told reporters.

Seven Colombians, four Argentines and a Guatemalan have been arrested for trafficking and possible money laundering, he said.

“This is a new one,” Michel said, adding that authorities would have to adapt their search strategies.—AFP

“We had planned to open the border today but now we have to react to this.”

—Croatian Prime Minister

Russia announces naval drills in ‘east Mediterranean’

MOSCOW — Russia’s defence ministry on Thursday said it would hold naval drills in the “east Mediterranean” region in September and October, as the West frets over a military build-up by Moscow in Syria.

The exercises include three warships from Russia’s Black Sea Fleet, including the Saratov landing ship, the Moskva guided missile cruiser and the

Smetlivy destroyer, the ministry said in a statement. The drills will involve “40 combat exercises, including rocket and artillery fire at sea and airborne targets,” the statement said.

The ministry said that the Mediterranean drills — which were restarted in early 2013 — had been planned since the end of last year and did not link them to the conflict in Syria.

Russia officially alerted the airport in Cyprus earlier this month through the international aviation authorities to divert aircraft from the area between Syrian port of Tartus, where Russia has a naval facility, and Cyprus.

The United States has accused Moscow of sending troops, tanks and fighter jets to Syria in recent weeks, sparking fears that Russia could be preparing to join in fighting alongside its long-standing ally President Bashar al-Assad.

Syrian officials said this week that they have received new warplanes and sophisticated missiles from Russia and some reports in Russia alleged that Moscow has dispatched soldiers to the war-torn country.

Russia, which has supported the Syrian regime throughout the four-and-half year conflict that has claimed some 250,000 lives, says any support is in line with existing military contracts and that personnel have been sent to train the Syrian forces.—AFP



Russian Navy vessels head for joint exercises with the Japan’s Maritime Self-Defence Forces (MSDF) in the Sea of Japan. PHOTO: AFP

US, Russia, Mideast need to help stop refugee tide: Merkel



German Minister of Economic Affairs Sigmar Gabriel (L) and German Chancellor Angela Merkel. PHOTO: REUTERS

BERLIN — The European Union needs the support of the United States, Russia and the countries in the Middle East to help fight the causes of the influx of refugees seeking to enter the bloc, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Thursday.

Merkel told the German parliament that the refugee situation could only be tackled by addressing the causes of the exodus.

“That can only happen with the support of our transatlantic partners, the United States, as well as with Russia and the states of the region of the Middle East because of the dreadful situation in Syria,” she said.

Merkel said an agreement reached by EU leaders overnight to pledge at least 1 billion euros (\$1.12 billion) for Syrian refugees in the Middle East was a first step, which had to be built upon.—Reuters

More than 717 pilgrims die in stampede in worst haj disaster in 25 years

MINA — At least 717 pilgrims were killed on Thursday in a stampede outside the Muslim holy city of Mecca, Saudi authorities said, the worst disaster to strike the annual haj pilgrimage in 25 years.

At least 805 others were injured in the crush at Mina, a few kilometres east of Mecca, caused by two large groups of pilgrims arriving together at a crossroads on their way to performing the “stoning the devil” ritual at Jamarat, Saudi civil defence said.

Thursday’s disaster was the worst to befall the pilgrimage since July 1990, when 1,426 pilgrims were crushed to death in a tunnel near Mecca. Both stampedes occurred on Eid al-Adha (Feast of the Sacrifice), Islam’s most important feast and the day of the stoning ritual.

Photographs published on the Twitter feed of the Saudi civil defence on Thursday showed pilgrims lying on stretchers while emergency workers in high-visibility jackets lifted them into an ambulance.

The haj, the world’s largest annual gathering of people, has been the scene of numerous deadly stampedes, fires and riots in the past, but their frequency was greatly reduced in recent years as the government spent billions of dollars upgrading and expanding haj infrastructure and crowd control technology.

Safety during haj is a politically sensitive issue for the kingdom’s ruling Al Saud dynasty, which presents itself internation-



Members of Saudi civil defence try to rescue pilgrims following a crush caused by large numbers of people pushing at Mina, outside the Muslim holy city of Mecca in this handout picture published on the Twitter account of the Directorate of the Saudi Civil Defence, 24 September, 2015.

PHOTO: REUTERS

ally as the guardian of orthodox Islam and custodian of its holiest places in Mecca and Medina.

Unverified video posted on Twitter showed bodies, clad in the white towelling of those undertaking haj, lying on the ground by the side of the road, surrounded by debris, as pilgrims and rescue workers attempted to revive them.

Street 204, where the stampede occurred, is one of the two main arteries leading through the camp at Mina to Jamarat, the site where pilgrims ritually stone the devil by hurling pebbles at three large pillars. In 2006, at least 346 pilgrims died in a stampede at Jamarat. Reuters reporters in another part of Mina said they could hear police and ambulance sirens,

but that roads leading to the site of the disaster had been blocked.

“Work is underway to separate large groups of people and direct pilgrims to alternative routes,” the Saudi Civil Defence said on its Twitter account.

It said more than 220 ambulances and 4,000 rescue workers had been sent to the stampede’s location to help the injured. Saudi-owned Al-Arabiya television channel showed a convoy of ambulances driving through the Mina camp. Some of the wounded were evacuated by helicopters.

An Arab pilgrim who did not want to give his name said he had hoped to perform the stoning ritual later on Thursday afternoon but was now too frightened to risk doing so.—Reuters

EU leaders claim unity regained, pledge aid for Syrians

BRUSSELS — EU leaders pledged at least 1 billion euros (\$1.1 billion) for Syrian refugees in the Middle East and closer cooperation to stem migrant flows into Europe at a summit described as less tense than feared after weeks of feuding.

Chairman Donald Tusk said the meeting, which ended early on Thursday after seven hours of talks in Brussels, was “really excellent, for sure much better than we expected”.

He heard “very substantial and energetic” exchanges between the Austrian and Hungarian leaders, whose common border was among those disrupted by chaotic crowds of migrants this summer, but not the mutual recrimination that has threatened to tear apart the bloc’s cherished passport-free Schengen zone.

“Today’s meeting and this atmosphere are a very positive sign,” said European Council President Tusk, a former prime minister of Poland. “It’s quite a symbolic moment for me as it’s clear we have stopped this risky blame game.”

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, criticised by some eastern neighbours for what they saw as actions that have fuelled the influx of people trying to reach Germany, voiced satisfaction:

“We know that the problem is not solved with the decision taken. But we have taken one of many necessary steps. I got the feeling that we want to tackle this task together.”

Held at short notice after governments fell out badly over a

scheme to share out responsibilities for asylum-seekers around the EU, the summit carried political rather than legal weight. A joint statement read: “We can only manage this challenge by working together in a spirit of solidarity and responsibility.”

Among short-term actions before the next regular summit in mid-October, the EU would offer at least 1 billion euros more to the UN refugee agency UNHCR, its World Food Programme and other agencies and increase funding for Syrian refugees in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and other countries — part of a broad push to ease factors driving Syrians to risk sailing to Europe.

“It is close to the scene of the tragedy that the refugees must be kept, welcomed, supported,” said French President Francois Hollande, renewing a call for global cooperation by wealthy powers to take in some of the most needy cases.

As part of efforts to win cooperation from Turkey, locked in a long love-hate relationship with Europe and host to some 2 million Syrian refugees, Tusk and EU chief executive Jean-Claude Juncker will host President Tayyip Erdogan on 5 October.

The summit set a November deadline for Greece and Italy to have EU-staffed “hotspots” in place to register and fingerprint new arrivals and start a process of relocating Syrians and others likely to win refugee status to other EU states and deporting those regarded as unwanted economic migrants.—Reuters

Twin suicide bombings kill at least 10 at Houthi-run Yemeni mosque

SANAA — Two suicide bombers killed at least ten people at a mosque run by Yemen’s Houthi group on Thursday in the capital Sanaa, where Muslim worshippers were celebrating the Muslim Eid al-Adha holiday,

medics and witnesses said.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack at al-Balili mosque just outside the Old City of Sanaa, but it appeared to resemble previous bombings by Islamic State that

have killed hundreds of Zaydis — a branch of Shi’ite Islam that the militant group considers to be heretical.

The Iran-allied Houthis seized Sanaa a year ago and forced President Abd-Rabbu Mansour

Hadi into exile in Saudi Arabia.

Since March, the Western-allied Kingdom has led an Arab alliance trying to restore Hadi to power and drive the Houthis back to their northern Stronghold; Islamic State has exploited resulting conflict to expand its operations. Houthi fighters sealed off the area where the explosions occurred.

Nayef, who lives near the mosque, said he heard one explosion followed quickly by a second one.

“We gathered to rescue the wounded. The situation is very painful and blood is everywhere.”

It was the second attack targeting a mosque run by the Zaydi group, which hails from the Muslim Shi’ite sect, in the capital this month.

Witnesses said the first blast shook the mosque soon after worshippers gathered for Eid prayers.

“The situation is very painful, and blood is everywhere.”

— Sanaa resident

A second suicide bomber detonated his explosives belt when Houthi guards tried to stop him rushing deep inside the mosque.

“We rushed outside and summoned the ambulances,” one witness said. The Houthi Ansarullah group’s website said at least 10 people were killed in the attack. Medics said at least 36 other people were wounded in the attack.

Arab media have put the death toll at at least 25.

Muslims celebrate Eid al-Adha — the feast of sacrifice — in congregation at mosques. Islamic State has claimed several bombings targeting mosques run by the Houthi group in recent months.

Earlier this month, at least 28 people were killed and 75 were wounded in twin suicide bombings claimed by the Islamist militant group’s Yemen branch targeting a mosque in northern Sanaa.

In March, Islamic State suicide bombers killed at least 137 worshippers and wounded hundreds more in coordinated attacks at two mosques during Friday prayers in Sanaa.—Reuters



A Houthi militant walks inside the al-Balili mosque after two bombings hit the mosque in Yemen’s capital Sanaa, 24 September, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

British Museum reveals shifting identity of the Celts

LONDON — A new exhibition on the story of the Celts opens at the British Museum on Thursday, tracing the shifting use of the term through artworks covering 2,500 years of history from Scotland to Spain.

“Celts: art and identity” examines the origin and usage of the term, which was first coined by the ancient Greeks to refer to barbarians from the north, and later used for the Celtic revival of the last 300 years in the British Isles.

Using jewellery, swords, carved stone crosses and massive armlets weighing more than a kilogramme (2.2 pounds), the London museum shows how Celts have often been set apart from their neighbours.

“Celts can be a slippery term,” said Julia Farley, curator of the British Museum’s Iron Age collections.

“The story we are telling isn’t so much the story of a people as the story about a label,” she said.

In around 500 BC, the Greeks called their northern barbarian neighbours “Keltoi”. It was a blanket term describing diverse tribes beyond the frontier rather than a specific people.

“Because the Celts didn’t really write anything down, we learn

“The story we are telling isn’t so much the story of a people as the story about a label,”
—Julia Farley, curator of the British Museum’s Iron Age collections

everything through the lens of the ancient Greeks. And to them it wasn’t necessary to distinguish between the different tribes,” project curator Rosie Weetch told AFP. While Greek society was structured around cities, Celts lived in farmsteads and small village communities. But their accomplishments were on a par with the finest achievements of Greek and Roman artists.

More than 250 objects have been selected from the collections of the British Museum and others across Europe to illustrate the skill of the Celtic peoples.

They include the Gundestrup cauldron, the largest known example of European Iron Age silver work, which was found in a peat bog in Denmark. As the Roman empire expanded, it took in lands that had been considered Celtic, such as Spain and Gaul.

The exhibits show how a hybrid Romano-British culture emerged, with local designs appearing on Roman helmets. The final section of the exhibition deals with the Celtic revival in the British Isles, which began around 300 years ago. The forgotten word eventually came to be used for the related pre-Roman languages of Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, the Isle of Man and Brittany in northern France.

It led to the creation of a re-imagined, romanticised Celtic past that began to appear in art and literature as 19th-century discoveries fired up public imagination.—AFP

‘Super blood moon’ to give stargazers a rare show

PARIS — For the first time in decades, skygazers are in for the double spectacle on Monday of a swollen “supermoon” bathed in the blood-red light of a total eclipse.

The celestial show, visible from the Americas, Europe, Africa, west Asia and the east Pacific, will be the result of the Sun, Earth and a larger-than-life, extra-bright Moon lining up for just over an hour from 0211 GMT.

“It will be quite exciting and especially dramatic,” predicted astronomer Sam Lindsay of the Royal Astronomical Society in London.

“It’ll be brighter than usual, bigger than usual.”

The Moon will be at its closest orbital point to Earth, called perigee, while also in its brightest phase.

The resulting “supermoon” will look 30 percent brighter and 14 percent larger than when at apogee, the farthest point — which is about 49,800 kilometres (31,000 miles) from perigee. Unusually, our planet will take position in a straight line between the Moon and the Sun, blotting out the direct sunlight that usually makes our satellite glow whitish-yellow.

But some light will still creep around Earth’s edges and be filtered through its atmosphere, casting an eerie red light that creates the “blood moon”.

The Moon travels to a similar position every month, but the tilt of its orbit means it normally passes above or below the Earth’s shadow — so most months have a full moon



PHOTO: AFP

minus eclipse.

For people younger than 33, this will be their first-ever chance to see a “super blood moon”.

The last, only the fifth recorded since 1900, was in 1982, according to the NASA space agency, and the next will not be until 2033.

If the weather holds, that is — the spectacle would not be visible behind cloud cover.

On top of the wow factor, the event is also of great interest for researchers.

Over a 24-day cycle, the temperature on the surface of our satellite normally ambles between highs of about 121 degrees Celsius (250 degrees Fahrenheit) in direct sunlight, and lows around minus 115 C in the shade.

These changes help researchers study the composition of the crust, as

rocks warm and cool slower than sand-like dust.

But on Monday, the eclipse will see that temperature shift happen over the eclipse’s duration — confining the observable change to the very outer surface, said Noah Petro, deputy project scientist for NASA’s lunar orbiter.

“That almost instant change tells us about the upper few centimetres of the surface. We’re getting a very fine, unique measurement of the uppermost surface,” Petro told AFP.

Monday’s “blood moon” will be the last in a string of four total lunar eclipses since 15 April, 2014, in a series astronomers call a tetrad.

These phenomena may be a normal part of the celestial calendar today, but for many ancient peoples it was an omen of bad things to come.

“Throughout history

many cultures have seen (eclipses) as being a sign of gloom and doom,” Petro said. They weren’t always wrong.

In February 1504, explorer Christopher Columbus used a blood moon to trick Jamaican natives who had been feeding him and his men, but cut them off when relations turned sour. Columbus knew a blood moon had been forecast, and warned the natives that his god would send an angry “sign” at their treatment of the newcomers. Legend has it the natives came running with food as soon as the Moon turned red.

Unlike a solar eclipse, which creates the impression of a bright “ring” of light as the Moon passes before our star, there is no danger in watching Monday’s lunar spectacle with the naked eye, the experts say.—AFP

Wine, veal, roasting pig: Napoleon’s St Helena feast

LONDON — Fifty bottles of wine, four ducks, and a roasting pig: the feast of food and drink provided to French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte during his exile on Saint Helena was revealed Wednesday in a document auctioned in Britain.

The list details the inhabitants of Napoleon’s household on the island, Longwood, including loyal aide General Henri Gatién Bertrand and his family, and numerous staff

including “32 Chinese”.

Each day, the entourage were delivered 23 kilos of beef and veal, 23 kilos of mutton or pork, 31 kilos of bread, 42 eggs and 15 bottles of milk, two turkeys, two geese, 12 pigeons and nine fowl, in addition to the pig and ducks.

And to accompany the vast quantities of wine, also on the list were malt liquor, rum and cognac.

“This fascinating document gives a detailed in-

sight into the quality and quantity of wine, spirits and food that were enjoyed by Napoleon and his retinue during his exile on St Helena,” explained auction house Woolley and Wallis.

It sold for £976 (\$1487, 1,330 euros) at auction on Wednesday in the southern city of Salisbury, England.

Signed by Denzil Ibbetson, a British officer and artist who served on St. Helena, the inventory is dated 13 October, 1820.—AFP

MYANMA RAILWAYS

Amendment of Tender Closing Date

The following Tenders Closing date shall be amend as follows.

Sr No	Tender No	Description	Closing Date & Opening Date	Extension of Closing Date & Opening Date
1	7/MR/INDIA (E) 2015-2016	Ballast Cleaning Machine (2) Items	30.9.2015	17.11.2015
2	8/MR/INDIA (E) 2015-2016	Track Geometry Measuring Trolley (4) Nos Rail-Road Excavator with Five Attachments (2) Nos, Self-Propelled Trolley for Ultrasonic Rail Inspection (2) Nos and Track Off-Trackable Tamping Machine (4) Nos	30.9.2015	17.11.2015
3	9/MR/INDIA (E) 2015-2016	Small Track Maintenance Machines (10) Items	30.9.2015	17.11.2015

Enquiry about tender can be made to Managing Director, Myanmar Railways (Fax No. 95-67-77016) by fax or by phone to 95-67-77001, 95-1-291994, 95-1-291985 during office hours.

Managing Director, Myanmar Railways,
Ministry of Rail Transportation, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar

**The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Energy
Invitation to Tender
Joint Venture Project of LPG
Importation, Storage, Distribution and
Marketing
by using Existing Facilities of LPG
Terminal in Thanlyin Refinery Area
Tender No. (1-MLTJVP/ 2015-2016)**

- The Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise (MPE), a State-owned Enterprise of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, operating under the Ministry of Energy, announces an Invitation to Tender for Joint Venture Project of LPG Importation, Storage, Distribution and Marketing by using Existing Facilities of LPG Terminal in Thanlyin Refinery Area. The purpose of the Joint Venture is to fulfill the domestic LPG demand growth with stable supply.
- All interested parties, Myanmar citizen companies or foreign companies, are cordially invited to lodge a submission in accordance with the tender documents. If the Myanmar citizen company has in relation with foreign company which has worldwide experience in LPG business, it will be preferred. In the tender document, the following facts are included:
 - Refurbishment and upgrading plan for LPG terminal facilities such as storage tanks, control system, safety system, firefighting system, jetty and etc.
 - Expansion of LPG filling facilities and LPG storage tanks under requirement of local demand
 - Proposed land lease rate for existing area of LPG Terminal
 - Proposed MPE's assets value for existing LPG Terminal facilities
 - Proposed capital contribution
 - Business and financing plan
 - Economic model and cash flow
 - Human Resources Development plan and Corporate Social Responsibility program
- The Tender Documents with further details related to the LPG Terminal can be purchased by any interested parties commencing **30 September 2015** upon submission of receipt of payment for 1,500,000 Kyats (One Million and Five Hundred Thousand Kyats) to the following address.
- Applicants shall submit the proposal in person no later than **5 November 2015 at 12:00 noon** to and for more information, contact the following address;

Managing Director
Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise
Ministry of Energy
Building No. 44, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
mltjv.Project@gmail.com
Fax: +95 67 411124, +95 67 411126
- If the applicant is a foreign company or Myanmar citizen company joining with foreign company, recommendation of the Respective Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar at the place of company's registration or establishment or nearest shall be submitted along with tender proposal or within one week after submission of tender proposal.
- Late inquiries or inquiries via telephone will not be answered.

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV KAI MING VOY NO ()**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KAI MING VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25.9.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P.L 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 GLOBAL MARS SHIPPING &
LOGISTICS SERVICES CO LTD.**

Phone No: 2301186

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV E.R. TURKU VOY NO (081W)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV E.R. TURKU VOY NO (081W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25.9.2015 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 HANJIN SHIPPING LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO (133W)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO (133W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25.9.2015 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 ORINET OVERSEAS
CONTAINER LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV MOROTAI VOY NO (YF272R)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MOROTAI VOY NO (YF272R) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25.9.2015 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 CMA CGM LINE**

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV KOTA TAMPAN VOY NO ()**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA TAMPAN VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25.9.2015 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

WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is cloudy in the North Bay, monsoon is strong in the Andaman Sea and South Bay, weak elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 25th September, 2015: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Taninthayi Region, Kachin and Mon States, fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing, Yangon and Ayeyarwady Regions, Rakhine and Kayin States, scattered in Bago Region and Chin State and isolated in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavy falls in Taninthayi Region and Mon State. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough sea are likely at times Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon – Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (30 - 35) m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar areas.

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Next Bond will be male, white: Pierce Brosnan

LONDON — Former James Bond Pierce Brosnan is confident that the next 007 spy after Daniel Craig will be white and male despite the debate about bringing a black actor as the face of hit franchise.

“Spectre” will see Craig suiting up as Bond for the fourth time but there is no word whether he will return for a fifth stint or not.

In an interview, Brosnan, who played the MI6 agent in “GoldenEye”, “Tomorrow Never Dies”, “Die Another Day” and “World is not Enough”, said the franchise will not go far from tradition.

“Anything is possible for sure, but I think he’ll be male and he’ll be white,” the actor said.

He, however, said that there are wonderful black actors to play the fictional spy. “There’s wonderful black actors out there who could be James Bond, and there’s no reason why you cannot have a black James Bond.” The issue of a black actor playing the next bond had attracted some controversy recently when Anthony Horowitz, the author of new James Bond novel, said fan-favourite Edris Elba was too street to play Bond. He had to apologise later.

Brosnan, 62, would welcome a black Bond but he is not so sure about a female James Bond.

“A female James Bond, no, I think it has to be male. James Bond is a guy, he’s all male. His name is James, his name is James Bond.”—PTI

One Direction announce new album, release album art



PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Chart-topping boy band One Direction have revealed the name and artwork for their fifth album, to be called “Made in the A.M.”

One Direction have also released a track from the album, “Infinity”, for anybody who pre-orders the album, to be released on 13 November, or streams it through online retailers. The announcement came on Tuesday ahead of the band’s

concert at Camden’s Roundhouse Theater in London, where they were performing as part of the Apple Music Festival.

Dozens of excited fans lined up outside the venue hours before the show started to see band members Harry Styles, Niall Horan, Liam Payne and Louis Tomlinson in person.

“We’re gonna be quite close so, I’ve never been that close to them so I don’t know how I’ll re-

act. I’ll probably cry,” one female fan said.

“Knowing Harry Styles will be there makes me want to get up every day,” another said.

The intimate gig may be one of the band’s last for a while since they said that they would be taking a break in March 2016.

The foursome were a five piece until Zayn Malik quit in March earlier this year.—Reuters

Katie Price to release solo material

LONDON — Former glamour model Katie Price has revealed she is currently recording new solo music material. The 37-year-old star, whose last offering was 2010 track “Free To Love Again” that suffered from poor sales and was criticised for relying heavily on autotune, took to Twitter to make the announcement.

After pop star Karava revealed the pair were working together, Katie took to Twitter to clarify, “I did a favour 4 @kavana_official but NEVER discussed doing duet in fact I’m in studio recording my own tracks solo (sic).”

Price’s tweet came after “I Can Make You Feel Good” hitmaker Kavana insisted they were working on a duet.

“We’ve decided to do a duet. I mean, God bless her, she can’t really sing, can she? But I’ve said to her that I’ll get her in the studio and make it sound good.”

Price enjoyed hits with her ex-husband Peter Andre, 42, including a cover of Disney’s classic “A Whole New World” in 2006.

She also auditioned to be the UK’s “Eurovision Song Contest” entry in 2005 with “Not Just Anybody” but lost out to singer Javine.—PTI

Australia under pressure to ban entry to singer Chris Brown

SYDNEY — Australia was facing pressure on Thursday to deny entry to American singer and hip-hop star Chris Brown over his history of domestic abuse, as Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull pledged A\$100 million (\$70.05 million) to combat violence against women.

Public pressure has been growing to block Brown, whose California probation stemming from a 2009 plea to assaulting singer Rihanna was revoked in February, from performing in four Australian cities in December.

Australian Minister for Women Michaelia Cash, speaking alongside Turnbull at an event in Canberra highlighting new government efforts to fight domestic violence, urged Immigration Minister Peter Dutton to bar the performer.

“People need to understand that if you are going to commit domestic violence and then you want to travel around the world there are going to be countries that say to you, ‘You cannot come in because you are not of the character we expect in Australia,’” Cash told reporters. Dut-

ton has not commented publicly on the issue.

Cash, who was assistant immigration minister until her elevation to the frontbench this week, previously denied boxer Floyd Mayweather entry to Australia over his history of domestic violence. It is not uncommon for performers with legal troubles to be refused entry to foreign countries. Brown postponed a British tour in 2010 after he was denied a visa and in February was declined entry into Canada.

Turnbull and former Prime Minister Tony Abbott, who was ousted in a leadership coup last week, have devoted greater resources to battling domestic violence after a spate of high-profile deaths. At least 31 women were killed by their partners in the first 15 weeks of 2015, police figures show, sparking a public outcry and calls for greater government resources focused on the issue.

The 11-year-old son of Australian of the Year Rosie Batty, who attended the media event with Turnbull and Cash, was killed by his father at a cricket training session in Victoria state in 2014.—Reuters

Holy lawsuit, Batman! US court affirms Batmobile’s copyright

SAN FRANCISCO — The Batmobile, the indispensable crime fighting vehicle driven by comic book hero Batman, has enough distinct character traits to qualify for copyright protection, a US appeals court has ruled.

The 9th US Circuit of Appeals on Wednesday affirmed a ruling against a manufacturer of replica Batmobiles.

“As Batman so sagely told Robin, ‘In our well-ordered society, protection of private property is essential,’” 9th Circuit Judge Sandra Ikuta wrote for a unanimous three judge panel.

Larry Zerner, an attorney for defendant Mark Towle who sells replica Batmobiles for approximately \$90,000, said he was disappointed in the ruling. The law specifically states that automobile designs are not subject to copyright, he said. “My client just sells cars,” Zerner said. “The car is not a character. The car is a car.” A spokesman for Time Warner Inc unit Warner Brothers, corporate parent of DC Comics, declined to comment.

Towle runs a business called Gotham Garage, where he sells



The Batmobile. PHOTO: REUTERS

replicas of cars featured in movies and television shows, according to the ruling. DC Comics sued him for copyright infringement in 2011, and a lower court judge ruled for DC.

In the 9th Circuit ruling on Wednesday, Ikuta wrote that DC must prove it owns a copyright in the Batmobile as it appeared in the 1966 television series and the 1989 movie starring Michael Keaton.

“To the Batmobile!” she wrote. Batman’s vehicle has consistent character traits that can be

protected by copyright, Ikuta wrote. “No matter its specific physical appearance, the Batmobile is a ‘crime-fighting’ car with sleek and powerful characteristics that allow Batman to maneuver quickly while he fights villains,” she wrote.

Additionally, there is no dispute that DC created the Batman character, and various licenses it has entered into over the years did not transfer its underlying property rights, Ikuta wrote. The case in the 9th Circuit is DC Comics vs. Towle, 13-55484.—Reuters

Genny, Fay nod to past at Milan fashion week open

MILAN — Milan kicked off its catwalk shows for next spring's womenswear on Wednesday with

designers presenting rich, embellished collections amid expectations of growing sales.

After New York and London, Italy's fashion capital picks up the baton with six days of spring/

summer 2016 shows and presentations showcasing the latest offerings from global brands such as Giorgio Armani, Dolce and Gabbana and Versace.

Among the first to display their creations on Wednesday were Italian fashion brands Genny and Fay.

Genny Creative director Sara Cavazza Facchini mixed art deco shapes with 1980s metallics for her line of dresses, wide-leg trousers and jumpsuits.

Models wore silk dresses and tunics with slit sleeves which revealed shoulders and arms falling into embroidered wrists.

Cavazza Facchini said she was inspired by artist Sonia Delaunay, known for her use of vibrant colors

and geometric shapes, for her patterned evening dresses. A floaty emerald green dress provided the only bold color in a palette mainly of white, gold, silver and bronze.

Fay, part of the Tod's luxury goods group, went for a 1970s style with colorful patterned prints and rich embroidery in short skirts and corset-style waistcoats.

Designers Tommaso Aquilano and Roberto Rimondi presented dresses, from minis to just above the knee, and military-style jackets in black and white, pink, maroon, navy and mustard.

They used paisley patterns on clothes and accessories, which included bags, sandals as well as

calf-high boots, a surprise element in a spring line.

"Now fashion has to be very eclectic, heterogeneous," Aquilano said. "We now need clothes that can be used in between autumn/winter and spring/summer."

The shows are set against a upbeat mood among Italy's fashion sector. The national chamber of fashion has forecast a five percent rise in sales this year to 64.5 billion euros (\$72.06 billion).

Milan Fashion Week runs until Monday. Among the most-anticipated shows will be celebrity-favorite Roberto Cavalli's, where Norwegian designer Peter Dundas makes his debut as creative director.—Reuters



Models parade at the end of Gucci's presentation. PHOTO: REUTERS

Harvard spiffs up dorms with original masterpiece prints

BOSTON — Dorm life can be anything but classy, but Harvard University students are being offered the chance to rent valuable original prints of masterpieces by the likes of Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse and Andy Warhol.

Under the Student Print Rental Programme run by the Harvard Art Museums, students living in Harvard housing can pay \$50 to rent an original print, said Jessica Diedalis, the curricular registrar at

the Harvard Art Museums.

The programme, which had been on hiatus since 2008 because of museum construction, began in 1972 with an anonymous donation. Museum officials now curate a spe-

cial collection for students of the Ivy League school in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to select from on the first days of class each year.

Of the 275 prints available, 177 have been

claimed for this academic year, Diedalis said.

"We want (students) to be inspired by it, to absorb something special in addition to what might already be going up on their walls," she said. Students

sign a contract that holds them responsible for any damages to the rare works, but Diedalis said there had been no problem in the past. "We find that the students are very careful." —Reuters

US judge rules copyright for 'Happy Birthday' invalid

LOS ANGELES — A US judge on Tuesday ruled that Warner/Chappell Music does not own a valid copyright to one of the world's most recognizable songs, "Happy Birthday to You," a decision that brings the song into the public domain.

The highly-anticipated ruling comes in a putative class-action lawsuit filed by several artists against Warner/Chappell, the music publishing arm of Warner Music Group, over the song in 2013 seeking a return of the millions of dollars in fees the company has collected over the years.

In order to make his ruling, US District Judge George H King had to delve into the song's long and complicated history, which began in 1893 with the publication of a melody called "Good Morning to All" in a kindergarten songbook, written by a Kentucky woman named Mildred Hill and her sister, Patty. That melody eventually came to be sung with the familiar Happy Birthday lyrics, which Patty also claimed to have written, according to court records.

Warner's copyright originated with the Hill sisters' publisher, the Clayton

F Summy Co, later known as Birch Tree and acquired by Warner in 1988. Summy had obtained registrations to "Happy Birthday" in 1935, according to court papers.

"Defendants ask us to find that the Hill sisters eventually gave Summy Co the rights in the lyrics to exploit and protect, but this assertion has no support in the record," King wrote in his 43-page opinion.

"The Hill sisters gave Summy Co the rights to the melody, and the rights to piano arrangements based

on the melody, but never any rights to the lyrics," he added. Warner could not be immediately reached for comment.

"'Happy Birthday' is finally free after 80 years," Randall Newman, an attorney for the artists including filmmakers working on a documentary about the song, told the Los Angeles Times. "Finally, the charade is over. It's unbelievable."

The case garnered attention from around the world not only because the

tune is so commonly performed, but because many were not aware it was still under copyright, let alone purportedly owned by a major corporation.

People who sing Happy Birthday in their homes or at private gatherings have typically never been at risk of a lawsuit. But when the song has been used for commercial purposes, such as in films, Warner has enforced its rights, and takes in an estimated \$2 million in royalties for such uses each year.—Reuters



Children clap around cakes on a table as they celebrate their "birthday" at a temple in Shifang, Sichuan province. PHOTO: REUTERS

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10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	China-Myanmar Bilateral Ties
10:36	Am	Hanlin, A Treasure Trove Of The Ancient Pyu City
(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Thursday 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	Mrauk U, Treasure Trove of Rakhine Culture
07:45	Pm	Civic Duty
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Unique Pattern Of Myanmar... A Trend Of Chin Traditional Dress
(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)		
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Thursday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)		
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)		

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

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(25-9-2015, Friday)

6:00 am	7:30 am
• Mono Classical Songs	• TV Drama Series
6:15 am	8:15 am
• Myanmar Series	• Myanmar Series
6:35 am	9:25 am
• Teleplay	• Myanmar Video
6:45 am	12:00 noon
• TV Drama Series	• Close Down

Japan's 105-year-old "Golden Bolt" sets sprint record, misses personal best

JAPANESE centenarian Hidekichi Miyazaki set a fresh record as the world's oldest competitive sprinter this week, one day after turning 105, but said he was disappointed at falling short of his own personal best.

"I wanted to shave off a few more seconds as I got 36 seconds while training," Miyazaki, wearing a bright red T-shirt and run-

ning shorts, said after completing his heat with a time of 42.22 on Wednesday. His personal record of 34.10, chalked up when he was 103, remains unbeaten for centenarian.

Born on 22 September, 1910, Miyazaki was already eight when World War One ended and 34 when Japan was defeated in World War Two. He did not start running until he was in his 90s, since many

of the friends with whom he had played the Japanese board game "Go" had passed away, according to Guinness World Records.

Miyazaki, known as the "Golden Bolt" for imitating Jamaican Olympic gold medallist Usain Bolt's famed lightening bolt pose, says he longs for the opportunity to challenge the fastest man in the world, according to Guinness World Records.

Asked the secret of his success, Miyazaki said he exercised daily, ate in moderation and chewed his food properly. "The doctors are all surprised. It's all about being in good health," he told reporters. Japan, which on Monday marked "Respect for the Aged Day, tops the world in number of people over age 65 years old. The number of people over 80 topped 10 million for the first time, of whom 60,000 are over 100 years old, according to a report issued by the Ministry of Internal Affairs this week.—Reuters



105-year-old Japanese Hidekichi Miyazaki poses like Jamaica's Usain Bolt in front of an electric board showing his 100-metre record time of 42.22 seconds. PHOTO: REUTERS

Old rivals Australia and US in 2016 Davis Cup clash

TRADITIONAL rivals Australia and the United States will clash in the first round of the 2016 Davis Cup, while Great Britain and Japan will meet for only the second time, after the draw was made on Wednesday.

Australia (28) and the US (32) have won the Davis Cup 60 times altogether, though neither is the power it used to be, with only one win each this century.

Britain, who will play Belgium in this year's final in November, will start their 2016 campaign at home against Kei Nishikori's Japan, 85 years after their only previous meeting.

The draw for the World Group, made in Santiago, Chile, also served up Switzerland with a potentially tricky away tie against Italy.

The powerful Swiss, headed

by Roger Federer and Stan Wawrinka, have split their past six ties against their neighbour.

World number one Novak Djokovic's Serbia will host Kazakhstan, while France, under new captain Yannick Noah, will host Canada.

The first round ties will be played 4-6 March. Under Davis Cup regulations, the home team chooses the surface.—Reuters

Pyin Oo Lwin clinches Mandalay tennis competition



Pyi Oo Lwin tennis team with the trophy. PHOTO: TIN MAUNG

MANDALAY — Pyin Oo Lwin Township clinched the Mandalay Region inter-township tennis tournament on Wednesday, which began on 19 September. The tournament attracted 125 players from 25 townships in various categories. A trophy and cash prize of K300,000 was given to the winning team.—Tin Maung

Volleyball Federation on the lookout for talent during youth competition

Ko Moe

YANGON — The Third Youth Volleyball competition will take place near Inle's Phaungdaw Oo Pagoda on 28 September.

Players must aged between 10 and 15 to be eligible and the Myanmar Volleyball Federation will provide volleyballs and uniforms. The federation

said that it will be actively scouting for talented young players.

Myanmar's national volleyball team will host a demonstration match before the youth competition begins. The first Youth Volleyball Competition was held in Inle in 2012, and the second was held in Ngwe Saung Beach in 2013.—GNLM

Celta stun Barca 4-1, Real's Benzema hits double to sink Bilbao

BARCELONA — A Karim Benzema brace gave Real Madrid a 2-1 victory at Athletic Bilbao and lifted them to the top of La Liga on goal difference ahead of Celta Vigo, who thrashed Bar-

celona 4-1 on Wednesday with Iago Aspas hitting a double.

The Frenchman took full advantage of a poor backpass by Mikel San Jose and fired home to put Real ahead after 19 minutes.

Bilbao showed typical fighting spirit and a fine diving header from Sabin Merino ended Real keeper Keylor Navas' record unbeaten start to the season after 67 minutes, but they were only level

for three minutes.

Benzema, a threat all night to the Athletic rearguard, was quickest to an Isco cross and knocked it in from close range.

Real and Celta now have 13 points after five games while Barca are a point behind.

After disappointing spells at Liverpool and Sevilla, Aspas is back to his best this season having returned to Celta and struck clinical finishes in either half against a Barca side who were far from their normal dominant selves.

Nolito, a former Barca youth player, fired his fifth goal in as many games to put Celta ahead after 25 minutes with a pinpoint curling drive from the left of the area.

Aspas then chipped the ball over keeper Marc-Andre Ter Stegen for the second minutes later.

It was clear that it was not going to be Barca's day when Lionel Messi struck the woodwork after 52 minutes with only keeper Sergio Alvarez to beat and then Aspas raced clear and

slotted home on 55 minutes.

Barcelona's Neymar scored from a tight angle after 80 minutes but Celta substitute John Guidetti volleyed in their fourth minutes later.

The players in the blue of Celta could have been mistaken for Barca the way they pressed the visitors back with their quick movement and link-up play.

Ter Stegen could only get his fingertips to Nolito's strike into the top corner and then Gerard Pique hesitated in possession on the halfway line with the ball finding its way to Aspas who ran through and lifted the ball over the keeper.

After the break Barca pressed forward but left themselves wide open at the back. Messi hit the woodwork and then shortly after Aspas latched onto a long punt forward, evaded a challenge from Dani Alves, and found the corner with his shot.

Messi set up Neymar for a consolation while Guidetti was then given space in the area and cracked the ball home.—Reuters



Celta Vigo's John Guidetti scores a goal against Barcelona's goalkeeper Ter Stegen during their Spanish first division soccer match at Balaidos stadium in Vigo, Spain 23 September, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS