

**Myanmar observes the UN's World Tourism Day**

PAGE 2

**UEC Chair briefs on election process in Shan State**

PAGE 3

ANALYSIS

**Judging: keep it simple**

PAGE 8

# HELP FOR WINTER CROPS

## President promises support to those who couldn't regrow rice

PRESIDENT U Thein Sein pledged that the government will assist farmers in growing winter crops as recent floods disrupted rice cultivation for thousands of farmers.

At a meeting with local farmers during his visit to Ingapu, Ayeyawady Region, on Wednesday, the president said the government strived to help farmers grow rice when the floods receded in Ayeyawady Region and would provide assistance to those who could not re-grow rice in time for the end of the rainy season to grow alternative crops during winter.

The Ministry of Cooperatives will provide the assistance to people in the flood-hit areas, he added.

To prevent floods in the country's rice bowl, the government, in cooperation with international organisations, will enlarge river embankments, which will prevent the overflow of river water and improve the river system in the region, the president said.

President U Thein Sein also urged officials from Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation to devise preparedness plans for El Niño to ensure that irrigation water reaches farmlands in Ayeyawady Region.

In the evening, the president made tour of inspection to Kanyin Dam and its



Farmers plant rice seedlings in field in Ingapu, Ayeyawady Region, as flood waters recede. PHOTO: ZAW GYI

spillway and diversion weir.

The floods which started in July hit four regions and two states, covering more than 1.4 million acres of rice farms and destroyed more than 800,000 acres, according to the data of the

Ministry of Commerce.

"More than 300,000 acres of rice fields were submerged by the floods, but more than 200,000 acres emerged unscathed," said U Win Myint Naing, the president of the Ay-

eyawady Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry, in early September.

"Furthermore, of the 100,000 acres of rice fields that were totally destroyed, more than 70,000 acres have been re-

planted," he added.

Floods caused by heavy rains in July and August this year killed 122 people nationwide and displaced more than 1.6 million people.

See page 3 >>

### INSIDE

**Myanmar, Australia pledge cooperation on immigration, technical training**

PAGE 2

**Three-day car expo to be held in Yangon**

PAGE 2

## EU sends election observers to Myanmar

Ye Myint

THE European Union has sent an election observation mission to Myanmar for the country's general elections on 8 November, according to a press release on Tuesday.

This is the first time that the EU has deployed election observers in Myanmar. It has an agreement with the Union Election Commission that permits it to observe every stage of the electoral process, including advance voting, in all states and regions of the country.

According to the press release, the EU delegation of election observers to Myanmar comprises 101 people, who are led by Chief Observer Alexander Graf Lambsdorff, a Vice-President of the European Parliament.

The chief observer said in the statement that the forthcoming general elections are a key opportunity to further consolidate democracy in Myanmar.

He was appointed by Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President

of the European Commission, who said that the deployment of the mission confirms the EU's continued commitment to the democratic transition of Myanmar.

"Elections held in a peaceful and inclusive environment will help to consolidate irreversible reforms in the country."

A core team of the EU's nine election analysts are scheduled to stay in Myanmar until the election process if completed arrived in the country on Saturday. They will be joined by 30 long-term observers on 7 October and 62 short-term

observers on 2 November. A delegation of European Parliament and Myanmar-based diplomats from EU Member States will reinforce the mission on election day.

The election observation mission will issue a preliminary statement 48 hours after election day and a final report comprising a number of recommendations at a later stage.

The EU affirmed in the statement that the independent mission will neither interfere in any way in the election process, nor validate the election results.—GNLM



# Myanmar observes the UN's World Tourism Day

MYANMAR observed World Tourism Day 2015 on Tuesday, with a message read out by a United Nations Development Programme official from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon.

In a speech to mark the occasion in Nay Pyi Taw, Vice President U Nyan Tun called for Myanmar to develop policies that will help protect cultural heritage sites from the adverse effects of natural disasters.

U Nyan Tun cited the three Pyu cities of Hanlin, Beikthano (Vishnu) and Srikhetra, all of which have been included on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

This year's theme was 'One Billion Tourists, One Billion Opportunities', which the vice president said represents the opportunity for Myanmar to "make best use of billions of opportunities to alleviate the potential impact natural disasters might have on the tourism industry."

U Nyan Tun said that the country's recent unprecedented floods affected nearly two million people, wreaking havoc on livelihoods and the economy.

The government has initiated long-term plans for recovery measures in which tourism plays a critical role, the vice president



Vice President U Nyan Tun gives an address during a ceremony to mark World Tourism Day in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday. PHOTO: MNA

added. He said he hoped that Myanmar's tourism industry will prioritise practices that do not cause harm to the natural environment.

The country laid out a policy for responsible tourism in 2013, which places emphasis on the active participation of civil society

in ensuring a sustainable development through tourism.

The country saw an inflow of over one million tourists in 2012, a figure that doubled in 2013 and is expected to reach 4.5 million this year.

U Nyan Tun pointed out the

need to create fresh opportunities to make the country one of the world's top tourist destinations.

Myanmar won the Best in Travel- AEC Country award for 2014 by the Lonely Planet Traveller magazine.

Union ministers U Nyan

Tun Aung, U Aye Myint Kyu, U Win Tun and U Htay Aung presented prizes to the winners of excellence in tourism awards, including Chatrium and Kempinski hotels, Exo-Travel Myanmar and Myanmar Voyage International Tourism.—MNA

## Myanmar, Australia pledge cooperation on immigration, technical training



Lt-Gen Ko Ko holds talks with Mr Greg Kelly over cooperation between Myanmar and Australia.

PHOTO: MNA

THE union minister of home affairs and the union minister of immigration and population met Mekong Region director Mr Greg Kelly from the Australian embas-

sy in Bangkok in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday.

Lieutenant General Ko Ko and Mr Kelly discussed the prospect of cooperation be-

tween Myanmar and Australia in immigration affairs and Australia's provision of technical training and machinery to Myanmar.—MNA

## Three-day car expo to be held in Yangon

AN automotive expo is scheduled to take place in Yangon from 9 to 11 October and will showcase a variety of spare parts, accessories and servicing, an event organiser said Wednesday.

The show will take place at Myanmar Event Park and will feature exhibits from more than 210 brands from 22 countries,

said Mr Darren Siow of AMB Event Group. "We expect to attract more than 7,000 visitors including those from auto-related businesses," he said.

This year's show is titled 'MYANAUTO 2015 Expo' and technical seminars are set to be held on 10 October for the first time, said Mr Siow. The expo

bills itself as the biggest auto aftermarket exhibition in Myanmar, with similar events held in Yangon in 2013 and 2014.

There will also be auto service demonstrations for mechanics and free car diagnostic check-ups for expo-goers at the event, with a checkup limited to 50 cars per day.—GNLM

## Myanmar Security Expo opens

DEPUTY Minister of Finance Dr Maung Maung Thein attended the opening ceremony of the Myanmar Security Expo 2015 at the Myanmar Convention Centre (MCC) in Yangon on Wednesday.

During the ceremony, executive director Mr Jack Chia from Singapore's MP International Company Limited, chairman U Aye Chan of the IMK Group of Companies and the deputy minister delivered speeches.

Afterwards Yangon Region

chief minister U Myint Swe, Region Hluttaw Speaker U Sein Tin Win and deputy minister Dr Maung Maung Thein participated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The expo will last three days from 30 September to 2 October. It includes 75 showrooms showcasing the products and services of 17 companies from 17 countries. Surveillance equipment and services, telecommunications equipment and security suits are among the items on display.—MNA

## Escalators to be added to Bahan 3<sup>rd</sup> Street flyover

YCDC will install escalators at Bahan 3rd Street flyover, according to deputy engineering officer U Tin Tun Oo.

Escalators were not initially included in the scope of the project, however YCDC decided to add escalators to the flyover due to the high numbers of pedestrians already in the vicinity.

"At the weekend, many people come to Kandawgyi Lake and Shwedagon Pagoda using the Bahan 3rd Street flyover. The estimated budget for the flyover project is now K400 million (US\$310,000), includ-

ing the escalators," U Tin Tun Oo said.

YCDC is currently building a flyover at the junction of Sule Pagoda Road and Anawrahta Road and the junction of Anawrahta Road and Lamadaw Road, with an estimated budget of K 360 million (\$279,342) for each project.

Another three flyovers will be built along Pyay Road near Junction Square, Marlar Hostel and Inya Lake Bank with estimated budgets of K200 million (\$155,190) for each project.—Ko Moe





President U Thein Sein inspects Kanyin Dam during his tour of Ayeyawady Region. PHOTO: MNA

## HELP FOR WINTER CROPS

>> from page 1

Most of the flood-related deaths were reported in Rakhine State, where at least 56 people died, followed by Sagaing Region with 24 deaths, Mandalay with 12 and Shan State with nine.

On 3 September, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) called for urgent support to help farmers recover from a month of extreme

monsoon weather, worsened by the arrival of Cyclone Komen at the end of July.

The deluge also destroyed around 972,000 acres of farmland and 36,000 acres of fish and shrimp ponds and killed an estimated 20,000 head of cattle, according to the agriculture agency.

Some 385,000 households were displaced by the floods and landslides that destroyed thou-

sands of homes and irrigation canals in 12 of the country's 14 provinces, the agency reported.

The FAO also said that out of the six provinces hit hardest by the monsoon floods, four have been faced recurrent inter-communal tensions since June 2012, which displaced more than 660,000 people, making those regions especially vulnerable to the impacts of the floods.—GNLM

### President U Thein Sein sends messages of felicitations to People's Republic of China

NAY PYI TAW — On the occasion of the 66<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Founding Day of the People's Republic of China, which falls on 1 October 2015, U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent messages of felicitations to His Excellency Mr. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China and His Excellency Mr. Li Ke-qiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China.—MNA

### Vice Presidents send messages of felicitations to People's Republic of China

NAY PYI TAW — On the occasion of the 66<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Founding Day of the People's Republic of China, which falls on 1 October 2015, Dr. Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun, Vice Presidents of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, have sent messages of felicitations to His Excellency Mr. Li Yuanchao, Vice President of the People's Republic of China.—MNA

## What they stand for: campaigns aired

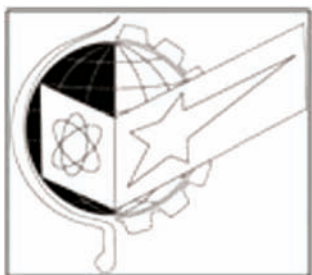
Khumi (Khami) National Party, Democratic Party for a New Society and Karen National Party broadcast campaign speeches on Wednesday.

**Khumi (Khami) National Party**



KNP's Chairman U Kyaw Tun said his party would emphasise regional development and the right to self-administration for his ethnic group, with plans to promote free education and healthcare, especially in remote areas. The chairman pledged to strive for rural development by improving basic infrastructure such as transportation, communication and power supplies, as well as advocating for loans to be provided to small businesses. He also expressed his party's stance on tougher environmental conservation measures.

**Democratic Party for a New Society**



DPNS's Chairman U Aung Moe Zaw said that his party would concentrate on achieving speedy reforms in areas such as labour, employment, education, health and agriculture. The chairman hinted at downsizing the government's organisational structure and revoking certain laws deemed to impose unnecessary restrictions on minorities and gender equality. He pledged that his party would play a decisive role in paving the way for self-administration.

**Karen National Party**



KNP's Chairman Mann Thein Shwe vowed to launch new initiatives aimed at boosting economic growth, state building, rule of law, accountability and social mobilisation in addition to encouraging the emergence of an independent civil society and fostering a culture of dialogue. The chairman pledged that his party would strive to ensure equal rights among all ethnic groups and to strengthen the rule of law. The party will help bring about the emergence of a genuine federalism, he added.—GNLM

## UEC Chair briefs on election process in Shan State

UNION Election Commission Free Elections (ANFREL).

Chairman U Tin Aye met local election commissions in Kengtung, Shan State, on 29 September, briefing on the electoral process and observational visits by Carter Centre, the European Union and the Asian Network for

In Tachilek, he met with political parties, election candidates, local election commissions and civil society and spoke of his commission's measures for holding a free and fair election.—MNA

## Two, not three, party speeches to be broadcast today

CAMPAIGN speeches delivered by representatives from the People's Party of Myanmar Farmers And Workers and MRO National Democracy Party (MNDP) will be broadcast on state radio and television networks on 1 October. MRTV, the Hluttaw channel, Myawady TV, Myanmar Radio and Shwe FM will broadcast the speeches.

Although three political party speeches are usually broadcast every day during the campaign period, only two speeches will be broadcast today because the Danu National Organization Party is not participating in the broadcast programme.—GNLM

**ELECTION COUNTDOWN** 38 DAYS  
Make your voice count. Cast your vote.



## Traditional clay toys at Chanayethasan's pagoda festival

VENDORS of traditional clay toys have come to Phayathonsu Pagoda in Mandalay to sell their wares at a local festival. The vendors are from Shwebo, Myintmu and Myaung townships in neighbouring Sagaing Region.

The colourful clay toys are competing in the market with plastic toys also being sold at the festival.

The pagoda festival will formally begin on 23 October, but vendors are also able to make sales during the pre-festival period. A clay toy festival in Mandalay's Aungmyaethasan Township was held on 22 August.—*Thiha Ko Ko*



Clay toys attract Myanmar children at Phayathonsu Pagoda festival in Mandalay. PHOTO: THIHA KO KO

## Land leases presented to Zalun Township villagers

A TOTAL of 24 government land leases were handed over to residents of Zawgyi village in Ayeyawady Region on Monday. The leases will legalise the villagers' land ownership.

Zalun District Commissioner U San Htay, who also chairs the District Land Lease Presentation Commit-

tee, said the land lease transfers were arranged by President U Thein Sein in order to improve the socioeconomic status of members of the rural community.

The commissioner explained the benefits of land leases and the opportunities they create to the villagers.—*Aye Myint Thein (IPRD)*

## Australia lends a hand to vocational training in Myanmar

DEPUTY UNION MINISTER of Science and Technology Dr Aung Kyaw Myat attended the opening ceremony of the Australia-Myanmar Vocational Education Leadership Training (VELT) course in Nay Pyi Taw.

Training will be provided by Australian experts from 28 to 30

September to the heads of technical and vocational skills institutes in Myanmar.

"Technology and the vocational training sector play an important role in a country's socio-economic development and in reforming the education sector more broadly. We welcome the opportunity

to build capacity and to strengthen cooperation in this regard with Australia," the deputy union minister said.

Senior Adviser for Project Development at the Australian Embassy Sal Rowe highlighted key points in IT development and vocational training during the opening ceremony.

## Nahtogyi healthcare association offers free services

THE THUKHA CHANTHA Free Health Care Association in Nahtogyi, Mandalay Region is providing free health care to patients, including the elderly, across Myanmar.

As the weather warms in Myanmar's dry regions, the volume of patients has increased from between 60 and 100 per day to 150 per day, said the association.

They association also said the prevalence of palm sugar delicacies, or 'jaggery', in Myanmar's central regions has caused a spike in the frequency of diabetes. The association said most diabetes patients also suffer from hypertension.

Due to medical expenses being unaffordable for many, the association's free health clinic is often crowded with mothers, children and senior citizens.—*Htay Myint Maung*

## Zartithway wins boat race at Phaungtaw Oo Pagoda Festival



Zartithway's crew winning the race at the traditional boat racing held in Meiktila Lake. PHOTO: CHAN THA

TRADITIONAL BOAT races being held at Meiktila's Phaungtaw Oo Pagoda Festival concluded on 28 September, with Zartith-

way's crew winning the race.

Despite heavy rain, the boat races attracted large audiences.

Shwelu Koko's team won the second prize, while Shwenyiako came third.

A total of 18 teams participated in the traditional

boat race. The Zartithway team also won first prize in the most recent festivals held, which was in 2011 and 2012.—*Chan Tha*

## 8-Mile flyover to be finished by March 2016

AN-UNDER construction flyover at Yangon's 8-Mile junction is scheduled to be completed by March 2016. It is located at the intersection of Kabar Aye Peya, Kyightwine Pagoda and Pyay roads and is expected to ease the city's traffic congestion.

The four-lane flyover featuring steel plates and box girders will be 160 metres long, including the approach roads. It will be able to bear up to 75 tonnes per vehicle, with a clearance height of 6.5 metres.

The main bridge will have 14 RC pillars. The foundations are currently being built by a workforce of 20 foreign and Myanmar engineers and 200 local construction workers, who are employed by Crown Advance Construction Com-

pany Ltd.

Project manager U Than Swe said his team has arranged two lanes on each side of the work site for the convenience of cars crossing the roads. He said after the completion of the flyover, cars

will not have to wait at the junction's traffic lights and will be able to save time by driving over or under the flyover.

According to a survey conducted by the company, 14,870 cars take Pyay Road downtown every day and 11,780 cars take it uptown, with a total of almost 27,000 cars crossing the junction every day.

The flyover is estimated to cost K15.8 billion (US\$11,639,185), said a company source.

Construction on the flyover began on 6 September.—*Soe Win*



## Japan promulgates new security laws



An employee of the National Printing Bureau in Tokyo. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

TOKYO — The Japanese government Wednesday promulgated two new security laws enacted earlier this month to expand overseas operations of the Self-Defence Forces.

The peace and stability system development law and the international peace support law will take effect within six months

at a date to be specified under an ordinance.

The new laws will also allow Japan to exercise the right to collective self-defence, or using force to come to the aid of the United States and other friendly countries under attack even if Japan itself is not attacked.—*Kyodo News*

## Amnesty urges action on Indonesian 1960s mass killings

JAKARTA — Indonesia must do more to provide justice for victims of a 1960s anti-communist purge and their families, Amnesty International urged Wednesday, 50 years on from events that triggered one of the worst mass killings of the 20th century.

At least 500,000 people died in the killings across the archipelago that started after General Suharto put down a coup on October 1, 1965, that the authorities blamed on communists.

Security forces supported local groups in conducting the massacre over several months, with many suspected of even weak links to Indonesia's communist party killed, and hundreds of thousand of others imprisoned, some for years.

Suharto took power after the

failed coup and ruled Indonesia with an iron fist for 32 years, with the necessity of the killings to rid the country of the communist threat becoming part of the official narrative and the perpetrators left unpunished.

Calls grew for action to come to terms with the dark episode after the dictator was toppled in 1998, but rights groups have criticised authorities for making little progress. President Joko Widodo — who came to power last year and is viewed as a break from a string of rulers with links to the Suharto era — vowed to solve past rights abuse cases, but Amnesty said Wednesday not enough was being done. “Five decades is far too long to wait for justice for one of the worst mass killings of our era,” said Papang Hidayat, Am-

nesty International's Indonesia researcher, in a statement to mark half a century since the killings.

“Across Indonesia, victims of the 1965 and 1966 events and their family members have been left to fend for themselves, while those suspected of criminal responsibility walk free.” Widodo's government announced in May that it would establish a committee to try to resolve past human rights abuses, but Amnesty noted that it did not have power to prosecute, meaning surviving perpetrators would still not face justice.

There has been speculation that Widodo's government might issue an official apology for the killings but presidential spokesman Ari Dwipayana told AFP the president had not yet considered the matter.—*AFP*

## Three killed in blasts in south China

NANNING — Three people have been confirmed dead and 13 others were injured in the blasts in south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region on Wednesday afternoon.

The blasts occurred at the

seat of Liucheng county and the surrounding areas, with the first one heard at about 15:50.

Pictures online showed a building half-collapsed in Dapu Township. Witnesses also saw vehicles damaged on the road,

and there were people injured in the blasts.

Rescuers have rushed to the scene. Initial investigation showed that explosives could be inside express delivery packages.—*Xinhua*

## Indian court sentences five to death over 2006 Mumbai blasts

MUMBAI — An Indian court sentenced five men to death on Wednesday for a series of bomb blasts that ripped through packed trains in Mumbai in 2006, killing nearly 200 people.

Another seven found guilty of involvement in the attacks in India's financial capital were sentenced to life imprisonment by the special court, their defence lawyer told reporters.

The 12 men were convicted of murder, conspiracy and waging war against the country over the coordinated series of attacks that killed 189 people and wounded more than 800.

Defence lawyer Wahab Khan said all 12 would appeal.

“We still believe they have been framed and the court has relied on confessions and not on mitigating evidence,” he told reporters outside the court.

Seven blasts ripped through the suburban trains during the evening rush hour in July 2006.

The bombs were packed into pressure cookers and then placed in bags and hidden under newspapers and umbrellas in the trains.

In all, police charged 30 people over the bombings including 13 Pakistani nationals, who along with four Indian suspects have yet to be arrested.

Prosecutors said the devices were assembled in Mumbai and deliberately placed in first-class coaches to target the city's wealthy Gujarati community.

They said the bombings were intended as revenge for ri-

ots in the western state of Gujarat in 2002 that left some 2,000 people dead, most of them Muslims.

Prosecutors accused Pakistan-based militant group Lashkar-e-Taiba of being behind the 2006 attacks, although a little-known outfit called Lashkar-e-Qahhar claimed responsibility. Over the course of the nine-year trial, the court examined nearly 250 witnesses.

The accused were represented by Shahid Azmi, a Muslim rights activist and lawyer, who was mysteriously killed by unidentified gunmen in 2010.

Wednesday's ruling is believed to be the largest number of

death sentences handed down in one go since 2006, when 11 people were sentenced to hang for perpetrating deadly bomb blasts in Mumbai in 1993.

**“We still believe they have been framed.”**

**Defence lawyer Wahab Khan**

Ten of those sentences were later commuted to life in prison, however. Only Yakub Memon, who was hanged in July, failed to have his death

sentence upheld on appeal.

The men convicted on Wednesday can appeal to Mumbai's high court and then India's Supreme Court in New Delhi. If those appeals fail they also have the option of making a mercy plea to India's president.

“The whole process could take a year,” terrorism and security expert Sameer Patel told AFP. The Supreme Court has said that capital punishment should only be carried out in “the rarest of rare” cases in India, among a dwindling group of nations that still have the death penalty on their statute books.—*AFP*



Two of the 12 men are escorted by police to a court in Mumbai, India, 30 September 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

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## Australia bids for seats on Security Council, Human Rights Council



Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop. PHOTO: REUTERS

SYDNEY — Australia has launched a new bid to be elected to the United Nations Security Council, with Foreign Minister Julie Bishop saying the nation hoped to maintain its focus on international security.

Bishop said in a statement Wednesday that Australia would be a candidate for a Security Council seat in 2029-30 as she signalled the country's intention to also seek a spot on the UN Human Rights Council for 2018-20.

The foreign minister, who is in New York for UN meetings, said that Australia served with distinction when it last held a non-permanent seat on the Security Council from 2013-14, "most noticeably through our advocacy of the downing of MH17".

"Had we not been on the

Security Council, I doubt very much we would have been able to achieve that unanimous resolution that led to the presence of Australian authorities and Australian Federal Police in Ukraine to recover the bodies and the remains of the

**"When we participate in these multilateral organisations we enhance Australia's reputation as a good global citizen"**

Opposition Labor spokeswoman

Australians killed on that flight," Bishop told reporters in New York Tuesday.

Malaysia Airlines MH17 was down by a suspected ground-to-air missile over Ukraine in July last year, killing all 298 on board including 38 Australian citizens and residents.

Australia has vowed to keep pushing for the prosecution of those who shot down the flight.

Bishop added that the decision to bid for a Security Council seat was taken by new Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, who ousted Tony Abbott in a political party coup two weeks ago.

The 2029-30 term is the first available opportunity to nominate for a seat that is uncontested, giving Australia the greatest chance of success and minimising the cost, she added.

Opposition Labor spokeswoman Tanya Plibersek supported the moves, saying "when we participate in these multilateral organisations we enhance Australia's reputation as a good global citizen".

But she expressed concern that Australia's treatment of asylum-seekers held in offshore camps on the Pacific islands of Papua New Guinea and Nauru could make the human rights bid "very difficult".

UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants Francois Crepeau last week said he was postponing a visit to Australia due to restrictions on his access to detention centres and fears that people who spoke to him could face legal reprisals.—AFP

## N Korea threatens to scrap family reunion with South

SEOUL — North Korea has threatened to cancel a reunion for families separated by the Korean War, after "reckless" remarks by South Korean President Park Geun-Hye on Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programme and human rights record.

Scrapping the 20-26 October event would effectively tear up an agreement the two Koreas reached in August to de-escalate tensions that had pushed them to the brink of armed conflict.

Addressing the UN General Assembly in New York on Monday, Park said the North's pursuit of a nuclear deterrent constituted a global threat and she urged the international community to join in pushing Pyongyang down a different path. She also called on Pyongyang to improve its human rights record in the wake of a report by a UN Commission of Inquiry which concluded that North Korea was committing rights violations "without parallel in the contemporary world".

A statement issued late Tuesday by a spokesman from the North's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea (CPRK) said Park's comments were "utterly bereft of reason" and proved she was "hell-bent" on confrontation.

"Due to the South Korean authorities' reckless confrontation row, not only North-South relations but the reunion of separated families ... has been put at serious peril," the spokesman said.

"The event may prove completely abortive," he added.

Millions of people were separated during the 1950-53 Korean conflict that sealed the division between the two Koreas. Most died without having a chance to see or hear from their families on the other side of the border, across which all civilian communication is banned. About 66,000 South Koreans — many of them in their 80s or 90s — are on the waiting list for an eventual reunion, but only a very limited number can be chosen each time. Pyongyang has a lengthy track record of manipulating the divided families' issue for political purposes, refusing proposals for regular reunions and cancelling scheduled events over some perceived slight.

On Wednesday, the South's Unification Ministry said Pyongyang's threat to cancel was "very regrettable" and warned the North against seeking political "pretexts" for renegeing on a humanitarian commitment.

There has been widespread speculation that the North is planning a satellite rocket launch to mark the 70th anniversary of the ruling Workers' Party on October 10. UN resolutions prohibit North Korean use of ballistic missile technology, and a rocket launch would trigger a spike in military tensions that is likely to count the family reunion among its first victims.

The reunion programme began in earnest after a historic North-South summit in 2000, and was initially an annual event. But strained cross-border relations have allowed only one reunion in the past five years.—AFP

## Dentist group's 3 ex-leaders nabbed over donations to ruling lawmaker

TOKYO — Tokyo prosecutors Wednesday arrested three former leaders of the Japan Dental Federation for their alleged false political funds report over donations to a ruling Liberal Democratic Party lawmaker.

The three, including former President Mikimasa Takagi, 70, allegedly falsified donations to a support group for Midori Ishii, making them out to be donations to another lawmaker's group to prevent donations to the Ishii side from topping an annual limit of 50 million yen (\$416,963).

The federation is suspected of sending 50 million yen to the Ishii group via a group supporting Democratic Party of Japan lawmaker Masami Nishimura in 2013 while contributing another 45 million yen directly to the Ishii group, they said.

Prosecutors raided the federation's office over the allegation in April.—Kyodo News



Reporters gather in front of the building housing the Japan Dental Federation in Tokyo on 30 September, 2015. Tokyo prosecutors arrested three former leaders of the organisation the same day for their alleged false political funds report over donations to a ruling Liberal Democratic Party lawmaker. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

## China says two Japanese arrested on suspicion of spying

BEIJING — China said Wednesday two Japanese citizens had been arrested for suspected spying, a move likely to increase tensions between Asia's two largest economies.

"China arrested two Japanese on suspicion of carrying out espionage activities," Hong Lei, a foreign ministry spokesman, told a regularly scheduled briefing.

"We have notified Japan on the relevant situation."

Japanese media reported that the two men were held separately in May, one in the northern province of Liaoning and another in the eastern province of Zhejiang. Both were being held on charges including violating China's anti-espionage law, the Asahi newspaper reported. Japan's top government spokesman Yoshihide Suga disputed claims of spying following the reports.—AFP



## Georgia executes a woman for first time in 70 years



(L to R) Dorinda Tatum, Rev Michelle Ledder and Minister Cassandra Henderson react after hearing the news of the execution of Kelly Gissendaner at the Georgia Diagnostic and Classification Prison in Jackson, Georgia early 30 September 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

ATLANTA — The US state of Georgia executed its only woman on death row on Wednesday, marking the first time in 70 years the state has carried out a death sentence on a woman, a prison official said.

Kelly Gissendaner, 47, died by lethal injection at 12:21 am EDT at Georgia Diagnostic and Classification Prison in Jackson, a prison spokeswoman said.

Gissendaner was sentenced to death after being convicted of what is known in the state as malice murder for her role in plotting the killing of her husband, Douglas, in 1997.

Pope Francis, who concluded a six-day US trip on Sunday and is an outspoken opponent of the death penalty, had urged offi-

cial to commute her death sentence.

Gissendaner's execution marks the first death sentence carried out against a woman in Georgia in 70 years. She was the 16th woman executed in the United States since the Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty in 1976.

The US Supreme Court on Tuesday denied last-minute requests for a stay of execution.

The state's Board of Pardons and Paroles met on Tuesday to decide whether its refusal earlier this year to commute Gissendaner's sentence to life in prison should stand.

Board members were not swayed by her latest appeal for clemency, which emphasized her

model behaviour in prison and her remorse. Her lawyers also noted she was not present when the crime was committed.

The man who carried out the kidnapping and murder, Kelly Gissendaner's then-boyfriend, Gregory Owen, received a life sentence.

Rev. Cathy Zappa, an Episcopal priest who taught Gissendaner through a prison theology programme, had said Gissendaner was scared but had not wavered in her belief in God.

Prison spokeswoman Lisa Rodriguez-Presley said Gissendaner requested a final prayer before she died.

Gissendaner's supporters included her three adult children and a former Georgia Supreme Court justice who says he was wrong to deny one of Gissendaner's earlier appeals.

But the family of Doug Gissendaner said Kelly Gissendaner showed him no mercy.

"As the murderer," the family said in a statement before the execution, "she's been given more rights and opportunity over the last 18 years than she ever afforded to Doug who, again, is the victim here." Gissendaner's scheduled execution was called off in February due to bad weather affecting roads and again in March when officials noticed what they believed was a problem with the injection drug they were about to use.—Reuters

## Former US spy agency contractor Snowden draws crowd with Twitter debut

WASHINGTON — Edward Snowden has come in from the cold — on Twitter.

Snowden, the fugitive former National Security Agency contractor who leaked details about the US government's massive surveillance programmes, started a Twitter account on Tuesday from exile in Russia with a simple handle - @snowden. He attracted more than 171,000 followers in about an hour and had 740,000 by Tuesday evening. But Snowden himself was following only one other Twitter account — his former employer's.

"Meanwhile, a thousand people at Fort Meade just opened Twitter," Snowden said in a tweet, referring to the US Army base in Maryland that is the home of the NSA. Snowden's initial tweet was "Can you hear me now?" The message, a take-off on a cellphone provider television commercial, was retweeted 25,000 times within an hour. In his Twitter profile, Snowden described himself by saying: "I used to work for the government. Now I work for the public."

Supporters see Snowden as a whistleblower who boldly exposed government excess. But the US government has filed espionage charges against him for leaking intelligence information.

Snowden fled the United States in May 2013 and has been living in Russia since being granted asylum there later that year.

Initial reaction on social media to Snowden was more positive than negative. Based on a Thomson Reuters proprietary algorithm that looked at Twitter posts mentioning Snowden or his official Twitter handle, there were about 1,109 positive tweets versus 156 negative, a ratio of about 7 to 1, within the first hour of his initial tweet.

The counts were from a representative sample. In his earlier hours on Twitter, Snowden exchanged tweets with prominent astrophysicist and radio talk-show host Neil deGrasse Tyson, who had encouraged Snowden to try Twitter during an interview on his show this month.

On Twitter, the two discussed the discovery of water on Mars, and Snowden joked that his work for the Freedom of the Press Foundation keeps him busy, "but I still find time for cat pictures." Tyson asked how he felt about being considered a traitor as well as a hero, noting that "you're a geek to me." Snowden responded that he was "just a citizen with a voice." The user name @Snowden had already been claimed by someone who had not used it in three years.—Reuters

## Italy clears migrants from tent settlement

ROME — Italian police cleared around a hundred migrants from tents where they were camped along the coastal road near the town of Ventimiglia at the French border at dawn on Wednesday, TV broadcasts showed.

The Facebook page set up by activists for the makeshift camp said some migrants had jumped into the sea in protest, and all of them had retreated to the rocks along the seaside in the standoff with police.

"The police are blocking the border. We are having breakfast on the rocks. We are not going

back," read a Facebook post.

Migrants who have been turned back at the French border have gathered along the coast near Ventimiglia since June. Police have repeatedly tried to clear the area.

More than 130,000 migrants have arrived in Italy by boat so far this year, making it a front-line country along with Greece for Europe's biggest immigration crisis since World War Two. France refuses to let them cross the border because, according to EU law, the migrants are Italy's responsibility.—Reuters



Refugees and migrants disembark from the Blue Star Patmos passenger ship at the port of Piraeus, near Athens, Greece on 30 September 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Finnish protester who dressed in KKK outfit may face charges

HELSINKI — A Finnish teenager who wore a Ku Klux Klan-style outfit to an anti-immigration protest has been questioned and may face charges, police said Tuesday.

The 19-year-old was filmed by public television at a demonstration on Thursday night in

the southern city of Lahti, wearing the notorious white cone mask of the racist American organisation.

Two other protesters were held the same evening for throwing rocks and Red Cross volunteers, but the young man was only brought in on Mon-

day. He was released after questioning but could face charges for "inciting an offence and contempt for the Finnish flag," which he was also with him on the march, police said in a statement.

The outfit was a "stupid, improvised thing" he reportedly

told officers. "He has no criminal record and is not known to be part of any militant group," the statement added.

The Finnish government was quick to condemn as "racist" the protest against a new centre for asylum seekers, adding that "violence and threats

are never acceptable".

The country has been forced to open new shelters for migrants in the face of facing an unexpected influx of asylum seekers, a large number of whom are Iraqis who arrived via neighbouring Sweden.—AFP



## PERSPECTIVES

## Judging: keep it simple

Myint Win Thein

In the fields of history and political science, scholars and analysts use various tools and methods to assess the strengths and shortcomings of a particular leadership. But even when they use the latest theories or quote their most esteemed supporters, academics sometimes get it wrong.

The general public is never slow to make

judgements on leadership. What's curious is that the general public makes fewer mistakes than its more scholarly peers. They assess a leadership by answering a few simple questions, such as whether the leader helped them to reach their goals in life or if undesirable things occurred. For example, if the public desire democracy, peace and prosperity, their leadership is responsible for doing all it can to make it a reality. Governments that incite hatred, whether it be racial, religious or otherwise – or worse still, war and poverty – is guilty of misleading the people regardless of how much it waxes lyrical about democracy. The line between leading and misleading is completely clear to the public. The general public simply

judge a leadership or an era based on what they went through at the time because they are not armed with scholarly tools or academic methods. What is surprising is that they tend to judge a leadership with more acumen than scholars.

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## Turning grey into gold

Shamshad Akhtar

Just a few decades ago, the population of the Asia-Pacific region was dominated by the young. Now, as birth rates have dropped and life expectancies improved, the population is aging. Twelve per cent of our people in the region are already over the age of 60. By 2050, this figure will rise to one-quarter of the whole population. Never before have countries aged as rapidly. It took France 115 years and Sweden 85 years to become aged societies, but for Viet Nam and Thailand, it will take only 20-22 years. The region risks getting old before it gets rich. So how do we address this crisis of a rapidly aging population in our region?

It is clear that the demographic window of opportunity for the region, which opened with a surge in the working-age population, is closing. Take China for example: 67 per cent of its population is of working age today – but this has started to change. Forty years from now, this will have shrunk to only half, with almost one third of the entire Chinese population older than 65.

Does this mean that our region will inevitably lose its economic dynamism?

Not necessarily – if we prepare properly, and act now. The International Day of Older Persons, celebrated on 1 October every year, provides us with a good opportunity to reflect on how best to prepare for these new challenges and opportunities.

There is still ample scope to increase labour force participation, even as working-age populations decline. In many countries across the region, large proportions of the population, especially women, remain excluded from labour markets. For example in the Republic of Korea, only 56 per cent of women of working age participate in the labour force, and in South Asia, less than a third do. Going forward, countries will have to adopt more active policies to encourage and enable women's labour force participation.

Countries with an increasingly aged population might also consider policies attracting orderly and reliable international migration as an additional option to address key potential labour shortages.

Another key element which must be addressed to sustain economic growth is to increase productivity. When countries age, their economic structure should move from labour-intensive industries to more technology-oriented ones. This entails improving the quality of education and promoting technological upgrades and their wide-

spread adoption.

We also need a new system of inter-generational solidarity. In the traditional system, older persons were looked after by their children. But these traditional systems are breaking up as a result of increasing industrialization, increased women's labour force participation and rural to urban migration. However, we can turn these changes into another opportunity. We can turn population ageing into a second demographic dividend, with financially-secure, healthy older persons, empowered to focus their decades of accumulated experience, wisdom and wealth to stimulate new economic growth. The specific needs of older persons can also spur innovation and demand for new products, as well as creating job opportunities in care industries. This will only work however, if we act now to ensure that older persons are provided with the means and opportunities to contribute to society. Currently, only about 26 per cent of working-age people in the region contribute to pension schemes. We need to further develop pension systems to increase savings and to sustain domestic demand. We also need to introduce principles of solidarity into pension systems, and especially address the needs of women.

Population ageing plans must be at the centre of development, not an afterthought, and the time to act is now. Comprehensive policies, developed and implemented in collaboration with older persons, are urgently needed.

With the right preparation, we can benefit from a golden generation of healthy, wealthy and active older persons. In 2002, the United Nations brought countries together in Madrid to agree on a global way forward: to treat older persons as actors of development; to ensure their health and wellbeing; and to create enabling and supportive environments for them. In the new sustainable development agenda, adopted last week, older persons have a role to play in almost each of the new goals. The United Nations stands ready to support countries to put these plans into action, and to secure future societies for all ages in Asia and the Pacific.

*(The author is an Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). She is also the UN's Sherpa for the G20 and previously served as Governor of the Central Bank of Pakistan and Vice President of the MENA Region of the World Bank.)*

## Act tough against tobacco

Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh



Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia Region

TOBACCO kills 150 people every hour and 1.3 million annually in the WHO South-East Asia Region. The use of tobacco in the Region is unacceptably high, and is increasing alarmingly. The Region has 260 million smokers and 290 million

dents in the Region is offered free tobacco as per the recent Global Youth Tobacco Survey. Some countries have seen an increase in tobacco use among 13 to 15 years old since 2003. Other countries in the Region have not seen any decline. The situation is grim and getting worse.

It has been a decade since the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) was developed. Ten of the 11 countries in the Region signed the WHO FCTC. All countries are implementing measures against tobacco. Clearly, what we are doing is not enough. We need to redouble our efforts to outpace the tobacco epidemic.

The use of tobacco is a major risk factor for non-communicable diseases (NCD) which account for

and appropriate are the best-buys, which include increasing taxes on all tobacco products. Making all products equally less affordable would discourage people from switching from an expensive tobacco product to a less expensive one. Taxing all smokeless tobacco products, which are highly toxic and addictive, is equally important.

Countries need to develop, implement and strengthen legal frameworks, regulatory mechanisms, policies and sale of tobacco products. We now need policies and regulations for e-cigarettes – to ban and restrict their sale, promotion, advertising and sponsorship.

Robust public campaigns against tobacco and large graphic warnings on cigarette packs and other tobacco products need to be implemented at the earliest. Countries need to ensure smoke-free workplaces and public spaces.

Health systems need to be strengthened to address tobacco control and prevention. Tobacco cessation services should be provided at all health care levels.

Another area where governments need to start focusing attention is creating alternative livelihoods for tobacco growers and workers.

Implementing stronger measures need firm and continuous political commitment. National, regional and inter-country collaborating mechanisms are needed for regularly sharing best practices on tobacco control. Most importantly, countries need to support cross-border control of tobacco related trade and marketing.

Countries in the Region have unanimously committed to achieving 30% reduction in tobacco use by 2025. To get there we need to act now, firmly.

**"The use of tobacco is a major risk factor for non-communicable diseases (NCD) which account for 62% of the deaths in the Region."**

smokeless tobacco users. One-third of the population is exposed to tobacco smoke. The effects of tobacco are not confined to users alone. Second hand and even third hand smoking is impacting the health of families and the people around the smokers.

The impact of tobacco is much beyond health. Increased expenditure on healthcare, deaths and diseases cause productivity loss, affects the quality of life and has economic cost to the society. There is a close association between poverty and tobacco. Tobacco use is more prevalent among the socio-economically vulnerable groups. One in 10 stu-

62% of the deaths in the Region. NCDs are also on the rise. A large proportion of these diseases and deaths and their socio-economic consequences are preventable with effective tobacco control and prevention measures.

To accelerate efforts against tobacco, countries adopted the Dili Declaration on Tobacco control at the Regional Committee meeting of WHO South-East Asia Region in Timor-Leste on 7 September. All 11 member countries pledged a full-on war against tobacco.

This renewed commitment needs to be reinforced with stronger measures to prevent and control tobacco use. The most cost-effective



# Malaysian motorcyclists enter Myanmar via Myawady border gate

FOUR MALAYSIAN TOURISTS explored Myanmar on motorbikes, travelling along the Hpa An-Kyaithiyo-Nay Pyi Taw-Inlay-Mandalay-Pagan-Kalay-Tamu route from 16 to 25 September. They entered Myanmar from Thailand via the Myawady border gate and exited into India via Chin State.

Their tour was arranged by the Shwezin-Yeitnyein tour company. Myanmar's peak tourist season has just begun, and the volume of tourist groups and individual travellers is expected to rise drastically.

The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and local tour companies have also made it possible

for foreign tourists to enter and exit Myanmar by car, motorcycle and bicycle at border gates.

Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Htay Aung said that more than 3.08 million tourists visited Myanmar as of September this year. He added that if the momentum persists, Myanmar may receive more than its target of 4.5 million visitors during 2015.

Daw Khin Than Win, director of the Tourism Promotion and International Relations Department under the ministry said she "ambitiously expects Myanmar to welcome 5 million visitors this year."—*Ministry of Hotels and Tourism*



Malaysian Motorcyclists stopped over in Myanmar after entering the country through Myawady. PHOTO: MHT

# UFM attends meetings in New York

UNION MINISTER for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin, who is currently in New York, the United States of America, to attend the 70<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), participated in the Informal ASEAN Foreign Ministerial Meeting (IAMM), the Leaders' Summit on Countering ISIL and Violent Extremism, and the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting with the President of the

70<sup>th</sup> UNGA and the UN Secretary-General (AUMM) on 29 September 2015 at the UN Headquarters.

Afterwards, the Union Minister attended the Partnership Group Meeting for Peace, Development and Democracy in Myanmar (PGM) and briefed the Meeting on achievements and challenges of the reform process in Myanmar, efforts for holding of transparent, free and fair elections, promotion

and protection human rights, endeavours for signing of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreements, efforts for development in Rakhine State, measures taken by Myanmar on boat people, enactment of certain domestic laws, potentials for future cooperation with the United Nations, and calls for continuation of the international community's constructive cooperation in the reform process of Myanmar.—*MNA*

# School children fed milk at Myawady primary school



School children enjoy milk at Myaenigone basic education primary school in Myawady.

PHOTO: HTEIN LIN AUNG

STUDENTS at the Myaenigone basic education primary school in Myawady were fed milk on 29 September to promote the habit of consuming enough calcium for healthy growth.

The event was organised by the District Live-

stock and Husbandry Department and attended by deputy director Dr San Myint. The milk was donated by U Zaw Myint and his family. A total of 190 students drank milk at the event.—*Htein Lin Aung (IPRD)*

# Library course concludes in Tatkon



An official presents award to a trainee. PHOTO: TIN SOE LWIN (IPRD)

A COURSE on library science concluded in Tatkon Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, on 28 September.

Outstanding trainees from the course were given awards at the local middle school, where the course was held. It was attended by both teachers and students.

The Tatkon Township Information and Public Relations Department conducted the course, and its senior officials presented the prizes.

The two-day course was conducted to acquaint local residents

with libraries and to promote the maintenance of Bawashaysaung Library.

One trainee who received an award said she will strive to sustain the library and regularly visit the library after finishing her work on the farm.

The rural 12 metre by 11 metre brick library remains unfinished. Library patron Abbot Sangha U Tayzawintaka from the local Paintaw Monastery is accepting donations for the library's completion. IPRD officials visited the site and donated books.—*Tin Soe Lwin (IPRD)*

# World Heart Day observed in Mandalay

WORLD Heart Day was observed at Mandalay General Hospital on 29 September by the hospital's Cardiology Department and local pharmaceutical companies.

Upper Myanmar Supervisor of Hospitals Dr Maung Win and the Cardiology Department's retired director Professor Dr Tun

Shwe spoke at the event.

Cardiologists gave educational talks on heart disease prevention and dieting to members of the public and members of the audience were provided with free blood pressure and cholesterol tests. A lottery was also drawn.—*Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)*



## Israeli air raids hit Gaza

GAZA CITY — Israeli air raids have hit the Gaza Strip in response to a rocket fired from the Palestinian enclave that was intercepted by the Iron Dome missile defence system, officials said Wednesday.

There were no reports of injuries from both the rocket fire and the Israeli raids, which the military said targeted “four terror sites”.

Witnesses and Palestinian security sources said four training camps for Hamas’s armed wing, the Ezzedine Al-Qassam Brigades, were hit in the raids. They were empty at the time.

Three of the camps are located in Gaza City and the fourth in the north of the coastal enclave.

The rocket from Gaza was fired toward the southern Israeli city of Ashdod, according to the military.

Salafist militants claiming links to the Islamic State group have said they were behind recent rocket fire from the Gaza Strip, but Israel holds Hamas responsible for all such incidents. Hamas is the Islamist movement that runs Gaza, which has been hit by three wars with Israel since 2008, including last summer’s devastating conflict that left more than 100,000 homeless and killed more than 2,200.

A rocket fired last week from Gaza into southern Israel caused no damage or injuries.—*AFP*

## Kurds take ground from Islamic State in north Iraq

ERBIL — Kurdish forces said they drove Islamic State out of several villages near the oil city of Kirkuk in northern Iraq on Wednesday after US-led coalition airstrikes targeted insurgent positions overnight.

The assault, which began at dawn, is the latest of a number of offensives to consolidate Kurdish control over Kirkuk and drive the militants away. It also brought the peshmerga, the military forces of Iraq’s autonomous Kurdistan region, closer to the insurgents’ bastion of Hawijah.

Kurdish counter-terrorism forces said in a statement they, along with the peshmerga, had driven the militants out of four villages southwest of Kirkuk.

“At six in the morning, the peshmerga and counter-terrorism forces began to advance as part of a plan to clear several more villages from Daesh terrorists and advance to the vicinity of the Hawijah district,”

read the statement.

Daesh is a widely used Arabic name for the Islamic State group, also known as ISIL or ISIS.

The Kurds took full control of Kirkuk last summer when Iraqi soldiers abandoned their bases in and around the city as Islamic State militants overran around a third of the country including Hawijah, around 55 km (34 miles) to the west.

Kurdish leaders say they will never give up the ethnically mixed city, which sits outside the formal boundary of their region on some of Iraq’s largest oil reserves, but to which they, as well as Turkmen and Arabs, lay claim.

The peshmerga have been widening a buffer around Kirkuk city in a series of offensives, clearing more than 530 square kilometres over the past six months, according to the region’s security council.—*Reuters*

## NATO troops reach Kunduz to support Afghan forces



Afghan security forces take their positions during a gun battle in Kunduz city, northern Afghanistan on 29 September 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

KABUL — NATO special forces have reached Kunduz to support Afghan troops after the Taliban seized the strategic northern city, the military coalition said Wednesday.

“Coalition special forces are on the ground in Kunduz advising their Afghan counterparts,” a NATO spokesman said.

The forces are comprised of US, British and German troops, a Western military source told AFP

on condition of anonymity, without specifying the number.

NATO said US forces had also carried out three air strikes in total since Tuesday — one on the outskirts of Kunduz and two near the city’s airport, which is currently under attack by Taliban insurgents.

After years of costly involvement in Afghanistan, most NATO troops pulled back from the frontlines by the end of 2014, although

a residual force of around 13,000 remains for training and counter-terrorism operations.

The Taliban’s incursion into Kunduz, barely nine months after the NATO combat mission ended, raises troubling questions over the capacity of Afghan forces as they battle militants largely on their own. It has also renewed questions about Washington’s plan to withdraw most US forces next year.—*AFP*

## First French strike on IS in Syria kills 30 jihadists

BEIRUT — France’s first air strike on the Islamic State group in Syria killed at least 30 jihadists, including 12 child soldiers, a monitoring group said on Wednesday.

“The French air strike (on Sunday) on an IS training camp in eastern Syria killed at least 30 IS fighters including 12 from the ‘Cubs of the Caliphate,’” said Rami Abdel Rahman of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

IS calls its child soldiers “Cubs of the Caliphate”.

Abdel Rahman said foreign IS fighters were also among the dead, and that the strike had wounded around 20 people. The raid took place in Syria’s eastern province of Deir Ezzor, near the Albu Kamal border crossing used by IS to link the Syrian and Iraqi parts of its so-called “caliphate”.

President Francois Hollande

said on Sunday that six French warplanes hit an IS training camp near Deir Ezzor city, and that more strikes could follow in the coming weeks.

“We struck militarily an extremely sensitive site for (IS),” said French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, describing it as a “strategic hub” for militants travelling between Iraq and Syria.—*AFP*

## Gulf-backed Yemeni forces battle Houthis for strategic territory



Saudi troops walk past armoured personnel carriers at their base in Yemen’s southern port city of Aden. PHOTO: REUTERS

SANAA — Tribal fighters backed by a Saudi-coalition won control of a strategic dam in central Yemen from Houthi forces on Tuesday but lost ground in the south near the port of Aden, where President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi’s government is based, residents and officials said.

The seizure of the Marib dam by militiamen fighting alongside Gulf troops is their biggest success in several weeks of an armed push towards the Houthi-controlled capital Sanaa 110 km (70 miles) West that was slowed by landmines and stiff resistance from Houthi forces ensconced in rugged mountains.

Pictures printed on the front pages of Gulf dailies showed the foreign troops and local tribesmen

planting the flags of the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia over the dam. A coalition of Arab states has been attacking the Iran-allied Houthis across Yemen since March, trying to dislodge it from areas it has seized since last year and to Hadi.

Arab Gulf countries see their intervention as a part of a wider struggle by Sunni states against what they see as meddling by Shi’ite Iran, a charge Tehran denies. Condemning Hadi’s government as a tool of the Gulf monarchies and the imperialist West, the Houthis say their spread through the country is a revolution.

The Saudi-led campaign seized Aden and other southern provinces from the Houthis in July

but has struggled to take over other population centres and cement their authority in the increasingly lawless region.

In pro-Hadi fighters’ first significant loss in weeks, a district in the southwestern Taiz province fell to the Houthis and their allies in Yemen’s army on Tuesday.

Residents and local officials also said they appeared to be mobilizing their forces for a southern push in the nearby area of Kirsh, about 75 km (46 miles) from Aden.

Six months of civil war and hundreds of coalition air strikes have killed more than 5,400 people in Yemen, according to the United Nations, and exacerbated already widespread hunger and suffering.—*Reuters*



# Japan factory output slides unexpectedly, risks of recession rising



Employees work an assembly line at a factory of Glory Ltd, a manufacturer of automatic change dispensers, in Kazo, north of Tokyo, Japan. PHOTO: REUTERS

TOKYO — Japan's factory output unexpectedly fell for the second straight month in August, fuelling worries the economy is slipping back into recession and raising more doubts about whether the government can reignite growth and end decades of deflation.

As a slowdown in China chills global growth, hitting export-reliant Asia particularly hard, analysts say the Bank of Ja-

pan may be forced to offer fresh stimulus as early as next month in a bid to get the faltering economy back on track.

"In the absence of growth engines due to weakness in external and domestic demand, the possibility is growing that the economy has shrunk for a second straight quarter in July-September and it may be slipping into a recession," said Hidenobu Tokuda, senior economist at Mizuho

Research Institute.

"Given weakening of the economy, the BOJ could ease policy again next month, even though Governor (Haruhiko) Kuroda remains bullish and the government is wary about further yen weakening boosting the cost of imports."

The economy shrank an annualised 1.2 percent in April-June. August factory output fell 0.5 percent month-on-month,

trade ministry data showed on Wednesday, short of a 1.0 percent increase expected by analysts.

Not surprisingly, exporting industries led the decline. These included general-purpose machinery, cars and China-bound auto parts. The cooling China economy has been adding to global deflationary pressures in the form of crumbling commodity and oil prices.

The Bank of Japan has been pumping billions of dollars into the economy to spark inflation towards its 2 percent goal by September 2016, and has remained adamant that prices will move up over time despite faltering external and domestic demand.

However, few — if any — investors expect the target to be reached as a renewed drop in oil costs saw prices fall for the first time since the BOJ deployed its massive asset purchases more than 2 years ago.

The weak indicators have rekindled doubts about Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's 'Abenomics' strategy of reviving growth through fiscal expansion, monetary stimulus and structural reforms.

Speaking in New York at a news conference on Tuesday, Abe said: "We have come to the

point where a bit more effort is required," to pull the world's third-biggest economy out of deflation.

The outlook for businesses also looked grim, with the trade ministry cutting its assessment of industrial output, saying it is weakening. Manufacturers surveyed by the trade ministry expect output to rise just 0.1 percent in September before bouncing 4.4 percent in October.

Separate data showed consumer spending also remained fragile, with retail sales up just 0.8 percent in August from a year earlier, slowing markedly from 1.8 percent growth in July.

The BOJ will scrutinise a batch of data — including its key tankan survey due on Thursday and household spending out Friday — at its policy review next week. It has already pumped 180 trillion yen (989 billion pounds) into the economy since launching a massive stimulus programme in April 2013, and each month gobbles up government bonds equivalent to about 1 percent of Japan's GDP.

Analysts say the central bank won't be able to stay its hand for too much longer. "Additional easing by the Bank of Japan next month looks all but inevitable," said Marcel Thieliant, economist at Capital Economics.—Reuters

## Rio de Janeiro mayor bans Uber, open to debating regulation

RIO DE JANEIRO — The mayor of Rio de Janeiro said on Tuesday he would ban the use of ride-hailing app Uber in the city, but left the door open to possible regulation of the service in the future.

The decision comes as major cities across Brazil struggle to come to grips with the app and the impact it is having on local taxi drivers.

Mayor Eduardo Paes had until Tuesday to sign a law passed by the city council last month.

"Uber is banned," he told a press conference in Rio de Janeiro. Un-licensed drivers will face a fine of up to 2000 reais (\$493).

But the mayor, who presents himself as a technology fan and wears an Apple watch, said he was open to discussing with Uber Technologies Inc how it might be legalized and regulated.

Uber officials in Brazil could not immediately be reached for comment. The service has triggered protests by

taxi drivers from London to New Delhi as it upends traditional business models that require professional drivers to pay steep licensing fees to drive cabs. In July thousands of taxi drivers protested in Rio, blocking main roads during rush hour.

Uber has argued that banning the app in Rio is a move against customer choice and mobility in a city known for traffic jams and rude taxi drivers. An Uber campaign resulted in 700,000 emails being sent to City Hall to veto the law.

The company has also suggested Brazil introduce a system by which Uber drivers pay a fee into a regional fund to improve public transport. Such a scheme is being introduced in Mexico.

But the taxi lobby is strong in Rio and the law was passed

**"I can't drive an Uber, it's illegal."**

**Mayor Eduardo Paes**



Taxis parked on the street, one with words which reads "Out Uber", are pictured during a protest against the online car-sharing service Uber in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. PHOTO: REUTERS

by an overwhelming majority in the city council.

Paes said City Hall would look to develop an app of its own to allow users to rate the service of taxi drivers, one of the main advantages Uber users cite over local cabs.

A photo of Paes driving a taxi was splashed across the

front page of Rio's main daily, O Globo, on Tuesday.

The mayor drove the cab on Sunday to get frank views from residents about the state of the city.

When asked why he wasn't driving an Uber, the mayor replied "I can't drive an Uber, it's illegal." —Reuters

## EU, China sign key partnership on 5G

BRUSSELS — The European Union (EU) on Monday announced that it has signed a key agreement with China on 5G network, saying both sides are ready to enhance cooperation on research funding and facilitating market access.

"Both parties are committed to reciprocity and openness in terms of access to 5G networks research funding, market access as well as in membership of Chinese and EU 5G associations," EU said in a press release. Signed at Monday's EU-China high level economic and trade dialogue in Beijing, the agreement was described by the bloc as a "milestone" in the global race to develop 5G networks. By 2020 there will be more than 30 times as much mobile Internet traffic as there was in 2010, the EU said, adding that in the future everybody and everything will use 5G, the next generation of communication networks. "With today's signature with China, the EU has now teamed up with the most important Asian partners in a global race to make 5G a reality by 2020. It's a crucial step in making 5G a success," said Gunther Oettinger, European commissioner in charge of digital economy and society.—Xinhua

## All four French telecoms groups submit applications for mobile auction

PARIS — France's telecoms regulator ARCEP said on Tuesday that it has received applications from all four domestic carriers to indicate that they will take part in an upcoming auction of 4G mobile spectrum.

Orange, Numericable-SFR, Bouygues Telecom and Iliad will bid for the 700 megahertz airwaves, which are being freed up from television broadcasters.

Mobile carriers need such low-frequency spectrum to trans-

port voice and data traffic at time when volumes are surging as people increasingly surf the web and watch video on the go. The auction process will occur during the month of November, said ARCEP, with the aim of deliver-

ing the approvals by end of the year.

France hopes to raise at least 2.5 billion euros from the sale of mobile airwaves, which has already been earmarked for the defence budget. —Reuters



## Taj Mahal needs nine-year mud pack to tackle pollution

NEW DELHI — The Taj Mahal will need nine years of mud packs to remove yellow stains from its white marble walls caused by air pollution, the *Times of India* reported on Wednesday.

Archaeologists said the lengthy period was needed to properly and safely clean particles from the four minarets and the main dome of the famed monument to love.

Authorities have taken numerous steps in recent years to try to protect the 17<sup>th</sup>-century monument from pollution coming from the busy city of Agra nearby, including banning local coal-powered industries.

The mud pack cleaning was announced last year, followed by

a local ban on the common practice of burning cow dung for fuel, in order to reduce the carbon deposits on the Taj's walls.

The *Times of India* newspaper outlined an action plan by authorities after submitting a Right To Information request to access government documents.

The Taj — India's top tourist attraction — was built by Mughal emperor Shah Jahan as a tomb for his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal, who died giving birth in 1631.

It has drawn a string of world leaders and royalty including former US president Bill Clinton, while Diana, the late British princess, was famously photographed alone on a marble seat there in 1992.—*AFP*

## Catalan leader slams lawsuit over breakaway vote

BARCELONA — Catalonia's president Artur Mas Wednesday accused the Spanish government of suing him because its "pride was hurt" by his bids to let his region vote on independence from Spain.

A court on Tuesday summoned Mas to face possible charges for holding a 2014 symbolic ballot on Catalan independence, which is fiercely opposed by Madrid.

The case dates back to last year but the summons came just two days after separatist groups won an absolute majority in the Catalan parliament in a separate regional election.

"It was the reaction of a proud government whose pride was hurt, a rabid, clumsy one incapable of dialogue, which acts brutishly and is doing all it can to try to get rid of me," Mas said in a radio interview.

Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy rejected Mas's claims of victory in Sunday's election, in which Mas and fellow separatists won control of the regional parliament but fell short of an absolute majority of votes.

The separatists claimed Sunday's regional election result gave them a mandate to

**"It was the reaction of a proud government whose pride was hurt, a rabid, clumsy one incapable of dialogue."**

**Catalonia's president**

push on towards a declaration of independence by 2017.

The Catalonia high court on Tuesday called Mas to go before a judge on 15 October for questioning on accusations of civil disobedience, abuse of power

and embezzlement of public funds in last year's vote. He and two other officials are accused of breaking the law by organising the ballot on 9 November in defiance of an injunction by Spain's Constitutional Court. If found guilty they could be banned from public office.

Mas said Wednesday that the November vote was "a great

act of democratic rebellion".

Catalan nationalists say they get a raw deal from the central government which redistributes their taxes.

Mas said he was read for dialogue with Madrid, but Ra-

joy has refused any talks on independence.

Rajoy has rejected their calls for greater autonomy and called for unity as the eurozone's fourth-biggest economy recovers from recession.

In order to form a pro-independence parliamentary bloc, Mas's Together For Yes alliance must team up with the radical left-wing group CUP, which has said it will refuse to accept him as leader of the separatist movement.

With both parties set to start negotiations imminently, Mas called on the CUP to "join forces against an arrogant adversary that does not want dialogue."

Catalan leaders could find themselves with new interlocutors in Madrid depending on who wins Spain's general election in December.—*AFP*

## Nepali leader says India 'breaking international law'

KATHMANDU — A senior Nepali lawmaker, tipped to be the next prime minister, on Wednesday accused neighbouring giant India of breaking international law by deliberately halting cross-border trade, forcing the landlocked nation to ration fuel.

Since last Thursday, members of an ethnic minority living in Nepal's southern plains have blocked a critical trade route into the country from India in protest over the new constitution adopted on 20 September.

Officials say cargo movement through other border checkpoints has also declined sharply since last week, sparking fears of a fuel shortage and long queues at petrol stations.

K.P. Oli, chief of the ruling UML party, said the Indian government, rather than demonstrators, was responsible for the border stoppage, in an unofficial protest over its dissatisfaction

over the constitution.

His comments reflect mounting public anger in Nepal where many accuse India of being behind the blockade. New Delhi has denied the allegations and urged dialogue with the protesters to end the stand-off.

"India is saying those people (protesters) are in no man's land, they are blocking the roads so (Indian trucks) are not being able to supply, that's not true," he said.

"There is no gas, no vegetable supplies, no fuel for vehicles, no fuel for airlines, and life is about frozen," Oli told AFP in an interview.

"We don't want this type of friendship."

"India should not violate the treaties and agreements between our two countries, one. Second, India shouldn't undermine and violate the international norms and rights of the landlocked countries in general."

More than 40 people have been killed in clashes between police and protesters representing ethnic minorities who say a new federal structure laid out in the constitution will leave them under-represented in the national parliament.

New Delhi, fearing instability on the border, has criticised Nepal for rushing the constitution rather than resolving the concerns of the minorities, many of whom have relatives living in India.

Oli is seen as the top candidate when parliament votes on a new prime minister to head the government in coming weeks in the wake of the constitution's adoption.

His comments signify a stronger stand against India which has traditionally exerted significant political influence in Nepal.

The Indian Oil Corporation is the sole supplier of fuel to Ne-

pal.

As cross-border trade slowed to a crawl, with hundreds of trucks backed up at checkpoints in the plains, home to half the country's population, Nepal this week began rationing fuel and decided to limit the number of vehicles allowed on the roads.

The new constitution, Nepal's first to be drawn up by elected representatives, is the final stage in a peace process that began when Maoist rebels laid down their arms in 2006 after a decade-long insurgency.

Work on the new constitution began in 2008 after the Maoists won parliamentary elections and abolished the monarchy. But power-sharing squabbles between parties stymied progress.

Lawmakers finally reached agreement in June this year, spurred by a massive earthquake two months earlier that killed nearly 8,900 people.—*AFP*

### PICTURE OF THE DAY



A woman with a pram walks past a street art installation in Astana, Kazakhstan, 30 September, 2015.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Singapore's population grows at slowest in more than a decade

SINGAPORE — Singapore's population rose 1.2 percent over the past year, the slowest in more than a decade, as it tried to reduce numbers of foreign workers, while long-standing efforts to encourage citizens to have more children bore some fruit.

The total population stood at 5.54 million as of June 2015, according to data released on Wednesday, including 3.38 million citizens.

The citizen population continued to age, with 13.1 percent 65 or older, compared with 12.4 percent last year, due to slowing fertility rates and increasing life expectancy.

Singapore has for years tried to get its well-educated and well-off citizens to have more children, with little success but births in 2014 rose 7 percent, to 33,193, close to the 2012 level, which was the highest in a decade.

Increasing numbers of foreign workers led to grumbling about high property prices and crowded public transport and in response, the government has been curbing numbers, exacerbating a labour crunch, particularly in manufacturing, services and construction.

Businesses faced a tight labour market but help was at hand, the government said in its 2015 population report.

"The government will support businesses to shift towards skills- and capital-intensive ways to grow, so that businesses can continue to grow and succeed here, to create quality jobs for Singaporeans," the government said.—*Reuters*



**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE****MV PRINCESS VOY NO (001)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PRINCESS VOY NO (001) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.10.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-1 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 ECL (S'PORE) PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301191/2301178

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE****MV LINDAUNIS VOY NO (001N)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV LINDAUNIS VOY NO (001N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.10.2015 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 CHINA SHIPPING LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE****MV SINAR SOLO VOY NO (677NIS)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SINAR SOLO VOY NO (677NIS) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.10.2015 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 SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINE**

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE****MV NASICO LION VOY NO ( )**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV NASICO LION VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.10.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W(2) 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

**SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT NOTICE  
(PROCUREMENT OF GOODS / WORKS)  
REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR  
NCDDP – NATIONAL COMMUNITY DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT  
Loan No./Credit No./ Grant No.:H-814MM**

**Contract Title: PRINTING OF THE OPERATIONS MANUAL  
Reference No. : NCB G 26**

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received financing from the International Development Association (IDA) toward the cost of the National Community Driven Development Project (NCDDP). The Department of Rural Development (DRD) of the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, in its role as implementing agency of the NCDDP, intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contract for the printing of the operations manual.

The Department of Rural Development (DRD) now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the printing of:

Item	Descriptions	Units	Delivery to:
1	80000 copies of the Operations Manual Volume 1 (250 pages) in Myanmar Language	80,000	20.000 copies in Yangon. 20.000 copies in Mandalay and 40.000 copies in Nay Pyi Taw
2	2.000 Printed copies of the Operations Manual Volume 2 (300 pages) in English/Myanmar language	20,000	500 copies in Yangon. 500 copies in Mandalay and 1.000 copies in Nay Pyi Taw

Bidding will be conducted through the National Competitive Bidding procedures as specified in the World Bank's Guidelines:

A complete set of bidding documents in English may be obtained by interested eligible bidders upon the submission of a written application to the address below. The bidding documents will be sent by e-mail only.

Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 26 October 2015 09:30 Hrs Myanmar time. Electronic bidding will not be permitted. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the bidders' designated representatives at the address below on 26 October 2015 10:30 Hrs Myanmar time. Further information and bidding documents may be obtained through Mr. Kyaw Swa Aung, Director of DRD,067-409071(Office), 09-43434333 ([drdmyanmar@gmail.com](mailto:drdmyanmar@gmail.com)) during office hours Monday to Friday from at the address given below.

The address referred to above is:

Attn: U Kyaw Soe, Deputy Director General  
Office N° 14, Nay Pyi Taw, Union of the Republic of Myanmar

Department of Rural Development

Tel: +95-067-409413, 409071 (office)

Email: [drdmyanmar@gmail.com](mailto:drdmyanmar@gmail.com), Website: [www.cdd.drdmyanmar.org](http://www.cdd.drdmyanmar.org)

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The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Dated 1 October 2015

[Imm@kcyangon.com](mailto:Imm@kcyangon.com)

**WEATHER REPORT**

**SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS RECORDED AT 09:30 hrs M.S.T:** During the past (24) hours, rain or thunder-showers have been fairly widespread in Taninthayi Region, scattered in Bago and Ayeyawady Regions, Kayin State, isolated in Nay Pyi Taw, Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway and Yangon Regions, Shan,Chin, Rakhine and Mon States and weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Taunggyi (1.26) inches, Myeik (1.18) inches, Madauk (1.14) inches and Tharrawady (1.06) inches.

**BAY INFERENCE:** Monsoon is weak in the Andaman Sea and South Bay, weather is partly cloudy elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 1st October, 2015:** Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Taninthayi Region, scattered in Naypyitaw, Man-

dalay,Bago and Ayeyarwady Regions, Shan, Kayin and Mon States, isolated in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (80%).

**STATE OF THE SEA:** Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Continuation of thundery activities in the Southern Myanmar areas.

**FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1st October, 2015:** Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%)

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1st October, 2015:** Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1st October, 2015:** Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

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## Pope joke, few changes make for lukewarm Trevor Noah TV debut



Television personality Jon Stewart (L) talks with actor Trevor Noah at the 67th Annual Primetime Emmy Awards Governors Ball in Los Angeles, California on 20 September, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

NEW YORK — Trevor Noah got a lukewarm welcome as new host of “The Daily Show” in a debut that featured jokes about himself, immigrants and Pope Francis, and was watched by some 3.5 million Americans.

Ratings data on Tuesday showed that Noah’s first outing drew about the same TV audience as Jon Stewart’s farewell in August after 16 years with the late night Comedy Central show.

However, Noah’s premiere on Monday was simulcast across all Viacom Inc platforms. The audience watching on Comedy Central was estimated at just over 1 million, Nielsen data showed.

As promised, the South African-born comedian made few changes to the format of political and pop culture satire and a nightly interview that was developed by Stewart.

That proved both reassuring and a little disappointing to US television critics.

Washington Post critic Hank Stuever called Noah’s performance a “seemingly smooth debut.”

“I just have to ask: What were we all so afraid of?” he said. ... It’s too early for Noah to crush it, but it’s enough for now to just utter a sigh of relief. ‘The Daily Show’ is back with its essen-

tial wit and irreverence intact,” Stuever wrote.

Noah, who is little known in the United States, made his newness a running joke in Monday’s show, quipping that the “Daily Show” family “has a new stepdad. And he’s black.” Since other celebrities had turned down the host’s job, “once again, a job Americans rejected is now being done by an immigrant.”

A joke about Pope Francis and the size of his penis, and a cocaine joke about dead singer Whitney Houston, did not go over well with either the studio audience or some TV critics.

Lloyd Grove for the Daily Beast called Noah’s debut “crude, clumsy.”

“His material was hit-and-miss, -- even the raucously cheer-leading studio audience groaned at times -- and he seemed, at least in his initial outing, to lack his predecessor’s valuable gift for exhaling laughs from the death of a punch line,” he wrote.

At USA Today, Robert Bianco felt Noah’s debut was “less than spectacular” but New York Times TV critic James Poniewozik, compared it to a new iPhone.

“It was sleeker, fresher and redesigned,” Poniewozik said. “There were tweaks here and there - look, even a new font! But it still does essentially the same thing.”—Reuters

## Redfoo to headline Yangon concert for flood victims



Redfoo, also known as Stefan Gordy of the band LMFAO. PHOTO: REUTERS

A MUSIC concert will be held at the Shwe Htut Tin Ground in Tamwe Township on 24 October, according to Polyphonic Music & Entertainment, who is organising the event.

The concert will feature American DJ and singer Redfoo, Malaysian DJ and singer Darren Ashley, and Myanmar

artists Ar-T and DJ Wine, among others.

Part of the profits from the concert will be donated to flood victims in Myanmar, according to event organiser Ko Taye Tin.

Ticket prices will range from K50,000 to K700,000. —Maung Sein Lwin

## Nicki Minaj to bring family story to life in TV comedy series



PHOTO: REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — Rapper Nicki Minaj is bringing the story of her New York upbringing to television with a comedy series for ABC Family.

“This is one of the more unique adventures I’ve ever embarked on,” Minaj, 32, said in a statement on Tuesday.

The series is to be based on Minaj’s family which moved to the United States from Trinidad and Tobago in the early 1990s.

The musician will produce the still-untitled show as well as act in it, although her role has not been announced. In revealing the news on Twitter on Tuesday, she said she was scouting for at least one important role: “I am now launching a nation wide search to find #YoungNicki.”

Shooting will begin this winter in the Queens borough of New York but no date has yet been set for broadcast.

“Nicki is an international superstar, yet not everyone knows how inspiring and hilarious her true story is,” said Karey Burke, ABC Family’s executive vice president programming and development, in a statement.

The hip hop celebrity is to appear next year on the big screen for “Barbershop 3,” starring as a hairdresser alongside rapper Ice Cube.

ABC Family is a unit of Walt Disney Co.—Reuters

## Orlando Bloom visits migrant camp



UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Orlando Bloom (R) takes a selfie with Tariq Maria from Damascus, Syria as he visits the migrant transit camp in Macedonia. PHOTO: REUTERS

MACEDONIA — Hollywood actor Orlando Bloom paid a visit to the Gevgelija migrant transit camp in Macedonia on Tuesday, as part of his role as a goodwill ambassador for the United Nations’ Children’s Fund Unicef. The “Lord of the Rings” and “Pirates of the Caribbean” actor played with children as he toured the camp, which lies on Macedonia’s border with Greece.

He also spoke with several of the camp’s inhabitants, who were awaiting the next part of

their journey into western Europe.

Thousands of migrants, many of them Syrian refugees, have been making their way towards the European Union, first embarking on perilous boat journeys to Greece and then continuing on buses and trains. Europe’s migration crisis has seen a large number of people stuck in chaotic and squalid conditions on countries’ borders or walking along roads seeking a new home.—Reuters



# Thousands line up for rare corpse flower bloom near Chicago

GLENCOE — Thousands of curiosity seekers lined up in the blustery, dark Chicago Botanic Garden on Tuesday night to catch a rare glimpse of a 4-1/2-foot (1.4-metre) tall corpse flower in full bloom, but not in full stench.



The *Amorphophallus titanum* plant, also called the corpse flower at the Chicago Botanic Garden is pictured in bloom on 29 September, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

The garden in a north Chicago suburb planned to stay open until 2 am

on Wednesday to let the crowds see the blooming corpse flower — properly known as the titan arum or *Amorphophallus titanum* — during the 24 to 36 hours it is expected to stay in bloom.

Titan arum flowers typically stink like rotting flesh when they bloom. The smell is aimed at attracting pollinators that help it reproduce. However, evening visitors to the first titan arum ever to bloom in the Chicago area were relieved, or maybe disappointed, that the stench had dissipated over the day. “It wasn’t as smelly as we thought,” said Hanam Tran, a 30-year-old administrator who stood in line for an hour with his mother and another relative to see the pale-green, phallus-shaped plant with a frilly, dark red bloom around the bottom.

The titan arum, dubbed Alice, surprised experts when it suddenly bloomed this week. Another titan arum at the garden, Spike, failed to bloom after weeks of anticipation this past summer. A Spike webcam drew 350,000 views and prepared the public and garden staff for Alice.

“We were certainly all disappointed with Spike not opening a month ago. However we were able to learn a lot,” said Tim Pollak, the outdoor floriculturist who has worked for 12 years to bring one of the garden’s eight titan arum’s to this stage.

Mike Sarchet, 23, a consultant who visited Alice with a friend, said he had watched and waited in vain for Spike to bloom.

“Then I saw on Facebook today that this one surprise bloomed and I said ‘we have to go right away after work,’” Sarchet said. The Botanic Garden had seven experts on hand to explain the bloom to visitors who filed through a greenhouse. Pollak said Alice lived up to her corpse flower name early in the morning, giving off a horrendous stink that faded later in the day.

Titan arums are native to the Indonesian rainforest and typically take 10 years to bloom, and then die.

Some of Alice’s pollen — which can be frozen for up to two years — will be donated to other gardens with rare titan arum plants.—*Reuters*

## For families split by Korean war, a bittersweet reunion or despair



Kang Neung-hwan, 94, who is one of the participants in the latest inter-Korean reunion in 2014 for families separated by the 1950-53 Korean War. PHOTO: REUTERS

SEOUL — For 87-year-old Lee Yong-nyo, the last chance to meet a daughter she had not seen for decades disappeared with the click of a mouse.

The Red Cross was holding a computer algorithm-driven lottery in Seoul, the first step in choosing 100 South Koreans who can meet kin in the North separated since the 1950-53 Korean War.

Tens of thousands of South Koreans have applied to meet families living in North Korea. When the two governments agree, the Red Cross sets up a three-day meeting at the Mount Kumgang resort near their border for some of the families.

“My heart is going to burst,” wept Lee after she did not make the first cut at the Red Cross draw for the next reunion in October.

“I want to find my daughter, or at least know if she is dead or alive. I left her when she was three. When am I going to get the chance, if not now?”

When am I going to get the chance, if not now?” The reunions are an important marker for the state of relations between the two Koreas, which are technically still at war. Nineteen such reunions have been held since 2000, the last one in February, 2014. The random draw whittles down the list to 500 from the 66,000 South Koreans who have registered for the visits. The Red Cross pares the number to 250, reflecting applicants’ health and whether they still want to go. Authorities in the North then try to locate the relatives, and finally, about 100 families are chosen for the reunion, with the elderly and those with immediate family members on the other side getting priority.

“I can’t begin to tell you how empty I feel now,” said Jung Se-hoon, an 85-year-old man seeking his mother and three younger siblings. He did not make it through the computerized draw either.

For those who win, the victory is bittersweet.

Kang Neung-hwan was among 82 South Koreans picked to visit the North in February 2014, the last time the Koreans held reunions of family members, briefly seeing the son he had never met

**“I want to find my daughter, or at least know if she is dead or alive. I left her when she was three. When am I going to get the chance, if not now?”**

Lee Yong-nyo

and will probably never see again. “I wish it was 10 days or two weeks, but three days went so fast,” Kang, 94 and in declining health, said from the couch of his home in Seoul, pictures of his son on the wall behind him. The meetings, held in a ballroom of the resort, are watched by officials and media and include only two hours of private meeting time, if previous reunions are a guide. Kang was a schoolteacher when he joined a wave of people fleeing the North as China entered the war, leaving behind his wife of four months and promising to return. He had not known that she was pregnant, and that the border would be shut.—*Reuters*

## Artist Banksy says ‘Dismaland’ to go to Calais migrant camp

LONDON — Timber and fixtures from Banksy’s “Dismaland” theme park in western England will be sent to build shelters at an informal migrant camp in Calais, northern France, the elusive street artist said on his website.

The “bemusement park”, billed as Britain’s “most disappointing visitor attraction”, was a sell-out attracting more than 150,000 paying vis-

itors in the five weeks it was staged in Weston-super-Mare. “Coming soon ... Dismaland Calais,” the website said, with a picture of Dismaland’s Sleeping Beauty castle amongst the tents of the camp.

“All the timber and fixtures from Dismaland are being sent to the ‘jungle’ refugee camp near Calais to build shelters. No online tickets will be available.”—*Reuters*



(1-10-2015, Thursday)

6:00 am

• Mono Classical Songs

6:15 am

• Myanmar Series

6:40 am

• Fashion Show

6:50 am

• Teleplay

7:00 am

• TV Drama Series

7:45 am

• TV Drama Series

9:50 am

• ASEAN CULTURAL FAIR (2014)

10:00 am

• Myanmar Video

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(1-10-2015 07:00 am ~ 2-10-2015 07:00 am) MST

### Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Myanmar Social & Charitable Association (Ep-1) Mingalar Byuha
07:50	Am	Philatelic Pleasure
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Those Who Never Give Up (Ep-6) In Pursuit of a dream
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Myanmar Pottery
09:51	Am	Egg Shell
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Moving Meditation: Aikido
10:39	Am	Myanmar Weaving
10:51	Am	A Tea Business: Pankwan (Part-2)

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

### Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	A Journey To Southern Shan State (Ep-1)
07:47	Pm	Cosplayer
07:52	Pm	Today Myanmar: Ceasefire
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Tapestry- A Unique Combination Of Painting and Craftsmanship
08:44	Pm	Aye Aye Soe: Myanma Pioneer Female Bodybuilder
09:26	Pm	Let's Cook (EP-3) Scrambled Eggs & Cutie Pancake
09:52	Pm	Egg Shell

(10:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (10:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)  
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Wednesday 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](http://www.myanmaritv.com/schedule))



## Promote football in schools, says MFF chairman



Myanmar Football Federation chairman U Zaw Zaw.

MYANMAR Football Federation chairman U Zaw Zaw has urged the Ministry of Education to hold more football matches at schools.

“The purpose of playing football isn’t to win trophies. Students need physical exercise to improve their physical and mental development. Students will be less likely to use drugs if they are involved in sports. I want the ministry to change the education system not only ac-

ademically but also through better sporting programmes. We can work together with the ministry to promote sports in schools, especially football,” U Zaw Zaw said.

The chairman also called on the Myanmar Football Academy to cooperate with the federation to promote football among students.

In many countries around the world, sport is part of the school curriculum, which gives students a chance to hone their skills at a young age and starts them off on a level-playing field. “We have to keep up with international schools, not only in terms football, but also other sports. Sporting programmes should be set up for our students by the ministry,” U Zaw Zaw said.

If the government teaches sports subjects in schools and makes provisions for students to be able to use football pitches, the federation will do all it can to prepare students for international-level matches, the chairman said. —*Ko Moe*

### AFC U-19 Championship 2016 Results (30-9-2015)

Timor Leste	0-0	Hong Kong
Brunei Darussalam	0-4	Myanmar

## Myanmar, Thai officials face off in friendly football match

YOUTHS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS from Myanmar and Thailand took part in a friendly football match in Mae Sot on Thursday.

Myanmar’s team included Myawady District Commissioner U Lwin Ko Oo, local police officials and community leaders.

The matches were held to promote friendly relations between the two countries, which is expected to boost tourism and trade between them.—*Htein Lin Aung (IPRD)*



Government officials from Myanmar and Thailand enter into pitch to take part in friendly football match in Maesot. PHOTO: HTEIN LIN AUNG (IPRD)

## Tetchy Wenger defends selection as Arsenal lose again

LONDON — Arsenal’s hopes of advancing from the Champions League group stage for the 16<sup>th</sup> straight season were left dangling by a thread after they lost an astonishing clash 3-2 to visiting Olympiakos Piraeus on Tuesday.

The Gunners have now lost their opening two group matches for the first time ever following their 2-1 defeat at Dinamo Zagreb two weeks ago and are bottom of Group F, six points behind leaders Bayern Munich, who they have to play twice.

Olympiakos, whose 12 previous visits to England since 1965 all ended in defeat, scored as many goals in this match as they had managed in the last 50 years in England, and have three points along with Dinamo, who were beaten 5-0 at Bayern.

The defeat left Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger in a tetchy mood when he faced the media at the post-match news conference.

His team selection was criticised when they played in Zagreb and he came under renewed

questioning after this loss especially about his decision to play No.2 stopper David Ospina instead of first choice Petr Cech. He was unusually curt with his answers.

“I make the decisions and the selections for the team and I am responsible for it. I know many things that maybe you don’t know and maybe ignore,” he said.

“You cannot select the team by making a poll before the game and getting everyone’s opinion.”

“It leaves us in a bad position but we are still in it,” added Wenger. “We have to think we can beat Zagreb here and Olympiakos away from home and get a result in our next game against Bayern at home, but we are not out of it.” Olympiakos, who had lost their last five Champions League away games and their last six in all European competition took the lead against the run of play when Felipe Pardo’s 32<sup>nd</sup> minute shot was deflected by Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain past Ospina.—*Reuters*

## Under-13 girls football matches kick off in Othaya District



Zayathiri’s team beat Pobbathiri 3-2 in Under-13 girls football match at Pobbathiri Township’s No 20 Basic Education High School sports ground. PHOTO: SHWE YE YINT (IPRD)

UNDER-13 girls football matches kicked off at Pobbathiri Township’s No 20 Basic Education High School sports ground on Wednesday. The matches are held to nurture promising football players.

The girls are from basic education schools in Othayathiri, Pobbathiri, Zayathiri and Tatkon townships in Othaya District, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.

One team from each school will compete in the championship.

In today’s match, Zayathiri’s team defeated Pobbathiri with a score of 3-2.—*Shwe Ye Yint (IPRD)*

## Beer for Bayern after five star Champions League win

BERLIN — Bayern Munich’s best start to a Champions League campaign sees them top of Group F after two wins from two, eight goals scored and none conceded but the German champions are expected to get even stronger when key players return from injury.

Bayern scored four goals in the opening 28 minutes against Dinamo Zagreb on Tuesday and their overall performance in a 5-0 victory fired a warning shot to potential title challengers across the continent.

Striker Robert Lewandowski scored a hat-trick as Bayern ended the Croats’ 45-game unbeaten run.

Bayern’s dominance, both at home and in Europe, has come despite the fact wingers Arjen Robben and Frank Ribery, as well as defenders Holger Badstuber, Jan Kirchhoff and Medhi Benatia, have been missing due to injury. Spain international Javi Martinez has only just returned after spending several months on the sidelines due to injury. —*Reuters*