



President U Thein Sein inspects waterway conservation projects

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We all share the blame

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# AIRPORT TALKS TAKE OFF

## Govt, consortium discuss signing of Hanthawaddy framework agreement

Aye Min Soe

GOVERNMENT officials and the consortium that won the tender to build Hanthawaddy International Airport discussed the signing of an initial framework agreement for the project and getting ODA loans from the Japanese government.

It is hoped that the signing will take place shortly, state-run news service MNA said on Friday.

During the same meeting that took place in Nay Pyi Taw Thursday, the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) discussed the traffic allocation policy, which covers how flights will be allocated between Yangon International Airport and Hanthawaddy International Airport in future.

Hanthawaddy International Airport will become a major gateway for Myanmar and a regional aviation hub, said U Nyan Tun Aung, Union Minister for Transport, at the meeting.

A consortium of Yongnam and Changi Airport Planners and Engineering (CAPE) from Singapore and Japan's JGC Corporation won the contract to build Hanthawaddy International Air-

port in Bago Region in 2014.

The airport project will be commissioned into service in 2022, four year later than its target due to issues surrounding obtaining Official Development Assistance from investors, according to DCA.

The airport project has been delayed a number of times: it was previously targeted to be completed in 2018 and then postponed to 2020. It is now expected to start operations in 2022, according to DCA. Investors are seeking ODA loans to inject into the project, which will cost around US\$1.5 billion, the Deputy Director of the Department of Civil Aviation U Min Lwin told *The Global New Light of Myanmar* in August.

Yangon International Airport is currently being upgraded to handle an increase in foreign travelers, as arrivals to the airport are soon expected to exceed 2.7 million.

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. The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism is targeting more



A conceptual design of Hanthawaddy International Airport by Yongnam CAPE-JGC Consortium.

Photo supplied by DCA

than six million arrivals in 2017.

The Hanthawaddy International Airport project is the largest of three airport projects being undertaken to accommodate the growing numbers of foreigner trav-

ellers to Myanmar. It will be constructed on more than 9,000 acres of land on the site of a World War II Japanese army airport.

Located in the Bago region about 48 miles north east of Yan-

gon, the international airport is projected to handle up to 12 million passengers a year.

It takes around 90 minutes to travel to Bago from Yangon by car.—GNLM

# First public bus system targets Dec, Jan for launch



One of Yangon's privately operated buses trundles along Sule Pagoda Road. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

Aye Min Soe

A PUBLIC bus service is expected to launch its first phase with 65 brand new imported buses this December or January. The Bus Rapid Transit system will operate along the main routes linking the commercial capital's north and south.

Yangon's existing bus system is comprised of a number of private operators who vie for ticket profits by speeding and collecting passengers. Some of Yangon's buses date back to World War II and they are infrequently cramped, while very few have air conditioning. Although private bus services will not be banned from the roads, they are likely to be less popular than a more effi-

cient and comfortable public service.

The first public company will sell shares to the public in the next 10 days, Dr Maung Aung, who chairs the committee responsible for forming the public company, told *The Global New Light of Myanmar*.

"We had to push back the launch of the new bus service by a month because we needed to give companies extra time to buy the vehicles that comply with all our criteria," said Dr Maung Aung.

The buses are imported from China and Korea, as well as Sweden's well known Scania brand.

Yangon Region Government invited tenders to import buses for the new public bus service last year. The government will retain

a 40 percent share, while 60 percent of shares will be available for the public to buy. Myanmar's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT Lite) system has been established through a Public, Private, Partnership (PPP).

The project is divided into phases, with the capital for the first phase set at K25 billion (US\$19.42 million). The government will inject K10 billion (\$7.77 million) into the first phase.

The BRT (Lite) system aims to reduce traffic congestion and pollution, as well as providing the public with a more affordable and comfortable method of transport, Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Myint Swe said during a ceremony held in May when the public was invited to buy shares in the scheme.—GNLM

## Attorney-General attends chambers meetings in Singapore



Seventh event of attorney generals chambers in progress in Singapore. — PHOTO: MNA

MYANMAR'S Attorney-General Dr Tun Shin arrived back in Myanmar yesterday after attending the 7th Event of the Attorney-General's Chambers of Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam in Singapore.

The Attorney-General took part in the three-day event from 28 to 30 September, together with

counterparts from three ASEAN member countries whose legal systems are also based on the English common law system.

The attorney-general held discussions with attendees about legal and economic theories and gave a presentation summarising the key highlights and issues of the five years he's been in office.

Myanmar's Attorney-General's Office was given special observer status in this year's event.

During his stay in Singapore, the Attorney-General held separate talks with the Minister, Senior Minister and Attorney-General of Singapore and Attorneys-General of Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam.— MNA

## The world's largest floating book fair docks in Yangon

THE world's largest floating book fair docked at Alone International Port Terminal in Yangon yesterday.

Its crew is made up of 400 volunteers from 68 countries, while the ship is stocked with more than 5,000 titles. Book lovers can peruse titles on science, sports, hobbies, cookery, arts, medicine, languages and philosophy including children's titles, academic texts, dictionaries, atlases and more – for very affordable prices.

The floating book fair will remain in Yangon from 3 to 14 October.

Entrance is free to the public on Sunday, from 1pm to 6pm. Book sales will be in Myanmar curren-

cy and there will be a food and drink service onboard, Dr Go Cin Zam, Director of Operation Mobilisation told The Global New Light of Myanmar.

The first time the Logos Hope docked in a Myanmar port was in 1998, and then again in 2002.

The ship is a charitable venture, which will carry out projects in Myanmar –

as it does wherever it goes, said Mr Ronald Lappin, Managing Director of Logos Hope.

The Logos Hope is supported by German Christian charitable organization. It was established in 1970 and has travelled to 160 countries, bringing the joy of reading to millions around the world. — *Thithathu-Photo : Ba Aye*



## Coca-Cola donates \$100,000 to flood recovery

Jessica Mudditt

THE Coca-Cola Foundation has donated US\$100,000 to its long-time partner American Red Cross for flood recovery efforts in Myanmar, according to a press release issued on 2 October.

Coca-Cola's bottling partner in Myanmar, Coca-Cola Pinya Beverages Myanmar (CCPBM), also provided relief in the immediate aftermath of the floods that swept through the country in July and August. The company dispatched

more than 450 local employees to flood-hit areas to donate water, food and other relief supplies. The company donated 350,000 bottles of its Max20 water brand in some of the worst affect states and regions, including Bago, Sagaing, Magway, Pyay, Monywa, Nyaung Oo, and Rakhine.

"Coca-Cola is committed to supporting the Myanmar people and we hope this donation will have a positive impact on the many people across the country that have been affected by the recent floods," said Irial Finan, President and EVP, Bot-

tling Investments Group, The Coca-Cola Company.

On 25 September, a fire at Coca-Cola's warehouse in Mingaladon Township caused almost a million dollars in damage. The blaze took 415 fire fighters, one of whom was injured, several hours to extinguish and whose cause has not yet been established. A Coca-Cola Myanmar spokesperson told Myanmar Business Today on 28 September that there were no immediate impacts on the ability of the world's largest beverage company to produce and distribute its products in Myanmar.



The American Red Cross with relief supplies provided by the Coca-Cola Foundation. PHOTO: COCA-COLA MYANMAR

## Japan extends emergency grant for to rebuild schools hit by floods

THE government of Japan announced on 2 October that it will extend its emergency grant aid to Myanmar.

The funds, which totals US\$10 million, will

go towards the reconstruction of schools hit by the floods of July and August, as well as the provision of study materials and workshops on disaster risk reduction organised by the United Nations

Children's Fund (UNICEF). According to a statement issued on Friday, the grant aims to help students in flood affected communities resume their studies as soon as possible.— GNLM

## Malaysia's Maybank opens branch in Yangon



Ms Pollie Sim, CEO of Maybank International.

PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN

Khaing Thanda Lwin

MALAYSIA-based Maybank officially opened its branch in Yangon yesterday, offering a wide range of wholesale banking services to its clients, focused primarily on trade-related transactions.

Ms Pollie Sim, CEO of Maybank International, said: "Our focus will be on supporting wholesales and corporate clients as well as domestic banks

with services such as deposit accounts, working capital financing, transaction banking, cash management, treasury and capital market solutions."

She added, "The bank will leverage on its expertise in the financing of power, utilities, oil and gas as well as the telecommunications sectors, which are also priority growth areas for Myanmar."

She said that lending will be mainly driven by working capital

financing and transaction banking by the country's growing international trade and demand for cash management, especially as projects are completed and commence operations.

Maybank offered a representative office in Myanmar in 1994 and has a registered capital of US\$75 million.

The bank said it has plans to continue to roll out a variety of training sessions for staff at local banks, with a particular focus on

the capital market, international trade and capacity building.

Maybank was one nine foreign banks to be awarded a licence from the Central Bank of Myanmar on 1 October 2014. Foreign banks may provide loans to foreign investors in Myanmar, however retail banking services are not permitted. Foreign banks may provide loans to local businesses if they do so in cooperation with local banks.—GNLM

## President inspects waterway conservation projects



President U Thein Sein with members of Nyaung Shwe's Township's local community at Phaungdaw U Pagoda on Friday. PHOTO: MNA

PRESIDENT U Thein Sein inspected a number of projects in Shan State yesterday that aim to protect the ecology of the region.

During a visit to Inlay Lake in Nyaung Shwe Township of Shan State, the president oversaw silt removal for the proper flow of water in Inlay Lake and its waterways, which is necessary to protect the lake from being damaged.

Other restoration and conservation works include the dredging

of sediment along Ngaphe waterway as it leads to Phaungdaw U Pagoda and the fencing the waterways to prevent farmlands from encroaching the waterway.

The President continued on to Phaungdaw U Pagoda, where he paid his respects, donated cash and greeted local residents. The president stressed the need for a coordinated approach to reforestation, ensuring effective land use and modernising agricultur-

al techniques. The president announced that a dredger is on its way from the Netherlands soon and will soon become a vital part of efforts to conserve the area's natural waterways.

During his inspection of Nadi Lake in Nyaung Shwe Township, the President was briefed on the progress made to date on its restoration. Nadi Lake feeds water into more than 800 acres of farmland and supplies water to Inle

Lake when the latter's water level drops.

The President then heard reports from the Waminn group of companies on the installation of water treatment equipment for Inphawkhon village and plans to provide 8,000 people a day in potable water using a water treatment solution.

The president also donated provisions to monks at Namthu monastery.—MNA

## President U Thein Sein sends messages of felicitations to ROK, Germany

ON the occasion of National Foundation Day of the Republic of Korea, which falls on 3 October 2015, U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent messages of felicitations to Her Excellency Madam Park Geun-hye, President of the Republic of Korea and His Excellency Mr. Hwang Kyo-ahn, Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea.

The President also has sent messages to His Excellency Mr. Joachim Gauck, Federal President of the Federal Republic of Germany and Her Excellency Dr. Angela Merkel, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, on the occasion of the Germany Unity Day, which falls on 3 October 2015.—MNA

## What they stand for: campaigns aired

The Public Service Students' Democracy Party, Red Shan (Tailai), Northern Shan Ethnic Solidarity Party and the Guiding Star Party broadcast campaign speeches on Friday.

### Public Service Students' Democracy Party



Chairman U Min Min Tun said that the policies of his party are based on independence, peaceful coexistence, building a modern military and the development of cooperative societies, as well as small and medium size enterprises and public companies.

### Red Shan (Tailai) and Northern Shan Ethnic Solidarity Party



Chairman U Aung Khinn and General Secretary U Saw Win Tun clarified the history and policies of his party. The party aims to build a federation of human rights and democracy, to participate in national development tasks, to promote the interests of local people, to preserve traditions and cultures of ethnic groups and to unify its ethnic nationals dispersed in the entire country.

### Guiding Star Party



Chairman U Aye Myint said that his party was once famous for its efforts to promote the interests of workers, farmers and child soldiers. He pledged to work in the interests of the people in accordance with the law and to expose unfair treatment whenever it occurs.—GNLM

## UEC chair explains electoral processes in Putao

UNION Election Commission Chairman U Tin Aye discussed electoral procedures with local officials and election commissions in the town of Putao in Myitkyina on Friday. Putao is the northernmost town of Kachin State and is home to various ethnic groups.

U Tin Aye also highlighted the importance of holding credible elections, as well as the role played by electoral tribunals and the registration and supervision of political parties.

According the 2008

Constitution, the commission is responsible for holding an election every five years, within 90 days of the time the parliamentary term expires. The term of the current parliament ends on 30 January 2016.

The chairman urged all stakeholders to play a constructive role in helping to make the upcoming election a success in cooperation with the commission.

The chairman pledged that the Union Election Commission will do its best to hold a free and fair election on November 8.—MNA

## Three party speeches to be broadcast today

CAMPAIGN speeches delivered by representatives from the New Society Party, Inn National Organization Party and 88 Generation Democracy Party will be broadcast on state radio and television networks on 3 October. MRTV, the Hluttaw channel, Myawady TV, Myanmar Radio and Shwe FM will broadcast the speeches.—GNLM

**ELECTION COUNTDOWN**  
Make your voice count. Cast your vote. **36** DAYS

## School renovated in Takon

A MIDDLE school building in Ayaukku village in Takon Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area has been renovated with government funding and was opened to students on Thursday. The facility cost nearly K15 million (\$11,600) to renovate and occupies 2.37 acres. It was originally constructed as a primary school back in 1975 and a middle school was added in 2012. During the 2015-16 academic year, 437 children were enrolled at the school.—*Tin Soe Lwin*



A school in Ayaukku village in Takon township was renovated at a cost of about K15 million. PHOTO: TIN SOE LWIN

## Tug of war planned to break the drought

AFTER three years of drought, township authorities in Natogyi Township have decided to take matters into their own hands by holding a five-day tug of war event to bring on the rains. According to ancient Myanmar custom, staging a tug of war as monks recite religious verses can break a drought. The event will be held from 7-11 October in Mandalay Region's Myingyan District.—*Htay Myint Maung*

## Trade fair aims to link local and Japanese investors



Businessmen observe booths displayed at Mandalay Investment Fair. PHOTO: THIHA KO KO

THE Mandalay Investment Fair Under was held on Wednesday at Mandalay Resort Hotel. The event was sponsored by Mandalay Region Government and Japan Overseas Trade Association, the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The fair aimed to create a link between local businessmen and foreign investors and was attended by around 300 businesspeople. Forums were held to provide insights into Mandalay's investment opportunities, particularly in hotels and tourism, garments and the transport industry. A total of 14 booths were on show at the fair.

Foreign businesspeople were also taken on a tour of major investment projects, such as the Mingalar Mandalay Project, Tada U Hotel Zone project and Myotha Industrial Zone. Mandalay is considered upper Myanmar's economic and is a major hub for onward border trade to neighbouring countries.—*Thiha Ko Ko*

## Naunglaybin hosts football tourney

NYAUNGLAYBIN Township authority hosted the Township Sports Development Committee Shield football tournament on Thursday, which is part of the township's sports devel-

opment programme. Twenty-nine teams from wards and villages in the township will take part in the tourney, which runs from 1 to 23 October. In the opening match Chaungyin's team beat Pyu-

tanza Myoma-4 ward 4-1. Deputy Minister for Sports U Zaw Win spoke of the need to boost participation in sports in Myanmar during the opening ceremony of the tournament.—*Kyi Soe Lin*

## Transformers installed in Kyaku villages

AS part of the government's poverty alleviation and rural development projects, two transformers

were installed in both Kyaku East and West villages in the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area. During a ceremony

held on Thursday, an engineer explained the safety features of the new facility.—*District IPRD*



Kyaku East and West villages in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area get new transformers. PHOTO: DISTRICT IPRD.

## Mandalay Region Chief Justice meets UNDP delegation

A UNDP delegation met with Mandalay Region Chief Justice U Ye Aung Myint on Thursday to discuss holding workshops to boost the capacity of legal officers in drafting laws and analysing policies.

UNDP's delegation comprised Ms Caitlin Reiger of UNDP's Rule of Law/Access to Justice, Mr Miguel De Lemos, Access to Justice Officer and Daw Nwe Nwe Lwin, an official of Rule of Law, Democratic Governance Unit.—*Thiha Ko Ko*



Mandalay Region Chief Justice holds talks with UNDP delegation. PHOTO: THIHA KO KO

## Helicopter crash survivor to run in election

BRIGADIER General Than Maung (retired) has said he will run in the 2015 general elections representing Shanni and Northern Ethnic Solidarity Party in No.2 constituency in Bamauk Township, Sagaing Region. The brigadier was on board a helicopter that crashed into Than-

lwin river on 19 February 2001. He and other 12 officers survived the crash but the other 16 passengers, including Lt-Gen Tin Oo, Major General Thiha Thura Sit Maung, the Commander of South East Command, and Minister Brigadier General Lung Maung died.—*GNLM-001*

# Hopes for talks on new auto law

Association seeking three-year grace period for implementing the switch to left-hand drive cars



Cyclists and cars travel along Bayintnaung Bridge No. 2 Hlinethaya Township. PHOTO: YE MYINT

## Ye Myint

SOME of the more contentious changes earmarked for the country's auto market will be up for discussion with ministry personnel and industry bodies soon, said the president of the country's auto association on Wednesday.

Following the enactment of the new automobile law on 7 September, concerns have arisen amongst vehicle users and auto dealers about how and when the mandatory use of left-hand drive cars will be implemented in Myanmar.

The provision is contained in a new draft automobile policy that was drawn up by the private sector and which is likely to be submitted to the government within the next week, said Dr Soe Tun, president

of Myanmar Automobile Manufacturers and Dealers Association. The policy was drawn up by private sector representatives for manufacturing cars in Myanmar

Although the policy proposes that left-hand drive cars in Myanmar should not become mandatory until the end of 2018, the new law stipulates that left-hand drive cars will become mandatory in Myanmar in early 2016. It is expected to be among the law's associated rules and regulations, which must be released within 90 days of the enactment of the new legislation.

"We'd like to request the government to implement the switch to left-hand drive in accordance with the proposals contained in the policy," he added.

"As far as I know, the

details about making the switch in the rules and regulations of the new law are not set in stone," he said.

The Road Transport Administration Department has said that it aims to eliminate the use of right-hand drive cars, because Myanmar's right-hand side traffic lane system makes them very unsafe.

Dr Soe Tun said that auto dealers are anxious about what will happen to all the right-hand drive vehicles still in showrooms when the new law comes into force, and are united in hoping for an adequate grace period for the switch to be made.

According to the association, there are more than 100 car showrooms in Yangon and some 30,000 right-hand drive cars that are still up for sale.

Dr Soe Tun said that due to Myanmar consumers' preference for right-hand drive cars manufactured in Japan as opposed to Korea and China with left-hand steering, the overwhelming majority of the 400,000-odd cars that were imported after import rules were relaxed are right-hand drive.

Spare parts for Korean and Chinese autos are hard to come by and most people cannot afford to buy new European cars, he said, adding that local mechanics are more familiar with right-hand drive vehicles.

According to the association's president, other points expected to be discussed with ministries include new measures for vehicles importation and the registration of car dealers.—GNLM

## Promotions for almost 8,000 defence service personnel

MEMBERS of Myanmar's Defence Services were promoted for long term services and loyalty on Thursday.

More than 7,600 members of the army, navy and air force were promoted up a

rank, while 118 captains were promoted to the rank of officiating major.

Military commanders attached insignia to those who were promoted during a ceremony on Thursday.—Myawady

## Police honour GNLM reporter

GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR reporter U Nay Lin from Nyaunglaybin, Bago Region, won a prize for his contribution to the rule of law during an event commemorating Myanmar Police Day on Wednesday.

Towns-elders and ward and villager administrators were also given awards at the event. Awardees were recognised for their contributions to the community.—GNLM



U Nay Lin accepts the Certificate of Honour for his outstanding performance. PHOTO: NAY LIN

## Tatkon roads get upgrade



Engineers at work to upgrade a road in Tatkon. PHOTO: TIN SOE LWIN

THE Tatkon Township Development Affairs Department is building culverts along a main road to ensure

unimpeded water flow. The project is a part of a wider initiative to upgrade the township's roads. The project will

benefit local residents, as well as more than 150 monks who live in a monastery near the road.—Tin Soe Lwin

## LOCAL STATEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATE EMBASSIES ACCREDITED TO MYANMAR

THE Heads of Missions of the European Union accredited to Myanmar warmly welcome the ratification, on 28 September 2015, of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

This ratification reinforces the global trend towards eliminating the recruitment of children into armed forces. Children affected by armed conflict remain among the

top human rights priorities of the European Union (EU). Armed conflicts still affect a great number of children and pose a serious threat to their survival, development and life opportunities.

The ratification of the Optional Protocol is an important step. The European Union encourages the Government to further improve the promotion and protection of human rights in the country.

The EU stands ready to offer support in implementing the Optional Protocol

to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

**Note:** The European Union consists of 28 member states: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

## India unveils climate target to cut carbon intensity

NEW DELHI — India has promised to make its economy more energy efficient and cut the carbon produced per unit of GDP growth by 33-35 percent by 2030 from 2005 levels, its contribution to help reach a deal to slow global warming at a UN climate summit in December.

The world's third-largest emitter and last major economy to submit plans ahead of the Paris summit did not, however, commit to any absolute cuts in carbon emissions.

China and the United States, the biggest polluters, have agreed to start reducing their emissions over the next 15 years, but India has long said its economy is too small and its people too poor to agree to absolute cuts in greenhouse gases now.

Instead, India said it aimed to cut carbon intensity — meaning its emissions will rise, but at a slower pace — and to grow the share of power generated from non-fossil fuel sources to 40 percent.

India, often acting as the voice of the developing world, plays an important role in global climate talks and some environmental groups welcomed its plan.

“India now has positioned itself as a global leader in clean energy, and is poised to play an active and influential role in the

international climate negotiations this December,” said Rhea Suh, president of New York-based Natural Resources Defence Council.

Close to 200 nations will meet at a UN summit to agree a deal to slow man-made warming by keeping temperature rises below a ceiling of 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

India said it planned to develop 25 Solar Parks, supply 100,000 solar pumps to farmers and convert all 55,000 petrol pumps across the country to solar.

It also pledged to “aggressively” develop hydro and nuclear energy and said it would build more mass transit rail systems in cities to limit car usage and increase rail freight.

Despite these commitments, India has a poor record of fixing infrastructure and environmentalists fear that India's emissions will rise rapidly as the use of cars, air travel and air conditioning grows among its 1.2 billion people.

In its submission, New Delhi stressed that coal would continue to dominate future power generation.

India's target for carbon intensity falls well short of China, which pledged at the end of June to reduce its carbon intensity by



A labourer drinks water as smoke rises from a chimney of a brick factory at Togga village on the outskirts of the northern Indian city of Chandigarh. PHOTO: REUTERS

60-65 percent by 2030.

At a previous UN summit in 2009, India had already committed to reduce its emissions intensity by 2020 by 20-25 percent from 2005 levels.

India said its plans were “fair and ambitious” as it balances a low-carbon future with its development needs.

Preliminary estimates indicate India would need to spend around \$206 billion between 2015 and 2030 for adapting to the effects of climate change, the submission said.

“India's climate actions have so far been largely financed from

domestic resources. A substantial scaling up of the climate action plans would require greater resources...,” said the statement, lodged with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

At least \$2.5 trillion will be required for meeting India's climate change actions between now and 2030, it estimated.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi met US President Barack Obama and France and Britain's leaders last month, and called for a climate change agenda that helps developing countries with access to finance and technology.—Reuters

## Singapore's new cabinet sworn into office

SINGAPORE — Singapore's new cabinet was sworn into office late Thursday at the Istana, after Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong announced the new cabinet on Monday. In a speech at the swearing-in ceremony, Lee said that his first objective in forming this cabinet is to provide the most effective government for Singapore.

“We are entering a new phase of our nationhood. We face more complex challenges and new issues that cut across multiple domains. Therefore, I have appointed Coordinating Ministers to oversee work in three major areas,” he said, adding that the new cabinet will focus on areas including national security, economic and social policies as well as infrastructure.

The other major goal in forming this cabinet, as Lee pointed out, is to prepare the next team to take over from the current leadership. “My responsibility...is not just to govern Singapore well today, but also to prepare the next team to take over from us. This will secure Singapore's future beyond this generation, and take the country another step towards SG100.”—Xinhua

### GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

**Director** - Maung Maung Than  
mnmnthn2@gmail.com

**Chief Editor** - Than Myint Tun  
wallace.tun@gmail.com

**Deputy Chief Editor**  
Than Tun Aung

thantunaunglm@gmail.com

**Chief Reporter** - Aye Min Soe  
koayeminsoe2006@gmail.com

**Senior Consultant Editor**  
Jessica Mudditt

jess.mudditt@gmail.com

**Consultant Editor**  
Jacob Goldberg

jjgold.news@gmail.com

**Editors**  
Ye Myint, uyemyint76@gmail.com,  
Kyaw Thura, kthura.spk@gmail.com,

Myint Win Thein  
journalist.sss@gmail.com

**International news**  
Ye Htut Tin

mryehtuttin@gmail.com

Tun Tun Naing  
tunyunain@gmail.com

**Reporters**  
Khaing Thanda Lwin

juniorlwin25@gmail.com

Tun Aung Kyaw  
tunaungkyaw.31@gmail.com

**Translator**  
Ma Than Htay

Khaing Minn Nyo  
khaingminn@gmail.com

**Proof reader**  
Nwe Nwe Tun

**Layout designers**  
Tun Zaw, Thein Ngwe,

Kyin Shwe, Zaw Zaw Aung,  
Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,

Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,  
Sanda Hnin, Zu Zin Hnin

**Circulation & Advertising**  
San Lwin (+95) (01) 8604532

**Ads and subscription enquiries:**  
thantunaunglm@gmail.com

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## Strong storm injures people, disrupts transportation in Japan

TOKYO — A strong low-pressure storm with heavy winds and rains hit Japan from Thursday night to Friday, causing injuries, transportation disruptions, evacuations, blackouts and school closures mainly in the northernmost prefecture of Hokkaido.

A 64-year-old man was found with a head injury near a windmill power generator destroyed by strong winds in Hiroo, local police said, while a 72-year-old woman broke her right leg in Esashi when she fell from a ladder due to the wind. Several more injuries were reported in Hokkaido.

In Toyama Prefecture, central Japan, a 71-year-old woman broke her arm after strong winds

caused her to fall. Hokkaido Railway Co halted some 310 train runs, while more than 30 flights to and from New Chitose Airport in Hokkaido were cancelled.

More than 100 people were evacuated from their homes in the prefecture, while about 450 schools closed.

Hokkaido Electric Power Co said blackouts affected about 15,000 houses in the prefecture.

Rishiri Airport in Hokkaido recorded a maximum wind speed of 157.32 kilometers per hour.

The Japan Meteorological Agency said strong winds and heavy rains may continue in Hokkaido and northeastern Japan until Saturday.—Kyodo News



A tree is seen broken on 2 October, 2015 in the aftermath of a strong storm in Takasu on the northern main Japanese island of Hokkaido. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

## Indonesia refuses help offered by Singapore to deal with haze: MEWR

SINGAPORE — Indonesian officials clarified that they had enough resources and did not need to call on assistance offered by Singapore to deal with haze at this time during the meeting with Singaporean delegates, said Singapore's Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources (MEWR) on Friday.

A small team of Singaporean officials, led by Permanent Secretary Choi Shing Kwok of MEWR, met with Indonesia's Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs

Gen (Retd) Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan and Head of National Disaster Management Agency Willem Rampangilei in Jakarta on Thursday.

The meeting was convened at the invitation of the Indonesian side, said MEWR. Singapore delegation was briefed on the measures being undertaken by the Indonesian government in Sumatra and Kalimantan to tackle land and forest fires that are causing haze in Singapore and the region.

Singapore reiterated and ex-

plained its offer of assistance to tackle the fires, including the provision of one Chinook helicopter to conduct water bombing and one C-130 aircraft for cloud-seeding operations. However, Indonesia clarified that it had enough resources of its own and did not need to call on assistance offered by Singapore at this time, said MEWR in a statement.

The meeting also discussed law enforcement actions by Indonesia against errant companies. Singapore explained how

its Transboundary Haze Pollution Act allows it to take legal action against offenders who cause transboundary haze in Singapore to supplement Indonesia's actions while respecting Indonesia's sovereignty.

Singapore also reiterated and explained its request for Indonesia to share information that could help identify companies suspected of causing such fires. NEWR said the request has been considered by the Indonesian side who will respond in due course.—Xinhua

# Israel's Netanyahu launches all-out assault on Iran deal at UN



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. PHOTO: REUTERS

UNITED NATIONS — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu used his annual United Nations address on Thursday to launch an all-out assault on the historic nuclear deal with Iran, warning that his country would never let the Islamic Republic join the atomic weapons club.

Speaking at the yearly gathering of world leaders at the UN General Assembly, Netanyahu reiterated Israeli criticism of a deal between Iran and major world powers aimed at curbing Tehran's nuclear programme.

He said that, once inter-

national sanctions are lifted, "unleashed and unmuzzled, Iran will go on the prowl."

Israel, Netanyahu said, would never allow Iran "to break in, to sneak in, or to walk into the nuclear weapons club." Israel, which experts and diplomats say has the only nuclear arsenal in the Middle East, has repeatedly warned it is prepared to use military force to prevent Iran from acquiring atomic weapons. Tehran denies wanting nuclear arms and insists its nuclear programme is peaceful.

US President Barack Obama's administration has

vigorously defended the July 14 nuclear agreement with Iran against criticism from Republicans in Congress, who tried unsuccessfully to kill the deal, and Israel, describing it as the best way to avoid a new war in the Middle East.

Obama's already strained relations with Netanyahu deteriorated further in the months before the July nuclear deal because of the Israeli leader's forceful campaign against it.

During Netanyahu's speech, Washington was represented by US Ambassador Samantha Power's deputy, David Pressman, and US Ambassador to Israel Daniel Shapiro. Power and Secretary of State John Kerry are both in New York, but Power's spokeswoman, Hagar Chemali, said they had to join a video conference call with Obama that ended up coinciding with the Israeli speech. Netanyahu pulled no punches. "We see a world celebrating this bad deal, rushing to embrace and do business with a regime openly committed to our destruction," he said.

The Israeli leader held up a copy of the latest book by Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei that he said was a "400-page screed detailing his plan to destroy the state of Israel."

Diplomatic sources have said that Israel and Iran's regional rival, Saudi Arabia, have been discussing how to respond to the nuclear deal and their fear that the lifting of sanctions, expected in the coming months, will embolden Iran

**"Israel will continue to respond forcefully to any attacks against it from Syria."**

**Benjamin Netanyahu**  
Israeli Prime Minister

to pursue a more aggressive foreign policy in the Middle East. Without naming countries, Netanyahu said Israel was in touch with Arab states about Iran.

"Israel is working closely with our Arab peace

partners to address our common security challenges from Iran and also the security challenges from ISIL (Islamic State) and others," he said. Most of Netanyahu's 43-minute speech was focussed on the threat posed by Iran. But towards the end, he responded to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' UN speech on Wednesday, in which Abbas said recent Israeli security actions at the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem could ignite a religious war.

Netanyahu told the General Assembly that Abbas should stop "spreading lies about Israel's alleged intentions on the Temple Mount," and return to direct negotiations to secure peace between the Israelis and Palestinians.

"Temple Mount," where Al-Aqsa is located, is the Israeli term for the location. It is one of the holiest sites in Islam and Judaism.

Abbas had accused Israel of undermining US attempts at brokering peace, though Netanyahu placed the blame on the Palestinians. Netanyahu also accused the

General Assembly and the UN system as a whole of engaging in incessant, unjustified "Israel-bashing."

Twice during his speech — once at the beginning and again in the middle — he silently stared at the 193-nation General Assembly with an angry look on his face.

His second staredown with the General Assembly lasted for 45 seconds, coming after Netanyahu accused the assembly of maintaining "deafening silence" in the face of Iranian threats to destroy Israel.

The prime minister also made clear that Israel would continue to use military force to repel attacks from Syria and to prevent the Iranian-backed Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, which is fighting in Syria alongside government forces, from acquiring key weapons.

"Israel will continue to respond forcefully to any attacks against it from Syria," Netanyahu said, adding that it would also "prevent the transfer of strategic weapons to Hezbollah from and through Syrian territory."—Reuters

## Germany wants migrants with no hope of asylum to be turned away at border

BERLIN — German Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere wants to turn away migrants at the border if they clearly have no chance of gaining asylum, a regional newspaper reported, citing a draft bill from his ministry.

Passauer Neue Presse cited the draft bill as saying that like at airports, transit zones should be set up at land border crossings so that the asylum process can be carried out before a decision is made on whether migrants can enter Germany or not.

"That should create the possibility to deny entry at land borders as well in cases of inadmissibility or where an asylum application is clearly unfounded," the newspaper cited the draft bill as saying.

In cases where an asylum application was not clearly unfounded, the migrant would be allowed in, it said, and in cases where a decision on entry could not be made within a week or accommodation could not be provided at the border, the migrant

would be allowed in, according to the draft bill.

Unaccompanied minors and people with particular needs would also be generally exempted from the border procedure, it said.

De Maiziere, speaking on German broadcaster ZDF on Thursday evening, said this new rules would only used to speed up the processing of clearly unfounded applications, such as those from the western Balkans, but it would also send a "signal".—Reuters



Migrants queue as they wait to board a regional train at the main railway station in Munich, Germany on 13 September 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Spain shores up legal powers to prevent Catalan breakaway

MADRID — Spain's parliament on Thursday approved measures giving the Constitutional Court powers to fine or suspend authorities that do not carry out its sentences, shoring up legal powers to deal with any bid for independence from Catalonia.

Secessionist parties in the wealthy region on Sunday secured an absolute majority in terms of seats in the local parliament in an election seen by some as a proxy vote on independence but won only 48 percent of the votes cast, less than the majority that would be needed in a referendum.

Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy has refused to allow the region, with its own language and culture, to hold a referendum on independence, saying it is against Spain's constitution, and has blocked any attempts to change that decision in the courts.

The inconclusive result of Sunday's election had lessened the chance of a split of the region from Spain, Rajoy said in a television interview on Thursday. The measure, easily passed on Thurs-



A Junts Pel Si (Together For Yes) supporter displays pins after polls closed in a regional parliamentary election in Barcelona Spain on 27 September 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

day given the absolute majority of Rajoy's ruling People's Party (PP), will come into effect before December's general election and will allow the court to force the resignation of officials and civil servants, including politicians, if they do not comply with rulings.

It will also give the court the ability to level fines of up to 30,000 euros (\$33,500) on officials.

Catalan parties on Thursday said it had been drawn up specifically to target the acting head of the Catalan regional government, Artur Mas.

"It's personal — they want to wipe out Mas politically and personally," Carles Campuzano,

member of parliament for Mas's pro-independence party CDC, told the lower house.

The PP said the law was designed to strengthen the power of the courts. The centre-right party has said the measures are a very clear message to those who want to break away from Spain.

Rajoy said on Thursday he would back any decision from the Constitutional Court to sack the head of the Catalan government if he took steps towards independence that go against the constitution.

The courts have been key in Madrid's fight to block any Catalan bid for independence.—Reuters

## PERSPECTIVES

## We all share the blame

Kyaw Thura

**W**ITH the general election a little over a month away, the public is looking forward to getting a fresh start with eager anticipation. No one doubts what it takes to be a truly democratic government and how important their own role is in making it happen.

It is undeniable that decades of mismanagement and negligence have left a trail of problems in our wake. The blame should not lie solely with the government: we the people must

shoulder some responsibility. The logic governing the requisites of the country and the people to stand with dignity intact is morality, education and rule of law.

A virtuous government will ensure that every individual is equal before and under the law and that its people enjoy easy access to quality education. On the other hand, no matter how equal we are before the law, it is meaningless if the law is not equal to each of us. Under no circumstances can failed law guarantee the rule of law.

The roots of most conflicts and crimes lie in ignorance and prejudice. That is why education is regarded as one of the most powerful instruments for overcoming these two extremes, in addition to alleviating poverty. It is through education that we learn to distinguish right and wrong in complex cir-

cumstances, so what we all need is a certain level of education to acquire the ability to reason.

After all, the most we can hope for is the emergence of a new government that is accountable to its people and willing to respect the rule of law and revitalise the education system.

## Write for us

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

## Understanding NCA

Aung Naing Oo

**T**HE NCA (Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement) is a complex legal document containing 103 points across seven chapters.

Being a complex legal document covering ceasefire, politics, humanitarian and civilian protection, it may be difficult for grassroots or people in conflict zones to understand the meaning of the agreement. But it will affect the lives of millions of people directly or indirectly connected to the armed conflict. Adequate explanations, therefore, should be provided.

Following the successful conclusion of negotiations over the NCA on August 7, the government published the full text with the agreement from the ethnic armed organizations. It is also available online.

But no one knows how many people have actually read the historic text. Most importantly, do they understand it?

Recently it came to our attention that there are comprehension problems regarding the ceasefire text. We realized that even among those who have followed the peace process closely did not understand the NCA well.

There were complaints from

some ethnic civil society groups that the ethnic armed organizations in their areas did not provide adequate explanations of the NCA. Equally the government must share the blame.

It dawned on us that the importance of the NCA was lost in translation. In addition, the NCA was considered to be the government property rather than a joint effort with Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs).

It was a wake-up call for us. Indeed, then we had many questions.

Have the people in the government read it? Have the ethnic leaders who have never been at the negotiation table read the NCA text and fully understood it and its implications?

What does the JMC (Joint Monitoring Committee) mean? What are the requirements of all signatories to the NCA regarding ceasefire monitoring and civilian protections? How will political dialogue be organized?

To answer some of these questions, we made a presentation to a selected group of politicians, academics, civil society leaders and high profile journalists in early September during our monthly community forum. Even here, we found out that there were shortcomings in understanding the NCA and its im-

plications.

Based on these alarming revelations, we have organized press conferences, invited diplomats, political parties and civil society groups to explain the NCA. Ethnic groups have also organized gatherings to inform the public of the NCA, its contents and meanings. The Myanmar Peace Center also published a booklet on NCA. The government-owned TV stations have broadcast news, interviews and analyses on the NCA.

We know it is not enough. But it is worth mentioning here some of the key points in the NCA.

Firstly, the aims of the NCA are to strengthen existing ceasefires; to start political dialogue and to lay firm foundations for peace not only under the current administration but also future governments of Myanmar until peace is achieved.

Secondly, the NCA contains 55 provisions directly related to military issues. They deal with agreements that all signatories – be they the Myanmar Tatmadaw or EAOs – must abide by without fail. The NCA also contains 18-point civilian protections.

Most important of all, the NCA provides that the signatories form joint monitoring committees at all levels in order to strengthen the ceasefire. After the signing, necessary terms of references will be jointly developed in order that the NCA can be easily understood in the conflict areas. At this juncture, the role of civil society organizations working in conflict and conflict-affected areas will be crucial in maintaining ceasefires.

Thirdly, as a minister involved in the peace process remarked that although the NCA, as the Agreement suggests, is about ceasefire also contains 33 clauses relating to political issues.

Of these, the main points are as follows.

The EAOs do not need to give up their weapons or territory. The majority of the provisions in the NCA originated with the EAOs but they were included in the document as the product of the joint drafting process. Negotiations were conducted among equals.

The amendments, including additions and subtractions - to the 2008 constitution will be carried out based on the results of the political negotiations. The government guarantees a Union based on democratic and federalism principles and all-inclusive political negotiations — both longstanding demands of the EAOs.

Most crucially, the NCA provides a roadmap and a joint political dialogue committee to negotiate the future of Myanmar.

Fourth, the NCA is not an end in itself; it is a means to put an end to armed conflict in Myanmar. The NCA is considered the door way to political negotiations. In fact, it is the real beginning of the peace talks.

Fifth, the EAO signatories to the NCA will no longer be subject to prosecution under the troublesome Unlawful Association Act otherwise known as penal code 17/1. The delisting will be completed before the signing

so that the EAO signatories will ink their assent not as illegal organizations but as legitimate entities.

Sixth, the government will fully commit to the NCA regardless of whether all or some groups sign the NCA. In turn, the government will expect full compliance from the other signatories. In other words, the NCA calls for rigorous implementation and unwavering commitments from all signatories.

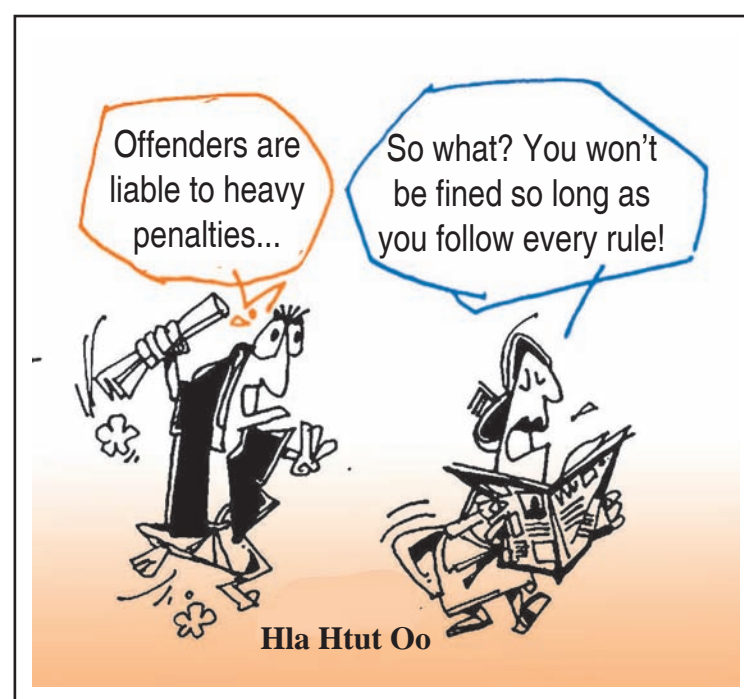
Seventh, the negotiations of the NCA were conducted in the spirit of good faith, cooperation, negotiation and compromise. This same spirit will govern the implementation.

Finally, the NCA along with the whole peace process is a joint effort. It is a shared process and collective ownership by all who negotiated the agreement over 20 months in good faith. To this end, it belongs to all citizens of Myanmar regardless of where they are from and where they reside.

The NCA is a historic document. It is a catalyst for changes that will ensure the end of the armed conflict and bring about durable peace. For this, we all have a duty to understand it.

**(Aung Naing Oo is the Director of Peace Dialogue Program, Myanmar Peace Center.)**

**“The NCA is a historic document. It is a catalyst for changes that will ensure the end of the armed conflict and bring about durable peace. For this, we all have a duty to understand it.”**





# It is easier promised than done

**Tommy Pauk**

**N**ORMALLY, it is easier to promise about a task than to do it in real world. To make promise without burning desire is easier, but practical work is difficult. Sometimes, even though the persons who make promises have willingness and goodwill towards the needy, there might be unforeseen obstacles and difficulties in doing things or implementing the tasks. For example, some politicians made a promise for alleviation of poverty in the society. Under such circumstances, they cannot be blamed for the failure or unsuccessful plan or project. Some people easily promise to do something or to give something to somebody, but they fail to accomplish the task or break the promise deliberately. Actually, promise is a kind of vow among human relations. However, some people never ever think about uneasy work or task before they make promise to others.

In political arena, most of the politicians as well as power mongers promise their electorate of the constituencies easily for fulfilling the needs and wants of them. The politicians promise their supporters concerned recklessly and superficially. They use lip service and take advantage of the respective eligible voters dishonestly. In other words, the promise comes from their vocal cord, but not from their heart indeed. Later, they break their great promise and the ordinary people get annoyed and frustrated bitterly. Promise is a tool for the dirty politicians to persuade the voters to support their

parties or individuals. In politics and public affairs, the leaders and administrators must be cautious to make promises to the general public concerned. Before making any promises, they should analyze the matters pertaining to public services or public affairs if these matters are possible to be solved or materialized or not. Without being thought, they easily make promise in order to convince the public that they are able to do a certain job for advancement or improvement of the society concerned, demanded or expected by public. In this case, if the outcome or result is not as expected by public, the leader and administrators will surely be discredited. The eloquent public speaker can persuade and make promise with beautiful words. They easily make promise for something and damn the consequences. Political promise is a commitment for serving the people's interests and the politicians concerned ought to do things as promised. Most of the politicians are pretty crazy for power so they promise easily to the people while canvassing for votes. The following promises are made due to public desires; - the promise of stabilizing the prices of commodities, upgrading the standard of telecommunications for country, removal of yes-men and bureaucrats in the administration for different ministries etc.

When they are in power or elected by the majority people, they break their promises so the bad situations remain exist in the society and they hurt the peoples' feelings in daily life. People humbly have expected that the would-be government member or candidates of some parties can

improve the lousy or critical situations occurring in the society. People literally understand the promises of the politicians as the duties and responsibilities that they must perform efficiently. Unfortunately, people are cheated and those ungrateful persons neglect the demand of public and they only concentrate on personal gain, fame and opportunities for them and their families. Such abhorrent and selfish acts and behaviors should not be prevalent in any form of political system in any society in the world. They do not respect and regard their promises by themselves. What a shame!

Above-stated promises are to be implemented in possible way. Due to their mindsets, the possible ways to improve that stuff are not done even when they are in power. Basically, peoples' desires are to establish modern, advance and prosperous nation among the nations around the world. That is why people are so eager to know how the leader or powerful politicians are going to implement the tasks they have already promised to do before they are elected democratically. If the country is rich in natural resources, mineral resources, energy resources and human resources, the genuine, thoughtful and efficient leadership should be available for implementing sustainable socio-economic development of the society. The good leaders around the world keep their promises and can do things in conformity with the public desires properly. They never promise easily if the public demand or desire is impossible to do practically.

When we see the issue from the legal perspective, a promise is a con-

tract between a promisor and a promisee. (N.B law terms). If the promisor breaches the certain contract, the promise must be compensated for the loss of his or her expectation or tangible objects. These days, some people even do not care not only promises but also oath because they could stay away from justice or they are above the law. Nevertheless, once they break their promises, they lose trust of the ordinary people forever. Viewing from the moral perspective, they have no dignity and honesty. The values of basic human decency and integrity are ignored by those silly and dishonest people in a certain society. Myanmar maxim says: 'All the kings must maintain fidelity or commitment to his countrymen and the countrymen are also obliged to keep their promises.' During the successive Myanmar dynasties, the kings and the countrymen had practiced in accord with the maxim. Therefore, there had been mutual trust between kings and the entire countrymen in those days in Myanmar.

In business arena, businessmen must not fail to keep their promises while dealing with each other for doing business. A successful businessman has won trust among the other businessmen not because of his capital but because of his promise. It is undeniable that keeping promise and

doing the right things always make a person successful in life in any society. In business dealing, promise is vitally important because business is a kind of contract between the two different businessmen. The content of the contract must have value of goods, timeframe, conditions and purchasing date or buying dates. All that stuff must be completed or done perfectly from both parties and they have agreed to all particulars on the contract or they have made a written agreement format formally. If one party fails to keep promise, the other party will have right to demand for the loss in business legally.

Promise is synonymous with vow or commitment in social life in human society indeed. A person who makes promise is responsible and accountable for his or her promise to those in need. He or she ought to implement the tasks or materialize the projects consistently. Even our world communities are obligated to do or act or trade in accord with the international treaty or pact or agreement, which is a kind of promise to deal each other harmoniously. Before we promise something, we should make sure if it is possible to do or act. Political promise, social promise and business promise must not be made easily so as not to encounter bad and awful consequences in human society!!!

**Tommy Pauk is the pseudonym of U Thein Swe, who is B.A (English) and (Registered Law) R.L I. degrees holder. He has English Teaching experience at Yangon University English Department and Workers' college in Yangon, nad now is working as freelance writer and English Teacher cum Translator/Interpreter for foreign firms.**

## Unique Practices and Common Issues

**San Shwe Aung**

**W**E are different from one another. Scientists have mentioned that generally each and every person in the world has different DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid), which is a molecule that carries most of the genetic instructions used in the development, functioning and reproduction of all known living organisms. But one in 1 million people might have the same DNA according to the research. Individuals are not only unique physically but also have different views, behavior, thought and belief. Even among brothers and sisters it is quite usual that the appearances, preferences and views are different. If we look at the world, countries are unique. Many countries are different in geography. One country may have high lands with snow capped mountains and chilly weather while others have tropical weather with huge flat arable land with rivers flowing in many parts of the country like that of ours. Coun-

tries are distinguished with the culture of nationalities residing there. Some countries have only few or single nationality while others, such as ours, have several dozens and even hundreds of ethnic nationalities who speak different languages, have different traditions and culture. Food traditionally taken by the people in different parts of the world is a very interesting matter. Even in one continent although we eat rice, for instance in Asia, the dishes and ways to cook meat and vegetable are quite different. In most part of Africa maize and banana are eaten as staple food with meat and vegetable. Very clear example is that although we eat rice in both countries, Thai and Myanmar curry and dishes are quite different in taste and flavor. In many countries motor vehicles are driven carefully not to make any accidents however small it may be, like just touching one rear bumper with other's front bumper, including in Yangon. But in many cities of India the traffic is so terrible that once all vehicles come to a standstill, cars bumpers would

touch one another so that nothing, even a pedestrian cannot pass to the other side of the road, not to mention a bicycle, motorbike or trishaw! In Myanmar, a new comer or the foreign tourists wonder why 95% of all vehicles steering wheels are on the right side (wrong side) while the traffic moves on the right side of the road! Yet the car accidents are relatively low in Myanmar compared to other countries.

Our school children, both boys and girls, from the middle class level wear green color Longyi or sarong when they attend the schools, which is unique and a national pride of course. Majority of Myanmar people still wear traditional costume. Nevertheless, there are other unique practices which are shameful and despicable in the eyes of respectful local citizens and foreign visitors in our country. Many people are now addicted to chewing betel and spitting the red betel sliver on to the road, platform and any where they please without taking into account to the cleanliness and well swept surrounding in the public roads.

Many people have experience of his or her car littered with betel spitting on the bonnet or on the roof of the cars while parking on the road side. Bus drivers, conductors, some commuters, many pedestrians who are addicted to the betel chewing will spit hundreds of time a day to whatever surface he goes by. It is a big national shame and authorities have to educate to the public through public media about the bad health impact as well as giving warning not to spit in public. The violators should be fined heavily in accordance with laws. It is also important to include the shameful "UNIQUE" practice of betel chewing and spitting in public in the curriculums of the primary, middle and high school classes so that our future generation would avoid this unique practice.

Smoking in the public areas is a common problem faced by many countries in the world not like spitting betel sliver, which I think is quite unique to Myanmar and perhaps another couple of countries. Smoking is banned by law in the public areas in many countries. Enforce-

ment of the smoking ban is quite strong in Singapore for example. One violator can be easily caught through CCTV and accordingly fined. Littering carelessly is another common problem particularly in the cities where the population is very dense. Although nowadays YCDC has deployed sufficient numbers of big garbage bins in almost all parts of Yangon city, some people still dump their household waste on the platform, on the road and throw into the water drain with no proper covers. They normally throw their waste during the night time to avoid being seen by others. These people have very low morale standard and are not cooperating with agencies who are trying to keep the city as clean and hygienic as possible. Yangon city is growing with increased population year after year. To keep the city clean which every sensible citizen aspires, all must participate and contribute to the international standards by not littering in the public roads, platforms, drainages and parks. And one day we can be proud of our clean garden city of Asia.

## DPRK seeks US peace treaty to normalize ties with Washington, UN

UNITED NATIONS — The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) told the UN General Assembly's general debate on Thursday that Pyongyang seeks a peace treaty with the United States to end the 1950-1953 Korean War and "address the abnormal relations between the DPRK and the UN."

"If the United States makes policy change with courage, a dramatic improvement will be affected in the security environment on the Korean Peninsula and will eventually lead to addressing security concerns of the United States," said DPRK Foreign Minister Ri Su Yong, in an apparent reference to Pyongyang's nuclear threat. "This is the best option we can afford."

"The DPRK is strongly convinced that the urgent replacement of the armistice agreement with a peace treaty is a way to ensure peace and security on the Korean peninsula and address the abnormal relations between the DPRK and the UN," he said.

The "abnormal relations" he referred to has to do with the US forces in South Korea technically part of a UN Command.

The 1950-1953 Korean War was silenced not by a peace treaty but a cease-fire and Washington has long insisted the only way it will negotiate with Pyongyang is through the Six Party Talks, involving representatives from China, DPRK, Japan, Russia, South Korea and the United States.

"Late last August the situation on the Korean Peninsula once again headed to the brink of war," Ri said, referring to tensions heightened during annual joint military exercises held by South Korean and US militaries.

"What measures can the UN take when it is a UN commander who commands the large-scale exercises that create a vicious cycle of heightened tensions," Ri asked, adding that lodging complaints with the world body is to no avail because the United States as a permanent member of the Security Council holds veto power.—Xinhua

## Syria and Ukraine: two fronts in Russian war for influence

BRUSSELS — Russia's air strikes in Syria are in part designed to extract concessions from the West over Ukraine by making Moscow a key player in any attempts by world powers to hammer out a post-conflict settlement in Damascus, some Western officials believe.

While the Syrian capital lies 1,800 miles (3,000 km) south of Kiev, for Russian President Vladimir Putin they are two fronts in the same war that is aimed at blocking Ukraine's European integration, some EU, US and NATO officials say.

Publicly no officials will make such a link, saying it is too speculative and French diplomats hosting a high-level meeting with Putin in Paris on Friday are reluctant to draw any conclusions.

But privately, a number of senior officials and diplomats have told Reuters they believe the Russian leader's aim is to use his intervention in Syria partly to pressure the West to tacitly accept Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea and gradually lift the sanc-

tions imposed by the West in retaliation.

The Kremlin says Russian air strikes are targeting "well-known" terrorist organisation inside Syria.

Strategically, Putin's air strikes are securing his interests, protecting Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and Russia's Syrian port in Tartous, which complements Russia's access to the Black Sea that it now controls after taking the

Crimean peninsula. Western officials also see other motives, including that Moscow may also say that its military involvement in the Syrian civil war, its first intervention in the Middle East in decades, could also be used to help stem the record numbers of refugees flowing to Europe.

Most see a way for Putin to make himself "an indispensable interlocutor for the West", as one EU

official put it, while recognising he is defending a long-time ally, the Assad dynasty.

"It's the same game," said another official closely involved with Ukraine policy.

"Putin's involvement in Syria is a way to seek concessions, to get the West to avoid talking about Crimea, drop sanctions and accept a frozen conflict in eastern Ukraine."—Reuters



File photo of Nusra Front fighters walk among debris caused by what activists said was shelling from warplanes loyal to Syria's President Bashar al-Assad near the national hospital in Jisr al-Shughour town, Idlib Province on 22 May 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Gunman kills nine at Oregon college, dies in shootout with police



First responders transport an injured person following a shooting incident at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, Oregon on 1 October 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

ROSEBURG — A gunman stalked onto an Oregon college campus on Thursday and opened fire, killing nine people and wounding seven before police shot him to death, authorities said, in yet another burst of US gun violence that ranked as the deadliest this year.

The suspect, who witnesses say fired dozens of

shots in a classroom full of screaming students, was slain in an exchange of gunfire with two police officers in Snyder Hall at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, ending the morning rampage.

The gunman was not publicly identified by local authorities. A law enforcement source named him as

Chris Harper-Mercer. Other media said he was 26.

In a photo posted on a MySpace profile believed to be his, a young man with a shaved head and dark-rimmed eyeglasses is seen staring into the camera while holding a rifle.

CNN reported the suspect was armed with three handguns, a "long gun" and

body armor. According to survivors, the gunman at one point ordered covering students to stand up and state their religion before shooting them one by one.

Stacy Boylan, the father of an 18-year-old student who was wounded but survived by playing dead, told CNN his daughter recounted her professor being shot point blank as the assailant stormed into the classroom.

"He was able to stand there and start asking people one by one what their religion was," Boylan said, relating the ordeal as described by his daughter. "'Are you a Christian?' he would ask them. ... 'If you're a Christian, stand up. Good. Because you're a Christian, you're going to see God in just about one second,' and he shot and killed them. And he kept going down the line doing this to people."

Another student, Kortney Moore, 18, who was present in the writing class when the gunman entered and survived unhurt, gave a

similar account to the local News Review newspaper.

Authorities offered no explanation for the gunman's actions.

"The law enforcement investigation into the shooter and into his motivations is ongoing," Douglas County Sheriff John Hanlin said at an afternoon news conference. He also said three of the wounded victims were hospitalized in critical condition.

Hanlin refused to name the gunman. "I will not give him the credit he probably sought via his horrific and cowardly act," he told reporters.

The massacre in Roseburg, a former timber town on the western edge of the Cascades some 260 miles (420 km) south of Portland, was the latest in a flurry of lethal US mass shootings in recent years.

Thursday's was the deadliest this year, surpassing the nine killed in a gun battle between motorcycle gangs in Waco, Texas, in May, and the nine who died in the rampage of a gunman

at a black church in Charleston, South Carolina in June.

Not counting Thursday's incident, 293 mass shootings have been reported this year, according to the Mass Shooting Tracker website, a crowd-sourced database kept by anti-gun activists that logs events in which four or more people are shot.

The violence has fueled demands for more gun control in the United States, where ownership of firearms is protected by the Second Amendment of the US Constitution, and better care for the mentally ill.

President Barack Obama, speaking just hours after the rampage, said the mass killings should move Americans to demand greater gun controls from elected officials.

"Somehow this has become routine," a visibly angry Obama said. "The reporting is routine. My response here, at this podium, ends up being routine. ... We've become numb to this."—Reuters

# Iran troops to join Syria war, Russia bombs group trained by CIA



A civil defence member tries to put out the flames on a burning military vehicle at a base controlled by rebel fighters from the Ahrar al-Sham Movement, that was targeted by what activists said were Russian airstrikes at Hass ancient cemeteries in the southern countryside of Idlib, Syria on 1 October, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

BEIRUT — Hundreds of Iranian troops have arrived in Syria to join a major ground offensive in support of President Bashar al-Assad's government, Lebanese sources said on Thursday, a sign the civil war is turning still more regional and global in scope.

Russian warplanes, in a second day of strikes, bombed a camp run by rebels trained by the US Central Intelligence Agency, the group's commander said, putting Moscow and Washington on opposing sides in a Middle East conflict for the first time since the

Cold War. Senior US and Russian officials spoke for just over an hour by secure video conference on Thursday, focussing on ways to keep air crews safe, the Pentagon said, as the two militaries carry out parallel campaigns with competing objectives.

"We made crystal clear that, at a minimum, the priority here should be the safe operation of the air crews over Syria," Pentagon spokesman Peter Cook said.

Two Lebanese sources told Reuters hundreds of Iranian troops had reached Syria in the past 10

days with weapons to mount a major ground offensive. They would also be backed by Assad's Lebanese Hezbollah allies and by Shi'ite militia fighters from Iraq, while Russia would provide air support.

"The vanguard of Iranian ground forces began arriving in Syria -soldiers and officers specifically to participate in this battle. They are not advisers ... we mean hundreds with equipment and weapons. They will be followed by more," one of the sources said.

So far, direct Iranian military

support for Assad has come mostly in the form of military advisers. Iran has also mobilised Shi'ite militia fighters, including Iraqis and some Afghans, to fight alongside Syrian government forces.

Moscow said it had hit Islamic State positions, but the areas it struck near the cities of Hama and Homs are mostly held by a rival insurgent alliance, which unlike Islamic State is supported by US allies including Arab states and Turkey.

Hassan Haj Ali, head of the Liwa Suqour al-Jabal rebel group that is part of the Free Syrian Army, told Reuters one of the targets was his group's base in Idlib province, struck by about 20 missiles in two separate raids. His fighters had been trained by the CIA in Qatar and Saudi Arabia, part of a programme Washington says is aimed at supporting groups that oppose both Islamic State and Assad.

"Russia is challenging everyone and saying there is no alternative to Bashar," Haj Ali said. He said the Russian jets had been identified by members of his group who once served as Syrian air force pilots.

The group is one of at least three foreign-backed FSA rebel factions to say they had been hit by the Russians in the last two days.

At the United Nations, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told a news conference Moscow was targeting Islamic State. He did not specifically deny that

Russian planes had attacked Free Syrian Army facilities but said Russia did not view it as a terrorist group and viewed it as part of a political solution in Syria.

The aim is to help the Syrian armed forces "in their weak spots", said Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov.

Pentagon spokesman Peter Cook described Thursday's military talks as "cordial and professional." During the talks, Elissa Slotkin, an acting assistant US secretary of defence, "noted US concern that areas targeted by Russia so far were not ISIL strongholds." Cook said, using an acronym for Islamic State.

The Pentagon said it would not share US intelligence with Russia and suggested the talks included ideas to increase safety, such as agreeing on radio frequencies for distress calls and a common language for communications.

US Republican Senator John McCain, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and a frequent Obama critic, questioned the logic of talks on how to keep US and Russian militaries apart, known in military parlance as "deconfliction."

"Unfortunately, it appears 'deconfliction' is merely an Orwellian euphemism for this administration's acceptance of Russia's expanded role in Syria, and as a consequence, for Assad's continued brutalization of the Syrian people," McCain said.—Reuters

## 11 dead in US C-130 plane crash in Afghanistan

KABUL — A C-130 military transport plane crashed on Friday in eastern Afghanistan, killing 11 people, including six US soldiers who were part of a NATO training and counter-terror mission supporting stretched Afghan troops.

Though it was not immediately clear what caused the crash, it comes as Afghan forces — backed by NATO special forces and US air support — pushed into the centre of Kunduz in northern Afghanistan to flush out Taliban insurgents who held the provincial capital for three days.

The C-130 crash, which occurred at about midnight local time on Friday (1930 GMT Thursday), left six US soldiers and five civilian contractors dead, US Army Colonel Brian Tribus said.

The contractors had been working for "Resolute Support", the NATO-led training mission.

Jalalabad is situated on a key route from the Pakistani border region — where many militants are based — to Kabul, and it has been the scene of repeated attacks in recent years. Its airport is home to a major military base.

Although there were no im-

mediate indications that the plane crash was due to militant action, Jalalabad airport has come under attack on several previous occasions. In December 2012, Taliban suicide bombers killed at least five people in an hours-long battle at the airport, the third attack on it that year.

Most NATO combat troops pulled out of Afghanistan last year but a small contingent remains, including roughly 10,000 American soldiers.

The US soldiers, along with other NATO troops and private contractors, are focusing on training Afghanistan's national security forces.

The C-130 Hercules is a cargo plane built by Lockheed Martin. It is powered by four turboprop engines and is used extensively by the military to ship troops and heavy gear.

It can take off and land on rough, dirt strips and is widely used by the US military in hostile areas.

The crash comes with Afghan forces battling a Taliban insurgency that has blighted the country since the 2001 US-led invasion of Afghanistan.—AFP

## Israel army launches manhunt after couple killed

BEIT FURIK — Israel deployed hundreds of troops on Friday in a hunt for suspected Palestinian gunmen after an Israeli couple were killed in front of their children in the occupied West Bank.

Eitam and Naama Henkin, both in their 30s, were gunned down while driving on Thursday night between the settlements of Itamar and Elon More, in the north of the Palestinian territory.

Their four children, aged between four months and nine years, were found unharmed in the back of the car.

Israeli army spokesman Arye Shalimar said security forces were conducting an "intensive search" on the ground combined with intelligence efforts.

The Henkins were residents of the central West Bank settlement Neria, northwest of Ramallah. They were to be buried in Jerusalem's Har Hamenuhot cemetery at 0800 GMT on Friday.

In the Palestinian village of Beitillu, a short distance from Neria, assailants torched a car and spray-painted "Revenge Henkin" on a nearby wall, the army said on Friday, noting that nobody

was hurt. Apprehensive of rising tensions among settlers and Palestinians, the army said it would be deploying "four battalions in order to prevent an escalation of violence in the area adjacent to the location of the attack."

Thursday's shooting came hours after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's address to the United Nations General Assembly, and a day after that of Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas, who said that Israel's refusal to release prisoners and stop settlement activity was hampering fresh peace talks.

Netanyahu condemned the killings, which he called "the effects of Palestinian incitement," vowing security services would work to "capture the murderers and improve security for all Israeli citizens."

Tensions have been running high between Israeli police and Palestinians at the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem.

The site of Thursday's shooting was near the Palestinian village Beit Furik, where a Palestinian was killed by Israeli forces during clashes last month.

Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Yaalon said security forces would "spare no efforts to arrest the killers and their sponsors".

The Palestinian militant group Hamas for its part hailed those behind Thursday's deadly attack, while not taking responsibility for it.

"This operation was in response to the crimes of the Zionists," it said in a statement.

Israel occupied the West Bank in the 1967 Six-Day War in a move never recognised by the international community.

Hardline Jewish nationalists see the entire West Bank as part of Israel, which refers to the territory as Judea and Samaria, the names for the ancient biblical kingdoms located there.

The last killing of an Israeli in the West Bank happened on 29 June when a settler died and three others in a car with him were wounded.

On 31 July, suspected Jewish extremists firebombed a Palestinian home in the village of Duma that killed toddler Ali Saad Dawabsha and his parents.—AFP

## Afghan refugees languish in Athens far from 'promised land'

ATHENS — Afghan refugee Khodadad spends his days huddled with his family in an Athens square with little food, no money and dwindling hopes of ever reaching their desired destination: Germany.

They are among thousands of Afghans languishing in the Greek capital without passports and with barely any cash after being ferried to the mainland from the Aegean islands on which they land every day from Turkey.

In the cruel, unofficial pecking order among hundreds of thousands of migrants who have flooded into Europe this year, Afghans are beneath the underdogs.

Unlike often richer and better educated Syrians, they have travelled further and can't afford the ride across the Balkans to the "promised land" of northern Europe.

"We have no money. We wait," Khodadad shrugged as he cradled his seven-month-old baby.

Victoria Square, in a poor, run-down part of Athens, has been transformed into a makeshift camp in recent weeks with thousands of mainly Afghan refugees sleeping rough in the open, braving the occasional downpour as autumn sets in. Trying to ease the strain on local authorities, the government moved several hundred refugees on Thursday from the square to a sports centre north of Athens. Earlier



Afghan refugees are seen on a bus as they are transferred from Victoria Square to an indoor stadium in Athens, Greece on 1 October 2015.—PHOTO: REUTERS

this week, it transferred a few hundred to the former Olympic hockey stadium, only to see Victoria Square fill up again days later.

Cafes are full of young Afghan men charging their mobile phones while families try to create some semblance of a normal life in their tents. Sales staff from big brand mobile phone companies sell SIM cards in the middle of the square.

Women in bright-coloured headscarves breastfeed their babies while young children take turns on a tiny rocking horse. Others play cards on

worn-out mattresses laid among rubbish beneath a German-made statue of Theseus, a mythical king of Athens. Most have nothing to do but wait. Afghans spend longer than Syrians in each country on the migrant trail to earn or collect enough money to travel north. It takes longer to process their asylum applications because authorities give priority to Syrians, designated as refugees since they are fleeing a civil war.

"It's difficult, time doesn't pass. We are hungry. We eat only bread,"

said Khodadad, who declined to give his last name because he fears for the safety of relatives at home.

He said he paid 2,500 euros (\$2,800) to a shadowy middle-man for his family's 20-day journey from the northern city of Kunduz to Greece via Iran and Turkey in search of a better life in Europe after his sister was killed by the Taliban. His wife, baby and two more children aged 6 and 7 travelled with him.

"There is war in Afghanistan. Many people died. We were scared to sleep at night," he said.

The Taliban, who ruled Afghanistan with a harsh interpretation of Islamic law for five years, have been fighting to re-establish their Islamist rule after being toppled by a US-led invasion in 2001.—Reuters

**"There is war in Afghanistan. Many people died. We were scared to sleep at night."**

**Khodadad**  
Afghan refugee

## Tuna canneries in Philippines urged to be responsible enterprises

MANILA — Tuna cannery companies in the Philippines were urged Friday by an international environmental group to comply with sustainable fisheries guidelines after almost all scored poorly in a recently conducted survey.

According to Philippines-based officials of Greenpeace Southeast Asia, eight out of the nine tuna canneries in the country received poor ratings in terms of traceability and transparency and sustainability of their sources and methods, as well as on social responsibility. The ninth got a "fair" grade.

"It's important to have those traceability mechanisms because we wanted to ensure you know how to come up with conservation measures," Vince Cinches, Oceans Campaigner for Greenpeace Southeast Asia, said in a news briefing.

"If we will be able to communicate the importance of having mature tuna, how much it will translate to in terms of income to the local community, and if you are going to conserve juvenile tuna, then we will see how much it will be able to feed a nation for a very long period of time," he said.

Ephraim Batungbacal, Regional Oceans Research Coordinator of Greenpeace Southeast Asia, disclosed in the same news conference that some 220,000 metric tons of tuna caught in the Philippines each year go to the canneries. It represents

more than half of the total tuna catch, with the rest either going to domestic restaurants or being exported to the United States, Japan and Europe.

Citing figures presented at a tuna conference last year in Indonesia, Greenpeace said the Philippines contributed 6.88 percent of the canned tuna exports across the world in 2013, which reached more than \$8.1 billion.

"With our overfished seas, it is necessary that we rank our tuna canneries because they have an important role to play in reversing the decline of our tuna stocks," Cinches said, noting that it is the first time Greenpeace conducted the survey.

He said Greenpeace is recommending that cannery companies do not take tuna unless it can be traced to the vessel and point of capture; properly label their products with the species name, catch method, and fishing ground; and be transparent to third party auditors, among others. The group presented, as an example, a photo of a canned tuna product from New Zealand that indicated the fishing area and catch method.

Cinches said that aside from general consumers, the canneries themselves will benefit from these measures that are aimed at addressing the problem of rampant illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the country.—Kyodo News

## Mounting extortion plagues shopkeepers in violent Venezuela

CARACAS—A Portuguese immigrant to Venezuela who opened his shop in an industrial zone of Caracas 25 years ago stores wads of cash in a black bag each week then waits for the phone to ring.

When the call comes, a youth's voice checks he is ready to pay, and a motorbike swings by shortly after to pick up 5,000 bolivars for local gangsters.

The payment — worth nearly \$800 at the government's strongest official exchange rate, though only \$6 on the black market — ensures the gang does not attack his construction materials' store again as they did last year.

"I refused the first time they phoned and then early

one Friday they shot at the outside of the business. Another day, they came by on a bike shooting at midday," he said.

"Here, everyone pays. Anyone who says they don't is lying."

Extortion has increased in the last two years as crime gangs assert more control in the South American nation, according to official statistics and interviews with businessmen.

State prosecutors say they completed 215 investigations into extortion and kidnapping in 2014, more than twice as many as the year before, though law enforcement officials say they see only a fraction of the problem because extortion is rarely reported.

A survey by private monitoring group Venezuelan Violence Observatory this year found that 34 percent of those interviewed said extortion was "very present" where they lived, compared with 25 percent in 2013, the last time the poll was conducted.

"We live in a state of fear. Sometimes we call the police, but they don't even come," said Alberto Quintero, who owns a paint store in San Cristobal city near the Colombia border. He said he is threatened sporadically by gangs and forced to make payoffs, the last one 30,000 bolivares — more than four times the monthly minimum wage.

Extortion in Venezuela was for years concentrat-

ed mostly in that volatile western border region. But it is increasingly common in the capital too, adding to economic pressures forcing stores out of business, says the Caracas Chamber of Commerce.

"An alternative but illegitimate social order has been established in Caracas," said the chamber's executive director, Victor Maldonado. Twenty percent of the its members shut businesses last year due to recession and crime, including extortion.

Venezuela suffers one of the world's highest rates of violent crime, which critics of President Nicolas Maduro attribute to ineptitude and rampant corruption among police, state

prosecutors and judges.

Maduro blames security problems on right-wing Colombian paramilitary groups whom he says are in league with his political adversaries. One ruling Socialist Party official described extortion as a paramilitary practice.

The interior ministry declined to give further information on the practice when consulted by Reuters.

Business owners say they receive anonymous phone calls from individuals who identify themselves as having links to organized crime. The callers promise protection in exchange for payment and threaten violence against those who refuse.

"They always call me

on Thursdays or Friday. I always tell them I'm ready," added the Portuguese immigrant, nervously checking to make sure nobody in the hallway of his store was listening. He asked that neither he nor his business be identified for fear of reprisals. Businesses resort to creative accounting to justify the costs and pass them on to consumers by raising prices. Annual inflation is believed to be in triple digits although the government has given no data for 2015.

Some truckers driving cargoes through Venezuela's central plains say they pay off gangs at rest stops so vehicles won't be stolen, though that does not protect them from common theft.—Reuters

## China cuts off illegal government involvement with tax agents

BEIJING — A total of 533 officials from taxation departments across China have been punished for illegal connections with tax agents since January, said the top anti-graft agency here Friday.

The move was part of a national operation to sever government involvement with non-governmental intermediate agencies, said the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in a press release on its website.

The campaign is aimed to stop government officials from using

these agencies for their own gains and ensure the government's impartial stance.

A total of 58 local taxation departments were found to have leased offices to tax agents or even provided offices for them for free. They were ordered to stop doing so, the press release said.

Discipline inspection agencies also exposed ten taxation departments that allowed tax agents to use their canteens as well as the other ten that have inappropriate financial transactions with tax firms.

Two tax firms from two provinces were dis-

qualified during the operation. Taxation departments across the country has launched large-scale internal inspections since the beginning of this year while a number of new protocols were issued.

The State Administration of Taxation (SAT) dispatched 14 inspection teams to check up the development of the operation in 38 local taxation departments.

The CCDI office also interviewed leading officials of SAT and ten provincial taxation departments to supervise and push forwards the operation.—Xinhua

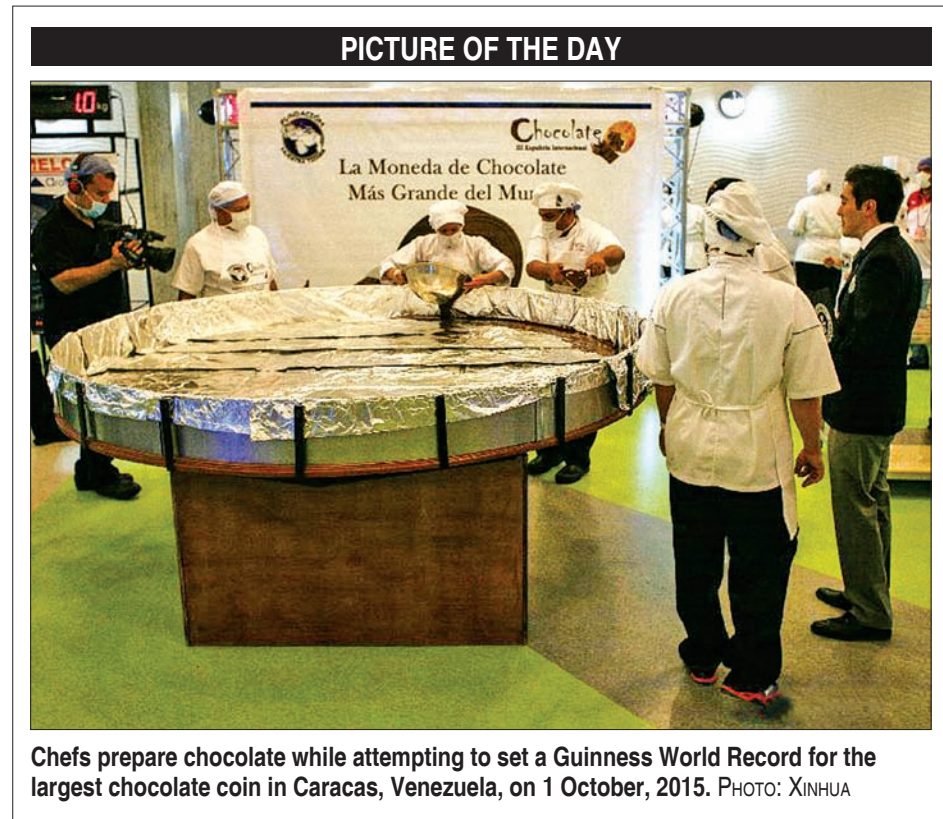
## New Zealand aims to raise global standards for ocean management

WELLINGTON — New Zealand is to share its experience of ocean management and conservation at the international Our Oceans Conference in Valparaiso, Chile, next week, Environment Minister Nick Smith said Friday. "Oceans make up 72 percent of the world, but only 2 percent is in protected areas. The popula-

tion of marine life like fish and seabirds have halved over the past 40 years," said Smith, who is leading a delegation of officials and experts to the event. "The biggest problems are in the high seas beyond individual countries' jurisdictions, making up about 70 percent of the oceans, where we need strengthened insti-

tutions and rules to ensure the sustainability of fishing stocks and improved protection of marine life."

New Zealand's ambition was to be a leader in ocean management, and its fisheries quota system had provided it with more certified sustainable fishing stocks than any other country, while environmental



**PICTURE OF THE DAY**  
Chefs prepare chocolate while attempting to set a Guinness World Record for the largest chocolate coin in Caracas, Venezuela, on 1 October, 2015. PHOTO: XINHUA

regulations ensured a "robust" process of checks on mining and other activities.

Last month the government announced the establishment of the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary, centered around a group of tiny islands about 1,000 kilometres northeast of the North Island and covering 620,000 square km, which

was a "benchmark in ocean protection." "The next challenge will be the update of our marine protection legislation," said Smith.

"New Zealand successfully sponsored a United Nations resolution in June calling for new marine protection measures in the high seas," he said. "Countries like New Zealand, the Unit-

ed Kingdom, the United States and Australia have made significant contributions with new sanctuaries at the Kermadecs, Pitcairn Island, the northeast United States islands and the Coral Sea. This is an opportunity to share experiences and to advance improved ocean sustainability and protection measures."—Xinhua

### WEATHER REPORT

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

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2015:** Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Taninthayi Region, fairly widespread in Yangon Region, Chin, Rakhine and Mon States, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Upper Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago and Ayeyarwady Regions, Shan and Kayin States and isolated in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (80%).

**STATE OF THE SEA:** Sea will be 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 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2015:** Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%)

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2015:** One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2015:** Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

**WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR WEEKEND:** Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Yangon Region and scattered in Mandalay Region.

## More people drown in Switzerland due to heat waves

GENEVA — 48 people, 21 more than for the whole of 2014, have drowned in Switzerland since the beginning of the year, the Swiss Rescue Society (SSS) indicated on Thursday. Among those who lost their lives 38 were men, while 4 women and 6 children account for the remaining fatalities. According to figures, 44 people lost their lives in lakes and rivers, 2 died as result of diving accidents and 2 in

diverse circumstances. Prolonged high temperatures recorded in Switzerland this summer meant that a greater number of people visited the confederation's many aquatic sources including lakes, rivers and swimming pools.

According to the Federal Office of Meteorology and Climatology (MeteoSwiss), August 2015 was one of the hottest recorded since statistics were first compiled 152 years ago.—Xinhua

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV ANAN BHUM VOY NO (142N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ANAN BHUM VOY NO (142N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.10.2015 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 COSCOS CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV BANGSAOTONG VOY NO (174)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BANGSAOTONG VOY NO (174) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.10.2015 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 WONGSAMUT OCEAN SHIPPING CO LTD.

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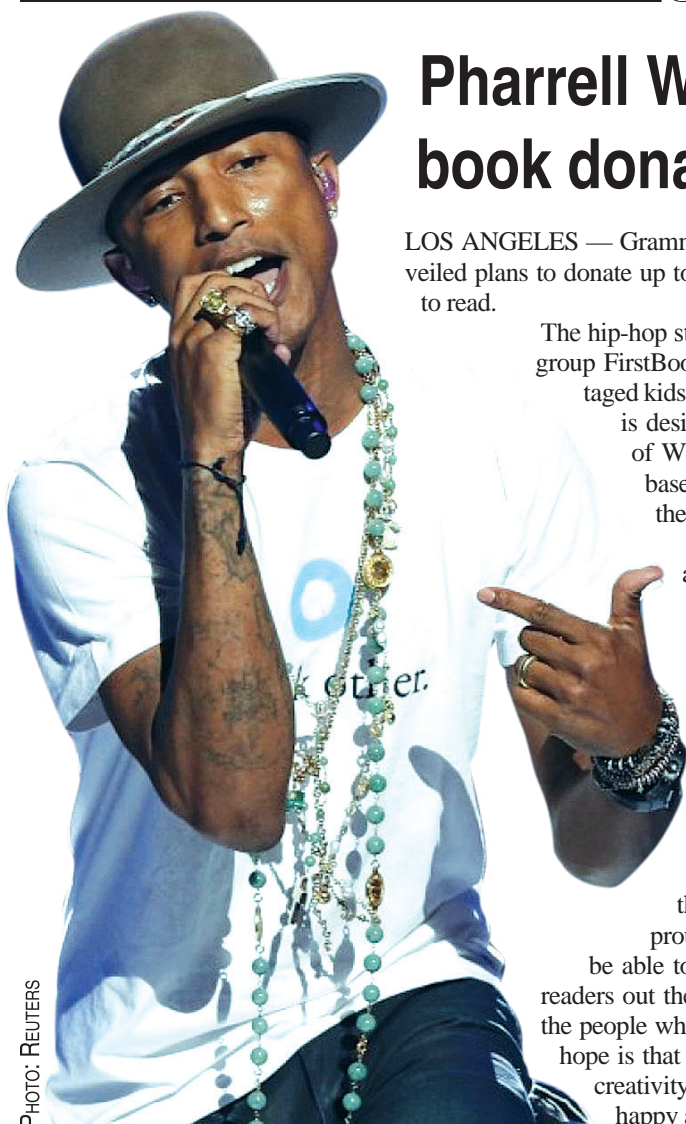


PHOTO: REUTERS

## Pharrell Williams launches book donation campaign

LOS ANGELES — Grammy winning singer Pharrell Williams has unveiled plans to donate up to 50,000 books to encourage young children to read.

The hip-hop star, 42, teamed up with officials at non-profit group FirstBook to provide reading materials to disadvantaged kids, reported *Billboard* magazine. The campaign is designed to coincide with the upcoming release of Williams' new picture book *Happy!*, which is based on his "Despicable Me 2" theme song of the same name.

Publishers at Penguin Young Readers are also urging fans to spread the word on social media by sharing why reading makes them happy using the hashtag "#readHappy", with each post generating a book donation to children in need. "Every child on this planet deserves to experience the joy of reading," said Williams, a father of one.

*Happy!* the book, which features illustrations of youngsters celebrating what it means to be happy, hits retailers next week. Announcing the print news earlier this year, an excited Williams gushed, "I'm so proud of my collaboration with Penguin and to be able to share my book *Happy!* with all the young readers out there. "I love what I do and am grateful to all the people who felt that 'Happy' resonated with them. My hope is that this book inspires a child's imagination and creativity and that it teaches the importance of being happy and true to yourself." —PTI

## Schwarzenegger takes 'Golden Icon' award at Zurich Film Festival

ZURICH — Action star Arnold Schwarzenegger has been honoured with the Zurich Film Festival's top "Golden Icon" award for his four decades of work both in film and politics.

The award celebrates an actor's or actress' lifetime achievements. Previous recipients include Diane Keaton and Morgan Freeman.

Schwarzenegger, who first came to fame as a bodybuilder who won the Mr Universe title at age 20, returned to making

movies after two terms as California Governor from 2003 to 2011.

Few however have enjoyed the success of "The Terminator" or "Conan the Barbarian" in which he starred in the 1980s and '90s.

"I'm happy to be back into acting and I'm also very happy that I did my public service ... so I will be doing many more movies," he said at the festival on Wednesday night.

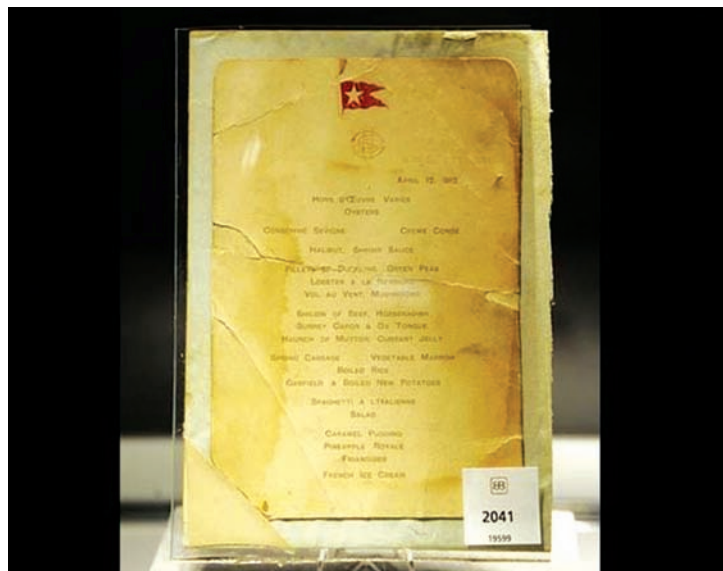
The Austrian-American Schwarzenegger, 68, also presented his new movie "Maggie" at the festival, in which he plays a farmer struggling to look after his dying daughter.

Last month television network NBC said Schwarzenegger would replace US Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump as the host of reality show "The Celebrity Apprentice". —Reuters



PHOTO: REUTERS

## Titanic's last lunch menu sells for \$88,000 at auction



A lunch menu for the Titanic is on display at Bonham's auction house in New York. PHOTO: REUTERS

NEW YORK — A menu for the last luncheon served to the first-class passengers aboard the ill-fated Titanic has sold for \$88,000 at an online auction.

The menu, which was saved by a first-class passenger, was sold on Wednesday to a private collector, Auctioneers Lion Heart Autographs said. The price was in line with pre-sale estimates.

Stamped with a date of 14 April 1912 and the White Star Line logo, the menu included grilled mutton chops and custard pudding; corned beef; mashed, fried and baked jacket potatoes; a buffet of fish, ham and beef; an apple meringue pastry; and a selection of eight cheeses.

Lion Heart Autographs said

the menu was saved by Abraham Lincoln Salomon, one of the passengers who escaped on the so-called "money boat" lifeboat that was filled with wealthy people. It is thought to be one of only three or four menus from the ship's last lunch that still exist.

The menu was offered for sale by an unidentified person who was given some Titanic items by a descendant of one of the lifeboat survivors.

The luxury ocean liner foundered in the Atlantic Ocean on 15 April 1912 after striking an iceberg during its maiden voyage from Southampton, England, to New York. Some 1,500 people lost their lives. — Reuters

## Little Mix want to take 'Get Weird' tour worldwide

LONDON — British pop group Little Mix will kick off their UK arena "Get Weird" tour in March and the all-girl band say they want to take it worldwide.

With two albums, a perfume and the kudos of being the first group to win Britain's television talent show "The X Factor" to their name, Little Mix say a

world tour is next. They are set to release their third album "Get Weird" next month.

"We have so many fans around the world and we just want to show them us," band member Leigh-Anne Pinnoch said on the sidelines of the Apple Music Festival where the band performed last week.

"We just want to get there and show them what we can do."

Also on the agenda is a film — just like the Spice Girls did with their movie "Spice World".

"It is honestly the dream to be able to have our own movie, maybe act in it, similar to ... what the Spice Girls did," Pinnoch added. —Reuters



PHOTO: REUTERS

# Toyooka city reinventing itself to fight aging society threat



An oriental white stork looks for food in a paddy field in Toyooka, Hyogo Prefecture, western Japan. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

TOYOOKA — Reviving Japan's once-extinct stork population is not just a story of nature preservation in the city of Toyooka, Hyogo Prefecture. It's also the tale of a provincial region reinventing itself to avoid becoming the human community equivalent of an endangered species.

With the loss of people and prosperity to bigger urban areas in an aging and shrinking Japanese society, Toyooka, along with many other regions across the country, faces the risk of becoming a withered community.

Facing the Sea of Japan and covered mostly by forests, Toyooka is known for its tourist spots such as the Kinosaki hot spring spa and skiing slopes. But of its approximately 85,000 residents, over 28 percent are aged 65 or over, according to its website.

To expand its presence on tourists' radar screen, Toyooka is promoting itself not only as a nature-rich sanctuary for a rare bird but also as a regional centre of performing arts and a manufacturing hub of high-quality bags. Toyooka already attracts 4.7 million tourists

annually, the city says.

Visitors arriving in Toyooka by air land at Konotori Tajima Airport ("Konotori" means stork in Japanese), and a 15-minute drive takes them to a preservation area where wild storks look for prey in rice paddies.

There is no shortage of education and entertainment offerings for stork lovers, with easy access to such facilities as the Hyogo Park of the Oriental White Stork, where young storks are grown in captivity, and the Toyooka Municipal Museum for Oriental White Stork. Around 300,000 tourists visit the preservation area each year, according to a museum official. Toyooka is the place where the last known wild bird of the oriental white stork species in Japan died in 1971, excluding those captured and kept for an artificial rearing project which ended in failure. However in 1985 young birds were imported from Russia, and the stork population in Toyooka has now recovered to around 170 birds, including around 80 in the wild and 90 being

kept in captivity in preparation for release into the wild, the city says. To make Toyooka an oasis for storks, organic farming has been promoted so that the farmland remains rich in small creatures that become prey for the bird. Crops grown through this stork-friendly farming have been named "stork rice," and the stork brand fetches a premium over ordinary rice.

"The rice is delicious and the harvest is rich," said Akihisa Sezaki, a municipal official. "We are hoping to spread this farming method across the country." Toyooka is also tapping its cultural heritage as it seeks to become a vibrant region.

Early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Eirakukan theater near the former Izushi-jo castle thrived as "kabuki" shows

and "yose" vaudeville performances drew crowds of people. Eirakukan was later converted into a cinema, before being closed in 1964. But in 2008, Eirakukan was restored as a theater for kabuki and other plays to bring back vigor to the community. In April 2014, the Kinosaki International Arts Centre was opened to provide a stage for dance and other performing arts and also to bring together Japanese and foreign cultures. Through its artists-in-residence programme, the centre invites artists from around the world to stay for extended periods of time in Toyooka and enrich their creative imagination through experiencing life in Japan.

Last year, 500 artists from 26 organisations spent time at the centre,

including actress Irene Jacob, a previous winner of the Best Actress Award at the Cannes Film Festival. The cosmopolitan air of the centre mingles with the traditional atmosphere of the nearby Kinosaki hot spring spa, as foreign artists staying at the centre are sometimes seen enjoying bathing at the springs.

Toyooka is also highlighting its prowess in bag manufacturing as part of its community rejuvenation initiative. The 62 bag manufacturers in the city make some 10-billion-yen's worth of bags annually, accounting for around 70 percent of the overall production of non-leather bags in Japan.

An old shopping area has been renovated as "bag street," featuring around a dozen bag shops.

Previously, Toyooka's bag manufacturers mostly made bags for US and European brands. However, emphasizing their hometown roots, they are now working together to push the Toyooka brand of bags.—*Kyodo News*

**"The rice is delicious and the harvest is rich. We are hoping to spread this farming method across the country."**

**Akihisa Sezaki**  
Municipal Official

## Long after Hitler and Tiger, Judith Kerr still has yarns to spin



British children's writer and illustrator Judith Kerr chats as she sits by her desk at her home in west London, Britain on 30 September 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — At 92 years of age and with over nine million books sold, British children's writer and illustrator Judith Kerr could be enjoying a restful retirement, but no.

The author of bestselling picture book "The Tiger Who Came To Tea" and of "When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit", an account of her childhood as a Jewish refugee fleeing Nazi Germany, Kerr has just published a new book and is keen to find her next project.

"I'm miserable now because I haven't thought of the next one yet," she joked at her home in Barnes, a leafy corner of south west London, where she has lived

and worked since 1962.

Elegant in a long gray dress and pearl necklace, and fit from her frequent walks by the Thames, Kerr effortlessly climbed two steep flights of stairs to her studio, a small room with a drawing board and table cluttered with pencils and sketchbooks.

Faded family photos vie for shelf space there with books and trinkets including cuddly toy versions of Mog the cat, one of Kerr's most popular creations who features in many of her books.

Her new work, "Mister Cleghorn's Seal", is a novella illustrated with black-and-white pencil drawings, a departure for Kerr. "Mis-

ter Cleghorn' I really am pleased with, because it's something I've never done before," she said.

The tale of a man whose snap decision to save a motherless seal pup turns his life upside down, it was inspired by a true episode from the youth of her father, Alfred Kerr, a famous writer and drama critic in Germany before World War Two.

"Only my father would have thought he could do this mad thing," said Kerr, chuckling at the thought of him struggling to keep a seal on his Berlin balcony. The story did not end well for the real seal, although the novella has a happy conclusion.

Alfred later had his

adopted seal stuffed, and as a little girl Judith used to sit on it and stroke its fur in the family home in Berlin. But after they fled Germany in 1933, when Judith was nine, the Nazis seized it along with all their possessions.

They also publicly burned Alfred Kerr's books and put a price on his head. In exile in Switzerland, he joked that he felt insulted because the amount was too low.

Those events, and the family's subsequent struggle to get by as impoverished refugees in Paris and then wartime London formed the subject of Judith Kerr's autobiographical trilogy that started with "When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit", published in 1971.

The book has been translated into many languages and taught to schoolchildren as an introduction to a dark chapter of history. It won the prestigious Youth Book Prize in Germany, and in 1993 a school was named after Kerr in her native Berlin.

Kerr said that as she had got older she had thought more often about the Jewish children from her generation who perished in the Holocaust, and of the lives they might have lived. "If you've got a life that so many people didn't have, you can't waste it," she said.—*Reuters*

**mitv Myanmar International**

(4-10-2015 07:00 am ~ 5-10-2015 07:00 am) MST

### Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:24	Am	Yatana Theinga City and Shwe Bon Yatanamingalar Palace
07:43	Am	Image Of The Monks
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Myanmar Prehistory
08:50	Am	Mobile House
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	The Precious Lands Of Myanmar (Mandalay Region)
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Wet Markets of Yangon: Thirimingalar Market
10:35	Am	School For the Blind (Kye Myin Dine)

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

(03:00 Pm ~ 05:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 09:00 Am)

05:03	Pm	News
05:25	Pm	School For the Blind (Kye Myin Dine)
05:51	Pm	Today Myanmar "Broadcasting Law"
06:30	Pm	Live: AFC-U 19 Championship Qualifying Tournament for Bahrain 2016 (Group-G) (Myanmar Vs. Hong Kong)

### Prime Time

08:03	Pm	News
08:24	Pm	Let's Cook (EP-4) Hassle-free Bite-sized Club Sandwiches & Hot Fudge Brownies
08:49	Pm	Myanmar Masterclass: Artist Than Kywe

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

(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Saturday 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))

**MRTV Entertainment Channel**

(3-10-2015, Saturday)

6:00 am	• Classical Songs	• Myanmar Series	
6:10 am	• Teleplay	7:05 am	• Cassette Drama
6:25 am	• Teleplay	8:30 am	• Dramatic Arts
6:35 am	• Fashion Music	9:55 am	• Teleplay
6:50 am		10:10 am	• Myanmar Video

## Defence service team wins Karatedo Cup



The winners of the 6<sup>th</sup> 2015 Japan Karatedo Cup pose for photo together with Japanese ambassador Mr Tateshi Higuchi. PHOTO: KO MOE

Ko Moe

AN awards ceremony was held for the 6th 2015 Japan Karatedo Cup at Aung San Stadium on 2 October. The championship was organised by the Japanese Embassy in Myanmar in cooperation with Myanmar Karatedo Federation.

Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar H.E Mr Tateshi Higuchi presented the winner's cup to the defence service team.

Participants from ministries across the country and 20 clubs

took part in the two-day competition, which included 17 matches.

Best player awards went to Aung Khin Sit from Ministry of Sports in the senior male category; Thazin Aye from Ministry of Defence Service in the senior female category; Hein Htet Aung from the Youth Training Centre (YTC) in the junior male category and Thet Mhu Kyezin from Tiger in the junior female category. The best player of the tournament went to Min Hein Khant from the ministry of forestry.—GNLM

### AFC U-19 Championship 2016 Results (2-10-2015)

Vietnam	5 - 0	Brunei
Myanmar	0 - 0	Timor Leste

## No guarantees for Rooney, says England boss Hodgson

ENGLAND coach Roy Hodgson can give Wayne Rooney "no guarantees" that he will always pick him for the national team and said the current crop of forwards he has to choose from is the best he has seen during his tenure.

Manchester United forward Rooney will be awarded a golden boot by Sir Bobby Charlton before England's Euro 2016 qualifier against Estonia on 9 October after overtaking him as the country's leading scorer.

Rooney became the first England player to reach the 50-goal mark when he scored against Switzerland on 8 September but his club form has come

under increasing scrutiny.

He went 11 Premier League games without a goal before ending the drought with his first league goal of the season in United's 3-0 win over Sunderland last weekend.

Asked if the 29-year-old could lose his place in the England team if his form did not recover, Hodgson said: "That day hasn't arrived and, with any luck, it won't arrive ... but there are no guarantees.

"He would regard me as someone who is very false if I ever said to him, 'Your place is guaranteed.' I would be very upset if anyone asked me to give them a guarantee of a place."

## Nadal, Djokovic meet Thai Prime Minister

BANGKOK — Tennis titans Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic met with Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha on Friday and visited the site of a deadly Bangkok bomb blast.

World number one Djokovic and Nadal, a 14-times grand slam champion, are in Thailand for a sold-out exhibition match aimed at boosting confidence in safety following the August attack which killed 20 people, including fourteen foreigners.

The blast, the worst incident of its kind in Thai history, has taken a toll on the country's important tourism industry, which had just begun to recover after political protests last year.

The pair visited the Erawan shrine, the scene of the explosion, and placed flower garlands at the site amid pouring rain.

Earlier, Nadal and Djokovic, wearing pale blue and yellow traditional Thai silk jackets, gave tennis racquets to Prayuth and chatted to the premier through an interpreter. Prayuth asked the



Tennis players Novak Djokovic of Serbia and Rafael Nadal of Spain give rackets to Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha during a meeting at the Government House in Bangkok, Thailand. PHOTO: REUTERS

two to help promote Thai tourism. "We are very pleased to have world-class tennis players in Thailand," said Prayuth. "We hope you will help boost confidence."

Djokovic last visited Thailand in 2008 when he lost the

final of the Thailand Open to Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, while Nadal visited Bangkok in 2010 for the same tournament and lost in the semi-finals. The two will face each other at Bangkok's Hua Mark Indoor Stadium at 1300 GMT on Friday.—Reuters

## Top scorer Vardy playing with broken wrist

LONDON — Leicester City's England striker Jamie Vardy has been playing with two broken bones in his wrist since 13 September, but that has not prevented him from becoming the Premier League's top scorer.

Leicester manager Claudio Ranieri revealed the extent of the injury on Thursday after the striker was named in England's squad for their remaining Euro 2016 qualifiers against Estonia and Lithuania.

The injury seems not to have

hampered Vardy, who netted his fifth and sixth goals of the season in last weekend's 5-2 home defeat by Arsenal to go top of the scorers' list, and Ranieri said he will play against Norwich City on Saturday.—Reuters



England manager Roy Hodgson during the Press Conference. PHOTO: REUTERS

Liverpool striker Danny Ings has also been called up for the qualifiers against Estonia and Lithuania (12 October), along with Rooney, Harry Kane, Theo Walcott and Jamie Vardy.

Daniel Sturridge misses out after recently returning from long-term injury.

"If you put Danny Welbeck into that list as well, who has done ever so well for us, I think our choice is enormously dif-

ferent to 2012, put it that way," Hodgson said.

"If I cast my mind back, there seems to be so many more players now knocking on the door than there were four years ago, so that's got to be very positive."

Hodgson also invited Aston Villa's Jack Grealish to train with the team after the 20-year-old decided to play for England rather than Republic of Ireland.

However, Villa manager Tim Sherwood refused to let Grealish go with the 20-year-old still waiting for FIFA to ratify the nationality decision.

"The idea was to show him St George's Park and ... induct him into England ... but Tim made it clear that wasn't a good idea as far as he was concerned and he needed the boy to do some more training because he missed pre-season."—Reuters