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KAREN IN CAPITAL

GNU delegation in Nay Pyi Taw to sign NCA



The GNU delegation, led by chairman Saw Mutu Saepo, arrive at the Horizon Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

ACCORDING to the chairman of the Karen National Union, arrived in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday to sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. The agreement is slated to be signed on 15 October. The delegation includes 16 members, including the chairman and Saw Jonny. They are staying at the Horizon Hotel in the capital.—GNLM

GNU, ABSDF, RCSS/SSA-S removed from list of unlawful associations

ACCORDING to an announcement signed by Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Ko Ko on 12 October, President U Thein Sein has removed the Kayin National Union (GNU), the All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF) and the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS)/Shan State Army-South (SSA-S) from the list of Unlawful Association. They had previously been added to the list under the Unlawful Association Act. These groups previously all agreed to sign the nationwide ceasefire accord with the Myanmar government.—GNLM

ABSDF, RCSS/SSA-S removed from list of terrorist groups

PRESIDENT U Thein Sein has removed the All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF) and Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS)/Shan State Army-South (SSA-S) from the Terrorist List announced on 12 October. The groups had previously been added to the list in accordance with the Anti-Terrorist Law. The announcement was signed by Lt-General Ko Ko, the Minister for Home Affairs. Both groups previously agreed to sign the nationwide ceasefire agreement with the Myanmar government.—GNLM

Excess water from Thaphanseik Dam poses no threat to local people



Water flows past spillways of Thaphanseik Dam on 12 October. PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY

People living near Thaphanseik Dam have been told not to worry about flooding, as the Irrigation Department is monitoring the situation closely, according to source close to the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation.

The water level in Thaphanseik Dam recently exceeded its capacity of 2,880,000 acre-feet, reaching 3,191,614 acre-feet, but the excess water flowed into the dam's spillways. The water level rise was caused by heavy rainfall.

Authorities had to release excess water through spillways until 2pm on Monday.

The water level in the dam receded to 3,156,674 acre-feet after irrigation authorities released excess water.—MNA

Elections cancelled in some village-tracts

THE Union Election Commission on Monday announced the areas where it is impossible to hold elections.

The commission said in its statement that it had to cancel the elections in the areas as it is impossible to hold elections in a free and fair manner.

The areas include 212 vil-

lage-tracts in Kachin State, 94 village-tracts in Kayah State, 41 village-tracts in Bago Region, one village-tract in Mon State and 5 townships and 56 village-tracts in Shan State.

Areas where elections are cancelled are also posted on the website of the UEC at www.uecmyanmar.org.—MNA

Bago authorities, media to discuss ways for access to information

BAGO Region government and local media will hold a workshop on Tuesday in Bago on seeking ways for getting information from the local authorities.

The workshop is jointly organized by Ministry of Information, Bago Region Government and Myanmar Press Council

(Temporary), focusing on getting access to information from the governmental departments.

Officials from the regional-level departments and members of the local journalist associations in Bago region will participate in the one-day workshop.—MNA

Foreign cruise ships line up for Myanmar's tourist season

UNDER the supervision of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and travel tour company Destination Asia Co Ltd, cruise liner MV Oceania Insignia arrived at Thilawa Port in Yangon via Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 4 October. The ship carried 635 passengers and 400 crew members. The liner set off for Phuket, Thailand, on 6 October.

Similarly, Myanmar Voyages Co Ltd has arranged for the MV Silver Shadow, part of the Silver Sea Cruises fleet from the United States, to arrive with 326 passengers and 290 crew members in Yangon and stay from 3 to 6 November. The tour company has organised another trip for the cruise liner to visit again from 26 to 29 December with 300 passengers and 290 crew members.

Moreover, MV Seaborn Sojourner will come to Yangon with 200 passengers and 330 crew members from 11 to 14 De-

cember, and MS Volendam will come with 550 passengers and 632 crew members from 26 to 28 December. The ships' tours were organised by Destination Asia Co Ltd.

While they are docked in Myanmar, these ships' tour companies have also organised day trips around Yangon and Bago and one-night trips to Bagan and Mandalay.

Tourist arrivals to Myanmar by cruise ship have been increasing yearly. In 2014, 21,583 tourists came to visit on 20 cruise liners. In 2015, up to October, 25 cruise liners have arrived with 22,815 visitors, according to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

Tourists visit Myanmar via sea, air and roads from bordering countries. People also travel Myanmar's rivers, such as the Ayeyawady and Chindwin, on national cruise ships.—MoHT



MV Oceania seen at Thilawa International Terminal. PHOTO: MoHT

Monk to build hospital for rural poor

Construction will start next month on a hospital that will help low-income families in Sagaing Region access medical treatment

Khaing Thanda Lwin

A prominent monk in Myinmu, Sagaing Region, is working to establish a 150-bed hospital in the town to provide healthcare to low-income communities.

The five-storey building will

be built at a cost of more than K1 billion (US\$774,893) and the funds have been collected by the monk, Tipitakadhara Dhammabhandagarika Sayadaw Bhaddhanta Vamsa Pala Lankara, from donors in Myanmar and abroad.

The project is slated to begin in November in Htee Saung village,

Myinmu Township, which is located beside the Mandalay-Monywa Highway and is 74 kilometres from the city of Mandalay.

The facility is expected to be completed by 2017.

The hospital will specialise in treatment for people suffering from chronic diabetes and high blood

pressure, which is also known as hypertension. Treatment will be free of charge.

"Diabetes and hypertension are the fastest growing health problems in the country due to people's unhealthy lifestyles," said Professor Than Than Aye at a public health seminar, adding that people often fail to take preventative steps to help them avoid non-communicable diseases.

The monk said he also has plans to raise awareness about the

two chronic diseases among the general public.

Tipitakadhara Dhammabhandagarika Sayadaw Bhaddhanta Vamsa Pala Lankara also established an eye hospital in 2013, which provides treatment for eye diseases free of charge. The hospital provides healthcare services to over 1,600 patients per month.

Those who wish to donate to the new hospital can call 09 794 753 741.

ASEAN ministers discuss energy sector development in Kuala Lumpur

THE 33rd ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM) was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 5 to 10 October. The participants issued a joint ministerial statement pledging to implement new action plans for development in the region's energy industry.

In his opening remarks at the AMEM, Honourable Datuk Seri Panglima Dr Maximus Johnity Ongkili, Malaysia's Minister of Energy, Green Technology and Water, called for greater cooperation among the countries to achieve a sustained and cost-efficient energy supply without depriving future generations.

The meeting highlighted the achievements in the implementation of the 2010-2015 ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation and discussed strategies for the new plan of action for 2016-2025, which will be implemented in two phases. The first phase of the APAEC 2016-2025 will cover the period of 2016-2020 with the measures to enhance energy security cooperation and move toward greater connectivity and integration.

Myanmar's delegation was led by U Zay Yar Aung, Union Minister for Energy, who served as the Vice Chair of the AMEM.

The Myanmar delegation also attended the 12th ASEAN+3 Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM+3), the 9th East Asia Summit Energy Ministers Meeting (EAS EMM) and 5th Meeting of ASEAN Energy Ministers and International Automatic Energy Agency in Kuala Lumpur.

While in Malaysia, U Zay Yar Aung met Mr S. Iswaran, Minister for Trade and Industry of Singapore and General Anantaporn Kanjanarat, Thailand's Minister of Energy, to discuss opportunities for cooperation in the energy, trade and industry sectors.—*Ministry of Energy*

Myanmar to attend anti-trafficking meeting in Bangkok

COMMIT taskforce meeting aims to promote cooperation among GMS countries to combat human trafficking

Khaing Thanda Lwin

MYANMAR will attend the third anti-human trafficking taskforce meeting of Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking (COMMIT) Process, which will be held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 15 to 16 October.

The Myanmar delegation will include Police Brig-Gen Win Naing Tun, head of the Myanmar Police Force's Anti-Trafficking in Persons Division, U Hsan Lin, assistant director from the Union Attorney-General Of-

fice and Daw Aye Mar Kyaw, project coordinator for UN Action against Trafficking in Persons (UN-ACT).

The meeting will focus on the achievements of the COMMIT Process and will include an Implementation Update. The participants will exchange best practices and discuss communication between countries, partnerships with CSOs, the COMMIT Capacity Baseline and methods of reporting the progress of COMMIT.

UN-ACT has extended in-

ited officials from the ASEAN Secretariat, World Vision and the International Organisation for Migration to attend the meeting.

UN-ACT was established in 2014 to ensure a coordinated approach to more strategically and effectively combating trafficking in persons in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) and beyond. The project builds upon the work previously undertaken by the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking (UNIAP).

103 boat people repatriated to Bangladesh

MYANMAR handed over 103 verified Bangladeshi citizens out who were rescued off the coast of Myanmar in May and June to Bangladeshi authorities on Monday.

The former boat people were repatriated after a meeting between Myanmar and Bangladeshi authorities in Taungpyo

(Letwe) in Maung Taw District, Rakhine State.

A Myanmar team led by Deputy Director U Saw Naing of Maung Taw District handed over the Bangladeshi nationals to a Bangladeshi team headed by the acting commanding officer of No 17 Border Guard Battalion at Cox's Bazar.

Myanmar has repatriated a total of 729 verified Bangladeshi nationals on six occasions. The remaining boat people will be repatriated to their countries of origin upon the completion of the verification process, according to a press release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar.—*MNA*



Myanmar authority handed over 103 boat people to Bangladesh authority on Monday. PHOTO: MNA

Landslide kills 17, six feared dead in Hpa-saung Township



Two-day torrential rain caused landslide in Hpa-saung Township, Kayah State. PHOTO: BALAKE IPRD

TORRENTIAL rain caused a landslide on Sunday in a village in Hpa-saung Township, Kayah State, killing 17, according to a news report from the Myanmar News Agency on Monday. Others are feared dead.

Among the confirmed dead are 10 men and seven women.

About 60 houses were destroyed by the landslide, which happened at about 2pm in a hilly area between Mawchi Taung Paw village and Lokhalo village.

Local authorities and police teamed up with residents to carrying out rescue operations at the site of the tragedy.

Temporary relief camps have been opened at schools and at a Lokhalo Station Hospital, and more than 360 inhabitants of houses in the landslide risk area have been relocated there.

The Kayah State government held an emergency meeting and sent rescue teams to the disaster-hit area along with relief aid.

Members of the local regions and battalions are clearing the road between Hpa-saung and Mawchi.

Myanmar's weather bureau released a weather forecast at 7pm on Monday, saying isolated heavy rainfall is expected in

Kayah State, with 100 percent degree of certainty and validity until the evening of 13 October.

Meanwhile, heavy rain is likely to fall in Mandalay, Magway and Ayeyawady regions and Rakhine State.

On Thursday, a flash flood in a creek caused by heavy rains in Kalaywa Township, Sagaing Region, swept away 16 people.

So far, two bodies have been found, and the remaining are feared dead, along with more than 20 cattle, local authorities told The Global New Light of Myanmar.

Around 200 acres of farmland were also buried under sand brought in by the flash flood in Phonethone creek in Kyaunggyi Village, Chin Chaung village tract, in Kalaywa Township, Sagaing Region.

The disaster followed the country's worst floods in 100 years, which struck from late July to August, killing more than 120 people nationwide and impacting more than 1.6 million people. Most of the flood-related deaths were reported in Rakhine State, where at least 56 people died, followed by Sagaing Region with 24, Mandalay with 12 and Shan State with 9 dead.—*GNLM*

New bridge to be built in Meiktila Township



A new bridge will replace this ramshackle one in Meiktila Township. PHOTO: CHAN THAR

A NEW Latpankhakawt-Galonkone bridge, which will connect 20 villages in Meiktila Township, is set to be built during the current 2015-2016 financial year, according to an official from the township's Rural Development Department. The new steel-framed bridge with wood flooring will be 10.6 metres long and 4.2 metres wide, and its budget will come from the rural development fund of the Mandalay Region Government. The construction is expected to take one and a half months and will start very soon, said department official Daw Hla Hla Oo.

A new bridge has become necessary as the current old bridge is deteriorating and becoming unsafe to cross. The new bridge, which crosses a creek, will provide a vital communication route for the rural community of over 20 villages in the township.—*Chan Thar*

Election competition visible on the streets of Natogyi

SIX candidates, including an independent, are campaigning for votes in Natogyi Township, Mandalay Region. The competition has roused vocal debate in the community over who should represent them.

Even members of a single family are split over the decision. Several sisters whose father works for the township election commission are in dispute over who should get their votes. Some voters said they would vote for the candidate who will benefit the community the most, regardless of which party the candidate represents. People on motorcycles have been circulating around the town adorned with their favourite parties' emblems.

Residents have also placed bets on who will win on voting day.—*Htay Myint Maung*

Myanmar sends delegation to human rights seminar in South Korea

A Myanmar delegation left Yangon for South Korea on 10 October to attend the Seminar Programme on Human Rights Policy Development (Myanmar). The trip was arranged by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

The seminar will run until 24

October in Seoul and Seongnam.

The 15 members of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission will exchange views on education and the protection and promotion of human rights between Myanmar and South Korea.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Officials in Pobbathiri, Tatkon receive polling procedure training



PHOTO: TIN SOE LWIN

IN preparation for the general election on 8 November, 150 ballots officials from Pobbathiri Township in the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, were offered a two-day polling procedure training course at the township's General Administration Office yesterday.

The opening was attended by senior township officials and Ottara District Election Commission member U Mya Thaug, who explained the procedures.

The chief polling officers, their deputies and polling sta-

tion staff were given lectures on polling matters and were shown a demonstration of voting procedures.

That the same day, a video on polling procedure was screened for polling officials at the Tatkon Township town hall. The township has 136 polling booths. The attendees will also hear lectures in two groups on 12-13 October and 14-15 October.

Tatkon Township has six town wards and 49 village tracts.—*Shwe Ye Yint/Tin Soe Lwin*

2nd Annual Meeting of Innovation for Cool Earth Forum held in Tokyo

UNION Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Win Tun discussed Myanmar's efforts for reducing impacts of climate change in the country at 2nd Annual Meeting of Innovation for Cool Earth Forum in Tokyo on 8 October.

Under the title "Future Strategies on Climate Change in Myanmar", the Union Minister said Myanmar laid down five policies

and drawn strategies to reduce CO2 emission and to efficiently use of natural resources in attempt to combat the impacts of the climate change.

He also pledged that Myanmar would cooperate with international organizations in combating the climate change despite restrictions of technological know-how and financial resources.—*GNLM*

Landslide dams pose no threat

LANDSLIDE dams, or lakes created by earth shifted by landslides, are common in Chin State. These dams pose a threat to nearby communities because they are prone to collapse, which causes flash floods. Recently, one big lake and four small lakes were created by landslides on the upper reaches of Twilone Creek, which flows into Yazagyol Dam through Nayinzayar Creek.

Seven people, including children, were killed by flooding and

landslides in Chin State this summer. Donors and volunteers rushed to villages hit by landslides to provide victims with emergency shelters and food. Now, efforts are being made to relocate the victims to a forest reserve because their former villages are prone to landslides.

In addition to relief assistance, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement offered K100,000 to each family that lost a member to the natural disasters.

AIKIDO training became available to staff of the Yangon Region Police Office on 10 October with the aim of improving the fighting skills of police officers. The training will take place every weekend until 27 December at the office.

Altogether, 16 police staff, including three officers, are attending the course.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Aikido course opens for police

Officials from the Irrigation Department who surveyed the landslide dams that formed in Chin State said the dams are not likely to collapse and do not pose a danger to local people. In the event of a collapse, the experts said, the water would flow through the spillways of the Yazagyol Dam.

Nonetheless, the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry taking measures to prevent the collapse of the landslide dams.—*Su Hnin Lei*



A landslide dam in Chin State. PHOTO: SU HNIN LEI

Thai judge to announce verdict in British murder trial in December

BANGKOK — A Thai judge will announce a verdict in the trial of two Myanmar migrant workers accused of killing two British tourists at the end of the year, a defence lawyer said on Monday, following a trial that has been mired in controversy.

Britons Hannah Witheridge, 23, and David Miller, 24, were found bludgeoned to death on the southern island of Koh Tao last year. A post-mortem examination showed Witheridge had been raped.

The killings raised questions about the safety of tourists in Thailand, the competence of its police force and its treatment of migrant workers. Lawyers for the accused, Zaw Lin and Win Zaw Htun, both 22, have made police incompetence and mishandling of evidence central to their defence.

“The verdict will be on 24 December,” chief defence lawyer Nakhon Chompuchat told Reuters. “There is a chance we can still win,” he said, adding that inconsistencies in the police investiga-



Myanmar migrant workers Zaw Lin (R) and Wai Phy, also known as Win Zaw Htun, arrive at the Koh Samui Provincial Court, in Koh Samui, Thailand. PHOTO: REUTERS

tion, including not sealing off the crime scene properly, could work in favour of the defence.

During the trial, which began in July, defence lawyers com-

plained of a patchy police investigation marred by disputed forensics.

The trial ended this weekend with the men alleging they were

tortured and sexually assaulted to make false confessions.

Rights groups have become involved in the trial and claim the men are being used as scapegoats because of their status as foreign migrant workers in Thailand.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha agreed last year to allow Britain's Metropolitan police to conduct an inquiry in an attempt to reassure the victims' families that the judicial process was being carried out in a fair and transparent way.

The Met refused to hand over a report they had compiled on the police investigation and the two accused men lost a high court challenge in August that sought access to the report.

Andy Hall, a Thailand-based activist for the rights of migrant workers who is helping with the defence, said there needs to be an urgent investigation into sexual assault allegations. The defence and prosecution have been given until 26 October to deliver their written closing statements.—Reuters

Vietnam to build cable car system near Son Doong Cave

HO CHI MINH CITY — The Vietnam National Administration of Tourism has supported the installation of a cable car system near Son Doong Cave, a tourism attraction, in central Quang Binh province, local online newspaper VnExpress reported on Monday.

Vietnam's tourism watchdog's chief Nguyen Van Tuan said the system, which will connect Son Doong and Phong Nha caves in the Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park, will help lure more visitors.

Many experts assumed that the planned cable car system will negatively affect the environment.

Son Doong Cave is more than 200 meters wide, 150 meters high, and approximately nine km long.—Xinhua

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Mahathir, other leaders urge prompt end to 1MDB scandal

KUALA LUMPUR — Former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad and some leaders of the ruling party jointly demanded resolution of the 1MDB state fund scandal on Monday and condemned a crackdown on dissent, signaling a divide within the coalition.

Mahathir has openly called for Prime Minister Najib Razak to resign over allegations of corruption at 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) and in a rare public display of unity, Mahathir and sacked deputy prime minister Muhyiddin Yassin called a news conference to express their concerns.

Voices of dissent from within the ruling United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) were quickly silenced with a July cabinet reshuffle that ousted Najib's critics, including Muhyiddin.

“The government is now defining the law according to their own needs. We are here to show that we are against the abuse of the law on our country.”

Mahathir Mohamad



(Seated from L to R) UMNO's Deputy President Muhyiddin Yassin, former prime minister Mahathir Mohamad and member of parliament Razaleigh Hamzah give a news conference in Putrajaya, Malaysia, on 12 October 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

A former senior member of UMNO, Khairuddin Hassan, and his lawyer, Matthias Chang, were formally charged on Monday with attempts to sabotage Malaysia's banking and financial systems.

Khairuddin had called for US law-enforcement authorities to probe the 1MDB scandal. Mahathir and the other UMNO leaders called for the two to be released.

“We see a climate of fear among the people,” Mahathir told reporters. “The government is now defining the law according to their own needs. We are here to show that we are against the abuse of the law on our country.”

Also present at the news con-

ference were party vice-president Shafie Apdal, also sacked as a minister, and party elders Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah and Sanusi Junid.

Najib, who chairs the 1MDB advisory board, has been at the center of a political storm over allegations of graft and mismanagement at the fund.

The scandal hit crisis point in July when media reports said investigators looking into 1MDB found that nearly \$700 million dollars were transferred into bank accounts of the prime minister. Najib has denied talking any money for personal gain.

Muhyiddin, who is still the UMNO deputy president, said the party cannot be seen as uncaring.

“UMNO has a certain culture...you tend to suppress your feelings. What I'm asking is for them to be more expressive through the many platforms. Do not be fearful if what you're doing is right,” he said.

Asked if he would call for Najib's resignation, Muhyiddin said: “I don't need to say it as others have said it... There are problems of concern and it is up to the prime minister to consider what he should do that is best for the nation.”

1MDB has amassed debts of over \$11 billion. The attorney general's office recently dismissed a recommendation by the central bank to prosecute.—Reuters

Angus Deaton wins 2015 Nobel Prize for Economics



Goeran K Hansson, Permanent Secretary of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (C) announces Angus Deaton of Britain as the winner of the 2015 Nobel Economics Prize, on 12 October 2015 in Stockholm. PHOTO: AFP

STOCKHOLM — British economist Angus Deaton won the 2015 economics Nobel Prize for “his analysis of consumption, poverty, and welfare,” the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said on Monday.

“To design economic policy that promotes welfare and reduces poverty, we must first understand individual consumption choices,” the award-giving body said on announcing the 8 million Swedish crown (\$978,000) prize. “More than anyone else, Angus Deaton has enhanced this understanding.”

The economics prize, officially called the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, was established in 1968. It was not part of the original group of awards set out in dynamite tycoon Nobel’s 1895 will.—Reuters

Arrest warrant issued for ex-Thai PM Thaksin over court no-show

BANGKOK — A Thai court on Monday issued an arrest warrant for fugitive former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra after he failed to turn up for a defamation case filed against him by the army.

The ruling would appear to mean little as Thaksin lives abroad anyway to avoid a jail sentence handed down in 2008 for graft, but it is another setback for the former telecoms tycoon with some seeing it as the latest attempt to ensure he never returns to power.

Three governments backed by Thaksin have been forced to step down by the courts or military since 2006.

Thaksin is accused of defaming the military during interviews given to a South Korean newspaper in May that were later posted on YouTube.

In rare comments to foreign media, Thaksin accused the military of being part of a conspiracy that overthrew Thaksin’s sister, former prime minister Yingluck Shinawatra, in 2014, days before a bloodless military coup.

“The accused did not come to the meeting so a warrant was issued as the court saw he was not in the country even though an appointment was made for the first hearing,” Major General Sarayuth Klinmahom, director of the Office of the Judge-Advocate of the Royal Thai Army, told reporters.

Thaksin himself was ousted by the army in 2006. Since then, the country has been divided between his supporters and the Bangkok-based elite which sees him as a threat to the old royalist-military establishment.

For more than a decade, the country has seen at times violent street protests from both Thaksin supporters and their opponents.

Thaksin, whose parties have won every election since 2001, tapped into the changing aspirations of the working class.

But his popularity with Bangkok’s middle class soon waned and he was accused of vote-buying and harbouring republican sympathies, among other accusations, all of which he denies. From his base in Dubai, Thaksin travels frequently to Africa and Asia where he has business interests.

Yingluck swept to power in 2011 on a wave of rural support but was ordered to step down after a court found her guilty of abusing power.—Reuters

China’s top diplomat to visit Japan amid new spy report

BEIJING — China’s top diplomat will visit Japan this week for high-level political talks, the foreign ministry said on Monday, amid reports that China has detained two more Japanese nationals for spying.

State Councillor Yang Jiechi, who outranks the foreign minister, will be in Tokyo on Tuesday and Wednesday and will meet the head of Japan’s National Security Council, Shotaro Yachi, a close ally of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said the two sides would talk about bilateral and international issues and ways to “manage and control disputes”, though was not

able to immediately say if Yang would meet Abe.

China and Japan have close economic and cultural ties, but have long bickered over their painful wartime history, and have an increasingly bitter argument over ownership of a group of uninhabited islets in the East China Sea.

Last month China said that it had arrested two Japanese for spying.

Japanese media said over the weekend that two others had also been detained, one a Japanese woman who had been held in Shanghai since June and the other a Japanese national in Beijing.

Hua would not directly comment on those reports.

“As far as I understand, relevant Chinese departments are investigating the relevant cases in accordance with the law. The relevant situation has been passed on to the Japanese side,” she told a daily news briefing.

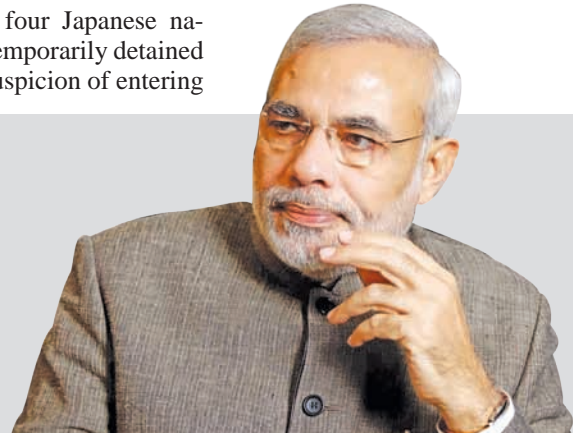
A Japanese foreign ministry spokesman declined to comment.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has overseen a tightening of already strict security laws and regulations, including setting up a new national security commission and renaming the national security law, which took effect in 1993, as the Counterespionage Law.

In 2010, four Japanese nationals were temporarily detained in China on suspicion of entering

a military zone and taking photographs without permission. The detentions came at a time of escalating tensions between Tokyo and Beijing. Last year, China’s then-ambassador to Iceland disappeared following reports he had been arrested by state security for passing state secrets for Japan. China has never explained what happened to him.

Sino-Japanese relations, coloured by Japan’s occupation of parts of China before and during World War Two as well as rivalry for regional influence, have thawed since Abe met Xi twice since last November.—Reuters



Indian PM’s party in tight race as voting opens in northern state

PATNA — Voting began on Monday in India’s northern state of Bihar, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi faces a major electoral test whose outcome is crucial to his efforts to consolidate power and speed economic recovery.

About 67 million people are registered to vote in India’s third most-populous state over the next month in an election spread over five phases that will test the appeal of Modi’s policies aimed at industrialisation and creating jobs.

Women dressed in black burkhas and young men holding identity cards queued outside a polling station as voting began in the district of Begusarai, about 100 km (62 miles) east of Patna, the state capital.

“We are voting for development,” said one voter, Siya Ram

Singh, as he left the polling station. “Our villages are not developed, all the attention has been focused on towns.”

There were no jobs in the state for young people, another voter added. Votes will be counted on 8 November.

Modi’s ruling Hindu nationalist party is not in power in Bihar. The election could give him the strength to push through planned reforms nationwide by boosting his party’s numbers in the upper house of parliament, where it is now in a minority. Since taking office last year, Modi has struggled to build support in parliament for an ambitious overhaul of the economy.

“This is a crucial, crucial election for Modi,” said S. Chandrasekharan, director of the South Asia Analysis Group in New Del-

hi. “His prestige is on the line. If his party does well, it’ll be a huge boost to his credibility. If it doesn’t, he will be a much diminished figure.” Among the major

“His prestige is on the line. If his party does well, it’ll be a huge boost to his credibility. If it doesn’t, he will be a much diminished figure.”

S. Chandrasekharan
Director of the South Asia
Analysis Group

changes being blocked by opposition parties are a business-friendly land purchase law and the biggest overhaul of taxes since independence from Britain in 1947.

Victory in Bihar will help Modi as lawmakers in parliament’s upper house are picked on the basis of parties’ strength in state assemblies.

Opinion polls are divided on the outcome, but some show Modi may struggle to capture the state.

Bihar, traditionally seen as a bellwether of national politics, is one of India’s poorest states, and its population of 100 million exceeds that of Germany.

Modi has visited 13 times over the last three months to deliver speeches, as he tries to win power in a region where caste allegiances traditionally decide elections.—Reuters

UK response to migrant crisis is inadequate, say senior ex-judges



Migrants wait near a fence with razor barbs as an Eurotunnel freight shuttle goes to England by Channel Tunnel in Calais. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Some of Britain's most senior former judicial figures criticised Prime Minister David Cameron's government on Monday for its response to the EU migrant crisis, saying it was inadequate and was pushing people into the arms of smugglers.

A statement, signed by more than 300 retired judges, working lawyers and legal experts, said Britain's vow to take in 20,000 refugees over the next five years

was not enough, and called for safe routes to be set up to deal with a flood of refugees from war-torn Syria to the European Union.

Britain's judiciary rarely openly criticises politicians, but this public statement had the support of dozens of top legal figures such as Lord Nicholas Phillips, former President of Britain's Supreme Court, and Nicholas Bratza, ex-President of the Euro-

pean Court of Human Rights.

"Like many others, we consider that the UK Government's offer to resettle 20,000 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees from camps in the Middle East, spread over 5 years, is too low, too slow and too narrow," their statement said.

It said under international law states had a duty to provide protection to refugees but many countries in the EU including

Britain had made it impossible to people to access these rights by limiting their means of travel.

"This situation, coupled with draconian penalties on airlines and ships which carry undocumented passengers ... has created the conditions which drive individuals and families into the hands of people-smugglers, with unseaworthy and overloaded boats or suffocating lorries," it said.

In response, the government said Britain had been "at the forefront of the international response" to the refugee crisis.

"We are working closely with UNHCR to identify and resettle those in the regions who are the most vulnerable," said Richard Harrington, Minister for Syrian Refugees. "This also deters people from attempting these perilous journeys which have already led to so many tragic deaths."

The crisis comes at a time when immigration is a major political issue in Britain, with polls suggesting it is now Britons' top concern, and could be a significant factor in influencing how the country votes in a referendum on Britain's membership of the EU due by the end of 2017.

Last week, Cameron's interior minister said mass immigration was damaging British society, leading to criticism from some business figures but praise from party activists and right-leaning media.—Reuters

Nikolic: It is time for national consensus



PHOTO: TANJUG

BELGRADE — Serbian President Tomislav Nikolic stated on Monday that it is time for a national consensus with regard to Pristina.

"I think that it is time for a national consensus on how to act further with regard to Pristina especially because it seems that the West is no longer willing to allow the name Pristina to appear in official documents," Nikolic told reporters in Belgrade. I can see that there is an unfair play about Serbia and that along with the talks in Brussels, which should completely define our relations, a major part of the Western civilization and the EU is organising a direct admission of the Pristina administration to numerous international organisations without any consultations with Serbia, Nikolic said and announced talks with foreign officials on Kosovo's potential UNESCO membership.—Tanjug

Islamic State is prime suspect in Turkey bombing: PM Davutoglu

ISTANBUL — Islamic State is the focus of investigations into a twin suicide bombing that killed at least 97 people in the Turkish

capital Ankara and investigators are close to identifying one of the suspects, Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said on Monday.

Speaking on Turkish broadcaster NTV in a live interview, Davutoglu said Saturday's attack was an attempt to influence the

outcome of a parliamentary election on Nov. 1 and that necessary steps would be taken if security failures were found to have con-

tributed to the bombing.

"It was definitely a suicide bombing. DNA tests are being conducted. It was determined how the suicide bombers got there. We're close to a name, which points to one group," he said of the worst attack in Turkey of its kind.

Two senior security sources told Reuters on Sunday that initial signs suggested Islamic State was behind the attack, and that it bore striking similarity to a July suicide bombing in Suruc near the Syrian border, also blamed on the radical Islamists.

The two explosions happened seconds apart on Saturday as hundreds gathered for a march organised by pro-Kurdish activists and civic groups to protest over a conflict between Turkish security forces and Kurdish militants in the southeast.

The pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), which said it was the target of the attack, has put the death toll at 128 and said it had identified all but eight of those bodies. Davutoglu's office has said 97 people were killed.—Reuters



Police in Diyarbakir, Turkey, on 11 October 2015 use tear gas and water cannon to disperse people marching to protest the double suicide bombing in Ankara that killed up to 128 people. PHOTO: REUTERS

OPINION

Not all change is alike

Myint Win Thein

The world always changes, sometimes as a result of the actions of well-intentioned people.

In Myanmar, everyone seems to be a proponent of change, and no one seems to be against it. Thus, the word 'change' has become a catchword for every politician. They all promise change if the people vote for them in the upcoming election.

With the general election approaching, peo-

ple in Myanmar talk about change even more loudly than before. Politicians from the ruling party boast about how much has changed since it took over the government and how much will change if the people continue to trust them. The opposition parties promise even more change if they win the election.

While it is natural for the public to stress that change is necessary, people must clarify the types of change they envision, because people's desires for change vary widely.

In addition, the type and direction of change they need may be different from politicians'. On the other hand, politicians are also required to identify the change people need.

Many historic world leaders have been immortalised by the change they brought to their societies. Even more disappeared from history

because they failed to bring about enough change. Some are remembered as villains who opposed change.

Now, with everyone apparently working for change, it is important that Myanmar's politicians make the changes that the majority of the people desire.

Write for us

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

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

Myanmar's negotiator expresses belief in China's willingness to help in peace process

A peace negotiator of Myanmar on Saturday expressed the belief that China would be willing to help Myanmar realize peace.

Dr. Min Zaw Oo, director of Ceasefire Negotiation and Implementation with the Myanmar Peace Center, made the remarks in an interview with Xinhua.

The official denied that he has accused China of interfering in the country's peace process.

He rejected the allegation that his prior interview with Reuters included remarks charging the Chinese government with exerting pressure on some ethnic armed groups of Myanmar to stay away from taking part in signing the Nationwide Ceasefire Accord (NCA) planned for Oct. 15 in Nay Pyi Taw.

"It was a misreport of the media," he told Xinhua.



Dr. Min Zaw Oo, director of Ceasefire Negotiation and Implementation with the Myanmar Peace Center, receives an interview with Xinhua News Agency in Yangon, Myanmar, Oct. 10, 2015. PHOTO: XINHUA

Praising two Chinese special envoys for as professional diplomats, he agreed that they attended series of peace talks between the government and the armed

groups as pure observers with no pressure put on any side.

He pointed out that Myanmar's peace issue belongs to its own domestic

one and other countries hold no responsibility for the long failure to get resolved.

He highlighted that Myanmar-China relations have been good since ancient time and during the period of successive Myanmar governments, believing that no matter which government takes office, the two countries will have friendly ties.

Moreover, for the sake of stability and development of the two countries' border areas, he stressed the need for the two countries to continue to strengthen cooperation and coordination.

According to the peace negotiator, the Myanmar government and eight ethnic armed groups would take part in signing the NCA in Nay Pyi Taw, while door will remain open to those armed groups who fail to join the signing this time.—Xinhua

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

Green peafowl (*Pavo muticus*), a majestic, endangered species of peafowls that are cousins of the more abundant and least concerned blue peafowl or Indian peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*), the National Bird of India is most possibly extinct in its wild habitats of North East India. The green peafowls have been the glory of the unspeakable beauty and grandeur of North East India, predominantly Manipur and Mizoram at one point of time. The species is currently believed to be extinct in the wild in Southern China, North East India and Bangladesh as part of its former range and presently restricted only in small pockets of Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia. Relentless anthropogenic pressures in the form of over hunting, capture for colorful plumage and habitat destruction are believed to be the major factors responsible for the loss of the species in the wild. In India, the species was previously found in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram and its distribution in Assam is not well recorded. However, there are no reliable reports of last sighting of the species ever in its core wild habitats of Manipur and Mizoram for over a decade. The only live specimens are available in the Manipur Zoological Garden at Imphal. Based on my research, this is the only zoo in the entire India where green peafowl specimens are available for public display. Since this species was once known from the spectacularly beautiful North East India, it is important to educate the people of the region about their lost treasures from a glorious and organic past. It is painful to find such a beautiful species being lost in the wild; and hence I humbly wish to advocate for addressing the concerned authorities through your esteemed daily to start a comprehensive captive breeding program for the species in North East for slowly returning the species back to its original habitat in the Indian subcontinent. Breeding stock could be acquired through neighboring Myanmar still maintaining a natural wild populations of green peafowl in the country. Both green and blue peafowls and their hybrids are available in the EU and the US international pet markets as a colorful and attractive caged species. The breeding of the species is reported to be considerably easy and hassle free and should be looked upon as a viable alternative to return the species to the wild in North East India and Myanmar could be a crucial biodiversity source in providing a stock breeding population. Such cooperation between Indian and Myanmar in Joint Conservation Initiative (JCI), if successful can serve as exemplary global conservation model.

Thanking you
Sincerely yours
Saikat Kumar Basu



TIN AUNG

The General Elections

The Constitution of two thousand and eight among others, grants each Region and State self governance to shape it's own destiny, on the principles of non-disintegration of the Union, of National Solidarity and perpetuation of Sovereignty.

It is indeed a historic provision which will enable each State and Region to be experienced in exercise of their mandate in the governance of their Region or State.

The powers to do so is to be extended as the Constitution was recently amended giving self governance greater opportunity in preparation for the Country's political destiny

In the forth-coming November General Elections it's imperative for the people to elect able persons to the various Hluttaws to hasten the transition to democracy and the political vision.

Lokethar

Nostalgic Memories of The University Hostel Life

**Khin Maung Myint
(MPT Retired)**

I am not a sentimental person by nature. However, after I reminisced about my university days in an article on student unions, contemporaries of mine urged me to write about the happy days as hostel students. The task is a bit challenging, as it would be of a different theme from the articles I am used to writing. Those who had read my previous articles would have noticed that most of them dealt with conservation of the ecosystems, disciplines, civic duties, hygiene, health, developments of infrastructures that would solve traffic jams and to take advantage of our country's strategic assets. Thus, I was reluctant to oblige my friends, but I do not want to disappoint them, so I am taking a great risk and attempt writing it. Though I had studied at both the Mandalay University and the Rangoon (Yangon) University (RU), I chose to write the hostel life at the latter. The reason is because I thought it would be more interesting, as the RU's location, its environs, the hostels and the campus lay out render a unique atmosphere and beauty. That uniqueness and the beauty was what made the RU un-forgotten to those who had trodden the campus grounds during their student days.

The fact that the Yangon University is situated on a very large plot of land and closeness to the beautiful Inya Lake made it more unique. Though I had seen the later day famous modern universities in Thailand and Singapore, I dare say that there is none comparable to the Yangon University campus. Also the level of the academic achievements at this university was recognized as the best in South East Asia since its establishment until the nineteen sixties. In those days there were some foreign students, including Russians, Chinese, Japanese and even Nigerians, who studied here. One of the most well known of those foreign students is U Shwe Ba, a Japanese journalist who used to work for the NHK broadcasting station at the Myanmar language section. I had unexpectedly met him in 1986 in Tokyo, while I was attending a telecommunication seminar. He came and introduced himself, speaking in fluent Myanmar language, while he was covering the seminar for the NHK. During our conversation, he reminisced passionately about the happy days at the Yangon University, in the nineteen sixties, as an exchange student. He explained to me how he came to be known as Shwe Ba, the same as that of the popular action movie star of that period. According to him another



Inlyar Hostel. PHOTO: GOOGLE

Japanese student adopted the name Kyaw Swe, another famous star. The names were given by their Myanmar friends.

During those heydays, the Yangon University hostel life was very enjoyable. There were many facilities and functions on the campus that the students could participate and were un-forgotten until today. The large campus and the nearby scenic Inya Lake provided the students with a perfect setting to take leisurely strolls and relax. In the evenings, the banks of the Lake were crowded with groups of students, both male and female, taking in the pleasant views and enjoying the cool and clean breeze that blew across the large expanse of water. It was the time to meet and socialize and forget about the tedious studies for a while. The Chancellor Road that leads from the main entrance right to the majestic and symbolic landmark, the Convocation Hall, also was another attraction for the hostel students of the past. For those few individuals, who had passion for playing musical instruments and singing, the night times afforded them the opportunity to show off their talents to the lady students. Early every night, during the open seasons, small groups of male students could be seen playing guitars, medelins, banjos and even accordions, singing in front of the ladies' hostels. There were requests from the lady students, to sing for them the songs they wanted to listen.

Other functions are the annual grand dinners that every hostel student looked forward to. Each hostel would celebrate lavishly with live music concerts, or *Ahnyeint* (traditional Myanmar dance) troupes. During the months of November and December, the university campus took on the carnival mood. There were one sort of function or the other going on at the week-ends. The entertainments included those of the famous foreign artistes too. During

my two years' stint at the RU, the Marther Graham Ballet troupe from the US staged a show at the Convocation Hall, free of charge, for the staffs and the students. The famous Benny Goodman Jazz band, from the US also entertained the students, live, in the open space at the front of the Science Faculty. In the fifties, jazz music was a craze and to have that opportunity was a great treat for the students.

The scientific exhibitions held annually were also very popular with the students and the public alike. During such exhibitions, the public was welcome to roam the university campus, where the exhibits were on display. The military — Army, Navy and Air force also participated in those exhibitions. The military

We should not forget the fact that the Yangon University of the past had produced great leaders, most of whom were hostel students.

weapons and equipments displayed, attracted large crowds. As those were the days when our country was facing foreign aggressions, the patriotic students were interested to join the military to defend the motherland. At those exhibitions they could obtain necessary informations that were valuable for them in deciding which service they should join.

Those who were weight-lifting or body-building buffs could train at the well-equipped gymnasium located behind the Student Union building. There were tennis courts, volley ball courts, basketball fields,

a football field, a hockey field, track and field facilities, indoor badminton courts, boxing rings and even a standard-sized swimming pool on the campus grounds. These sport facilities provided good trainings for the students. There was also a boat club, where interested students could become members. The RUBC (Rangoon University Boat Club) participated regularly in regattas abroad in the past. Annual sports meets were also the highlights of our university days. Thus it was no wonder there were many national level sportsmen and women produced by the RU in those days.

For those who were interested in traditional Myanmar dance and music, the University Arts Association provided them the lessons and occasionally staged concerts on the campus for the member students to display their acquired talents. Some present day famous performers in the movie industries are products of such endeavours.

The beauty of the university and the scenic Inya lake and the *Gantgaw* trees, which were abundant on the university campus were perfect inspirations for the fledgling poets, composers and writers among the students. During the blooming seasons, the *Gantgaw* flowers engulfed the whole campus with a pleasant fragrance, a unique feature that cannot be found anywhere else. The famous phrases such as — *Gantgaw Myay* (Gantgaw Land) or *Gantgaw Taw* (Gantgaw Jungle), *Gantgaw lann* (Gantgaw Lane) that appeared frequently in poems, songs and stories related to the university campus were well known, even to those who had never set foot on the campus. Such environs are also beneficial to the students, as the pleasant sights, smells and atmosphere are good for the mental health.

In those days, every student who came from the States and Divi-

sion were able to get accommodated in one of the many hostels on the campus. There were eleven hostels for men and four for the ladies. Each hostel was under the charge of a Hall Warden and an Assistant Warden. There were rules and regulations for the hostel students to follow, but I had never, during my time at the hostels, seen someone committing serious offense or anyone taken action for it. The students behaved well and also the Wardens treated us as gentlemen. There were no tight restrictions as to the leaving and returning to the hostel before midnight. At midnight the hostel doors were locked, but the watchmen would open them for the late arrivals. So, I must say that our hostel lives were very free, but no one take advantage of that situation. As we were treated like gentlemen, we behaved accordingly.

The hostels bred in us, the brotherhood spirit and thus we were very united and supportive to one another. The friendship nurtured as hostel-mates were everlasting. Even many years after we left the university and went our own ways, when we meet again in our waning years, our friendships were still firm. The friendship between hostel-mates are thicker than those between of the classmates, as the hostels provided us an atmosphere of a close-knit family. The hostels are also places where students from different regions and states could exchange their cultures and customs, thus promoting understanding among the national races, which would nurture special bondage and unity among our people.

I sincerely hope that the authorities would revitalize the Yangon University campus and its hostels very soon. It would be very welcome, by the public, if that should materialize. This hope is not born off the sentiment of my younger days, but because it would be a very positive step in the right direction. We should not forget the fact that the Yangon University of the past had produced great leaders, most of whom were hostel students. Before concluding, I would like to emphasize the importance to have hostels made available for the students as the cost of lodging at private boarding places are exorbitant and lacked security and discipline. Some places are not fit for female students to stay. I would not consider to keep my grand daughter, if I had one, at such places. In conclusion, I would like to urge the authorities to expedite the revitalization works of the main Yangon University campus, which was once the pride of every student who had passed down the annals of her history and for the country too. A university would not be complete without the hostels.

Sweden's PM shuns opposition calls to push Green Party from power

STOCKHOLM — Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Lofven said on Sunday he had no plans to oust the Green Party from his government but that he wanted more cooperation with the centre-right opposition.

On Friday a grassroots rebellion at the Christian Democrats convention prompted the smallest opposition party to vote to pull out of an accord to let the minor-

ity government's budgets through parliament, and the other centre-right parties quickly followed.

The deal was struck just 10 months ago to avoid new elections after the anti-immigration Sweden Democrats, which holds the balance of power, brought down the centre-left minority government's budget by voting for the centre-right opposition's bill instead of its own.

Analyst feared the collapse of the deal could bring about the first snap election in Sweden in over half a century.

But in a televised debate on Sunday, PM Lofven of the Social Democrats rejected calls from the opposition Liberals to oust the Greens from government in order to facilitate smoother cooperation with the opposition.

"Forming a new government

is not on the agenda," said PM Lofven. "But I welcome the attitude (of cooperation)."

Several other party leaders in the debate talked of the need for cooperation and Anna Kinberg-Batra of the Moderate party, the largest opposition party, said she would not try to bring down the government's budget in a parliamentary vote in December or to use the possibility to alter it after it

had passed.

"Sweden is facing acute challenges and it would not be responsible to throw Sweden into a political crisis now," she said. The only party to make substantial gains in the polls since last year's election is the Sweden Democrats. Most analysts deem a snap election unlikely as it would probably not to break the Sweden Democrat's balance of power.—Reuters

Political crisis escalates in Iraq's Kurdistan region

ERBIL — Kurdish security forces stopped the speaker of parliament in Iraq's Kurdish north from entering its capital on Monday in an escalating political crisis destabilising the region at war with Islamic State militants.

Speaker Yousif Mohammed's personal assistant said forces loyal to the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) had turned him back on the road from Sulaimaniyah to Erbil, where the regional parliament is located.

The KDP, which controls Erbil, accuses the Gorran party to which the speaker belongs of provoking violent protests in which five people died.

"He has been prevented by KDP forces and he's now returned (to Sulaimaniyah)," said the speaker's personal assistant Daroun Rahim. "It's a very dangerous de-

velopment." The move came after protesters attacked and torched several offices of the KDP in Sulaimaniyah province in the worst unrest the relatively stable autonomous region has seen for years.

Gorran, which is based in Sulaimaniyah and enjoys popularity there, said late on Sunday it had been informed by the KDP that its ministers in the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) should not return to work.

Senior KDP official Hemin Hawrami appeared to confirm that on Twitter, saying Gorran was "no longer in government".

The crisis is reinforcing old divisions in the region, which used to have two separate administrations, one run by the KDP in Erbil and Duhok, and the other controlled by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) in Sulaimaniyah.—Reuters

Police arrest Air France staff

PARIS — Police arrested several Air France workers at their homes early on Monday as investigators tracked down protesters who hounded executives from a meeting about mass job cuts last week and tore the clothes of two fleeing managers.

The arrests came a week after the world's media broadcast footage of a Air France human resources manager, his shirt ripped off but tie still around his neck, scaled a fence to escape the angry workers. A second manager had his shirt ripped down the back.

Police and judicial sources said five Air France staff, all members of the hardline CGT labour union, were arrested at their homes in the Paris region and would be placed in custody in the capital. The incident

took place on 5 October at Air France's offices in the Charles de Gaulle airport zone north of Paris, where human resources head Xavier Broseta and long-haul service executive Pierre Plissonnier were attending a works council meeting.

The managers and Air France Chief Executive Frederic Gagey had been outlining a cost-cutting plan involving 2,900 layoffs when protesters stormed the room. The proposal is described by the company as "Plan B" after it failed to persuade its pilots to accept a less radical one earlier this year.

At least four of those arrested were from the airline's cargo division, the police and judicial sources said. They were identified from video footage of the noisy protest.

Air France declined to

comment on the latest developments. The airline's management hopes to renew contact this week with a view to resuming discussions on the carrier's future.

"Air France has no comment to make on a judicial enquiry," a spokeswoman for the company told Reuters.

According to French newspaper Le Parisien, Air France management is ready to consider another form of restructuring along the lines of one agreed with pilots at its Dutch arm KLM.

That deal included a freeze on general pay rises, a gradual increase in the retirement age, productivity measures and profit sharing. In return, Air France could scale back the number of routes it closes and long-haul aircraft it withdraws.—Reuters

Syrian army, Russian jets advance against rebels in fiercest clashes for days

BEIRUT — Syrian army and allied forces supported by Russian warplanes made further advances as they pressed an offensive against insurgents on Monday, in the fiercest clashes for nearly a week, a monitor said.

Russian jets carried out at least 20 air strikes on the town of Kafr Nabuda in Hama province in western Syria, and hundreds of shells hit the area as the Syrian army and Hezbollah fighters seized part of it, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

Forces loyal to President Bashar al-Assad have in the past few days recaptured territory close to the government's coastal heartland in the west thanks to Russian intervention, reversing rebel advances made earlier this year.

Moscow says its air campaign targets Islamic State, but most of the strikes have hit rival insurgent groups fighting against Assad, some of which are supported by the United States.

Pro-government forces including the Lebanese group Hezbollah on Monday captured the southern part of Kafr Nabuda, the Observatory's Rami Abdulrahman said.

The fighting, shelling and air strikes killed and wounded dozens of insurgents, he said.



Rebel fighters carry their weapons as they take positions in the town of Kafr Nabudah, in Hama Province, Syria, on which forces loyal to Syria's President Bashar al-Assad are carrying out offensives to take control of the town, on 11 October 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

"These are the most violent battles in the northern countryside (of Hama) since the start of joint operations several days ago" between the Russian air

force and Syrian ground forces, he said.

Kafr Nabuda's capture would bring government forces closer to insurgent-held positions

along the main highway that links Syria's main cities. "The town is very important and strategic," Abdulrahman said.

Russia began its air cam-

paign on September 30, alarming a US-led coalition which is carrying out its own air strikes against Islamic State in Syria and Iraq.—Reuters

Novartis buys another 2.5 percent in Israel's Gamida Cell



Swiss drugmaker Novartis' logo is seen behind scaffolding at the company's plant in the northern Swiss town of Stein January 27, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

JERUSALEM — Swiss drugmaker Novartis will invest up to an extra \$15 million in Gamida Cell, an Israeli developer of stem cell therapies, Gamida said on Sunday.

Novartis last year invested \$35 million in the company for a 15 percent stake, in a deal that could reach \$600 million if Novartis exercises a buyout option that expires in 2016.

The \$15 million investment will be used to advance Gamida Cell's clinical programmes, including the development of NiCord, an experimental treatment for patients with high risk hematological malignancies, or blood cancers such as leukemia and lymphoma and sickle cell disease.

Gamida plans to initiate a Phase III clinical trial with NiCord in mid-2016.

As part of the latest deal, Novartis will immediately invest \$5 million in Gamida Cell for an additional 2.5 percent stake.

Also, subject to the close of an equity financing by the end of 2017 to fund the late stage development of NiCord, Novartis will invest up to another \$10 million. Novartis will not have rights or options to Gamida Cell products or technology under the terms of the agreement.

Other Gamida shareholders include Clal Biotechnology Industries, Elbit Imaging, Israel Healthcare Venture, Teva Pharmaceutical Industries, Denali Ventures and Auriga Ventures.—Reuters

Florida circus elephants find second career in research

POLK CITY — At a Florida retirement home for former circus elephants, residents enjoy a steady diet of high-quality hay and local fruits and vegetables, as well as baths and occasional walks.

For these majestic beasts, this life of relative leisure at the 200-acre Centre for Elephant Conservation comes after years on the road, entertaining America in "The Greatest Show on Earth" for Ringling Bros and Barnum & Bailey Circus. Under pressure of animal rights activists, the circus is now phasing the animals out of its show.

In March, the circus company announced with some reluctance that it would end its elephant acts by 2018. It said it wanted to use the retired animals to help save their endangered species through breeding and medical research.

"If we didn't do it, the elephants would go extinct in North America, likely in 25 years or less," said Kenneth Feld, chief executive officer of the circus' owner, Feld Entertainment.

Animal welfare groups, which for years have accused the circus of mistreating the elephants, are still not satisfied and have questioned the company's current plan.

"Certainly it's an improvement to take the elephants off the road, but Ringling should immediately retire all its elephants to real sanctuaries instead of a bogus breeding farm in Florida," said Rachel Mathews, legal

counsel to People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. "They should be allowed to just be elephants."

Asian elephants, which are smaller and rarer than the African variety, have long been an audience favorite under the big top.

Fewer than 40,000 Asian elephants remain in the wild. About 250 are in captivity in the United States, 26 of which were born over the past 20 years at Ringling facilities.

The ranch-like property in central Florida where 29 of the circus company's 42 Asian elephants now live is about an hour's drive south of The Villages, the sprawling human retirement destination and golfer's paradise.

The elephants spend their days outdoors in fenced enclosures where they are in sight or earshot of one another and enjoy loaves of white bread as an occasional treat. At night they stay in large barns, with their feet often chained to keep them from stealing each other's food.

But the animals have not left their former lives behind altogether. They continue to receive training to make them easier to manage, staff said.

The elephants are still trained to lie down, which allows workers scrub them, and to put a foot on a stool, which helps in grooming their toenails.

Their close interaction with trainers allows the staff to easily take weekly blood samples from

the large veins behind their ears. The blood is used to monitor the elephants' health and provide specimens for research. A Ringling spokesman could not say how many, if any, elephants had been officially retired since the announcement, only that the company still has 13 performing in three units.

Feld said he was saddened by the decision to remove the elephants, which have been fixtures in circus shows for more than a century, but the company is committed to helping protect and preserve the species.

One example is the elephant conservation centre's work with the Smithsonian's National Zoo. The aim is to improve the diagnosis and treatment of a herpes virus that kills 20 percent of elephant calves born in North America, said veterinarian Dennis Schmitt, Ringling's director of research. On reproduction of the species, Ringling has established a Genomic Resource Bank for Asian elephants and has achieved a live birth through artificial insemination. The center, which is not open to the public, has also helped in cancer prevention efforts for humans.

Despite a far-greater body mass and far more cells than humans, the lifetime cancer mortality risk for elephants is less than 5 percent, compared with 11 percent to 25 percent in humans, according to a new study published Thursday in the Journal of the American Medical Association.—Reuters

Staff deaths at leading hospital put India's TB battle in spotlight

MUMBAI — Campaigners and a former official overseeing Asia's largest tuberculosis hospital in Mumbai say staff deaths there are being under-reported, highlighting India's growing struggle to contain multi-drug resistant forms of the contagious, airborne disease.

Many of India's toughest TB cases end up in the metal cots of the state-run Sewri Hospital, where on a recent Reuters visit open wards were lined with emaciated patients, many left alone by families scared by the disease and its stigma.

Medical Superintendent Rajendra Nanavare, Sewri's top doctor, says an average of six patients a day die at the 1,200-bed hospital.

Nanavare says a dozen hospital workers had also died from TB in the last five years. But others say the real number of staff deaths is higher — although they could not give a precise figure — pointing to a public health crisis at the heart of one of the world's most densely populated cities.

"A lot of class 4 workers like the sweepers and the cleaners at the hospital leave work after they get the infection," said Prakash Devdas, president of the local workers' union.

"We don't know if they're alive with the infection or dead. Nobody tracks them. That's why I said the actual number would be much higher."

Campaigners blame weak infection controls, poor oversight and infrequent checks on workers in a country where the shame of TB alone drives people to suicide.

"There is so much interaction between the patients and staff. They become more vulnerable... especially if they have weak immunity," said former TB officer Mini Khetarpal, who supervised the hospital for Mumbai authorities until earlier this year.

Nanavare said 69 employees has been diagnosed with TB since 2011, of whom 12 had died while 28 had been cured.

A lot of staff continue to work at the hospital long after being infected.—Reuters



A security woman stands guard outside the Group of TB Hospitals in Mumbai, India. PHOTO: REUTERS

China says plans to lift all out of poverty in six years

BEIJING — China hopes to lift all its 70 million living beneath the poverty line to safety within the next six years, at an average rate of a million people a month, a cabinet official said on Monday.

Despite rapid economic growth in the last two decades, poverty remains a huge issue in China, especially in rural areas where a lack of jobs drives able-bodied adults to work elsewhere, leaving children and the elderly behind.

“We have six years to eradicate all poverty,” said Hong Tianyun, deputy director of China’s State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development of China, on the government’s website.

About 70 million people, mostly in the countryside, live beneath China’s poverty line, earning less than 2,300 yuan (\$362) annually, the official Xinhua news agency reported last month, citing data from the National Bureau of Statistics.

Hong added the short timeframe put pressure on local governments.

“If there are no special major initiatives, it will be extremely difficult to achieve this mission,” Hong said. “So, from the central to local authorities, from top to bottom, the pressure has been coming down.”

The central treasury has channelled more money into a poverty relief fund this year after results last year fell short, analysts have said.

About 12.3 million people earned enough in 2014 to move above the poverty line, compared with 43.3 million in 2011, Xinhua said.

China has previously set 2020 as a target for virtually eliminating poverty within its borders, proposing a programme including free vocational schools, better public services, financing for new businesses and improvements in rural healthcare and roads.

But concerns about the yawning gap between the rich and the poor have intensified as the world’s second-largest economy slows.

Beijing also faces huge pressure in creating jobs for university graduates.

Leaders have said avoiding mass unemployment is a crucial police priority amid the slowdown.—Reuters

PICTURE OF THE DAY



An aerial view shows a glass bridge under construction as it is suspended over a canyon in Zhangjiajie National Park, Hunan province, China. PHOTO: REUTERS

Ohio prosecutor criticised over reports on child’s shooting by police

CLEVELAND — An Ohio prosecutor handling the fatal shooting by police of a 12-year-old boy while he played with a replica pistol was criticised by activists on Sunday for releasing two reports that called the shooting “reasonable” before any grand jury decision on charges had been announced.

“It looks as though the prosecutor is trying to taint the grand jury process as well as manipulate the judicial process overall,” said Edward Little, one of the so-called Cleveland 8, a group of clergy, academics and activists who have called for the two police officers involved in the November 2014 playground shooting of Tamir Rice to be indicted.

The conclusions of a retired FBI agent and an out-of-state prosecutor were submitted to the Cuyahoga County prosecutor’s office ahead of an expected decision by a grand jury on whether criminal charges were warranted in the shooting, which was captured on surveillance video.

Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Timothy McGinty said in a statement on Saturday that his office was not reaching any conclusions based on the two reports. The reports said Timothy Loehmann, the white officer who shot Rice, who was black, opened fire because he felt threatened.

The case is one in a series of

high-profile police-related shooting deaths of African-Americans which have raised questions about the use of force by law enforcement.

Little said the release of the reports to media late Saturday on a holiday weekend was “reminiscent” of prosecutors’ handling of the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri where details of the case were leaked to the media before a grand jury decision not to bring charges against the police officer involved.

“This community has lost all hope in this prosecutor to be fair and impartial,” Little said.

Retired FBI agent Kimberly Crawford, in a review of the shooting, wrote that it was “apparent not only was Officer Loehmann required to make a split-second decision, but also that his response was a reasonable one.”

In another report, Colorado prosecutor S Lamar Sims also concluded that “Officer Loehmann’s belief that Rice posed a threat of serious physical harm or death was objectively reasonable, as was his response to that perceived threat.”

The Rice family’s attorney, Subodh Chandra, accused prosecutors of failing to properly advocate for the victim and of “sandbagging” the grand jury proceedings by improperly re-

leasing case documents.

“Our prosecutor is freelancing. The officers here are being given special treatment,” he said in a phone interview.

Civil rights activists lit up social media on Sunday to criticize the handling of the case.

“It’s Mike Brown all over again. The police are working their tactics to make sure the family don’t get that day in court,” said Tory Russell, with Hands Up United, a Ferguson-based social rights group.

“This is a very transparent attempt to undermine the abil-

ity to receive justice for Tamir Rice and his family,” said Arisha Hatch, with the civil rights group Color of Change.

Rice was killed after Cleveland police received an emergency call about someone brandishing a gun outside a city recreation centre. Officer Loehmann shot Rice twice in the abdomen, seconds after his partner, who also is white, drove their vehicle to within 5 feet (1.5 metres) of the boy in the playground. The gun turned out to be a replica pistol that shoots pellets, but had the orange tip removed.—Reuters



Tamir E Rice, 12, is seen allegedly pointing a pellet gun at the Cudell Recreation Centre in Cleveland, Ohio, in this still image from video released by the Cleveland Police Department. PHOTO: REUTERS

Key allies of disgraced China security chief jailed for graft

BEIJING — Chinese courts sentenced two key allies of disgraced former security chief Zhou Yongkang to jail on Monday, one for 16 years and the other for 13, after finding them guilty of corruption, the latest officials felled in a sweeping anti-graft campaign.

President Xi Jinping has spent the past three years waging war on deep-seated corruption, saying it threatens the very survival of the ruling Communist Party.

Scores of senior offi-

cial in the party, the government, the military and state-owned enterprises have been brought down, including Zhou, jailed for life in June after a secret trial in China's most sensational graft scandal in 70 years.

A court in Hanjiang in the central province of Hubei jailed Jiang Jiemin, the former head of state-owned China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), the country's top energy group, for 16 years for bribery and abuse of power.

Another court in a different part of Hubei called Xianning sentenced Li Chuncheng, who was a deputy Communist Party boss in the southwestern province of Sichuan, to 13 years in jail on the same charges.

The announcements came on the courts' official microblogs.

Jiang was a close associate of Zhou, the once-powerful domestic security chief and a former member of the elite Politburo Standing Committee, the most senior person to

have been charged with corruption in Xi's anti-graft campaign.

Zhou had also been at CNPC, the parent company of PetroChina Co Ltd, having risen through the ranks to serve as general manager from 1996 to 1998.

State television showed pictures of a grim-faced Jiang, who also ran the state asset regulator for five months before being sacked in September 2013, sitting in the dock with a policeman at each side.

Jiang took more than 14 million yuan (\$2.21

million) in bribes between 2004 and 2013, and with Zhou's connivance broke rules to provide assistance to others in their business dealings, the court said without elaborating.

Jiang admitted his guilt and provided evidence of his crimes and so received a more lenient sentence, the Hanjiang court said, adding he would not appeal.

He had served as CNPC chairman from 2011 to 2013 and had gone on trial in April. It is not clear why the verdict took

so long to come out.

The former senior Sichuan official Li took 19.8 million yuan in bribes, but also got a lighter sentence for his confession and co-operation, the court said.

While the statement did not use Zhou's name, Li was mentioned in Zhou's trial as someone who used his influence to help others' illegal business activities. Li also went on trial in April.

Zhou was party boss of Sichuan from 1999-2002 and it became one of his powerbases.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV BANGKACHAI VOY NO (139)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BANGKACHAI VOY NO (139) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 13.10.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.I.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.

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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S WONGSAMUT OCEAN
SHIPPING CO LTD.**

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV BEHSHAD VOY NO (SCY1005)

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

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

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AGENT FOR: M/S LAND AND SEA SHIPPING
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MV CHENG SHAN WEI VOY NO (009)

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

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

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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S BRILLANT SKY SHIPPING
CO LTD.**

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MALTE RAMBOW VOY NO (1517)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MALTE RAMBOW VOY NO (1517) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12.10.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KUO HSIUNG VOY NO (1040W)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KUO HSIUNG VOY NO (1040W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12.10.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P/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 CHINA SHIPPING LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

Reminder for Companies

1. The notification has been publicized in local newspaper that the companies registered in accordance with Myanmar Companies Act (1914) and Special Company Act (1950) at the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) have to notified their existence regardless of whether their registration is valid or not latest by 16 October 2015.
2. The reminder is therefore made that the companies which have not yet notified must report to DICA in due course and consideration will not be made for those reported beyond the deadline and will be struck off from the registered list according to Section 247 of Myanmar Companies Act.
Directorate of Investment and Company Administration

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 13th October, 2015: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Kachin State, fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, Shan, Chin and Kayah States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavy falls in Mandalay, Magway and Ayeyarwady Regions, Rakhine State. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Thundery activities in the Southern Myanmar areas.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 13th October, 2015: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 13th October, 2015: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 13th October, 2015: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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Vin Diesel. PHOTO: REUTERS

Vin Diesel answers 'body-shamers' with six-pack abs photo

LOS ANGELES — "Furious 8" star Vin Diesel posted on Instagram a new photo of him showing off his abs in a reply to people, who mocked his round belly. Diesel made headlines for showing off his round belly during his stay at a hotel in Miami earlier this month.

The 48-year-old actor took to Instagram on Saturday, October 10 to address the news and say that "body-shaming is always wrong," reported *Acshowbiz*. Diesel posted a photo of him standing upright in a black shirt showing off his

muscular pecs. He looked mysterious as he wore black glasses and held mobile phone on one hand. "It is amazing the response from the journalists who I have been talking to for the last two days in New York. Today one wanted to see the dad bod.

Haha," he wrote. The actor of "The Last Witch Hunter" continued, "I am wondering if I should show the picture... Body-shaming is always wrong! What do you think?" The snap came along with the hashtag "Last Witch Hunter," a movie he is currently promoting.—PTI

Steven Tyler wants Trump to stop using Aerosmith

LOS ANGELES — Aerosmith frontman Steven Tyler has reportedly asked Donald Trump to stop using his band's song "Dream On" during his presidential campaign.

According to the Hollywood Reporter, representatives for Tyler sent Donald Trump for President Inc a cease-and-desist letter on 10 October, asking that he stop using the track during campaign events. This is said to be the second time Trump has been asked not to use the song, having been first warned after an event on August 21 in Mobile, Alabama.

However he has continued to use it at events, including during a recent appearance in Georgia.

The cease-and-desist letter stated, "Trump for President does not have our client's permission to use 'Dream On' or any of our client's other music in connection with the Campaign because it gives the false impression that he is connected with or endorses Mr Trump's presidential bid.

"We are unaware of any public performance license granting Trump for President the right to perform 'Dream On' in connection with the Campaign. If Trump for President has any such license, please forward it to our attention immediately." Trump is thought to be an big Aerosmith fan and last year he attended one of the band's concerts, after which he tweeted, it "doesn't get any better than that."

He was also believed to have been on friendly terms with Tyler, reportedly bringing the singer to the Republican debate in August as a personal guest.—PTI

'Pan' flops with \$15.5 Million, 'The Martian' keeps top spot

LOS ANGELES — "Pan" walked the plank over the Columbus Day Weekend.

Warner Bros. spent \$150 million to bring the Neverland adventure to screens and millions more in marketing, but the big-budget fantasy mustered a puny \$15.5 million opening. That debut puts "Pan" alongside "The Fantastic Four" and "Tomorrowland" in the pantheon of the year's most punishing flops.

"It's a huge misfire," said Jeff Bock, box office analyst with Exhibitor Relations, adding, "We won't see another Peter Pan film for awhile." "Pan's" backers weren't the only ones having a rough weekend. Sony's "The Walk" stumbled in its wide release, expanding from 448 Imax and premium large format theaters to more than 2,500 locations, and eking out \$3.6 million in the process. The biopic about Philippe Petit's daring high-wire walk between the Twin Towers cost \$35 million to produce and has clear Oscar ambitions for director Robert Zemeckis and the

technical team behind the film. It has made a paltry \$6.4 million in its initial two weeks. The Sony team seems discouraged that positive reviews for the picture's innovative use of 3D and strong word-of-mouth hasn't lifted "The Walk" higher.

"It's a conundrum why more folks didn't come out, because once you see it, it's one of those films that you never forget," said Rory Bruer, Sony's distribution chief. "It's a picture that everybody put their heart and soul into."

With the new major studio releases teetering, Fox's "The Martian" stabilized overall ticket sales. The space thriller slipped a modest 32% in its second weekend, nabbing \$37 million and pushing its domestic total to \$108.7 million. Sony's "Hotel Transylvania 2" also showed impressive endurance, racking up \$20.3 million in its third weekend and bringing its stateside haul to \$116.8 million.

With "Pan" finishing in third place, the top five was rounded



Actor Hugh Jackman arrives for the world premiere of "Pan" at Leicester Square in London, Britain. PHOTO: REUTERS

out by Warner Bros.' "The Intern" and Lionsgate's "Sicario," which earned \$8.7 million and \$7.3 million, respectively. "The Intern" has generated \$49.6 million in receipts, while "Sicario's" total stands at \$26.7 million.

In limited release, Universal's "Steve Jobs" scored, pulling in \$521,000 across four theat-

ers for a per-screen average of \$130,236. That ranks as the best theater average of the year, and nicely positions the film about the Apple co-founder for its wide release launch on 23 October.

"This is a movie that's executed so well that you're not seeing a biography of a man, so much as you're seeing a work of art," said Nicholas Carpou, Universal's domestic distribution chief. Bruised by poor reviews and the continued strength of "Hotel Transylvania 2," "Pan" failed to deliver family crowds. Roughly 55% of its opening audience was female and 52% of ticket buyers were over 25 years old. The film rolled out across 3,515 locations. "Pan" was originally slated to open in July, but Warner Bros. pushed the film back into October citing the need for more time to complete the visual effects work. The film's cast includes Hugh Jackman, Rooney Mara and Garrett Hedlund. Joe Wright, best known for prestige fare like "Atonement," directed the picture.—Reuters

I am single: Sam Smith

LONDON — Grammy-winner Sam Smith says he is "still very single" following his split from Jonathan Zeisel earlier this year as he is focusing on his relationships with friends and family.

The 23-year-old "Writing's On The Wall" hitmaker had a short-lived romance with the American dancer earlier this year but has now confessed he is not yet ready for a relationship, reported *Female First*.

"At the moment I'm trying to hang on to a relationship with me and my family and my friends. Once I've got into the routine of this life, which may-

be I'm still trying to get into that cruise-control with, then I think maybe I can introduce a guy. I'm still very single," he said.

The singer also said he is glad he never had a real relationship before he found fame as he believes he would have missed the normality of it.

"I'm trying my best. There's different challenges. The blessing for me is that I didn't have a boyfriend before I got well known so I didn't know any different. If I'd been in a relationship before I got well known I think I'd be a bit more upset," Smith said.—PTI



Grammy-winner Sam Smith. PHOTO: REUTERS

Buffalo races attract crowds in Cambodia



Cambodian men ride buffaloes during an annual water buffalo race at Vihear Sour pagoda in Kandal province, Cambodia, on 12 October 2015. PHOTO: XINHUA

Chinese visitors help boost New Zealand accommodation sector

WELLINGTON — A surge in Chinese visitors helped boost New Zealand's accommodation sector in August, according to figures from the government statistics agency Monday.

Guest nights in commercial accommodation for August were up 4.2 percent year on year, said a statement from Statistics New Zealand.

Domestic guest nights were up 5 percent and international guest nights were up 2.6 percent.

For the year ended August, national guest nights were up 5.4 percent from the August 2014 year.

Visitor arrivals in August were up 7 percent year on year to 202,900, the highest ever for an August month, Statistics New Zealand said last month.

Visitors arriving from China in August were up 5,200 year on year to 25,100, the highest-ever number for an August month.

The number of visitors in the year to the end of August was up 8 percent to an annual record of 3.02 million.

In the year ending August, three countries accounted for 61 percent of New Zealand's overseas visitors: Australia with 1.29 million, China with 320,400 and the United States with 236,300.—Xinhua

Safety of food from Fukushima emphasized at Milan expo

MILAN — A campaign began at the Japan Pavilion of the food-themed world expo in Italy on Sunday to demonstrate to visitors that food from Fukushima Prefecture is safe despite a nuclear disaster there in 2011.

During the four-day campaign through Wednesday, samples of local foods, such as fruits and Japanese sake, are being offered to highlight the quality control efforts producers have been making since the disaster.

At the pavilion, Norio Hashimoto, an official of

the Fukushima prefectural government, said the quality of fruits shipped from the prefecture is "fully vouched for." He added, "Fukushima is one of the major producers of fruits in the country."

His colleague, Takeshi Fujita, said the purpose of the campaign is to convey "correct information" about Fukushima foods, but stressed that he does not intend to force it on anyone.

The campaign is also aimed at conveying how far rebuilding has proceeded since the Fukushi-

KANDAL — Thousands of Cambodians flocked to Vihear Sour pagoda here on Monday to watch buffalo races along a dirt track as part of a ceremony marking the end of Pchum Ben, an annual 15-day festival honoring the dead.

Sam Sophy, director of Kandal Provincial Tourism Department, said 24 water buffaloes were registered for the 450-metre-race on a muddy road leading to the pagoda.

"The event is aimed to preserve and promote our Cambodian culture and tradition to national and international tourists," he told Xinhua.

Thai Thang, chairman of the racing committee, said each of the participants was given five US dollars.

Rider Cho Sok-hen, 35, said he has joined the race for 15 years in order to preserve this traditional sport and to celebrate the Pchum Ben.

"We do not compete for the championship, but for pleasure. After the race, we ride our beasts back home and do farming as usual," he said.

Interspersed with the buffalo races were horse races and other events, including bouts of traditional wrestling and stick-fighting.

Both buffaloes and horses were adorned with brightly colored headgear before the festivities kicked off.

"I have joined the race for three years. My participation is to contribute to the preservation of Cambodian tradition," said horse rider Thy Thach.

"After the race, we use our horses for transportation."

Pchum Ben is one of the largest traditional ceremonies in the Southeast Asian country.

Vihear Sour pagoda is located some 40 km southeast of capital Phnom Penh.—Xinhua



A student (R) of the University of Milan hands out dried peaches from Japan's Fukushima Prefecture to visitors to the Japan Pavilion at the world expo in the Italian city, on 11 October 2015. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

mitv Myanmar International

(13-10-2015 07:00 am ~ 14-10-2015 07:00 am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Today Myanmar & ICT "Education & ICT"
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Bogalay Tint Aung: A Man of Versatility (Episode- II)
08:52	Am	Today Myanmar "Fixed Minimum Wage"
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Life In NightArt In Life (Ep-2) Part-1
10:03	Am	News
10:43	Am	A bike ride in pursuit of Mural Art (Episode-2)

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Monday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Pm ~ 05:26 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 9:26 Am)

05:26	Pm	A bike ride in pursuit of Mural Art (Episode-2)
05:44	Pm	Tea Leaves
05:52	Pm	Serene and Scenic Magwe
06:03	Pm	News
06:30	Pm	FIFA World Cup Qualifying Football Tournament for Russia 2018 (Round-2 Group-G) Myanmar Vs. Laos

Prime Time

08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Let's Cook (EP-5) Creamy Mushroom Soup & Honey Lemon Drink
08:54	Pm	Green Grocer

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

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

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

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

MRTV

Entertainment Channel

(13-10-2015, Tuesday)

6:00 am	• Mono Classical Songs
6:20 am	• Myanmar Series
6:40 am	• Kyae Pwint Myaye Yin Khone Than
8:00 am	• TV Drama Series
8:45 am	• Radio Drama
9:35 am	• Myanmar Video
6:15 pm	• FIFA World Cup 2018 Qualifying Football Match (Live) (Myanmar Vs Laos)

MRTV News Channel in Brief

(13-10-2015, Tuesday)

6:00 am	• Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw	News/ Weather Report
6:20 am	• Mytta Pawana By Mingun Sayadaw Phayagyi	1:20 pm
7:35 am	• Socio Economic Scenes	• Sing & Enjoy
8:00 pm	• News/ International News	2:35 pm
8:30 am	• Head Line News	• Mono Classical Songs
8:35 am	• Documentary	3:30 pm
9:00 am	• News/ International News	• Head Line News
9:35 am	• Nine Precept	4:35 pm
10:00 am	• News/ International News	• University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) — Second Year (English)
10:35 am	• Science and Technology Programme	5:00 pm
11:00 am	• News	• News/ Weather Report
11:35 am	• Documentary	5:15 pm
12:00 noon	• News/ International	• Teleplay
		5:35 pm
		• Money Talk Myanmar
		6:00 pm
		• News
		6:20 pm
		• FIFA World Cup 2018 Qualifying Football Match (Live) (Myanmar Vs Laos)
		8:00 pm
		• News/ International News / Weather Report
		8:35 pm
		• Documentary
		9:00 pm
		• News
		• TV Drama Series

Germany, Albania, Romania and Poland join 2016 party



A young man makes the eagle symbol of the Albanian flag with his hands while watching on a screen the Euro 2016 qualifying soccer match between Albania and Serbia, in Kosovo's capital Pristina, on 8 October 2015. Serbia won 2-0. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — World champions Germany and perennial also-rans Albania do not share much in common in soccer but both were united in joy on Sunday when they qualified for Euro 2016 in France along with Romania and Poland.

The World Cup winners, who have lifted the Henri De-launey trophy three times as European champions, left it late but sealed their spot with a 2-1 win over already-eliminated Georgia which gave them top spot in Group D.

Albania, who have never previously reached the World

Cup or European Championship since first entering both in the mid-1960s as a secretive state shrouded in hard-line communist aloofness, secured their place with a 3-0 win over Armenia in Yerevan.

Thousands of their supporters in both Albania and Kosovo, where a number of the Albania players were born, took to the streets, letting off fireworks and driving around towns and cities hooting their car horns in celebration.

Poland finished behind Germany with a 2-1 win over Ireland in Warsaw forcing the

Irish into the playoffs. The winner was a stunning diving header by striker Robert Lewandowski who took his tally to a record-equalling 13 for a single Euro campaign.

Romania also secured their berth in France when they won 3-0 in the wintry Faroe Islands to secure second place in Group F behind already-qualified Northern Ireland.

Romania's victory lifted them to 20 points, one behind the Irish who finished on 21 after a 1-1 draw in Finland, leaving Hungary in third spot with a place in the playoffs.—Reuters

Mercedes take title as Hamilton wins in Russia

SOCHI — Mercedes clinched their second successive Formula One constructors' championship on Sunday and Lewis Hamilton took a huge stride towards his third drivers' title with victory in Russia.

Congratulated on the podium by President Vladimir Putin, Hamilton took his ninth win of the season and 42nd of his career after a throttle problem forced the early retirement of German team mate Nico Rosberg.

The Briton now has a lead of 66 points over Ferrari's second-placed Sebastian Vettel and, if results go his way, can secure his own second successive crown in Austin, Texas, in two weeks' time. Mercedes team bosses had left the circuit long before the constructors' title was confirmed, however, with the outcome depending on a stewards' enquiry that eventually demoted Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen from fifth to eighth. "We found out (about the title) upstairs. It just feels special to be a part of it and to have



Mercedes Formula One driver Lewis Hamilton of Britain throws his trophy in the air in celebration after winning the Russian F1 Grand Prix in Sochi, Russia, on 11 October 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

contributed to a team success," Hamilton told reporters some two hours after the race had ended.

"It is a great, great, great feeling." With four races remaining, and a maximum 100 points to be won, Hamilton has 302 points to Vettel's 236 and Rosberg's 229.

"It looked like we were going to have a race and I was thinking

this is great and we were going to put on a good show," said Hamilton, who also won the inaugural Russian Grand Prix last year, of his afternoon. "Nico made a mistake at turn one and went wide. I overtook him and after that, or maybe even before, he started to have some problems. It is very unfortunate for the team."—Reuters

Hazard says he's in the worst form of his life



Chelsea's Eden Hazard

LONDON — Chelsea's Eden Hazard cannot explain why he is struggling for his club this season and said manager Jose Mourinho has been right to drop him from the starting line-up as he is in the "worst form of his life".

The Belgian was the Premier League's best player last season as Chelsea cruised to the title, but paid the price for his stunning fall from grace this term when Mourinho dropped him from the starting line-up for the Champions League defeat by Porto on 29 September.

Hazard has no goals and just two assists in 11 appearances for the club this season, a slump that has contributed to Chelsea's slide down the table, where they currently sit in 16th place.

"This is the first time in my career that I have had such a difficult spell like this," Hazard was quoted as saying by the British and Belgian media.

"I can't really explain it. All I know is that I will need to work hard in order to bounce back. At Chelsea we have concerns both as a team and

individually," the 24-year-old winger added. Hazard admitted his poor performances meant he was no longer "untouchable" as one of the first names on Mourinho's team sheet, but praised the Portuguese and backed himself to bounce back when the league resumes on 17 October after the international break.

"I was left on the bench against Porto in the Champions League, and I am no longer immune to being left out. You can be untouchable when you play well, and that has not been the case with me," Hazard said.

"I think the manager wanted to send me a message by making me a sub. I don't read everything he says, but he explains everything.

"I am not too worried for him — Mourinho is the best coach in the world when it comes to dealing with pressure. I am an optimist, and I know I can learn a lot from tough spells. "I hope to come back stronger, and I am ready to play and do my best," he added.—Reuters

Young Fitzpatrick's Matt finish secures Woburn win

WOBURN — European Tour rookie Matt Fitzpatrick, the youngest player in the field, showed the old stagers a thing or two by easing to a two-stroke triumph at the \$4.55 million (£2.97 million) British Masters on Sunday.

The 21-year-old Englishman was locked in an enthralling race for the title with Dane Soren Kjeldsen until pressing the turbo-charge button on the back nine and accelerating away from the field to finish with a 68 and a 15-under total of 269.

Fitzpatrick, who had held or shared the lead all week, snared successive birdies at the 11th and 12th before rolling home a 20-foot birdie effort at the 15th and turning to the crowd to celebrate with a double fist-pump.

The former world amateur number one effectively sealed his maiden tour win with a laser-guided tee shot to three feet

at the short 17th and could even afford the luxury of a dropped shot at the last on a sunny but cold autumnal day at Woburn.

Kjeldsen looked as if he would make Fitzpatrick fight all the way to the 18th but his bid was undermined when he took three putts from 30 feet at the 15th and followed up by slicing his drive straight up against a tree at the next hole.

The Dane ended up with a 69 for 271 and had to settle for a share of second place with Ireland's Shane Lowry (67) and Paraguay's Fabrizio Zanotti (69).

"It's not going to sink in for a long time," Fitzpatrick told the presentation ceremony after picking up a cheque for \$755,000 and doubling his earnings for the season. "It was a long day and I didn't really know what I had to do to win but I just sort of ground it out. It was a great day."—Reuters