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Union Election Commission makes a U-turn



Union Election Commission Chairman U Tin Aye addresses the meeting with representatives from seven political parties.—MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY

Aye Min Soe

AFTER touting the idea of delaying Myanmar's much-anticipated general elections due to disruptions caused by flooding and landslides, the Union Election Commission announced last night that it will be held on November 8 as scheduled.

A statement issued by the

commission said that it took into account the views expressed by representatives from seven political parties during a meeting held yesterday morning in Nay Pyi Taw to discuss a possible postponement.

"The UEC reviewed the opinions put forth by a number of political parties and has decided to go ahead with the election on 8 November. There will be no delay,"

said the statement issued by UEC.

Myanmar News Agency also reported the views expressed by the parties that took part in the meeting.

The ruling Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) supported the idea of postponing the election – for an unspecified period – on the grounds that natural disasters have prevented can-

didates from campaigning in certain areas; in particular Shan and Kachin states.

The main opposition party, the National League for Democracy (NLD) disagreed, saying that the impact of the flooding was not an insurmountable obstacle to holding an election.

Floods hit 12 of the country's 14 states and regions in July

through to September, killing 132 people and affecting an estimated 1.6 million people – the equivalent of almost half a million families, the UEC said.

The floods were the worst natural disaster to occur in Myanmar since Cyclone Nargis killed nearly 140,000 people in May 2008.

A constitutional referendum took

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International and local representatives to witness ceasefire inking

Ye Myint

INTERNATIONAL and local observers will witness the signing of the nationwide ceasefire accord, which is scheduled to take place on Thursday in Nay Pyi Taw, according to a senior adviser at Myanmar Peace Centre.

Representatives from the United Nations, the European Union (EU), China, India, Thailand and Japan will be present as witnesses when the peace deal is signed between the government and eight ethnic armed groups, said MPC's senior adviser U Hla Maung Shwe yesterday.

"The national security adviser

of India's National Security Council and five members will be present, along with a special envoy sent by China. The EU Ambassador to Myanmar and Thailand's permanent secretary will be among other international witnesses, who also include representatives from Japan and the UN."

The president, the two vice presidents, the commander-in-chief and the deputy commander-in-chief of defence services, the attorney-general and the speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw will sign the peace pact on behalf of the government, he added.

Three representatives from each of the eight ethnic armed

groups will ink the accord.

Despite having invited three leaders each from the two ethnic negotiating teams—the nationwide ceasefire coordination team and the senior delegation—and members to the ceremony, only those from the eight groups will be present on the signing day, said U Hla Maung Shwe.

He added that a joint implementation coordination meeting between the government and ethnic armed organisations who have signed the deal will take place at Myanmar International Convention Centre-2 in Nay Pyi Taw on Friday.

The post-steps for peace ac-

cord signatories include forming a joint ceasefire monitoring committee and a Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee.

The Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee will be responsible for dealing with military matters while the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee will handle political issues.

According to the national ceasefire accord (NCA), the political framework will be established within 60 days of signing and political dialogue will occur within 90 days.

The senior adviser said that U Win Htein of the National League for Democracy is likely to be pres-

ent as a witness at the ceremony.

According to the senior adviser, other Myanmar witnesses include: U Ko Ko Gyi and U Mya Aye of The 88 Generation Peace and Open Society, U Khin Maung Swe of National Democratic Force, U Zo Zam and Daw Chin Chin of Chin National Democratic Party, U Sai Aik Paung of Shan Nationalities Democratic Party, Daw Than Than Nu of Democratic Party-Myanmar, U Htay Oo and U Tin Nang Thein of Union Solidarity and Development Party, U Than Tin of National Unity Party and three ethnic affairs ministers—U Zaw Aye Maung, U Saw Tun Aung Myint and U Khun Than Myint.



Union Minister for Information U Ye Htut meets officials of ethnic's media. PHOTO:MNA

Union Information Minister meets ethnic minority media groups

UNION Minister for Information U Ye Htut held discussions about establishing a framework to develop ethnic minority media outlets during a meeting with members of ethnic media groups in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Chief editors and key staff members from Mizzima, Tanintharyi Weekly, Thanlwin Times, Kantarawaddy Times, Marnagar News, Burma News International, Development Journal and Kanbawza Times attended the meeting. Discus-

sions focused on their collective aims and challenges and the possibility of providing financial assistance for the development of ethnic language newspapers and to foster a free flow of information in Myanmar.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Three delegations arrive in capital for ceasefire signing



Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) led by U Saw Lah Bwe, Chin National Front (CNF) led by chairman Pu Nang Lian Thang and Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan State Army-South (RCSS/SSA-S) led by U Ywet Sit arrive in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA



DELEGATIONS from three ethnic armed groups arrived in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday to sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, which is scheduled to take

place on Thursday. The delegations include the Democratic Karen Bud-

dhist Army (DKBA) led by U Saw Lah Bwe, Chin National Front (CNF) led

by chairman Pu Nang Lian Thang and the Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan

State Army-South (RCSS/SSA-S) led by Chairman U Ywet Sit.—*MNA*

Yangon Region Chief Minister inspects progress of bridge in Htantabin

YANGON Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe visited Htantabin Township to inspect progress on a bridge being constructed there on Sunday.

The Chief Minister instructed officials to comply with all safety standards and to complete Kokkwa Bridge in Bawlekyun

within the scheduled time-frame. The Bridge on Htantabin-Lamutan-Hleseik Road crosses Hlaing River and is more than 2,000 feet long and 28 feet wide. It is flanked by a pedestrian walkway on both sides and will be able to withstand 75 tonne loads.

The Chief Minister

also met with township level officials, civil servants, social groups and local residents.

Speaker of Yangon Region Hluttaw U Sein Tin Win briefed the chief minister on the region's parliamentary activities.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Five more ethnic groups removed from unlawful list

ANOTHER five ethnic organisations who have committed to sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement have been removed from the government's list of unlawful associations and terror-

ist groups, according to a statement of the press release team issued on Tuesday.

The organisations include Karen National Union-KNU, Karen National Liberation Army-Peace

Council-KNLA-PC, Chin National Front-CNF, Democratic Karen Buddhist Army-DKBA, Pa-O National Liberation Organisation-PNLO and Arakan Liberation Party-ALP.—*GNLM*

17 trafficked fishermen return home

SEVENTEEN trafficked Myanmar fishermen stranded in Indonesia were repatriated on Tuesday.

"They were trafficked to Indonesian fishing boats while working in Thailand. They never received the salaries they were owed," said Police Colonel

Khin Maung Hla.

It was too difficult a task for police to track down the perpetrators because of a lack of evidence, he added.

The victims had been stranded in Pontianak and Kupang islands of Indonesia, and were repatriated with assistance from the In-

ternational Organisation for Migration and Myanmar's Immigration and Population Department.

The men are sheltering at a social welfare institute in Mayangon Township and will soon be returned to their family homes.—*Zaw Gyi (Panita)*

Myanmar Motion Picture Day marked in Yangon

MYANMAR Motion Picture Day 2015 was held at Myanmar Motion Pictures Organisation (MMPO) yesterday in Yangon.

The event also coincided with the 52nd Annual Homage Ceremony for 144 filmmakers whose careers span decades in Myanmar.

MMPO's patron,

filmmakers and organisation chairman U Lu Min and Young Generation Film Artists & Crews attended the ceremony.

Donations of K200,000 (US\$155) were given to each of the respected filmmakers, who are now in their senior years. Sithu Bogale Tint Aung gave a thank you speech on behalf of the

filmmakers. The Myanmar Motion Picture Day has been held since 1920 as a commemoration of "Myitta and Thuyar" – a film that is now 95-years-old.

Plans are underway to hold a grand centennial anniversary of Myanmar Motion Picture Day, according to chairman of the organisation.—*Yi Yi Thant*



Myanmar Motion Pictures Organisation Chairman U Lu Min presents gifts to an elder motion picture artist. PHOTO: YI YI THANT

President accepts credentials from Kazak, Ghana, Swiss ambassadors



President U Thein Sein accepts credentials from Kazakhstan's new ambassador Mr Marat Yessenbayev.

PHOTO: MNA

MR Marat Yessenbayev, Kazakhstan's newly-accredited ambassador presented his credentials to President U Thein Sein at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday. The President also received credentials from Mr Pier Benjamin Clement Eghan, Ghana's newly-accredited ambassador



President U Thein Sein accepts credentials from Mr Pier Benjamin Clement Eghan, Ghana's new ambassador.

PHOTO: MNA

and Mr Paul R. Seger, Switzerland's newly-accredited ambassador.

Also present were Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister at the President's Office U Thein Nyunt and Acting Director-General U Ko Ko Naing of the Protocol Department.



President U Thein Sein and Swiss Ambassador Mr Paul R. Seger pose for documentary photo.

PHOTO: MNA

The Union Minister for Foreign Affairs received the Swiss Ambassador at the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday. They discussed the promotion of bilateral relations and strengthening cooperation between Myanmar and Switzerland.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Myanmar marks International Day for Disaster Reduction

REHABILITATION efforts for floods and landslides in July and August highlight the need to maintain the momentum to develop sustainable disaster-resistant economic growth, Vice President U Nyan Tun said at the ceremony to mark the International Day for Disaster Reduction in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday.

The ceremony was held in conjunction with a forum about the rehabilitation of flood-hit areas, which aimed to develop a viable, effective, inclusive and sustainable framework for rehabilitation that can respond effectively to future disasters.

The vice president said that Myanmar has successfully overcome the stark challenges posed by recent floods and landslides as a result of cooperation between philanthropists, the government

and the victims themselves. He said this has reduced the possible economic impact of the disasters.

The vice president said that assessment for post disaster needs was conducted and revealed that the losses caused by the disasters were greater than initially thought.

Recognising the impact of the disasters and emergency needs of the people, the government worked together with its development partners, the vice president added.

The vice president summed up his address by urging stakeholders to develop a rehabilitation framework plan.

The resident representative of the UNDP read out a message from UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Vice President U Nyan Tun views equipment for prevention of natural disasters. PHOTO: MNA

NO ELECTION DELAY

>>from page 1

place a few days after the cyclone hit, although it was delayed in the worst affected areas. However the then-government came under fire from the United Nations and other members of the international community for not postponing the referendum entirely, as the scale of destruction was so vast. The referendum passed significant constitutional changes, including the 25 percent allocation of parliamentary

seats to members of the military and the ineligibility of persons married to foreigners to take on the role of president.

The UEC chairman cited a meeting back on 21 July this year when members of the National League for Democracy Party, Myanmar Farmers' Development Party and Guiding Star Party had proposed the election be delayed due to errors in voters' lists. During the same meeting, a represent-

ative from Chin Progressive Party had suggested the election be postponed because of difficulties of campaigning in areas hit by floods and landslides, he said.

U Tin Aye had also urged yesterday's meeting participants to consider a lack of peace and stability in some areas, saying that political parties were prevented from carrying out effective campaigning in certain areas of Shan State, Kachin State and the Palaung Self-administered Zone. A representative from the National Unity Party agreed that the election

should be postponed, citing "social chaos" and natural disasters.

The National Democratic Force reportedly questioned whether postponing the election would adversely impact the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, which is scheduled to be signed on Thursday by eight ethnic groups and the government.

Myanmar Farmers' Development Party supported the postponement of the election, while Arakan National Party urged the UEC to determine whether a delay would impact the situation of Internally

Displaced People in Rakhine State. The party suggested that the postponement of the election should be nationwide, not be region-wise, if it were to be delayed.

The general election is being hailed as a historic turning point for Myanmar, a country which has not held a democratic election for 25 years. A number of international election observers, including those from the European Union, have already arrived in Myanmar and will publish reports shortly after the polls, while both local and foreign investors are watching keenly.

Village huts swept away in Myanaung Township

HEAVY rain in Myanaung Township, Ayeyawady Region raised water levels of Paesi Creek on 12 October, causing widespread flooding in surrounding areas. Six huts in Nyaungchehtauk Village



Houses of local people in flooding in Myanaung Township. PHOTO: WIN BO (IPRD)

were swept away. A village elder said that the floods did not result in any casualties to people or animals, but that the economic cost of the damage is estimated to be around K300,000 (US\$233).

The families who lost their homes are staying with relatives and township authorities are providing relief assistance.

Yaungchi-Oo rice mill on nearby Pathein-Monywa Road was also inundated by six feet deep flood waters, which destroyed 400 bags of milled and broken rice, which each weigh 50 kilogrammes. The cost of the damage is K3.75 million (\$2918).—*Win Bo (IPRD)*

Free treatment for hepatitis at new clinic in Mandalay

A HEPATITIS clinic called 'Byanmaso' opened in Mandalay on 11 October and will provide free medical treatment to people with hepatitis B and C. The facility was donated by prominent hepatitis specialist Professor Dr Khin Maung Win and his wife, Dr Khin Lay Yee.

The clinic will provide K300,000 (US\$233) a month for

treating hepatitis C patients and K250,000 (\$194) for hepatitis B and treatment will last until full recovery is made. The affiliate 'Byanmaso' social welfare association will also assist with providing free medical treatment to patients according to their economic status.

Dr Khin Maung Win advised the patients to avoid chemically

dyed foods, varieties of mushrooms containing toxins, binge drinking and to consult a medical practitioner if symptoms arise. He also advised against non-sterile blood transfusions as well as unsterilised dental and tattoo instruments.

The prevalence rate of hepatitis C in Myanmar is 4 per cent.—*Thiha Ko Ko*

Livestock development vocational training given in townships

LIVESTOCK Breeding and Veterinary Department of Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development began simultaneous two-week vocational training courses in eight townships in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on 12 October.

Each courses will involve 20 trainees, who will learn about developing pastures, fermented cattle feed and breeding cattle, poultry, and pigs for commercial purposes. The training course will run until 25 October.—*Thant Maung*



Tractors are ready to be used at paddy fields in Nyaungshwe Township of Shan State. PHOTO: MYAT THU

Tractors provided for development of Nyaungshwe Township

AS a follow-up to President U Thein Sein's recent visit to Inlay region in Shan State, five tractors were handed over for the development of Nyaungshwe Township on Monday.

Shan State agriculture and livestock minister U Sai Sa Lu handed over documents related to State Hluttaw representatives at the township General Administration Department.

State Inn national race minister U Win Myint also attended the ceremony.—*Myat Thu*



An official demonstrates use of water from tube-well at a cropland in Ngazun. PHOTO: ZAW MIN AUNG

Myanmar Autism Association introduced at Mandalay



A speaker gives talks on nature of autism. PHOTO: THIHA KO KO

MEMBERS of the Myanmar Autism Association gave educational talks on autism in Mandalay's Maha-aungmye Township on Monday.

The event was attended by members of Mandalay Region Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee, officials of Social Welfare Department, teachers from schools for children with disabilities, as well as parents and autistic children.

Specialist doctors includ-

ing the association's chairman Dr Myint Lwin explained the condition, which is a neuro-developmental disorder characterised by impaired social interaction, verbal and non-verbal communication, and restricted and repetitive behavior.

According to statistics, boys are four times more likely than girls to have autism and there are 67 million with the condition worldwide. World Autism Day is held globally every year on 2 April.—*Thiha Ko Ko*

100 tube-wells to be dug in Ngazun Township

NGAZUN Township, located in the arid Myingyan District, will receive 100 tube-wells from the Mandalay Region Special Fund. The wells will help irrigate local farms.

The cost of digging the wells will be K60.25 million (US\$46,750). Twenty-seven wells have already been dug in the township.

All the wells are to be completed by the end of November, when the plantation season

starts, said a township official.

Myingyan District Deputy Commissioner U Myint Thin Aung came to inspect a completed 10-centimetre diameter tube well in Ward 4 on 9 October and observed its irrigation of nearby farms.

The tube wells are being dug by the Irrigation and Water Utilisation Management Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation.—*Zaw Min Naing*

Okinawa revokes approval for US base relocation work



Demonstrators opposing the planned relocation of a key US military base within Japan's southernmost island prefecture of Okinawa clash with police officers in Nago, Okinawa, on 13 October 2015. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

NAHA — Okinawa Governor Takeshi Onaga on Tuesday officially revoked the approval his predecessor issued to the central government for landfill work to relocate a key US military base within the southern island prefecture, with the stalemate over the relocation plan now likely to end up in court.

"It was recognized that there are defects in the approval. We decided that rescinding it is reasonable," Onaga said at a press conference at the Okina-

wa prefectural office building in Naha.

At issue is a controversial plan to relocate the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma to Henoko, a coastal region of

Nago, from its current location in the more densely populated Ginowan. The issue has long pitted the central government against local officials and residents who demand the base be

"Revoking the approval is extremely regrettable as it ignores the efforts made so far by officials."

Suga

The chief Cabinet secretary

moved outside of Okinawa. In Tokyo, Japan's top government spokesman, Yoshihide Suga, told a news conference that the central government is considering taking legal action to suspend the governor's revocation.

In a separate news conference, Defence Minister Gen Nakatani said the central government will "promptly take action" to ask the land, infrastructure, transport and tourism minister to suspend the revocation, although this will not take place Tuesday.

The central government is planning to start building a replacement facility for the Futenma base this fall.

Suga, the chief Cabinet secretary, said the central government sees "no legal flaws" in the approval for landfill work given in 2013 by then Gov Hirokazu Nakaima. "Revoking the approval is extremely regrettable as it ignores the efforts made so far by officials in Okinawa and the central government to eliminate the risks posed by the Futenma base," he said, adding that construction work will continue as planned while taking "utmost care of the environment."—*Kyodo News*

China's top diplomat Yang meets Abe aide

TOKYO — Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi held talks with a senior national security adviser to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Tuesday as the two countries prepare for a trilateral summit with South Korea.

At the outset of the meeting in Tokyo, Shoto Yachi, who heads the secretariat of Japan's National Security Council, said relations between Japan and China are basically "improving" and he is eager to develop friendly ties despite some "problems" such as the situation in the East China Sea. Japan has been concerned about China's maritime assertiveness and its gas field development in the waters. Yang, China's top diplomat, said he wants to play "an active role to improve" bilateral relations, which have shown signs of thawing after being damaged over territorial and historical issues. The topics in their meeting included the three-way summit of Japan, China and South Korea to be held possibly later this month in South Korea. Yachi invited Yang to visit Japan when they met in Beijing in July. Yang is scheduled to meet Abe on Wednesday.—*Kyodo News*

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Malaysia prosecutor says right to clear 1MDB



President and Group Executive Director of 1MDB, Arul Kanda Kandasamy. PHOTO: REUTERS

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysia's attorney general said on Tuesday that he was right to close an investigation by the country's central bank into troubled state-owned investor 1MDB as there was no evidence the fund's officials had knowingly flouted the law.

Last week Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) said it had urged attorney general Mohamed Apandi Ali to prosecute 1MDB, saying the fund had secured permits to remit \$1.83 billion overseas based on inaccurate or incomplete disclosure of information, breaching domestic regulations.

The central bank's statement raised the pressure on 1MDB,

which is at the centre of a political crisis in Malaysia over its debt of nearly 42 billion ringgit (\$10.05 billion) and alleged financial graft.

However Apandi said that at no point in time had the central bank tried to stop 1MDB's overseas transactions, nor had it required the fund to provide details of account numbers it was sending money to or to outline the manner in which the funds would be channeled.

"Since there is no requirement, the omission on 1MDB's officials' part to disclose is not an offence," said Apandi during a press briefing on Tuesday.

The central bank has also asked 1MDB to repatriate \$1.83

billion back into Malaysia, however the fund has said the sum has been spent or ear-marked for debt settlement arrangements.

The money was originally used for equity and loan investments in a joint venture with oil company PetroSaudi between 2009 and 2011.

The central bank did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

On Monday, former prime minister Mahathir Mohamad and several key Umno leaders called for a swift resolution to the ongoing 1MDB scandal, signalling a further divide within Prime Minister Najib Razak's party, the United Malays National Organisation.—*Reuters*

Passenger of Indonesia's crashed chopper found alive

JAKARTA — A passenger aboard an Indonesian helicopter was found alive on Tuesday two days after it crashed in a lake in North Sumatra, a spokesman of the national search and rescue agency said.

According to the survivor named Fransiskus Subihardayan, the light single-engine Eurocopter EC130 fell into the huge volcanic Lake Toba on Sunday, said Zainul Tjajar, spokesman of the

national search and rescue agency. "As they felt there was something wrong with the chopper, the man and four other people on board jumped into the lake when the plane was passing through the lake," the spokesman told Xinhua.

"However, the rescuers only found the man at around 12:00 o'clock local time today (Tuesday). He was floating among the water hyacinths.

The wreckage of the choppers and the four other persons who were on board are still being searched for," he added. The man was discovered conscious but his condition was weak, he was immediately rushed to a hospital, said Tjajar. The chartered helicopter operated by PT Penerbangan Angkasa Semesta lost communication with North Sumatra air traffic control about 17 minutes after taking off from the air-

port in Samosir island, according to him. The plane was heading toward Kulanamu airport in Medan, the capital city of North Sumatra. The 5 people on board comprised 2 crews and 3 passengers.

Lake Toba lies amid volcanoes in North Sumatra and is popularly known among domestic and foreign holidaymakers. It is the largest volcanic lake in the world.—*Xinhua*

Top China paper says US, Russia playing Cold War game in Syria

BEIJING — China's top newspaper on Tuesday accused both the United States and Russia of replaying their Cold War rivalry by engaging in military action in Syria, saying they needed to realise that era is over and should instead push for peace talks.

The People's Daily, the official paper of China's ruling Communist Party, said in a commentary that the United States and Russia seemed to be using Syria as a proxy for diplomatic and military competition, as during the Cold War.

"The United States and the Soviet Union used all sorts of dip-

lomatic, economic and military actions on the soil of third countries, playing tit-for-tat games to increase their influence — it's an old scene from the Cold War," the newspaper wrote in a commentary.

"But we're in the 21st century now, and people need to get their heads around this!" it added.

While China generally votes with fellow permanent United Nations Security Council member Russia on the Syria issue, it has expressed concern about interference in Syria's internal affairs and repeatedly called for a political solution.

Russia last month began striking targets in Syria in a dramatic escalation of foreign involvement in the civil war. This has been criticised by the West as an attempt to prop up Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, rather than its purported aim of attacking Islamic State.

The United States and its allies have also been carrying out air strikes in Syria against Islamic State, and have supported opposition groups fighting Assad.

The People's Daily said nobody should stand by while Syria becomes a proxy war, and efforts to reach a peaceful settlement to

the crisis should not slacken. "The international community, especially large countries with much influence, must fully recognise the critical, urgent necessity to reach a political solution to the Syria issue," it said. The commentary was published under the pen name "Zhong Sheng", meaning "Voice of China", often used to give views on foreign policy.

China, a low-key diplomatic player in the Middle East despite its dependence on the region for its oil, has repeatedly warned that military action cannot end the crisis.—Reuters

"The United States and the Soviet Union used all sorts of diplomatic, economic and military actions on the soil of third countries..."

The People's Daily

Flight MH17 shot down over Ukraine by Buk missile: Dutch report

GILZE-RIJEN — Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 was shot down over eastern Ukraine by a Russian-made Buk missile, the Dutch Safety Board concluded on Tuesday in its final report on the July 2014 crash that killed all 298 people on board.

The long-awaited findings of the board, which was not empowered to address questions of responsibility, did not specify who launched the missile.

"A 9n314m warhead detonated outside the aeroplane to the left side of the cockpit. This fits the kind of warhead installed in the Buk surface-to-air missile system," said Safety Board head Tjibbe Joustra, presenting the report. Russia had disputed the type of missile used, he added.

At a meeting with victims' families earlier Tuesday, Joustra

said passengers who were not killed by the impact of the missile would have been rendered unconscious by the sudden decompression of the aircraft and a lack of oxygen at 33,000 feet.

Joustra was speaking at the Gilze-Rijen military base where the flight cabin and business class section of the Boeing 777 have been assembled painstakingly from wreckage brought back from Ukraine.

The board also found that Ukraine had reason to close airspace over the conflict zone, and that the 61 airlines that had continued flying there should have recognized the potential danger.

It recommended international aviation rules be changed to force operators to be more transparent about their choice of routes.—Reuters



Tjibbe Joustra, chairman of the Dutch Safety Board, looks at the final report into the crash of July 2014 of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 over Ukraine, in Gilze Rijen, the Netherlands, on 13 October 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

Clinton's tack to the left to be on display in Democratic debate

LAS VEGAS — Hillary Clinton has veered hard to the left ahead of Tuesday's first Democratic presidential debate, hoping to inoculate herself from criticism by rival Bernie Sanders and woo the union members and liberal activists who have been slow to embrace her.

But in a Democratic race so far featuring few political attacks or policy clashes, Clinton's move to protect her left flank on issues like the Asian trade pact and Keystone oil pipeline could open the door during the nationally televised debate to questions about her sincerity and charges of flip-flopping.

Clinton, the Democratic front-runner, and Sanders, a US senator from Vermont who is her prime challenger, will take part on Tuesday at 8:30 pm EDT in the first of six scheduled debates in the race to be the party's nominee in the November 2016 presidential election.

They will be joined by former Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley, former Rhode Island Governor Lincoln Chafee and former US Senator James Webb of Virginia. The show-down will give Sanders his first broad national exposure and offer Clinton a chance to ease the concerns of some Democrats about her.

After two raucous Republican debates that drew big television audiences attracted by the fireworks generated by front-runner Donald Trump, the Democratic encounter, hosted by CNN and to be held in Las Vegas, is likely to be a tamer affair.

It comes at a critical time for Clinton, whose once overwhelming lead among Democrats in opinion polls has slipped amid questions about her use of a private email server instead of a government account when she was secretary of state.

In addition, she faces the threat that Vice President Joe



PHOTO: REUTERS

Biden could enter the race — something he has been increasingly urged to do as Clinton's lead falters.

Sanders, a self-described socialist, has excited the party's left wing and generated big crowds with a persistent message of eradicating income inequality and reining in Wall Street.

In response, Clinton took stances on several key issues recently that align her with Sanders. She reversed course to announce her opposition to the 12-nation Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal that she had praised when she was secretary of state, and she rejected the Keystone XL pipeline that she had said in 2010 she was inclined to approve. Sanders is a longtime opponent of both projects.

Sanders, who has repeatedly refused to directly attack Clinton, signaled over the weekend he would make an issue in the debate of Clinton's tardiness on some of those topics, noting he opposed Keystone and the TPP "from day one."

Clinton, who still faces ambivalence about her candidacy from much of the union rank-and-file, won praise from labor leaders for her opposition to the TPP. Labor has opposed the pact out of

fear it would cost manufacturing jobs and weaken environmental laws.

"I don't think she ever had any inclination to back TPP," said R Thomas Buffenbarger, a Clinton ally who is president of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, which has endorsed Clinton.

Still, one labour leader said unionized workers very much want to hear Clinton take her opposition to the TPP even further.

Some subtle policy differences remain between the two top Democratic contenders. Sanders has pushed for what he calls a sensible approach on gun control and voted against the 1993 Brady handgun bill that President Bill Clinton signed into law.

Clinton, who has touted her foreign policy experience as secretary of state, broke with the White House to back a no-fly zone in Syria to give refugees a safe corridor. Sanders opposes it, saying it could be a step toward pulling the United States into the Syrian civil war.

Sanders has discouraged Super PACs from raising funds on his behalf, warning of the influence of corporate money. Clinton is backed by several Super PACs.—Reuters

Norway PM sees billions in extra costs to cope with asylum seekers



Afghan refugees walk on a rocky beach moments after arriving on a dinghy on the Greek island of Lesbos after crossing a part of the Aegean Sea from the Turkish coast to Lesbos, on 12 October 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

OSLO — Norway may have to spend an extra 40 to 50 billion crowns (\$4.9 billion-\$6.2 billion) over the next five years to cope with a rising number of people seeking asylum, Prime Minister Erna Solberg told parliament on Tuesday.

Norway has seen a rising number of people seeking asylum in recent months, albeit fewer than neighbours Sweden or Finland. Some 20,000-25,000 people are expected to arrive in 2015, rising to over 30,000 next year. Norway has 5.2 million inhabitants.

"If 40,000 to 50,000 asylum seekers were to receive residency, the costs the next five years would lie between 40 and 50 billion crowns," Solberg said. "With many minors coming alone, those numbers could be even higher."

Without measures to cut expenses, she said, the extra costs of accommodating refugees would number several billions of crowns in 2016.

The government would "shortly" present an amendment to the 2016 budget it presented last week, based on those new forecasts, she said.

Earlier on Tuesday, Solberg was reported as saying that Norway may have to tap its \$856 billion sovereign wealth fund more than planned next year to cope with a rising number of people seeking asylum.

Her right-wing government said last week it would make the first net withdrawal from the fund to finance tax cuts and boost a slowing economy hit by weak oil prices.

Its 2016 budget planned to spend 2.8 percent of the fund's value in 2016, up from 2.6 percent this year, equivalent to an extra 23 billion crowns.

"We must use more money because we can't stop everything that is happening in Norway just to pay for the flow of refugees," Solberg was quoted as saying in

the business newspaper Dagens Naeringsliv on Tuesday.

Asked whether this will mean an even greater use of money from the oil fund, she said: "Yes, I don't think we can manage this just by reallocating." When speaking in Parliament, Solberg did not say how the extra 40-50 billion crowns she saw in extra costs could be funded.—Reuters

"We must use more money because we can't stop everything that is happening in Norway just to pay for the flow of refugees."

Erna Solberg
Norwegian Prime Minister

Dacic says supports Vucic in decision on elections

BELGRADE — The reason for holding potential early elections will not be a failure of the government, but political instability resulting from an atmosphere created through "scandals and frame-ups," says Serbian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ivica Dacic.

"I think that the government has achieved significant results," Dacic told the RTV on Monday,

noting that he understands Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic, who has announced that he will make a decision on elections this month because he is not satisfied with the political atmosphere in the country.

"Political stability is needed," Dacic said.

"If holding elections is a condition for that, I agree with it," he said.—Tanjug



Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ivica Dacic.
PHOTO: TANJUG

NEWS IN BRIEF

Russia describes shelling of embassy in Damascus as terrorism

MOSCOW — Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Tuesday Moscow considered the shelling of its embassy in Damascus as a terrorist act, RIA news agency reported on Tuesday. "This is an obvious act of terrorism, probably aimed at intimidating supporters of the fight against terrorism," Lavrov was quoted as

saying ahead of talks with the United Nations' special envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, on Tuesday.

Two shells were fired at the Russian embassy in Damascus on Tuesday during a demonstration in support of Moscow although there were no immediate reports of casualties or damage to the building.—Reuters

Four killed in Bosnian mine accident

SARAJEVO — Four miners were killed and two injured in a mine accident in central Bosnia early on Tuesday, most probably after an upper platform crashed down on them, a Bosnian regional television reported.

All other miners safely left the coal mine in Kakanj after-

wards. The two injured miners were taken to a hospital but their injuries were not life-threatening.

The accident took place around 0100 (2300 GMT). Mining inspectors were at the site to investigate the causes of the accident, the television said.—Reuters

Iranian parliament passes bill approving nuclear deal

DUBAI — Iran's parliament passed a bill on Tuesday supporting the government in implementing a nuclear deal with world powers, but insisted that international inspectors would have only limited access to Iran's military sites, state news

agency IRNA said.

"The bill to implement the JCPOA ... was passed in a public session on Tuesday with 161 votes in favour," IRNA said, referring to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action reached in July.—Reuters

NZ police arrest man over infant formula contamination threat

WELLINGTON — New Zealand police said on Tuesday a 60-year old businessman has been arrested and charged with two counts of criminal blackmail after an 11-month investigation into a threat to contaminate New Zealand infant formula with pesticide.

Letters were sent to the national farmers' group and dairy giant Fonterra last No-

vember, accompanied by packages of infant formula laced with the pesticide 1080, demanding that use of the toxic pesticide be stopped by the end of March.

China is the biggest buyer of New Zealand dairy products but New Zealand's agriculture ministry has said there had been no sign of countries stopping shipments because of the threat.—Reuters

Package detonated at site of Turkey bombings in apparent false alarm

ISTANBUL — Turkish security forces carried out a controlled explosion on Tuesday of a suspicious package outside the Ankara train station where a double suicide bombing killed at least 97 people three days ago, broadcaster CNN Turk reported.

The government said on Monday Islamic State was the prime suspect in Saturday's

attacks, but opponents have vented anger at President Tayyip Erdogan and the authorities over perceived security failures after the blasts in the heart of the capital.

The controlled explosion appeared to have been a false alarm. Footage on CNN Turk showed that the bag that was detonated appeared to have contained food.—Reuters

OPINION

Home ownership must be more affordable

Myint Win Thein

WITH the opening of markets for foreign investment, property prices in Myanmar have risen sharply in recent times. Property prices in Yangon are said to be on a par with cities such as New York. But whilst property prices have risen to an international rank, average incomes of Myanmar's

middle class has not increased anywhere near as much. Rising property prices are making people's lives difficult and it prevents many from enjoying the economic growth spurred by the increase in foreign investment.

For low income families in cities, buying a house has become almost impossible and most are now opting to rent instead. However, rents are also on the rise and families are spending large chunks of their incomes on rent, which makes saving up enough to buy one incredibly tough. The problem will only get worse if steps aren't taken to the remedy the situation – and it will hinder the economic growth of the country in the long run. Therefore, affordable housing projects or low-rent houses should be more widespread.

Another vital component of making home ownership more affordable is to provide mortgages. This will help many families of middle class to have their own houses and the country will benefit greatly from inclusive economic growth.

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.

Ministry to designate no-go hotel zones in Bagan

NEW zoning laws will aim to ensure that Myanmar's bid to have Bagan listed as a UNESCO site is successful – but will likely require several hotels to be demolished



Magnificent temples and pagodas in Bagan. PHOTO: HONEY WIN

WITH the aim of having the ancient city of Bagan added to UNESCO's World Heritage list, the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism will designate cultural heritage zones in Bagan.

A ministry spokesperson said yesterday that mod-

ern buildings located in restricted zones pose a major threat to the chances of making a successful bid to UNESCO.

The ministry designated the first three ancient zones back in 1991.

According to the law,

hotels, motels and businesses are permitted to operate in what is known as preserved zones, but not the remaining zones. Currently, there are around 120 hotels in Bagan, most of which were established before designations were made, and as

a result are situated in restricted zones. The ministry will also take measures aimed at the eventual UNESCO listing of Mrauk-U of Rakhine State, Kyaukhtyoe Pagoda in Mon State and Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon Region.—Honey Win

Religious ID cards provided to monks in Bago

A ceremony was held to provide religious identity cards to unregistered monks from the Ministry of Religious Affairs at Zawtikayon Parli University in Pyay, Bago Region, on Sunday.

The identity cards were provided to 90 monks

from Zawtikayon Parli University, Minphu monastery, and Mahagadawin monastery by Bago Region's religious office branch.

Branch Deputy Director U Sein Lin oversaw the ceremony.—Maung Shwe Win

Training provided to polling booth officials in Dekkhinathiri Township

IN preparation for the general elections of 8 November, 65 polling booth officials from Dekkhinathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area attended a training course on polling procedures yesterday.

Most polling booth officials are volunteer teachers.

The course was con-

ducted at the township's General Administration Department. The heads of polling booths, their deputies and other staff were shown a video demonstrating various procedures and protocol. The video was distributed by the Union Election Commission.—Shwe Kokko

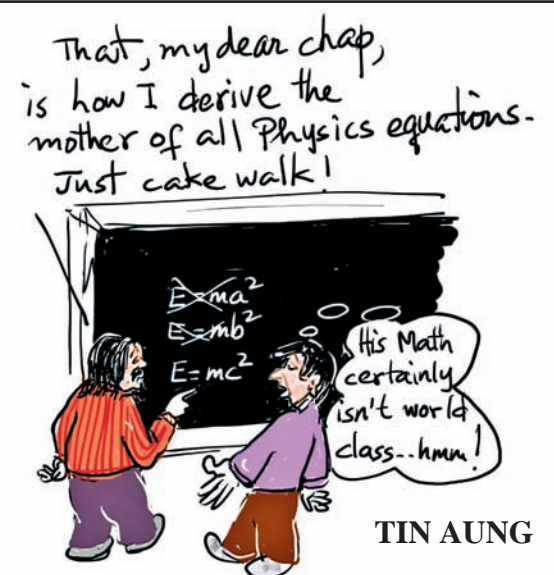
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

I would like to raise this question through your esteemed daily to your broad readership on human evolution. If someone could kindly provide an article or an explanation on this in your Features Section for educating us that would be so much appreciated. My question is if there is no "true" wide variation(s) among different human races and sub-races why did nature and evolution support it? If modern human (*Homo sapiens*) is believed to have originated from East Africa and migrated to different continents in course of our evolutionary history; why are there different racial types based on skin color, eye color, facial characteristics and hair types among people from different continents and geographical areas; although they are all same species according to the classical definition of "species" and "speciation"—why not just one racial type? People originally evolved in Africa and migrated to the rest of the world and these early migrants survived in colder temperate and even polar conditions. Again people from Europe have survived in the harshest environments in Asia, Africa, the Americas and Australia; then why is there an apparent variation in hair, eye and skin color among different races? How did it help or initiate any progress in the humans in purely evolutionary term or how is this advantageous compared to other morphological features? Why nature did retain these variations over several generations in different geographical areas? Why did these minor genetic variation(s) survived in evolutionary term? How did it help in human evolution in any way or form as we certainly never diverged into separate species as all human races can interbreed with one another and produce fertile offspring?

Look forward to hear from the readers.

Thanking you
Sincerely yours
Saikat Kumar Basu



TIN AUNG

Maximizing benefit from international cooperation in higher education sector

Myo Myint

IN this Knowledge Age, it is widely recognized that the quality of education of a country has a huge impact on the competitiveness of its labour force as well as on the ability of workers to equip themselves with new skills being demanded by rapid changes in the national and world economy. In turn, the quality of education is determined by the quality of teachers. The quality of teachers may be ensured through three ways. The first is by recruiting teachers from among the best graduates. The second is to provide professional development programmes throughout their careers that will enhance the quality of teachers. The third is to obtain the services of the academically brilliant persons serving in other professions to do part-time teaching at universities. In many countries with developing economies, the first strategy of trying to get the best from among university graduates to serve as university teachers is getting more difficult due to the emergence of professions that are more attractive in terms of prestige as well salary. Therefore, these days, universities may not get the brightest of their graduates back to serve as teachers. They have to be contented with recruiting graduates who may not all be academically, or professionally well-prepared, to serve as university teachers. The third strategy is also difficult to utilize as there are not many persons in other professions who are either willing, or have the time, to dedicate part of their time to do part-time teaching at universities. Consequently, the only option available is for universities to provide professional development programmes to constantly enhance the quality of faculty so that they can keep up with the ever-changing academic and skill demands of new batches of students.

As a person who has served as a head of a university department and the head of a university, I see at least five areas in which all faculty will benefit by receiving assistance for professional development. The first is English language skills as English is the medium of instruction at Myanmar universities, the language of academic dialogue and the language to gain access to most references, journals, research papers and other relevant publications. Due to various reasons, the majority of university graduates are weak in English and a large percentage of faculty will admit that they need to improve their English language skills not only to enhance their teaching but also to carry out research. The second need is up-to-date research methodology as Myanmar academics not only need it for their own research but also to impart it to their students, be they undergraduates or post-graduates. The need for better expertise in research methodology stems from various reasons including the ma-

majority not having had adequate training in it while they were university students. Students as well as teachers will feel more comfortable with research, will be better able to think of new areas for research, and will be better equipped to do more challenging research if they can have access to up-to-date research methodology. The fourth area is related to developing better knowledge of the content of their specialization as due to the fast development of new knowledge and skills and their easy access, they need to keep up with new findings in their field of specialization. In addition, faculty must not forget that in this Age of ICT, flourishing private education institutions and online learning, they can be easily by-passed by bright students who can easily gain access to new knowledge through other channels. This means that if teachers do not prove themselves to be efficient teachers, they will become irrelevant to their students and they together with the institution they work for lose the esteem of their students. Senior faculty will also need to know about syllabus design, as their expertise is constantly sought in updating the syllabuses of existing programmes and initiating new programmes. The fifth area is methodology and classroom management. In the distant past, it has been generally accepted that university teachers need no initial training in methodology but nowadays with the huge increase in the number of students, variations in student learning styles, greater insight into the psychology of students and the use of ICT, mastery of effective teaching methods, approaches and styles and classroom management have also become crucial for successful teaching.

In Myanmar, just as in many countries, there are no pre-service teacher training programmes for university teachers. Newly appointed university faculty, who need to have at least a master's degree, are provided a brief orientation programme which may, in some departments, include auditing lectures of senior faculty. To remedy any shortcomings on the part of faculty, national level plans for the development of Myanmar higher education sector have consistently included programmes for higher education institutions to hold a variety of activities for the professional development of faculty. In accordance with this initiative, universities have held discussions, presentations, forums, seminars, conferences, workshops, and short-term training programmes on a variety of areas and topics for the professional development of faculty, and all faculty have been assigned to do research. However, in practice, the quality and sustainability of professional development programmes held at various universities and colleges in the past varied from institution to institution and department to department and were very much dependent on the interest shown by heads of departments and the par-

ticipants, and the attention given by rectors. To augment the professional development programmes at home institutions, faculty have also been sent abroad to both Western and Asian countries to participate in study tours and short-term and long-term programmes including master and doctoral degree courses. Some of these courses are quite innovative and include on-line, distance, sandwich and a combination of online and in-house programmes. Moreover, within the past four years, collaborations between Myanmar universities, especially the better-known ones, and international universities and education organizations have noticeably increased. One of the areas of cooperation is raising the quality of teachers as part of the effort to promote excellence in Myanmar universities. Collaborative activities have been held both in Myanmar institutions as well as at host universities abroad. These include English language programmes for faculty, seminars, summer schools, conferences, workshops, training in specific areas, long and short-term courses conducted by visiting professors for both students and teachers, and assistance with opening of new pro-

“In Myanmar, just as in many countries, there are no pre-service teacher training programmes for university teachers.”

grammes, curriculum development, training of newly recruited faculty, use of ICT in teaching and learning, research methodology, and specific instructional methods.

All the faculty professional development programmes have been beneficial in one way or another, in promoting excellence in teaching and in giving Myanmar faculty a taste in innovative teaching and how classes and research are conducted abroad. There is no doubt that Myanmar higher education sector and the Myanmar universities concerned are immensely grateful to international world-class universities and educational organizations for providing scholarships and opportunities to study the way courses are conducted abroad, to update their knowledge on their area of specialization, to pick up innovative teaching methodologies that promote independent learning and 21st century skills, to observe the use of technology in education, and to give them exposure to the use of cutting-edge technology in research. In return, some of the Myanmar faculty have been able to share with their colleagues knowledge about the Myanmar education sector, Myanmar society, culture, history, and Buddhism, and findings of researches carried out in the

fields of arts and sciences including those on Myanmar's wealth of flora and fauna, etc.

On their return from abroad, it is compulsory for faculty to hold open seminars lasting a few hours regarding their study abroad which are usually attended by the rector, heads of departments and interested faculty. Some faculty, if they have the opportunity, try to incorporate in their teaching what they have learnt from their colleagues abroad. Some keep in touch with the faculty they have made friends with while abroad and continue to exchange information and ideas related to their fields of study or to conduct joint researches. Some manage to get the faculty they have met abroad to come over to their universities and share their knowledge. Some share the books and materials they have brought from overseas with their colleagues and students. A few return rejoining their institutions empty-handed and empty-headed. It is unfortunate that in many cases, the activities held within the country with international collaboration or those activities held abroad at foreign institutions to which Myanmar faculty were invited have little long-term impact, either on the persons concerned or the institutions and departments to which they belong to. There are a number of reasons for this “academic loss in transit”. Some of them will be discussed. The first is the need for a more systematic selection process for sending faculty abroad than the one in place to ensure that the right person is chosen for the right programme. There has been cases when both very junior faculty and professor level faculty have been selected to attend the same programme abroad. There have also been instances when faculty who are on the verge of retirement, as reward for their services, are sent to some very useful courses to which faculty who have more years left to work to disseminate and incorporate new know knowledge in the curriculum should have been sent. There are also programmes abroad to which faculty are sent that have no relationship to their expertise or their specialization because it had been a form of reward or because of the inability to identify the appropriate person. There are also instances when if more capable faculty had been sent, the benefits derived would have been far greater both to the programme as well as for the institution concerned. There are also instances when if there had been better preparations in cooperation with host organizations regarding the aim and the needs of the end user at the planning stage as well by the person assigned to make the trip, better results would have been gained. There has also been instances when a programme would have been more beneficial, if the person who had been assigned was clearly briefed about the reason for being sent and what he/she was expected to achieve and to do on his/her return. More importantly, there have

been several instances when little use is made of the knowledge and skilled gained by the person sent abroad for training on his/her return home. Similarly important is the fact that little follow-up is made of how the knowledge and skills gained abroad are being made use of by the departments and institutions concerned. This is a matter of importance, as many persons return to their institutions after some useful training but reverts to old practices as they have not been asked to, or not given the opportunity to make use of the expertise they have gained abroad.

Three suggestions are offered that may be useful in ensuring that the outcomes of the cooperation between Myanmar and international universities are maximized by the institutions and specializations concerned. The first is the need to carry out thorough review of the system and who should be the decision maker in the selection process and never to make use of training programmes to reward persons whose expertise is unrelated to the programmes. The second is to have a master plan for the whole sector and plans for each institution defining long-term and short-term needs, so that the institutions concerned will be clear about their needs and what their roadmap is and collaborating international institutions and organizations can be informed about the needs. The third is to ensure that whatever bit of useful knowledge or skill gained is shared and utilized and to have a follow-up system in place to ensure sustainability which is the key word in professional development of faculty. (In this connection it should not be out of place to remind of the need to carry over by succeeding generations whatever relevant good practices have been adopted in the past, and not to throw it out of the window in the name of change or reform, so that the same things will not have to be started afresh and valuable time, money and effort wasted.)

At a time when education expenditures are being increased by the State, when people are looking at the education sector with a critical eye, when the country is looking to education to play a bigger role in accelerating development, and contributing organizations and institutions are very much interested in how their assistance is being utilized, authorities concerned should note that that every bit of new knowledge, skill and insight gained is important, and any activity, especially those that have a strong impact on the development of higher education such as nurturing teacher excellence, is important and time should not be wasted in making use of it. In the matter of making use of the knowledge and skills gained from institutions overseas to promote the quality of our faculty, just as the number of activities is important, so also is the quality, usefulness and the long-term impact the activities will have on the education sector.

Yemen's Saleh says ready to commit to UN peace terms



Yemen's former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. PHOTO: REUTERS

DUBAI — Yemen's former president has vowed to honour a peace plan brokered by the United Nations in talks in Oman and to quit Yemeni cities if a Saudi-led Arab alliance stopped air strikes on the country.

Ali Abdullah Saleh also told the Lebanon-based al-Mayadeen television in an interview broadcast on Monday that he was ready to quit his position as head of the country's largest party, the General People's Congress (GPC), to facilitate an end to fighting that had killed more than 5,000 people.

Saleh, who enjoys the loyalty of the armed forces despite having stepped down from office nearly four years ago after months of protests, had joined forces with the Iran-backed Houthis in fighting a Saudi-led alliance trying to shore up President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

The Houthis and Saleh's GPC last week sent letters to UN chief Ban Ki-moon declaring their acceptance of the peace plan, which includes a Security Council resolution adopted in April calling on the Houthis to

quit cities captured since September last year.

But a spokesman for Hadi dismissed those acceptances as a "maneuver" and demanded that the Iran-backed group hand back territory it has seized since last year.

In Monday's interview, Saleh said: "We had reached a 10-point agreement with the UN envoy in Muscat, and we later reached (an agreement) of seven points which we and Ansarullah (Houthis) accepted, but until now the other side had not because they only want a dialogue through the gun."

"This seven-point agreement needs a mechanism for each point. Who will prepare this mechanism? The United Nations," he added.

Saleh said he was willing to step down as head of the GPC within 21 days in exchange for ending the attacks on Yemen and lifting a blockade on the entry of supplies to the country. The Saudi-led alliance regards the Houthis as proxies for non-Arab Iran, a main regional rival for Saudi Arabia. Asked about allegations that Iran was providing advisors and support for the Houthis, Saleh said: "Perhaps there are scholarships from Iran and possibly financial aid, but there is not a single Iranian weapon or advisor in Yemen."—Reuters

UK seeks release of Briton facing 350 lashes in Saudi Arabia

LONDON — Britain said on Tuesday it was seeking the release of an elderly British man facing 350 lashes after being caught with homemade wine in Saudi Arabia, a sentence which his family said could kill him.

Karl Andree, 74, was jailed for 12 months in August last year but remains in prison awaiting further punishment for breaking strict Saudi laws prohibiting alcohol after police found the wine in his car, his family said.

"There were two sentences. The custodial sentence which finished in August and then there's the lashing sentence ... which I assume he's been kept in there because that hasn't been dealt with yet," his son Simon Andree told BBC radio.

"We have no idea what's going to happen in respect of that."

"I'm not criticising Saudi because it's their law, it's their way of life. My father has served his time, he regrets what's happened, he just wishes to come home now."

He said his father, who had worked for oil companies in the kingdom for some 25 years, was in poor health, had suffered cancer three times, and also had

asthma.

"He's an old frail man and I fear this lashing sentence is potentially a death sentence for him," Simon Andree said. "That's our biggest concern, which is why we are trying to raise the case now to get him out." Britain's Foreign Office, which warns on its website that there are severe penalties for possessing alcohol in Saudi Arabia, said embassy staff in Riyadh were checking Andree's health regularly.

"Ministers and senior officials have raised Mr Andree's case with the Saudi Government and we are actively seeking his release as soon as possible," a spokesman said. No one was available to give an immediate response from the Saudi Embassy in London.—Reuters

"He's an old frail man and I fear this lashing sentence is potentially a death sentence for him."

Simon Andree
Son of Karl Andree

Two killed in Palestinian 'Day of Rage' attacks

JERUSALEM — Palestinian men armed with knives and a gun killed at least two people and wounded several others in a string of attacks in Jerusalem and a Tel Aviv suburb on Tuesday, police said, on a "Day of Rage" declared by Palestinian groups.

Two Palestinians shot and stabbed passengers on a Jerusalem bus, killing one and injuring five, Israeli media reported, as Israel and the Palestinian territories suffered their worst period of unrest in years.

One of the assailants was killed, an ambulance service spokesman said, and the other captured.

Minutes later, another Palestinian rammed his car into a bus stop in the centre of Jerusalem, then got out and began stabbing pedestrians, killing at least one and wounding several, police said.

The attacker was "neutralised", officers added, without giving details.

Earlier in the morning, a Palestinian man stabbed and lightly wounded an Israeli on a shopping street in Raanana, just north of Tel Aviv, officials and witnesses said.

Amateur video distributed by police showed several men kicking and beating the alleged assailant as he lay on the ground. The ambulance service said he was seriously hurt.

Within an hour of that attack, another knife-wielding Palestinian struck in Raanana, wounding four people, police and media reports said.

Six Israelis and 27 Palestinians, including nine alleged attackers and eight children, have died in almost two weeks of street attacks and security crackdowns.

The violence has been stirred in part by Muslim anger over increasing Jewish visits to the al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem.

The main Palestinian factions, including the Western-backed Fatah movement and the militant Hamas group, declared a "Day of Rage" on Tuesday across the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem.

The leaders of Israel's Arab community have called for a commercial strike in their towns and villages.

The now-daily stabbings have raised speculation that Palestini-

ans could be embarking on another uprising or intifada, reflecting a new generation's frustrations over their veteran leadership's failure to achieve statehood. Israel has poured police reinforcements

into Jerusalem, where many of the stabbings have occurred. In Raanana, a shopkeeper said he heard shouting, grabbed a heavy wooden umbrella, and ran outside to confront the assailant.

"He started stabbing the guy. I hit him a couple of times and kicked him and the knife flew out of his hand," the store owner said. "I wish I had had a gun — I would have shot him."—Reuters



Israeli emergency personnel stand near a covered body at the scene of an attack on a Jerusalem bus, on 13 October 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

Driverless buses, platoons of trucks to shape Singapore's transport future

SINGAPORE — Singapore unveiled its public transport future on Monday, and it was a vision of passengers commuting in driverless buses along roads and freeways populated by platoons of autonomous trucks following a single driver.

The city state's plans to streamline its transport future have begun with two self-driving vehicles going through their paces in a Singapore estate that is home to research facilities and educational institutes.

The vehicles are the vanguard of two projects — one run by the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology (SMART) with the National University of Singapore and one by the Agency for Science, Technol-

ogy and Research. Some US states and countries including Germany also allow testing of driverless vehicles on public roads. Singapore, with its limited land and workforce, is hoping that autonomous vehicles will encourage its residents to use more shared vehicles and public transport, and avoid further congestion on its roads. "Trying to look for bus drivers, truck drivers — big challenge for us," said Pang Kin Keong, permanent secretary in the ministry of transport.

"We don't have a huge population and these are not some of the professions which Singaporeans aspire to," Pang said after taking a ride in SMART-NUS's driverless car — a modified Mitsubishi Motors Corp electric vehicle with

a top speed of 30 km per hour (20 mph). The government and port operator PSA Corp also said on Monday that they would seek proposals to design and implement autonomous truck platooning trials, in which a human-driven truck is followed by other driverless trucks. Autonomous vehicles could spur the mass-market adoption of ride sharing, ultimately resulting in a marked reduction in personally owned vehicles and in the total number of cars on the road, at least within cities, according to a Boston Consulting Group report in April.

Google and a number of automotive manufacturers and suppliers have said the technology to build self-driving cars should be ready by 2020.—Reuters



A crew member inputs his route in an autonomous self-driving vehicle goes onto the road during a demonstration at one-north business park in Singapore on 12 October 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

Britain cuts 2017 car production forecast to 1.8 million cars



A worker inspects a component on the fuel inlet production facility at Futaba Industrial in Foston, central England. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Britain will build around 1.8 million cars in 2017, less than originally expected, due to more sluggish growth in Europe, industry body the Society for Motor Manufacturers and Traders said on Tuesday.

A spokesman at the SMMT

told Reuters last month that the group forecast car output of 1.95 million cars in 2017, but Chief Executive Mike Hawes said on Tuesday that the figure would be "something in the order of 1.8 million cars."

He said that the industry

would by 2020 beat the record of 1.92 million cars set in 1972, potentially several years later than originally expected. "We had an expectation that Europe would grow much more rapidly out of recession than it has done," Hawes told reporters.—Reuters

Google, others help messaging startup Symphony raise \$100 million

NEW YORK — Symphony Communication Services, a messaging startup backed by Wall Street banks, said it had raised more than \$100 million in a new round of funding from investors including Google, UBS Group AG and European venture capital firm Lakestar.

Symphony's chat service allows financial firms, corporate customers and individuals to put all of their digital communica-

tions on one centralized platform.

The Wall Street Journal, citing sources familiar with the matter, reported last week that the new round of funding would value Symphony at about \$650 million.

Other investors that participated in the latest funding round include French investment banks Natixis SA, Societe Generale and a group of existing investors including Silicon Valley venture

firm Merus Capital.

Goldman Sachs Group Inc led a group of 14 banks including Bank of America Corp, Citigroup Inc and JPMorgan Chase & Co in making a \$66 million investment in Symphony last October, when Symphony was set up.

Symphony said on Monday it would use the new capital to address demand and to speed up expansion of its global operations.—Reuters

Facebook pushes shopping features in move to e-commerce

SAN FRANCISCO — Facebook Inc (FB.O) wants its users to shop for clothes and other products from their mobile phones without ever leaving its app.

In an effort to move further into e-commerce and compete with Amazon Inc's (AMZN.O) retail offerings, Facebook announced Monday it is testing several ad features that allow users to shop directly through its app.

Few users make purchases on mobile phones because it is slow and cumbersome, but Facebook hopes to win over more ad dollars by smoothing the process. Mobile purchases make up less than 2 percent of all retail sales, according to research firm eMarketer.

"We're looking to give people an easier way to find products that will be interesting to them on mobile, make shopping easier and help businesses drive sales," said Emma Rodgers, Facebook's head of product marketing for commerce.

Among the new features

are ads that take a user through a specific brand's products without redirecting them to another site. For example, a user who clicks on an ad from a boutique could see an expanded page that displays numerous clothing items.

Businesses on Facebook will also be able to display products for purchase directly on their own pages. And users will be able to purchase products directly on Facebook through a "buy now" button that will be more widely available. The 1.5-billion-member social network has also added a new section on its app that takes users directly to a shopping page where they can browse among numerous brands from a select group of small businesses that will gradually expand.

"From Facebook's perspective, they're addressing a pain point for retailers," said Catherine Boyle, an analyst at eMarketer. "They will attract serious ad dollars with this offering."—Reuters



Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg. PHOTO: REUTERS

Japan may halt funds for UNESCO over Nanjing row with China



Journalists and visitors look at skeletons of victims of the 1937 Nanjing massacre at the Nanjing Massacre Museum during a media trip, in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province. PHOTO: REUTERS

TOKYO — Japan may halt funding for UNESCO over the UN heritage body's decision to include documents relating to the 1937 Nanjing Massacre, a move that Tokyo has protested against because of what it says are questions over authenticity.

The bitter legacy of Japan's military aggression before and during World War Two still haunts ties between Asia's two biggest economies 70 years after the end of the conflict.

UNESCO included the dossier submitted by Chi-

nese organisations in the latest listing for its "Memory of the World" programme, which is intended to preserve important historical materials.

A Japanese government source said the committee that made the decision was

made up of experts in document preservation, not in evaluating the veracity of historical content.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said it was "problematic" that UNESCO had made its decision despite the conflicting views

of Japan and China.

"The government would like to ask for fairness and transparency in the Memory of the World programme so that it would not be used for political purposes," Suga said.

"As for Japan's (financial) contribution (to UNESCO), we plan to look into all possibilities and revisions, including halting payments," he told a news conference.

Japan contributed 3.72 billion yen (\$31 million) to UNESCO in 2014, or about 10.8 percent of its total budget.

China says Japanese troops killed 300,000 people in the massacre. A post-war Allied tribunal put the death toll at about half that number.

"The (Japanese) government believes there is no denying that some killings of non-combatants and acts of looting took place," Suga said. "But there are various debates on the issue and Japan's stance is that it is difficult to put a finger on specific numbers."

The dossier, covering the period from Dec. 13, 1937 to early 1938, includes

court documents from the Allied tribunal and a separate Chinese military tribunal, as well as photographs said to be taken by the Japanese army and film taken by an American missionary.

China has welcomed UNESCO's decision.

"The Nanjing Massacre is a severe crime committed by Japanese militarism during World War II and is a historical fact recognised by the international community," China's foreign ministry said in a statement on Saturday.

"Facts should not be denied and history not re-written."

Some Japanese conservatives periodically say that accounts of the massacre are a fabrication or exaggerated.

Sino-Japanese ties have also been frayed by territorial rows and mutual mistrust over China's growing military assertiveness, as well as Japan's bolder security stance, although relations have thawed somewhat recently. China's top diplomat was in Japan on Tuesday for high-level political talks.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV BAOLONG VOY NO (1510)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BAOLONG VOY NO (1510) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 14.10.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T (5) 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 BRIGHT SAIL SHIPPING
LTD.**

Phone No: 2301186

Washington state man who moved a river ordered to pay restitution

SEATTLE —

A Washington state court has ordered a man who redirected a river to pay restitution of \$50 a month into an environmental fund, the state's top lawyer said on Monday.

William Cayo Sr was found guilty in April of violating water pollution and shoreline management laws as well as conducting prohibited hydraulic activities when he

changed a Tahuya River channel in February 2013, Attorney General Bob Ferguson said.

Cayo used an excavator and bulldozer to fill the river channel near his home and redirect the river, Ferguson said, adding that, in all, Cayo filled and graded nearly 1.5 acres (0.6 hectares) of riverbed.

Cayo has served 30 days in jail and was ordered to pay \$8,000 in

finer, Ferguson said in a statement on Monday.

Cayo's appeal was dismissed on 6 October, the statement said.

The court also ordered Cayo to pay \$200,000 in restitution, but in monthly installments of \$50, making it unlikely he will reach that full sum.

The court signed the restitution order on Friday, Ferguson's office said.

A National Marine Fisheries Service biologist's report found that Cayo's actions harmed multiple endangered species, including steelhead, coho and chum salmon, and harmed water quality, Ferguson said.

Restitution payments will go to a state fund that supports projects to restore or enhance the environment.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV ANAN BHUM VOY NO (143N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ANAN BHUM VOY NO (143N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 14.10.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV KOTA TENAGA VOY NO (308)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA TENAGA VOY NO (308) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 14.10.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV MCC MERGUI VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MCC MERGUI VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 14.10.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

PICTURE OF THE DAY



Visitors tour the bus section during the "Autoclasica 2015" show, in San Isidro city, 30km away of Buenos Argentina on 12 October. The 15th "Autoclasica 2015", the largest vintage car festival in South America, was a show organised by the Vintage Car Club of the Argentine Republic. It presented a selection of 900 vintage and historical cars of international level. PHOTO: XINHUA

Aussie hunter missing for six days survives on black ants

SYDNEY

An Australian hunter missing for six days without water in remote bushland has said it is a miracle he is still alive after being forced to eat ants to survive.

The man, 62, on a hunting trip in Western Australia's gold fields, became lost after leaving his campsite in pursuit of a camel, wearing nothing but a T-shirt, shorts and flip-flops.

Authorities found the man on Tuesday, sitting under a tree 15 kilometres from where he was last

seen. "He just spent the last two days under a tree eating black ants and that sustained him," WA Police Superintendent Greatwood told reporters.

"When we found him, he was extremely dehydrated, disoriented and basically delusional."

Greatwood said it was a miracle he survived harsh conditions — where temperatures reaching up to 37 degrees Celsius — without protection and water.

The man was taken airlifted to hospital after initial treatment.—Xinhua

INVITATION FOR PRICE QUOTATIONS

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received financing from the International Development Association (IDA) toward the cost of the National Community Driven Development Project (NCDDP). The Department of Rural Development (DRD) of the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, in its role as implementing agency of the NCDDP, intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of this credit to eligible payments under the contract for which this bidding document is issued. DRD now invites eligible suppliers to express their interest in supplying the following items:

Ref No	Description of Goods or Services	Quantity	Units
G.12	Office Furniture	1379	Nos
G.13	Diesel generator 10 KVA	18	Nos
G.14	Air Conditioner (2 HP)	36	Nos
G.15	Drinking water cooler	18	Nos
G.20(b)	Item 2: Laptop Computer	108	Nos
G.21	Fax and Scanner	18	Nos
	Photo Copier	18	Nos
	Color Printer	18	Nos
	Projector with Screen	18	Nos
G.23	Item 1: Still Camera	36	Nos
	Item 2: Video Camera	18	Nos
G.24	Plotter	1	Nos
G.25	Item 1: Portable hard drive	36	Nos
	Item 2: UPS	105	Nos

Expressions of Interest must be submitted in a written form to the address below (in person) and clearly indicate one or more of the Reference number above. Eligible suppliers having expressed interest will receive a REQUEST FOR QUOTATION. Sealed Quotations will be submitted to the address below at the latest the dead line, after which no Quotations will be accepted.

The goods will be contracted in 9 (Nine) separate contract. Suppliers will be selected following the Shopping Method as per the "Guidelines for Procurement of Goods, Works and non-Consulting Services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers" dated January 2011.

Please submit Expression of Interest and Sealed Quotations to: U Kyaw Soe, Deputy Director General, Department of Rural Development, Office No.(14), Nay Pyi Taw. For detailed information please contact U Kyaw Swa Aung, Director, Procurement and Logistic Section, Mobile phone 0943434333 or office phone 067409071.

For more information on the NCDD Project please also visit DRD's Website: www.cdd.drdmyanmar.org.

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(15/2015)

Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars and Myanmar Kyats.

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-053(15-16)	Emulsion Treating Chemicals (Demulsifier) (5,000) Ltr	US\$
(2)	IFB-054(15-16)	High Pressure Hose & Accessories (4) Items	US\$
(3)	DMP/L-008(15-16)	Hydraulic Pressure Pipes & Water Pressure Pipes (1) Lot	Ks
(4)	DMP/L-009(15.16)	Koomey Fluid (C-50F) (800) Liters	Ks

Tender Closing Date & Time - 11-11-2015, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 14th October, 2015 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph +95 67 411097 / 411206

WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.
FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 14th October, 2015: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin States, fairly widespread in Shan and Mon 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: Decrease of rain in Sagaing Region and Kachin State.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14th October, 2015: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14th October, 2015: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14th October, 2015: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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'Steve Jobs' an engaging portrait, ex-Apple CEO says



Director of the movie Danny Boyle (L) poses with writer Aaron Sorkin at an industry screening of "Steve Jobs" at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Beverly Hills, California October 8, 2015. The movie opens in the US on October 23. PHOTO: REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — In the four years since his death, Apple co-founder Steve Jobs has emerged as one of Hollywood's favourite subjects, though his brilliant but testy persona has proved tough to capture.

But in the latest biopic to tackle the Silicon Valley legend's life, former Apple CEO John Sculley and co-founder Steve "Woz" Wozniak saw a glimmer of their old friend.

"There are many times in this movie where both Woz and I said, 'Wow, this really did feel like Steve,'" Sculley told Reuters in an interview, saying he had discussed the film with Wozniak.

Sculley, who led Apple

from 1983 to 1993, is one of the key characters in "Steve Jobs," a movie from Oscar winners Danny Boyle and Aaron Sorkin that centers on three product launches: 1984's Macintosh, 1988's NeXT cube and 1998's iMac.

Arriving in theaters across the US this week, "Steve Jobs" is the third film focused on the tech guru's life and, like its predecessors, has been met with protests from insiders who say it presents an unduly harsh portrait.

Sculley echoed those concerns, saying the film, which delves into Jobs' strained relationship with his daughter, shows just one side of a complicated man.

"I knew the young Steve Jobs really well, and he was a much bigger, better person than one could come to the conclusion if they only saw the movie," he said.

The film devotes great attention to Jobs' relationship with Sculley, now 76, who is depicted as both a father figure to the entrepreneur and a target of his famous temper. Some of the film's most heated scenes show the men feuding over Apple's advertising and Jobs' ouster. The scenes were embellished, but the film makers made an effort to capture Sculley's experiences, inviting him on set to learn his mannerisms, Sculley said. Sorkin has said he created an "impressionistic" portrait of Jobs, and his depiction of the dynamic between Sculley and Jobs largely rings true, Sculley said. "People loved working for Steve," Sculley said. "He had a vision that excited all of us." Decades after leaving Apple, Sculley's path has converged with his old company's. Among his many ventures, he co-founded Obi Worldphone, which makes smartphones featuring Silicon Valley design at a lower price point for emerging markets. The company addresses a hole in the market, much as Jobs' Mac delivered a computer for everyday consumers, Sculley said.

"I've always looked for opportunities to fill design gaps," he said. —Reuters

Janet Jackson notches seventh No 1 album on Billboard 200 chart



Janet Jackson takes the stage to accept the Ultimate Icon Award during the 2015 BET Awards in Los Angeles, California. PHOTO: REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — Pop star Janet Jackson scored her seventh No 1 album on the weekly US Billboard 200 album chart on Monday, making her only the third musician to achieve a chart-topping record in each of the past four decades, Billboard said. "Unbreakable," Jackson's eleventh studio album and the first after the 2009 death of her pop star brother Michael Jackson, sold 109,000 albums, 44,000 songs and was streamed nearly 4 million times in the week ending on 8 October, totaling 116,000 units according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan.

The only other artists to score a chart-topping record in each of the past four decades are Barbra

Streisand and Bruce Springsteen.

Streisand and Madonna are the only other female artists to have more No 1 albums than Jackson, the former with 10 under her belt and the latter with eight, Billboard said.

The Billboard 200 chart tallies album sales, song sales (10 songs equal one album) and streaming activity (1,500 streams equal one album). Last week's chart-topper, rapper Fetty Wap's self-titled record, dropped to No 4 this week, behind R&B singer The Weeknd's "Beauty Behind the Madness" at No 2 with 73,000 units and rappers Drake and Future's "What A Time To Be Alive" at No 3 with 65,000 units. —Reuters

Witches and thrones: Indian animators cash in on special effects boom

MUMBAI — They call themselves Hollywood's best-kept secret: India's animators, long-time partners for the likes of Walt Disney Co, are reaping the rewards of surging demand for visual effects and gaining the confidence to venture out on their own.

India's animation industry generated revenue worth 44.9 billion rupees (\$675.7 million) in 2014, a 13 percent increase from the previous year, according to data from a FICCI-KPMG report on India's media and entertainment industry.

The industry is expected to double in size to 95.5 billion rupees within five years, as Hollywood studios tap a large pool of low-cost, English-speaking animators who are familiar with Western culture.

So far, animators based in India have created crowd scenes and props for the Emmy award-winning TV series "Game of Thrones" as well as more prominent visual effects for films including Disney's



Prime Focus employees work inside a visual effects studio in Mumbai, India. PHOTO: REUTERS

2014 Angelina Jolie movie "Maleficent" and Dreamworks Animation's "How to Train Your Dragon", among other Hollywood hits.

"We are one of those best kept secrets. We do all this amazing work and no one knows about it," said Biren Ghose, who runs the Indian subsidiary of US firm Technicolor, which includes the India-based animation units that worked on "Maleficent".

In a bid to gain more business and build a higher profile, a unit of Mumbai-listed visual effects firm Prime Focus Ltd last year bought London-based Double Negative, the studio that this year won an Oscar for best visual effects for "Interstellar".

Others like Prana Studios have attracted investment from some of the country's richest men — Reliance Industries' tycoon Mukesh Ambani and Anand Ma-

hendra of the diversified Mahindra Group. "Of course cost is a big factor," said Arish Fyze, Prana's chief executive and creative director, when asked about the Indian animation industry's appeal. Both Mahindra and Reliance declined to comment for this story.

"But ultimately, animation is about performance and understanding cultural idioms and idiosyncrasies. The combination is what our clients find helpful."

India's animation industry is almost as old as its movie industry, the world's biggest in terms of revenue. In 1956, a local movie studio invited a Disney animator to train them, and a year later, India's first animated production "The Banyan Deer" was made.

Over the years, studios have generated their own animated movies, ranging from 2008's box office flop "Roadside Romeo", a 3-D cartoon movie jointly produced by Yash Raj films and Disney, to this year's hit war epic "Bahubali", India's costliest film on record.

Indian demand for local animation is dwarfed by business from Hollywood, but some studios like Prana say working on their own movies will elevate the industry's status, and their own profile.

"It's a departure from waiting for work to come from the United States," said Prana's Fyze. The firm is creating its own animated movie "Wish", about wishing wells. —Reuters

Local fare-compare website rolls out new products and services

Jessica Mudditt

MYANMAR'S first and most comprehensive fare-compare website has expanded to offer a host of new services and products designed to make travelling in Myanmar stress-free.

Flymya was launched in June this year to allow customers to check flight schedules for every domestic airline and to book tickets via Paypal, major credit cards and Myanmar Payment Union (MPU). E-tickets are provided and cash payments can also be accepted by visiting Flymya's office in downtown Yangon.

Flymya also guarantees the cheapest flights available, so it's no surprise that it's currently processing more than 1,000 flight bookings a month.

"As an avid traveller myself - both for business and leisure - I understood that there was a need to create an online platform that would take the pain out of arranging travel plans in Myanmar. As tourism continues to boom, I'm excited



Flymya customer and Turkish travel blogger Hande Cilek enjoys the stunning surrounds of the ancient city of Bagan under the shade of a locally crafted parasol. PHOTO: SUPPLIED BY HANDE CILEK

to play a role in modernising my country's travel sector," Flymya founder Mike Than Tun Win told *The Global New Light of Myanmar* on 13 October.

According to a press release issued yesterday, the

new features on the website include all-inclusive tour packages booking for day-trips in Yangon, Mandalay, Bagan and the Heho region. It also offers hotel bookings and car rentals in major hubs such as Manda-

lay, Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw.

The website has also added a photo gallery linked to its Instagram account and a blog filled with information for visitors about local foods, religious sites, nature


spots, traditions and customs.

Mike Than Tun Win said the expansion is designed to help reduce travel hassles — particularly for first-time visitors to Myanmar.

"Many travellers find that they need to go in person to a local travel agent to book everything they want to do. As credit cards are still not widely accepted — even at restaurants and the like — it can be very time-consuming to arrange travel plans in Myanmar. Our goal is to make it easy — and to free up precious time to explore this fascinating country."

Flymya also offers travellers with free advice on vaccinations, destinations and visa requirements. Its dedicated customer service team speaks both English and Myanmar and replies to all email inquiries within 24 hours. Flymya prides itself on offering the highest levels of customer in Myanmar, said Mike Than Tun Win, who returned to Myanmar in 2010 after a successful business career in Singapore.

"We received many requests from our customers to provide additional services, such as tour packages and car rentals. The expansion of our services gives travellers peace of mind because they know that we've sorted the nitty-gritty details for them before they even land."



Entertainment Channel

(14-10-2015, Wednesday)

6:00 am

- Mono Classical Songs

6:20 am

- Myanmar Series

6:50 am

- Teleplay

7:55 am

- TV Drama Series

8:45 am

- Catch Asia News (Part-12)

8:55 am

- Musical Programme

9:05 am


- National Symphony Orchestra

9:20 am

- Myanmar Movie (Black & White)

12:00 noon


- Close Down



News Channel in Brief

(14-10-2015, Wednesday)

<p>6:00 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw <p>6:15 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Exercise <p>6:25 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classical Song <p>7:35 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money Talk Myanmar <p>8:00 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News/ International News <p>8:30 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Line News <p>8:35 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People Talks <p>9:00 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News/ International News <p>9:35 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science and Technology Programme <p>10:00 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News/ International News <p>10:30 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Line News <p>11:35 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRTV's Youth Programme <p>12:00 noon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News/ International News/ Weather Report 	<p>1:20 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentary (Classical Song) <p>2:35 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myanmar Traditional Boxing <p>3:30 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Line News <p>4:35 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) — Third Year (Zoology) <p>5:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News/ Weather Report <p>5:15 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teleplay <p>6:35 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real Story Real Movie <p>7:30 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Line News <p>8:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News / International News / Weather Report <p>8:35 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentary <p>9:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News <p>9:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TV Drama Series <p>9:00 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine Arts-Bosom of Dramatic Performance
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(14-10-2015 07:00 am ~ 15-10-2015 07:00 am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	History of Kyaik Wyne Pagoda
07:44	Am	Impressionist Myanmar Master Artist - U Lun Gywe
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Bogalay Tint Aung: A Man of Versatility (Episode-III)
08:52	Am	Graffiti: Portraiture
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Bollywood Actress "Laila Khan" Born & Raised in Myanmar (Part-I)
09:46	Am	A Happy Visit to Zoological Garden (Nay Pyi Taw)
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Crab Business (Part-I) Mud Crab
10:41	Am	Buddha Image Built of Bamboo Strip
10:53	Am	Paper Flower

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

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	Alaungdaw Kathapa
07:45	Pm	Products of Myanmar - Mya Setkyar Pure Silk Fabric From Inle Lake
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Myanmar Masterclass: Artist Zay Yar Aye
08:39	Pm	Ngapali Beach: Fishing Villages
08:47	Pm	Life of Sea Urchin Diver

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Tuesday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

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

Dominican Republic, Venezuela mark Columbus' discovery of Americas

CARACAS — Dominican Republic and Venezuela on Monday marked the mixed legacy of Christopher Columbus' accidental discovery of the Americas 523 years ago.

The Italian explorer's landing in the Americas on 12 October, 1492, in his search for a shortcut to the East Indies, expanded Europe's horizons and helped fuel the Renaissance, but also ushered in centuries of brutal colonial rule for Americas' indigenous civilizations.

Each year on this date, the marble mausoleum in the Dominican Republic where his remains reportedly reside is opened to the public.

The discovery not only revealed a new route toward the West, but also uncovered other ways of life, heritages and customs, said Marcelino Maria Lopez, the director of the Columbus Lighthouse, the monument in tribute to Columbus, the Dominican daily *El Nuevo Diario* reported.—Xinhua

Bolt aiming to crack 19 seconds in 200 metres

KINGSTON — Six-times Olympic champion Usain Bolt has already started his preparations for next year's Rio Games and has sent a warning to his competitors — he thinks he is capable of breaking 19 seconds in the 200 metres.

Bolt's record of 19.19 seconds for the 200 has stood since Aug. 20, 2009, four days after he set the 100m record of 9.58 seconds, both at the world athletics championships in Berlin.

"I really want to run under 19 seconds," Bolt told Reuters from his training base at the University of West Indies in Kingston as he began preparations for next year's Rio Olympics. "It's one of my major goals.

"I think it's one of the toughest ones, because it's going to be hard to find the right day and sometime the perfect race to get this (200m record). "It will not be an easy task, but I personally feel I can do it and my coach (Glen Mills) thinks I can do it so it is just about the work and finding the perfect time to do it, so it is one of the things (for 2016)."— Reuters

Asian Football Confederation launches coaching course



Trainees of AFC's 'C' certificate coaching course pose for group photo with officials. PHOTO:TIN MAUNG (MANDALAY)

THE Asian Football Confederation launched its third tier coaching course known as the 'C Certificate' on 12 October in Mandalay.

The course is being jointly conducted by the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) and Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) and is taking place at Mandalay Region Football Federation's Bahtoo Stadium.

MFF's general secretary U

Tin Aung and U Sein Win Gyi of Upper Myanmar football federation attended the opening ceremony and AFC instructor U Win Thu Moe gave an outline of the course, which will run until 25 October.

Than Than Htwe of the Transport Ministry, Khin Marlar Tun, San Yu Naing and Mar Mar Si of the Sports Ministry, Phyo Ko Ko Hlaing (Kanbawza FC), Myo Kyaing and Win Tin

of Rail Transportation Ministry, Aung Kyaw Moe, Soe Naing, Khin Maung Win, Aung Kyaw Hein, Kyaw Kyaw Oo, Win Tin, Aung Kywe Oo, Soe Khaing Win, Yan Naing and Aung Myo Naing of Mandalay Region, player Zaw Win Tun, Han Tun and Naing Naing Aung of Mandalay Sports and Physical Education Institute are participating in the training course.—Tin Maung

Muguruza withdraws from Hong Kong Open



Garbine Muguruza of Spain celebrates after winning the first set against Timea Bacsinszky of Switzerland during their women's singles final at the China Open Tennis Tournament in Beijing, China. PHOTO: REUTERS

HONG KONG — Spanish world number four Garbine Muguruza has withdrawn from this week's Hong Kong Open due to a lingering ankle injury, organisers said on Monday.

Muguruza, who turned 22 last week, claimed the biggest title of her fledgling career by beating Switzerland's Timea Bacsinszky 7-5, 6-4 on Sunday to win the China Open, rising to fourth in the rankings, a point behind third-placed Russian Maria Sharapova.

"Muguruza suffered a left ankle injury while playing in the Wuhan Open at the beginning of October," Hong Kong organisers

said on the tournament website (www.lhktennisopen.hk).

"The Spaniard ... will now rest the injury ahead of a likely appearance at the season-ending WTA Finals beginning on 25 October," they added.

Muguruza's run to the final in Wuhan, where she lost to Venus Williams, and her success in Beijing meant she reached finals in back-to-back weeks for the first time.

Her withdrawal in Hong Kong follows those of Belarusian Victoria Azarenka, Eugenie Bouchard of Canada and Germany's Sabine Lisicki, who are also injured.—Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

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Myanmar 3 - 1 Laos

Zlatan strikes again as flat Sweden head for playoffs

STOCKHOLM — Zlatan Ibrahimovic scored his eighth goal in eight Euro 2016 qualifiers as Sweden beat Moldova 2-0 in Stockholm on Monday, but his side must content themselves with a playoff spot after Russia beat Montenegro 2-0 to claim second spot in Group G.

Undefeated group winners Austria thumped Liechtenstein 3-0 to finish on 28 points, eight more than Russia and 10 ahead of the Swedes, who will find out their opponents when the playoff draw is made in Nyon, Switzerland on Sunday.—Reuters

Slovenia beat San Marino 2-0 to seal playoff berth

SAN MARINO — Slovenia secured a Euro 2016 playoff berth after second-half headers by captain Bostjan Cesar and Nejc Pecnik gave them a 2-0 win at San Marino in a dour Group E qualifier on Monday.

Slovenia finished third in the section on 16 points from 10 games, behind winners England and second-placed Switzerland who qualified automatically for next year's tournament in France.—Reuters

Ruthless England complete perfect 10

LONDON — England became only the sixth team to end a European qualifying campaign with a 100 percent record when they beat Lithuania 3-0 in their final Group E match on Monday.

England, showing eight changes from the team that started Friday's 2-0 win over Estonia at Wembley, put themselves into a commanding position after scoring two goals which went in off the same right-hand post inside the opening 35 minutes. The first, after 29 minutes, was a powerful long-range strike from Ross Barkley that took a deflection off a defender before flying into the net.—Reuters

Pacquiao looking to return to ring early next year

NEW YORK — Manny Pacquiao will be ready to return to the ring by next March, the Filipino boxer said on Monday while in New York to accept an award.

Pacquiao is recovering from surgery to repair a torn rotator cuff following his defeat to Floyd Mayweather in May. Winner of world titles in eight different weight classes, the 36-year-old Pacquiao said earlier this month that he is eyeing one final fight

next year before retiring.

"My shoulder is 80 to 90 percent healed and I believe I can start training in November or December so I can fight early next year," Pacquiao told the New York Daily News while preparing to be honoured by the Asia Society on Tuesday.

Pacquiao had formerly expressed interest in a rematch with Mayweather following a fight that did not meet expectations. Mayweather has said he is

now retired after he improved to 49-0 last month. Pacquiao was asked about possibly facing British fighter Amir Khan as his potential next opponent, but was non-committal.—Reuters

