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PEACE STARTS NOW

Ethnic armed groups arrive in capital for ceasefire signing

REPRESENTATIVES from ethnic groups arrived in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday to sign the nationwide ceasefire agreement (NCA) with the government. The signing will take place today.

Among today's arrivals, a delegation for the All Burma Students' Democratic Front (ABSDF) is led by Yebaw Than Ge; the delegation for the Pa-O National Liberation Organization (PNLO) is led by U Khun Okka; the delegation for the Arakan Liberation Party is led U Khaing Soe Naing Aung; and the Kayin National Union/Kayin National Liberation Army-Peace Council is led by U Htein Maung.

Representatives from China, India, Thailand, Japan, the EU and the UN will be present as witnesses at the signing ceremony.

The ceasefire will be signed by eight of the country's main 15 ethnic groups, following talks that began several years ago and led to a number of bilateral ceasefires that failed to sustain peace. It is hoped that the agreement will become a fully-fledged peace process that will end more than 60 years of civil conflict.

The signing of the NCA will be broadcast live on the MRTV News Channel and the Hluttaw Channel of Myanma Radio and Television.—GNLM



KNU/KNLA (PC) delegation led by U Htein Maung arrive in Nay Pyi Taw.



U Khaing Soe Naing Aung of ALP.



ABSDF delegation led by Yebaw Than Ge and party.



U Khun Okkar and party of PNLO.

PHOTOS: MNA

Heavy rains cause traffic chaos in landslide-hit Mawchi

HEAVY rains on Wednesday came as another blow to Mawchi in Kayah State, causing a river to flood a bridge and cause chaos on the roads, just days after the area was hit by deadly landslides.

Local authorities are using equipment to clear the river's waterway and restore its proper flow without damaging Bridge No. 2 on the road between Pasawng and Mawchi.

Local authorities are relocating those living in disaster-hit areas to relief camps.

Meanwhile, out of more than 2,000 migrant miners from

lead mines in Mawchi sheltering at a relief camp in Loika, around 300 returned home Wednesday with the assistance of local government.

The official death toll following the landslide has reached 17, while another six people are feared dead, according a news report from Myanmar News Agency on Wednesday.

Around 60 houses were destroyed and 1,186 people have been displaced by the landslide, which occurred in a mountainous area between Mawchi Taung Paw village and Lokharlo village

on 10 and 11 October.

Local authorities, army personnel and police teamed up with residents to carry out rescue operations.

Aid from the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has already reached the victims, and more aid will be shipped to the disaster-hit area soon, according to the ministry.

"Local authorities are carrying out rescue and rehabilitation efforts in Mawchi and we are also assisting private donors to reach Pasawng and Mawchi," said U Aung Swe, Chairman of

the Loikaw Township Natural Disaster Management Committee.

On Thursday, a flash flood in a creek in Kalewa Township, Sagaing Region, swept away 14 people.

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

Around 200 acres of farmland were buried under sand that swept in during the flash floods in Phonethone creek in Kyaung-

gyi Village, Chin Chaung village tract, in Kalewa Township, Sagaing Region.

The disaster followed the country's worst floods in 100 years, which struck from late July to August, killing more than 120 people nationwide and impacting more than 1.6 million people.

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

UEC chairman, Union FM meet special adviser to UNSG

THE Union Election Commission will make every effort to ensure that the general elections on November 8 are free and fair, its chairman told the special adviser to the secretary-general of the United Nations in Myanmar yesterday.

The meeting focused on security measures, the postponement of elections in some areas, local and foreign election observers, fair and balanced media coverage and ways to avoid the politicisation of religion by

political parties.

Elections will be delayed in five townships in Myanmar, Myanmar News Agency reported last night, as well as "other constituencies."

The chairman spoke of allowing local and foreign observers to have access to the polls and inviting the election commissions from the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The general elections are

scheduled to be held on 8 November.

Mr Vijay Nambiar, Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on Myanmar also called on Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday.

They discussed the government's efforts towards the development of Myanmar as well as further cooperation between Myanmar and the United Nations.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Mekong countries to hold anti-trafficking taskforce meeting

THE Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative Against Trafficking (COMMIT) will hold a taskforce meeting in Bangkok on 15 and 16 October.

Member countries will discuss progress on the COMMIT process and implementation updates, its civil society organisation platform and COMMIT's capacity baseline and development.

Myanmar's delegation consists of Commander of

Anti-Human Trafficking Police Force Police Brigadier General Win Naing Tun, Assistant Director U Hsan Lin of the office of the Attorney-General of the Union and Project Coordinator Daw Aye Mar Kyaw of UN Action for Cooperation against Trafficking in Persons (UN-ACT).

The UN-ACT regional office invited officials from the ASEAN Secretariat, World Vision and IOM-X to the meeting.

Myanmar News Agency

Italian opera venue switched to Strand Hotel

THE Italian Embassy in Yangon has announced it will shift an Italian opera performance from the National Theatre to the Strand Hotel in Yangon, due to extensive renovation works being undertaken at the national theatre.

The opera is held as part of celebrations worldwide for the 15th Week of the Ital-

ian Language Worldwide and it will take place at 7 pm on Friday, 23 October.

Event organisers stressed that the time and date remains unchanged and that only the venue is different for the performance of 'Gran Gala D'Opera E Operetta'. Italian embassies around the world are hosting opera concerts in the month of October.—*GNLM*

Photo exhibition to raise funds for the elderly

A charity is preparing to host an exhibition of aerial shots by two members of the Action Times Foundation.

Khaing Thanda Lwin

A PHILANTHROPIC organisation called the Action Times Foundation will host a photography exhibition featuring aerial

views of Myanmar's natural landscapes on 16 and 17 October.

The 'Aerial Photo Gallery Show' will take place at City Star Hotel near Yangon's City Hall in Kyauktada Township and it

will showcase around 80 works by two members of the Action Times Foundation (ATF).

Photographer Htin Aung Kyaw said, "We took these photographs in popular tourist areas such as the ancient city of Bagan in Mandalay Region, as well as Inlay and Taunggyi in Shan State."

Prices will start from K30,000 (US\$23), with all of proceeds from sales going to senior citizens living in Yangon's sub-urban Hlinethaya and Shwepyitha townships.

ATF has been providing assistance to poor elderly people without offspring since 2012. The foundation currently provides home-based elderly care to around 50 people, with most residing in Hlinethaya Township.

ATF said it has plans to increase the number of people receiving care in both townships.



An aerial shot that will be on display during the exhibition.

Relief supplies for flood victims arrive in Yangon from Russia

SPECIAL aircraft cargo from Russia containing humanitarian assistance for flood victims arrived at Yangon International Airport on Wednesday.

Russian Ambassador Vasily B. Pospelov handed the relief items over to Yangon Region Minister Dr Myint Thein at the airport.

The aid package includes

65 tents, 1,500 blankets, 10 inflatable boats, 300 50-kilogramme rice sacks and other relief supplies. The aid package weighed over 30 tonnes and is worth US\$2.5 million.

The relief aid will be distributed to flood victims in Ayeyawady Region, Chin State, Rakhine State, Sagaing Region and Magway Region.—*Zaw Gyi (Panita)*

Family fun day aims to promote healthy habits

A '3D walkathon' in December will aim to promote regular exercise, with all proceeds donated to a children's hospital in Yangon

Khaing Thanda Lwin

A FAMILY-ORIENTATED day out will take place on 6 December at People's Park in Yangon with the goal of promoting healthy lifestyle choices, said event organisers during a press conference yesterday.

The activities will include a new style of a walkathon known as a '3D adventure walk', which organisers hope will promote regular exercise. The event is being hosted by Myanmar's leading retailers, City Mart Holdings Co (CMHL) and

leading food and beverage producer in ASEAN, Fraser and Neave Ltd.

The event was held for the first time last year and attracted 2,000 people at People's Park.

"We expect even more participants this year because the event will include a totally new experience – the 3D Adventure Walk," said Mr Prapas Rattanapas of Fraser and Neave.

The walkathon will raise awareness about the importance of families staying active and the enjoyment of doing activities together as a family,

said Daw May Zin Soe Htet, marketing director of CMHL.

The event is open to all ages, and those interested may register at Marketplace City Mart, City Mart (Thamine), City Mart Junction Maw Tin and Ocean Super Centre Shwegondine between 16 November and 2 December.

The registration fees is K2,500 (US\$2) per form, which includes up to three people to participate.

All registration fees will be donated to Yankin Children's Hospital.



A girl demonstrates on 3D painting that will be on display at the upcoming event to raise walking habits. PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN

President accepts credentials from newly-accredited ambassadors

President U Thein Sein accepted credentials from newly-accredited ambassadors Mr. K.W.N.D. Karu-

naratne of Sri Lanka, Mr Olivier Richard of France and Mr Demetrios A. Theophylactou of Cyprus at

the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. Also present on the occasion 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 from the Protocol Department.—*Myanmar News Agency*



President U Thein Sein poses for documentary photo with Sri Lankan Ambassador Mr. K.W.N.D. Karunaratne.



President U Thein Sein accepts credentials from French Ambassador Mr Olivier Richard.



President U Thein Sein receives Ambassador Mr Demetrios A. Theophylactou of Cyprus.

Swiss ambassador applauds ceasefire deal during meeting with commander-in-chief

DURING a meeting between Myanmar's commander-in-chief of defence services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and Swiss ambassador Mr Paul R Seger, the nationwide ceasefire accord, which is scheduled to be signed today, was applauded by the ambassador.

The commander-in-chief said that the president extended an olive branch to ethnic armed groups as a means of bringing armed conflict to an end and that

the army played a constructive role in the process.

"Officials from both sides will ink the peace agreement," the senior general said.

The Swiss ambassador described the signing of the nationwide ceasefire accord as a critical step to reconciliation and development, adding that the deal will serve as a solid foundation for the democratic goals the country has set. The commander-in-chief pledged the army's commitment

to the peace process, stressing that it will initiate national development based on stability and unity among ethnic groups.

When asked about voting rights for military personnel, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing assured the Swiss ambassador that free and fair elections will be held on 8 November.

The pair also discussed strategies to promote new levels of cooperation between the two countries.—*Myawady*

Speaker, UN adviser discuss upcoming elections

PYITHU Hluttaw speaker Thura U Shwe Mann met the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Adviser to Myanmar Mr Vijay Nambiar in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

They discussed legislative

issues, the nationwide ceasefire accord, human rights and measures to be taken before, during and after the 8 November election to ensure that it is free and fair.—*Myanmar News Agency*

President appoints four ambassadors

PRESIDENT has appointed U Lwin Oo as Ambassador to Nepal; U Myo Aye as Ambassador to Serbia while at the same time continuing his role as Ambassador to Israel; Daw Yin Yin Myint as Ambassador to Poland while continuing her duties as Ambassador to Germany; and U Tha Aung Nyun as Ambassador to Ghana, while also acting as Ambassador to South Africa.—*GNLM*

ELECTION COUNTDOWN
Make your voice count. Cast your vote. **24** DAYS

Electricity supplies improve in Inlay's hotel zone



A 66/11 KV 20 MVA sub-station under construction in Inlay Hotel Zone. PHOTO: MAUNG MAUNG THAN

THE ELECTRICITY committee in the Hotel Zone of Inlay region in southern Shan State has announced that it has completed its projects and improved electricity supplies in the area.

The committee says the Hotel Zone in Nyaungshwe Township

has received a 66/11 KV 20 MVA sub-station, a 26.4-mile-66 KV electricity cable from Naungka sub-station, a 20.84-mile-11 KV cable for the A, B, C areas of the hotel zone, 360 double poles and 220 single poles, ten 11.4 KV and 50 KVA transformers, a 60x50 ft

four unit and a two unit 48x44 ft staff quarters. The committee also completed a 66 KV cable line and a 66/11 KV 20 MVA sub-station in February. The ultimate goal is for all hotels to be provided with 24 hour electricity.—Maung Maung Than-Taunggyi

Ban on firecrackers and fireworks enforced in Tatkon

TATKON Township General Administration Department has stepped up enforcing a ban on firecrackers and fireworks as the end of Buddhist Lent draws near.

The department issued warnings against selling fireworks through loud speakers in various parts of the township.

Authorities said that ran-

domly setting off fireworks will cause alarm to residents, especially older people and children and that they are sometimes used deliberately to destroy the peace and tranquility of the area.

Road-side shops, markets and vendors have been banned from selling any such items and authorities said that action will

be taken against anyone caught doing so. Local officials undertook a surprise inspection of stores in the township on 9 October. As Buddhist Lent ends in late October, many people are in a festive mood, however authorities are enforcing security measures in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.—Tin Soe Lwin-IPRD

MCDC member meets Chanayethazan ward administrators

MANDALAY City Development Committee member U Aung Htay met ward administrators from 20 wards in the Manda-

lay city township of Chanayethazan on 12 October.

Talks focused on improving drainage and water pipelines, the

regular collection of rubbish and the steps that need to be taken to close unauthorised toll gates in the township.—Thiha Ko Ko



The 1,100-foot long asphalt road stretching in Nyaungdon. PHOTO: TUN KYAW

Election procedures discussed in Monywa

DISCUSSIONS on the upcoming general election of 8 November and the rule of laws were held in Monywa, Sagaing Region on 11 October as part of a debate. The Eyes on Burma Debate (EOB Debate) at Win Unity Hotel was attended by political parties, civil society organisations, the media, election observers and members of the public.

Sagaing Region Election Sub-Commission Chairman U Tin Oo explained the commission's functions, which include data collection and the issuance of voters' lists, corrections made for eligible voters and

provisions to ensure free campaigning by all candidates. He urged all stakeholders to cooperate in the interests of a free and fair election.

U Thein Than Oo of Myanmar Lawyers' Network called for responsible campaigning among candidates and U Seesar Nyi Nyi from a public rights implementation group highlighted the importance of transparency and accurate voters' lists.

The attendees took part in lively discussions at the event, which was sponsored by USAID, EOB and Burma News International.—Maung Pyi Thu

Census data workshop in Kyaukme



Participants discuss use of census data at the workshop.

PHOTO: MYINT AUNG

A WORKSHOP on data distribution of the 2014 census was held in cooperation with Immigration and National Registration Department of Ministry of Immigration and Population and UNFPA in Kyaukme in Shan State on 12 October.

The course was attended by Kyaukme district service personnel, civil society groups and members of the public.

District's Deputy Commissioner U Soe Naing was

present, along with a Additional State Head U Soe Naing and District Head U Aye Hlaing of INRD.

The three-day workshop aimed to provide attendees with the skills to evaluate and vet data in order to implement more efficient and targeted development programmes, as well as being a useful source of information of itself for the public and media.—Myint Aung

Road works begin in Nyaungdon

A TARMAC road is being constructed to improve links to Shwe Hintha Monastery in Nyaungdon Township at a cost of K50 million (US\$38,800).

The project is being overseen by the monastery's Bawdi-Kyaung Abbot Sayadaw Bhaddanta Yugandharabhivamsa and

funds have been donated by the abbot and well wishers.

The widened 1,100 foot-long road will ease congestion along the township entry road, said a ward administrator, as the township lies close to a busy highway in Ayeyawady Region.—Tun Kyaw

Abe meets China's Yang amid preparation for summit with South Korea



China's State Councillor Yang Jiechi (L) shakes hands with Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at the start of their talks at Abe's official residence in Tokyo, on 14 October 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

TOKYO — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met with Chinese State Councillor Yang Jiechi on Wednesday in Tokyo as the two countries are preparing for a trilateral summit with South Korea in late October or early November.

The meeting came as Tokyo and Beijing trade barbs over the latter's successful bid last week to register its "Documents of Nanjing Massacre" in a UN cultural agency programme, a new source of concern in otherwise improving bilateral relations.

On Tuesday, Shoto Yachi, national security adviser to Abe, met Yang, China's top foreign policy official who outranks the foreign minister, and filed a protest over the listing of the materials to the "Memory of the World" programme of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

Details of the protest were not immediately known, however. Japanese officials have criticized UNESCO for "unilaterally" registering the Chinese

documents without allowing Japan to access them for verification, especially when there are conflicting views between the two countries over the 1937 incident such as the number of Chinese civilians and soldiers killed by the Japanese military.

In Tuesday's talks with Yang, Yachi, head of the secretariat of the National Security Council, expressed concern about Beijing's muscle-flexing in asserting its territorial claims in the East and South China seas, according to Japanese officials.

Yang said bilateral ties have shown "a momentum of improvement," but urged Japan to "properly handle sensitive issues in historical, military and security areas," the official Xinhua News Agency said Tuesday in a dispatch from Tokyo.

The upcoming three-way summit, which would involve Abe, Chinese Premier Li Ke-qiang and South Korean President Park Geun Hye, will be the first such gathering since May 2012.—*Kyodo News*

China denies militarising South China Sea

BEIJING — China has not militarised the South China Sea, but there are certain countries which keep flexing their muscles who should stop hyping up the issue, China's Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday.

Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying made the comments at a daily news briefing after US Defence Secretary Ash Carter said the United States military would sail and fly wherever international law allowed, including the disputed South China Sea.—*Reuters*

Thai student robs 6 taxi drivers for university fees

BANGKOK — A student committed robbery preying on six taxi drivers in the Thai capital on Wednesday with alleged intent to fund his university fees, police said.

The 18-year-old male student, identified merely as Chalermmyod, separately called six cabs to a halt in a dark, long lane off Ladprao road and robbed the taxi drivers of their cash altogether amounting to 2,380 baht (about 66 US dollars).

The lone suspected robber used a bogus revolver to perpetrate the crime which saw the panic-stricken victims quickly handing out their money. None of the taxi drivers resisted or got hurt, the police said.

The six separate heists occurred in a row during the wee hours and lasted less than two hours.

One of the victims was quoted as saying that the youngster thanked him for the money and wished him good luck before he got off.

Chalermmyod was arrested near the crime scenes shortly after he had made off with cash from his sixth victim, the police said.

The suspected robber student, who was majored in psychology, was quoted as saying that he did so only to find some money to pay for the fees at his state university and to buy a bus ride to his native southern province of Chumphorn.—*Xinhua*

Philippine army rejects call for negotiations to free hostages

MANILA — The Philippine army on Wednesday rejected demands by Islamist militants to start negotiations for the release of three abducted foreign tourists and a Filipino woman and halt an offensive on a remote southern island.

Two Canadians, a Norwegian and the Filipino, who were taken hostage at a resort on Samal island on 21 September, have appealed by video to Philippine authorities to stop military operations on the tiny island of Jolo, to the west of Samal, and to Canada to help negotiate for their freedom.

There has been speculation the four had been taken hundreds of miles west to Jolo, a stronghold of Abu Sayyaf, a small but violent Islamist militant group, known for bomb attacks, kidnappings and beheadings in the southern Philippines.

"There is no negotiation that can be made with any of those who are perpetrating this crime," military spokesman Colonel Restituto Padilla told a press briefing at the main army base in Manila.

"We cannot, as of the matter, discuss operational details, but we can assure you the safety of the hostages is always foremost in our minds."

The army commander on Jolo, General Alan Arrojado, said the military would not stop operations against the al Qaeda-linked Abu Sayyaf because there was no proof the hostages were in that



A still image captured from video footage of Philippine jihadis and kidnap victims is shown in this SITE Intelligence Group video made available to Reuters on 13 October 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

area. "It may be a mock up scenario, it could be taken elsewhere and made it appear to be on Jolo to stop our operations," he said about the video appeal of the hostages. "There will be no let up in our operations." Asked about the video, a Canadian Foreign Ministry spokes-

man said the government was "pursuing all appropriate channels" to seek further information.

Armed men with covered faces were seen in the video standing behind the four hostages who made appeals to halt army offensives and to negotiate for their release. All of them were shown to be sitting in a jungle while the militants with covered faces held rifles and machetes and shouted "Allahu akbar" (God is greatest). The militants' leader spoke fluent English, demanding the artillery attacks be halted and the negotiation of the release of the hostages. He did not identify what group they belonged to or their location.—*Reuters*

"We can assure you the safety of the hostages is always foremost in our minds."

Colonel Restituto Padilla
Military spokesman

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Australian PM under pressure to act on asylum detention policy

SYDNEY — A group of Christian protesters occupied the Sydney offices of Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull on Wednesday, demanding an end to the long-term detention of asylum seekers in centres in the South Pacific.

Around 20 activists, some holding a banner declaring “Children don’t belong in detention”, called on Turnbull to end the controversial offshore detention policy.

“I’m hopeful that we will look back at this particular moment, the change in prime minister, the fresh approach, and see that it was the time when that national shame was put to an end,” said protest spokesman Justin Whelan.

Turnbull, who ousted former Prime Minister Tony Abbott in a party coup last month, was not in his office at the time of the protest.

Pressure is mounting on Turnbull to act on the harsh detention conditions, after reports of systemic child abuse and sexual assault and criticism by the United Nations and human rights groups.

Turnbull said last month he was concerned about conditions in the camps, but many in his Liberal party support the mandatory detention policy which has been a vote winner.

Australia’s highest court is considering whether the policy of sending asylum seekers to the South Pacific island nation of Nauru for long-term detention is in breach of the constitution.

Australia receives nowhere near the number of refugees currently flooding into Europe, yet successive governments have vowed to stop asylum seekers reaching the mainland, turning boats back and sending those intercepted to camps on Manus island in Papua New Guinea and Nauru.

On Tuesday Nauru’s Australian public relations firm, Mercer PR, caused outrage after releasing the name of an alleged rape victim after she had spoken to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation under the condition of anonymity.

That followed a raid on Saturday of the local offices of Save the Children, which works with detainees at the camps, in which laptops and mobile phones were seized by police.

Save the Children spokeswoman Olivia Zinzan defended the integrity of her staff and organisation, which has not had its contract renewed following clashes with the Abbott government over conditions at the facilities.

“As always, our priority re-



A group of around twenty protesters occupy Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull’s electoral office, demanding the end to the policy of offshore detention of asylum seekers, in the Sydney suburb of Edgecliff, Australia, on 14 October 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

mains working to mitigate the harmful impacts of offshore immigration detention, to the extent that the circumstances allow,” Zinzan said.

Nauru has made it virtually impossible for journalists to vis-

it by imposing a non-refundable A\$8,000 (\$5,775.20) visa application fee which few media outlets are prepared to pay.

Al Jazeera English said on Wednesday that despite having offered to pay the non-refundable

fee, it had been told all media had been barred from the country. Nauru said the media outlet did not “go through the proper channels” to apply for a visa. Al Jazeera English disputed that in a statement.—Reuters

Gov’t aims to invalidate Okinawa decision to block base relocation work

TOKYO — The government asked the land and infrastructure minister on Wednesday to invalidate Okinawa Governor Takeshi Onaga’s revocation of approval for landfill work to relocate a key US military base within the southern island prefecture.

Onaga on Tuesday revoked the approval his predecessor issued to the central government for landfill work to relocate the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma to Cape Henoko from its current densely populated location within Okinawa.

If the minister decides to invalidate the decision, reloca-

tion-related work can continue and the central government can push its plan to start building a replacement facility for the Futenma base as early as this fall.

Okinawa is expected to take countermeasures by taking the case to court.

Soon after the Defense Ministry’s Okinawa bureau asked Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Minister Keiichi Ishii to launch an examination on the legitimacy of Onaga’s revocation of approval for landfill work and invalidate it, the governor issued a statement criticizing the central government’s move.

“This clearly shows the government’s hard-line stance to set up a new base (in Okinawa) anyway and it is extremely regrettable.”

Takeshi Onaga
Okinawa Governor

“(The government) requested the examination a day after we notified the revocation. This clearly shows the government’s hard-line stance to set up a new base (in Okinawa) anyway and it is extremely regrettable,” Onaga

said. The Defence Ministry’s Okinawa bureau stressed the necessity of invalidating the revocation, saying in a statement, “It is necessary to stop (Onaga’s move) in order to avoid serious repercussions, such as a delay in removing risks associated with the Futenma air base, as well as the adverse effect on trust between Japan and the United States.”

The issue has long pitted the central government against local officials and residents who are demanding that the base be moved outside of Okinawa, which has long hosted the bulk of US forces in Japan.

Elected last November on a platform of opposition to the planned relocation, Onaga advocates moving the base outside Okinawa to reduce the burden on the prefecture.—Kyodo News

China’s Tianjin to relocate chemicals firms after blasts

BEIJING — Hazardous chemical companies in the Chinese port city of Tianjin will be moved to an industrial zone far from the site of deadly warehouse explosions in August in the city’s development area, state media reported on Wednesday.

The frequency of industrial accidents, and the explosions that killed more than 160 people in Tianjin’s Binhai New Area in August, have raised questions about safety standards following three decades of breakneck economic growth in China.

Firms handling dangerous chemicals will be relocated to the Nangang Industrial Zone about 30 kilometres (19 miles) from the blast site and at least 10 kilometres from the nearest residential area, the official Xinhua news agency said, citing local officials.

Nangang aims to become a “world-class port and base for the heavy chemical industry”, Xinhua said. “A third-party organisation will be authorised to enact and release evaluation reports on the environment, safety and ecology,” the news agency said without giving further details. Tianjin officials came under criticism in the wake of the blasts, which flattened part of one of the world’s busiest ports.—Reuters



People continue staging a rally on 14 October 2015, in the Japanese coastal city of Nago, Okinawa, against the planned relocation of a key US base within the southernmost island prefecture. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Clinton's debate showing may spell trouble for Biden



Democratic presidential candidate and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton shakes hands with rival candidate and US Senator Bernie Sanders in the first official Democratic candidates debate of the 2016 presidential campaign in Las Vegas, Nevada, on 13 October 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

WASHINGTON — US Vice President Joe Biden faced an altered political dynamic on Wednesday after Hillary Clinton reasserted her command of the Democratic Party race during a debate that may have left little room for him to run.

Clinton, 67, was widely hailed by analysts as turning in a nimble, effective performance on Tuesday night, perhaps easing the fears of some Democrats fretting that the flap over her use of a private email server while in the Obama administration was torpedoing her candidacy.

In doing so, she at once may have dampened calls for Biden to make a belated entrance into the race, while also blunting the threat from insurgent candidate Bernie Sanders, a 74-year-old US senator from Vermont and self-described democratic socialist.

"If you're a Hillary supporter and you were worried for whatever reason, you should feel very good about yourself," said Rodell Mollineau, a Democratic strategist who attended the debate in Las Vegas. "This is the kind of debate that helps build momentum."

Sanders, Clinton's top rival among declared presidential candidates, was handed the opportunity by debate moderators to assail her over the email issue. Instead, he dismissed the controversy as trivial, drawing an ovation from the crowd and shoving the spotlight away from Clinton's most profound political weakness. For Biden, 72, who continues to ponder a bid for the presidency in the November 2016 election, the evening served as a reminder of how tenacious Clinton, steeled by scores of debates in her 2008 presidential

run and four years as secretary of state, can be as a candidate.

At times Clinton seemed to be reaching out both to the progressives in her party more likely to back Sanders and the moderates who may prefer Biden.

She went toe-to-toe with Sanders over gun control, addressed income inequality, and advocated for more liberal family-leave policies. At the same time, she refused to go along with Sanders' call to break up Wall Street banks, reiterated her support of the Patriot Act, and said she would not hesitate to use military force if necessary, at times obliquely criticizing President Barack Obama's White House — and by proxy, Biden — for failing to stand up to Russian President Vladimir Putin and for doing too little with regard to the civil war in Syria. —Reuters

Vucic, Mustafa committed to implementing past agreements



Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic, European foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini and Kosovo Prime Minister Isa Mustafa.

PHOTO: TANJUG

BRUSSELS — Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic and Kosovo Prime Minister Isa Mustafa "repeated their commitment to the implementation of all the past agreements," according to a release from the office of European foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini.

"The two prime ministers had an open discussion on the state of play in the dialogue, in particular as regards the implementation of the 25 August agreements," according to the release, a link for which can be found on the Twitter account of Mogherini's spokeswoman Maja Kocijancic.

Mogherini hosted an informal dinner with Prime Ministers Vucic and Mustafa in Brussels late on Wednesday. —Tanjug

NEWS IN BRIEF

7 killed in election office blast in C Pakistan

ISLAMABAD — At least seven people were killed and a dozen others injured when a suicide blast hit an election office of a lawmaker in Pakistan's central district of Dera Ghazi Khan on Wednesday, local media reported.

According to the reports, the blast took place at noon in the Tonsa Shareef area of Dera Ghazi Khan in the country's eastern Punjab province.

District Police Officer Mubashir Meikan said the targeted office belonged to Amjad Farooq Khosa, a member of the National Assembly from

the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, the ruling party of the country.

The lawmaker's personal guard told media that Farooq Khosa was not present in the office when the attack happened.

Police and rescue teams rushed to the site shortly after the blast was reported.

Hospital sources said at least three of the injured remained in a critical condition. Police have cordoned off the area for investigations. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack yet. —Xinhua

Islamic State, Kurdish PKK may have role in Ankara bombings

ISTANBUL—Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said on Wednesday both the Islamic State and the Kurdish militant group PKK may have played a role in the twin Ankara bombings over the week-

end that killed almost a hundred people. At a press conference in Istanbul, Davutoglu said the investigation into the connections of two suicide bombers were being deepened. —Reuters

British banker accused of HK double murder to stand trial in Oct 2016

HONG KONG — The trial of a British banker accused of murdering two Indonesian women in Hong Kong last year will start in October next year, the man's lawyer said on Wednesday.

The hearing will last around 20 days from 25 October until 21 November, 2016, Rurik Jutting's lawyer Michael Vidler told reporters outside Hong Kong's High Court.

Jutting, a former Cambridge graduate who worked at Bank of America Corp, did not appear in court and has yet to enter a plea. Police found the

body of one of the women in his luxury, high-rise apartment with wounds to her neck and buttocks on 1 November last year. The other woman's body was found inside a suitcase on the balcony of the apartment, authorities have said.

The grisly murders of the two women, described by Hong Kong media as prostitutes, shocked the city, which has a low homicide rate. After being charged for the double murder, Jutting was found fit to plea following a psychiatric assessment at the end of 2014. —Reuters

Iraqi army, militia forces launch assault to retake Baiji from Islamic State

BAGHDAD — The Iraqi army and volunteer militia fighters, who are mostly Shi'ite, launched an assault on Wednesday to retake the city of Baiji in northern Iraq from Islamic State militants, an Iraqi military spokesman said.

Baiji is near the country's largest oil refinery and is only 150 km (90 miles) away from Mosul, Iraq's second largest city which fell to the hardline Sunni militants of Islamic State in June 2014.

The city has since changed hands several times in fierce clashes.

The Hashid Shaabi militiamen and Iraqi army soldiers began their assault from the south on Wednesday and managed to fight their way into the center of the city, military spokesman Colonel Mohammed al-Asadi said.

The force was backed up by air strikes from the US and Iraqi airforce, Asadi said. —Reuters

OPINION

A healthy workforce is essential

Myint Win Thein

Everyone deserves to lead a long life that is free of chronic pain or ill-health. Sadly however, low income earners tend to have much lower access to healthcare, despite the fact that they should be entitled to the same services as others.

Healthcare is a fundamental right, yet gov-

ernments around the world fail to recognise it as such.

In fact, healthcare services are getting more and more expensive. With private clinics and hospitals emerging, the more money one spends on medical services, the stronger the prospects a person has to survive. It is unjust that a person needs to spend a fortune on a minor operation or risk the consequences of a shoddy job being done. Many people are subject to poor medical treatment, which can be fatal when they are seriously ill. A system needs to be implemented to allow everyone to access healthcare services. No one should die because they cannot pay for hospital treatment.

Although the government has created a social security system for workers, it is unable to cover

every worker in Myanmar. A more extensive and effective social security system should be established to help low income earners gain equal access to medical treatment. There's even a solid business case for it: a healthy workforce is more productive than an unhealthy one.

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.

Silence the guns and end the war

Tommy Pauk

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has been marching towards the democratic state since 2011. The democratic government has been striving hard for economic reform and political reform in line with the aspiration of the entire people for democracy. Myanmar is home to 135 different national races or diverse ethnic groups. We all have been residing in Myanmar from time immemorial.

Historically, it was in 1886, Myanmar was colonized by British colonialists and it became a British colony in the South East Asia. Then, the British colonialists had sown the seeds of hatred among the national races. Due to dire legacy of the British colonialists' Divide and Rule Policy, there had been unsolved problems, suspicions and misunderstanding among our national brethren for sixty years. During that space of time in Myanmar, gun exchanges were prevalent among us in different states and divisions sporadically and regularly. The ethnic peoples were in chaotic conditions and in disarray losing peace, livelihood and settlement. They became the internally displaced people due to long term gun-fighting or armed conflict in states and divisions in Myanmar. The solution for permanent ceasefire had been a dream like "Building castles in the air". The unsolved problems, suspicions and misunderstanding triggered tensions, clashes, conflicts, discriminations and armed struggle. Both Myanmar armed forces and the ethnic armed groups did not win, nor did they lose. However, the country, Myanmar lost many lives of national brethren and encountered the hindrance to socio-economic development in states and divisions. Horrendously, the evil of civil war caused the damage of infrastructure, the loss of homes and loss of all national brethren

lives nationwide. All the Myanmar people were insecure to travel across Myanmar due to gun fighting between government troops and the ethnic armed groups. The local people in the conflict zone were in despair in their daily life. We were deeply concerned that the conflict might disintegrate the union and transform into severe civil-war-torn country. Therefore the entire people of Myanmar and the governments were so anxious to end the armed conflict existing in Myanmar. We need to protect our country from being disintegrated. We do not want to see or hear the disintegration of the Union of Myanmar. All the national brethren wish to enjoy everlasting peace and maintain unity in Myanmar. We all have to get on well with each other. Unless sincerity, mutual trust, transparency and integrity prevail among national brethren in our country, we will lose peace and sovereignty certainly. It is our bounden duty to protect our country Myanmar's territory from any alien intrusions or meddling activities indeed. Whenever argument, dispute, disagreement, problem and misunderstanding arise, we should discuss or negotiate or solve the specific matters or problems sincerely and magnanimously. Whatever critical or serious matter arises, we ought to avoid lopsided views on them so that the clear or useful solutions could be found.

Before regaining our own independence from the British, the union spirit and unity were laid down by General Aung San, our national hero and leaders of diverse ethnic groups on 12 February 1947. It was known as Panglong Agree-

ment. We honor 12 February as a politically significant day and call it Union day. The Union day is to mark the solidarity of the national brethren in Myanmar. Obviously, the historic agreement was made by wise, thoughtful, selfless and patriotic leaders of Myanmar before regaining our own independence from the British colonialists. It was the significantly historic event led or organized by General Aung San, our national hero. Therefore, we all

conflict between the government and some ethnic armed groups began in some states and divisions in Myanmar. Some neo-colonialist countries refueled the conflict and supported the ethnic armed groups with arms, military training and finance secretly. Nevertheless, the successive governments have attempted to make ceasefire with respective ethnic armed groups, but they were unsuccessful.

Anyway, the present government has always made concerted efforts to sign the pact for permanent truce with the ethnic armed groups. The government held talks for seeking means and ways to end the armed conflict between Myanmar government troops and the ethnic armed groups. Thus the positive outcome or good result has been made by both sides.

We, all the citizens of Myanmar happily and wholeheartedly welcome the auspicious news, which states that the government and some ethnic armed groups would sign the nationwide ceasefire agreement (NCA) on the 15th of October 2015, today. The beam of the dawn appears in the sky of Myanmar now. We rejoice that peace process has already reached the successful way indeed. From now on, this agreement will ensure the peace among the national brethren nationwide. Consequently, sustainable socio-economic development will be able to share states and divisions equally. People can safely make their living and education service and healthcare service can be promoted efficiently in their areas. In addition, traveling by road and by rail road will be more secure and smoother nationwide as the armed conflict is ended. Gun fires will be silent and pleasant traditional songs

and music in various areas can be heard tunefully. The harmony and peace will undoubtedly be prevalent in our country. Misery and evil of civil war will come to an end and nightmare of estrangement will also be wiped out forever. The true sincerity and goodwill of the all leaders of national brethren and present government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar must be praised respectfully.

As all the national brethren have been given rights in accord with the constitution of 2008, they can manage for the all-round development of the respective states and divisions with the support of Union Government. Guns should be used only for security and safeguarding the property and lives of the people in Myanmar indeed. The internal affairs must be solved through the table talk rather than the use of exchanging gun fires. In the past, the sounds of gunfire were sporadically heard and the huge destructions were made in the conflict zones. Now the situations have totally changed with lively and pleasant atmosphere among the ethnic peoples in their areas across the country. All the conflict zones are back to normalcy and the ethnic people can earn the stable livelihood. We do not want to hear or encounter any serious conflicts and civil war in our country. It is time to maintain union solidarity and march together towards durable democracy!!!

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



We do not want to hear or encounter any serious conflicts and civil war in our country.

should regard union spirit and unity among our national brethren based on mutual trust and love. In 1948, we regained our own independence from the British. Afterwards, some ethnic armed groups were formed due to estrangement between the government and some ethnic groups. As a result, the armed

The stuff of fairy tales: A Bavarian prince comes to town for Oktoberfest

Jessica Mudditt

TWO-hundred years ago, a prince and princess were wed in the Bavarian capital of Munich, Germany. Insofar as wedding parties go, the event was something of a hit – to put it mildly. The royal wedding held in October 1810 spurred what is known today as Oktoberfest, the world's largest beer festival that attracts six million revellers at celebrations held across the world.

The great, great grandson of the groom of that fateful wedding, Prince Luitpold of Bavaria (who later became King Ludwig I), was the guest

“The wedding was used as an instrument to unify the country after the Napoleonic wars – it was a good opportunity to do so and the public were invited to come and join in the celebrations. It was a very successful party and it became bigger and bigger. A cultural exhibition was added the following year and then later, a target shooting contest as well as a horse race,” Prince Luitpold explained.

While the horses were jettisoned some time ago, target shooting remains part of local festivities in Germany and according to the prince, attracts a staggering 10,000 competitors nationwide. He assured

fest isn't just about (over) indulgence. It's also about cultivating a sense of friendship and unity among people from all corners of the globe.

The prince summed up the spirit of the festival as follows: “No matter where you're from, Oktoberfest is a time to celebrate happily together. It's about having a good time and leaving the problems of the day behind – it's a chance to drink and dance and talk.”

“No matter where you're from, Oktoberfest is a time to celebrate happily together.”

- Prince Luitpold of Bavaria

a 150-year-old brewery, of which he is the CEO.

With great understatement, he said with a smile: “I'm basically in the drinks business. During my visit to Myanmar I met with some businesspeople that I know – I leave politics to the politicians.”

Prince Luitpold explained that Bavarian beer, which is respected worldwide, is unusual in that it is made with wheat malt rather than barley. It's



Picture left Christian-Ludwig Weber-Lortsch, German ambassador to Myanmar, with Prince Luitpold.

PHOTO: AUNG NAING Oo

“In Bavaria we never use any preservatives in our beers. This is because we have 500-year-old laws, which are the world's oldest actually, that prohibit it.”

Royal links to Myanmar

The Luitpold dynasty has reigned as dukes, counts and kings; including two Swedish ones. The family also produced two Roman emperors and two curiously titled ‘Anti-Kings of Bohemia.’

“There have been no more kings since the revolution of 1918,” said the prince, who added that while the family no longer has a formal role in governance, its relationship with the state remains close. The royal family is heavily involved in arts and education as well as hosting events of historical significance, such as Prince Luitpold's annual jousting tournament, which is held at Kaltenberg Castle; one of the two castles he owns.

This year was the prince's third visit to Myanmar. He first came four years ago and said the country has changed significantly since then. Prince Luitpold described Myanmar as “an impressive country taking fast steps forward. Yet it's also in good shape – many beautiful old buildings remain and there are many areas where nature is pristine.”

However he added that while Myanmar will likely become a “boom country,” he also hopes that development does not outpace the

momentum to preserve local traditions.

Prince Luitpold noted that Germany has a long history of trade with Myanmar – in the 1900s, for example, it was one of the country's biggest importers of rice. His grandfather spent several weeks in Myanmar in 1903 as part of a world trip that included tête-à-têtes with the emperors of China and Japan and members of Myanmar's royal families, although who among the latter group he met Prince Luitpold was unable to recall.

“My grandfather wrote down his memories from the trip, which I've found very interesting to read. He went on to become the head of Germany's army during World War I and he had a very analytical mind, while also being interested in the arts. He said that of all the nations he visited, Myanmar had the most beautiful, happiest people. It's interesting that things haven't changed much since my grandfather's visit,” he said.

The prince recalled an encounter with Myanmar people that amused his grandfather.

“There was an Englishman swimming in a river and all the locals were laughing and watching him very happily. My grandfather asked why they looked so happy. The reply? Someone had been eaten in that river by a crocodile the day before.”



One of Bavaria's stunning castles - though not one inhabited by Prince Luitpold. PHOTO: WIKICOMMONS

of honour at Yangon's Oktoberfest celebrations on October 9 and 10, which were held at Inya Lake Hotel. This was the fourth time that Oktoberfest was celebrated in Myanmar's commercial capital, with the number of guests increasing ten-fold to 2,500 since the event made its debut in 2012.

In an exclusive interview with *The Global New Light of Myanmar*, Prince Luitpold, who naturally shares the same name as his ancestor, discussed his passion for quality beer, Oktoberfest's origins and some fond memories of Myanmar.

Where it all began

So how did a single wedding transform into a global celebration of all things German?

The Global New Light of Myanmar that large quantities of beer, humans and guns is not a recipe for disaster in the particular context of Oktoberfest.

“The locals don't get drunk – they're very serious about the sport and stay sober during the competition. They celebrate afterwards with a few beers,” he said.

In Yangon, 5,000 litres of the prince's own Royal Bavarian beer were supplied on tap to festival goers, who waved German beer mugs in the air and danced on tables to pop hits and the traditional beats of a Bavarian band after chowing down on a delectable German buffet featuring salads, sausages, sauerkraut and roasted pig.

However Oktober-



Guests at Oktoberfest enjoyed plentiful mugs of Royal Bavarian beer, which is owned by Prince Luitpold.

PHOTO: AUNG NAING Oo

Beer connoisseur to boot

Prince Luitpold is a beer expert: it could even be said that brewing the stuff is in his blood. It began as a family tradition 750 years ago and he lives in a castle in Bavaria with

also unfiltered and has a distinct flavour. And the total absence of preservatives means that hangovers brought on by excessive consumption are less nasty than they potentially could be.

Israel sets up East Jerusalem roadblocks in bid to stem attacks



Palestinian protesters carry a pole to close the road during clashes with the Israeli troops near the Jewish settlement of Bet El, near the West Bank city of Ramallah. PHOTO: REUTERS

JERUSALEM — Israel started setting up roadblocks in Palestinian neighbourhoods in East Jerusalem and deploying soldiers in cities across the country on Wednesday to try to combat the worst surge of violence in months.

Palestinian officials condemned the security measures — the most serious clampdown in the Jerusalem area since a Palestinian uprising a decade ago — as collective punishment.

Israel's security cabinet had authorised the crackdown hours earlier in an overnight session after Palestinians armed with knives and a gun killed three Israelis and wounded several others on Tuesday.

Seven Israelis and 30 Palestinians, including children and assailants, have been killed in two weeks of bloodshed in Israel, Jerusalem and the occupied West Bank.

The violence has been partly

triggered by Palestinians' anger over what they see as increased Jewish encroachment on Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa mosque compound, also revered by Jews as the site of two destroyed Jewish temples.

There is also deep-seated frustration with the failure of years of peace efforts to achieve Palestinian statehood and end Israeli settlement building in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Israeli paramilitary border police used their vehicles to block an exit at the edge of Jabel Mukabar, an East Jerusalem neighbourhood and home to three Palestinians who carried out deadly attacks against Israelis on Tuesday.

Policemen carried out body searches and examined the identity papers of Palestinian motorists. Cars were then allowed to leave. Palestinians who live in East Jerusalem carry the same identity papers as Israelis and unlike brethren

in the West Bank can travel throughout Israel.

Dimitri Delliani, an official in Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah movement, said closing entrances to Palestinian neighbourhoods was "collective punishment in violation of all international law".

"(Israeli) cabinet decisions will not stop the Intifada (uprising). People of resistance do not fear new security restrictions," Hussam Badrawn, a spokesman for the militant Hamas group in the West Bank said.

The government said the immediate aim was to stem stabbings and other attacks by Arab assailants, many of whom resided in Jerusalem's eastern sectors.

One Israeli official who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity said Palestinian neighbourhoods would not be sealed off completely, describing the measure as "loose encirclement".

Israel regards all Jerusalem, including the predominantly Arab east captured and annexed in 1967, as its "indivisible capital" — a claim that is not recognised internationally — and its right-wing government is wary as being portrayed as dividing the city.

"No one is going to lock down East Jerusalem," Israeli Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked said on Army Radio.

At a Jerusalem bus stop where a Palestinian from Jabel Mukabar stabbed and killed an Israeli man on Tuesday before being shot dead, an Israeli woman sounded a defiant note.

"They want us to be afraid so we have to do the opposite," said the woman, who identified herself only as Jana.

Merchants in predominantly Jewish west Jerusalem reported a sharp drop-off in the number of shoppers.

"You can see it's almost empty here ... but we are (in Jerusalem), so we had even worse periods in the past," resident Avinoam Avganim said on usually busy Jaffa Road, the scene of several of the dozens of Palestinian suicide bombings that rocked the city during the 2000-2005 uprising.

At a late-night meeting of his security cabinet that finished in the early hours of Wednesday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also allowed revocation of residency rights of Palestinians deemed to have committed "terrorism" and a step-up in the demolition of homes of people who carry out attacks. The cabinet also approved an expansion of the national police, extra guards on public transport and the deployment of army units in "sensitive areas" along the steel and concrete barrier that separates the West Bank.—Reuters

French police protest

PARIS — Thousands of police protested outside France's justice ministry for the first time in decades on Wednesday to denounce a lack of resources and what they say is insufficient support from the judiciary in their daily law enforcement work.

"There's real anger here."

Gregory Goupil
Police union representative

The protest was billed as the broadest showing of discontent within the police since 1983, when then Justice Minister Robert Badinter faced similar protests and accusations of laxity after gangsters killed two policemen.

This time, too, the discontent came to a head a week after a prisoner who was granted a brief out-of-jail permit seriously wounded a policeman in a shootout in Seine-

Saint-Denis on the northern edge of Paris. "There's real anger here," said police union representative Gregory Goupil.

The police no longer felt they had the understanding of the judiciary, and a string of recent decisions to let criminals out of jail or free suspects from custody had brought frustration to the boil. The fact that the protest was supported by the whole range of police unions and grades was interpreted by local media as a sign that Justice Minister Christiane Taubira, often accused of refusing to adopt a harsh-enough line on law and order, was in danger of losing her job.

Beyond the protest in Paris' chic Place Vendôme square - home to the justice minister's office and occasionally the scene of heists at luxury jewellery shops - rallies were also being organised in other parts of the country. Former Prime Minister Francois Fillon joined the fray to take a dig at Socialist President Francois Hollande.—Reuters

Iranian MPs arrive in Damascus before joint offensive

DUBAI — A delegation of Iranian lawmakers arrived in Damascus on Wednesday in the build-up to a joint operation against insurgents in northwest Syria, and said US-led efforts to fight rebels had failed.

The visit, led by the chairman of the Iranian parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission, Alaeddin Boroujerdi, came as Iranian troops prepared to bolster a Syrian army offensive that two senior officials told Reuters would target rebels in Aleppo.

The attack, which the officials said would be backed by Russian air strikes, underlined the growing involvement in the civil war of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's two main allies, which has alarmed a US-led coalition opposed to the president that is bombing Islamic

State militants.

"The international coalition led by America has failed in the fight against terrorism. The co-operation between Syria, Iraq, Iran and Russia has been positive and successful," Boroujerdi was quoted as saying by Iran's state broadcaster IRIB as he arrived at Damascus airport.

The delegation was due to meet Assad, said officials.

Iran has sent thousands of troops into Syria in recent days to bolster the planned ground offensive in Aleppo, the two officials told Reuters.

Iran's Tasnim news agency reported two senior officers from Iran's Revolutionary Guards - Major General Farshad Housounizadeh and Brigadier Hamid Mokhtarband - were killed fighting Islamic State militants in Syria on Monday, though it

did not say where. Another senior Revolutionary Guards commander, Hossein Hamedani, was killed last week while advising the Syrian army near Aleppo.

Assad's government has been strengthened by two weeks of Russian air strikes that the Kremlin says are targeting Islamic State. The United States says they have also targeted other rebel groups. With military support from Russian and Iran, the Syrian army is trying to drive insurgents from western areas crucial to Assad's survival. Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister, Hossein Amir Abdollahian said on Tuesday that Tehran was working with Russia on drafting a peace plan for Syria. But Western powers, and many countries in the Middle East, say Assad must go as a precondition for peace.—Reuters

Repaired SpaceX rocket to fly by early December, company says

JERUSALEM — Space Exploration Technologies, or SpaceX, expects to return a repaired and upgraded Falcon 9 rocket to flight around the start

of December, a company vice president said, less than six months after one exploded shortly after liftoff.

The 208-foot-tall (63-metre)

rocket carrying a load of cargo for the International Space Station exploded less than three minutes after liftoff from Florida on 28 June.

The cause of the accident was traced to faulty bracket inside the rocket's upper-stage engine. When the steel bracket broke, a bottle of high-pressure helium was released, causing the engine to over-pressurise and explode.

"We believe in the next six to eight weeks we'll be able to return to flight," Lee Rosen, SpaceX vice president of mission and launch operations, said on Tuesday at the International Astronautical Congress under way this week in Jerusalem.

The Falcon 9, which failed after 18 successful flights, will carry a communications satellite for Luxembourg-based SES SA.

The rocket also will deliver a tiny satellite for SpacePharma, a privately owned Israeli startup, which developed a miniaturized laboratory for microgravity research.

A countdown clock on display at the SpacePharma congress exhibit pegs the Falcon 9 launch for 1 December.

Privately owned SpaceX also is expected to attempt to

land the rocket's first-stage on a platform in the ocean after the second-stage takes over to deliver the SES and SpacePharma satellites into orbit.

To try to achieve that, California-based SpaceX will use a more powerful version of the Falcon 9 than it has flown previously. SpaceX wants to return its rockets so they can be refurbished and reflown, slashing launch costs.

"Things are coming along nicely with the upgraded version of the vehicle and we're prepared to get back at this," Rosen said.

SpaceX intends to submit its first bid for a US military launch contract before it returns to flight.

It is expected to compete to fly a next-generation US Global Positioning System satellite. If it wins, the company will break a monopoly on the military's launch business held by United Launch Alliance, a partnership of Lockheed-Martin and Boeing. Bids for the GPS 3 launch are due on 16 November. — Reuters



An unmanned SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket launches from Cape Canaveral, Florida. PHOTO:REUTERS

USDA awards first manufacturing contracts for bird flu vaccine stockpile

CHICAGO — The US Department of Agriculture on Tuesday said it has awarded contracts to two drug companies to manufacture doses of avian influenza vaccine for poultry, in preparation for the potential return of the fast-spreading avian influenza virus later this year.

The two contracted firms — Iowa-based Harrisvaccines, and France-based Ceva Corp — will manufacture an undisclosed number of vaccine doses and store those doses for up to 5 years, USDA said in a statement released late Tuesday.

In addition, the companies are required to test the vaccines regularly for potency, as well as deliver finished vaccines any-

where in the United States within 10 days of a request for them from the National Veterinary Stockpile.

Separately, the agency and Iowa State University have translated USDA biosecurity training materials from English into Spanish, in an effort to help farmers and on-farm workers better understand ways to prevent bird flu infections ahead of the potential resurgence.

Iowa is the country's top egg producing state and was the epicenter of the worst ever US bird flu outbreak, which forced the culling of almost 50 million birds nationwide.

The agency's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has not approved the

use of an avian influenza vaccine in birds, and has not made a decision whether to use such vaccines in a future outbreak, USDA said Tuesday.

But in August, the agency said it wanted to create a stockpile of vaccine for the Eurasian H5 strain seen in the outbreak in the United States earlier this year. At the time, APHIS issued request for proposals (RFPs) from vaccine manufacturers.

USDA said APHIS will continue to issue such RFPs quarterly from now through September 2016, in an effort to have vaccine makers develop and produce other products that can help bolster the vaccine stockpile if another avian influenza outbreak happens in the US. — Reuters

China to mass produce Ebola vaccine

TIANJIN — A private Chinese biotechnology company plans to mass produce a vaccine against the Ebola virus developed by Chinese military scientists.

Tianjin CanSino Biotechnology Inc has started construction of an industry base to produce the vaccine in the Tianjin Economic and Technological Development Area, sources with the company said on Wednesday.

Investment into the base totals 2 billion yuan (about 317 million US dollars) and con-

struction will be complete in September, 2018.

The base also produces other vaccines against pneumonia, meningitis and tuberculosis. Annual production is around 200 million vaccines.

Developed by a team of biotech experts with the Chinese Academy of Military Medical Sciences, the Ebola vaccine is based on the 2014 mutant gene type and in the form of freeze-dried powder, which can remain stable for at least two weeks in temperatures of up to 37 degrees Celsius.

Experts say it is suitable for the tropical climate in West African countries, where the deadly epidemic outbreak has killed more than 11,297 people since 2014.

According to the Ministry of Health of Sierra Leone, one of the three most affected countries along with Liberia and Guinea, the vaccine has proven "clinically safe".

Since the outbreak, China has offered 120 million US dollars of aid and 500 medical staff and experts to affected countries. —Xinhua

Sitting time does not increase mortality risk

LONDON — Sitting for long periods is not associated with an increased risk of dying, according to a study recently released by the University of Exeter.

These findings challenge previous research suggesting that the act of sitting itself causes harm even when people routinely walk a lot or do other exercise.

The findings also contradict recommendations by Britain's National Health Service (NHS) that remaining seated for too long is bad for your health, regardless of how much exercise you do.

The study followed more than 5,000 participants for 16 years.

The participants provided information on total sitting time and on four other specific types of sitting behaviour: sitting at work, during leisure time, while watching TV, and sitting during leisure time excluding TV.

They were also asked to provide details on daily walk-

ing and time spent engaged in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

The study showed that over the 16-year follow-up period none of these sitting measures influenced mortality risk.

The findings overturned current thinking on the health risks of sitting and indicated that the problem lies in the absence of movement rather than the time spent sitting itself, researchers said.

Any stationary posture where energy expenditure is low may be detrimental to health, be it sitting or standing, according to the researchers.

"Our findings suggest that reducing sitting time might not be quite as important for mortality risk as previously publicised and that encouraging people to be more active should still be a public health priority," said lead author Dr Richard Pulsford from the University of Exeter.

The study has been published in the International Journal of Epidemiology. — Xinhua

"Our findings suggest that reducing sitting time might not be quite as important for mortality risk as previously publicised."

Dr Richard Pulsford
University of Exeter

Announcement on Result of the Yangon Stock Exchange's Logo Design Competition



Yangon Stock Exchange Joint-Venture Company Limited (YSX) hereby make an announcement on the result of the logo design competition that YSX logo selection team selected following design of U Min Thitsar as a winning logo design of the competition. The winning logo will be registered by YSX as a trademark and all right and title in and to the copyright or any other intellectual property rights of the logo are owned by YSX.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV PHUONG NAM-69 VOY NO (08-2015)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PHUONG NAM-69 VOY NO (08-2015) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15.10.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T-2 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV CONMAR DELTA VOY NO (009W)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV CONMAR DELTA VOY NO (009W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 14.10.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of B.S.W where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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UN veteran appointed new World Humanitarian Summit chief

GENEVA — Next year's World Humanitarian Summit is supposed to help reshape the multi-billion-dollar emergency response sector to reflect important changes such as the growing involvement of organisations outside the United Nations.

Today, after a week of speculation, Antoine Gerard, a longstanding staff member of the UN's humanitarian aid coordination body, OCHA, was named as the new head of the summit's secretariat.

The announcement, made by OCHA head Stephen O'Brien, follows the surprise resignation of Jemilah Mahmood in August.

Gerard, who is French, enjoys respect among his colleagues for his field experience, technical ability and straight talking. But he hardly fits the profile of a prominent non-Western

woman that the secretariat was widely thought to be seeking as its new head.

His appointment will also do little to erode the perception that OCHA is increasingly dominating the summit. Today, NGOs told a preliminary meeting in Geneva that they felt their work was under-reflected in a synthesis of pre-summit regional consultations with 23,000 people across the world.

A separate report, bearing the name of the UN secretary-general and containing his recommendations for the summit, to be held in Istanbul in seven months time, is currently being drafted by OCHA.

Reaction among those currently gathered in Geneva for a global consultation on the summit was muted. Some expressed concern that Gerard lacks Mahmood's charisma and ability to reach across the



Antoine Gerard, new Chief of the World Humanitarian Summit. PHOTO: IRIN

differing constituencies that make up the WHS process.

"He's got the field experience, he's got the technical experience and he's extremely principled," said one senior UN representative. "The issue is: does he have the convening ability? And what exactly he is expected to do? It is

very unclear what happens between this meeting and May 2016."

Gerard began working for OCHA in Burundi in 2002 before taking senior posts in Zimbabwe, Sudan, and in the West Africa regional office. He previously worked for many years with Médecins Sans Frontières.—IRIN

Women win landmark UK divorce battle over husbands' wealth lies

LONDON — Two women who claimed their ex-husbands tricked them into accepting smaller divorce settlements should have their cases re-examined to see if they should get more money, Britain's top court said on Wednesday in landmark rulings.

Alison Sharland and Varsha Gohill had argued that they had been misled by their former spouses as to the true extent of their wealth when their divorce claims were settled.

Their cases had both been rejected by Britain's Court of Appeal, but on Wednesday the Supreme Court backed the women, a decision which lawyers said

could lead to others seeking to have divorce settlements renegotiated.

"I hope that their decision sends out a message to everyone going through a divorce that they cannot lie in the family courts and get away with it," Sharland said in a statement through her lawyer.

"My legal battle has never been about money. It has always been a matter of principle."

She had accepted a deal in 2012 from her ex-husband Charles Sharland, the chairman and founder of IT firm AppSense, which amounted to 10 million pounds (\$15.4 million) in property and cash if she

agreed to accept 30 percent of proceeds from any sale of his shares in his company which he valued at between 50 to 75 million pounds.

However, she then learned that he had been in discussions with investment bankers earlier in 2012 regarding plans to float AppSense, and an article in the Wall Street Journal suggested the company's worth to be between \$750 million and \$1 billion.

In her judgement, Supreme Court judge Brenda Hale said Alison Sharland had been "deprived of a full and fair hearing of her claims" because of his "fraud".

Gohill accepted

270,000 pounds in 2004 after divorcing her ex-husband but later discovered he had hidden his true worth from her after he was charged with money-laundering offences.

"There are no winners in divorce and more than a thought has to be given to the families and the children locked in this type of litigation," Gohill said.

Experts said the verdict could have major repercussions, with James Brown, a partner from law firm JMW Solicitors which represented Charles Sharland saying the case "may open floodgates to couples revisiting divorce agreements".—Reuters

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

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS RECORDED AT 09:30 hrs M.S.T: During the past (24) hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Kachin State, rain or thundershowers have been isolated in Taninthayi Region, Rakhine and Kayin States, scattered in Mon State, fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing, Bago and Yangon Regions, Chin and Kayah States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with regionally heavy falls in Mandalay Region. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Singaing (2.96)inches, Pyinoolwin (2.45)inches, Maubin (2.01)inches, Hainggyikyun (1.77)inches and Amarapura (1.72)inches.
BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 15th October, 2015: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Kachin State, scattered in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon States and fairly widespread in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of decrease of rain in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 15th October, 2015: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 15th October, 2015: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 15th October, 2015: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

PICTURE OF THE DAY



People walk past cast bronze sculptures, created by Russian Buryat artist Dashi Namdakov on an embankment of the Yenisei River in the town of Kyzyl, administrative centre of Tuva region, Southern Siberia, Russia, on 7 October 2015. Dashi Namdakov is a representative of Buryats, native people of Siberia, who lives and works in Britain and Italy, casts bronze, silver and gold sculptures based on symbiosis of national traditions of nomad Buddhists, West European myths and classical art school, according to local media. Tuva region is inhabited by Tuvans, historically cattle-herding nomads, who nowadays practise two main confessions — Buddhism and Shamanism. PHOTO: REUTERS

Former Louisiana police chief jailed for tasing inmates

A former Louisiana police chief was sentenced to prison and another former state police chief pleaded guilty to civil rights violations after an investigation into excessive force found they used stun guns to discipline non-combative jail inmates, the US Justice Department said.

Gregory Dupuis, 57, who served as police chief in Mamou, Louisiana from 1994 to 1997 and from 2004 to 2014, was sentenced on Tuesday to one year and one day in prison, the Justice Department said in a press release.

The sentence was handed down by US District

Judge Richard T Haik of the Western District of Louisiana amid a nationwide debate over excessive police force, particularly against minorities, after a series of police killings of unarmed black men elsewhere in the United States.

Robert McGee, 44, who resigned as Mamou police chief on 8 October, pleaded guilty on Tuesday to violating an individual's civil rights. He faces up to 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine at his sentencing, which has not yet been scheduled.

Both Dupuis and McGee admitted using stun guns to punish inmates at the Mamou jail who were

being disruptive, "even if the inmates' disruption was purely verbal, and on inmates who were calm and compliant when the officer deployed the TASER," according to the press release.

The tiny town of Mamou, with 3,500 residents, is about 85 miles (137 km) west of Baton Rouge.

In one instance in 2010, Dupuis was called to the jail because of a verbally disruptive detainee. After the inmate complied with his order to get down from his bunk and put his hands on the far wall, Dupuis deployed a stun gun to his back, causing him to collapse in pain, injuring his knee, the release said.

That same year, McGee and an inmate were having a conversation and, "although the inmate posed no threat to himself or the officers, McGee fire the TASER at the inmate," causing him to collapse in pain.

"Law enforcement officers have a duty to ensure that detainees are treated fairly and humanely when taken into custody," said US Attorney Stephanie Finley. "Mr Dupuis and Mr. McGee breached that trust and violated their oaths by using excessive force on incarcerated individuals."

Reuters was not immediately able to identify lawyers for McGee and Dupuis.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV SINGAPORE BRIDGE VOY NO (118)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SINGAPORE BRIDGE VOY NO (118) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15.10.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P/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.

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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MARCLOUD VOY NO (00017S)

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S CHINA SHIPPING LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA TAMPAN VOY NO (663)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA TAMPAN VOY NO (663) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15.10.2015 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
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(15-10-2015 07:00 am ~ 16-10-2015 07:00 am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03 Am News
07:25 Am Myanmar Social & Charitable Association (EP-3) (Part-1)
07:49 Am Myanmar Social & Charitable Association (EP-3) (Part-2)
08:03 Am News
08:26 Am Bogalay Tint Aung: A Man of Versatility (Episode-IV)
08:53 Am Kayah
09:03 Am News
09:26 Am Marketable Goods (Straw painting)
09:44 Am Five-Star Ocean Liners in Myanmar Waters
10:03 Am News
10:26 Am Myanmar Martial Art (EP-1) (Bando)
10:44 Am Chanmyay Yeiktha Meditation Centre- Chaw Dwin Gone
(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Wednesday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

Prime Time

07:03 Pm News
07:26 Pm Mrauk U, Treasure Trove of Rakhine Culture
07:46 Pm Products Of Myanmar - Velvet Slipper
08:03 Pm News
08:26 Pm Innovative Handiworks Based On The Art Of Line Drawing
08:45 Pm Entrepreneur "Nan Ei Ei Zar"
09:03 Pm News
09:26 Pm Let's Cook (EP-5) Creamy Mushroom Soup & Honey Lemon Drink
09:53 Pm A Nun's Creation in Fruit Carving
(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Wednesday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(For Detailed Schedule - www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(15-10-2015, Thursday)

6:00 am • Musical Programme
• Mono Classical
8:55 am • Myanmar Video
Songs
9:50 am • China in Myanmar
6:30 am • Myanmar Series
Cultural Show
7:00 am • Teleplay
10:00 am • Myanmar Video
8:00 am • TV Drama Series
12:00 noon
8:45 am • Close Down

Jamaican Marlon James's Bob Marley novel wins Man Booker prize

Marlon James became the first Jamaican to win the Man Booker fiction prize on Tuesday for "A Brief History of Seven Killings", inspired by an attempt to kill reggae star Bob Marley, and said he hoped more Caribbean writers will follow.

The 686-page novel, which uses Jamaican patois, Harlem slang and liberal doses of scatological language, tells the story of a gang of cocaine-fuelled ghetto kids armed with automatic weapons who tried but failed to kill Marley in the Jamaican capital Kingston in 1976 before he gave a peace concert.

"Jamaica has a really really rich literary tradition, it is kind of surreal being the first and I hope I'm not the last and I don't think I will be," James, 44, said after winning the award.

"There is a real universe of sort of spunky creativity that's happening," he added. "I hope it brings more attention to what's coming out of Jamaica and the Caribbean."

James, who said he had been inspired to become a writer by his father, said he had decided to give up writing after one of his books was rejected 70 times, but eventually it was published and he was able to put the voices he heard in Jamaica into his work.

"The reggae singers ... were the first to recognise that the voice coming out of our mouths was a legitimate voice of fiction

...that the son of the market woman can speak poetry," he said.

Author and academic Michael Wood, chair of the five judges who selected James's book from a shortlist of six titles, said the sprawling work had impressed the entire panel.

"The excitement of the book kept coming, I think, and we just felt it didn't flag, and on re-reading it just got better," he told reporters. The book is the third novel by James, who now lives in Minneapolis and teaches writing.

In an online interview with the Gawker Review of Books website, James was quoted as saying the book breaks a lot of the rules he teaches his students at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota.

"Half of the stuff in that book I don't allow my students to do," James said. "There's a seven-page sentence in the book. Even when the book ends, it just stops."

Wood told reporters he was sure his mother would not have been able to get through even a few pages of the book, but he recommended it to readers who want to try something different.

"It may be controversial but only if you simply extract the swearing and drugs and stuff from the context," he said. "It could well be that it's not so controversial."

The prize, which in its 47-year history previously has gone to Salman Rushdie, Hilary Man-



Marlon James, author of "A Brief History of Seven Killings", poses for photographers after winning the Man Booker Prize for Fiction 2015 in London, Britain, on 13 October 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

tel, Margaret Atwood and J.M. Coetzee, carries a top cash award of 50,000 pounds (\$76,000), but more importantly can be a huge shot in the arm for book sales.

Last year's winner, Australian writer Richard Flanagan's "The Narrow Road to the Deep North", has sold 800,000 copies worldwide, a statement announcing the prize results said.

James's book has won high critical acclaim, with the New York Times saying it was "like a (Quentin) Tarantino remake of 'The Harder They Come', but with a soundtrack by Bob Marley and a script by Oliver Stone and William Faulkner".

Wood noted that James calls

his novel which opens with a dead man speaking, describes events that occurred in Jamaica from the viewpoints of dozens of characters, and closes in New York City — "Dickensian" in its scope.

He said a rule change two years ago which allowed American writers to compete for the Man Booker, previously limited for the most part to the Commonwealth, had no impact on this year's choice, since Jamaica is a Commonwealth country. But he said the change had broadened the types of books under consideration. "The sheer range of what we read was amazing," he said. — Reuters

Jay Z attends court as 'Big Pimpin' copyright trial gets underway

LOS ANGELES — Attorneys for Jay Z said in court on Tuesday that the rapper had properly acquired the rights to an Egyptian musician's melody to use for his hit 1999 song "Big Pimpin'," as a trial in a long-standing copyright lawsuit got underway.

Jay Z, whose real name is Shawn Carter, and hip hop producer Timothy "Timbaland" Mosley are among the defendants named in a 2007 complaint by the nephew of late Egyptian songwriter Baligh Hamdy, who alleged that the rapper had used his uncle's composition without permission.

Jay Z, wearing a navy suit and tie, sat between his lawyers at the US District Court in Los Angeles as he silently observed the afternoon's proceedings. He told Reuters he had no comment on the case.

He is scheduled to testify on Wednesday.

Jay Z's lawyer Andrew Bart argued Tuesday that the explicit lyrics of "Big Pimpin'" should not be discussed in relation to the lawsuit, as a depiction of the words as "vulgar" and "disgusting" could prejudice the jury against Jay Z.

US District Court Judge Christina Snyder ruled in his favor, saying examining Jay Z's lyrics would be irrelevant in this case.

Attorney Peter Ross, representing Hamdy's nephew Osama Ahmed Fahmy, told the eight-member jury that Jay Z and his producers had purposefully avoided asking permission to use Hamdy's track because they allegedly knew it wouldn't be granted given the risqué lyrics.

"You have to go to the composer himself, or his heirs, play the work, and get his approval," Ross said. "That, he never did."

The lawsuit follows another high-profile musical copyright case. In March, the heirs of late soul singer Marvin Gaye successfully sued artists Robin Thicke and Pharrell Williams for \$7.4 million for plagiarizing Gaye in their hit "Blurred Lines."

Attorney Christine Lepera, representing Timbaland and other defendants, told the jury that Fahmy's suit is an "effort to get an undeserved income." Released in 1999, "Big Pimpin'" was a breakout hit for Jay Z. Forbes estimated his wealth at \$520 million in 2014. — Reuters

Taylor Swift dominates American Music Award nominations



PHOTO: REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — Taylor Swift led the field on Tuesday with six nominations for the 2015 American Music Awards, closely followed by British singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran and Canada's The Weeknd.

Swift, Sheeran and The Weeknd, who all have dominated the music charts this year, will compete for the biggest prize — artist of the year — in the fan-voted awards show taking place in Los Angeles on 22 November.

Swift, 25, won nominations in virtually every category for which she is eligible, including favorite pop/rock album for her best-selling 2014 release "1989," which cemented her switch from country music to dance-pop. She also will compete with Ariana Grande and Meghan Trainor for best pop/rock female artist and her single "Blank Space" is among the nominees for song of the year.

Sheeran and The Weeknd each had five nominations.

Trainor, country newcomer

Sam Hunt, Britain's Sam Smith, rapper Nicki Minaj and Ohio-based indie rock band Walk the Moon, each had three nominations. Hunt and Walk the Moon also picked up nods for best new artist, along with The Weeknd, New Jersey rapper Fetty Wap and Swedish indie pop singer Tove Lo.

Music superstars Beyonce and Justin Bieber racked up just one nomination apiece after a quiet year on the music scene.

The American Music Award nominations are based on fan interaction as reflected on Billboard magazine and its website, including album and digital sales, touring, radio airplay, social media and touring.

Fan voting opened online on Tuesday and the 10 artist of the year nominees will be narrowed to five based on votes received by 11 November.

Singer and actress Jennifer Lopez will host the American Music Awards show from Los Angeles. It will be broadcast live on ABC television.

—Reuters

China, Croatia pledge to tap potential for cooperation, boost partnership

BEIJING — Chinese President Xi Jinping held talks with Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic on Wednesday and they pledged to make joint efforts

to tap the potential for bilateral cooperation and boost the partnership between the two countries.

Hailing the development of

the bilateral ties, Xi said Grabar-Kitarovic's visit will instill new momentum in the China-Croatia relationship.

Grabar-Kitarovic is paying

a state visit to China from Tuesday to Sunday, during which she attended a high-level forum on poverty reduction and development in Beijing.

Xi said China and Croatia should view the bilateral relationship from a strategic and long-term perspective, and continue supporting each other on issues concerning their core interests and major concerns.

As Croatia is an important country along the the Belt and Road, China and Croatia should unite their development strategies, said the Chinese president, proposing they focus on cooperation on energy, transportation, industrial parks, finance, telecommunications and agriculture.

Xi also suggested closer high-level interactions and people-to-people exchanges between the two sides.

Xi said he is appreciative of Croatia's commitment to the development of China-Europe cooperation and that the Chinese side will work with Croatia to enhance the strategic partnership

between China and Europe.

Lauding Croatia and some other European countries' on-going efforts to relocate refugees, Xi said the Chinese government will provide more assistance for the refugees to alleviate the crisis.

For her part, Grabar-Kitarovic said the Croatia-China development has developed well over the past 23 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations, citing frequent high-level interactions, fruitful economic cooperation and people-to-people exchanges, and close communication in international affairs.

Grabar-Kitarovic expressed gratitude for China's support for Croatia's development.

As a member of the European Union, Croatia will work to boost the relationship between China and the bloc as well as the cooperation between China and the Central and Eastern European Countries, said the visiting president. Grabar-Kitarovic said the Croatian side appreciates China's contribution to resolving the refugee crisis in Europe.—Xinhua



Chinese President Xi Jinping (L) holds a welcoming ceremony for Croatia's President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic before their talks in Beijing, capital of China, on 14 October, 2015. PHOTO: XINHUA

Islamic State battles insurgents as Syria army prepares assault

ISLAMIC State militants battled rival insurgent groups on Wednesday north of the city of Aleppo, where officials say the Syrian army is preparing an offensive of its own backed by Iranian soldiers and Russian jets.

A rebel fighter and a group monitoring the war said Islamic State fighters took control of parts of the towns of Ahras and Tel Jabin, about 12 km (8 miles) north of Aleppo, before being pushed back.

Gains by Islamic State north of Aleppo would threaten the supply lines of rival rebels inside the city, which is divided between insurgents and government forces. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the road used by Aleppo residents heading north to the Turkish border remained closed on Wednesday.

"Today there are fierce battles between us and Daesh in Ahras, Tel Jabin, and rural northern Aleppo," said Hassan Haj Ali, head of the Liwa Suqour al-Jabal rebel group, using another name for Islamic State.

His unit is one of several foreign-backed insurgent forces which find themselves fighting Islamic State on the ground, at the same time as they are bombed by Russian jets and are bracing for further ground attacks by the army and its foreign allies.

"There are mobilizations by the regime in most parts of Aleppo, particularly in Bashkoy," he said, referring to another town north of Aleppo, which before Syria's civil war began in 2011 was the country's biggest city and a major commercial and industrial center.

"There were advances (by Is-

lamic State) at dawn but we were able to recover Ahras entirely. There are battles in Tel Jabin," said Ali, speaking to Reuters via an internet messaging system.

The Observatory reported fighting between Islamic State fighters and government forces trying to advance towards an air base besieged by the jihadist group in Aleppo province.

Any further escalation in the Aleppo area near the Turkish border will likely further anger NATO member Ankara which opposes President Bashar al-Assad, backs the insurgents, and has expressed deep concern at Russian air strikes.

Iran has sent thousands of additional troops into Syria in recent days to bolster one offensive that is underway in Hama province and in preparation for another in the Aleppo area, two senior regional officials told Reuters.

The army also launched a fresh assault against rebel-held areas east of Damascus on Wednesday, including Jobar and Harasta, controlled by non-Islamic State rebel groups including Jaish al-Islam.

Underlining Iran's central role in support of Assad, whose territorial control of Syria is currently estimated at a quarter or less, a team of Iranian lawmakers arrived in Damascus on Wednesday on an official visit.

Two senior Revolutionary Guards officers were killed fighting Islamic State in Syria on Monday, Iran's Tasnim news agency reported. Another senior Guards commander was killed last week, as was a top Hezbollah commander.

Supported by two weeks of

air strikes, the Syrian army and its allies have been fighting insurgents in northern Hama province, and neighboring Idlib and Latakia provinces, trying to reverse rebel gains over the summer which had threatened the coastal heartlands of Assad's Alawite minority.

The offensive has resulted in the captured a number of towns in Hama and Latakia, but progress has not been fast. The rebels say they are using plentiful supplies of U.S.-made anti-tank missiles to repel the attacking forces.

That is a sign of increased foreign support for the rebels in response to the Russian-Iranian intervention.

Two rebel commanders said on Tuesday they have stationed a

dozen TOW anti-tank missile platforms supplied from abroad along a 30 km (20 miles) defensive line in Hama province in an effort to contain the army advance.

The missiles have been widely seen as important to rebel advances earlier this year that had put Assad under pressure.

Russia has stepped up its air strikes in recent days, announcing on Tuesday it had carried out 88 missions in the previous 24 hours, one of the heaviest days of bombardment of its campaign so far.

Moscow's intervention means Russian and U.S. jets are flying combat missions over the same country for the first time since World War Two, raising fears of accidental confrontation.

Russia says it has asked Washington to discuss coordination of military efforts, but Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said the United States had declined to send a military delegation to Moscow for discussions. In the fighting near Damascus, government forces fired hundreds of rockets at towns in the Eastern Ghouta, according to the Civil Defense for Rural Damascus, a rescue service operating in rebel-held areas.

Warplanes launched at least 10 air strikes on Jobar, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported. Rami Abdulrahman, director of the Observatory, said insurgents had also fired rockets at government-held Damascus.—Reuters



Smoke rises after what activists said was shelling by the forces of Syria's President Bashar al-Assad in Old Aleppo's Kadi Askar area, Syria, August 1, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

Kanbawza defender signs with Ayeyawady United FC

Ko Moe

KANBAWZA Football Club defender Thein Naing Oo has signed a three-year contract with Ayeyawady United FC, which includes a special transfer fee and begins on 1 November.

Thein Naing Oo has played

with Ayeyawady United FC in the past, so he is expected to quickly adjust to playing for the new team, said Ayeyawady's team manager U Myo Win. He was also a member of Myanmar's silver medal-winning U-23's team at the SEA Games in Singapore this year.



Ayeyawady United FC's new player Thein Naing Oo. PHOTO: AYEWADY UNITED FC

Asian hockey tournament hosted by Myanmar in December

Ko Moe

MYANMAR will host the 2nd Men's Asian Challenge at Theinbyu hockey pitch in Yangon from 12 to 20 December, according to the Myanmar Hockey Federation.

Seven teams will take part, including those from mainland China, Taipei, Hong Kong, Singapore, Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

A total of 28 players from

Myanmar team have been undergoing intensive training since the beginning of September, said federation executive U Kyaw Ye Han yesterday.

The national hockey team will be comprised of a number of players from the Myanmar's bronze medal winning team in the 28th SEA Games. Myanmar came second in the first Men's Asian Challenge in 2013.

Uruguay lead 2018 race, Argentina struggle

SAO PAULO — Argentina remain winless and goalless after their first two 2018 World Cup qualifiers following a 0-0 draw in Paraguay on Tuesday, while Brazil got off the mark in the South American group with a 3-1 home win over Venezuela.

Uruguay, Chile and Ecuador made it two wins from two games, with the Uruguayans shrugging off the absence of suspended strikers Luis Suarez and Edinson Cavani to top the group on goal difference after beating Colombia 3-0.

Ecuador, who stunned Argentina in Buenos Aires five days ago, scored another 2-0 win, this time at home over Bolivia and sit second in the 10-team group.

Chile followed up last week's win over Brazil with a 4-3 victory in Peru to sit third, ahead of Paraguay on four points, Brazil and Colombia on three, and 2014 World Cup finalists Argentina on one.

Without the injured Lionel Messi and Sergio Aguero, Carlos Tevez was tasked with leading the Argentina attack in Asuncion and headed a good Angel Di Maria cross just over the bar.

Tevez then suffered a broken nose early in the second half when he was hit by defender Victor Caceres's elbow going for a high ball and spent four minutes being bandaged up before returning the fray. He was eventually substituted in the 75th minute and



Paraguay's Dario Lezcano and Argentina's Ramiro Funes Mori battle for the ball during their 2018 World Cup qualifying soccer match at the Defensores del Chaco stadium in Asuncion, Paraguay. PHOTO: REUTERS

is still looking for his first Argentina goal in four years.

"We're sorry not to have got the three points which we had come for. I'm not happy with one point because we needed to win the match," Argentina coach Gerardo Martino said.

Brazil, without the suspended Neymar, raced into the lead after 40 seconds with the first of

two first-half goals from Willian at the Castelao in Fortaleza.

Three minutes before half-time the midfielder doubled Brazil's lead. Defender Filipe Luis crossed the ball, Oscar let it run and Willian tucked it away.

Venezuela pulled one back in the 64th minute through Christian Santos at a corner but striker Ricardo Oliveira restored Bra-

zil's two-goal cushion nine minutes later. Uruguay took the lead after 33 minutes when centre back Diego Godin rose to bullet home a header from a Carlos Sanchez corner kick.

Striker Diego Rolan added a second six minutes into the second half with a chip over goalkeeper David Ospina and substitute Abel Hernandez got a

third after 87 minutes. "We don't know if we'll get to Russia, for that we must work a lot in all these matches," said Uruguay coach Oscar Tabarez. "We can't hope to win matches just with defensive tactics." Juan Cuadrado was sent off in the dying moments at the Centenario to cap a miserable night for Colombia, who were without the injured James Rodriguez.

Copa America champions Chile beat 10-man Peru in Lima with two goals each from strikers Alexis Sanchez and Eduardo Vargas.

Sanchez put Chile in front but Peru equalised in the 10th minute through Jefferson Farfan.

Peru were reduced to 10 men in the 23rd minute after Christian Cueva was sent off for kicking out at Jorge Valdivia but still managed to grab the lead when Farfan converted a 36th-minute penalty. Vargas pulled Chile level four minutes before halftime, Sanchez restored their lead in the 44th and Vargas scored his second four minutes into the second half. Paolo Guerrero struck Peru's third in added time.

Ecuador, still on a high after their win in Buenos Aires, overcame the elements and a stuffy Bolivia side to win in Quito. Miller Bolanos got the first goal in the 81st minute and Felipe Caicedo added a second from the penalty spot in injury time after he was felled in the box.—Reuters

Roger Federer knocked out in Shanghai opener

SHANGHAI — World number three and defending champion Roger Federer suffered a surprise defeat in the second round of the Shanghai Masters on Tuesday, losing 7-6(4), 2-6, 6-3 to Spain's Albert Ramos-Vinolas.

The Swiss, returning to action after a month off, looked rusty against the 70th-ranked qualifier and despite appearing to be back on track when he cruised through the second set, he succumbed in the decider to a single break of serve in the eighth game.

US Open runner-up Federer, 34, banged down 15 aces and won more points than his opponent but a lack of sharpness at crucial moments sent him spinning to defeat. Last year 17-times grand slam champion Federer survived six match points in his opening match against Argentina's Leonardo Mayer and went on to lift the title.

This time there was no escape against the left-hander he beat for the loss of only three games at Wimbledon in 2012.

"I'm always cautious," Feder-

er said. "I don't underestimate or lack respect for anybody out there. These guys are all touring professionals, they know what they're doing. "The margins are so small.

"I had my chances. I just couldn't make it today. I've got to look into it. But at the end of the day this can happen during the year. Unfortunately, here in Shanghai where I was defending champion, I was really hoping again to play a great tournament," he added. Ramos-Vinolas, 27, had never beaten a player ranked in the

top 10 before. His reward for some fearless hitting was a third-round meeting with Frenchman Jo-Wilfried Tsonga who outclassed Victor Estrella Burgos in straight sets.

"I'm really happy to beat Roger Federer," Ramos-Vinolas told the ATP's website (www.atpworldtour.com).

"I didn't expect it during the match. After the second set I thought I would lose. But I played really good. I am very happy because it's the most important victory for me."—Reuters



Roger Federer of Switzerland. PHOTO: REUTERS