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ODYSSEY FINALLY OVER 39 stranded fishermen return from Indonesia

Zaw Gyi & Aye Min Soe

OUT of more than 130 Myanmar fishermen who have been stranded in Indonesia's Ambon, Tanjungpinan and Meulaboh islands, 39 from Ambon Island returned to Myanmar yesterday.

"The fishermen arrived back today after being moved from Thai fishing boats to Indonesian fishing boats. We will conduct an investigation to know whether they were trafficked or not. If so, we will expose the truth and take action against trafficking," said Police Maj Ye Win Aung.

The fishermen returned to Myanmar with the assistance of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the Myanmar embassy in Indonesia and Myanmar's immigration department.

The remaining fishermen will be able to return home this month, according to a police source.

Officials from Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia and Indonesia will hold a second round of talks in Bali, Indonesia, on 20 and 21 October in an effort to resolve the region's human trafficking issues.

Several Myanmar fishermen who came back from Indonesia over the last few months will testify at a trial against one fishing company that is accused of committing human trafficking.

Indonesia's Witness and Victim Protection Agency (LPSK) will take the Silver Sean fishing company to court for trafficking Myanmar fishermen in an attempt to get salaries and compensation for the victims.

LPSK met with 22 trafficked



Fishermen arrive at Yangon International Airport. PHOTO: ZAW GYI

fishermen in Myanmar during its visit to the country in September and reached an agreement in principal with Myanmar authorities to send 14 fishermen involved in the case to Indonesia for the trial, said Police Col Khin Maung Hla to *The Global New Light of Myanmar*.

"Actually, more than 500 fishermen from who came back from Benjina about four to five months ago did not receive salaries from their companies because the Myanmar authorities and Indonesian authorities had to give priority

to repatriating them to Myanmar as quickly as possible due to insufficient accommodations and food for them," he added.

"However, the two countries will cooperate further to resolve the issues of salaries and the grievances of the remaining Myanmar fishermen," Police Col Khin Maung Hla said.

He added that 176 fishermen out of more than 300 Myanmar fishermen stranded on Indonesia's Ambon Island returned to Myanmar in September and received sal-

aries from their companies only after disputes between the employers and workers were resolved by Myanmar and Indonesian authorities.

Meanwhile, the Myanmar embassy in Indonesia has offered its assistance to more than 443 fishermen who returned home from Indonesia's Benjina Island in early June by filing a lawsuit against the Benjina Company in an attempt to secure compensation for the fishermen.

Myanmar, Thailand and Indonesia held their first meeting

on the issue of human trafficking in Phuket, Thailand, in July 2015, focusing the issue of trafficked fishermen.

During its visit to Myanmar, the LPSK expressed its readiness to cooperate with Myanmar to resolve the human trafficking cases in Benjina.

The LPSK has kept Myanmar authorities informed about the developments in the Benjina slavery case, providing updates on the trial schedule and the protection of the witnesses from Myanmar.

Han Jen labour dispute to enter new negotiations

Ko Moe

STRIKING workers and bosses from the Han Jen Garment Factory will participate in another round of negotiations on Thursday in an attempt to break a deadlock over the salaries of skilled workers.

During yesterday's negotiation session, sponsored by the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, the two sides did not reach an agreement that would satisfy the demands of the striking workers. The workers have demanded salaries ranging between K45,000

to K60,000 per month.

Daw Kyin Aye, the factory's boss, said during the negotiation that she would consider the demands of the workers after six months, saying the factory cannot satisfy the demand right now.

The workers also demanded the reinstatement of labour union leader Kyaw Kyaw Myint.

The arbitration council working on the dispute previously passed a resolution to reinstate eight members of the union, excluding Kyaw Kyaw Myint.

The workers should appeal to the council as no one has the right to interfere in the resolu-

tion of the arbitration council, said a government official who witnessed the negotiation yesterday.

Out of more than 2,100 workers at the factory, more than 1,000 have been holding a sit-in protest outside the factory since 18 September.

Hpaung Daw U Pagoda images brought to Nyaung Shwe



The barge carrying four golden statues of of Buddha Image tours around villages in Inlay Lake during Hpaung Daw U Pagoda festival for public homage. PHOTO: NAY MYO THUREIN

FOUR IMAGES of the Hpaung Daw U Pagoda were brought to Nyaung Shwe on Tuesday morning to be displayed to residents.

The elaborately decorated Karaweik barge was towed by 28 traditional boats and over 100 leg-rowers across Inle Lake to Nyaung Shwe.

The images were taken from the barge to a decorated vehicle by Union Minister of Culture U Aye Myint Kyu and Chief Minister of Shan State U Sao Aung Myat.

The grand procession was accompanied by other ministers and Nyaung Shwe Township officials. The images were set up

to receive respect and veneration from the township's residents.

Hpaung Daw U Pagoda is celebrated every year with traditional leg-rowing demonstrations and competitions.

In this year's leg-rowing competitions, male teams were comprised of 100 or 46 leg-rowers, while female teams had 26 leg-rowers. Individual rowers also competed. The winning teams received awards from the union minister and state chief minister.

The four images of the Hpaung Daw U Pagoda will remain in Nyaung Shwe from 20 to 22 October. —Nay Myo Thurein

Pobbathiri holds orientation course for special election police

POBBATHIRI Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, opened an orientation course for newly appointed special poll station police officers at the township General Administration Office on 20 October.

The policemen will be responsible for the security of polling stations and of voters in the upcoming 8 November general election. Township police chief Police Major Min Zaw explained the duties of the officers

and security rules.

One special officer will be deployed at each booth, said the police major. The course was attended by 75 poll station officers from around the township. —Shwe Ye Yint

Yinmabin election commission braces for elections

A TRAINING course for village election commission members in Koneywa, Paukpanphu and Kyuntaw villages in Yinmabin Township, Sagaing Region, was held in

Koneywa on 20 October. The one-day course was attended by 45 rural election commission members.

Similar courses will be held across the township by 25

October, according to a township official.

The township has 94 ballot booths. The general election is to be held nationwide on 8 November. —Tun Ko Ko

Myawady officials discuss boosting border trade



Myawady Trade Zone is Myanmar's second largest border trading post. PHOTO: HTEIN LIN AUNG (IPRD)

A MEETING to promote border trade was held in Myawady, Kayin State, on 20 October. Myawady, situated on the border with Thailand, is home to Myanmar's second largest border trading post.

Myawady District Commissioner U Lwin Ko Oo told traders to be prepared for the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), which will be estab-

lished soon. He urged them to keep complete records of their transactions in order to facilitate a smooth flow of trade.

A second friendship bridge is being built in Myawady to improve transportation to Thailand, he added.

At the meeting, other district officials urged drivers of trucks, buses and other vehicles to abide by traffic rules. They

also told traders to comply with trade and customs laws.

Daw Thin Thin Myat, the chairperson of the township trade association, discussed strategies to develop border trade with the officials at the meeting.

Muse, a town in Shan State on the border with China, is Myanmar's largest border trading post. —Htein Lin Aung (IPRD)

Myanmar, Czech Republic commit to greater cooperation



Czech Ambassador Mr Jaroslav Dolecek and Deputy Minister Daw Lei Lei Thein exchange notes of the investment agreement in the presence of Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw. PHOTO: MNA

THE REPUBLIC of the Union of Myanmar and the Czech Republic signed an agreement on Tuesday to promote investment opportunities and cooperation in trade, business and industry.

Myanmar's Deputy Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Daw Lei Lei Thein and Czech am-

bassador Mr Jaroslav Dolecek signed the agreement.

The signing ceremony was witnessed by Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Dr Kan Zaw and Deputy Minister for Science and Technology Dr Aung Myat Kyaw. —Myanmar News Agency

Special election police trained in Nay Pyi Taw

A SPECIAL police force for the upcoming elections received training on Tuesday in Zabuthiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw. The special force will assist the Myanmar Police Force in ensuring a free and fair election.

Nay Pyi Taw regional police officer Ko Ko Aung and other officials attended the opening ceremony.

"We organised the special

police force to coordinate on security issues during the election. The selection of candidates was based on education, location, language skills and understanding of local customs," said police officer Ko Ko Aung.

The training will take from 20 to 30 October, and the members of the special force will be deployed to 612 polling stations in Dekkhina District. —Ko Pauk

President pledges development projects to flood victims

PRESIDENT U Thein Sein met residents of Kantbalu Township, Sagaing Region, yesterday, offering instructions on measures for regional development, including the re-cultivation of winter crops and repairs to transport infrastructure damaged by recent flooding.

During his inspection tour, the president was accompanied by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and union ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, U Myint Hlaing, U Ohn Myint, Dr Myint Aung, U Kyaw Lwin and U Ye Htut.

The president and his entourage left the township for Kawlin, where he inspected recovery activities being undertaken in flood-affected areas.

In a meeting with local people, the president said a message posted on social media by a local resident brought him to the area. The president said his original itinerary was meant to bring him to Monywa, Kantbalu and Katha townships in Sagaing Region, but he added Kawlin when he saw a status posted by U Aung Myo Wei about his twice-flooded town.

President U Thein Sein pledged socioeconomic development projects under the Emerald Green Development Project as part of the recovery measures for flood-affected areas across the region.

The president and his entourage proceeded to Katha after the visit to Kawlin.—*Myanmar News Agency*



President U Thein Sein welcomed by local people during his tour of Sagaing Region. PHOTO: MNA

Hluttaw Commission discusses remaining bills

UNION parliament speaker Thura U Shwe Mann presided over the coordination meeting of the Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, commission members clarified records of meetings held on 28 September and 8 October. They also discussed several bills that were not discussed by the parliament before the end of its term. The speakers made remarks on the bills.

Deputy Speaker U Nanda Kyaw Swa also attended the meeting.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Members elected to News Media Council

THE Myanmar Press Council (Interim) elected 24 people as members to a newly formed media council at a selection ceremony held at the Novotel Hotel in Yangon yesterday morning.

According to the interim press council, the elected members will form the News Media Council as the interim organization's successor.

The 24 members are so-

cial, legal, economic, science and IT experts from news agencies, publishing associations and journalist networks.

The members include lawyer U Han Nyunt, who was nominated by President U Thein Sein, Reuters correspondent U Aung Hla Tun, who was nominated by union parliament speaker Thura U Shwe Mann and foreign correspondent U Tin Maung Aye,

who was nominated by upper house speaker U Khin Aung Myint.

U Maw Than, chairman of the Selection Board, said the election of a chairman, vice chairman and secretary would take place in seven days.

The election will take place on 27 October, the chairman added, without specifying the time.—*Myanmar News Agency*

WPSA holds meeting in Namsam

AN educative meeting was held by Shan State Women Peace and Security Association at Namsam town of Palaung Self Administered Zone in Shan State, on 19 October.

At the meeting, Shan State

WPSA's chairperson Daw Lu Lu Maing limelighted on women's rights and basic laws, the differences between men and women in family level as well as in country level and for women to gain full access of

human rights and security.

The workshop was attended by local women organizations, civic societies, village administrators, and women affairs' advocates.—*U Myint Aung*

Two injured in Mongshu blast

AN explosion occurred in the town of Mongshu, Shan State, yesterday afternoon, leaving two people injured, according to a local official.

A timed mine planted by an insurgent group exploded near the Shan Literature and Culture School in Mongshu at 4pm.

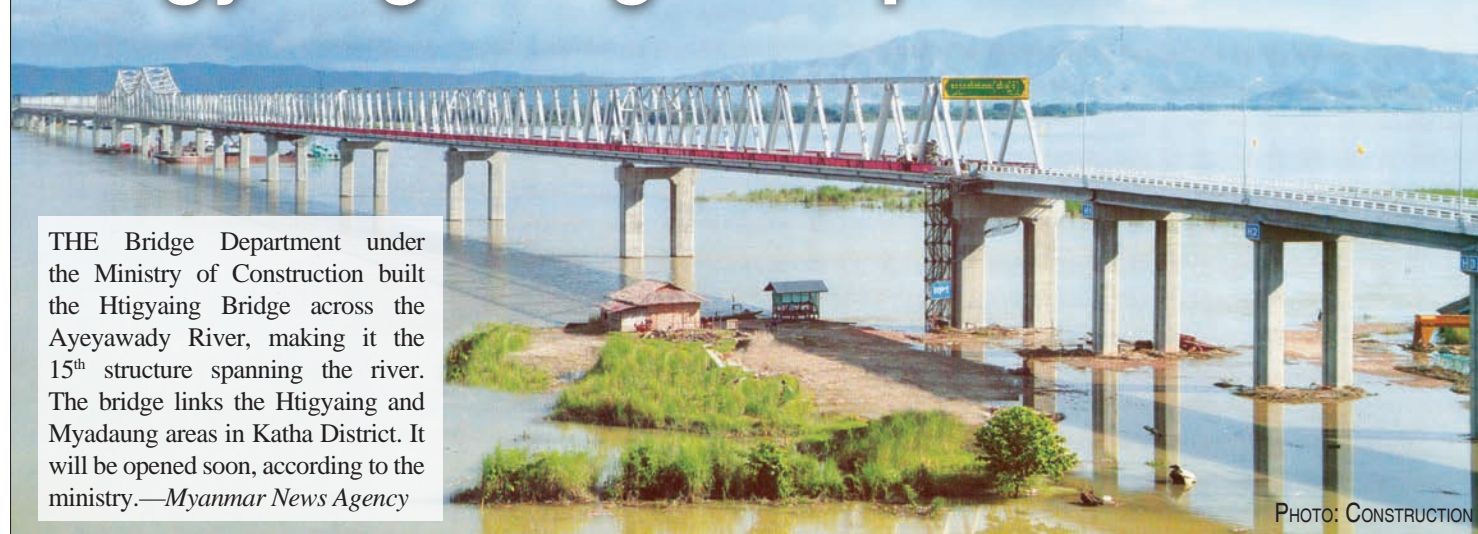
Daw Nan Leit, 74, and Ma Nan Khin, 12, are being treated for injuries at the local hospital. Brig-Gen Khin Maung Htwe of the Mongshu military base visited the victims and provided them with financial assistance and other gifts.

Authorities are still investigating the blast.—*Myawady*



Daw Nan Leit, 74, receives treatment for injuries at hospital. PHOTO: MYAWADY

Htigyaing bridge to open soon



THE Bridge Department under the Ministry of Construction built the Htigyaing Bridge across the Ayeyawady River, making it the 15th structure spanning the river. The bridge links the Htigyaing and Myadaung areas in Katha District. It will be opened soon, according to the ministry.—*Myanmar News Agency*

PHOTO: CONSTRUCTION

Correction

Please read "President of the Korea Statistical Promotion Institute" instead of "Korean Ambassador to Myanmar" in the third paragraph of second column on Page 3 of this daily issued on 21 October 2015. We regret the error.—*Editor*

Cambodia PM starts to 'like' Facebook as opponents woo voters online

PHNOM PENH — Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Sen is taking a belated leap into the digital age in a bid to court young, urban voters as he tries to fend off unprecedented competition from the opposition after three decades in power.

The former Khmer Rouge soldier has started to enthusiastically embrace Facebook for the first time, coming round to the platform after almost losing a 2013 election when the opposition won a surge of support online.

The self-styled "strongman" has until recently denied using Facebook, but when an account bearing his name received its millionth "like" last month, he finally admitted it was his, coinciding with the government's moves to ramp-up its cyber presence.

"He uses his own messages to reach out to people and to answer questions people want to ask him," said government spokesman Phay Siphon, when asked why Hun Sen started using Facebook.

Seventy percent of Cambodia's 15 million population are under 30 years of age, while

nine million of its citizens use the Internet.

Hun Sen's Facebook, which now has 1.2 million "likes", carries images and videos of new infrastructure and credits him with Cambodia's speedy economic development.

Some of the 63-year-old's most recent activities were sharing links to what he says are his favourite TV shows, "Cambodian Idol" and "The Voice" — local spin-offs of hit US talent contests.

In June, Sen's government held two mandatory classes for 400 heads of Phnom Penh schools, which included showing them how to get Facebook accounts and write supportive messages for the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP), according to people who attended the sessions.

Government spokesman Phay Siphon said the classes were part of a broader exercise to train civil servants across the country to use social media to improve lines of communication.

Lesson materials obtained by Reuters included instructions on accessing and linking to social media accounts and web-



A Facebook user looks at the page of Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Sen. PHOTO: REUTERS

sites of the CPP and its youth wing, while teachers were urged to try and defend the government from negative messages online.

"We must promote what's really happening, about what government has really done," said Huot Yary, head of the capital's education department, recalling instructions during the classes.

Political analysts say the CPP is trying to counter a swell of online criticism since the last election, when the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) carved off a chunk of CPP's house majority, winning 55 seats to CPP's 68, down from 90 before. Part of the opposition's gains were due to rapid online courting of young, urban Cambodians angered by issues like

forced evictions, low factory wages and state graft.

There are concerns, however, that the government's new social media focus is not just about using it, but controlling it. The creation of Internet laws and a cyber crime task force are being considered and some critics fear the real aim is to intimidate opponents and block-out dissent.

Independent political experts forecast the 2018 election to be the closest ever in Cambodia and say the CPP has realised the battleground will now be on social media.

"It is scrambling to enter the digital age and counter the active opposition presence online," said Sebastian Strangio, a journalist and author of the book, "Hun Sen's Cambodia".

Many in Cambodia's younger generation doubt though that the government's bulked up online presence will have much sway on their opinions. "There are all sides of information available now already, and youths know a lot - we have education," said 21-year-old university student Kim Hong. —Reuters

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Typhoon Koppu weakens rapidly after killing 58 in Philippines

CASIGURAN — A typhoon that dumped heavy rains on the northern Philippines, killing 58 people as it flattened houses and destroyed crops, was petering out on Wednesday, weather officials said.

Typhoon Koppu weakened from a tropical depression into a low pressure area, but authorities maintained a warning to ferries and fishermen on three northern islands not to go to sea.

Raging floodwaters and landslides triggered by the typhoon in the main Philippine island of Luzon caused most of the deaths, Romina Marasigan, a spokeswoman for the national disaster agency, told reporters.

More than 100,000 people are still in temporary shelters as Koppu destroyed more than 6.57 billion pesos (\$141.63 million) worth of crops, infrastructure and homes.

"We were terrified and prayed as we stayed under a table for hours after strong winds blew away the roof and walls of our house," said one survivor, Andres Subang, 72, wiping away tears as he told of how his family made it through the disaster.

"I have experienced countless typhoons in my lifetime, but this was the worst. It left nothing, we have no food and no more livelihood."

Farm officials said flooding

destroyed 5 percent of expected fourth-quarter production in rice-producing provinces.

The coast guard said seven people died when a boat sank in the central Philippines.

Authorities in the coastal town of Casiguran, where Koppu made landfall at the weekend as a category 4 typhoon, deployed heavy equipment to clear roads of uprooted trees, toppled

electric posts and debris. "When we went around the town, we saw the typhoon's destructive impact, there were so many houses destroyed," municipal official Nida Coralde told Reuters, adding that distribution of relief supplies had begun.

Strong winds reduced people's homes to matchwood, leaving them with nothing, said one survivor, as residents began

work to repair homes.

The typhoon grounded military planes and helicopters on Tuesday, forcing the government to send in food, water and other relief materials by road. Some areas were still flooded, without power and communication links.

The Philippines is hit by 20 typhoons every year, on average.—Reuters



Typhoon victims are transported on farm tractors and a truck along a flooded portion of a highway in Zaragoza, Nueva Ecija in northern Philippines, on 20 October 2015 after the province was hit by Typhoon Koppu. PHOTO: REUTERS

China's Xi turns to money and politics in Britain after a day of pomp

LONDON — Chinese President Xi Jinping will preside over the signing of a deal to build a nuclear power station in Britain on Wednesday as Prime Minister David Cameron seeks to clinch \$46 billion in contracts with the world's second-largest economy.

After a day of pomp on the first full day of Xi's state visit to Britain, the Chinese leader will turn from pageantry to politics and business at talks with Cameron in his Downing Street residence and a London business summit.

The jewel in the crown of the business summit is expected to be an announcement that state-owned utilities China's General Nuclear Corporation and National Nuclear Corporation will take a multi-billion pound minority stake in the Hinkley Point nuclear plant in Somerset owned by France's EDF.

"A growing China-UK relationship benefits both countries and the world as a whole," Xi told a state banquet at Buckingham Palace hosted by Queen Elizabeth on Tuesday night.

Cameron is pitching Britain as the pre-eminent Western gateway for investment from China, though the warmth of the reception for the Communist leader has raised some eyebrows with allies and drawn criticism that London is ignoring human rights.

Protests against Xi have been small so far, though activists have accused Cameron of seeking to court Chinese money by brushing

aside criticism of a crackdown in civil liberties since Xi came to power in 2012.

British officials and business leaders say the rise of China is impossible to ignore: China's economy is four times the size of Britain's.

"The Chinese economy has been one of the drivers of global growth, and I think that will continue," Cameron told China Central Television. "We encourage investment, and China is investing more in Britain now than other European countries."

China has feted Britain for a visionary choice to strengthen ties, though some British lawmakers have pressed Cameron to raise the issue of cheap Chinese steel imports after over 4,000 jobs were thrown into jeopardy at steel plants across Britain.

In an attempt to cash in on big-spending Chinese middle classes, Britain said it would introduce a cheaper two-year multiple-entry visa that will require fewer supporting documents.

In what is likely to be the biggest deal of Xi's visit, Chinese utilities will take a stake in a 16 billion pound EDF power station project in Somerset. The Chinese investment was agreed in principle in October 2013 but has taken until now to be finally agreed.

The deal brings Britain's first new nuclear plant since 1995 a step closer and is also a boost for EDF, which has been hit by billions of euros of cost overruns



Chinese President Xi Jinping with Queen Elizabeth at a state banquet at Buckingham Palace, London, during the first day of his state visit to Britain. PHOTO:REUTERS

and years of delays with two of its other European nuclear projects in Finland and France.

As part of the deal, EDF may agree to cede leadership on a subsequent new nuclear project at Bradwell, east of London, to the Chinese partners who want to bring their own nuclear reactor technology to Britain.

The prospect of China, which Western spymasters say sponsors hacking of global companies, helping to build a nuclear plant

in Britain and being involved in running others has stoked security concerns in Britain. Steve Hilton, a former policy adviser to David Cameron, told the BBC that Britain should impose sanctions on China for political oppression and cyber attacks instead of rolling out the red carpet.

"This is one of the worst national humiliations we've seen since we went cap in hand to the IMF in the 1970s," said Hilton, who left Downing Street in 2012,

referring to the 1976 crisis during which Britain was forced to ask for a loan from the International Monetary Fund.

"The truth is that China is a rogue state just as bad as Russia or Iran, and I just don't understand why we're sucking up to them rather than standing up to them as we should be."

China has strongly denied previous accusations of espionage, saying it is itself a victim of cyber attacks.—Reuters

Indonesia to cut number of Jakarta flights per hour over safety concerns

JAKARTA — Indonesia will cut the number of flights allowed per hour from Jakarta's main airport due to safety concerns, officials said on Wednesday, following a series of major crashes that have killed more than 300 in the last year.

Indonesian airports have struggled to cope with the huge expansion of air travel in Southeast Asia's largest economy, getting poor marks in a 2014 safety audit by the UN aviation agency due to

insufficient staffing.

To help ease the work load on air traffic controllers at Jakarta's Soekarno-Hatta International Airport, it will be limited to 62 take-offs and landings an hour, down from around 72 at peak hours currently, said Muzaffar Ismail, director for aircraft operations at the transportation ministry.

"With the high frequency of flights, there is a greater risk of collisions and accidents," Ismail said. The changes were not expected to

lead to a reduction in the number of take-offs and landings per day, as more flights would be scheduled for off-peak hours to meet the new capacity requirements. Haze from slash-and-burn forest fires was not mentioned as a safety concern. Experts questioned how reducing the number of flights would actually fix Indonesia's air safety problems. "If 72 flights an hour was not safe, then why did they approve it in the first place?" said Jakarta-based aviation consultant Gerry Soejat-

man. "It seems to be an overreaction. Instead of mitigating the risk, they seem to be avoiding the risk."

Indonesia has a poor aviation safety record, with four major crashes in less than a year.

In December, an AirAsia flight went down in the Java Sea, killing all 162 on board. More than 120 people died in June in the crash of a military transport plane, while all 54 on board a Trigana Air aircraft died in a crash in Papua in August.—Reuters

Three jailed as Thai police launch sweeping royal defamation probe

BANGKOK — A Thai military court jailed three people on Wednesday, including an aide to the crown prince, as part of a major probe into a group of people who allegedly falsely claimed links to the monarchy.

Thailand's lese-majeste laws are the world's harshest and make it a crime to defame, insult or threaten the royal family. Anyone convicted of insulting the royals faces up to 15 years in prison for each offence.

The investigation comes at a time when the government is cracking down on perceived royal defamation with prosecutions skyrocketing since a May 2014 coup.

It also comes at a time of

heightened anxiety over the health of 87-year-old King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who is convalescing at a Bangkok hospital after being treated by doctors for 'water on the brain', which has added to the political uncertainty shrouding Thailand since the coup.

"There were references to the high institution ... so we brought these three in order to jail them," Srivara Rangsiabrahamakul, assistant national police chief, told reporters.

"There might be others involved in this case and if there are we will proceed with a case against them."

The term "high institution" is often used by Thais to refer to the monarchy. A police document

seen by Reuters named a policeman and two civilians, including Suriyan Sujaritpalawong, an aide to Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn, as suspects. Suriyan pleaded guilty. The two others pleaded not guilty. Since taking power in 2014, the junta has vowed to aggressively pursue and prosecute violators of the law, including those who live abroad.

Military courts, which since the coup hear many lese-majeste cases, have handed down record-breaking sentences.

The probe follows a high-profile corruption investigation in late 2014 involving the police, military and several family members of Srirasmi Suwadee, the former wife of Vajiralongkorn.

Srirasmi, formerly known as Princess Srirasmi, relinquished her royal title at the height of that investigation. Critics say Wednesday's jailing was part of an unrelenting clampdown by the junta as it ramps up prosecutions under the royal defamation law.

"The junta and the army are on a warpath against critics of the monarchy," a senior Western diplomat based in Bangkok, who did not want to be named because of the sensitivity surrounding the matter, told Reuters.

"We see this in its arbitrary use of the law often to, one suspects, get rid of political enemies."

The case will be tried in a military court.—Reuters

Chinese consul shot and wounded in Philippine restaurant

MANILA — A Chinese woman shot and wounded China's consul general to the Philippine city of Cebu and killed two staff while they were eating in a restaurant on Wednesday, a police spokesman said.

Song Ronghua was rushed to a hospital for treatment, Chief Superintendent Prudencio Banas said, adding the woman was arrested.

"We're still trying to determine the motive for the shooting," Banas said, adding the victims and the attacker were dining at the time of the shooting.

"We have the suspect, a Chinese woman, but we would need translators to interview her on what really happened."

The foreign ministry and China's embassy in Manila declined to comment and were trying to gather more details about the incident.—Reuters

PICTURE OF THE DAY



An Indian policewoman bows her head during a ceremony to mark Police Commemoration Day in Zewan, on the outskirts of Srinagar, on 21 October 2015. Every year on 21 October, Police Commemoration Day is observed to remember and pay respects to police personnel across India who were killed in the past year while performing their duties. PHOTO: REUTERS

Top US general seeks momentum in Iraq, bucks 'stalemate' label

BAGHDAD — US Marine General Joseph Dunford, who took over this month as America's top military officer, pledged on Tuesday to seek new ways to build momentum in Iraq's battle against Islamic State and bucked descriptions of the conflict as a "stalemate."

Emerging from his first trip to Iraq as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Dunford said he was encouraged by the latest battlefield gains, including an advance to secure most of the strategic Baiji oil refinery.

After operational briefings from US commanders and talks with Iraqi leaders, Dunford also said Iraqi security forces had taken critical terrain around the city of Ramadi "and tightened the noose." The advances, he said, marked a sharp contrast with the picture in Iraq less than two months ago, when the last chairman, General Martin

Dempsey, described the state-of-play in Iraq as tactically stalemated.

"Maybe some people would have characterized it as a stalemate a while ago. I'm not willing to say that," Dunford told reporters after a full day of meetings, first in Iraq's Kurdistan region and then in Baghdad.

"We're going to look at a wide range of things that we can do to help the Iraqis generate momentum and reinforce the successes that they're starting to have." After a request from Iraq's Kurdistan region, Dunford said his team was working to speed supplies of ammunition for Kurdish peshmerga forces.

Dunford cited the possibility of boosting training to Iraq's elite counter-terrorism services, who US officials said led the advance in Baiji, with support of US-led air strikes.

He also noted the need for

new vehicles for them and equipment to counter Islamic State bombs. But he said some of the challenges in Iraq were structural. Iraq's security services are now divided, with different commanders speaking to the United States on behalf of Iraq's army, its Popular Mobilization Forces, its police and Kurdish peshmerga.

That, Dunford says, needs to change.

"If we had one person to talk to that could speak with authority about the campaign ... that's kind of what we need," he said. Dunford has a long history in Iraq. As the United States moved towards war with Iraq in 2003, Dunford — then a colonel — found himself commander of Regimental Combat Team 5, the unit that would lead the US invasion, seize the Rumaila oil fields and then head towards Baghdad.—Reuters

Mexico to use drones in new search for missing students

MEXICO CITY — Mexico's government will mount a new search in tandem with international experts for the remains of dozens of students training to be teachers who were abducted and apparently massacred a year ago, bowing to widespread domestic and international pressure.

The plan, which includes a new investigations team and the use of drones and satellite technology, could help President Enrique Pena Nieto restore public trust in his government's ability to act against corruption and a perceived culture of impunity.

Mexico government says

that 43 students were abducted by corrupt municipal police, and then handed over to be massacred by a local drug gang that believed the students had links to a rival outfit in the crime-racked, impoverished state of Guerrero.

Forensic experts have already identified the remains of one of the group from a bone fragment, and have identified a possible match for a second victim. But an international team of experts reviewing the case last month questioned the government account of how the gang members incinerated the students' remains, ground up the

charred bodies, and then dumped the ashes in a river, arguing its investigation was sloppy and full of holes. "There will be a new task force that will relaunch the investigation," Eber Betanzos, Mexico's deputy attorney general for human rights, said in Washington at a meeting of the experts looking into the case.

The government signed an agreement with the experts, from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, to use satellite technology and land and water drones to look for the students and any hidden graves.—Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

Large majority of CDU members happy with Merkel as leader

BERLIN — An overwhelming majority of conservative CDU members are happy with Angela Merkel as their party leader and want her to stand as chancellor again in the 2017 federal elections, a poll showed on Wednesday.

The Forsa poll of 1,012 CDU party members showed 82 percent were happy with Merkel's work, while 81 per-

cent wanted her to stay on as leader from 2017. Popular support for Merkel's conservatives has slipped in recent weeks over worries about an influx of refugees, while the chancellor has been criticised within her own party over how she has handled the crisis. The poll was conducted between 12 and 15 October for German magazine *Stern*.—Reuters

Drug ring member sentenced to 11 years in prison

BELGRADE — The Special Court in Belgrade Tuesday sentenced Mihajlo Djokovic (36) to 11 years in prison over charges that he participated in the smuggling of at least 1,825 tons of cocaine from Argentina to Western Europe in 2009 as a member of a crime ring controlled by drug lord Darko Saric.

Djokovic was tried separately from Saric's ring, who were delivered a first instance verdict last year, since he was

extradited to Serbia from Italy, where he had also been tried for smuggling cocaine, as late as May this year. The Special Court delivered a first instance verdict against Darko Saric on July 13, sentencing him to 20 years in prison for organizing the smuggling of 5.7 tons of cocaine from Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay to Western Europe, while members of his criminal ring were given sentences from 12 to 20 years in prison.—Tanjug

USAF base in UK says investigating reports jet has crashed in England

LONDON — A US Air Force base in eastern England said it was investigating reports on Wednesday that one of its F/A-18 fighter jets had crashed, with police saying an aircraft had come down in farmland.

"We are hearing reports and we are awaiting further information about it," said a

spokeswoman for RAF Lakenheath. Cambridgeshire police said emergency services had been called to a scene of a plane crash in Redmere near Ely.

"At this stage it is not known if there are any casualties," a police spokeswoman said.—Reuters

Iran top leader Khamenei approves nuclear deal: official website

ANKARA — Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei approved the nuclear deal between Tehran and world powers and ordered it to be implemented subject to certain conditions, his official website said on Wednesday.

In a letter to President

Hassan Rouhani published on the website, Iran's highest authority said the United States and European Union should clearly announce the elimination of sanctions against Iran, and warned that the deal had several structural weak points.—Reuters

Fake reporters punished for racketeering

BEIJING — Seven cases of fake reporters extorting money under the guise of exposing negative news were published by the National Office Against Pornographic and Illegal Publications as part of a nationwide campaign.

Around 73 such cases have been investigated nationwide, with eight very serious, the office said in a statement on Wednesday. Ma Shiping, the

subject of one of the cases, was sentenced to 5.5 years of imprisonment with a fine of 30,000 yuan (about 4,730 U.S. dollars) by a court in Jiangsu Province, east China, for blackmailing local government, state firms and individuals for more than 120,000 yuan. He acted as a journalist threatening to publish negative news about them in Shandong and Jiangsu provinces.—Xinhua

Iraq's ruling alliance, Shi'ite militias urge PM to request Russian strikes on Islamic State

BAGHDAD — Iraq's ruling alliance and powerful Shi'ite militias have urged Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi to request Russian air strikes on Islamic State militants, who control large parts of the country, members of the coalition and militias told *Reuters*.

Growing pressure on Abadi to seek Russian support puts him in the delicate position of trying to appease his ruling coalition, as well as militias seen as a bulwark against Islamic State, while keeping strategic ally Washington on his side.

America's top general, Joseph Dunford, said on a trip to Baghdad on Tuesday that the United States won assurances from Iraq that it would not seek such strikes.

Former Cold War foes the United States and Russia are carrying out rival campaigns of air strikes in neighbouring Syria and speculation has been growing this could spill over into Iraq, a major OPEC oil producer.

Abadi, his government and the Iranian-backed militias have all expressed frustration with the pace and depth of the US campaign against Islamic State and signaled their intention to lean on Moscow, to the consternation of Washington.

Two members of parliament said the prime minister was under "tremendous pressure" from the



Shi'ite fighters launch artillery toward Islamic State militants in al-Fatha, northeast of Baiji. PHOTO: REUTERS

ruling National Alliance to request Russian intervention.

Iraq received over \$20 billion in US military training since the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003 but its army virtually collapsed in the face of an Islamic State sweep through the north last year and made further gains in the west.

US-led air strikes have failed to turn the tide in the war against the ultra-hardline Sunni militants who have declared a caliphate

and want to redraw the map of the Middle East.

MPs and alliance members said an official request for Russian air strikes was relayed to Abadi in a meeting last week and that he has not officially responded.

"Abadi told the meeting parties that it wasn't the right time to include the Russians in the fight because that would only complicate the situation with the Americans and could have undesired

consequences even on long-term future relations with America," said a senior Shi'ite politician close to Abadi.

Russia, Iran, Syria and Iraq have formed a Baghdad-based intelligence cell in an attempt to boost efforts to counter the spread of Islamic State in the region. The cell has already shared intelligence for air strikes in Iraq and Syria.

Muen al-Kadhimi, a sen-

ior aide to the leader of the Badr Brigade militia, said Russia had proven more decisive in its air campaign in Syria than the Americans so it was only natural to seek Moscow's help in Iraq.

"I am positive that the government will respond to pressures, especially after the official mandate of the National Alliance for prime minister Abadi to request Russia's participation," he said.—*Reuters*

Syrian president thanks Putin for Russia's support: Kremlin

MOSCOW — Syrian President Bashar al-Assad thanked Russian President Vladimir Putin for his military support during a visit to Moscow, according to a transcript of their meeting published on the Kremlin website.

At the meeting, Putin said Russia was also ready to help with a political solution in Syria, and would work closely on that with other world powers who want a peaceful solution to Syria's prolonged conflict.

"I would like to express enormous gratitude to the whole leadership of the Russian Federation and to the Russian people for the help they are giving Syria," the transcript quoted Assad as saying.

"Thank you for standing up for the unity of Syria, and its inde-

pendence," he said. "Those political steps that have been taken by the Russian Federation since the start of the crisis have not allowed events in Syria to develop following a tragic scenario." Putin said that positive developments on the military front in Syria would provide a basis for a long-term political solution, involving all political forces, ethnic and religious groups.

"We are ready to make our contribution not only in the course of military actions in the fight against terrorism, but during the political process. This will, of course, be in close contact with other world powers and with countries of the region which are interested in a peaceful resolution of the conflict," Putin said, according to the transcript.—*Reuters*



Russian President Vladimir Putin shakes hands with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad during a meeting at the Kremlin. PHOTO: REUTERS

Migrants come ashore on British RAF base in Cyprus

NICOSIA — Four boatloads of migrants came ashore at a British military base on Cyprus on Wednesday, authorities said, the first time since the migrant crisis began that migrants have landed directly on what is considered British sovereign soil.

Vessels carrying the migrants were spotted in the early morning hours off RAF Akrotiri, a sprawling military facility on the southern coast of Cyprus used to bomb Islamic State targets in northern Iraq.

"We have not established where they are from yet," a spokesman for the bases said.

It was unclear exactly how many migrants there were. Two vessels initially arrived carrying about 140 people, and then another two boats arrived, authorities said.

Britain started using RAF Akrotiri to bomb Islamic State targets in northern Iraq in September 2014. The base is one of two sovereign territories retained by Britain on Cyprus, a colony until 1960.—*Reuters*

Slovenia gives army more power amid migrant crisis

LJUBLJANA — The Slovenian parliament passed legislation early on Wednesday that will give the army more power to help police guarding the state border as thousands of migrants flood into the country from Croatia after Hungary sealed off its border.

The new legislation will enable the soldiers to control the border when there are no police pres-

ent. The army began helping guard the border on Monday, but so far only when police were present.

More than 20,000 migrants have arrived in Slovenia since Saturday morning in order to pass through to Austria. At least 6,000 spent the last night in Slovenia which provided them with shelter in refugee centres.

"(On Wednesday) we will

officially ask the EU ... for police back-up and for financial help," Prime Minister Miro Cerar told reporters before the vote in parliament.

Opposition parties said the government should follow Hungary and put up a fence on Slovenia's border with Croatia to prevent migrants entering the country.

An official from the interior

ministry said the possibility "of safeguarding border crossings with physical obstacles" cannot be excluded if the flow of migrants escalates. Attempts by Slovenia to stem the flow of migrants since Hungary sealed its border with Croatia on Friday have triggered a knock-on effect through the Balkans, with thousands held up at border crossings.—*Reuters*

OPINION

Objective history textbooks are essential

Myint Win Thein

Objectiveness is essential in children's history textbooks because a history textbook that is not objective is similar to a lie and can be very dangerous for society. Mistaking a lie for true history will mislead students to commit make wrong decisions in the future.

Children are often not equipped to read widely and to fully understand the world around them. They cannot distinguish right from wrong without some help from adults. Without help, they will make bad decisions until they get into trouble. History textbooks that are not objective are not helpful to them.

Concepts acquired in childhood have an enormous influence on children and shape their future lives. Inaccurate telling of history will mislead them. They cannot think objectively and may even happily commit crimes against humanity through such misinformation.

Children who believe in inaccurate versions of history never progress to their full potential. They cannot judge things around them properly and

cannot make wise decisions in their lives. People who make wrong decisions never succeed in life. Instead, they develop antisocial tendencies and are at risk to become criminals.

Criminals pose a threat to peace and stability of any society. Therefore, it is important that history textbooks for children are objective.

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Cornucopia versus Dearth

Tommy Pauk

Humans have been dreaming of cornucopia for a long time. There must be something difference between the dream and reality. Dream itself is not a practice, but it is merely a desire indeed. Even if there is much extremely abundant property available in life or in a society, human beings never satisfy with it. Cravings of human beings for temporal comforts, pleasure and abundance of property are infinite. Cornucopia not only exists in the myth, but also exists in secular world or temporal world. The worldly creature comforts and property are endless cravings of humans indeed. Cornucopia of food or property does not come into existence automatically or miraculously. Man has to make relentless efforts to create cornucopia on earth. Man is born to struggle for survival and Mother Nature provides sustenance for man on the planet. The superiority of human brain can create basic needs of shelter and clothing. Apart from consuming edible food such as fruits, plants, tubers, bulbs, leaves, meat and fish in natural environment, man has to grow some cereals crops, rice and corn for food as well. The fresh farm produce become the item of commodities for humans in modern age. After learning how to use fire properly, man obtained the knowledge and invented the methods of cooking. According to social status, people enjoy the different kinds of food in daily life. The rich can afford to store abundant basic commodities, but the poor have to struggle for getting access to daily food. In case of food shortage, the rich do not need to worry about it and they can escape from hunger. The less fortunate are hopeless to get food and they will encounter hunger in the same society. The rich hardly ever consider the plight of the less fortunate. Very few rich people share or donate something useful

to the needy. The governments concerned must learn the effects from cornucopia versus dearth occurring in their society, and they must be able to make the basic agricultural commodities available at reasonable prices for the middle class and the grassroots in their society.

The evolution of human standard and the creation of civilization make man greedier to attain much more basic necessities in life than before. The more humans attain creature comforts or luxuries, the more good things they want in temporal world. According to mythical or legendary world, the cornucopian atmosphere is a great delight for humans because they can get whatever they want and need easily and bountifully. Also everything is available for human life at all time. It seems like a temporal paradise. Availability of the abundance of creature comforts does not last long due to uncontrollable greed and desire of humans. Eventually, it vanishes and humans have to create cornucopia by themselves.

Human's excessive greed and unlimited temptation jeopardize and disrupt the stable atmosphere of human life. In reality, humans have to work hard to gain abundant food, shelter, clothing and great wealth. A person's zeal, perseverance, ability and luck support his or her efforts in finding abundant property and wealth in life. It is not an easy task for him or her to attain this social class in deed. The honest way of earning wealth encounters many difficulties and obstacles. As man is obsessed with creature comforts, worldly pleasure and abundant wealth, he has to maintain his position and to explore more and more property. The worldly pleasure and comforts motivate man to expand his empire of cornucopia constantly.

Two kinds of humans are generally classified in temporal world — the rich and the poor. The rich possess abundant material wealth and the poor possess very little material. The rich have

comfortable and easier life than the poor. Normally, poverty is caused by man-made disasters in some society or some region on this planet. Man-made disasters connote injustice, inequality, handling of inefficient government and poor leadership. Due to man-made disasters, dearth takes place in that particular community. As a result, the community suffers the abject poverty. When dearth prevails, hunger knocks out the community concerned. The community is critically lacking in basic human needs of food, shelter and clothing. The petty property cannot make the community comfortable. The life of this community is hard and difficult. In some developed and developing countries, the people in power and cronies are getting richer and richer as the grassroots get poorer and poorer. Under such circumstances, the impoverished grassroots cannot improve their position in their society. The luxuries are out of their reach. They live in the areas of acute social and economic deprivation badly. The dearth of food, clean water, standard housing and social security are their daily problems. They want and need job opportunities, better housing, vocational education and the guarantee for social security. They want no deprivation. Desperately, they are yearning for a better life. They wish they had good and smart leadership in their society.

Apparently, dearth is caused by inhumane act which does not fairly share the equal chances to all mankind. When some people who are in power neglect basic human rights, hunger and poverty prevails among the people in that society indeed. Actually, the people in power are responsible for looking after the impoverished people in their society. Alleviation of poverty is their concern. The rulers have to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor in their society so that the dearth of human needs can be lessened to some degree. On this planet Earth, almost 800 million people are starving and more than

900 million people are in extreme poverty. The vulnerable people should be provided with social protection and food aid by UN agencies and world communities. The volume of dearth is greater than the volume of cornucopia. This is a global issue and the world leaders and the United Nations are trying to resolve the issue effectively. On World Food Day 2015, the UN said that nearly a third of all world food produced is lost or wasted. Therefore, there is not much sustenance in the world for humans. We all are responsible for observing the main cause of loss and wastage of world food. Solving the dearth of food and drink problem is everyone's responsibility. The climate change or extreme weather conditions hit some regions and majority of people there encounter famine and drought.

Three types of people across the world are precisely categorized as follows;_

The affluent people or those who are in possession of abundant wealth, the people in middle class who are educated and work in professional jobs, and those who are vulnerable people encounter a dearth of basic necessities and live in rural areas or in slum districts.

Nonetheless, all human beings use to settle down in places which

are in habitable and available of abundant sustenance. Nowadays, an abundance of food availability is the most essential for humans regardless of social classes and modern technology must be applied for agriculture, animal husbandry and fishery. The people those who have a cornucopia of wealth should sympathize and help the vulnerable people who have dearth of food and property. Similarly, the rich countries are urged to contribute or aid to the poor countries with finance and food on humanitarian ground. Cornucopia creates happiness, pleasantness and hope but dearth leaves misery, despair and vulnerability. In our global village, we, humans must help and care each other sincerely and kindly!!!

About the author

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.

I think we ought to go back to barter trade. You wouldn't want It's a terrific system. No currency transaction: I make coffins! no inflation.



TIN AUNG

How Should the Ability of an Individual Gauged?

**Khin Maung Myint
(MPT Retired)**

Ability and University Degree

With which yardstick is the ability of a person measured? If somebody says it is measured with the university degree that he or she had acquired, I will have to argue that. Most of the university degrees are not applicable in the practical fields, except for some few professional degrees such as those in medicine, engineering, geology, mining, forestry, agriculture, computer science, economy, commerce and maritime etc. Even if they could be put to real practice, they are not the indicators of the ability of a person. There are many incompetent graduates in every field.

So, how is the ability of a person gauged? In my opinion, the intelligence quotient (IQ), skill, competency, talent, aptitude, proficiency, efficiency, perseverance, logical thinking, knowledge of the work, initiative, decisiveness, dedication, mind set and integrity contribute to a person's ability. Hence, they are good indicators of the ability of an individual. A person do not need to possess all the foresaid attributes, but if one has a few of them it would be enough. My opinion is, an individual should be assessed on the merits of one's skill, competency, efficiency, perseverance, integrity and achievements.

An ordinary degree is just a passport to employment and getting seniority or rank. If the subject combinations are not relevant to the type or nature of the work, what use is that degree? For instance, a degree holder, with a *Pali* and *Bunnese literature* combination, once joined a certain service and was given seniority, but he was not as efficient as most undergrads. Most subjects taught were related to mathematics, physics and in part to chemistry, so what use are the

subjects other than these, that a person had studied to obtain his degree, in pursuing that career.

From my experience, some graduates did not outdo or outshine the undergrads, whether it be in the academics or in the practical fields. In writing articles, I had tried to avoid self-aggrandizing myself, but I would like to request to allow me to do that for once, so that I can make my point. I excelled myself during the departmental training courses and also in the practical fields, while in the service, I outshone the graduates in my class. At the start of an advanced training course, one instructor asked the graduates among the students to put up their hands. Of the seven of us, six put up their hands except me. On seeing that, the instructor said I must try very hard to keep up with the others, so as not to hinder the progress of the course. All the subjects were taught in English and that was to my advantage. I stood first in that course.

In the practical field, I had been assigned various difficult tasks and I managed to execute them to the approval of my senior officers. One senior officer once remarked that after assigning me any task he did not have to worry or look back, as he was sure I would get it done and there would be no problem. I had never heard that said of others, my contemporaries or seniors. There were other remarks of appreciations for my ability but I would not burden the readers with the details. Such recognitions were very rewarding indeed. I really do not want to speak about my achievements, but I am doing it to validate my opinions herein.

Furthermore, I would like to ask, which university taught leadership or the art of administration at the undergraduate level. These are the two most important attributes an officer must possess. Though I believe that leaders are born, not made, I do not reject

the usefulness of the learnings and the credentials that accompanied them. However, throughout my career, I had encountered some officers, who had attended post-graduate courses in management and administration, failed to become good leaders or administrators. Hence, I want to emphasize that leadership or the art of administration do not depend solely on a university degree or a diploma, but a gift and in part acquired through studying the great leaders closely, and embrace their good qualities.

Here, I would like to mention what one ASEAN country leader said. He suggested that the ability of the individuals, instead of the degree certificates they had received, should be given priority. He went on to say that a degree is just a piece of paper, on which the certificate is printed. Only the ability of the individuals, irrespective of the level of the degree, is more important, because only the able persons could bring about the required results. The wordings may not be exactly the same as what he had said, but I can assure that it is the essence of his speech.

Ability and Examination Results

In my humble opinion, I do not personally believe that examination results are absolute indicators of an individual's ability. If a person prepared hard for the exam, he is bound to get high marks. On one occasion when we were compelled to sit for qualifying examination for promotion to a higher rank. I declined to sit for it, because those who joined the service later were exempted from it. They were deemed as qualified, citing that the departmental initiation courses they had attended were more advanced than ours. However, the irony was, I was one of the instructors for those courses. I raised that injustice to my boss and told him I would not sit for the exam. I presumed he put up

that issue during a meeting to those higher up. One day, after that meeting he told me I should sit for the examination. He explained that if I did not appear for the examination I would be considered as failed and that would deprive me of my promotion forever. However, he told me that the authorities were considering awarding one month's seniority for every subject if a candidate get a grade "A", which meant at least eighty out of the given one hundred marks. There were five subjects, so if they really meant it, there were five months' seniority for grabs, which I believed I could easily clinch. Though in my opinion, giving seniority for the high marks obtained in the exams is not right, I intend to get it if I must unavoidably sit for it.

Anyway, no circular in connection with that matter came out and the first of the three examinations scheduled was convened. I did not sit for that exam or the second one, as I was not convinced with the idea of those absurd exams. When the third and last exam was announced, I did not submit an application. However, my boss urged me not to defy the authorities. Here, I had to consider what would be the outcome of my stubbornness, born out of my principles, as I am a person who stood by my principles and not for my survival. I did not mind losing the opportunity of getting promoted, but as I did not want to disobey my boss who was very good to me, I sat for it and obtained five grade "As". The promise of seniority never materialized, so I was back at square one, still trailing behind my ex-pupils, who got graduate seniorities and superseded me. Four years after that system of granting seniority was introduced, it was abolished. By then the authorities must have realized their mistakes. I do not bear any animosity, whatsoever, against anyone.

Conclusion

I partly agree with the above

ASEAN leader's opinion concerning the ability and a University degree, but I am of the opinion that the degrees should not be totally ignored. During my long career that spanned across three different services, I had witnessed that some undergraduates and diploma certificate holders were more proficient and competent than some degree holders in the practical fields. By thus saying, I do not meant all the degree holders but some. My intention is to point out, it would be more correct to assess the ability of an individual based on the skill, competency, efficiency, perseverance, integrity and achievements and not solely on the degree certificate. Thus, in considering for an appointment or promotion, the degree certificate alone should not be a prerequisite, but the ability should also be a major deciding factor.

Furthermore, I would like to take the liberty to voice my opinion concerning the breeding of the intellectuals and technicians, at different levels. The education system is a mechanism to produce them, who form the bulwark of the workforce in the building of a nation. In building any structure, it is most important that it has a firm base. If it is top heavy it would topple. Likewise, the workforce, which build a nation should have a firm base. By that I meant, the ratio of the different levels of intellectuals and technicians bred should be a pyramid shape and not to be an inverted triangle. In other words, the number of doctorates should be at the top of the pyramid and should slope down gradually in the descending order of the level of degrees and diplomas or other proficiency certificates increasing in numbers as the tiers get lower. Near the base should be the real work horses, who are trained in the vocational training institutions. A larger and stronger base provides more stability and efficiency.

Tourism swells in Mandalay

AS THE weather grows milder, Myanmar is receiving increasing numbers of foreign tourists. Mandalay City, the pre-colonial royal capital, is receiving a significant portion of these tourists, many of whom use the city as a starting point for journeys around northern Myanmar.

Last year 200,000 tourists visited Mandalay, and 300,000 are expected this year. Mandalay is home to a high concentration of culturally significant sites.

Tourists come to Myanmar through tour companies or individually and are able to travel by car

or motorbike around the country. Following an agreement between Myanmar and Thailand to develop tourism between the two countries, Myanmar's Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and Thai travel companies have arranged a three-day visit for 180 Thai tourists from 15 to 18 October. The groups entered Myanmar via the Tachilek border gate in Shan State and traveled along the Tachleik-Kengtung-Mongla route. They participated in local cultural celebrations.

Myanmar expects over 4.5 million of tourists during the 2015-2016 tourist season. —*MoHT*



Tourists observe Myanmar's tradition in Mandalay. PHOTO: MINISTRY OF HOTELS AND TOURISM

Yahoo signs ad pact with Google; earnings and revenue miss

NEW YORK — Yahoo Inc said on Tuesday it had signed a search advertising deal with Google Inc, providing a potential boost to Marissa Mayer's efforts to turn around the company, which also reported revenue and profit that fell short of market estimates.

The deal with Google, a unit of Alphabet Inc, builds on an existing search partnership Microsoft Corp under which Yahoo gets a percentage of revenue from ads displayed on its sites.

Yahoo, whose shares were down 1.6 percent in after-hours trading, said the companies have agreed to delay implementation of the deal in the United States to allow the antitrust division of the Department of Justice to review it.

Yahoo has been struggling to boost revenue from ad sales in the face of stiff competition from Google and Facebook.

The Google deal was one of the few bright spots included in the company's third-quarter results statement.

Yahoo said it expected fourth-quarter revenue of \$1.16 billion-\$1.20 billion, well below the average analyst estimate of

\$1.33 billion, according to Thomson Reuters I/B/E/S.

Mayer, in her fourth year as chief executive, said the forecast was "not indicative of the performance we want."

"We are also experiencing continued revenue headwinds in our core (advertising) business, especially in the legacy portions," Mayer said on a call with analysts.

Yahoo said the proposed spinoff of its 15 percent stake in Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba Group Holding Ltd — a key issue for shareholders — may now close in January.

Yahoo earlier this year sought a private letter ruling from the Internal Revenue Service to confirm whether the transaction, worth about \$27 billion currently, would result in a tax obligation.

The tax agency denied the request, but Yahoo said it would go ahead with the spinoff by year-end anyway.

Many analysts attribute little value to Yahoo's core business without its Asian assets, which also include a 35 percent stake in Yahoo Japan Corp. Apart from

the Google deal, the only other good news came results came from Yahoo's emerging businesses, which Mayer calls Mavens — mobile, video, native and social advertising. Revenue in that area rose 43 percent to \$422 million in the quarter. Native advertising refers to ads that blend into the type and style of the content being viewed.

Excluding items, the company earned 15 cents per share, missing the average analyst estimate of 17 cents.

Revenue after deducting fees paid to partner websites fell to \$1.0 billion from \$1.09 billion, and the company forecast a drop to \$920 million-\$960 million in the current quarter.

Traffic acquisition costs, the amount Yahoo spends to attract users to its websites, jumped to \$223 million in the quarter from \$54 million a year earlier.

GAAP revenue rose 6.8 percent to \$1.23 billion, falling short of the average analyst estimate of \$1.26 billion, according to Thomson Reuters I/B/E/S.

Through Tuesday's close of \$32.83, Yahoo's shares had lost 35 percent this year.—Reuters

Apple tells US judge 'impossible' to unlock new iPhones

NEW YORK — Apple Inc (AAPL.O) told a US judge that accessing data stored on a locked iPhone would be "impossible" with devices using its latest operating system, but the company has the "technical ability" to help law enforcement unlock older phones.

Apple's position was laid out in a brief filed late Monday, after a federal magistrate judge in Brooklyn, New York, sought its input as he weighed a US Justice Department request to force the company to help authorities access a seized iPhone during an investigation.

In court papers, Apple said that for the 90 percent of its devices running iOS 8 or higher, granting the Justice Department's request "would be impossible to perform" after it strengthened encryption methods. Those devices include a feature that prevents anyone without the device's passcode from accessing its data, including Apple itself.

The feature was adopted in 2014 amid heightened privacy concerns following leaks by former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden about NSA surveillance programmes.

Apple told US Magistrate Judge James Orenstein it could access the 10 percent of its devices that continue to use older systems, including the one at is-



Customers hold the iPhone 6s during the official launch at the Apple store in central Sydney, Australia. PHOTO: REUTERS

sue in the case. But it urged the judge to not require it to comply with the Justice Department's request.

"Forcing Apple to extract data in this case, absent clear legal authority to do so, could threaten the trust between Apple and its customers and substantially tarnish the Apple brand," Apple's lawyers wrote.

A spokeswoman for Brooklyn US Attorney Robert Capers, whose office is handling the case, declined comment.

Earlier this month, Orenstein expressed skepticism about whether he could require Apple to disable security on the iPhone, citing Congress' failure to act on the issue of encryption despite the urging of the Justice Depart-

ment and Federal Bureau of Investigation. Orenstein deferred ruling until Apple had a chance to say if it was "technically feasible and, if so, whether compliance with the proposed order would be unduly burdensome."

Apple in its brief said it limited its views to those questions rather than the broader legal issue at hand, which it called "important." In an order Tuesday, Orenstein invited Apple to address that issue. A hearing is scheduled for Thursday.

The case is In re Order requiring Apple, Inc to assist in the execution of a search warrant issued by the court, US District Court, Eastern District of New York, No. 15-mc-01902.—Reuters

Asia shares lag behind Nikkei, euro firm for ECB



Investors speak in front of an electronic board showing stock information at a brokerage house in Beijing, China. PHOTO: REUTERS

SYDNEY — Asian shares turned mixed on Wednesday as soft export data kept investors cautious ahead of the European Central Bank's policy meeting later in the week, though Japan's market was having a go at setting a new peak for the month.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan dithered either side of flat with no clear trend evident across the region.

There was more evidence of the problems plaguing Asian trade flows with Japanese exports growing at the slowest pace since mid-2014, mainly due to weakness in China.

That gap in demand was one reason copper prices slipped to two-week lows and the commodity-heavy Australian share index lost 0.6 percent.

Yet the Nikkei still managed to climb 1.2 percent and probe the October high around 14,438, in part on lingering speculation of more quantitative easing by the Bank of Japan.

"Japan's market is so liquid and has been so well conditioned to handle bad news since QQE first began that, in a way, bad news is good news sometimes," said Gavin Parry, managing director at Parry International Trading.

Early signs were that shares in the UK, Germany and France would start with small gains, while the S&P 500 EMINI contract was up 0.2 per cent.

Wall Street had offered little lead with the Dow ending Tuesday 0.1 percent lower, while the S&P 500 eased 0.14 percent and the Nasdaq 0.5 percent.

Earnings for S&P 500 companies are expected to have fallen about 4 percent in the third quarter, while revenue is ex-

pected to have declined 3.8 percent, according to Thomson Reuters data.

Economic news from the United States was moderately upbeat as housing starts increased 6.5 percent in September to an annual pace of 1.21 million units, beating expectations for 1.15 million units.

There was also better news on bank lending in the euro zone as data from the ECB showed a further easing in credit conditions and improving demand for loans.

That might lessen the need for the ECB to immediately ramp up its 1 trillion euro asset purchase programme. The ECB's governing council meets on Thursday and markets expect it to highlight a willingness to act to boost inflation, but not just yet.

"The general consensus is that the ECB has been trying to moderate expectations this week, suggesting it's too early for discussion around extending the current QE programme," said analysts at Citi. The euro was a whisker higher at \$1.1359, but still hemmed in by support at \$1.3300 and resistance around \$1.1386.

The dollar index was last down 0.1 percent at 94.792.

The New Zealand dollar hit a one-week low of \$0.6737 after a disappointing global dairy auction saw prices for the country's single largest export fall 3.1 percent.

Oil prices softened on speculation US inventory data would only underline the extent of oversupply in the world.

The US Energy Information Administration (EIA) will report official inventory data on Wednesday. US crude slipped 30 cents to \$45.99 per barrel, while Brent lost 13 cents to \$48.58.—Reuters

One tough bird: vulture's genes help it thrive on rotting flesh

WASHINGTON — A diet of putrid rotting flesh may not be your cup of tea, but to the cinereous vulture, found across southern Europe and Asia, it is positively delightful. This tough bird, it turns out, is genetically wired to thrive on the stuff.

Researchers on Tuesday said they have sequenced the genome of this big scavenger, also called the Eurasian black vulture, identifying genetic traits that account for a stalwart stomach and powerful immune system that let it carry on eating carrion. They pinpointed genetic features related to gastric acid secretion that help explain this vulture's ability to digest carcasses and other features linked to its immune system defence against microbial and viral infections from decomposing flesh.

"It is known that they are all but immune to botulism and that they can happily eat the flesh of an animal coated in *Bacillus anthracis* that causes anthrax," said geneticist Jong Bhak of South Korea's Ulsan National Institute of Science and Technology.

"They also are known to take infected food with rabies, hog cholera and numerous other diseases that would be lethal to most other scavengers."

This vulture may have the strongest stomach in the world, Bhak said. "They have an extremely acidic stomach, enough to melt



Biologists cover the eyes of a young Black vulture (*Aegypius monachus*) before weighing it as part of a routine health check-up at a center run by the Black Vulture Conservation Foundation (BVCF) near Campanet, on the Spanish balearic island of Mallorca. PHOTO: REUTERS

bones and perhaps metals," Bhak added. The cinereous vulture, whose scientific name is *Aegypius monachus*, can be found in plains, grasslands and mountainous regions from Spain to South Korea, although its numbers are dangerously low in parts of its fragmented range. It is one of the world's largest birds of prey, with a wingspan up to 10 feet (3 metres). It is clad in dark brown feathers with a pale head and bluish beak. Its diet consists mostly of the carcasses of medium and large mammals.

The researchers compared its genome to that of the American bald eagle, and learned that the

two are more closely related than previously suspected. Bhak said they share a common ancestor that lived about 18 million years ago.

The cinereous vulture is a member of a group called Old World vultures found in Europe, Asia and Africa. These birds are distinct from the New World vultures like the turkey vulture found in the Americas that live similar lifestyles but are only distantly related. Bhak said the most recent common ancestor of Old World and New World vultures lived about 60 million years ago. The research was published in the journal *Genome Biology*.—Reuters

Sunscreen ingredient toxic to coral, killing off reefs: research

ORLANDO — A common ingredient found in sunscreen is toxic to coral and contributing to the decline of reefs around the world, according to new research published on Tuesday.

Oxybenzone, a UV-filtering chemical compound found in 3,500 brands of sunscreen worldwide, can be fatal to baby coral and damaging to adults in high concentrations, according to the study published in the Archives of Environmental Contamination and Toxicology.

The international research team that conducted the study, led by Craig Downs, found the highest concentrations of oxybenzone around coral reefs popular with tourists, particularly those in Hawaii and the Caribbean.

Downs, of the non-profit scientific organisation Haeretic Environmental Laboratory in Virginia, said the study helped explain why scientists aren't seeing baby corals in many established reefs in resort areas.

Oxybenzone alters coral DNA, makes coral more susceptible to potentially fatal bleaching and acts as an endo-

crine disruptor, causing baby coral to encase itself in its own skeleton and die, according to the findings.

Between 6,000 and 14,000 tons of sunscreen lotion winds up in coral reef areas each year, much of which containing oxybenzone.

The damaging effects were seen in coral in concentrations of oxybenzone as low as 62 parts per trillion, which is equivalent to a drop of water in six and a half Olympic-sized swimming pools, according to the researchers.

In Hawaii and the Caribbean, concentrations were 12 times higher, according to the sea water testing.

Outside of coral toxins, the Environmental Working Group had previously raised concerns about the chemical, saying that it may penetrate the skin and cause hormonal and cellular changes.

The American Academy of Dermatology, says there is no data showing oxybenzone is a health hazard and notes that it is one of the few ingredients in sunscreen that effectively protects skin from harmful UVA and UVB rays. —Reuters

Almost half of elderly patients miscalculate life expectancy

NEW YORK — Almost half of elderly people don't have an accurate sense of how much longer they're likely to live, a problem that may lead some of them to make poorly informed medical decisions, a US study suggests.

Doctors and patients often consider life expectancy when deciding which preventive measures or treatments will do the most good.

This projection might, for example, lead a cancer patient to skip toxic chemotherapy if they're not likely to live long enough to benefit from it, or it might encourage someone with diabetes to make lifestyle changes that might improve the last few decades of life.

"Whether they are aware of it or not, patients have a sense of how long they have to live and (they) bring this sense of prognosis to their healthcare decisions," lead study author Rafael Romo of the University of California, San Francisco, said by email.

Romo and colleagues asked more than 2,000 adults age 64 and older to predict their odds of living at least another 10 years and compared their responses to objective calculations doctors might use as the basis for clinical recommendations. Overall, about 55 percent of

participants had estimates similar to the objective calculations, the researchers report in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

But 33 percent of them underestimated how long they might live and 12 percent overestimated their probable longevity.

Unrealistic expectations may make patients less likely to follow recommended treatments or change long-standing regimens,

the authors argue.

"The logic goes that if patients underestimate their survival they may not think it is worthwhile to stop smoking, or eat healthy meals or stay active or undergo cancer screening tests or other preventive care," Dr. Victor Montori, an expert in shared decision making at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, said by email.

"Conversely, if patients over-

estimate their survival, they may demand healthcare from which they cannot derive benefit as they will run out of time," added Montori, who wasn't involved in the study.

Some patients might choose a palliative rather than a curative approach to end-of-life care, if they realized that whatever time they had left would be spent enduring the side effects of treatments they

won't live long enough to benefit from, noted Dr. Rosanne Leipzig, a geriatrics specialist at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York.

Others with decades to live might refuse medications to control their blood pressure or manage diabetes because they didn't expect to live very long and wanted to avoid a daily drug regimen that will benefit them years down the line, Leipzig, who wasn't involved in the study, said by email.

When doctors and patients don't discuss life expectancy, physicians are likely to err on the side of offering more treatment rather than less, said Dr. Elizabeth Eckstrom, a geriatrics researcher at Oregon Health and Sciences University in Portland who wasn't involved in the study.

The study findings suggest that patients may often be surprised to learn they have longer to live than they anticipated, Eckstrom added by email.

"Patients want to know prognosis to prepare logistically and financially, to prepare psychologically or spiritually, to prepare friends and family, to make the most of the time they have left, and to make health-related decisions," Eckstrom said.—Reuters



A pair of elderly couples view the ocean and waves along the beach in La Jolla, California. PHOTO: REUTERS

Non, merci! Why refugees avoid France

PARIS — While Germany expects to receive up to one million asylum seekers by the end of 2015, France is preparing for only 65,000, the same number it received last year.

Just a few years ago, France had among the highest number of claims in Europe, but its lack of accommodation and support for asylum seekers as well as long wait times for applications to be processed have made it a less attractive option for many refugees.

Mohammad Salah, a 28-year-old from Sudan, arrived in France a year and a half ago.

“I dropped off my request for asylum 13 months ago, and I’m still waiting for the answer,” he told IRIN. “First I stayed in a hotel, but after four months I ran out of money, I started to sleep in the street and joined other migrants in camps.”

While the UK media fixates on the sprawling camps on the outskirts of Calais filled with migrants hoping to cross the Channel, the French capital is dealing with a lesser-known crisis of homeless asylum seekers.

Over the summer in Paris, migrants were evicted from three informal camps, including the one Salah was living in. Municipal authorities cited health concerns and said they were trying to find longer-term solutions, both for asylum seekers and economic migrants.

Along with the others, Salah was offered hostel accommodation for a month. “The hostel was very far away from downtown Paris, and there we didn’t have any food donations,” he said. “So I went

back to Paris and one day I heard about this high school.”

Salah is now among about 700 migrants squatting in the abandoned Lycee Jean Quarre, a former hotel school in the 19th arrondissement. It is one of the few remaining places in Paris where homeless asylum seekers can stay. But within the next couple of weeks, by the end of October, many will have to leave.

“It has been planned for a long time that this building will be turned into a library,” explained Séverine Guy from the local municipality. “Construction work will start as planned, but until the library is opened, we’re thinking of opening 80 to 100 beds to host refugees.”

Municipal authorities opened eight new shelters over the summer and have committed to opening more in the next year, but Antoine Decourcelle of the French NGO Cimade said even the 10,000 places in new shelters the French government has promised nationwide by the end of 2016 won’t be enough.

“Many of the places where refugees are sent are overcrowded or under strict control,” he told IRIN. “For instance, in the east of Paris there is an emergency shelter for asylum seekers which is located inside a detention centre. They’re allowed to come and go as they want, but still they live behind fences.”

Salah, the Sudanese asylum seeker, said he could have handled having to sleep on the streets if it had been only for a few months, “but it’s too long now.”

His prolonged limbo is not unusual. It is typical of a French system plagued by bureaucracy.

Before asylum seekers can even make a claim, they have to register a fixed address with local authorities and then wait three weeks for them to send an asylum application document. Asylum seekers with no address often have to pay for one.

Once they manage to apply for asylum, the current average wait for applications to be processed is between 16 and 19 months. During that time, asylum seekers cannot work or access social welfare services such as income support and government housing. And after this interminable delay, the majority of asylum applications are rejected. In 2014, France only approved 22 percent of asylum claims (the EU’s average approval rate was 45 percent).

For all these reasons, most refugees avoid France, especially Syrians who can be fairly sure of getting refugee status in Germany or Sweden much more quickly. Recently, about 60 Syrian families were camping near the Paris ring road, the Périphérique. “Most of these refugees were going to Belgium or Sweden; some of them were left in France by their smuggler,” said Michel Roziere, who works with the NGO, Revivre.

“They are not keen on coming here,” he said. “During the two years that the asylum request takes [to process], asylum seekers don’t have access to anything: no French classes, no financial help, and no right to work. Until they get



Two ground floor offices have been turned into storerooms. Every day, local residents bring food, clothes and other essential items. PHOTO: IRIN

an address in France, they’re not allowed to access the healthcare system either. The Syrian refugees are very well aware of this.”

But Decourcelle said the lack of support for Syrian refugees in France is not the only reason they prefer to apply for asylum elsewhere. “What matters for refugees is to know that they have a community they’re going to. In the end there is a much bigger Syrian community in Germany. France is not a natural destination for Syrians seeking a new country, while it is for refugees from West Africa, Sri Lanka or Bangladesh for instance.”

The French government is currently working on a new asylum law that aims to reduce the waiting time for processing claims to nine months. Local government responses are also appearing: this week Paris officials made 18 commitments to improve its response

to asylum seekers including offering French classes to refugees and asylum seekers and paying a financial subsidy to Parisians who put them up in their own homes.

Among the Syrian refugees living in France, some arrived through an official resettlement programme. French President François Hollande agreed to welcome 30,000 Syrian refugees by the end of 2016. They will receive immediate refugee status and a residence permit within three months. Six hundred have already arrived, after being relocated from Germany, but about 100 have already returned to Germany. “By inviting them, the French government showed it has the necessary resources to welcome asylum seekers in good conditions,” said Decourcelle. In that case, why not offer [the same conditions] to those who are already in France and want to stay?”—IRIN

Female farmers in East Africa need support to compete with male peers

DARES SALAAM — Thousands of female farmers in Tanzania, Malawi and Uganda could escape a life of poverty if better policies were adopted to bridge a yawning gap in agricultural productivity between women and men, according to a World Bank and United Nations report.

The study by the World Bank and UN Women measured the economic costs of female farmers in the three east African countries having less access to land, labour, fertiliser, crop choice and machinery that made them less productive.

Previous studies have found women farmers in Africa produce

between 13 percent and 25 percent less than male farmers.

It found as many as many as 238,000 people in Malawi, 80,000 in Tanzania, and 119,000 in Uganda could be lifted from poverty if this agricultural gender gap was addressed as studies show women reinvest 90 percent of income into

families.

Agriculture is a key engine for most African economies, representing a critical source of income and ensuring food security and nutrition, with women comprising almost half of the agricultural workforce in sub-Saharan Africa.

“I’m very efficient when it comes to farming but since I don’t have access to the land I’d need for irrigation, I often produce less as a result and the whole family suffers,” said Salima Nyantole, a female farmer from Morogoro in southern Tanzania.

“If we had a system that gives us equal rights to use land as we please I am sure we would be better off.” The report, titled “The cost of gender gap in agricultural productivity in Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda”, said gender issues were not fully reflected in the countries’ agricultural policies and this needed to be addressed.

Analysts estimated that the gender gap was wiping \$100 million off the annual economy in Malawi, \$105 million in Tanzania, and \$67 million in Uganda.

“These estimates can help policymakers understand the scale of the problem to help designing

better policies to improve women’s ability to use agriculture to lift themselves out of poverty,” said the report released this week.

Caren Grown, senior director of World Bank’s Gender Group, said she hoped the report would be used by policymakers to implement “gender-sensitive and environmentally sustainable agricultural policies and programmes”.

The report found female farmers in the three countries have lower levels of education than men and are more often single.

In Malawi 70 percent of women farmers are widowed, divorced, or separated, against 3 percent of male farmers while this figure is 67 percent in Tanzania compared to 9 percent of men.

In Tanzania, women farmers cultivate about 0.6 hectares of land on average while male farmers cultivate more than 1 hectare. In Uganda, women farmers cultivate plots that are on average about 0.23 hectares smaller than those managed by men. Women farmers in Malawi are less likely to grow cash or export crops with a 28 percent gap in the area of land devoted to export crops in Malawi by men or women.—Reuters



Hawa Nakawungu, a coffee farmer, sprays her trees with pesticide on her farm near Uganda’s capital Kampala. PHOTO: REUTERS

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV DYNAMIC OCEAN-09 VOY NO (54)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV DYNAMIC OCEAN-09 VOY NO (54) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22.10.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W(3) where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY

AGENT FOR: M/S G-LINK EXPRESS PTE LTD.

Phone No: 2301186

WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and South Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 22nd October, 2015: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Taninthayi Region and Mon State, isolated in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi Regions, Chin and Rakhine States and weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (80%).

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuation of rain or thundershowers in Taninthayi Region and Mon State.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22nd October, 2015: Partly cloudy.

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Entertainment Channel

(22-10-2015, Thursday)

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 6:00 am | 9:00 am |
| • Mono Classical Songs | • Musical Programme |
| 6:20 am | 9:15 am |
| • Myanmar Series | • Myanmar Video |
| 6:45 am | 10:10 am |
| • Teleplay | • ASEAN China |
| 7:00 am | Cultural Show |
| • TV Drama Series | 10:30 am |
| 7:50 am | • Myanmar Video |
| • TV Drama Series | 12:00 noon |
| 8:40 am | • Close down |
| • Pyi Thu Ni Ti | |



Myanmar International

(22-10-2015 07:00 am~ 23-10-2015 07:00 am) MST

Today Fresh

- 07:03 Am News
- 07:26 Am Myanmar Charitable Labour Association
- 07:39 Am Kambawzathardi Golden Palace - A Treasured Legacy Of Golden Days
- 07:54 Am Waso or the Buddhist Lent
- 08:03 Am News
- 08:26 Am Myanma Agarwood
- 08:40 Am ABU Song Festival
- 08:53 Am Art Students: Sculpture
- 09:03 Am News
- 09:26 Am "Myanmar's Traditions and Culture" Myanmar's Secret Beautifier
- 09:50 Am Today Myanmar: Technology in Election
- 10:03 Am News
- 10:26 Am Super Myanmar Traditional Stick Form (EP-2)
- 10:42 Am Sai Ye Kwan
- 10:51 Am Egg Shell
- (11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) -Wednesday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
- (03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) -Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

Prime Time

- 07:03 Pm News
- 07:26 Pm A Visit to Kyauk Kyi
- 07:43 Pm Will you feed the pigeons?
- 07:49 Pm Mt. Naw Bu Baw
- 08:03 Pm News
- 08:26 Pm Pride of Myanmar - Bagan arts and handicrafts
- 08:40 Pm A Day Tour On A Cart (Bagan Trip)
- 08:53 Pm Myanmar Chef (Japanese)
- 09:03 Pm News
- 09:26 Pm Let's Cook (EP-6) Cheesy Burger & Crunchy Munchy Beary Cookies
- 09:50 Pm Today Myanmar: Technology in Election
- (10:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (10:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
- (11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Wednesday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
- (03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

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

Singapore megachurch leaders hit a sour note in pop music fraud case

SINGAPORE — The co-founder of a Singapore church and five other leaders were convicted of multi-million dollar fraud on Wednesday for diverting money to support his wife's pop singing career, a rare fall from grace in the tightly regulated city-state.

The mix of money, faith and scandal in the case has fascinated the public in affluent Singapore, where such cases are rare under a system with little tolerance for corruption.

Senior pastor Kong Hee heads City Harvest Church, one of a growing number of Singapore's megachurches preaching "prosperity gospel" that blends spiritual and material aspirations. The churches have ambitions to turn Singapore into a centre for

evangelical Christianity and to export their faith to the world. Kong was arrested and charged in 2012 with criminal breach of trust and falsifying accounts.

The six church officials were convicted of diverting nearly S\$51 million (\$37 million) in funds to advance the career of Kong's wife, Ho Yeow Sun.

"There is no doubt that they had something to hide ... They knew they were acting dishonestly," Judge See Kee Oon said in convicting the six in the Singapore subordinate court.

Ho has focused on the Mandarin pop market and has released albums, including "Embrace", through Warner Music Taiwan.

A video from an Eng-

lish-language single, "China Wine", shows her dancing intimately with rapper Wyclef Jean, sparking criticism that she had betrayed her calling as a Christian pastor. Ho, the co-founder and executive director of the church, was not charged in the case.

The church, which had around 17,000 members last year, has stuck by its leader. It held a prayer session for Kong and others on Tuesday night and Ho issued a message of support after the court ruling.

"Thank you for your unwavering faithfulness in loving God and loving one another. More than ever before, let's have a unity that is unbreakable," she said on the church website. —Reuters



City Harvest Church founder Kong Hee and his wife Sun Ho, also known as Ho Yeow Sun, arrive at the State Courts in Singapore on 21 October 2015, where a verdict is expected to be delivered for their trial of misappropriating S\$50 million (\$42.5 million) of church funds and falsifying the church's accounts. PHOTO: REUTERS

Murray mixes music dreams, darker matter in Afghan war comedy 'Rock the Kasbah'



Cast members (L-R) Zooey Deschanel, Bill Murray, Kate Hudson, and Bruce Willis arrive for the premiere of the film "Rock the Kasbah" in New York. PHOTO: REUTERS

NEW YORK — Bill Murray plays a has-been rock music manager whose fortune changes while on tour in Afghanistan in "Rock the Kasbah", taking the time-honoured route of using comedy to tackle more serious matters.

Murray plays Richie Lanz,

whose best years are behind him. When he takes his last client to Afghanistan to perform for US-soldiers and gets dumped, a twist of fate sees him meet Pashtun girl Salima Khan with a beautiful voice.

They travel across the war-

torn country as Lanz tries to help Khan, played by Leem Lubany, fulfill her dream of becoming the first woman to compete on Afghanistan's version of music talent show "American Idol".

"I haven't felt this way about a movie in a very long time," Mur-

ray said at the film's premiere on Monday. "You sort of use this comedy as your way into maybe a deeper subject matter. The comedy has to stay the course, it has to go all the way through and you have to be able to be funny when things get dark and most challenging."

The movie also stars Bruce Willis as a ruthless mercenary and Kate Hudson as a savvy prostitute.

"The idea of making the story right was going to be determined by the people about whom we were speaking, people from both Afghanistan and the Muslim world," Murray said.

"And those people seem to think that not only is it very successful on a human level, that it's respectful but it's entertaining too."

Oscar-winning director Barry Levinson said he likes to use comedy to address more serious issues.

"I always think it's an interesting way to go about it as opposed to just being a serious film," he said. "Sometimes behavior and real kind of humanistic behavior has the tendency to have humor mixed in with its more dramatic moments."

"Rock the Kasbah" hits US cinemas on Friday. —Reuters

Vin Diesel swaps speed for spirits in 'The Last Witch Hunter'



Actor Vin Diesel. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — "Fast & Furious" actor Vin Diesel swaps the world of speeding cars for the supernatural in "The Last Witch Hunter", playing a man destined to kill witches for all eternity to save humanity.

The action star has plenty of stunts and fights in the fantasy adventure, which also stars Michael Caine and "Game of Thrones" actress Rose Leslie.

"I was doing fight choreography for over a month and it kind of all changes when you have a propane tank strapped to your back and a flaming sword," Diesel said at the film's London premiere on Monday night.

"If you're off a couple of inches your whole wardrobe will go up in flames." Caine portrays Dolan 36th in the movie, a mentor to Diesel's lead character Kaulder. "I'm very experienced so it was simple and the part was lovely ... and it was short," Caine said. "I didn't spend 10 weeks getting up at half past six in the morning, I only did two weeks on the picture." "The Last Witch Hunter" hits cinemas worldwide starting from Wednesday. —Reuters

Sony to pay up to \$8 million in 'Interview' hacking lawsuit

LOS ANGELES — Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc has agreed to pay up to \$8 million to resolve a lawsuit by employees who claimed their personal data was stolen in a 2014 hacking tied to the studio's release of a comedy set in North Korea, "The Interview."

The settlement with the Sony Corp unit and current and former employees was disclosed in papers filed on Monday in federal court in Los Angeles.

Under the deal, Sony will pay up to \$2.5 million, or \$10,000 per person, to reimburse employees

for identity theft losses and up to \$2 million, or \$1,000 per person, to reimburse them for protective measures they took after the cyber attack.

Sony has also agreed to pay up to \$3.49 million to cover legal fees and costs, according to court papers. The settlement must be approved by US District Judge Gary Klausner.

Neither Sony nor a lawyer for the plaintiffs immediately responded to requests for comment on Tuesday.

"The Interview" starred Seth

Rogen and James Franco, and depicted the fictional assassination of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

Sony shelved the movie's wide theatrical release after the hacking, which surfaced in November and drew international attention. It later offered the movie through digital downloads.

The attack, for which US officials blamed North Korean hackers, wiped out massive amounts of data and led to the online distribution of email, sensitive employee data and pirated copies of new movies.

China Book Festival kicks off in London's oldest bookstore

LONDON — The London China Book Festival was launched on Monday evening in Hatchards, the oldest bookshop in central London.

Running from 19 to 28 October, the event will see the promotion of China-themed books in more than 20 bookstores and cultural places, including book retailer Waterstones, the bookstores of British Museum and Harrods.

Among those exhibited are the English version of influential Chinese books published in recent years. For most of the books, this is their debut in Britain. Books highlighting the festival include 38 books dedicated to China's political and economic topics, such as "Xi Jinping: The Governance of China", as well as more than 60 books on Chinese

traditional and modern literature, such as "A Dream of Red Mansions", and "The Three-Body Problem".

Guo Weimin, deputy head of China's State Council Information Office at the Opening Ceremony said the festival came as part of cultural exchange programs to celebrate President Xi's state visit to Britain.

"The Governance of China, authored by Xi Jinping, is the centerpiece of the book festival. Over 5.2 million copies of the book have been distributed globally, hitting a record for global circulation of books ever written by a Chinese leader since 1978 when reform and opening up was initiated in China," said Guo.

Hatchards, established in 1797, is London's oldest bookshop.—Xinhua

Tutankhamen's golden mask under restoration at Egyptian Museum



German archaeologist Christian Eckmann (C) works on the restoration process of the golden mask of Tutankhamun at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, Egypt, on 20 October 2015. Photo: Xinhua

CAIRO, — Restoration of the golden mask of King Tutankhamen, one of ancient Egypt's most famous artifacts, is underway at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, a German expert overseeing the restoration works said Tuesday.

"We hope that we can finish everything until the end of this year, or let us say after two months," German conservator Christian Eckmann told reporters during a press conference at the Egyptian Museum.

"We have not yet taken the beard off so

far. We need to know the exact situation under the beard," Eckmann said.

The German expert added that the team will develop a concept on how to repair after examining the situation of under the king's beard.

"There are some ways of course, we can decide properly what we have to do," he said. In January, media reported that the long shiny blue beard of the king was damaged by the museum's cleaning workers and then was glued back onsite hastily and unprofessionally.—Xinhua

LEGO may run short of bricks before Christmas

COPENHAGEN — Some children may not get their Christmas wishes fulfilled this year as LEGO's factories, although running at full speed, may not be able to make enough plastic bricks to keep up with demand from toy stores in Europe.

The Danish company has become the world's largest toymaker by sales, overtaking US Barbie-maker Mattel, thanks partly to

toys linked to movies, including "The Lego Movie."

But difficulties in forecasting demand accurately means some orders may not be filled on time.

"We will not be able to deliver all of the orders coming from customers in the remainder of the year," spokesman Roar Trangbaek told Reuters. He declined to specify which lines of toys or which European coun-

tries would be affected.

Trangbaek said the company would be able to deliver the orders it had already received but may have trouble filling new orders later this year.

"It is really extraordinary and it has exceeded both ours and our customers' forecasts," Trangbaek said when asked why the company had not foreseen the surge in demand.



A woman walks past a window display of Lego at a Saga Falabella department store in the Miraflores district of Lima.—PHOTO: REUTERS

The Danish company's sales grew by 18 percent in the first half of this year to 14 billion Danish crowns (\$2.1 billion), putting it ahead of Mattel and Monopoly-board maker Hasbro, whose revenues came in at \$1.9 bln and \$1.5 bln respectively.

"We are running our factories at maximum capacity and will do everything we can to meet demand," Trangbaek said.

The unlisted company, owned by the family of founder Ole Kirk Kristiansen, invested more than 3 billion crowns in plants and equipment last year to make more toys. Before Christmas last year, there were some shortages in some countries last year including Denmark and Canada. The company is building a factory in Jiaxing in China, 100 kilometers from Shanghai, which is expected to be up and running in 2017 and should produce most of the Lego toys for Asia in the future.

LEGO already has factories in Denmark, Hungary, Czech Republic and Mexico.—Reuters

Cuba releases artist 'El Sexto,' considered prisoner of conscience

HAVANA — Cuba on Tuesday released a graffiti artist whom Amnesty International had considered a prisoner of conscience and Cuban dissidents had celebrated as a touchstone case as he was jailed over a satire of Fidel and Raul Castro.

Danilo Maldonado, 32, best known as "El Sexto" (The Sixth), was held for 10 months for "disrespect of the leaders of the revolution" for painting "Fidel" and "Raul" on the backs of a pair of pigs in apparent reference to former leader

Fidel Castro and his brother and current president, Raul Castro, Amnesty International said.

Amnesty in September declared Maldonado the country's only prisoner of conscience but said it was considering other cases. Government officials "don't have a sense of humour," Maldonado told reporters after his release. "The crazy thing is, the show didn't even happen and look at the repercussion it had."

Police discovered the

animals in the trunk of Maldonado's taxi before he intended to display them in a Christmas Day art show. The Cuban government maintains it does not have any political prisoners and characterizes Cuba's small but vocal dissident community as mercenaries paid by US interests to destabilize the government.

Dissidents had made Maldonado's case a rallying cry. The government never commented on it.

Raul Castro and President Barack Obama sur-

prised the world last Dec. 17 by announcing the two former Cold War foes would end decades of confrontation and seek to restore diplomatic ties.

In conjunction with detente, Cuba released 53 prisoners who Washington had considered political, but Maldonado was detained eight days after the historic announcement. The dissident Cuban Commission of Human Rights and National Reconciliation estimates there are about 60 political prisoners in Cuba, including some two dozen held for peaceful acts of political protest.

"Now I am going to try to recover my energy and be with my daughter," Maldonado told Reuters by telephone upon his release. "I want to travel to the United States in the future and thank all the people who supported the cause to have me freed."

Amnesty International welcomed Maldonado's release but said he never should have been jailed in the first place.

"Peacefully expressing an opinion is not a crime," Erika Guevara-Rosas, Americas director at Amnesty International, said in a statement.—Reuters



Cuban graffiti artist Danilo Maldonado stands in his house in Havana. PHOTO: REUTERS

Bodybuilders, fitness models to compete in Yangon

A BODYBUILDING and fitness competition will be held at Aung San Indoor Stadium in Yangon on 25 October.

The competition will include men in weight groups of 55, 60, 65, 70 and 75 kilograms and women above the height of

five feet, three inches.

The selected male bodybuilders and female fitness physique contestants will move on to regional and state competitions. This competition aims to give exposure to potential outstanding contestants, according to central execu-

tive of the Myanmar Bodybuilding and Physique Sports Federation (MBPSF) U Kyaw Sein Than.

The contest is held annually by a sub-committee of the Yangon Bodybuilding and Physique Sports Federation and the MBPSF.—*Ko Moe*

Resilient Arsenal bounce back to beat Bayern



Olivier Giroud scores the first goal for Arsenal. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Arsenal bounced back off the ropes to land two late sucker-punches and score an unlikely 2-0 win over Bayern Munich after the Germans had dominated an outstanding Champions League match on Tuesday.

Olivier Giroud came off the bench after 74 minutes and headed the opener three minutes later while Mesut Ozil scored with virtually the last kick of the game against his World Cup-winning team mate Manuel Neuer to hand Arsenal a memorable victory.

Their first win in Group F after two defeats rekindled their

chances of reaching the last 16 and ended Bayern's run of 12 successive wins in all competitions.

"It was important to reproduce our Premier League form tonight and we did that. We got the balance right between defence and attack," Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger told reporters.

But for long periods, it looked as if a goalless draw or a Bayern win would be the most likely outcome. Bayern dominated possession but could not find a way past a superb Arsenal defence in which Laurent Koscielny and Per Meretesacker played superbly and Petr

Cech made some important saves.

At the other end, Arsenal had more chances, but never looked like getting the better of Neuer who made one stunning save to deny Theo Walcott from scoring with a header after 34 minutes, but then cost his team dearly when he flapped at Santi Cazorla's 77th minute freekick, allowing Giroud, who had just replaced Walcott, to stoop low and head home.

Ozil scored on a breakaway with virtually the final kick when his shot just crossed the line with Neuer scooping it clear just too late.—*Reuters*

Serena to start 2016 at Hopman Cup in Perth

WORLD number one Serena Williams will again launch her season at the Hopman Cup in Australia, tournament organisers said on Wednesday.

Williams reached the final of the mixed team event last year with American compatriot John Isner to kick off a superb season where she won the Australian and French Opens and Wimbledon to take her grand slam singles haul to 21.

"Perth definitely started something quite amazing so I think it's only natural and fair and reasonable that I go back to Perth," the 34-year-old said in a statement. "We were so close to winning last year. I'm really excited to be back."

Williams added that the Hopman Cup was excellent preparation for the Australian Open.

"In 2016 I want to play doubles in Australia so it

will be really exciting for me to get there, play some doubles and get some little experience at the Hopman Cup," she said.

Williams has not played since suffering a shock semi-final defeat to Italian Roberto Vinci at the US Open last month which ended her bid for a rare calendar grand slam.

She pulled out of two events in China earlier this month, we well as next week's WTA Finals in Singapore,

citing the need to rest after a year spent carrying injuries.

Williams will be joined in the 3-9 January Hopman Cup field by Briton Andy Murray and controversial Australian Nick Kyrgios.—*Reuters*



PHOTO: REUTERS

NEWS IN BRIEF

Own goals gift Valencia 2-1 home win over Ghent

VALENCIA — Valencia made it two wins out of three in Champions League Group H when own goals from the luckless Lasse Nielsen and Stefan Mitrovic gifted the La Liga side a 2-1 victory over Belgian champions Ghent on Tuesday.

After losing 3-2 at home to Zenit St Petersburg in their opening game, Valencia revived their bid for a place in the round of 16 when a Sofiane Feghouli effort secured a 1-0

success in Lyon last month.

The Algeria international was again decisive at a rainy Mestalla, vying with Nielsen to be first to a Joao Cancelo centre and forcing the Dane to put the ball into his own net in the 15th minute.

Valencia almost doubled their lead 10 minutes later but Santi Mina and Dani Parejo were denied by a superb double save from goalkeeper Matz Sels.—*Reuters*

Zenit stay perfect in Champions League after Lyon win

MOSCOW — Zenit St Petersburg stepped closer to reaching the knockout stages of the Champions League after making it three wins out of three in Group H following a 3-1 win against Lyon.

Zenit did not take long to take advantage of a lacklustre start by the visitors. A fine pass by Oleg Shatov in the third minute was played in Artem Dzyuba, who had time to take a touch before stroking the ball past Anthony Lopez to score his 11th goal in as many games for club and country.

Andre Villas-Boas' side were dominant and should have extended their lead. Dzyuba had a great chance to score his second following good work by Shatov and Hulk, but he slipped at the vital moment and his shot ballooned over the bar.

Whatever Hubert Fournier said to his team at half time worked, as they were rejuvenated. The French outfit drew level four minutes after the break as Alexandre Lacazette brilliantly deflected Christophe Jallet's cross past Mikhail Kerzhakov.—*Reuters*

Chelsea thwarted by woodwork in draw with Kiev

KIEV — Chelsea struck the woodwork twice but could not find a breakthrough in an entertaining 0-0 Champions League draw at Dynamo Kiev on Tuesday that left everything to play for in Group G.

Within the context of Premier League champions Chelsea's poor start to the season, a goalless draw in the Ukraine can be considered a positive result and Jose Mourinho's side certainly did enough to earn all three

points. Eden Hazard, restored to the starting lineup, struck the post early on while Willian crashed a free kick against the underside of the bar after the restart as the visitors crafted by far the better openings.

Kiev, who tested Chelsea keeper Asmir Begovic on occasions in the second half, have five points in Group G, one ahead of Mourinho's side and two behind leaders Porto who beat Maccabi Tel Aviv 2-0.—*Reuters*

Leverkusen rescue 4-4 draw against Roma in rollercoaster

LEVERKUSEN — Bayer Leverkusen squandered a two-goal lead but scored twice in the final six minutes to rescue a 4-4 draw against AS Roma in a rollercoaster Champions League Group E match on Tuesday.

The hosts opened up a two-goal lead in the first 19 minutes of the hugely entertaining encounter, through Mexico forward Javier Hernandez.

Roma raced back with two goals from Daniele De Rossi and doubled the tally in

the second half before another twist in the game produced two late strikes for Leverkusen, with Kevin Kampl scoring in the 84th and Admir Mehmedi 112 seconds later, to rescue a point.

"We could have won 5-4 in the end but we cannot be satisfied with how we played for long periods of the game," said Leverkusen keeper Bernd Leno, who made a string of good saves. "I can't really explain what happened in the end."—*Reuters*

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