



Yangonites enjoy festivities on fullmoon day of Tazaungmon

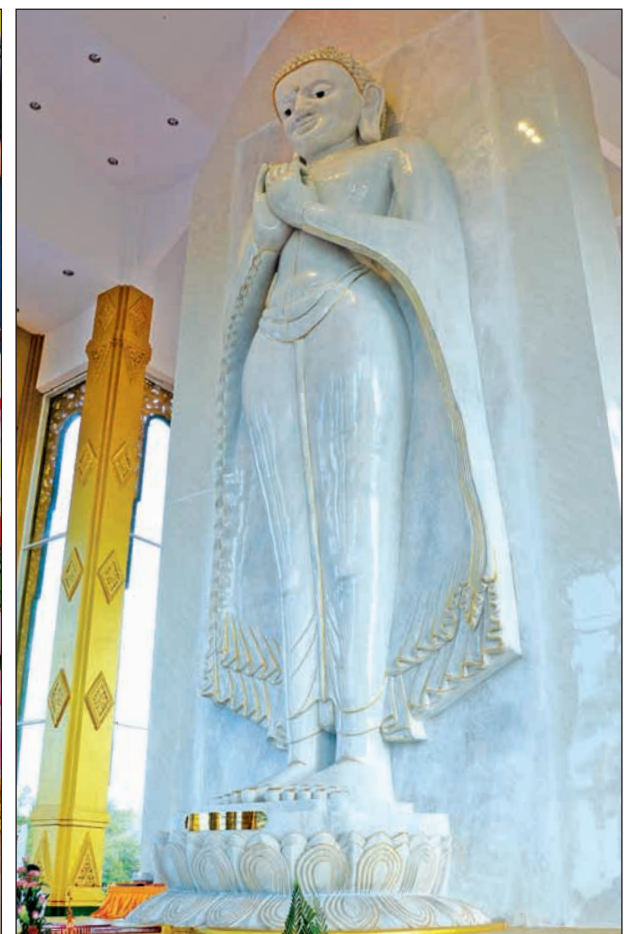
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Moderate nationalism must reign supreme

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## PRESIDENT ATTENDS CEREMONY AT MAHA THAKYAYANTHI BUDDHA IMAGE



President U Thein Sein and wife Daw Khin Khin Win offer Shwekyar robes, meals, fruits, flowers and water to Maha Thakyanthi Buddha Image. PHOTO: MNA

THE merit-sharing ceremony for enshrinement of religious relics, offering of emerald alms bowl and robes, and consecration took place at Maha Thakyanthi Buddha Image on the apex of Aungmawli Hill in Ottarathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday morning.

President U Thein Sein enshrined four kinds of Ceti and

jewelleries into the reliquary of the pagoda.

Senior monks led by Chairman of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Bhamo Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kumarabhivamsa recited "Jayanto Bodhiyamule" Gatha (religious verses).

President U Thein Sein and wife Daw Khin Khin Win offered

Shwekyar robes, meals, fruits, flowers and water to the Maha Thakyanthi Buddha Image.

Members of the Sangha consecrated the Buddha image while the president and wife unveiled the stone plaque.

Vice Presidents Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun and their wives, Speaker of Amyotha Hlut-

taw U Khin Aung Myint, Chief Justice of the Union U Tun Tun Oo, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife, Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Mya Thein and Chairman of Union Election Commission U Tin Aye donated offertories to senior Buddhist monks.

Union Minister at the President's Office U Thein Nyunt presented gifts to architects and engineers who built the Buddha image and pagoda.

The president and his wife, along with the congregation, shared merits for successful completion of meritorious deeds.—*Myanmar News Agency*

## Myanmar still ranked third in landmine casualty tally: report

Ye Myint

MYANMAR has retained its ranking of the having the world's third highest number of landmine casualties, according to the Landmine Monitor Country Report 2015.

Antipersonnel landmines have killed or injured more than 3,700 people between 1999 and the end of 2014.

The report, an annual publication of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, said

that most victims are civilians rather than members of the army or ethnic armed groups.

The actual number of landmine injuries and deaths in Myanmar could be higher than the numbers suggest, as accurate information is difficult to obtain, the anti-landmine group said.

Landmines tend to strike civilian victims who work in fields or are travelling to work by foot, said Yeshua Moser-Puangswan, research coordinator for the Landmine Monitor.

Afghanistan stands first while Columbia ranks second in landmine casualty rate, he added.

The majority of landmines are in Myanmar's eastern areas, with the report identifying at least 56 townships in Chin, Kachin, Kayin, Kayah, Mon, Rakhine, and Shan states, as well as in Bago and Taninthayi regions that are at risk. Kachin and Kayin states and eastern Bago region are also heavily contaminated by landmines, it added.

Despite the high level of

deaths and injuries by landmines, mine risk education remains insufficient in most areas, said the international watchdog group, adding that no humanitarian mine clearance programmes exist in Myanmar.

However there has been an improvement in terms of the medical and rehabilitative assistance provided to landmine survivors, it added.

The report found that there has been a significant decrease in the use of antipersonnel mines in

most areas of the country. In October 2015, a ceasefire agreement was signed that prohibits signatories from laying landmines. It was inked by the government and eight ethnic armed groups, with other ethnic groups yet to sign.

According to the report, 162 countries – which accounts for more than 80 percent of the world's governments, have ratified or acceded to the Mine Ban Treaty as of 1 November 2015. Myanmar, however, is not one of them yet.

## Government donates robes to Myanmar monks in India

THE Myanmar Ministry of Religious Affairs organised a Kathina (robe offering) ceremony at the Bodhi Gaya Myanmar Monastery in the town of Gaya in Bihar State, India.

Present at the occasion were 30 abbots led by Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dhaja Bhaddanta Naninda, abbot of the monastery, Union Minister for Religious Affairs U Soe Win and Myanmar Ambassador to India U Aung Khin Soe.

The government has organ-

ised the robe offering ceremony in India since 2008, donating special robes and offertories.

While in India, U Soe Win visited several Myanmar monasteries to meet with abbots and donate Kathina robes. He also offered a lotus silk robe to an ancient Buddha image at Maha Bawdi Pagoda.

The Union minister also met Myanmar monks who are studying Buddha's teachings at universities in India.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Union Minister U Soe Win offers provisions to a senior Buddhist monk. PHOTO: MNA

## Toungoo celebrates 505<sup>th</sup> anniversary



The 505<sup>th</sup> birth of Toungoo (Ketumati) in progress in Toungoo. PHOTO: BA AYE

A ceremony to mark the 505<sup>th</sup> year since the birth of the city of Toungoo was held on a grand scale near Ketumati archway on Bohmu Po Kun Road yesterday.

Union Minister for

Home Affairs and for Immigration and Population Lt-Gen Ko Ko cut a ribbon to launch the ceremony.

Soldiers in military uniforms from the Toungoo period marched from

the archway to Tawwin Ketumati Hotel along Bohmu Po Kun Road, replicating an ancient royal ceremony.

Officials presented prizes to winners in the acting, singing, painting,

photo, football, mini-marathon and Buddhology contests in commemoration of the event.

King Mingyi Nyo established Toungoo, which was called Ketumati City in 1510 AD.—*Thiha Thu*

## Outstanding B.Ed graduate of Sagaing wins gold medal

EDUCATION Adviser to the President Dr U Than Oo presented a gold medal of the U Than Oo Foundation to Ma Thu Thu Lin at the 18<sup>th</sup> convocation of Sagaing Education University on 21 November for his graduating at the top of the B.Ed class.

Sithu Dr. U Ba also conferred a gold medal on Dr U Than Oo for his

first-grade graduation of the B.Ed examination in 1960.

Sayagi Dr U Than Oo deposited K100 into a bank account in 2012 to save for the establishment of the U Than Oo Foundation. The deposit grew to K370 million in 2015.

Dr U Than Oo presented the "B.Ed U Than Oo Gold Medal" to Daw

Su Myat Aye Thaug from Myanaung Township, Ayeyawady Region during the 45<sup>th</sup> Graduation Ceremony of the Yangon University of Education in 2013 January, Daw Pyae Phy Myint from Patheingyi Township, Ayeyawady Region at the 46<sup>th</sup> Graduation Ceremony in January 2014 and Daw Khin Khin

Thant Sin from Yangon Region at the 47<sup>th</sup> Graduation Ceremony of December 2014.

Dr. U Than Oo will give gold medals to outstanding graduates of the B.Ed course from the University for the Development of National Races during the 2016-17 academic year.—*Ko Latt (MNA)*

## Japanese business hotel opens in Yangon

A 12-storey business hotel with 76 rooms opened in Yangon with the aim of providing Japanese style services to its customers.

At the opening ceremony yesterday, U Soe Min, Yangon Region's Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Breeding, encouraged more Japanese investment to help boost Myanmar's economy.

U Ye Htut, chairman of Shin Ye Htut Group, said, "Japan's largest companies are showing interest in Thilawa Special Economic Zone project, while some Japanese businesspersons wish to invest in mini hotels, restaurants, and travel and construction businesses."

"We are ready to link with those who want to invest in such businesses," said U Ye Htut.

Super Hotel Co Ltd Chairman Mr Takao Yamamura said that environmental sustainability will play an important role in the development of Myanmar's growing tourism industry.

The ministry of hotels and tourism is targeting five million international tourists to visit Myanmar this year.

Currently, there are 321 hotels which have more than 15,000 rooms in Yangon.

Shin Ye Htut Super Hotel is located on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road in Mayangon Township.—*Khin Maung Htwe*



Shin Ye Htut Super Hotel. PHOTO: Ko Ko ZAW

## Yangonites enjoy festivities on fullmoon day of Tazaungmon

BUDDHIST devotees and local residents performed meritorious deeds on the fullmoon day of Tazaungmon in townships of Yangon Region.

They offered Mathoe robes to Buddha images at famous pagodas and monasteries, donated Kathina robes to Buddhist monks, held lighting festivals and paid homage to senior citizens.

Last night, religious association made Mathoe robes and officials donated the robes to Buddha images at Shwedagon Pagoda in the morning.

Similar ceremonies took place at Botahtaung Kyaikdae-up Pagoda, Thiri Mngala Kaba Aye Pagoda and Shwephonepwin Pagoda.

In the evening, departmental offices, resident buildings and parks were illuminated with multi-coloured lights.—*Yi Yi Myint, Ohnma Thant*



Shwedagon Pagoda crowded with devotees on fullmoon day of Tazaungmon, (Samanaphala Day). PHOTO: MNA

## Locals flock to capital's pagodas

PAGODAS across Nay Pyi Taw council area, particularly the Thatta Thattaha Maha Bawdi Pagoda, the replica of Bodhi Gaya, saw huge crowds of devotees on the fullmoon day of Tazaungmone.

The devotees donated water, flowers, lights and offertories to various forms of Buddha images on the platform of Uppatasanti Pagoda. The offerings commenced at 6 pm yesterday with recitations of Buddha's teachings by religious associations.

Significant places in the area such as the Water Fountain Garden, Safari Park and hot springs were also visited on the day.

Many charity fairs were also held in the capital.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Pilgrims visit Uppatasanti Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw on fullmoon day of Tazaungmon. PHOTO: MNA

## Vice-Senior General Soe Win meets Thai Minister of Defence

VICE-Senior General Soe Win, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and Commander-in-Chief (Army), together with army chiefs of ASEAN countries, met with the Thai Minister of Defence of the Royal Thai Armed Forces on Tuesday.

The meeting was focused

on building trust and exchanging views on the role of the armed forces in realising the ASEAN's vision.

The army chiefs visited the Anata Somakhom Throne Hall and adjoined souvenir shop.

They later left for the Dusit Thani Hua Hin Hotel in Hua Hin.—*Myawady*

## Journalists association to pay respects to senior journalists

THE Myanmar Journalists Association will hold the 2nd respect paying ceremony to senior journalists at Yangon City Hall on 5 December.

Invitation letters will be sent to senior journalists 75 years and older. For further information, contact 09-254052128 and 09-421094659.—*Aung Thura*

## Myanmar's first stock market to open on 9 December

MYANMAR will open its first ever stock market on 9 December with announcements likely to be made soon regarding which companies will be selling shares. One company will be allowed to sell its shares at a time. Currently five companies have been chosen with more to come.

The Ministry of Finance has conducted 38 reform measures

including amendments and revocations of 12 finance laws, the deputy minister said in a recent interview with the *Myanmar News Agency*.

Dr Maung Maung Thein said that the reforms were based on the five pillars of finance—public finance management, stock markets, capital markets and the formation of support groups to

strengthen monetary systems.

Myanmar is introducing its stock market 15 years later than Vietnam but is expected to be on a par in three years, he quoted a business analyst as saying. The introduction of the market economy involved the emergence of many insurance companies, he added.

The stock market is the newly introduced financial system aimed

at encouraging foreign investment and growth. The deputy minister noted that foreign exchangers were being invited to the financial market.

"Economic development is really nothing without insurance firms," he said, adding that there were now 12 insurance companies, of which 11 are under private ownership.

Myanmar started taking steps to introduce the stock market back in 2012, writing the necessary laws and forming committees. Regarding foreign debts, the deputy minister said that the country owed US\$11b before 2011, but the number has decreased to 6 billion following discussions with creditors such as Paris Club.—*Myanmar News Agency*

## Kathina robes offered to senior monks



Local authorities and well-wishers offer Kathina robes to members of the Sangha in Muse.

PHOTO: MUSE DISTRICT IPRD

THE 54<sup>th</sup> communal Kathina robe offering ceremony was held in Muse, northern Shan State on Wednesday.

Local residents, well-wishers and staff of companies conveyed their offertories from the airport to Shwethamin monastery in Muse along Pyidaungsu Road.

Dancing troupes performed dances and songs to audiences along the way. On their arrival at the monastery, the Taungpaingthar hot-air balloon team released hot-air balloons in commemoration of the donation of Kathina robes.

A total of 155 offertories

were donated to senior Buddhist monks on the day. The donation ceremony was attended by the Muse District Deputy Commissioner U Kyaw Kyaw Tun, Township Administrator U Ko Ko Zaw and other lesser officials.—*Muse District IPRD*

## Faculty members of Mandalay University's Geology Department honoured



An old student presents gifts to faculty members of Geology Department at Mandalay University.

PHOTO: THIHA KO KO

THE 15<sup>th</sup> respect-paying ceremony for faculty members of the Department of Geology was held at Mandalay University by alumni and current geology majoring students recently.

A dawn meal was offered to Sangha members in the early morning at the university's Dhamma Building in tribute to

faculty members who had passed away.

The respect-paying ceremony that followed was attended by retired and current geology faculty members.

The teachers were traditionally paid respect by past and present students from Mandalay and Yadanabon universities and

offered gifts. Retired Rector Dr Myint Thein expressed his best wishes to the Geology Department faculty members.

Afterward, doctorate graduates in the Geology Department were honoured. A dinner for the geology faculty was held at the Oriental House restaurant in Mandalay.—*Thiha Ko Ko*

## Pyawbwe residents receive needed electricity

A CEREMONY to celebrate the launch of electric power was near the transformer in Kyutawwa village, Pyawbwe Township, Mandalay Region, yesterday.

Mandalay Region Minister for Electricity and Industry U Kyaw Myint, the head of the Yamethin District Rural Development Department U Thuang Htaik and officials cut the ribbon to formalise the ceremony.

Electrical engineer U Toe

Toe Aung from Yamethin District spoke about electrical safety for the benefit of locals in attendance.

The Rural Development Department and local people contributed K59.49 million (US\$45,735) for the installation of 11-KV power lines and a 315-KVA transformer in Kyutawwa village. A total of 166 of 217 local houses are now receiving electricity.—*Min Min Htwe*

## MCDC constructing low-income housing



Six storey buildings under construction for renting them to low-income people. PHOTO: MAUNG PYI THU

HOUSES for low-income, disadvantaged citizens are under construction in Nyaungkwe ward, Aungmyethazan Township, Mandalay. Construction began on 20 April this year.

The Mandalay City Development Committee and private construction companies plan to complete the first phase of construction by December 2015.

A total of 22 six-storey buildings are planned com-

prising 1,584 apartments. The apartments are 20 feet in length and 12 feet wide.

The apartments will be rented to freight-handling workers who are currently residing along the bank of the Ayeyawady River in Mandalay.

Tenants will be charged between K15,000 to K35,000 depending on which floor they reside in.—*Maung Pyi Thu*

## Villagers receive commercial fruit production training

A BASIC foodstuff production training course was opened in Aungchanthar village, Zabuthiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, by the Rural Development Department on Tuesday.

Nay Pyi Taw Rural Development Department director U Ko Ko Naing, the head of the Dekkhina District RRD U Soe Lin and Zabuthiri Township

Administrator U Win Shwe gave speeches at the course.

A total of 28 trainees attended the course to learn ways to preserve fruit and making juices, fruit wine, fruit jelly, fruit sauce and dried fruit.

They also learned about the risks of eating spoiled fruits during the 10-day course, which will run until 3 December.—*Shwe Kokko*

## MCDC organises risk assessment for city workshop

THE workshop on risk assessment tools & stakeholder perception of Mandalay took place at the hall of the Mandalay City Development Committee on Tuesday.

In an address, Mandalay Mayor U Aung Moun said that the cooperation of city residents plays a key role in building a safe and sustainable city. He

requested that people cooperate with the MCDC in municipal tasks.

City Relationship Associate Director Miss Katya of 100 Resilient Cities spoke on resilience strategies.

Officials of the MCDC explained plans for the implementation of resilience strategies for the city.—*Maung Pyi Thu*



Experts need to assess risk for buildings in Mandalay City. PHOTO: MAUNG PYI THU

## Upgrade of RC roads in Ngathaingyoung



Reinforced concrete road under construction in Ngathaingyoung. PHOTO: SOE MIN OO (IPRD)

THE upgrading of road sections on Lanmataw road and Pagoda road linking with Ngawun Dam were recently completed with the roads now lined with reinforced concrete. The project was completed on 20 November in Ngathaingyoung, Ayeyawady Region.

Local authorities placed concrete over 920 of the total 2,400

feet of Lamadaw road and over 800 of the total 2,800 feet on Pagoda road. Each section was 20 feet wide and 8 inches thick.

The government provided 5,000 cement bags for construction tasks while the public contributed K 84.3 million (US\$64,973) to the upgrade project.

An official said that local authorities plan to request funding from the regional government for the repairing of the people's sports ground, office buildings and religious edifices. Upon completion the road will benefit the maintenance of Ngawun Dam and local traffic.—*Soe Min Oo (IPRD)*

## Local farmers instructed on use of combine harvesters in Aunglan Tsp

THE Hsinthwelatt paddy plantation was harvested in Mogaung village, Aunglan Township, Magway Region, on Tuesday.

Township Administrator U Thein Hsint, officials of the Township Agricultural Mechanisation Department and the Agriculture Department explained the process of transforming traditional hand farming into a

mechanised, high scale endeavour.

The model plot yielded 98.32 baskets of paddy per acre (one basket=33.33 kilos).

The harvesting of paddy was attended by heads of the Township Farmland Management and Statistics Department as well as the township planning department.—*Thein Lwin (IPRD)*



Local farmers observe use of combine harvester in Aunglan Township. PHOTO: THEIN LWIN (IPRD)

## Hot-air balloon tourists fly over Mandalay City

THE arrival of tourists is increasing in Mandalay as of the second week of November, according to the Mandalay Region Directorate of Hotels and Tourism.

About 18,500 tourists from across the globe arrived in Mandalay by air, car and ship in October 2015.

In November, tourists visited the Myanan Sankyaw Golden Pal-

ace, Shwekyanggyi, Mandalay Hill, Taungthaman Bridge and ancient cultural zones in Sagaing, Pyin Oo Lwin, Mingun and Inwa.

Some tourists took in aerial views of urban life over Mandalay's Chanmyathazi Airport, Mandalay City, the Ayeyawady and Dokhtawady rivers, the Sagaing and Mingun mountain ranges and the Yadanabon Bridge by hot-air balloon.—*Thiha Ko Ko*



Tourists riding hot-air balloon over Mandalay. PHOTO: THIHA KO KO

# 2 Koreas begin preparations for high-level talks



South Korean chief delegate Kim Ki-Woong (R) shakes hands with his North Korean counterpart Hwang Chol (L) during their meeting at the truce village of Panmunjom in the Demilitarised Zone separating the two Koreas, North Korea on 26 November. PHOTO: REUTERS

SEOUL — North and South Korea yesterday started working-level talks at the truce village of Panmunjeom to lay the groundwork for high-level talks between the two sides, according to South Korea's Unification Ministry.

At the talks that got under way around 12:50pm, more than two hours after they were scheduled to begin, the two sides are expected to focus on the timing of the high-level talks and the level of the chief delegate for those talks.

South Korea's three-member team is headed by Unification Ministry official Kim Ki Woong, director of Special Office for Inter-Korean Dialogue. The North's team, also comprising three members, is

headed by Hwang Chol, director at the secretariat of the North's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland.

The two Koreas agreed on 25 August to hold the governmental talks to improve bilateral relations.

Tensions had escalated earlier that month after South Korea accused the North of planting landmines in the Demilitarised Zone between the two Koreas that seriously injured two South Korean soldiers.

They rose further after the two sides fired artillery shells at each other.

The two sides are still technically in a state of war as the 1950-1953 Korean War ended in an armistice and not a permanent peace treaty.—*Kyodo News*

## Thai PM says 4G auction funds will be spent on infrastructure, farmers

BANGKOK — Thailand's prime minister said yesterday that \$2.26 billion (1 billion pounds) raised from a 4G mobile license auction would be used to fund infrastructure projects and to help low-income people, including farmers.

Thailand's leading mobile operators Advance Info Service Pcl and True Corp won the auction for fourth generation mobile frequency licenses on 12 November, which was held by the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission. "There are many projects we are considering doing with the money raised including investment in railways and helping those with low incomes including farmers," Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, told reporters.

"This money will come to the government, to the central budget, to be made useful. This government has many projects including basic aid for the poor and for farmers."

The economy has been in the doldrums since a 2014 military coup and Prayuth's military government has sought to accelerate spending on railways and roads to boost border trade. It has also sought to appease disgruntled and politically powerful farmers who are struggling with record-low commodity prices and weak exports by rolling out \$1.3 billion in rural subsidies.

Farmers have been feeling the pain from the country's worst drought in decades, which has struck the heart of the farming sector, the backbone of the rural economy.

Rahul Bajoria, regional economist at Barclays Capital, said the government needs to step up support for agricultural sector to boost consumption.

"The rural economy has been dented by the weather, while Bangkok continues to perform well given the large number of tourists," Rahul told Reuters, adding that the severe drought has hurt rural incomes, which is driving week consumption. "The government's plans to boost the economy, some additional support for rural areas would help in lifting growth." Tourism, which accounts for 10 percent of GDP, has been among the few lone bright spots, and the government has said it expects a record 30.3 million visitors to Thailand this year.—*Reuters*

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Director - Maung Maung Than  
mnmnthn2@gmail.com

Deputy Chief Editor

Than Tun Aung  
thantunaungnm@gmail.com

Chief Reporter - Aye Min Soe  
koayeminsoe2006@gmail.com

Senior Consultant Editor

Jessica Mudditt  
jess.mudditt@gmail.com

Consultant Editor

Jacob Goldberg  
jgold.news@gmail.com

Alec Wilmot  
alec.wilmot.gnlm@gmail.com

Editors

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

Myint Win Thein  
journalist.sss@gmail.com

International news

Ye Htut Tin  
mryehtuttin@gmail.com

Tun Tun Naing  
tunyunaing@gmail.com

Reporters

Khaing Thanda Lwin  
juniorlwin25@gmail.com

Tun Aung Kyaw  
tunaungkyaw.31@gmail.com

Translators

Ma Than Htay,  
Hay Mar Tin Win

haymarfat@gmail.com

Proof reader

Nwe Nwe Tun

Layout designers

Tun Zaw, Thein Ngwe,  
Zaw Zaw Aung,

Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,  
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,

Sanda Hnin, Zu Zin Hnin

Circulation & Advertising

San Lwin (+95) (01) 8604532

Ads and subscription enquiries:  
adv.gnlm@gmail.com

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## Japan's CO2 emissions fall to 3 year low



Factories at an industrial zone are seen from Haneda airport in Tokyo. PHOTO: REUTERS

TOKYO — Japan's greenhouse gas emissions fell 3 percent to a three-year low in the fiscal year ended March due to reduced power demand and growing renewable energy, preliminary government figures showed yesterday.

Emissions fell for the first time in five years to 1.365 billion metric tonnes of CO2 equivalent, according to Ministry of Environment data. That was down 2.2 percent from 2005 and up 7.5 percent from 1990.

Japan's emissions had been rising after the 2011 Fukushima disaster that led to the closure of nuclear power plants and an in-

creased reliance on coal. The world's fifth-biggest carbon emitter, Japan set a goal in July to cut its emissions by 26 percent by 2030 from 2013 levels.

The reduction in the latest year followed power saving and billions of dollars of clean-energy investments in the wake of Fukushima, the ministry said.

France will host talks among almost 200 nations from 30 November - 11 December to agree a plan to limit climate change beyond 2030. Two of Japan's dozens of commercial reactors have been restarted during the last few months, marking the nation's first nuclear power generation

since September 2013.

An expected gradual restart of reactors from next year and growing renewable power would likely reduce the nation's energy-originated CO2 emissions for a third straight year to 1.149 billion tonnes in fiscal 2016 from a record 1.235 billion tonnes in 2013, the Institute of Energy Economics Japan (IEEJ) said.

Anxious to cut fuel bills, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe wants atomic power to account for 20-22 percent of the country's energy mix by 2030, but the goal is widely seen as unrealistic, and opposition to nuclear power remains widespread.—*Reuters*

## Australia's bushfires leave trail of death and destruction

SYDNEY — Fourteen bushfires burning across southern Australia have killed two people, thousands of animals, and destroyed 16 homes, and authorities said yesterday they feared the toll could rise.

The fires, which stretch across 210 kms (130 miles), broke out on Wednesday in heatwave conditions and quickly burnt across farmlands, forcing residents to flee and others to frantically try and save their homes and livestock.

"It was just the intensity of the fire and the speed. We tried to put it out. You just couldn't put it out," farmer John Lush told Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

"We've got a big machinery shed...and the (roof) gutters of that are 25 feet (eight metres) off the ground and the flames were coming over the top of that shed, so it was just horrific," said Lush.

A 56-year-old woman and a 69-year-old man died in separate fires. Thirteen people are being treated in hospital and three people are missing, said South Australia State Premier Jay Weatherill.

"Five of those are either in a critical or serious condition with significant burns. We know that one of those persons has burns to more than 80 percent on their body," said Weatherill.

"We hold grave fears for many more (and) can't be entirely sure we have identified every single person in the fire ground," he said.

Four people were killed in a



Firefighters use a bulldozer to try and stop a wildfire burning near the town of Esperance, in the south-west of the state of Western Australia, on 17 November. PHOTO: REUTERS

series of wildfires sparked by lightning in Western Australia state last week.

Wildfires are an annual summer event in Australia, but rising temperatures have prompted some scientists to warn that climate change could increase the length and intensity of the summer fire season. The Australian Bureau of Meteorology declared October the hottest month on record.

While residents who escaped the fires described their desper-

ate attempts to save their homes, one absent homeowner 3,000 kms (1,890 miles) north in the city of Darwin used a smartphone to activate his irrigation system to save his house.

"It's come up all around the house but my ability to turn on irrigation systems from my phone in Darwin and the fact that I had neighbours patrolling with fire units, I think we're lucky we got away with a house," Simon Maddocks told Australian Broadcasting

Corporation. Maddocks' 40 hectare (99 acre) wheat farm on the outskirts of the town of Hamley Bridge was completely burnt out.

Damage reports suggest more than 85,000 hectares of farmland and bush have been burnt by the fires, Weatherill said, with significant livestock lost, including more than 2,000 pigs.

Four hundred extra firefighters were due to arrive from interstate on Thursday to battle the blazes.—Reuters

## State funeral held for former South Korean President

SEOUL — South Korea yesterday held a state funeral for its former President Kim Young Sam, whose 1992 election victory marked the formal end of more than 30 years of military rule.

Kim, who was in power from 1993 to 1998, died on Sunday from blood poisoning and acute heart failure. He was 87. A ceremony was held at a plaza in front of the National Assembly or parliament in Seoul after a five-day mourning period. Kim was to be buried at the national cemetery in the city. Kim was opposed to South Korea's military dictators, and remains an iconic figure of the country's pro-democracy movement, along with former President Kim Dae Jung, who died in 2009. While in office his two predecessors — former generals Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo — were convicted and imprisoned for treason and other charges, although Kim later pardoned them.

His leadership was tarnished when South Korea was forced to accept a \$58 billion bailout from the International Monetary Fund during the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis. — Kyodo News

## Afghan forces launch bid to rescue 18 captured by Taliban

KABUL — Afghan security forces launched an operation on Wednesday to rescue 18 people captured by Taliban insurgents after their helicopter made an emergency landing in territory under the militants' control, the Ministry of Defence said.

The Taliban said they had shot down the helicopter and captured 15 people.

Moldova's acting prime minister said the helicopter was operated by a Moldovan company and it had 21 people on board including a Moldovan crew of three. He said he had asked the United States for help to rescue the crew although one of them appeared to have been killed, along with two other people.

The MI-17 helicopter made an emergency landing in the northern province of Faryab on Tuesday after it developed a technical problem, the Afghan ministry said.

"The insurgents then attacked and as a result two soldiers and one member of the crew were killed ... 18 people were captured," the ministry said in a statement. "Security forces have started a clearance operation to free the captives." The Taliban, fighting to expel foreign forces

and bring down the US-backed government, have made gains over the past year outside their southern and eastern heartlands and into northern areas including Faryab.

The ministry did not identify the captives or say if they were soldiers or civilians, or if any foreigners were among them.

The Taliban said five people had been killed and they had captured 15 who had managed to get out of the burning helicopter, most of them soldiers.

"The captured people have been taken to a safe place and an investigation has started," Taliban spokesman Qari Yousuf Ahmadi said in a statement. He made no mention of foreigners.

Moldova's acting prime minister, Gheorghe Brega, said his government had unconfirmed reports that one Moldovan was among three people the militants shot dead. The Moldovan Defence Ministry said the helicopter crash-landed after being shot at. The director general of Valan ICC, the Moldovan company which operated the MI-17, told reporters the helicopter had been carrying members of the Afghan security forces engaged in counter-terrorism operations.—Reuters

## Thai graft, royal insult cases threaten to embroil junta

BANGKOK — Accusations of corruption involving a park built to honour Thailand's revered monarchy are threatening to damage an anti-graft drive by the ruling junta, which seized power last year vowing to clean up government and protect royal prestige.

The accusations, levelled by some Thai media and opposition groups, have transfixed a country anxious over the declining health of the long-reigning King Bhumibol Adulyadej, 87.

They come amid a widening police investigation into corruption involving two nationwide cycling events, also aimed at celebrating the royals, in which two suspects have died in military custody.

The army said on Friday an internal investigation found no graft in the construction of the 1 billion baht (£18.5 million) Rajabhakti Park, near the royal resort town of Hua Hin. The project was overseen by General Udomdej Sitabutr, a former army chief who is currently deputy defence minister.

"There isn't any (corruption) at all. If there were any, I wouldn't let this go, that's all I'm

going to tell you," army chief General Teerachai Nakwanich told reporters, announcing the results of the military probe.

Teerachai was the latest in a succession of top junta leaders, including Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, to publicly stress there were no irregularities in the use of private donations raised for the construction of the park.

Yet allegations made by anti-junta groups of irregularities in the project's funding persist in the Thai media, and a usually subdued opposition has seized a rare chance to score political points.

"Can people still trust the junta?" said Thanawut Wichaidit, a spokesman for the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship, or "red shirts", which backed the government toppled by the military in 2014.

General Udomdej, who oversaw the project, told reporters on 10 November that there was "an element of truth" to media and opposition allegations that an unnamed civilian had demanded bribes from the foundries that cast giant statues of past Thai kings for the park.

"But everything has died down now and it is all above board," he said, without elaborating further.

On Tuesday, the defence ministry said it was setting up its own committee to investigate the construction of the park, which was opened by Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn in September. It will be headed by the permanent secretary for defence, General Preecha Chan-ocha, the prime minister's brother.

The accusations of kickbacks relating to the park project have been raised in the widespread coverage by Thai media of separate cases involving the organisation of two cycling events, "Bike for Mom" and "Bike for Dad", aimed at honouring the king and queen.

Those events, in August and December this year, are seen as aiming to boost the image of Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn, who does not enjoy the same level of popularity as his father.

Since October, seven people involved with the events, including two army officers, have been charged by the authorities with using the monarchy's name for personal gain.—Reuters

## OPINION

## Moderate nationalism must reign supreme

Kyaw Thura

Myanmar, though much smaller than its neighbours India and China, is home to more than 130 ethnic minorities. Myanmar's diverse groups have been living together in unison through good times and bad. A glance at the history of our country is enough to prove that all ethnic groups joined hands in the struggle for independence during the colonial era.

Today, however, it appears that nationalism in Myanmar has an aggressive streak, largely due to inequality in resource sharing, a major factor that has led to the development gap among states and regions. To this end, it is necessary for all regions to understand that equitable development involves making some sacrifices. Frankly, this term is no more than an eloquent expression, simply because it is almost impossible for every government to develop every area of their countries.

It is true that development is something which can in no way take place in the presence of armed conflict. On the other hand, it is equally true that development cannot materialise so long as powers and resources are unequally shared and poorly managed.

It is often found in many countries that prosperity follows decentralisation. One important thing is that we, regardless of our different ethnicities and faiths, must be loyal to our own country, putting national interests before our own. It is moderate, rather than extreme nationalism that drives democracy and brings about prosperity. Yet it appears that there is one behind the wheel.

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Due to a lack of human resources, counselling for parents is unavailable.



A sombre waiting room at Yangon Children's Hospital.

## WHEN CANCER STRIKES A CHILD

Jessica Mudditt

THIRI Swe was just two-years-old when she was diagnosed with liver cancer. The discovery was accidental: her parents had brought their baby daughter to a clinic to treat a fever and diarrhoea.

After nine months of chemotherapy and an operation to remove the tumour, Thiri Swe is now cancer free. The tiny survivor of one of mankind's most devastating diseases giggled as she lifted her polka-dot blouse to display a scar spanning inches across her belly.

"I feel so happy that my daughter is okay. She's our only child. We were very worried before the operation because she has a rare blood type: we were scared there wouldn't be enough blood available if she needed a transfusion. We were lucky that only one unit was required," said her father, U Myo Hlaing.

Although the chemotherapy was provided free of charge by the Ministry of Health, the indirect costs associated with cancer, the treatment of which can last two years and involves lengthy hospital stays, puts a heavy toll on families who are already struggling to make ends meet.

Eight-year-old Htun Htun Min from Bago was diagnosed with leukaemia seven months ago. Both his parents are labourers and had to abandon their livelihoods to travel to Yangon Children's Hospital. Although they didn't have to pay for the medication, the travelling costs and loss of earnings dealt a severe blow to the family's finances. Although Htun Htun Min no longer has leukaemia, his case isn't straightforward, with infections reoccurring. When a private donor stepped forward to cover the ongoing travel costs, his parents were overwhelmed with relief.

"Our situation would have been impossible without the help of a donor," his mother Htin Htin Khine told *The Global New Light of Myanmar*.

Regular donors also turn up to the hospital at 7am and unload hot food for patients and their families in the car park. Some cover the costs of funerals. Any money donated to the hospital is given directly to the families.

Myanmar has just two paediatric oncology units: one is at Yangon Children's Hospital and the second is at Mandalay Children's Hospital. Dr Aye Aye Khaing established the first paediatric oncology unit in Myanmar in 2002. She is the head oncologist for the unit and the only one there: her work is supported by junior doctors and nurses, who are themselves too few in number.

Kyaw Min, 12, is from western



PHOTOS: JESSICA MUDDITT

The indirect costs associated with treating child cancer are a burden too great for some families, particularly those who live in remote areas.

Rakhine State and has refractory cancer, which means that it is resistant to treatment. He is completely bald and his wispy eyebrows border lifeless eyes.

"We are not winning," said Dr Aye Aye Khaing quietly.

Kyaw Min's parents are farmers and getting to Yangon involves travelling by boat and bus: it's a journey that takes 36 hours. It is difficult to imagine how the gravely ill 12-year-old has the stamina to cope with repeated trips to Yangon. His current visit will last a week and he and his mother will sleep on the second floor of the hospital, which is crowded with other patients and their families.

"We don't have proper accommodation for patients and their families. In the Philippines, there is House of Hope and in the US, Ronald McDonald House. I wish Myanmar had something like that," said Dr Aye Aye Khaing.

In Myanmar, a child's prospects of survival are determined by their family's socioeconomic status. The parents of a 13-year-old boy with a very rare form of cancer were able to pay for him to travel overseas for an investigation, which led to identifying the correct medication to administer to him when he returned to Myanmar, said Dr Aye Aye Khaing.

These children are among dozens of others sitting in a waiting

room at the paediatric oncology ward – including a woman cradling a five-month-old baby who has had cancer three times and is awaiting blood test results. Whilst the walls are decorated with colourful murals and there's a scattering of toys to play with, the children sit listlessly beside their parents. One boy sits atop a plastic slide with his head in his hands.

Around a hundred patients assemble at the ward every day. An average of 60 remain overnight as inpatients. The hospital is chronically short of manpower, but the situation has been improving since World Child Cancer set up a partnership with Yangon Children's Hospital and Boston Children's Hospital.

World Child Cancer is a charity that was established in 2007 and its activities in Myanmar are funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). World Child Cancer funds partnerships between hospitals in different parts of the world, with the aim of improving access to treatment and care for children with cancer and their families.

World Child Cancer estimates that between 1,600 and 3,000 children are diagnosed with cancer every year in Myanmar. One of the challenges is that diagnosis is often fatally late and only a fraction of cases are thought to be diagnosed.

"The typical scenario for a patient in Myanmar is that the cancer is

in the advanced stages: tumours are larger and more disseminated. The condition in which they arrive makes treatment more complicated. And many children are malnourished or have competing illnesses such as TB, HIV or parasitic diseases. And they are more vulnerable to infections if there is a lack of access to clean water," said Carlos Rodriguez-Galindo, a consultant paediatric oncologist who works with World Child Cancer.

The most common form of childhood cancer is leukaemia – it accounts for around half of all patients. Cure rates in the US and Europe are 90 percent, but due to limited supportive care in Myanmar, such as physiotherapy, nursing care, laboratory support and nutrition, a patient's chances of survival are fifty-fifty at best. Many children die from side effects, such as having a very low white blood cell count, which makes them prone to infections. Laboratory facilities are ill-equipped to identify various infections, which prevents doctors being able to select the correct antibiotics. A further problem is that the hospital cannot treat patients receiving high doses of chemotherapy, so doses are lower and therefore less effective, said Dr Sophie Dewar, a highly specialised clinical psychologist who works for World Child Cancer.

"The early symptoms of leukaemia usually include fever, fa-

tigue, paleness and feeling weak. It's sometimes mistaken for a virus because the symptoms are quite vague," said Lisa Morrissey, nurse manager at Boston Children's Hospital during a visit to Myanmar.

"Another big problem is that leukaemia treatment can last more than two years. A lot of families live far away. The costs of having to travel between their home and the hospital, which during the rainy season can become very difficult, and to sustain that over a long period, leads many families to abandon treatment. And sometimes parents are faced with choosing between caring for a sick child and being able to provide food for their other children," she added.

Dr Aye Aye Khaing estimates that as many as 60 percent of patients discontinue treatment. Although doggedly pragmatic, she agreed that has one of the most emotionally challenging jobs in the world.

"It's very tough. Paediatricians can generally see a bright outcome, such as a baby being born and discharged – the parents are so happy. Here, things are mostly very grave. I try to get parents to focus on the present. I'll say, 'Today your child is sleeping and eating and isn't in pain. Be happy for today.' But sometimes I know from the prognosis that a child isn't going to make it. Some of the nurses and doctors cannot cope," she said.

She said that one blessing is that child cancer is rare. Prevalence rates around the world differ little. According to the World Health Organisation, 1,500 children out of 100,000 under the age of 15 contract cancer, whereas the ratio for adults is 470. An estimated 90,000 children under the age of 15 die of cancer every year. Lifestyle factors are not considered to play a role in up to 90 percent of cases, as children are unlikely to be exposed to common risk factors. Scientists are yet to discover why some children contract cancer and others don't.

In September, World Child Cancer and Yangon Children's Hospital received support from the Citymart Love & Hope Foundation and have been working in partnership to improve care for children with cancer in Myanmar.

"Our new partnership with the Citymart Love and Hope Foundation is a welcome development. With this additional funding, Yangon Children's Hospital can now provide better nutrition to improve the overall health of the children during treatment, provide transport to help children and their families get to the care they need, and provide local community care to extend the reach of the hospital," said World Child Cancer UK CEO Jon Rosser.

"I'm confident that our focus on mentoring, education, facilitating partnerships, improving access to medicines and data collection practices has made a difference to the chances of Myanmar children beating cancer and having a future."

For decades, Myanmar's health system has been heavily centralised and chronically underfunded. However if the pledges contained in the National League of Democracy's election manifesto are fulfilled, there is hope on the horizon. The NLD has committed to "enable government hospitals and clinics to provide high-quality drugs and modern treatment methods [and] raise the qualifications of government health staff."

It will also "increase the national health budget, and enable a reduction in the level of out-of-pocket expenditure incurred by the public for medical treatment [and] will cooperate with international experts and organisations."

Ensuring that children with cancer in Myanmar have the best possible chance of survival will lessen the suffering that many families are currently enduring.

To donate to the children's cancer ward at Yangon Children's Hospital, email Dr Aye Aye Khaing: [ayeayekhaing.dr@gmail.com](mailto:ayeayekhaing.dr@gmail.com)

For more information about World Child Cancer, visit [www.worldchildcancer.org](http://www.worldchildcancer.org)



Patients and families at the paediatric oncology unit at Yangon Children's Hospital.



A mother holds her five-month-old baby as she waits for test results.



Survival rates for childhood cancer in Myanmar are far lower than those in developed countries.



A father waits in a staircase with his son at the paediatric oncology unit.



# Russia buries a fallen soldier, but won't confirm where he fell

PALTSO — Russian serviceman Fyodor Zhuravlyov left home in a rush. He only managed to scrawl a phone number and a few words to his wife on a sheet of paper.

"I'm away on a work trip," the note said, according to a family friend.

Zhuravlyov's wife never saw him again. Late last week the military contacted the family to say that he was killed in combat on Thursday, 19 November.

The 27-year-old now joins the growing ranks of the Russian army's unexplained dead, victims of the Kremlin's military engagements inside Russia and, in the past few years, beyond its borders too that are so secretive nobody will officially acknowledge where the deaths have occurred.

Some of the deaths have occurred in Ukraine, where Russian troops have backed separatist rebels, though the Kremlin denies that. Others may have happened in Syria, where Russia says it is helping government forces fight Islamist extremists but only acknowledges a limited military presence.

Zhuravlyov's death was first noticed by Conflict Intelligence Team, a group of Russian investigative bloggers, who used social media posts and other sources to uncover information about Russian military deaths in Ukraine.

At Zhuravlyov's funeral on Tuesday in his home village in western Russia, the commander of his unit said he died while taking part in a counter-terrorism operation in Russia's mainly Muslim region of the North Caucasus, in which armed forces killed 14 Islamist militants in the Kabardino-Balkaria republic.

However, that operation took place on Sunday, according to an official statement, three days after the date of Zhuravlyov's death, inscribed on the plaque attached to a polished wooden cross planted at the head of his grave.

There was no public record of any security forces having been killed in that operation. Russia's southern military district, which



A view shows the grave of Russian serviceman Fyodor Zhuravlyov after the funeral at a cemetery in the village of Paltso, Bryansk region, Russia, on 24 November. PHOTO: REUTERS

oversees military activities in a region that includes Kabardino-Balkaria, declined to comment. The family friend and another person, a neighbor, who knows Zhuravlyov's family, both said they believed he could have been killed in Syria, though they had no evidence for this. "And where else could he die?" said the friend, who had been in touch with the family since Zhuravlyov's death.

Reuters has been unable to independently confirm that information. Zhuravlyov's elder brother Alexander, himself a military serviceman, also said he had been killed in an operation inside Russia.

The Russian defence ministry and the foreign ministry did not respond to questions from Reuters about where Zhuravlyov was killed and whether it was in an overseas operation. Russian law allows the state to treat military casualties as a secret.

Russia says its ground forces stationed in Syria are not in combat roles, except in exceptional circumstances. It says it has a force of marines protecting Tartous, the

port Russia's navy leases from the Syrian government, troops guarding an air base near Latakia, also on the Mediterranean, and instructors training Syrian forces how to use Russian-supplied weapons systems.

But there have been persistent reports, denied by Russian officials, that Russian soldiers have been fighting alongside the forces of Moscow's ally, Syrian President Bashar al Assad.

Zhuravlyov was buried in a metal coffin, carried to the grave with the casket lid shut, in a break with the usual Russian tradition of an open coffin.

His photo, in a black frame, on his grave showed a young army captain with small metal parachutes attached to his military tunic. They indicated he was a part of the elite air landing forces, one of Russia's main assault formations. According to Zhuravlyov's mother, Ludmila, he graduated from Ryazan Higher Airborne Command School.

The family friend said he later joined a special forces unit of the Main Intelligence Directorate, the intelligence arm of the Russian mil-

itary known by its Russian initials GRU. Zhuravlyov lived in Solnechnogorsk outside Moscow, the friend said, the same town where a special forces unit is garrisoned which, according to a report two years ago by Russian state broadcaster Russia Today, has special dispensation to conduct secret operations abroad.

To the sounds of a funeral march performed by a military band, the coffin with Zhuravlyov's body was carried from his parent's modest home, through the streets of the village, to the church for a funeral service.

Family members followed behind, some of them weeping.

Later, at the burial ceremony attended by about 100 people, Zhuravlyov's commander wiped tears from his eyes and addressed the officer's parents: "Forgive us that we didn't save him."

A military guard of honor fired a volley into the air.

The burial over, mourners dispersed but Zhuravlyov's parents were the last to leave, his mother lingering next to the cross on his grave.—Reuters

## Human error led to deadly US strike on Afghan hospital

WASHINGTON — A US investigation found that the deadly 3 October air strike in Afghanistan that destroyed a hospital run by Medecins Sans Frontieres was a tragic and avoidable accident caused primarily by human error, a top US military commander said on Wednesday.

Some US personnel were suspended and could face disciplinary action after failing to follow US rules of engagement in a war zone, said US Army General John Campbell, who leads international forces in Afghanistan.

It remained unclear whether the US military, even as it expressed remorse and wholly accepted blame, would be able to quickly mend its image in Afghanistan and elsewhere after the attack, which killed 30 people.

MSF's general director Christopher Stokes said in a statement on Wednesday that the investigation illustrated "gross negligence" by US forces.

"This was a tragic mistake. US forces would never intentionally strike a hospital or other protected facilities," Campbell said at a Pentagon news conference, releasing the results of the US investigation.

MSF, known as Doctors Without Borders in English, has in the past publicly cast doubt on the idea that the strike could have been a mistake.

Detailing its own investigation on 5 November, MSF said the site's location had been clearly communicated to both Afghan forces and the Taliban. "The frightening catalogue of errors outlined today illustrates gross negligence on the part of US forces and violations of the rules of war," Stokes said in his statement. "MSF reiterates its call for an independent and impartial investigation into the attack on our hospital in Kunduz."

Campbell acknowledged the hospital was on a no-strike list and that MSF had called during the attack to alert the US-led forces. He described a series of mistakes that allowed the American forces to destroy the hospital, despite the call. According to the US investigation, US forces had meant to target a different building in the city and were led off-track by a technical error in their aircraft's mapping system that initially directed them to an empty field.—Reuters

## Cameron says time to start bombing militants in Syria

LONDON — Prime Minister David Cameron told MPs yesterday it was time to join air strikes against Islamic State militants in Syria, saying Britain cannot "sub-contract its security to other countries".

Cameron, who lost a vote on air strikes against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's forces in 2013, needs to persuade several MPs in his own Conservative Party and some in the opposition Labour Party to back his cause if he is to win parliament's backing for military action. Parliament's Foreign Af-

fairs Committee criticised extending air strikes into Syria earlier this month, saying that without a clear strategy to defeat the militants and end the civil war such action was "incoherent".

But since Islamic State claimed responsibility for killing

130 people in Paris, some MPs who were reluctant to launch new strikes in Syria have increasingly felt action was needed to protect Britain from such attacks.

"We do not have the luxury of being able to wait until the Syrian conflict is resolved before tackling

ISIL (Islamic State)," Cameron wrote in a response to the committee's objections. He said in his 24-page response the campaign against Islamic State was entering a new phase, focussing on command and control, supply lines and financial support - something Britain could contribute well to. "It is wrong for the United Kingdom to sub-contract its security to other countries, and to expect the aircrews of other nations to carry the burdens and the risks of striking ISIL in Syria to stop terrorism here in Britain," he said.—Reuters

**"We do not have the luxury of being able to wait until the Syrian conflict is resolved before tackling Islamic State."**

David Cameron  
UK Prime Minister

# Wheelchair users more likely to die in car crashes



A wheelchair is pictured next to a walking frame during a media presentation in the 300-square-metre therapeutic garden of the Acute Neurological Rehabilitation Unit at Lausanne University Hospital (CHUV) in Lausanne, Switzerland. PHOTO: REUTERS

WASHINGTON — Wheelchair users may be more likely to die in collisions with cars than other pedestrians, an analysis of US crash data suggests.

Pedestrians in wheelchairs were 36 percent more likely to die in these crashes than other people, the examination of accident records found.

Men's risk was more than five times higher than the fatality odds for female wheelchair users.

The data don't show why wheelchair users may be more vulnerable than other pedestrians. But the findings suggest that city planners should consider ways to make sidewalks safer and drivers should be aware that people in wheelchairs may not move or re-

act in the same way as others do, said study co-author John Kraemer of the Department of Health Systems Administration at Georgetown University in Washington.

"It is entirely possible that people who use wheelchairs may be at greater risk of death if they are in a pedestrian crash perhaps because drivers are less likely to see them, brake, and collide slower; because being lower to the ground wheelchair users may be hit more squarely; or because some people who use wheelchairs may have pre-existing medical vulnerabilities," Kraemer said by email.

But regardless of the reasons that wheelchair users may be

more vulnerable, the take home message for drivers is the same, he said.

"Pay attention, stop texting, obey stops and speed limits," Kraemer said. "But also remember that there are road users like bicyclists and pedestrians like people with disabilities who may not be moving in exactly the same ways they would expect."

In the US alone, nearly 5,000 pedestrians are killed and another 76,000 are injured on public roadways each year, Kraemer and co-author Connor Benton at the Georgetown University School of Medicine write in the journal *BMJ Open Access*.

To assess how vulnerable wheelchair users may be in car crashes, they looked at data from 2006 to 2012 from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System, which is based on police reports of collisions, as well as data from news reports of accidents.

The researchers calculated that approximately 528 pedestrians using wheelchairs were killed in road traffic collisions during the study period, a death rate that is more than a third higher for wheelchair users than for the general population.

Almost half of fatal crashes occurred in intersections and about 39 percent of these collisions happened in locations without any traffic control devices such as stoplights, the analysis found. —Reuters

# Scientists create mosquito strain with malaria-blocking genes

WASHINGTON — Scientists aiming to take the bite out of malaria have produced a strain of mosquitoes carrying genes that block its transmission, with the idea that they could breed with other members of their species in the wild and produce offspring that cannot spread the disease.

The researchers said on Monday they used gene-editing, a genetic engineering technique in which DNA can be inserted, replaced or deleted from a genome, on a species called *Anopheles stephensi* that spreads malaria in urban India.

They inserted DNA into the germ line, cells that pass on genes from generation to generation, of the species, creating mosquitoes with genes that prevent malaria transmission by producing malaria-blocking antibodies that are passed on to 99.5 percent of offspring.

Malaria is caused by parasites transmitted to people through the bites of infected female mosquitoes. The goal is to release genetically modified mosquitoes to mate with wild mosquitoes so that their malaria-blocking genes enter the gene pool and eventually overrun the population, short-circuiting the species' ability to infect people with the parasites.

"It can spread through a population with great efficiency, increasing from 1 percent to more than 99 percent in 10 gen-

erations, or about one season for mosquitoes," University of California-San Diego biologist Valentino Gantz said.

University of California-San Diego biologist Ethan Bier called this a "potent tool in sustainable control of malaria," as all the mosquitoes in a given region would carry anti-malarial genes. "We do not propose that this strategy alone will eradicate malaria," University of California-Irvine molecular biologist Anthony James said.

But in conjunction with treatment and preventive drugs, future vaccines, mosquito-blocking bed nets and eradication of mosquito-breeding sites, it could play a major role in sustaining the elimination of malaria, James said. Other scientists also have been working to create genetically engineered mosquitoes. One group last year said it created a strain carrying a gene leading nearly all offspring to be male, which could cause wild populations to plummet.

"In contrast, our much more flexible system only prevents mosquitoes from carrying malaria but can be used to do no harm to the mosquito. So it should generate the least amount of ecological damage," Bier said. The UN World Health Organisation estimates there will be 214 million cases of malaria worldwide in 2015 and 438,000 deaths, most in sub-Saharan Africa. —Reuters

# Red meat linked to increased stroke risk

NEW YORK — Red meat — but not other types of protein — is linked to an increased stroke risk, and the odds go up the more meat people eat, a recent study suggests.

Researchers analysed data on about 11,000 middle-aged people who didn't have other risk factors for strokes such as diabetes or heart disease, and followed half of them for around 23 years.

The people in the study who consumed the most red meat had a 47 percent higher risk of ischemic stroke — caused by blockages in blood vessels supplying the brain — than those who typically ate the smallest amount of red meat. Protein from poultry, seafood or vegetable sources like nuts and legumes wasn't associated with any added risk.

Even though some previous research has linked high-protein diets to strokes, the results have been mixed and the current study helps solidify the evidence suggesting that red meat in particular may pose a danger, said lead

study author Dr. Bernhard Haring of the Comprehensive Heart Failure Centre at the University of Wurzburg in Germany.

"It's ok to eat red meat — preferably lean red meat — as long as you limit the amount," Haring said by email.

To assess the link between protein consumption and stroke risk, Haring and colleagues reviewed data from diet questionnaires completed by US residents aged 45 to 64 starting in 1987 and followed them through 2011 to see how many people had strokes.

The study participants were divided into five groups based on how much protein and what type they consumed.

For instance, the bottom-fifth averaged about 49 grams of protein a day, representing less than 13 percent of total calories. The top-fifth averaged 93 grams of protein a day, representing 23 percent of total calories.

Compared to participants with high protein consumption, those who ate less protein on average at the start of the study

were more likely to be black, current smokers and less likely to have high school diplomas or a regular exercise routine. The people who ate less protein were also less likely to be obese or take cholesterol-lowering medications.

There were no major differences in age, gender, or total calories consumed among participants who ate different amounts of protein.

During a median follow-up of 22.7 years, there were 699 strokes among 11,601 participants.

**"It's ok to eat red meat — preferably lean red meat — as long as you limit the amount."**

Dr Bernhard Haring  
Comprehensive Heart  
Failure Centre

The highest intake of processed meats like bacon, sausage and jerky was linked to a 24 percent higher risk of strokes, while the highest consumption of red meat was tied to a 41 percent increased risk, compared to people in the bottom-fifth for consumption of those items.

When the researchers looked just at men, the highest consumers of red and processed meats had a 62 percent higher stroke risk than men who ate the least.

Eating more eggs was linked to a 41 percent greater risk of hemorrhagic strokes, a less common type that is caused by a ruptured blood vessel in the brain. But only red meats were tied to ischemic strokes, the most common kind.

One limitation of the study is that researchers only had data on protein intake at two points in time, which the authors acknowledge might fail to account for changes in eating habits over the years.

Because the study was based on observation only and didn't

randomly assign some people to eat red meat while others abstained, it isn't possible to determine how diet changes might help reduce the risk of future strokes, noted Dr. Jennifer Dearborn-Tomazos, a neurology researcher at Yale University School of Medicine in New Haven, Connecticut.

It's possible, for example, that people who eat a lot of red meat also do other things that increase the risk of strokes, like not eating enough vegetables, Dearborn-Tomazos, who wasn't involved in the study, said by email.

Even so, the study findings linking red meat to stroke risk after accounting for how much fat, carbohydrates and fiber people consumed supports traditionally held beliefs that red meat and saturated fats may increase the risk of cardiovascular disease, she said. "This study really tells us that what we eat matters for our future cardiovascular health," Dearborn-Tomazos said. —Reuters

## Remember the 71 bodies in truck when demonising migrants

EISENSTADT — An Austrian investigator yesterday urged politicians and others who dismiss refugees as criminals or economic migrants to remember the 71 dead people abandoned in a meat lorry on an Austrian motorway.

The discovery of the decomposing bodies in an airtight truck on 27 August shocked the world at a time when the biggest migrant wave since World War II was moving through Europe.

The migrant crisis has given a boost to anti-immigrant parties across the continent. Speaking yesterday of the symbolic power of the case, Hans Peter Doskozil took aim at those seeking to demonise migrants who risk their lives to flee war and destruction.

“One must always keep in mind how these people feel and what pressure they are exposed to when one casually suspects them of criminality or says they are only economic migrants,” Doskozil told a news conference. “I hope and I wish that this incident will stay in the minds of people and decision makers.” Austria’s far-right and Islam-critical Freedom Party has seen its popularity soar since the summer, regularly scoring more than 30 percent in opinion polls despite xenophobic gaffes by its representatives.—*Reuters*

## 15 killed in Mi-8 helicopter crash in Russia

MOSCOW — A Mi-8 helicopter crashed in Russia’s Krasnoyarsk region yesterday, killing 15 people onboard.

Russia’s Emergency Situation Ministry confirmed there were altogether 25 people, including three crew members and 22 passengers, onboard. The 10 people that survived have been hospitalised, Oksana Gorbunova, spokeswoman for the West Siberian Transport Prosecutor’s Office was quoted as saying by the Interfax news agency.

The helicopter, en route to an oilfield in the region, crashed near the airport of Igarka and was found lying on its side on the right bank of the Yenisey River, a statement of Russia’s Investigative Committee said.

It was unknown yet what had caused the accident. Interfax quoted an unnamed source from emergency services as saying that it could have been resulted from a technical malfunction.—*Xinhua*

# Mud from Brazil dam burst is toxic: UN

RIO DE JANEIRO — Mud from a dam that burst at an iron ore mine in Brazil earlier this month, killing 12 people and polluting an important river, is toxic, the United Nations’ human rights agency said on Wednesday.

The statement contradicts claims by Samarco, the mine operator at the site of the rupture, and Samarco’s co-owner, BHP Billiton, that the water and mineral waste contained by the dam are not toxic.

Citing “new evidence,” the UN’s Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights said in a statement the residue “contained high levels of toxic heavy metals and other toxic chemicals”.

The agency did not identify the studies that were the basis for the evidence or say who conducted them, and a spokesman in Geneva was not immediately available for comment.

The owners of Samarco, Brazil’s Vale SA and Australia’s BHP, said they are taking every measure possible to provide emergency assistance to those affected by the dam break and to reduce the social and economic impacts of the disaster.

Samarco said in a statement that both pre- and post-disaster tests show the mud released in the dam burst, made up mostly of water, iron oxides and silica or quartz, presents no danger to human health and does not contain water contaminants.

BHP reiterated on Thursday the tailings that entered the Rio Doce were made up of clay and silt from processing earth containing iron ore and were “chemically stable”.



An aerial view of the Rio Doce (Doce River), which was flooded with mud after a dam owned by Vale SA and BHP Billiton Ltd burst at an area where the river joins the sea on the coast of Espirito Santo in Regencia Village, Brazil. PHOTO: REUTERS

“They will not change chemical composition in water and will behave in the environment like normal soils in the catchment,” BHP said, meaning that any metals in the sediment were non-reactive and would not leach into water.

BHP declined to comment on the UN’s report as it had not seen it, but said it was trying to contact the UN’s rapporteur to understand his comments.

While iron and manganese levels in the mud are above normal, Samarco said, they are below dangerous levels.

Biologists have been shocked by the impact of the burst dam, which Brazil’s government has called the country’s worst-ever

environmental disaster.

The mud has killed thousands of fish as it flows through the Rio Doce, the river which connects the mineral-rich state of Minas Gerais with Espirito Santo on the Atlantic coast.

BHP said the fish were most likely being choked to death by the sheer volume of fine sediment released by the dam burst clogging their gills, rather than the chemical composition of the sludge.

“Based on the evidence available, the concentration of sediment suspended in the water in the Rio Doce, as a result of the tailings being released, was high enough to starve the fish of oxygen,” a BHP spokesman said.

The 60 million cubic me-

tres of mine waste, equivalent to 25,000 Olympic swimming pools, cut off drinking water for a quarter of a million people. The dense orange sediment has now reached the ocean.

The huge volume of sediment in the water is the same factor that has overwhelmed water treatment plants along the Rio Doce and led Samarco to supply 100 million litres of drinking water and mineral water to towns along the river.

The UN statement criticised the response of the companies and the Brazilian government as “insufficient,” saying, “the government and companies should be doing everything within their power to prevent further harm”.—*Reuters*

## Paris attacks a reason Canada slowing Syria migrant flow: Prime Minister

OTTAWA — Public security concerns after the Paris attacks were part of the reason Canada pushed back its end-year deadline for accepting 25,000 Syrian refugees, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on Wednesday.

The federal government on Tuesday announced it was aiming to welcome the refugees by the end of February rather than 1 January and said all necessary security checks would be carried out in the region rather than in Canada.

Critics said the initial plan was too ambitious and would lead to rushed security procedures, especially in the wake of the 13 November attacks in Paris for which Islamic State claimed responsibility.

“One of the things that changed with Paris was the perception that Canadians had ... (they) had a few more questions,” Trudeau told reporters in

London when asked about the new deadline. Canada will spend up to C\$678 million (\$510 million) over six years flying in the refugees from Turkey, Syria and Jordan and then helping resettle them. The first flight is due to leave from the region early next month.

Aid groups preparing to resettle the refugees in Canada welcomed the new timeline, especially given thin resources on the ground after a decade of cuts to refugee flows by the previous

Conservative government.

“Most of the organisations and institutions doing the welcoming will be happy to have a few extra weeks to get ready,” said Janet Dench, executive director of the Canadian Council for Refugees, a high-profile umbrella group for the settlement and sponsorship of refugees and immigrants. While Canada has welcomed big groups of refugees in the past - including 5,000 Kosovars in 1999 and 60,000 Vietnamese between 1979 and 1980

— the Conservative government that preceded Trudeau’s Liberals, who won an election in October, shifted focus to skilled immigrants who met strict economic criteria rather than refugees.

In 2014, 23,286 refugees were admitted to Canada, down from 35,775 in 2005, according to government data.

The move away from refugee resettlement meant many agencies dedicated to the task of helping refugees find housing, jobs, schooling, language classes have cut staff, programs and services for a decade.

“In last 10 years we’ve been seeing a lot of cuts to the sector, a lot of cuts — anywhere between 2 percent of the budget to 100 percent of the budget, which was quite traumatising, very disheartening,” said Huda Bukhari, executive director of the Arab Community Centre of Toronto.—*Reuters*

**“Most of the organisations and institutions doing the welcoming will be happy to have a few extra weeks to get ready.”**

Janet Dench

Executive Director of the Canadian Council for Refugees

# Nuclear exit unthinkable for climate conference host France

PARIS — Early this year, France's state energy and environment agency was set to publish a study that found the country could realistically abandon nuclear reactors and rely completely on renewable power in decades to come.

But the presentation was scrapped under political pressure, with Energy Minister Segolene Royal later saying the agency needed to be "coherent" with government targets.

The episode illustrated the tensions surrounding energy policy in a country steeped in nuclear power since the 1970s and which relies on it for three-quarters of its electricity - more than any other nation.

Any suggestion of abandoning the atom is unthinkable for many in France, where scientists played a key role in discovering radioactivity, atomic energy is broadly accepted by all major political parties except the greens and the nuclear industry employs 220,000 people.

Ahead of the UN climate change conference in Paris next week, the French position exposes the lack of any consistent European policy on how best to switch from polluting fossil fuels to cleaner energy and reduce carbon emissions.

In Germany, the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster led to an exit from nuclear



General view of the construction site of the third-generation European Pressurised Water nuclear reactor (EPR) in Flamanville, north-western France in 2013. PHOTO: REUTERS

and a massive switch to renewables, while many other countries also decided to phase out nuclear.

But French lawmakers in July voted only to cap nuclear capacity at current levels and to reduce its share in the power mix to 50 percent by 2025 — without announcing any concrete steps towards that goal. They also backed a government target for renewables to generate 40 percent of power by 2030.

The study by state energy and environment agency ADEME — tasked with leading France's energy transition — had found, by contrast, that France could switch to 100 percent re-

newable energy for power generation by 2050 at a cost similar to sticking with atomic energy for 50 percent of its power.

"We show that a hypothesis that most stakeholders thought was unthinkable, is actually technically possible," ADEME head Bruno Lechevin wrote.

The report was finally published in October — months after lawmakers had approved the government's energy transition law — and included a carefully worded introduction by Lechevin, saying it was "an exploratory scientific study, not a political scenario".

France's heavy reliance

on nuclear power means it is, in some respects, a model for low-carbon power generation, but that also makes it harder to consider a shift to renewable energy.

The nuclear industry argues world leaders at the COP21 conference in Paris next week should not have to choose between nuclear and renewables but between low-carbon energy — including nuclear — and fossil fuels.

"We were surprised to see that the draft COP21 documents do not mention nuclear energy at all as a solution to climate change," said Isabelle Jouette of French nuclear lobby SFEN.—*Reuters*

## US, British, French foreign ministers planning to visit A-bomb park

TOKYO — The foreign ministers of three nuclear powers — the United States, Britain and France — plan to visit Hiroshima's peace park for the first time when they gather in the western Japanese city in April for a Group of Seven meeting, a diplomatic source said Wednesday.

The nuclear weapons states among the G-7 have informed the Japanese government that their top diplomats will visit the Peace Memorial Park, in response to Tokyo's invitation to do so to learn about the catastrophic consequences of atomic weapons, the source said.

Tokyo hopes the ministers' visit will build momentum for nuclear disar-

mament after talks at a UN review conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in spring collapsed and failed to produce a consensus document.

In the grouping, the foreign ministers of non-nuclear nations Canada, Germany and Italy have already visited Hiroshima, which was devastated by a US atomic bombing on 6 August, 1945, in World War II.

Japan also wants to use the opportunity to spur efforts toward a visit to Hiroshima or Nagasaki by US President Barack Obama, who has stated he seeks a world free of nuclear weapons, when he comes to Japan to attend the Ise-Shima G-7 summit in May in cen-

tral Japan, the source said.

No US president has paid such a visit due to strong opinions back home that the atomic bombings were justified as a means to ending the war. Three days after Hiroshima was devastated in the world's first atomic bombing, a second US atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki in southwestern Japan.

A Japanese government source said the G-7 foreign ministers including Japan's Fumio Kishida are expected to visit the park and lay flowers there together during their stay for talks on 10 to 11 April.

They are also expected to visit the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum within the park to listen to stories

about what happened after the atomic bombing.

Kishida had directly invited his US counterpart, Secretary of State John Kerry, to visit the park together, to which Kerry agreed. Tokyo has also secured the consent of France and Britain on their ministers informally, the source said.

Earlier this month, a Japan-sponsored resolution calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons was adopted at the UN General Assembly First Committee on disarmament issues, for the first time referring to the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings. The document calls for visits by leaders to the cities devastated by the use of nuclear weapons.—*Kyodo News*

### Engagement Announcement

Myat Mon Soe (B.C.Tech) (U.C.S.Y)  
Daughter of Dr. Maung Maung Soe (B.D.S) (YGN)  
residing in Yangon, Myanmar is engaged to  
Win Thu (B.C.Sc) (U.C.S.Y)  
Signalman at Union Pacific Railroad, USA  
Son of U Thein Myint and Daw Nwet Nwet Yi,  
residing in Los Angeles, California, USA.

The engagement ceremony was held on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015 (Sunday) at Park Royal Hotel, Padamyar Room 3, Yangon, Myanmar. Both sides of parents would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all honorable dignitaries, all relatives and friends, presented personally at the ceremony and those who earnestly extended assistance in everything at the engagement ceremony.

With parents and  
Win Thu + Myat Mon Soe

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV BC SANFRANCISCO VOY NO (019W)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BC SANFRANCISCO VOY NO (019W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27.11.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's 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 ORIENT OVERSEA  
CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV YANGON STAR VOY NO (045 7JR)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV YANGON STAR VOY NO (045 7JR) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27.11.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's 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 CMA CGM

Phone No: 2301185

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# Charlie Chaplin spun his Tramp costume into gold

LONDON — Charlie Chaplin once said that all anyone needed to make a funny film was “a park, a policeman and a pretty girl”. Chaplin failed to mention the “Tramp” costume that made him world famous.

You can see one of the women — among four Chaplin married in the course of his 88 years — in a glistening, outsized black-and-white picture of Paulette Goddard with a stolen bunch of bananas from “Modern Times” in “The Chaplin Archives”, a hefty book whose author calls it a “Blu-ray” high-definition tribute to the legendary comic actor and filmmaker.

Produced by the specialist German-based publisher Taschen Books, this 560-page tome weighing 7 kg (15 lb) and roughly the dimensions of a small television set, can hardly be read in bed and overwhelms many cocktail tables.

But it fulfils what English author Paul Duncan says was his goal of recreating Chaplin’s career chronologically — as he lived it — to mark, roughly, the centenary of the penniless English vaudevilian’s start in the movies, when he jumped ship from a theater company touring the United States.

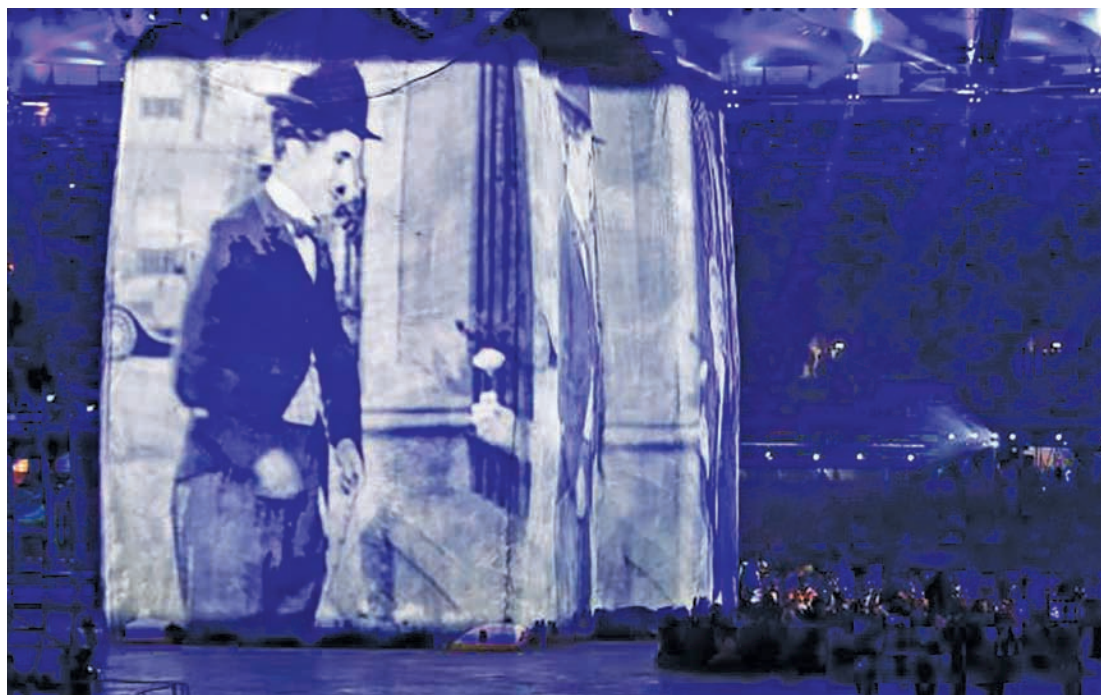


Image of actor Charlie Chaplin is projected onto a structure during the opening ceremony of the London 2012 Olympic Games at the Olympic Stadium, Britain. PHOTO: REUTERS

Reproduced on page 47 is Chaplin’s first movie contract, with Keystone, dated 25 September, 1913, for what to Chaplin was the then-princely sum of \$150 a week.

The rest, as anyone who has an eye for great movie-making

and funny films will know, is history. His oeuvre included silent film slapstick classics like “City Lights” and “Modern Times” before he embraced sound with political satire like “The Great Dictator” and black comedy including “Monsieur Verdun”.

“What I wanted to do was make it an oral history, so it’s actually Chaplin and his collaborators talking as you read the book, you’re reading about the events of his life and how he made his films,” Duncan told Reuters in an interview.

With access granted to the Chaplin family archives, and help from the Cineteca di Bologna with restored films, Duncan said that although there have been countless books on Chaplin over the years, this one is different.

“He’s always been so private and he kept things secret and I wanted to tell that story, the story of how he made his movies,” Duncan said.

“Between the documents and the oral history and the things that I found that the actual people who were there when the films were made said, they’re telling the story so there’s never a quote from somebody who wasn’t there.”

There is enduring interest in Chaplin, who died in 1977 and made his last film, “A Countess from Hong Kong” starring Sophia Loren and Marlon Brando, in 1967.

For the British market, the specialist film company Curzon Artificial Eye is releasing a new, boxed set of 10 of Chaplin’s films, plus extra features and shorts, in December. “I don’t think his appeal will ever fade,” Mark Towers, the product manager, said in an emailed response to questions. —Reuters



PHOTO: REUTERS

## David Beckham fears for his sexiest man alive crown

LONDON — Former soccer ace David Beckham has jokingly suggested Ben Stiller is trying to steal his crown as the Sexiest Man Alive.

The retired sports star was handed the coveted honour by *People* magazine last week, but has claimed Stiller’s on-screen alter-ego Derek Zoolander is try-

ing to knock him off his perch.

Beckham, 40, took to his Instagram account to post a picture of Ben on the front of the magazine and captioned it: “I’m barely a week into my reign and already this man is trying to steal my thunder AGAIN @people-mag #sexiestmanalive #blues-teel.”—PTI

## Pop artist Allen Jones revisits work with Kate Moss in new London show

LONDON — British pop artist Allen Jones returns to the subject of supermodel Kate Moss in his latest exhibition in London, which once more puts the female form centre-stage in sculptures ranging from the hyper-realistic to the abstract.

The 78-year-old artist has been exploring the female figure in his work for half a century, with some of his earlier pieces such as “Hatstand”, “Table” and “Chair” provoking controversy for their sexual charge.

“I’m totally uninterested in shocking people, I’m quite inter-

ested in shocking art,” Jones said during a press preview for the “Colour Matters” exhibition.

“Somehow or other, it became clear to me about 45 years ago that it was the figure that I was really preoccupied with, and depicting it and the relationships that figures can have with each other is ... basically my subject matter.”

Jones is also known for his 2013 work “Body Armour”, a portrait of Moss wearing a body cast sculpture that he had made in 1978. He has also produced paintings and other sculptures of Moss, and the latest of them, “A

Model Model”, made of polished stainless steel and cast resin, features in this show.

Jones said Moss had become his subject by accident. “I didn’t choose Kate (Moss). A collector who was involved with Kate, and obsessed with her, really, chose me.

“I was one of many artists who’d been asked to respond to Kate and I felt, since I spent my life painting the idealized female figure, that I’d be failing in my professional duty if I couldn’t take on the challenge of painting one of the icons of our time.”—Reuters

## Lawrence to make directorial debut with ‘Project Delirium’

LOS ANGELES — Actress

Jennifer Lawrence will be making her directorial debut with “Project Delirium.”

The 25-year-old “Hunger Games” star said she wanted to direct since she was 16, reported Entertainment Weekly.

“I’ve signed on to direct something called ‘Project Delirium’. It’s based on this article about mental warfare in the ‘60s, like an acid experiment gone terribly wrong.

“It’s funny, I’ve wanted to direct since I was 16 and always thought I should start making steps towards that. If I had tried to do it earlier, I wouldn’t have been ready.

Now I actually feel ready,” Lawrence said. Fresh from the success of “The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 2”, the Oscar-winning actress is currently working on a comedy with Amy Schumer.—PTI



PHOTO: REUTERS

## Belgian tourist boards parade cats to lure back tourists after lockdown

BRUSSELS — Belgium's tourist boards have latched onto a social media craze of cats that gave Brussels light relief during a tense five-day security lockdown in the wake of militant attacks in Paris.

Images of the city's streets deserted as security forces hunted suspected Islamist militants have dealt a blow to Belgium's tourism industry, with hotels reporting many cancellations.

When police on Sunday asked the public in Brussels not to share details of their operations on social media, Belgians took to tweeting each other pictures of their cats.

Capitalising on the social media hit, Belgium's three tourist authorities have now released

a 20 second video film showing cats at Brussels's landmarks such as the historic Grand Place or the Atomium, which they said was filmed at the height of the lockdown.

The video depicts cats dancing all over the city, some wearing black bowler hats or with green apples in front of their faces in a nod to paintings of the Belgian surrealist painter Rene Magritte.

In the background, a saxophone is heard, an invention of the Belgian Adolphe Sax. The original trend drew a warm response on social media, and the tourist authorities said they wanted to show how proud they were of Brussels and its residents for their good-humoured

response to the crisis. Belgium's capital has been on maximum alert since Saturday over the threat of a possible Paris-style attack. A coordinated assault in which 130 people were killed in Paris on 13 November was claimed by Islamic State.

Brussels, home to the European Commission, reopened its metro system and schools on Wednesday, albeit with armed police and soldiers still patrolling.

"Tourism Flanders, Visit Brussels and Wallonia-Brussels Tourism are proud of the people of Brussels and wanted to give them an extra boost," they said. "Their winking cats evoked great sympathy at home and abroad."—Reuters

## Japanese, Pakistani archaeologists strive to save threatened heritage

MANSEHRA — Twenty Pakistani university students gathered around rocks and boulders inscribed with ancient writing in the northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa last month to learn from a Japanese researcher how to use smart phones and cameras to photograph them.

The fieldwork involving Atsushi Noguchi of the Japanese Centre for South Asian Cultural Heritage came after his Tokyo-based nonprofit organisation recently signed a memorandum of understanding with Hazara University to set up a center to document Pakistan's archeological heritage.

Their cooperation may have started modestly, but it has the potential to grow into a premier project given the need of the hour for both development and for preservation and protection of world heritage.

The centre will begin documenting the archeological sites and remains in the Hazara region, including the Mansehra Rock Edicts which date from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. and are tentatively being considered for nomination as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

They are cut into the surface of three large boulders on the side of a rocky outcrop close to the city of Mansehra, on what is believed to be the same route used by Marco Polo and other adventurer traders and travellers to travel between Europe and China.

The inscriptions, which record 14 edicts of the Maurya Dynasty emperor Ashoka and are written in Kharosthim, the ancient script used in Gandhara culture, represent the earliest irrefutable evidence of writing in

South Asia.

"The important theme of Ashoka preaching was the sanctity of life, especially animal life," a roadside board at the site says.

"This place was probably a Serai, an inn where travellers of the ancient silk route made stopovers," said Mohammad Zahir of Archeology Department at Hazara University.

The etchings must once have been visible from a long distance but now only their outline can be discerned from close quarters.

Once the students get a rudimentary understanding of using cameras and laptops, they would be trained in 3D laser technology. Pakistan has rich archeological remnants rooted in the Indus and Gandhara civilizations, but much of it is rapidly deteriorating for lack of maintenance and due to the harsh environment.

Zahir hopes to realise documentation of thousands of such inscriptions and rock arts carvings now threatened with destruction by the proposed construction of Diamer-Bhasha Dam over the Indus River.

The Pakistan government is toying with the idea of constructing the dam in the Gilgit-Baltistan region, but the idea is opposed by regional governments of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh provinces which believe the dam would rob them of their share of water needed for irrigation.

Environmentalists also oppose the project on grounds that a minimum flow of the river's water downstream is necessary to save Sindh from desertification. International donors are also reluctant to take part in the financing of the project because



Atsushi Noguchi from the Japanese Centre for South Asian Cultural Heritage.

PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

of environmental and archeological considerations.

Environmental studies have revealed that the 200-square-kilometre lake to be created by the dam would submerge thousands of rock carvings belonging to Indus and Gandhara civilizations and displace 50,000 people from their ancestral lands.

However, the government in Islamabad is determined to bulldoze through the opposition and has announced plans to solicit foreign and domestic commercial borrowing to build the \$4.14 billion project.

"Bhasha Dam was the rallying point to set up the documentation centre. We should make maximum efforts to protect the ancient monuments that would be inundated by the dam," Zahir said.

Last July, Zahir and Noguchi visited the dam site and agreed to document the carvings threatened by the dam as early as possible.—Kyodo News



### News Channel in Brief

(27-11-2015, Friday)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>6:00 am</b><br/>• Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw</p> <p><b>6:35 am</b><br/>• Physical Exercises</p> <p><b>6:45 am</b><br/>• Documentary</p> <p><b>7:00 am</b><br/>• News / Weather Report</p> <p><b>7:35 am</b><br/>• People's Talks</p> <p><b>8:00 am</b><br/>• News/ International News</p> <p><b>8:35 am</b><br/>• Current Affairs</p> <p><b>9:00 am</b><br/>• News/ International News</p> <p><b>9:35 am</b><br/>• Weekly Entertainment</p> <p><b>10:35 am</b><br/>• MRTV's Youth Programme</p> <p><b>11:35 am</b><br/>• Science and Technology Programme</p> <p><b>12:00 noon</b><br/>• News / International News / Weather Report</p> <p><b>12:35 pm</b><br/>• TV Drama Series</p> <p><b>1:20 pm</b><br/>• TV Drama Series</p> | <p><b>1:50 pm</b><br/>• Talk on Old Film (Part-2)</p> <p><b>2:35 pm</b><br/>• Myanmar Traditional Boxing</p> <p><b>2:45 pm</b><br/>• People Talks</p> <p><b>3:00 pm</b><br/>• News</p> <p><b>3:35 pm</b><br/>• Clever</p> <p><b>4:00 pm</b><br/>• News/ Weather Report</p> <p><b>5:35 pm</b><br/>• Hyper Sports</p> <p><b>6:00 pm</b><br/>• News/ Weather Report</p> <p><b>6:35 pm</b><br/>• The Farmer</p> <p><b>7:00 pm</b><br/>• News</p> <p><b>7:15 pm</b><br/>• TV Drama Series (Part-15)(A)</p> <p><b>7:35 pm</b><br/>• TV Drama Series (Part-15)(B)</p> <p><b>8:00 pm</b><br/>• News / International News / Weather Report</p> <p><b>9:00 pm</b><br/>• News</p> <p>• TV Drama Series</p> <p>• Amazing World</p> <p>• Documentary (Part-1)</p> |
|---|--|



### Entertainment Channel

(27-11-2015, Friday)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>6:00 am</b><br/>• Alinka Wut Yee Music Troupe</p> <p><b>6:20 am</b><br/>• Pyi Thu Ni Ti</p> <p><b>6:40 am</b><br/>• Song Programme</p> <p><b>7:00 am</b><br/>• TV Drama Series</p> <p><b>7:50 am</b><br/>• TV Drama Series</p> | <p><b>8:35 am</b><br/>• Musical Programme</p> <p><b>8:50 am</b><br/>• Myanmar Video</p> <p><b>9:50 am</b><br/>• Myanmar Dream</p> <p><b>10:00 am</b><br/>• Myanmar Video</p> <p><b>12:00 noon</b><br/>• Close Down</p> |
|--|--|



### Myanmar International

(27-11-2015 07:00 am ~ 28-11-2015 07:00 am) MST

#### Today Fresh

- |       |    |   |
|-------|----|---|
| 07:03 | Am | News  |
| 07:26 | Am | Moe Ne' Keeps Its Tradition Alive                     |
| 07:51 | Am | Philatelic Pleasure                                   |
| 08:03 | Am | News  |
| 08:25 | Am | Atuladhipati Mahamunisacca Koe Htat Kyee Pagoda       |
| 08:43 | Am | Kay Tu Mar Lar "The Family"                           |
| 08:52 | Am | Human Right Human Dignity International Film Festival |
| 09:03 | Am | News  |
| 09:26 | Am | Natural Lake: Fish Breeding Business                  |
| 09:38 | Am | Travels In Monywa- Moe Hnyin Sambuddhe Pagoda         |
| 09:49 | Am | Yangon Markets: Da Nyein Gone Market                  |
| 10:03 | Am | News  |
| 10:26 | Am | Black Gold (Part-I)                                   |
| 10:33 | Am | International Dances in Myanmar                       |
| 10:51 | Am | Chaung Tha Souvenir Business                          |

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Thursday 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   |
| 07:25 | Pm | The Hills Of Phowintaung And Shwebataung   |
| 07:43 | Pm | Image Of The Monks   |
| 08:03 | Pm | News   |
| 08:26 | Pm | Myanmar National Poet And Literary Icon: Prolific Writer of Poems & Prose — Min Thu Wun (Ep-4) |
|       |    | Political Life & Remembrance   |
| 08:50 | Pm | MONASTERY (Shwe In - Pin Kyaung)   |
- (09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)  
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Thursday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)  
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)  
(For Detailed Schedule - [www.myanmaritv.com/schedule](http://www.myanmaritv.com/schedule))

# Real take top spot by thwarting Shakhtar rally



Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates with his team mates Casemiro and Dani Carvajal after scoring a goal for Shakhtar Donetsk during Champions League Group Stage, Group A at Arena Lviv, Lviv, Ukraine. PHOTO: REUTERS

LVIV — Real Madrid, who had already sealed a place in the last 16 of the Champions League, ensured top spot in Group A with a remarkable 4-3 win over Shakhtar Donetsk on Wednesday.

Cristiano Ronaldo scored after 18 and 70 minutes while Luka Modric (50) and Dani Carvajal (52) also struck to put the 10-times European champions in complete command on a freezing night in western Ukraine.

The temperature then soared quickly, on the field at least, as

Shakhtar netted three times in the closing stages.

Brazilian midfielder Alex Teixeira converted a penalty after 77 minutes before Dentinho chested the ball into the net from a corner.

Teixeira was again on target with an elegant drive in the 88th minute as the hosts gave Real a huge fright.

Real have 13 points from five matches, three ahead of Paris St Germain who also qualified by beating Malmo 5-0 in Sweden.

PSG are sure to finish sec-

ond because they have an inferior head to head record against Real. Shakhtar and Malmo both have three points.

Ronaldo opened the scoring with a header and grabbed his second goal of the night on the rebound after his initial attempt was blocked by a defender.

The Portugal forward also played a part in the other two goals by the visitors before Shakhtar came storming back as Real conceded their first goals in this year's competition.—Reuters

## Tighe thrives as Sydney winds flummox Spieth and Co

SYDNEY — Unheralded local Lincoln Tighe upstaged a field including world number one Jordan Spieth and a string of major winners after swirling winds wreaked havoc on the opening round of the Australian Open yesterday.

The big-hitting 26-year-old, so lowly-ranked he was denied a spot in Wednesday's pro-am, carded a five-under-par 66 early in the day and only Matt Jones, a member of the host Australian Golf Club, was able to come close in the afternoon with a 67.

Defending champion Spieth broke even with a 71, which left him with a share of 19<sup>th</sup> on a day when only 18 players finished below par.

Former US Open champion Geoff Ogilvy coped better with the shifting wind and sweltering heat than most of the more feted golfers, recording a 68 for a share of third with Taiwanese amateur

Yu Chun-An and compatriot Todd Sinnott.

"The wind is so flukey out there," said the Australian, who should at least end his run of five missed cuts on Friday.

"You don't even know what's going to go on today. I have absolutely no sense of what sort of score it's going to be at the end of the tournament, but if I play well I've got every chance to be there."

Spieth, playing with Ogilvy and former world number one Lee Westwood (70), admitted his uncertainty over how to deal with the wind had led him into a "brain fart" in his club selection at the final hole, which he bogeyed.

"I just didn't know what to hit, I was apparently two clubs off ... We just had no idea on that fairway," the US Open and Masters champion said.

"I think I'll go get some

rest, it was an early morning, and come out tomorrow ready for a low one," he added.

The 22-year-old American mixed three birdies with three bogeys playing what he admitted was "pretty boring golf" but for up-and-down rounds, it would have been hard to beat the 71 put together by Adam Scott.

The former Masters champion picked up two double bogeys before the turn, only saving himself from worse by chipping in from a waterside bank at the ninth. Three birdies in four holes from the 11<sup>th</sup> steadied the round before a bogey at the 17<sup>th</sup> pushed him back over par and he needed a sixth birdie at the last to finish back where he started.

"Anything par or better is a good score out there this afternoon," said the Australian. "I've got to go home tonight pretty happy with that."—Reuters

## United draw leaves Champions League hopes in balance

MANCHESTER — Manchester United endured a frustrating night when they were held to a goalless draw by PSV Eindhoven at Old Trafford on Wednesday, squandering the opportunity to seal their place in the last 16 of the Champions League.

United would have qualified with a win, but their hopes are now in the balance with the top

three teams in Group B separated by only two points with one match to play.

United, who have eight points, have to visit leaders VfL Wolfsburg, who have nine, on 8 December when only a win might be good enough. PSV, who are third on seven points, will qualify if they beat bottom-placed CSKA Moscow at home in their final game.—Reuters

## Griezmann fires Atletico into last 16, Galatasaray out

MADRID — Madrid eased through to the Champions League round of 16 with a game to spare and eliminated Galatasaray when Antoine Griezmann's double secured a 2-0 win at home to the Turkish side in Group C on Wednesday.

Atletico, the 2014 runners-up, needed only a draw to progress and their comfortable victory at the Calderon stadium put them level on 10 points at

the top of the group with Benfica and ahead of the Portuguese club on goal difference.

Benfica, who host Atletico in the sixth and final round of games next month when top spot will be up for grabs, fought back from two goals down to draw 2-2 at Kazakh side Astana earlier on Wednesday.

Galatasaray have four points in third place, with Astana on three in fourth.—Reuters

## Toyota signs sponsorship agreement for Paralympics



Toyota Motor Corp. President Akio Toyoda (L) and International Paralympic Committee President Philip Craven attend a press conference in Tokyo, on 26 November. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

TOKYO — Toyota Motor Corp. said yesterday it has signed a sponsorship agreement with the International Paralympic Committee through 2024, enabling the automaker to provide vehicles, robots and other services to ensure mobility for all.

During the period through the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, Toyota will serve as a Worldwide Paralympic Partner, the highest level of global sponsorship currently available for the Paralympic Games.

Signed by Toyota Motor President Akio Toyoda and IPC President Philip Craven in Tokyo, the agreement covers vehicles and robots such as rehabilitation robots and wearables. Japanese automakers have

been scrambling to put automated driving to practical use as the year 2020 approaches.

Toyota is the IPC's sixth Worldwide Paralympic Partner after companies including Japan's electronics maker Panasonic Corp.

"We don't want mobility to be an obstacle but rather an opportunity for people to achieve their dreams," Toyoda said at a press conference. "Through the Paralympic Games, we want to make the power of mobility and the power of sport available to all."

Craven said the partnership between the governing body of the Paralympic Movement and Toyota will be global in its reach and acts as a "catalyst" for creating a more equitable society.—Kyodo News