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DOWN WITH DRUGS

Fight drug abuse continuously through internal peace process

POLICE incinerated seized drugs with a street value of more than Ks66bn (US\$ 56.31 million) yesterday, marking the UN international day against drug trafficking and abuse.

Packages set alight contained heroin and marijuana and other precursor chemicals and they were burnt in three cities – Yangon, Mandalay and Taunggyi.

More than 590 kg of opium, 83.5kg of heroin, 41.8kg of low-grade opium, 123.1kg of marijuana and 10,355,844 stimulant tablets and other drugs and chemical precursors, according to police source.

At the ceremony to mark the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in the Nay Pyi Taw, Vice-President U Myint Swe called for a continuous fight against drug abuse through the internal peace process at the ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

U Myint Swe recounted the achievements in the elimination of drugs through closer cooperation between police forces and the ethnic armed groups that have returned to the legal fold. “The more progress we make in the peace process, the greater the control of drug abuse,” he said.

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Police officers incinerating seized drugs at an event to mark International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, outside Yangon June 26, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS/SOE ZEYA TUN



An ancient stupa is seen in Mrauk U Ancient Cultural Zone in Rakhine State. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

Conservation efforts made over 100 Mrauk U stupas

CONSERVATION efforts are currently being made over a hundred stupas within the Mrauk U Ancient Cultural Zone in Rakhine State, according to the Department of Archaeology and Museums for Mrauk U.

The conservation efforts began in January this year and are on-going.

“The stupas were all completely covered in vines and vegetation. The clearing of flora is being done out of respect. The grasses are difficult to maintain;

once you’ve cleared one side, they’ve grown tall on the other.” said U Nyein Lwin, director of the Mrauk U Department of Archaeology.

The Rakhine State government has provided Ks124m to cover conservation expenses, of which K60,000 (US\$50) a day is spent on employing 20 workers to handle maintenance of the stupas, over 80 stupas have already been cleared. “The meaning of the initiative is to allow for a good view of the pagodas. Efforts have also

seen that entrances into some of the overgrowth of grass on the pagodas has been cleared.” said U Than Myint, vice chair of the Mrauk U Ancient Cultural Heritage Conservation Organization.

Conservation efforts are also being conducted on the Alanipuya, Letwelpisidaw and Kyinnantat pagodas, Shinmyawah statue - together with other stupas within the Mrauk U Ancient Cultural Zone - as part of the new government’s ‘100-day plan.’—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Entrepreneurial event at Mandalay trade expo

A TRADE expo featuring products manufactured from local small-and-medium scale enterprises in Mandalay came to an end on Sunday. The event was organised by the region's Department of Small-and-Medium Scale Enterprise.

The exhibition aims to assist local entrepreneurs through networking events to potentially be exposed to opportunities, as well as promoting people's interest in local products.

As of 25 June, the expo was held in 73 Street in Chanmyathazi Township in Mandalay showcas-

ing machineries, cosmetics, export products, household utensils and personnel goods produced from local SMEs in 85 booths.

Traditional handmade materials including paintings, and the country's prized ornament lacquerware were displayed for sale at the event. U Swe Tint, director of the SME department, said the department severally conducts a series of trade expos in Mandalay where a large number of SMEs, local manufacturers produce valued-added products and hope to find new markets in foreign countries.—*Aung Thant Khaing*



Mandalay Trade Expo being seen with visitors and salespersons.

New sport center to be constructed in Bago Region

REGIONAL authorities in Bago Region plan to build a new sports center this FY, according to the region Sports and Physical Education Department.

The Regional government plan to build the facility at a cost of Ks1.5 billion (US\$1.2m).

There are plans to construct new sports centers in 16 townships and upgrade current sporting grounds.

Recently, efforts to promote a sporting culture in Myanmar has been exerted through funding and construction of facilities

while promoting the past time in state media.

Local construction companies have been invited to assist the government. The partner will be selected by July with construction expected to begin in August.

A large gymnasium is to be

built in Daik-U Township. The middle sport centers will be established in Nyaunglebin, Zigon and Letpadan townships. Smaller facilities are to be constructed in Bago, Shwegyin, Yedashe, Oktwin, Nattalin, Gyobingauk, Pyay, Thegon and Paungde town-

ships. There is no regional sport ground in Bago, the capital of Bago Region.

The region has turned out nearly 40 national level athletes in different sports including football, track and field, volleyball, tennis, boxing, etc.—200

Crime NEWS

Two killed in road accident



The scene of accident in old Yangon Mandalay Road.

TWO have died in a traffic accident occurring along the old road between Yangon and Mandalay on Friday.

A car being driven by Aung Pyae Phye (aka Nwar Gyi) collided head-on with a motorbike driven by Sergeant Tin Tun with another on board, near a filling station in Pobathiri Township in Naypyitaw. As this incident oc-

curred the car careened into another vehicle.

During the accident, two surgeons died on the spot while two others on another motorbike sustained serious injuries. They have been taken to Naypyitaw General Hospital. Traffic police are still investigating the case in an effort to arrest the "reckless driver," who fled the scene.

Male elephant kills vet in Pinlebu Tsp

A MALE elephant has killed a 43-year-old vet as the elephant in a state of "must," a period of time where male animals become sexually aggressive, in Doenwe Forest, Sagaing Region, police have reported.

The eight-foot tall male elephant named Aung Zeya owned by U Toe attacked the vet as it was

attempting to flee in a field. The owner tried to control the animal with the help of Zaw Myo Win, a veterinary surgeon of Homalin Timber Extraction Camp.

The cause of death of the vet is uncertain in the report but it claims that the animal killed the man with his trunk. Police are investigating the case.—*Lu Aung (Katha)*

Young man stabs neighbour

A YOUNG male has stabbed his neighbor in Sanchaung Township on Saturday morning, police have reported.

Thiha (aka Thant Zin) stabbed 49-year-old U Myint Htwe (aka U Kyaw Tun) after a quarrel about a drain near their houses located in Sanchaung.

The victim, sustained serious injuries, and was treated at Yangon's General Hospital.

On that day, local authorities including the township's Hluttaw representatives inspected the drain and negotiated with the two when Thiha

(aka Thant Zin) attacked the victim in front of the members.

Police seized the attacker on the scene.

After the case, the Yangon Mayor inspected the township drainage system and instructed relevant officials.—*Tin Win Lay (Kyimyindaing)*

One million Yaba pills seized in southern Shan State

POLICE and armed forces in Kalaw, Shan State seized Ks4bn (US\$3.4m) worth narcotics.

The amphetamines were discovered in a car when the joint forces stopped the vehicle along

Union Highway near Yeyaung and Yeyaungma villages located seven miles far from Kalaw.

Around 1 million WY-brand yaba pills were seized from a vehicle driven by Naing Naing Win

with two others on board.

The suspects have been charged by local police under the existing Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—*Myawady*

Man sustains serious injuries in vehicle crash

A CAR accident occurred on Saturday on the Yangon-Mandalay highway in Phyu Township leaving one with serious injuries.

A semi-trailer truck en route from Mandalay to Yangon crashed into the back of a cargo truck stopped beside the road and both vehicles overturned after the collision. Truck driver Aye Min Tun is receiving emergency care at the township General Hospital.

Police have blamed and charged the driver of the semi-trailer for careless driving.—*Myint Oo*



The cargo truck being seen overturned after collision.

Vice President U Henry Van Thio inspects disaster preparedness in Kungyangon

VICE President U Henry Van Thio inspected cyclone shelters yesterday in Kungyangon, an area in Ayeyarwaddy Region that was hit hard by Cyclone 2008. During the visit U Henry Van Thio heard reports on preparedness and quick response to disasters and raising awareness in the township.

U Henry Van Thio stressed

the need to carry out preparedness drills as part of efforts for using the infrastructures effectively. The vice president visited iron-reinforced cyclone shelters built in Laekhtekon and Hmawbi villages in the township.

He also went to the Relief and Resettlement Department in Yangon and inspected the cen-

tral store, urging authorities not to waste stored aid provided by the State. During his inspection, U Henry Van Thio was accompanied by Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye and Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Soe. —Myanmar News Agency



Vice President U Henry Van Thio visiting the cyclone shelter in Kungyangon. PHOTO: MNA

FDA to clamp down on substandard oil production

THE Myanmar Oil Millers Association (MOMA) and the Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) will join forces this July in a bid to mitigate the production of substandard edible oils, according to MOMA.

The initiative has been agreed upon after talks between the two parties Naypyidaw on 21 June, they also decided that action would be taken to reveal those illegally producing dangerous oils.

“They say it’s peanut oil, but actually it’s a mixture of non-peanut oil ingredients; sometimes grinding up rotten peanuts. The oils have a high acid content and pose dangers to one’s health if ingested. People can lodge complaints against dodgy oils and those which

falsify their expiration dates,” said U Khin Soe, chair of the Yangon Region MOMA.

Furthermore, the MOMA and FDA will reportedly also be joined by an alliance made up of ten bodies – which includes the Department of Consumer Affairs, Myanmar Police Force, Yangon City Development Committee, Attorney General’s Office and Consumer Unions – cooperating to expose and press legal charges against substandard oil producers.

“The influx of cheap foreign oils [into Myanmar] has dried up domestic produced oil. The domestic oil market could prosper if imports are controlled,” said U Win Htun, owner of the Kau-

ng Thant oil mill. Talks between both the FDA and MOMA agreed the Consumer Affairs Negotiation Committee will carry out field inspections on any oil producing companies about whom complaints are lodged, from which oil samples collected and sent to the FDA’s laboratory for testing.

Should tests reveal that oils in fact are unsuitable for human consumption, severe warnings will be given in regard to the Consumer Protection Law; producers will have their licenses revoked and enterprises suspended and the face being charged with a three year prison sentence and K5m (US\$4,230) fine.—Myitmakha News Agency

Political literature reading scheduled for 29-31 July

UNION Information Minister Dr Pe Myint attended the second coordination meeting at the Printing and Publishing Department in Yangon yesterday to discuss the organisation of a political literature reading in conjunction with a monsoon book fair.

At the meeting Dr Pe Myint called for concerted efforts to make the event successful, saying that the success of this first event would become a precedent for a winter literary festival.

The political literature reading in conjunction with the monsoon literary festival is to be held from 29 to 31 July at the Printing and Publishing Department on Theinbyu street in Yangon.

Dr Pe Myint urged officials and researchers to share politi-



Union Minister Dr Pe Myint addressing a meeting on holding political literature reading and monsoon book fair. PHOTO: MNA

cal, economic and social affairs knowledge with enthusiasts.

The first coordination meeting was held in May. The minister urged officials to invite resourceful people to the event,

saying that reading events had hardly ever touched on the questions of politics in the country despite an abundant supply of political literature.—Myanmar News Agency



Vice President U Myint Swe visiting exhibition booth displaying documentary photos on fighting drug abuse in Myanmar. PHOTO: MNA

Fight drug abuse continuously through ...

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As a signatory to the international drug control convention, the country is working together with other partner countries by adopting necessary laws.

As part of the strategy to deal with the challenges of drug production and use, the country has been engaged in its fourth 5-year drug control plan as of 2014. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) said in its reports that there was a downward trend in the country’s opium cultivation.

U Myint Swe stressed the need for prevention strategies

to reduce The number of youth using drug and also to prevent crimes activities and to target the punishment of major drug dealers and offenders.

U Myint Swe also called for closer cooperation and coordination amongst departments in border areas, describing these areas as major corridors for drug trafficking.

He also suggested programmes for opium-substitute agriculture and livestock as part of rural development, calling for stronger cooperation with international organisations in helping make the world free from drugs.—Myanmar News Agency

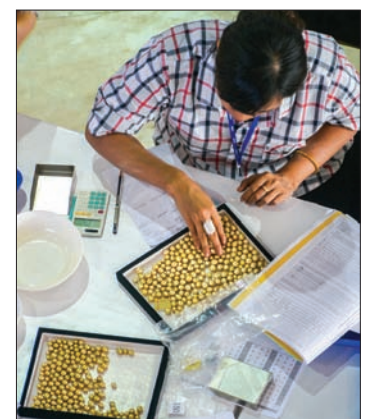
Pearl lots fetch 3.12m Euro in three days of the 53rd Myanmar Gems Emporium

OUT of 338 pearl lots, 312 were sold for Ks4bn (3.12m Euro) through a competitive bidding system and tender system at the 53th Myanmar Gem Emporium that kicked off on last Friday in Naypyitaw.

More than 510 gems lots will be on sale tomorrow at the emporium.

Foreign merchants from China, India, Japan, Singapore, Thailand and Australia as well as local merchants competed to buy the lots through the tender system yesterday. The emporium kicked off in Naypyitaw, with a Ks65m (50,000 Euro) deposit required of foreign merchants.

The duration of the emporium may be extended depending on the number of uncut jade



A trader checks pearls. PHOTO: MNA

lots and gem lots to be exhibited by sellers, according to the committee responsible for holding the emporium.—Myanmar News Agency

School snack shops in Magwe Region receive surprise inspections from DCA

IN a bid to prohibit illegal snacks being sold within schools in Magwe Region, the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) has announced they are currently carrying out a series of surprise inspections at schools in the region.

The region boasts over 4,000 schools, all of which are to receive inspections so far it is reported a total of 60 schools have had unexpected visits from the DCA.

“We don’t inform the school snack shops prior to our visit. Once surprise inspections have been carried out, findings are re-submitted to the Consumer Protection Association (CPA). Any arguments over the withdraw-

ing of permission to sell snacks will be negotiated by the CPA with the school headmaster concerned,” said Daw Aye Aye Moe, a civil servant from the Magwe Region DCA.

“[Snacks being sold] must display a company trade mark and address,” continued Daw Aye Aye Moe. “We want to conduct background checks on snacks that don’t display an address. The presence of non-permitted dyes can also pose danger to children. If an incident occurs because of a snack being ingested and there’s no address to check-up on, nothing can be done to remedy the grievances of the situation.”—Myitmakha News Agency

LOCAL Business

Railway Station project expected to launch May 2017

"THE Yangon Central Railway Station comprehensive development project is expected to launch in May, 2017," said an official from Division 7 of the Yangon Central Railway Station. When the bid bond of the first tender for the project to promote the Yangon Railway Station for the 2014-15 budget year was invited bidders were unable to produce the USD 4 million grantee. For this reason the invitation has been made for a second time, it is learned. Myanmar Railway

(MR) will finalise the selection of winners for the project in May. Fifteen companies including five from Myanmar, two from Singapore, two joint-venture companies from the US, two companies from Korea and three from China sent expressions of Interest (Eoi) for the project when MR invited tenders for the second time in July of last year. The project will be implemented over more than 62 acres of Myanmar Railways land and the organisation has urged local and international or joint

venture developers/investors to undertake design-and-build work for the project after one month, according to an official.

Investment in the Yangon Central Railway Station area comprehensive development project will reach USD 2.2 billion according to the announcement from April last year. According to sources, the area where the Yangon Central Railway Station area comprehensive development is sited is not included in the restricted area of high-rise buildings in which the

height of buildings are restricted to 470 metres above sea level. So far, the Resettlement Action Plan and the Conceptual Plan for the project have already been drawn, according to MR sources.

After the selection of tender, the winner company will have to renovate the old buildings of MR in a manner that retains ancient architectural design. The company is allowed to construct buildings on over 40 acres of MR land out of a total area of 63.622 acres.—*Soe Moe*

Organic fertiliser to be produced from vegetable waste

MYANMAR Green Land, an organic agro-industry, is planning to convert vegetable waste into organic fertiliser in partnership with a non-government organisation from Germany.

MGL Vice Chairperson Daw Thida said they would collect the waste from the Thiri Mingala market, which she said regularly dumps a large amount of vegetable waste.

A survey has been conducted on how much vegetable waste comes from the market, she said, adding that the German organisation had promised to offer assistance to the promotion of sales of organic fertiliser.—*Ko Moe*

Straw mushroom to be grown with Taiwanese technology

"Straw mushroom from Yangon region will be grown with the use of Taiwanese technology for export," said an official from the Myanmar Fruits Flower & Vegetable Producer & Exporter Association.

The straw mushroom is the most popular species of mushroom and the most demanded by

consumers, gathering a high price on the market. Foreign countries have expressed a wish to buy the mushroom for its medicinal value and high protein content. If the straw mushroom is exported, proper technology will be needed, it has been reported.

The current price of the straw mushroom in the market is from

between K7,000 to K8,000 per kilogram and the prices for other mushroom products such as silver snow mushroom and mouse ear mushroom are K5,000 per kilogram, it has been learned from an official of the Myanmar Fruits Flower & Vegetable Producer Exporter Association.

The straw mushroom must be

eaten on the day of its picking. It is required for the preservation of the product (for export) to dissolve the mushrooms in salt water and then can them. This technology will be imported from Taiwan.

The association aims to export the straw mushroom to Taiwan, South Korea, the USA and European nations.—*200 Soe Moe*

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Philippine military confirms fresh kidnapping of seven Indonesians

MANILA — A Philippine military spokesman on Sunday confirmed the kidnapping of seven Indonesian sailors, saying the new batch of victims are probably being held somewhere in Sulu Province.

Quoting a statement issued by the Western Mindanao Command, Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said the seven Indonesian sailors were kidnapped “on the high seas of Indonesia on or about 22 June at around 11 am.” He said the military in the region “is now assessing the situation and will plan for the best course of action to address the given situation.”

Padilla gave no other details of the fresh abductions that prompted Jakarta to halt its coal shipment to the Philippines unless the seven kidnapped Indonesian sailors are secured.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi

told reporters Friday that “the moratorium on coal exports to the Philippines will be extended until there is a guarantee for security from the Philippine government.” Indonesia supplies 70 per cent of the Philippines’ coal import needs. The notorious gang Abu Sayyaf Group has not claimed responsibility for the latest hostage-taking.

Last March and April, at least 14 Indonesian sailors were abducted in two separate attacks, according to the Philippine military. They were all freed in May.

The Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia have recently agreed to intensify their security operations in Sulu Sea where the Abu Sayyaf militants are operating. This month the three agreed to designate a transit corridor for commercial vessels crossing their water borders.—

Xinhua

China’s Xi lauds new Silk Road, says \$15 billion invested last year

BEIJING — Chinese companies invested nearly \$15 billion in countries participating in Beijing’s new Silk Road initiative last year, up one-fifth from 2014, President Xi Jinping said in Uzbekistan, lauding a scheme that is one of his key foreign policy.

Under the programme, announced by Xi in 2013, and also known as the “One Belt, One Road” programme, China aims to invest in infrastructure projects including railways and power grids in central, west and southern Asia, as well as Africa and Europe.

China has dedicated \$40 billion (£29 billion) to a Silk Road Fund and the idea was the driving force behind the establishment of the \$50 billion Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

In comments carried by state media late on Wednesday, Xi said China’s trade with countries participating in the new Silk Road exceeded \$1 trillion in 2015, accounting for a quarter of its total foreign trade.

“The Belt and Road Initiative’s primary planning and deployment has been completed and is now stepping onto the stage of taking root and intensive cultivation for sustained development,” Xi told the



Chinese President Xi Jinping speaks during a ceremony marking the 15th anniversary of the signing of the China-Russia Treaty on Good neighborliness, Friendship and Cooperation, in Beijing’s Great Hall of the People on 25 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Uzbek parliament.

Regions like the Balkans and Central Asia are key to the project, the government has said. Xi’s trip to Uzbekistan followed trips to Serbia and Poland.

The initiative envisages the revival of the ancient Silk Road routes from China to Europe to open new trade markets for its firms as the domestic market slows.

Forty nine countries along the economic corridor invested \$8.2 billion in China in 2015, up 25 per-

cent, Xi said, adding that over 70 countries and international organizations have taken part in the initiative.

Xi will also attend a meeting in Uzbek capital Tashkent of the Chinese and Russia-lead Shanghai Cooperation Organisation security bloc.

China has long been concerned at links between Islamist militants in Central Asia and those Beijing accuses of promoting separatism in the violence-prone far western region of Xinjiang.

State media said China and Uzbekistan had agreed to deepen their counter-terrorism cooperation, and ensure the safety of pipelines into China from Central Asia which are vital for Chinese energy security.

“China and Uzbekistan share concerns about terrorism, with extremists in the two countries sometimes conspiring together,” the official *China Daily* said on Thursday, noting extremists had been known to enter Xinjiang from Uzbekistan.—*Reuters*

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Malaysian PM Najib to unveil new cabinet on Monday



Malaysia's Prime Minister Najib Razak. PHOTO: REUTERS

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak is expected to announce a new cabinet on Monday in a reshuffle to fill vacant positions, *The Star* newspaper said quoting sources. The reshuffle might involve up to four ministers and three deputy ministers, the paper said quoting a source.

Najib had announced

his plan to rejig the lineup after the ruling coalition won the Sarawak state elections by an increased majority last month.

However, he told reporters on Friday that he needed more time to think about a cabinet reshuffle.

The Prime Minister’s office was not immediately available for a comment.—*Reuters*

Cambodia opposition leader, speaking at refuge, says PM is scared

PHNOM PENH — After a month living in an office at his party’s headquarters to avoid arrest, Cambodian opposition leader Kem Sokha remains defiant and said Prime Minister Hun Sen is scared of losing the 2018 election.

Kem Sokha called for “national reconciliation” talks to end a crisis that both he and the self-styled strongman, Hun Sen, have warned could nudge the

Southeast Asian nation into political conflict.

Tension has risen as Sokha and other opposition members face legal charges they say are trumped up by a judiciary in thrall to Hun Sen. The prime minister was intimidating the opposition in an attempt to avoid a rerun of a 2013 election that nearly cost him the premiership, Sokha said.

“What he is scared of most is defeat in the elec-

tion,” Sokha told Reuters in his first interview since he holed up at the party headquarters on 26 May. “His strategy is to remove the opposition party leadership, so now he is targeting me.”

Sokha became the acting head of the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) when the party’s leader, Sam Rainsy, was forced into exile late last year, also to avoid arrest.

Sokha is wanted for

failing to appear in court for questioning over a sex scandal investigation. He faces an accusation of procuring a prostitute. He said the CNRP would win in 2018, even though the vote would not be free or fair, because people want change after 30 years under Hun Sen and his Cambodian People Party (CPP).

Sokha sits in his office, the corner where he sleeps curtained off.—*Reuters*

Australian PM urges stability vote in national poll after Brexit shock

SYDNEY — Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull on Sunday used “Brexit” shockwaves to urge voters to return his government with a majority at a 2 July election, arguing only stable government can deliver jobs, economic growth and tough border controls.

After a tight eight-week campaign, Turnbull’s Liberal Party-led coalition is facing a strong challenge from the opposition Labour party and popular independents who could win enough seats to hold the balance of power in the upper house Senate.

The poll comes as Australia attempts to rebalance its economy away from a once-in-a-generation mining boom stymied by tumbling commodities prices.

Domestic economic issues such as tax and the funding of education and health care have dominated the campaign.



Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull. PHOTO: REUTERS

Border security has also been a hot button issue, giving rise to the return of far right political groups, even though the numbers of asylum seekers trying to reach

Australia pales in comparison to those fleeing to western Europe.

“The opportunities have never been greater, but so is the competition, and so are the uncertain-

ties,” Turnbull said in a speech in Sydney.

“The shockwaves in the past 48 hours from Britain’s vote to leave the European Union are a sharp reminder of the volatility in the global economy,” he added.

Britain’s vote to exit the EU has sent political and financial shockwaves around the world. “This is a time which demands stable majority government,” said Turnbull.

Turnbull prompted the election by dissolving both houses of Parliament in May, blaming intransigent independents in the Senate for blocking his agenda.

But he may not find himself any better situated after the poll due to the growing appeal of independent Nick Xenophon, whose new party is fielding almost 50 candidates.

Xenophon could emerge as kingmaker in a hung parliament if

opinion polls putting Turnbull’s Liberal-National coalition neck-and-neck with opposition Labour prove correct.

A further destabilising factor could be the return of far right parties, including Pauline Hanson’s One Nation, which are campaigning on anti-immigration, anti-Muslim agendas.

Turnbull’s speech in Sydney coincided with clashes in Melbourne between anti-immigration and anti-racism protesters. Hundreds of riot police were drafted in to keep the groups separate, arresting several people as scuffles broke out and Australian flags were burned.

Australia has seen a revolving door of political leadership in recent years.

If Turnbull loses on 2 July, the change in prime minister would be the fifth since 2010. —Reuters

Belt and Road Initiative links China’s development with that of Serbia, Poland, Uzbekistan

BEIJING — Chinese President Xi Jinping has wrapped up his state visits to Serbia, Poland and Uzbekistan, with the Belt and Road Initiative he proposed strengthening China’s ties with the three nations that sit right along the ancient trade route.

The initiative refers to the Silk Road Economic Belt that links China with Europe through Central and Western Asia by inland routes, and the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road connecting China with Southeast Asia, Africa and Europe by sea.

The Belt and Road Initiative has been a focus of the meetings between Xi and leaders of the three countries that were among the first to respond to the initiative and play key roles in its implementation.

China and Serbia signed a memorandum on jointly promoting the Belt and Road construction in 2015. At present, Serbia is pushing forward re-industrialization and attracting more foreign investment, while Poland hopes to provide a gateway for China to enter Europe.

“Our cooperation on major projects is making heartening and sweeping progress, delivering economic and social benefits to and having a positive impact on the entire Central and Eastern European region,” Xi said in a signed article in leading Serbian newspaper *Politika* published on 16 June.

In response, Serbia said it is ready to seize this crucial opportunity and play an active role in China’s initiative so as to align the development strategies of the two countries, deepen their pragmatic cooperation and realise

common development and prosperity. In Poland, the biggest nation in Central and Eastern Europe in terms of territory, population and economic volume, Xi reached agreements with his Polish counterpart Andrzej Duda on promoting economic ties within China’s Belt and Road and Poland’s Amber Road frameworks.

Xi also called on the two countries to make their partnership a paradigm of cooperation within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative.

For their parts, Polish leaders pledged support for the initiative and commitment for promoting Europe-Asia cooperation, adding that the dovetailing of Poland’s Amber Road and the Silk Road will play a significant role in promoting the security, prosperity and development of Europe and Asia.

In Uzbekistan, Xi and his Uzbek counterpart Islam Karimov vowed to jointly promote the initiative, and seek synergy between their respective development strategies.

While addressing the Uzbek Parliament on Wednesday, Xi called for building a “green, healthy, intelligent and peaceful” Silk Road.

Under the Belt and Road framework, a series of key projects is being carried out in the three countries, such as the Hungary-Serbia railway, the Pupin Bridge on the Danube River in Belgrade, the expansion and upgrading of the Kostolac Power Plant, the China-Europe freight train service, the Qamchiq Tunnel in Uzbekistan, as well as the China-Central Asia natural gas pipeline system.—Xinhua

30 dead in central China bus fire

CHANGSHA — At least 30 people were killed after a tour bus burst into flames in Hunan Province on Sunday morning, local authorities confirmed.

The accident happened at about 10:20am, when the bus carrying 56 people crashed into guardrails on a highway in Yizhang County. The ensuing oil leak may have caused the fire, the county government said.

Twenty-one people have been sent to hospitals, and rescuers are still searching the charred frame of the bus.

State Councilor Guo Shengkun, who is also public security minister, has ordered all-out efforts to save the injured, identify the cause of the accident, and to take measures to prevent similar tragedies from happening again.

A work team headed by Vice Public Security Minister Huang Ming is heading for Hunan to guide the investigation and handling of the accident on site.

Police have detained the driver. —Xinhua



Photo provided by witness on 26 June 2016 shows the accident site of a bus fire in Yizhang County, central China’s Hunan Province. Casualties have been reported after a passenger bus burst into flames on a highway in Yizhang on Sunday morning, local authorities and rescuers said. The exact number of victims is still being verified. PHOTO: XINHUA

Worker at US base in Okinawa arrested on suspicion of drunk driving

NAHA (Japan) — A civilian worker at a US base in Okinawa Prefecture was arrested on suspicion of drunk driving following a two-car collision early Sunday morning.

Okinawa prefectural police released the name of the suspect as Francis Shayquain Elijah. The 24-year-old resident of Okinawa City was allegedly driving under the influence of alcohol near her home outside the base around 4:30am.

The arrest comes amid increased efforts to strengthen discipline among personnel linked

to US bases in the southwestern Japan prefecture, which hosts the bulk of US military facilities in Japan.

The suspect, an employee of a shop at a US military base, denied the allegation, saying she had not consumed alcohol since the previous day, according to the police.

A breath test administered by local police indicated a blood-alcohol level four times the legal limit.

The US military had prohibited its service members in the prefecture from drinking alcohol

off base and outside their houses to strengthen discipline following the alleged murder and rape of a 20-year-old Okinawa woman by a US civilian base worker earlier this year.

The US military had also encouraged workers on its bases in the prefecture to adhere to the ban, initially imposed until 24 June and later extended to 28 June.

Police arrested the suspect after her vehicle collided with a car driven by a man at an intersection. The male driver was taken to a hospital.—Kyodo News

Russia secures energy deals, talks security with China as Putin visits

BEIJING — Russia and China sealed a raft of energy deals during President Vladimir Putin's visit to Beijing on Saturday, strengthening economic ties while pledging to preserve the strategic balance of power among nations.

The deals involve the sale of stakes in a number of Russian projects to Chinese firms, an oil supply contract and joint investments in petrochemical projects in Russia.

Rosneft (ROS.NMM), Russia's top oil producer, agreed with China National Chemical Corporation (ChemChina) [CNNCC.UL] that ChemChina would take a 40 per cent stake in Rosneft's planned petrochemical complex VNHK in Russia's Far East. The deal would help Rosneft finance the project and get access to the markets of the Asia-Pacific region, the Russian firm said in a statement. They also signed a new one-year contract under which Rosneft could supply up to 2.4 million tonnes of crude oil to ChemChina between 1 August, 2016, and 31 July, 2017. Rosneft and Beijing Enterprises Group Company Limited [BEGRP.UL] agreed the key terms of a potential sale of a 20 per cent stake in



Chinese President Xi Jinping shakes hands with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin during a welcoming ceremony in Beijing, China, on 25 June, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Rosneft's oil producing subsidiary, Verkhnechonskneftegaz, to a unit of Beijing Gas Group.

The Russian firm also signed a framework agreement with Sinopec (600028.SS) regarding the construction of a gas processing and petrochemical plant in East Siberia, aiming to set up a joint venture in 2017 focused on the Russian and Chinese markets.

Rosneft CEO Igor Sechin said his company did not plan to reduce its crude supplies to Chi-

na and would defend its market position amid competition with Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iraq, and Iran.

"We will stick to the volumes we have agreed on. It's around 40 million tonnes (per year)," TASS news agency quoted Sechin as saying.

Russia was China's largest crude oil supplier in May for a third month in a row, having surpassed imports from Saudi Arabia.—Reuters

More than 2.5 million and rising sign UK petition for new EU referendum

LONDON — Just days after voting to leave the European Union, more than 2.5 million Britons and UK residents had signed a petition calling for a second vote, forcing lawmakers to at least consider a debate on the issue.

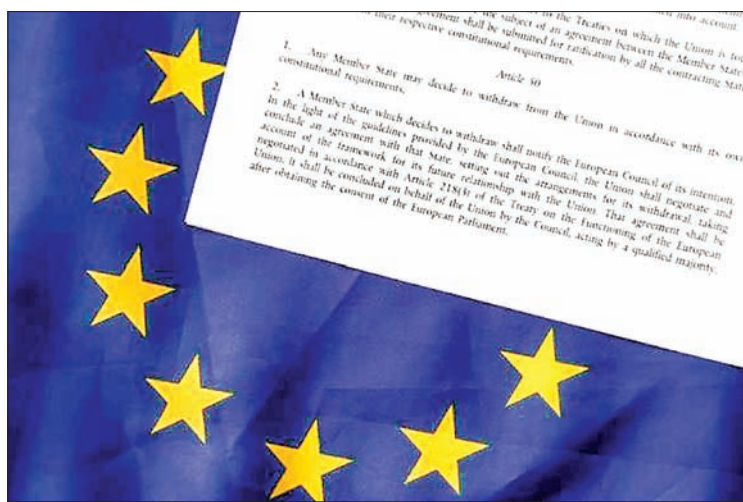
Parliament has to consider a debate on any petition posted on its website that attracts more than 100,000 signatures.

The proposal, posted before the 23 June referendum, said the government should hold another plebiscite on EU membership if the support for Leave or Remain in a referendum was less than 60 per cent in a turnout of under 75 per cent of eligible voters.

The result on Thursday saw 52 per cent of voters, 17,410,742 people, back a British exit, on a turnout of 72 per cent.

According to an opinion poll conducted on Friday, half of voters said the result should stand, even if the EU offered more reforms to Britain's EU membership, while 39 per cent said a second referendum should be held under the new terms offered.

Some 48 per cent of British adults said they were happy with the result against 43 per cent who were unhappy, according to the poll by ComRes for the Sunday Mirror.



Article 50 of the EU's Lisbon Treaty that deals with the mechanism for departure is pictured with an EU flag following Britain's referendum results to leave the European Union, in this photo illustration taken in Brussels, Belgium, on 24 June, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

The online petition — which only British citizens or UK residents have the right to sign — was proving so popular that by 2136 GMT on Saturday, 2,503,065 people had signed it.

Most of those who signed were based in areas where support for staying in the EU was strongest, most especially London, the website indicated.

Prime Minister David Cameron, who said on Friday he would resign after leading the failed campaign to keep Britain

in the EU, had said there would be no second referendum.

The ComRes poll also asked a representative sample of 1,069 adults when the next general election should be.

One third said there should be a vote as soon as the next prime minister was in place in the autumn, while 23 per cent said an election should be held early next year. Some 27 per cent said the next election should be in 2020 as currently planned, according to the online poll.—Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

J. Joksimovic: EU integration part of our development policy

BELGRADE — Serbia remains clearly on the path of progress and reforms, and European integration remains a part of its internal development policy, Serbian Minister for European Integration Jadranka Joksimovic said Friday following the UK's decision to leave the EU.

"Serbia, which strategically is clearly committed to continuing on the European path, is continuing the European integration as part of our internal development policy, which can best lead to overall development, higher living and working standards, a more efficient and more secure state, the rule of law, a stable economy, more investments and more jobs," Joksimovic said in a statement to Tanjug.— Tanjug

Militants kill eighth security personnel in northern India

NEW DELHI — Eight security personnel were killed and over 20 others injured in an attack by the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba militant group late Saturday in the northern Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, according to media reports.

According to the reports, the attack took place in the state's Pampore area while the personnel belonging to the paramilitary Central Reserve Police Force were returning by bus from a practice session. It is believed that the terrorists came from across the border. Condemning the attack, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted, "I salute the courage of the CRPF personnel martyred today in J and K. They served the nation with utmost dedication. Pained by their demise. My thoughts are with the families of those martyred today. May those injured recover soon."—Kyodo News

British cabinet to remain in post after Brexit vote — foreign minister

LONDON — Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond said on Sunday Britain's cabinet, which was split over whether the country should vote to leave the European Union, would remain in place until a new prime minister was in office. "Obviously a new prime minister will select his own cabinet and all of us will remain in office until that point and then the new prime minister will make his decision," Hammond told ITV television in response to a question about whether finance minister George Osborne would remain in post. Asked about what would happen to Gibraltar, a British enclave in southern Spain which Madrid said it would seek to jointly govern with London after the Brexit vote, Hammond said:

"We will be less able to protect Gibraltar's interests, not to defend Gibraltar's territory, of course we can do that, but to protect Gibraltar's interests if we are not in the European Union."—Reuters

Investor George Soros says 'Brexit' means 'disintegration' of EU

LONDON — Billionaire investor George Soros said on Saturday that Britain's vote to leave the European Union makes "disintegration of the EU practically irreversible," and that the effects of Thursday's referendum will likely damage Britain.

"Britain eventually may or may not be relatively better off than other countries by leaving the EU, but its economy and people stand to suffer significantly in the short to medium term," he wrote in a commentary on the website Project Syndicate.

Soros made huge profits in 1992 by betting against the British pound as it was withdrawn from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism.—Reuters

Scotland's Sturgeon says will negotiate best way forward for Scotland

LONDON — Scotland's first minister, Nicola Sturgeon, said on Sunday it was her responsibility to negotiate with the European Union to try to protect the interests of Scotland, which voted to remain in the bloc.

"My challenge now as first minister is to work out how I best protect Scotland's interests, how I try to prevent us being taken out of the EU against our will with all of the deeply damaging and painful consequences that that will entail," she told the BBC's Andrew Marr show. "My challenge, but also my responsibility as first minister, is to seek to negotiate to protect Scotland's interests," she said, adding she would speak to people in Brussels over the next few days.—Reuters

Opinion

Write for us

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

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

Before resilience wanes

Kyaw Thura

There has been an alarming increase in the number of people forcibly displaced from their homes around the world, according to a report released on 20 June by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The number of refugees is estimated to be more than the population of France, Italy and the United Kingdom combined.

More than 65 million peo-

ple have been displaced, with children accounting for more than half of the total number. Nearly 41 million of those accounted are displaced in their own countries. Measured against the world's population of 7 billion, these statistics show that one in every 113 people globally is a refugee. The size of human suffering signals that governments across the world need to work together to address and combat this issue.

According to the Global Report on Internal Displacement of May 2016 (GRID 2016) by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), Myanmar has witnessed more than 640,000 people displaced by armed conflict. However, the UNHCR in its report ranked our country as the second largest producer of both refugees and internally displaced people in the Asia and Pacific region, estimating the numbers

at 451,800 and 451,000 respectively.

To enrich our society and strengthen our collective security, we are bound to alleviate the suffering and plight of victims in conflict areas. We must promote dedication and determination that will see an end to the issue. We have had enough of political and ethnic conflicts. Now is the time for solutions to outnumber problems, before resilience wanes.

The Traditional "Greeting word" of Myanmar is "Min-gala-par"

U THAN ZAW

• Who or what ever person he may be, when ever he put his initial steps on Myanmar (Burma), he has to meet some-where else.

The initial greeting words of Myanmar IS "MINGALAPAR", then some other additional words depend on the one who greets, eg; "glad to meet you" and all etc.

The word "Mingalapar means, I wish you to be auspicious and advantageous in your future.

The responsive answer is "Mingalapar" also, with a very sweet smiling face in accordance with our (Myanmar) tradition.

We all keep, this manner and the behavior of smiling face is only our original practice or characteristic from birth. It is our basic equality. Where ever you go in any part of Myanmar, you shall encounter that mood, I believe. I am just for warding you open-heartedly. I am not boasting about it. In connection

with the word "Mingalapar" it had been introduced in Myanmar from the time of enlightenment of Lord-Buddha for over 25 centuries.

The back ground history of it might be recalled for all our knowledge in detail.

In those days, just before the period of Lord Buddha's enlightenment, there were the majority of human beings and, "DEVA" (spiritual beings) were divided into three mam groups, making arguments what is the realism or real definition of the word "Mingala".

They made stages in the public centres and debated the "TITILE" for almost (12) years.

During that time Lord-Buddha was dwelling at Zay-ta-wun monastery constructed by a very rich-man, by the name of Anatapein, a very peculiar incident happened and this was narrated by Shin Anan da, who was the younger brother and the Personal Assistant to Lord-Buddha as follows:-

At a mid-night, an unknown,

ordinary "DEVA" (spiritual being), with his whole body radiating brilliant lights shining the whole shrine-hall of Buddha, came forth and stopped at a place, not very far or near, in standing position, paid worship respectfully and forwarded a query about the actual meaning of "Mingalar" of which mankind as well as "DEVA" had been facing the problem still unsolved yet, reverence, sir.

The Lord-Buddha delivered the doctrine regarding (38) varieties of "Mingalars" as follows:-

Remarks: (May I write about the meanings of "Mingalars" in English only, because most of our readers are not familiar with original written literature in Sanskrit and the interpretation in Burmese (Myanmar) so far, Thanks)

Lord-Buddha's Doctrines about "Mingala-Sutta" in English :

1. Not to associate with the foolish,
2. To associate with the

wise;

3. To honor those worthy of honor;
4. To dwell in suitable locality,
5. To be endowed with merits occurred in the past;
6. To establish oneself rightly;
7. To have immensity of knowledge;
8. To acquire skills in sciences;
9. To be well-trained in discipline;
10. To have words well spoken;
11. Serve thy parents;
12. To support thy wife and children;
13. To be engaged in peaceful occupations;
14. Generosity;
15. Lawful conduct;
16. To support thy relatives;
17. To perform faultless actions;
18. To abstain from evils;

19. To restrain from sins;
20. To restrain from intoxicants;
21. To be diligent in law;
22. Reverence;
23. Modesty;
24. Contentment;
25. The gratitude towards the grateful;
26. Timely audition of the doctrine;
27. Patience;
28. Obedience;
29. Visit the monks;
30. Timely discussion of doctrine;
31. Ascetic practices;
32. Chastity;
33. To discern the noble truths,
34. To realize the "Nibbana",
35. The mind which is touched by the eight vicissitudes;
36. Be free from anxiety;
37. Be stainlessly pure;
38. Be perfectly secure;

"Mingala Sutta Ends"
May all Buddha's teaching perpetuate. Buddha Sasanam Siram Tittathu.

44th Shooting Competition of the Commander of Northeast Command's shield opened

THE opening ceremony of 44th shooting competition of the Northeast Command Commander's shield was held at the Military training school in Tang Yang town on 23 June.

The Commander of Northeast Command delivered the opening speech at the ceremony and formally opened the shooting competition firing the first shot. At the competition, 28 men's teams and 26 female teams from the battalions and regiments under the State Command participated in the shooting competition which will run from 23 June to 2 July. — Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services



The opening ceremony of Shooting Competition in progress. PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES

Two successful drillings to help overcome water scarcity

DRILLING at two monasteries in Taunggyi, Shan State, struck water on Friday benefiting Buddhist monks, students and people facing scarcity of drinking water.

The well at Theintaung Pariratti Monastery was drilled with funds from KBZ's Brighter Future Myanmar foundation BFM struck water at the depth of 565 ft with a rate of 1,500 gallons of water per hour.

A well at Maha Si Sasana Yeiktha meditation centre, at the depth of 90 ft, produces 3,000 gallons of water per hour.

"It is very surprising to see success at the drilling of two places on the same day," said U Kyaw Kyaw Soe from BFM.

With the use of seven drilling machines, BFM has successfully drilled 146 wells so far across the country, currently drilling five wells.

As part of its efforts to combat water scarcity problems, BFM has asked communities currently facing drought and/or a scarcity of fresh water to contact the foundation and arrange for fresh potable water to be delivered.—

Thura Lwin



The water gushes out of the well in Taunggyi. PHOTO: THURA LWIN

Education union minister attends International congress on vocational training in Switzerland

EDUCATION Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Kyi attended the 2nd International Congress on Vocational and Professional Education and Training in Winterthur, Switzerland, from Monday to Wednesday.

The conference focused on sharing the elements of success through the international exchange of successful principles. The event attracted high-ranking officials from 78 countries.

While in Switzerland, Union

Minister Dr Myo Thein Kyi called on the Swiss president to discuss matters related to the promotion of bilateral cooperation in vocational training. He also met with the education minister of Vaud province.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Research aims for high yields of hybrid paddy in Myanmar

THE Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation has reported a research study will be conducted in a bid to augment yields of privately owned hybrid paddy grains.

"Hybrid rice is not a popular commodity on the world market. We need to neglect the cultivation of hybrid paddy as there is currently no consumer market for it. That said, plans are in place to invest more heavily into researching privately owned hybrid paddy," said Dr Tun Win, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation.

Once hybrid paddy can

be produced privately, it will reportedly be cultivated as an emergency food supply in lieu of for a commercial market.

"Hybrid paddy, if produced, will be distributed to highland and rice scarce regions of the country. This type of paddy will be grown at times of experiencing rice shortages, such as during natural disasters. It's a very abundant variety of paddy, with one acre able to produce around 200 bushels of the grain," added Dr Tun Win.

Hybrid paddy grain is currently purchased from foreign countries at a high price. It is also

not adaptable to Myanmar's varied climate, resulting in smaller profit margins for local farmers.

"We have to buy the Palay Thwe hybrid variety of paddy from the Office of Agriculture. A package of about 2 bushels cost K7,000 last year. The first yields produces a large crop, but products rates depreciate once the paddy is replanted. It doesn't require a vast amount of water to grow, consequently not rendering it a practical crop for Myanmar as we experience annual heavy rainfall," said U Myint Oo, a farmer from Gwa Township, Rakhine State.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Complaint mechanism centres to be opened across the nation

COMPLAINT mechanism centres will be opened in all Regions and States to help citizens migrate legally, it has been learned from the Ministry of Labour.

These centres are currently being opened in Yangon, Mandalay and Magwe, Pa-an, Mawlamyine in Mon State, Meiktila, Myinchan, Kyaukse in Mandalay region, Dawei in Taninthayi region and Myawady in Kayin state and Kengtung in Shan state.

"We are ever ready to help migrant workers who are working for various reasons in foreign countries. The workers can contact the complaint mechanism centre without difficulty but they need to provide their names, exact addresses of their factories and their passport numbers when they call for help. As we know the phones lines are not very good, it can be difficult to ascertain the correct information" said Daw Khin Nway Oo, deputy director-general of the department.

Complaint mechanism centres that aid workers are being opened at the Ministry of Labour in Naypyitaw and Yangon Regions. The following numbers can be contacted in case of emergency: 067-430184, 067-430284, 01-650089 and 01-650187.

The telephone number of the Myanmar Labour attaché to Malaysia is +60-1-123-505-710, whereas Thailand is +66-086-774-6825 and Korea is(+82-2-790-3843). The following email address complaint.moles@gmail.com can also be contacted in case of emergency.

The ministry has already prescribed agent fees for sending Myanmar workers abroad. The agent fees for workers working in Malaysia is USD 850 and K25,500, while for those in Thailand it is Bahts 10,000 and K150,000. If an agents ask more than the prescribed fees employees can make complaints to the complaint centres.—200

Foreign tourists plant trees for Magwe Region locals

FOREIGN travelers visiting the Community Based Tourism (CBT) initiative being implemented in villages of Myaing Township, Magwe Region, are reportedly working together with local residents to plant trees that will provide shade.

The project is allegedly being carried out in a bid to mitigate deforestation to the area and conserve the natural environment.

"The planting of trees has been added to the CBT program in order to focus on environmental conservation. Once the area near the guest house has been fully planted, focus will shift to potentially planting atop of the deforested hillsides. We set a fee of US\$5 per foreigner. They have their name written on plastic and attached to the sapling. Foreign guests participate by planting the trees themselves," said U Myint Sein, assistant director of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism

for Magway Region. More than 450 shade giving trees, of varieties such as eucalyptus and margosa, have been planted since May this year by local residents and foreign travelers as part of the Myaing CBT. "Even foreign tourists pay to plant trees. We've added the tree planting activity to the schedule after local residents voiced foreigner should plant them. There's 270 acres upon which to plant trees. Anyone is allowed to come and plant trees as long as they are shade givers," said U Hsan Htun, chair of the Myaing CBT committee.

A total of 295 foreigner tourists took part in the CBT in Myaing Township between January-May of this year, while it is reported the addition of tree planting to the CBT program will entice over a thousand foreigners to the project throughout 2016.—*Myitmakha News Agency*



A foreigner participates in planting trees in Myaing.

Islamic State militants launch new attacks in eastern Afghanistan

KABUL — Heavy fighting between Islamic State militants and government security forces has claimed dozens of lives in eastern Afghanistan, officials said on Sunday.

In recent months insurgents claiming allegiance to Islamic State had largely appeared to be bottled up in a mountainous area along the border with Pakistan under threat of US air strikes.

The latest attacks indicate the group remains a potent threat to a government already battling an insurgency dominated by the rival Taliban.

At least a dozen Afghan security forces and civilians had been killed, with another 18 wounded, Nangarhar province governor Saleem Khan Kunduzi said in a statement.

Local officials claimed more than 100 Islamic State fighters had been killed in fighting in Nangarhar over the past three days, although exact figures varied and could not be in-

dependently verified.

"There is no doubt that Daesh do not respect anyone," Kunduzi said, using a common term for Islamic State. "They kill people, regardless of whether they're a child or a woman. They burn down madrasas, mosques and schools."

As many as 25 homes had been burned down in Kowt district, and five civilians were reported kidnapped, Nangarhar officials said.

Hundreds of police and soldiers are engaged in the area with reinforcements on the way, provincial police chief Zarawar Zahid said.

At a small event on Sunday in Kabul, the head of Afghanistan's civil society federation, Sediq Ansari, blamed local leaders for being negligent in the face of Islamic State threats and called on them to be suspended.

"They should be accountable for every drop of blood that

has been shed in Nangarhar so it becomes a lesson to other officials," he told gathered reporters.

Militants linked to Islamic State have not made as much progress in Afghanistan as in Syria and Iraq, where the group seized major cities and wide swaths of territory and attracted thousands of recruits.

In Afghanistan, the group is thought to consist mostly of disaffected members of other insurgent movements, including the Taliban, who have often battled Islamic State for control of areas in Nangarhar.

In January, US President Barack Obama gave US forces in Afghanistan more freedom to attack Islamic State targets, leading to a spike in air strikes and other operations, especially in Nangarhar.

No coalition forces have been involved in the latest fighting, spokesman Commander Ron Flesvig said.—*Reuters*



Iraqi security forces ride in a military vehicle in Falluja, Iraq, on 25 June, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Iraqi forces retake Islamic State holdout in Falluja, declare battle over

FALLUJA — Iraqi forces recaptured the last remaining district held by Islamic State militants in the city of Falluja on Sunday and the general commanding the operation declared the battle complete.

Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi claimed victory over Islamic State in Falluja more than a week ago but fighting continued inside the city, including in the

Golan district.

"We announce from this place in central Golan district that it has been cleaned by the counter terrorism service and we convey the good news to the Iraqi people that the battle of Falluja is over," Lieutenant General Abdul Wahab al-Saidi told state TV.

At least 1,800 militants were killed in the operation to retake Falluja, he said.—*Reuters*

Somali Islamist militants attack hotel in Mogadishu

MOGADISHU — Somalia's al Shabaab Islamist group launched a suicide bomb attack on a hotel in the centre of Mogadishu on Saturday before fighters stormed inside, police and the militant group said.

Police said at least 15 people had died, including guards at the site, civilians and militants. Others were wounded.

Gunfire had echoed round the seaside capital after the blast and ambulances raced to the scene. Police later said fighting had ended but they were searching the site for militants.

"We attacked the hotel which was frequented by the apostate government members," al Shabaab military operations spokesman Sheikh Abdiasis Abu Musab told Reuters. He said at least 20 guards and civilians were killed.

Al Shabaab, which frequently carries out attacks in the capital in its bid to topple the Western-backed government, often gives casualty numbers that are higher than figures announced by officials.

Police said the initial blast was caused by a suicide bomber before fighters stormed into the Nasahablood hotel, leading to a heavy exchange of gunfire. Officers said some people had managed to escape through the rear of the building.



Somali government soldiers run to take their positions during gunfire after a suicide bomb attack outside Nasahablood hotel in Somalia's capital Mogadishu, on 25 June, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

"The operation has now ended but we are still combing the building for any possible militants who are hiding," Major Ali Mohamed, a police officer, told Reuters.

The United States and other Western countries have been among the biggest donors to the

government in Mogadishu as it slowly rebuilds after years of conflict and prepares for parliamentary and presidential elections later this year.

"We strongly condemn this attack," a US State Department official said in a statement. "We remain committed to Somalia's

security and stability, and are proud to stand side-by-side with Somalia in the fight against terrorism."

The vote planned for August will be by limited franchise rather than one-person-one-vote, which officials and diplomats say would be too difficult while still

fighting an insurgency.

Muslims in Somalia and around the world are observing Ramadan. In previous years, al Shabaab has often intensified attacks during the fasting month, frequently picking targets where people gather just before or after breaking the fast.—*Reuters*

Thousands attend Yoga event across South East Asia

SINGAPORE/BANGKOK — Thousands of Yoga enthusiasts including foreigners on Sunday gathered at open grounds across South East Asia to take part in the Second International Yoga Day attended by senior government officials and celebrities.

In Thailand, around 6,000 people performed yoga at the prestigious Chulalongkorn University, in the heart of Thai capital Bangkok.

Most of the participants were Thai, but there were also many foreigners. The participants also included students and yoga enthusiasts.

A group of specially abled participants, sponsored by Deaf Association of Thailand also participated in the Event.

Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul, Minister of Tourism and Sports of Thailand, Bhagwant Singh Bishnoi, India's Ambassador to Thailand, Pomthong Malakul, Vice President for Academic Affairs of Chulalongkorn University and Yada Theppanom, Miss Grand Thailand 2013, inaugurated the event.

Video messages on the occasion of second International Yoga Day from Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Minister of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj were shown to the participants.

At least 150 people also participated in a Yoga Session at Hat Yai in Songkla Province.

In Singapore, Indian High Commissioner Vijay Thakur Singh, led more than 4,000 multi-ethnic Singaporeans, diplomatic representatives and migrant construction workers for a 90-minute grand Yoga session this morning.



International Yoga Day. PHOTO: REUTERS

"We have had one of the biggest yoga gathering this year," said Thakur.

The session, closed the week-long Yoga sessions being held since 19 June.

Though, the official date for the international Yoga day was 21 June as set by the United Nations, in Singapore it was celebrated almost on a daily basis for a week.

"Yoga has been a way of life. I feel that it is not (just) to be flexible outside, but also on the inside — that is more important," said

Dr Yvonne Looi, who has been a laughter yogi for the past four years.

Last year too, the Yoga day was observed with great enthusiasm across South East Asian countries, which share long historical and cultural linkages with India.

In Malaysia, Yoga Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm at several places.

The High Commission of India in Kuala Lumpur organised the celebration on 19 June at the Cheras Indoor Stadium, attended

by more than 600 people.

More than 20 local organisations sent their representatives for the event including Yoga institutions, corporate bodies and schools. Several of them came from outside the capital Kuala Lumpur, including school children from Nilai Tamil school.

Malaysians from all walks of life, including Malaysians of Chinese origin, participated with great enthusiasm.

The Chief Guest for the event was Malaysian health minister S. Subramaniam who is also

the chief of the country's largest ethnic-Indian based political party the Malaysian Indian Congress.

The Guest of Honour was Indian tennis legend Ramanathan Krishnan.

Subramaniam lauded the initiative of Prime Minister Modi and noted that India and Malaysia were also closely cooperating in other traditional areas, including Ayurveda and Siddha.

Indian High Commissioner in Malaysia T S Tirumurti welcomed the gathering.—PTI

Soon, low-fat chocolate that melts in your mouth

WASHINGTON — Chocoholics, rejoice! Scientists have found a novel way to manufacture low-fat chocolate for guilt-free indulgence by applying electricity.

When fat is removed from liquid chocolate, its viscosity, or consistency, changes and the chocolate jams the pipeline as it travels through the manufacturing process, scientists said.

Researchers from Temple University in the US theorised that by applying an electric field they could accomplish two things — reduce the viscosity enough to lower the fat content, but also increase the density of the particles to maintain proper flow of chocolate through the manufacturing process. The key was to apply the electric field in the same direction

as the flow of the chocolate. Traditionally, electrorheology (ER), the practice of using electric fields on liquids, works perpendicularly to the liquid flow direction.

Researchers believe this method could be applicable to any liquids for which there is a need to reduce viscosity.

In previous research, scientists used an electric field to thin fuel to improve the transportation of crude oil via pipeline and improve gas efficiency in the engine and a magnetic field to thin blood to help prevent heart attacks.

Electrorheology works by changing the alignment of the particles in a liquid using electric fields, researchers said.

In the current study, ER aggregated the cocoa solid particles into short chains, which allowed the scientists to reduce the viscosity and fat content but maintain the flow. For precision, researchers invented their own device to test their theory. They were able to reduce the fat on several different brands of chocolate by 20 per cent, better than they anticipated.—PTI



Chocolate beans and pods are displayed in New York. PHOTO: REUTERS

44% of diabetes cases undiagnosed in Brunei

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN — Around 44 per cent of diabetic cases in Brunei are undiagnosed, which means that more than 20,000 Bruneians are unknowingly living with diabetes, according to a research conducted by Brunei's health ministry.

In a statement issued Friday, the Ministry of Health (MoH) said that 12.4 per cent of adults have diabetes in Brunei, which is the leading cause of blindness, kidney disease and amputations among Bruneian adults.

People with diabetes are also two to four times more likely to experience heart attacks and strokes, the ministry said.

In its statement, the MoH said almost 90 per cent of people living with Type 2 diabetes are overweight or obese, which is defined as having a body mass index or BMI of 30 or greater.

In Brunei, six in 10 adults are overweight and obese, making

the country the "fattest" in ASEAN.

However, obesity is no longer a condition that just affects older people in Brunei as the number of younger people being diagnosed with obesity has been increasing, the MoH said.

"Among our children, 33 per cent are overweight and 18 per cent are obese," said the statement.

"Without a change in our behavior, the number of obese adults in the country is forecast to soar. This will prove devastating for the country and pose a real barrier towards our national development," the ministry said.

To prevent diabetes, the MoH said the most important measure one can take is to have a healthy diet and to exercise regularly in the form of 30 minutes of moderate physical activity such as brisk walking, cycling and swimming every day.—Xinhua

'No need to write, David,' impatient EU tells Cameron

BRUSSELS — Britain need not send a formal letter to the European Union to trigger a two-year countdown to its exit from the bloc, EU officials said, implying British Prime Minister David Cameron could start the process when he speaks at a summit on Tuesday.

"Triggering" ... could either be a letter to the president of the European Council or an official statement at a meeting of the European Council duly noted in the official records of the meeting," a spokesman for the council of EU leaders said.

A second EU official, asked about mounting frustration among leaders with the British prime minister's delay in delivering the formal notification required to launch divorce proceedings, said: "It doesn't have to be written. He can just say it."

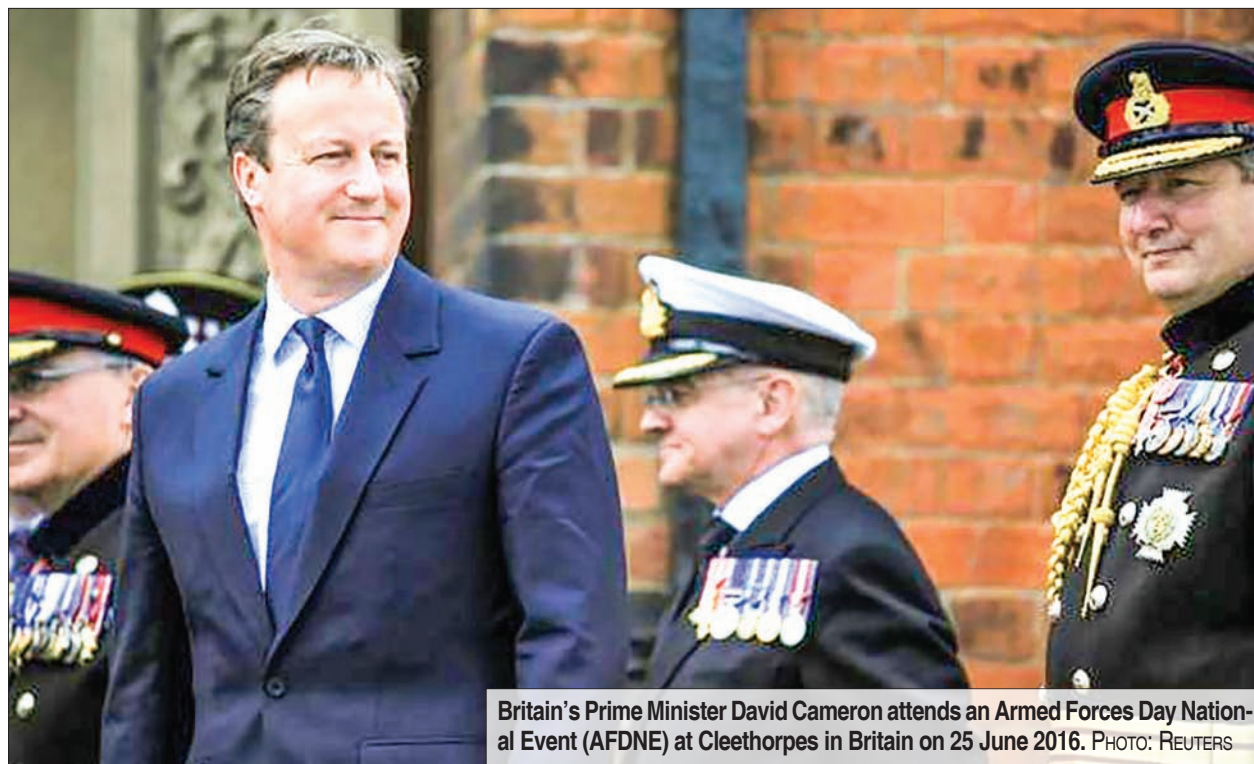
Cameron will brief the other 27 national leaders over dinner at a European Council summit in Brussels

on Tuesday on the outcome of Thursday's referendum at which Britons voted to leave the EU, prompting him to announce he will resign.

On Friday, he said he would leave it to his successor as Conservative party leader and premier to trigger Article 50 of the EU treaty, which sets out a two-year process to quit the bloc. That appeared to be a reversal of a pledge to launch the process immediately after the vote. It has angered EU leaders who want a quick settlement to limit uncertainty.

Some European leaders still expect Cameron himself to start the process in the coming days or weeks, officials said on Saturday. British officials were not immediately available.

Some Brexit campaigners have long said that Britain should aim to negotiate a comprehensive new relationship with the EU, seeking access to markets without submitting to EU rules



Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron attends an Armed Forces Day National Event (AFDNE) at Cleethorpes in Britain on 25 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

or open migration, before binding itself into the two-year timetable that would be fixed for talks if Article 50 is triggered. Such talk worries EU officials and leaders who fear that a prolonged haggling with London will further increase the risk of a domino effect of nationalist-led demands for exit from other states. They do not see a legal way to force Britain to start the process but have piled political pressure on Cameron to honor his pledge

to launch Article 50 negotiations and respect the popular vote. The Council spokesman made clear that leaders cannot simply choose to interpret something Cameron says as the trigger without the prime minister saying clearly he means it to be.

"The notification of Article 50 is a formal act and has to be done by the British government to the European Council," the spokesman said. "It has to be done in an unequivocal manner with

the explicit intent to trigger Article 50.

"Negotiations of leaving and the future relationship can only begin after such a formal notification. If it is indeed the intention of the British government to leave the EU, it is therefore in its interest to notify as soon as possible."

Since the shock vote on Thursday, won 52-48 per cent by the Leave camp in defiance of polls and the bulk of the British establish-

ment, there have been calls in Britain for the result to be reviewed or for parliament to ignore the referendum.

The second EU official, asked whether Britain could launch the process and then ask to stay, said that was not foreseen by the treaty: "Once you trigger it, you cannot take it back."

If a state fails to agree a departure treaty with the others, EU law simply stops applying to it after two years.—Reuters

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Date 27 June 2016

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Germany's Merkel signals sober separation from EU 'partner' Britain



German Chancellor Angela Merkel gives a statement in Berlin, Germany, on 24 June 2016, after Britain voted to leave the European Union in the EU BREXIT referendum. PHOTO: REUTERS

B E R L I N / H E R - MANNWERDER —

German Chancellor Angela Merkel called on Saturday for clear-headed negotiations with "close partner" Britain over its departure from the European Union.

Foreign ministers of the EU's six founding members had earlier said Britain should leave the bloc as soon as possible after Britons voted on Thursday to quit the 28-member bloc.

However, Merkel struck a more conciliatory tone.

"The negotiations must

take place in a business-like, good climate," Merkel said after a meeting of her conservative party in Hermannswerder, outside Potsdam, to the west of Berlin.

"Britain will remain a close partner, with which we are linked economically," she said, adding that there was no hurry for Britain to invoke Article 50 of the EU treaty — the first step it must take to set in motion the exit process.

"It should not take ages, that is true, but I would not fight now for a short time frame," Merkel said, in contrast with the more urgent call by the foreign ministers of Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg, who were meeting to the north of the German capital.

They pressed for Britain to trigger the process for exiting the bloc after Britons voted by 52-48 per cent to exit the EU, which it joined more than 40 years ago.

"We now expect the UK government to provide clarity and give effect to this decision as soon as possible," they said in a joint statement.

The president of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, also piled pressure on Britain, calling for it to trigger the Leave process at a summit of EU leaders next Tuesday.

"We expect the British government to deliver now," Schulz told Germany's *Bild am Sonntag* newspaper. "The summit on Tuesday is the appropriate moment to do so."

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who met with French President Francois Hollande in Paris on Saturday, called for "pragmatic negotiations" once Article 50 is invoked.

"My message is clear: when we work together we are stronger. I hope the British people will be able to overcome the challenges that await them," France's *Journal du Dimanche* quoted Ban as saying in an interview.

EU officials said there was no real problem if it took a few months to begin the process for Britain to leave, though waiting until the end of the year could

get in the way of the next round of EU budget talks and European election campaigning.

The officials said they were worried that British Prime Minister David Cameron, who resigned on Friday, could hand over to someone with a strategy to drag out the country's departure.

Matthew Elliott, chief executive of the Vote Leave campaign, said Britain should begin informal negotiations on a full settlement governing its post-Brexit relationship with the EU before invoking Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty.

France also pressed for a swift start to the exit process, with Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault saying negotiations must move quickly and that the remaining EU member states also needed to give fresh impetus to the European project.

"We have to give a new sense to Europe, otherwise populism will fill the gap," he said, adding that the EU could not wait for Cameron to depart in October before the exit process begins.—Reuters

Expanded Panama Canal — Bigger ships, bigger paydays for beans, coal, gas

SINGAPORE — Bigger ships could mean bigger paydays for commodity producers when the expanded Panama Canal opens this weekend as they can utilise larger vessels more frequently to tap into fast growing Asia-Pacific consumer markets.

The Panama Canal Authority estimates that the enlarged waterway will cut sailing times between Atlantic Ocean ports and Asia by up to 16 days for ships that previously could not fit through.

Soybean farmers, natural gas producers, container shippers, and coal miners hope to be among the winners when the expanded Panama Canal is inaugurated on Sunday at a cost of \$5.2 billion and after a two-year delay. Crude oil and iron ore exporters will see less benefit as they still depend on vessels too big for the waterway.

The US Soy Transportation Coalition, which represents soybean farmers, said moving to ships carrying up to 100,000 dead-weight tonnes (dwt) of beans on the canal from the current 76,000 tonne limit would add up to \$8 million in value per vessel.

"A customer of US soybeans in Asia could save 35 cents per bushel simply due to greater transportation



A worker talks on a walkie talkie as cargo ship named Cosco Houston, navigates through Cocoli locks during a test of the new set of locks of the Panama Canal expansion project on the Pacific side in Cocoli, on the outskirts of Panama City, Panama on 23 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

efficiency," said Mike Steenhoek, the Coalition executive director.

The United States is the second-largest exporter of soybeans to China, accounting for 30 per cent of China's 81.5 million tonnes of imports last year, according to China customs figures. Brazil accounted for 54 per cent.

Shipping volumes

through the Canal stalled in the mid-2000s, after rising earlier in the decade on increased Chinese trade, as vessels became too large to traverse the waterway.

Post-expansion, the Canal Authority hopes that tonnage volumes will rise by an average of 3 per cent per year, from almost 341 million tonnes in 2015.

Liquefied natural gas

(LNG) and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) sellers from the US Gulf and Caribbean, as well as Colombian coal suppliers should benefit from the expansion.

The US is ramping up LNG and LPG exports after the shale extraction boom and will compete with Middle East LPG sellers and Australian LNG exporters.

"It will create competi-

tion for all the producers in the Arabian Gulf by getting products from the US almost as quickly as from the Arabian Gulf," said a senior executive at a tanker shipping company who declined to be named.

Colombian shippers hope the bigger canal will open up trade to Asia as rising natural gas and renewable energy usage has cut

coal consumption in its traditional North American and European markets.

Colombian miners have already started shipping coal to Japan and South Korea but the voyages around South America and Africa can take up to two months.

Container shippers, carrying everything from fresh food to electronics, can sail ships of up to 13,000 teu (20-foot equivalent units) through the bigger Canal from the current limit of 5,000 teu.

Crude oil traders will be less affected because the supertankers they use remain too big for the canal at 300,000 dwt.

Water depth and lock restrictions still mean the enlarged canal will not be able to handle the biggest 180,000 to 200,000 tonne dry cargo ships, which mostly carry Brazilian iron ore.

Shippers also say the expansion will not make an immediate impact as ports need upgrading.

"Trading patterns will not change so quickly because of loading and discharge port limitations," said Ong Choo Kiat, president and director at U-Ming Marine Transport Corporation (2606.TW), Taiwan's largest dry-bulk and tanker ship owner.—Reuters

REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS

Procurement Result of GMS EWEC Indu to Kawkaeik Road Improvement Project (ADB Project No. 46422-003 MYA)

Department of Highways, Ministry of Construction invited bids for GMS EWEC Indu to Kawkaeik Road Improvement Project funded by Asian Development Bank (ADB) on 7th September 2015 and the following table is shown the procurement result of the bids.

I. Contract ICB1 ED-KKR Lot 1: Section 0+000 to 40+440

Bidders and bid prices

No.	Bidder	Bid Price MMK	Evaluated Price MMK	Remarks
1	See Sang Kam Yotah (1979) Co., Ltd.	56,234,609,170	61,858,070,087	
2	Qingjian International (Myanmar) Group Development Co., Ltd. & Qingjian Group Co., Ltd (QJG) JV.			Bid not technically responsive
3	China Road & Bridge Corporation	32,772,591,222	32,772,591,222	Successful bidder. Letter of Acceptance issued
4	IL & FS Transportation Networks Ltd & Elsamex S.A. JV.			Bid not technically responsive
5	Phuong Thanh Transport Construction and Investment Joint Stock Company	49,977,542,547	49,977,542,547	
6	Maga - Sierra JV.	66,858,722,689	66,858,722,689	
7	Shwe Taung - Wika - Tokyu JV.	83,021,718,813	83,021,718,813	
8	Sinohydro Corporation Ltd.	48,018,741,040	42,256,492,116	

II. Contract ICB1 ED-KKR Lot 2: Section 42+160 to 66+455

Bidders and bid prices

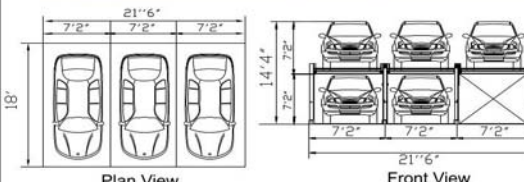
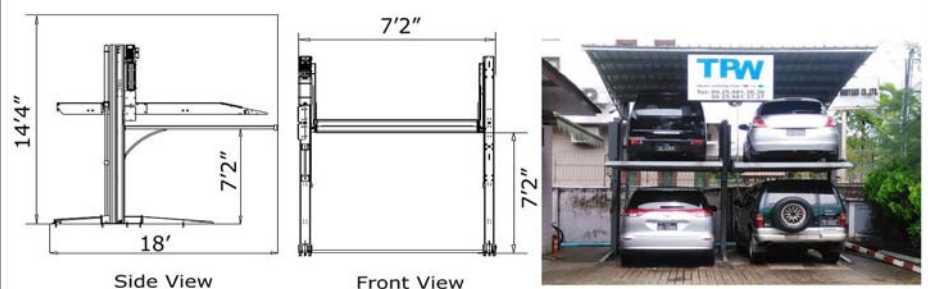
No.	Bidder	Bid Price MMK	Evaluated Price MMK	Remarks
1	Qingjian International (Myanmar) Group Development Co., Ltd. & Qingjian Group Co., Ltd (QJG) JV.			Bid not technically responsive
2	China Road & Bridge Corporation	25,320,079,725	25,320,079,724	Successful bidder. Letter of Acceptance issued
3	IL & FS Transportation Networks Ltd & Elsamex S.A. JV.			Bid not technically responsive
4	Maga - Sierra JV.	48,566,792,478.6	48,566,792,479	
5	Shwe Taung - Wika - Tokyu JV.	60,476,163,906	60,476,163,907	
6	Sinohydro Corporation Ltd.	35,810,342,703	31,513,101,579	
7	Nawarat Patanakam Public Co., Ltd.	35,382,555,387.3	35,270,821,955	

III. Scope of Work

The works, which will be executed under traffic, will require the removal of the existing pavement structure, widening and raising the road embankment, construction of a new two lane with sealed shoulders pavement structure with asphaltic concrete surfacing, demolition of existing structures and construction of approximately 111 new structures.

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My philosophy in life is I'm great: Chris Martin

LONDON — Coldplay frontman Chris Martin has adopted a new philosophy in life according to which he is “great and so is everyone else”.

The singer, who split from his ex-wife Gwyneth Paltrow in 2014, has made the decision to see himself as only having achieved amazing things, reported *Female First*.

“My philosophy at the moment is that I’m great — and so is everybody else. You have to fit your own oxygen mask. That’s really my philosophy now,” he said.

Martin approached a Sufi teacher to learn spiritual values

after his split from Paltrow.

The 39-year-old said he was taught to seek inner guidance and has admitted the philosophy has made him more confident in his music.

“My philosophy now (is) our band is the best band in the world. And so are all the other bands. Then I don’t have to feel threatened by any other bands. I enjoy it a lot more,” said Martin.

Following the last two years of contrasting emotions, the “Up & Up” singer now lives by the mantra that happiness is a state of mind you can omit control over.—*PTI*



Coldplay frontman Chris Martin performed with Bruno Mars and Beyoncé at the NFL's Super Bowl 50 Football game. PHOTO: REUTERS

New York Times fashion photographer Bill Cunningham dies at 87

NEW YORK — Bill Cunningham, the celebrated New York Times fashion photographer known for his shots of emerging trends on the streets of New York City, died on Saturday at age of 87 after being hospitalized for a stroke.

Cunningham worked for the *New York Times* for nearly 40 years, operating “as a dedicated chronicler of fashion and as an unlikely cultural anthropologist,” the newspaper said.

His photo spreads were a staple of the paper’s Style section and chronicled changing fashion through his choice of themes such as swirling skirts, Birkin bags and gaudy floral prints.

“A lot of people complain about fashion and fast fashion. There is no fashion. That is baloney. Look at this,” he said in a video for a recent spread in the paper on the use of black and

white contrasts in clothing.

Cunningham took pictures of celebrated New Yorkers at swank events and traveled the city by bicycle for decades, often wearing his signature blue jacket, to shoot street fashion typically using a single-lens reflex camera.

“He wanted to find subjects, not be the subject. He wanted to observe, rather than be observed. Asceticism was a hallmark of his brand,” the newspaper said.

Cunningham, who had tried his hand at hat making, was drafted by the US Army during the Korean War. After he got out in 1953, he eventually found work as a fashion reporter.

In the mid-1960s he acquired a small camera to help him with his work, and that started him off in fashion photography.



New York Times photographer Bill Cunningham arrives before the Marc Jacobs Fall/Winter 2016 collection during New York Fashion Week in the Manhattan borough of New York, on 18 February, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Michael Jackson’s family honours him on death anniversary

LOS ANGELES — King of pop Michael Jackson’s family remembered him on his seventh death anniversary.

The legendary singer died on 25 June, 2009 at the age of 50.

Daughter Paris paid tribute to the “Beat It,” hitmaker on Instagram. She created a photo collage featuring images of herself and her father, including childhood snapshots and what appears to be a Photoshopped picture of what the two might look like if they could pose together today.

“7 years, rest in peace, my best friend in the entire universe. I love you more than anything,” she wrote.

Paris also addressed the recent pornography collection allegations against her father.

“Things may be a little shitty in the press right now but everyone knows it’s all bull and I swear on the family name I will protect you for as long as I live. There’s

no one like you, and there never will be. Thank you for touching millions of hearts, but especially my own,” she concluded.



King of pop Michael Jackson. PHOTO: REUTERS

Jackson’s brothers — Jermaine, Tito, Jackie and Marlon, who made up the Jackson 5 with him — also honoured him with a performance at the San Diego County Fair in Del Mar, California, reported *ET* online.

The Jacksons sang hits like “One More Chance” and Michael’s “Wanna Be Startin’ Somethin’”.—*PTI*

Thailand holds 'White Romance Beach Party' for Chinese honeymooners

SAMUI ISLAND (Thailand) — The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Saturday held a "White Romance Beach Party" for 51 Chinese honeymoon couples in Thailand's southern province Surat Thai, in a bid to attract more Chinese honeymooners.

Runjuan Tongrut, Director of TAT's East Asian Region said, this is part of activities under the "honeymoon campaign in Thailand", which is promoted by TAT's five offices in China in cooperation with Chinese travel agents who are offering luxury packages, costing around 16,000 to 40,000 yuan (2,450-6,120 US-dollars) per couple, to attract high-end tourists and raise awareness of Thailand as a honeymoon destination.

At the welcome reception, honeymooners dressed up in all white to match the theme of a beach party. They participated

in a contest to share their photographs or videos via social media networks in China.

The couple who won the highest number of "likes" received a prize of a fully hosted tour package and free round trip air tickets from China to Thailand.

"The most popular couple" are voted by audiences and awarded a prize of two air tickets.

Held annually since 2014, the "honeymoon in Thailand" campaign has helped make Thailand the top outbound destination for Chinese travellers, particularly for weddings and honeymooners.

Thailand is one of the world's most popular wedding and honeymoon destinations, an acclaim that is backed by several awards and honors across the world.

Samui Island is the premier island destination in the gulf of Thailand, which is about 560 kilometres from Bangkok. It's

the third largest island in Thailand which boasts fabulous beach resorts, internationally acclaimed restaurants and world-class accommodation. It's also well known for its clear water and rich marine life, which makes it a so-called diving paradise.

The international wedding and honeymoon market in Thailand is valued at around 30 billion baht (850,000 million US dollars) per year, or about three per cent of the overall tourism revenue. Chinese tourists, numbering about 7.9 million, contribute most revenue to Thailand's tourism. In the first quarter of 2016, Chinese visitors to Thailand totaled 3,445,501, up 27.35 per cent over the same period of 2015.

TAT estimated that Chinese tourists will total 19.5 million with an expected expenditure of 509 billion baht in 2016. —Xinhua

Swiss electric car sets world acceleration record

GENEVA — An electric racing car built by Swiss student engineers has broken the world record for acceleration by battery-powered vehicles, taking only 1.513 seconds to reach 100kph.

The grimsel electric racing car accelerated from 0 to 100 kilometres per hour (kph) in just 1.513 seconds to set the new world record.

It reached the speed after covering less than 30 metres of track at the Dubendorf air base near Zurich. The previous world record stood at 1.779 seconds and was set last year by a team at the University of Stuttgart in Germany.

The record-breaking Formula Student electric car was developed and built in less than a year by a team of 30 students at ETH Zurich and Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and

Arts in Switzerland.

The grimsel is Academic Motorsports Club Zurich (AMZ)'s fifth electric vehicle and sets new standards in lightweight construction and electric drive technology.

Thanks to the use of carbon-fibre materials, grimsel weighs just 168kg. The four-wheel drive electric racing car has four specially developed wheel hub motors that are capable of generating 200 horsepower (hp) and 1700 Newton metre (Nm) of torque.

A sophisticated traction control system regulates the performance of each wheel individually, allowing the car's acceleration to be increased even further. No large-scale production car — even one with a combustion engine — can reach an acceleration comparable to the grimsel. —PTI

MRTV News Channel in Brief

(27-6-2016, Monday)

6:00 am

- Paritta by Hilly Region
- Missionary Sayadaw

7:35 am

- People's Talks

8:35 am

- Documentary

9:35 am

- Documentary (Women in Myanmar Society)

10:35 am

- Documentary (Farmer)

11:35 am

- MRTV's Youth Programme

12:35 pm

- TV Drama Series

1:30 pm

- Fine Arts-Bosom of Dramatic Performance

2:35 pm

- Mono Classical Songs

3:35 pm

- Tasty Trip

4:15 pm

- University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) —Second Year (Myanmar)

4:35 pm

- Socio Economic Scenes

5:35 pm

- Yes or No Talk Show

6:35 pm

- Documentary (Law)

7:15 pm

- TV Drama Series

8:00 pm

- News / International News / Weather Report

9:00 pm

- News
- MCN Debate
- TV Drama Series
- TV Drama Series

Note/ Hourly News Bulletins (Local + International)

Flower festival held at Mountain Rao in China's county



PINGDINGSHAN — Tourists take photos of flowers at Mountain Rao in Lushan County, central China's Henan Province, on 25 June, 2016. A flower festival is held at Mountain Rao in Lushan County on Saturday, on 25 June, 2016. PHOTO: XINHUA

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(27-6-2016, Monday)

06 : 00 pm

- Weather Report
- Pyi Thu Ni Ti

06 : 50 pm

- Cartoon Programme "Brave" (Part-2)

07 : 40 pm

- International Drama Series

08 : 20 pm

- International Drama Series

09 : 20 pm

- MRTV Entertainment Music

09 : 30 pm

- Life In NightArt In Life (Part-1)

10 : 00 pm

- International Movie Songs

10 : 10 pm

- Sagaing Guitar

10 : 20 pm

- Music Programme

10 : 40 pm

- Myanmar Video

Midnight

- Close Down.

From 27-6-2016 (Monday) 6:00 Pm
To 28-6-2016 (Tuesday) 6:00 Pm

mitv Myanmar International

(27-6-2016 07:00am ~ 28-6-2016 7:00am) MST

Today Fresh

- 07:03 Am News
- 07:26 Am Myanmar Traditional Identity (EP-2) Myanmar Chinthe (Myanmar Lion)
- 07:41 Am School for the Blind
- 07:47 Am A Historic Town: 9 Pagodas
- 08:03 Am News
- 08:26 Am The Recycle Art: Tyre
- 08:41 Am The Mountain with antique stone sculptures & Mural Painting
- 09:03 Am News
- 09:26 Am Those Who Never Give Up (Ep-6) In Pursuit of a dream

- 10:03 Am News
- 10:26 Am Aesthetic Chinlone
- 10:52 Am Yangon Markets: Nyaung Pin Lay Market
- (11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Sunday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
- (03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) -Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

Prime Time

- 07:03 Pm News
- 07:26 Pm Food Trip (Ep-10) (Part -2)
- 07:47 Pm Gold from Garbage
- 08:03 Pm News
- 08:26 Pm Taste of Myanmar (Shan - Flat -Rice- Noodle Soup)
- 08:42 Pm Parents' Day
- 08:48 Pm Life of Sea Urchin Diver
- (09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm)- Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
- (11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Sunday 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)

Murray plans harsh new initiation ceremony for Broady



Great Britain's Andy Murray celebrates during the final at Queens Club, London on 19 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

BELGRADE — Andy Murray once tried to make his international team mate Liam Broady's life a misery by ensuring his first speech at a Davis Cup welcome dinner

was a disaster.

Now the world number two is planning to make Broady's life just as uncomfortable in the unforgiving world of grand slam tennis.

For the first time in 56 matches over 11 years, Britain's twice grand slam champion Murray finds himself drawn at Wimbledon against a fellow countryman and he admits that playing his 22-year-old colleague will feel "weird".

For a former champion long buoyed by support from the home fans, Murray could instead find the showcourt crowds cheering for a lad from Stockport — home town of Murray's only rival for the accolade of Britain's best player ever, Fred Perry — when they play on Tuesday.

Broady reckons he is playing the part of Leicester City, the 5,000-1 no-hopers who went on to win the Premier League. Only one thing; he believes he's probably an even bigger outsider to pull off one of Wimbledon's great sensations.

It has all left the tournament's second favourite Murray

admitting he does not quite know what to expect with their first round match.

"It will be interesting. Obviously never happened before, not for me anyway," Murray told a news conference on Saturday.

"Liam's a good guy. Works hard. I would imagine we'd probably play on one of the big courts, so a big experience for him, as well. Yeah, look forward to it but, I mean, it will be a bit strange."

Broady inhabits a different world to Murray, scrabbling around in Challenger and Futures tournaments to make his way in the game as the world number 234.

Yet on the Davis Cup beat, they have got to know each other pretty well. When he first joined the British team, Broady recalled, Murray was vociferous in trying to ensure he went through the newcomers' initiation ceremony of having to make a speech at his first welcome dinner.

"He had obviously never been to one of the dinners before, so wasn't sure exactly what he should say," Murray smiled.

"We were telling him the wrong things to say and hoping he would stand up and actually say them." Disappointingly for him, though, Broady "did fine".

However fine he is on Tuesday, though, he will only be a launch pad for Murray to kick off a campaign in which, even Roger Federer concedes, the Scot and Novak Djokovic are the outstanding favourites.

Djokovic won their last battle in the French Open final, leaving Murray able once again only to marvel at the world number one's extraordinary level of excellence.

"His consistency and drive over the last few years has been incredible. I don't know if that's ever happened before, where someone's pretty much gone over a year consistently reaching the finals of tournaments," said Murray.

"In an individual sport, if you have a really bad day, wake up, you feel terrible, you lose at this level. He hasn't had really any of those results or those matches over the last few years. That's very impressive." —Reuters

Croatia regret missed opportunity after late Portugal win

LENS (France) — Croatia coach Ante Cacic lamented his fancied side's failure to score against bogey team Portugal in their 1-0 Euro 2016 last 16 defeat on Saturday as Ricardo Quaresma's extra time header sent them out.

The match was a turgid affair and appeared set for penalties before Danijel Subasic parried Cristiano Ronaldo's strike into the path of substitute Quaresma who made no mistake from point-blank range three minutes from the end of extra time.

Croatia enjoyed 17 shots to their opponents' six, but failed to register a single effort on tar-

get though they did hit the post through Ivan Perisic's header just before Portugal scored.

"Everything was perfect except we didn't

score," Cacic told reporters, "so we weren't successful in attack."

Croatia scored five goals in the group stage but have failed to find the net against Portugal in all four of their matches, losing every one.

"We played really well and were controlling the match," he added, "we conceded no chances, except the last one."

"They scored in the 117th minute, I congratulate them. They kept us far from goal and that's why they

Croatia's odds of winning the tournament were slashed after they came from behind to beat Spain 2-1 and top Group D, but they failed to produce a dynamic performance against Portugal.

"I am

really sad as

we had a great

"The draw was perfect for us, we knew if we beat Portugal we had an open path."

Portugal now advance to a quarter-final date with Poland, who beat Switzerland on penalties earlier on Saturday, in Marseille on Thursday. —Reuters



Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo in action with Croatia's Darijo Srna during EURO 2016 at Stade Bollaert-Delelis, Lens, France on 25 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS