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ANCIENT EARTHEN POT DISCOVERED



Construction workers check pieces of glazed pot and green objects unearthed in Mottama, Mon State. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

GROUP of builders have unearthed an ancient glazed earthenware pot filled with unidentifiable green objects in the Mon State town of Mottama while digging housing foundations in Thahtaygone Ward.

U Aung Myo Khaing, a member of a Mottama heritage conservation group, has said the pot, along with the objects found

inside, are to be sent to archaeologists for inspection.

"We will bring pieces of the pot and the objects inside for scientific testing by archaeologists," he said.

"It is reported that the mysterious objects discovered inside the pot have a high density and are green in colour, leading people to suspect they were items used by alchemists a century

ago. The pieces seem to be a mix of bronze, lead and mercury, according to current estimations. But scientific tests should help bring some clarity," said gold expert U Soe Oo.

"I was also oblivious to what the pot's contents are. I've been living here for 70 years and have often heard of ancient pots being unearthed in Mottama, but this is the first time there's been

such a find in this ward," said U Tin Myint, the owner of the land where the pot was discovered.

According to U Win Nang, head of the construction team that found the pot, the pot was discovered 1.5 feet below ground after one of the builders struck it with his mattock, after which it was entrusted to the land owner.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Lack of rules undermines rights of Myanmar's disabled

Rules to effectively protect the rights of people with disabilities needs to be enacted as quickly as possible, says Daw Yuya Thu, planning and research director of Myanmar Independent Living Initiative (MILI).

"The rights of disabled persons will be more protected once rules has been passed through parliament. Take the example of a child who wasn't allowed to enrol at a school on the outskirts of Yangon because they suffered from polio. Despite suffering from the disability he has abilities to learn, and more importantly, the right to learn at every school, but we can't take any legal action because there's no rules with which any can be taken. Health care services and appointing of jobs for those with disabilities can be performed better after a rules is enacted," said Daw Yuya Thu.

The law on the rights of persons with disabilities was passed through parliament in June 2015, during the erstwhile government's term in office, but subsequent rules have yet to be enacted. It is reported rules legislation is currently being drawn up by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

"I hope rules for disabled person will come to fruition sometime this year. People with disabilities need to be legally protected if they're to receive more opportunities in education, employment and the like," said U Myat Thu Win, chair of the Shwe Min That Foundation.

The delay in implementation of the rules comes despite Myanmar ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in December 2011.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Part of Taungthaman Country Resort project suspended

Aung Thant Khaing

THE Mandalay Region government has suspended part of the Taungthaman Country Resort Project from being implemented by Taungthaman Thitsar Co on a land plot nearby Taungthaman Lake in Amarapura Township.

The suspension of works on a 4.9-acre of land plot which is the part of the 40.27-acre project came after a recent inspection tour by the Mandalay Region Chief Minister. It is aimed at making a review on the part of project for its environmental impact.

Works on the part of the land adjacent to the Lake was ordered to be suspended but not

the whole project, said U Khin Maung Tun, spokesperson of the company at a press conference yesterday.

The project, with two phases on two land plots of 40.27-acres and 58.83-acres include residential complexes, traditional cultural booths and handicraft malls, tourism service area and a recreation park.

The project is scheduled to be completed in 2019, according to sources.

The suspended site, about 200 feet from U Bein Bridge, is set for construction of shops, said a responsible person from the company, adding that tax was paid for land use.

According to the company's spokesperson, more than



Artist's impression of Taungthaman Country Resort Project.

50,000 shady plants will be put on the project land and an EIA and SIA report on the project will be released soon.

The company paid taxes of more than K1 billion to the government, he added.

The previous Mandalay Region government allowed the company to implement the project on the 40.27-acre land on 5 March, 2015 and the 50.83-acre land on 28 March, 2016.

Military personnel engage collaborative volunteer work in Yangon, Sagaing Regions



Military personnel seen clearing rubbish, weeds and bushes.

PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES

MEMBERS of the Tatmadaw (Yangon Command) together with members of the Myanmar Police Force and Departmental personnel cleaned bushes and rubbish and dug a pit rubbish to bury the refuse with the use of machinery. Trees were also trimmed in the compound of the People's Hospital in Hmawbi Township on Friday.

On the same day, members of the Tatmadaw (North-West Command) cleared up rubbish, weeds and cleaned the drainage to allow a proper flow of water in the compound of No 1 Basic Education High School in Homalin town, Sagaing Region.— *Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services*

Staff housing built on Hlaing Campus

ELEVEN staff quarters are being built within the compound of Yangon University (Hlaing Campus), and they are estimated to be completed in December 2016.

The 12-storey buildings will include a 1,000-vehicle car park, escalators, a swimming pool and a football field. A Wi-Fi network will be available after the project is completed.

"The project is being implemented by the Ministry of Education to house its faculty members and staff in the country's higher education sector.

Those faculty members will be allowed to live there before they retire," said a senior official from the ministry.

In line with international standards, the staff housing project will include a 1.5-storey community centre, which was built in May 2015.

The housing complex will include over 900 apartments.—200

Crime NEWS

Shootings kills one, injures another in Tachilek

TWO firearm related accidents occurred in Tachilek township, Shan state (East) on Wednesday, leaving one man dead and another seriously injured. According to an investigation, one Arr Gar shot Lawh Yar when the suspect and the victim had an argument over a

mortgaged motorcycle. The bullet went astray and struck one Thet Hein Soe who is currently receiving medical treatment at Tachilek general hospital. The police are searching for Arr Gar who managed to escape from the scene and have filed charges against him.

Arr Gay also reportedly shot his brother-in-law, Arr Jar, in Wan Kaung 1 village, Tachilek township. U Arr Jar died on the way to Tachilek general hospital. Police are currently searching for Arr Gay who remains on the run.— *Maung Yin Kyay*

Boulder kills three gem miners in Mogok

THREE men were killed in Kyauk Hsaung village, Mogok after a boulder reportedly fell on the men. Aung Myo Thu, 16, Myo Lwin, 16 and Ye Win

Ko, 20, who were employees of the Hlan Shan Gem mining company, suffered serious injury and later died after they were struck by a boulder on

Wednesday. The accident occurred while they were maintaining the pit. Police are still investigating the case.— *Nay Wah (Mogok)*

Over 270,000 yaba pills seized

A COMBINED investigation team comprising officers and staff from Maung Taw police station seized 275,120 yaba pills at

the home of one Zarpha Hu Sein in Latha village, Maung Taw township on Thursday, according to a connected investigation from

Mawn Tet Hu Hsaung.

Similarly, police in Moemeik discovered 1,200 yaba pills on one Hsan Win together with Ma Aye in Bawdei village, Moemeik township on Wednesday. According to a connected investigation, the police searched the home and found 76,000 yaba pills.

Likewise, police from Taunggyi police station seized 390 yaba pills from vehicle driver Tin Way Htoo with one Ma Aye Aye Khine on board on Kalaw road in Taunggyi on Friday. Police have filed charges against all suspects under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.— *Myanmar Police Force*



Over 270,000 yaba pills seized in Maung Taw Township. PHOTO: MPF

Accident injures two in Dekkhinathiri



A VEHICLE accident occurred at the corner of Yati road and Shwe Hninsi road in Dekkhinathiri township, Nay Pyi Taw on Friday, leaving two drivers injured.

According to an investigation, a vehicle being driven by one U Kyaw Swa Myint, 41, col-

lided with second vehicle being driven by one U Win Htein, 66, while both drivers were speeding. U Kyaw Swa Myint and U Win Htein sustained minor injuries in the accident. The drivers have been charged by police.— *District IPRD*

Two motorboat collision leaves a man missing

A MOTORBOATING ferry collided with another motorboat near Myeik pontoon bridge, Taninthayi region on Wednesday.

According to an investigation, the motorboat, being driven by one Zaw Tun, 35, collid-

ed with the an other motorboat being driven by U Maung Lwin ,42, with 30 workers on board. The latter motorboat sank and the driver is still missing.

Police have filed charges against Zaw Tun.— *Myint Oo (Myeik)*

Govt vows to overcome challenges in cooperation with the people



Union Minister Dr Aung Thu speaks at the meeting with peasants in Thongwa Township. PHOTO: MNA

THERE can be both strengths and weaknesses in the implementation of regional development activities, and the weakness will be overcome by the government in cooperation with the people, said Daw Su Su Lwin, the wife of President U Htin Kyaw, yesterday during a meeting with local farmers at the Dagaw water gate in Dagaw village, Thongwa, Yangon Region.

The government is exerting its utmost efforts to fulfill the needs of the people, that the responsible professional personnel from the departments concerned are asked to consider suggestions made by farmers and provide technical assistance and, since its assumption of duties, the government has directed all of its effort towards fulfilling the needs of the people. The farmers (of the nation) are all requested to join the government in a like-minded manner, said the first lady.

Afterwards, local farmers discussed agricultural sector

development as well as regional development.

The Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Aung Thu, in his reply to the farmers, said that difficulties faced in water transportation, flood prevention, sanitation and the erosion of river banks can be attributed, in the opinion of the experts, to poor repair and maintenance of sluice gates, the incompleteness of the project for greening the City of Yangon and its 30-mile radius environs and a lack of maintenance of waterways.

Dr Aung Thu promised to bring benefits to the people of the region.

The meeting was also attended by Yangon Region Minister for Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry and Energy U Han Tun, representatives from the Pyithu Hluttaw, the Amyotha Hluttaw and the Regional Hluttaw, the directors-general, the region, district and township level departmental officers and local farmers.—MNA

Auto accidents killed 15 people in Yangon

POLICE Lt-Col Aung Ko Oo of the Traffic Police Force said 15 people were killed in 50 auto crashes in Yangon Region last week.

The traffic accidents that occurred between 27 May and this past Thursday killed 15 people and injured 44, with six hit-and-run drivers having been

indicted. Police Lt-Col Aung Ko Oo expressed his view that reckless driving accounted for the majority of traffic accidents.

In May alone, the region saw 243 car crashes, of which 154 cases were due to reckless driving while unskilled driving contributed to 25 road accidents.—Ko Moe

Residents protest against Myitson Dam meeting in Myitkyina

AROUND 50 residents in Myitkyina township staged a protest against Chinese Ambassador Hong Liang over attempts to negotiate the controversial dam project in the state.

The protest comes a day after a Chinese delegation comprising the ambassador and members of the China Power Investment (CPI) corporation visited residents who were relocated due to the dam project.

The protest took place around 9 am outside the Palm Spring Resort in Myitkyina while the delegation is holding discussions at the resort with local authorities comprising Kachin State

Chief Minister Dr Khet Aung and Chair of Kachin State Democracy Party Dr Tu Ja.

“The Chinese ambassador visited Aung Myay Thar Model village where residents who were relocated for the Myitson Dam project. At meeting with the residents, he told them that they would negotiate the objections to the dam project and the project would be carried out in line with the will of the local people,” said Daw Jor Khawn, a local.

“However, the residents did not get a chance to have their voices heard at the meeting. That’s why they have come here and staged the protest”, she added.

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Following the protest, Liu Zhan, General Manager of the State Power Investment Corporation-SPIC of China, who participated in the meeting yesterday morning, said the company has urged the authorities concerned to settle the issue as soon as possible. The project should not be delayed any longer due to the huge level of investment, he said.

He also called on the government to make the facts in the contract public ensuring transparency.

State-controlled SPIC is the product of a merger last June between the China Power Investment Corporation and the State Nuclear Power Technology Corporation. Wearing headbands that read ‘No Dam’ and carrying banners that said ‘No more destruction of our home land’ “CPI, get out of Kachin State” and “stop killing the Irrawaddy”, staged the protest standing side by side on a platform outside the resort.

Dr Tu Ja told The Irrawaddy after the meeting that he urged them to do what residents wish, but CPI would stick to the contract and that if Myanmar wanted to terminate the project, it would have to pay a large amount of money as compensation.—Mang Ngai, Zaw Gyi



Residents in Kachin State stage a protest against a Chinese delegation as it holds a meeting with local authorities in Myitkyina. PHOTO: ZAW GYI

Over 900 cases of diarrhoea reported within Yangon in 2016

THE Yangon Region Health Department (YRHD) has announced 900 patients sought treatment for serious, but non-fatal, cases of diarrhoea within government hospitals in the greater Yangon Region between January and May this year.

The highest number of cases was experienced in the densely populated Hlaingthaya Township, followed by Thingangyun, Dagon Myothit (South) and Insein Townships.

“The townships of Hlaingthaya and Dagon Myothit (South) are crowded parts of the city, where a lot of internal migrant re-

side. It’s important not to eat fly-blown or unclean food. One must eat fresh and well-cooked warm food to avoid suffering from diarrhoea,” said Dr Win Lwin, head of the YRHD.

According to the records of the department, 2011 saw two fatalities from diarrhoea, five in 2012, three in 2013, two in 2014 and a single fatality last year.

Dr Win Lwin says the YRHD carries out diarrhoea prevention activities in every Yangon township, which have been successful in mitigating diarrhoea related diseases such as cholera and food poisoning.

Between January and April this year, health professionals from the YRHD conducted a total of 2,497 awareness trainings; added chlorine to wells 1,279 times; sprayed anti-bacterial disinfectant in toilets within areas prone to cases of diarrhoea 1,414 times; and made 1,863 field trips.

It is reported there is a need for more people to use latrines, boiled water, add chlorine to well or water tanks; and wash their hands before cooking food or after touching dirty things in order to prevent diarrhoea, cholera and symptoms of food poisoning.—Myitmakha News Agency

K1 billion earmarked for upgrading Yangon’s drainage system

IT has been reported that K1 billion from the Yangon regional government’s budget will be used in repairing and improving the city’s drainage system in a bid to solve annual problems of flooding within the region.

Naw Pan Thin Zar Myo, spokesperson for the Yangon regional government, announced the aforementioned project at a discussion forum held at the

American Centre on Thursday. “There used to be septic tanks on 49th Street but they were later filled in with earth, upon which apartments were then constructed. Half of the city’s drains are clogged up with litter and debris, while Yangon also has no rain storage tanks. The result, drains fill up with water and rubbish when it rains, overflowing on the street,” she said.

The city boasts over 40 drain outlets which act as channels to funnel excess rainwater deluges out into the Hlaing, Ngamoe Yeik and Yangon rivers. But, nearly half of these outlets are completely clogged with rubbish, with water only able to flow through 21 of them.

“Pollution control, cleaning and waste management departments exist under the Yangon

City Development Committee (YCDC). Drains are cleaned by one department but responsibility for collection of the dug up waste is left to the other. As such, waste and rubbish that isn’t collected ends up flowing back into the drains when it rains,” said Daw Dewi Thantsin, an environmentalist.

It is reported that other projects earmarked for the Yangon

Region as part of the new government’s hundred day initiatives include the elimination of squatters; collaboration with NGOs and INGOs; discussion with local and foreign entrepreneurs to solve electricity shortages; together with a reduction in the number of bus lines and permission for public owned companies to be formed in a bid to solve the traffic congestion woes.—Myitmakha News Agency

LOCAL Business

Ministry plans to stock up on 30,000 tonnes of rice this year

THE Ministry of Commerce plans to stock up on 30,000 tonnes of rice within the year, according to Dr Soe Tun, vice president of the Myanmar Rice Federation.

Plans are underway to buy the crop from major rice growers in Yangon, Mandalay, Bago and Ayeyawady regions as well as in Rakhine State.

The federation does not know the exact date that rice will be collected but the ministry is likely to carry out the restoration of rice reserves as soon as possible, planning to buy between 5,000 and 30,000 tonnes of rice with the use of a government allocated budget and the tender system, Dr Soe Tun said.

This is the first time in four years the government has decided to stock up on emergency bags of low quality rice due to risks posed by climate change.

Further discussions will be made between the Ministry of Commerce and the Myanmar Rice Federation on matters related to collecting reserve rice.

Keeping rice reserves is one of the government's disaster prevention goals, allowing for the provision of food quickly should natural disaster strike anywhere in the country.

Myanmar is the world sixth-largest rice producing country. Rice is the country's main staple food. —WWP/Union Daily

Indians arrive on a trilateral trade promotion and goodwill visit

"A PARTY of Indians have arrived in Myanmar on a trilateral trade promotion and goodwill visit," said an official from the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

The three nations are

India, Thai and Myanmar. The Indians have arrived by arrangement of Bright View Travels and Tours Co Ltd. They have entered Myanmar via the town of Myawady, and are slated to be proceed-

ing to Yangon followed by Nay Pyi Taw, Bagan, Monywa and Tamu from whence they will return to India on 8 June, it has been learned.

Altogether this year 159 tourists have vis-

ited Mongphyat and Kengtung, 72 have visited Mongla, and 177 have visited Taunggyi, Inle, Bagan, Mandalay, Kyaukse and Yangon by the use of the tri-national Asia Highway.—200

Rental fees on the rise in Mandalay

MONTHLY rental fees in Mandalay, Myanmar's second-largest urban centre, have increased by an average of K200,000 since last year due to a decline in housing buyers in the market, according to local real estate agents.

"Home rentals turn better profits than sales. Service fees for home rentals depend on location

and the type of property. Fluctuations in real-estate are linked to the trends of prices in other markets. House owners only rent out their properties once they receive the price they want," said U Tin Hlaing, a real estate agent from Mandalay.

The monthly rental fee of a detached property made with zinc roofing and

bamboo matting has risen from K70,000 in 2015 to K100,000 this year, while properties made of reinforced concrete currently fetch K500,000 a month, up from K300,000 last year.

"Sales of real estate have subsided over the last couple of years. People dare not buy and sell land because of the changing

political climate," said U Myint Swe, a real estate agent.

It is reported real estate rental services have seen the most business in the Mandalay townships of Chanmyathazi and Pyigyidagun, according to the Mandalay real estate market. —Myitmakha News Agency

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Dam completion signifies growing Indian influence in Afghanistan

KABUL (Afghanistan) — India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Afghanistan on Saturday to mark the completion of a nearly \$300 million hydroelectric dam project, the latest symbol of Indian investment in its South Asian neighbour.

The dam, originally built in western Herat province in 1976 before being damaged during the civil wars of the 1990s, was rebuilt by some 1,500 Indian and Afghan engineers, according to the Indian Ministry of External Affairs.

"It is symbol of our friendship and would usher in hope, light up homes, nourish the fertile fields of Heart and bring prosperity to the people of the region," Modi said in a social media post as he departed for Afghanistan, the first stop on a five-country trip.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has nurtured

closer ties with India in the past year as relations with Pakistan have deteriorated in the face of continued insurgent attacks and border tensions. Afghanistan has walked a fine line as it accepts Indian aid, with Pakistan historically wary of any Indian influence in Afghanistan. "Salma Dam is another big step in deepening and broadening the relationship between Afghanistan and India," Ghani said in a post on Twitter. At more than 100 metres (330 feet) high and 540 metres (1,770 feet) wide, the dam is designed to generate 42 megawatts of power and help irrigate 75,000 hectares of land, according to Modi. India has poured more than \$1 billion into Afghanistan reconstruction projects and humanitarian aid, making it one of the largest donors to the war-torn country. —Reuters

US flexes muscles as Asia worries about South China Sea row



US Defence Secretary Ashton Carter arrives for the keynote address at the IISS Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore on 3 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

SINGAPORE — The United States stepped up pressure on China on Saturday to rein in its actions in the South China Sea, with top defence officials underlining Washington's military superiority and vowing to remain the main guarantor of Asian security for decades to come.

Defence Secretary Ashton Carter said the US approach to the Asia-Pacific remained "one of commitment, strength and inclusion", but he also warned China against provocative behavior in the South China Sea.

Any action by China to reclaim land in the Scarborough Shoal, an outcrop in the disputed sea, would have consequences, Carter said. "I hope that this development doesn't occur, because it will result in actions being taken by the both United States and ... which would have the effect of not only increasing tensions but isolating China," Carter told the Shangri-La Dialogue, a regional security forum in Singapore.

"The United States will remain the most powerful military and main un-

derwriter of security in the region for decades to come — and there should be no doubt about that." The top US military commander in the region, Admiral Harry Harris, told reporters at the forum that Washington needed to operate from a position of strength against "all outcomes".

"The bottom line is this: we want to co-operate where we can, but we just have to be ready as a military to confront them if we must," he said.

The South China Sea has become a flashpoint between the United States, which increased its focus on the Asia-Pacific under President Barack Obama's "pivot", and China, which is projecting ever greater economic, political and military power in the region. Carter however said he would welcome China's participation in a "principled security network" for Asia. "Forward thinking statesmen and leaders must ... come together to ensure a positive principled future," he said, adding that the network he envisaged could also help protect against "Russia's worrying actions" and the growing

strategic impact of climate change.

The deputy head of China's delegation to the forum said any attempts by the United States to isolate China would fail.

"This is a time of co-operation and common security," Rear Admiral Guan Youfei told reporters. "The US action to take sides is not agreed by many countries. We hope the US will also listen to the other countries." Other Asian leaders said the situation in the South China Sea was viewed with concern across the region. "All countries in the region need to recognise that our shared prosperities and the enviable rate of growth that this region enjoys over past decades will be put at risk by aggressive behaviour or actions by any one of us," Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar told the forum. Japanese Defence Minister Gen Nakatani said his country would help Southeast Asian nations build their security capabilities to deal with what he called unilateral, dangerous and coercive actions in the South China Sea.

"In the South China

Sea, we have been witnessing large-scale and rapid land reclamation, building of outposts and utilization of them for military purposes," Nakatani said. "No countries can be an outsider of this issue."

Trillions of dollars of trade a year passes through the South China Sea, which is home to rich oil, gas and fishing resources. Besides China, Viet Nam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have claims in the area, and rising tensions have been fuelling increasing security spending in the region. "The uncertainty of China's future trajectory is arguably the main driving concern about possible military competition now and in the future," Malaysian Defence Minister Hishamuddin Hussein said.

Carter said that for decades some critics had been predicting an impending US withdrawal from the region, but this would not happen. "That's because this region, which is home to nearly half the world's population and nearly half the global economy, remains the most consequential for America's own security and prosperity." In an apparent counter to "America-first" policies expounded by prospective Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, including suggestions that US troops should be withdrawn from Asia, Carter stressed bipartisan support for continued engagement. "Regardless of what else was going on at home or in other parts of the world — during Democratic and Republican administrations, in times of surplus and deficit, war and peace — the United States has remained economically, politically, and militarily engaged, as well as geographically located in the Asia-Pacific," he said. —Reuters

US, Japan, South Korea to conduct ballistic missile warning exercise

SINGAPORE — US Defence Secretary Ashton Carter said Saturday that the United States will conduct a trilateral ballistic missile warning exercise with Japan and South Korea later this month.

Speaking at the Asia Security Summit, also

known as the Shangri-La Dialogue, held in Singapore, Carter emphasized that the "US-Japan alliance remains the cornerstone of Asia-Pacific security."

With the new defence guidelines that Japan and the United States signed

last year, "the US-Japan alliance has never been stronger, or more capable of contributing to security around the region and beyond," he added.

He said the United States is committed to promoting a "principled security network" of mili-

tary cooperation, such as through the missile warning drill in the Asia-Pacific region.

Other senior defence officials from the region including Japanese Defence Minister Gen Nakatani are also attending the meeting. —Kyodo News

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Vehicles are submerged in flood in Congjiang County, southwest China's Guizhou Province, on 3 June 2016. The flood caused by torrential rainfall has left two people dead in Congjiang. PHOTO: XINHUA

Cosmetic surgery laws to be strengthened in Australia's NSW

SYDNEY — Laws surrounding the cosmetic surgery industry will be strengthened to further protect patients, the Australia's New South Wales (NSW) state government said on Friday.

The changes will require medical procedures such as breast augmentations, tummy tucks and liposuction to be carried out in facilities that have the same licensing standards as private hospitals.

NSW state Health Minister Jillian Skinner said the changes would provide greater safeguards for patients.

"Reports of significant adverse health outcomes for some patients has led to growing public concern over high-risk practices by some operators," Skinner said.

"A NSW Health discussion paper informed the changes made today, which will ensure a safer regulatory environment for patients undergoing selected cosmetic surgical procedures."

Australian Medical Association NSW president professor Brad Frankum welcomed the changes.

"Patient safety is paramount and these new regulations will improve safety for people who undergo these kinds of procedures," Frankum said.

It follows a review into the cosmetic surgery industry by the NSW health ministry following a number of medical complications resulting from cosmetic procedures.

The new laws will take effect in early 2017.—Xinhua

Regional conflicts should be resolved through cooperation: Thai PM

SINGAPORE — Regional conflicts should be resolved through cooperation, Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha said in a keynote speech at the 15th Shangri-La Dialogue which kicked off here Friday.

Peace and stability are common interests of the region, and Thailand is willing to maintain peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific Region under the international law, the Thai leader said.

On the South China Sea issue, Prayut said Thailand supports peaceful resolution of the disputes in line with the international law including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

"Thailand considers that full and effective implementation of

Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) will create an atmosphere conducive to resolution of the problem, and we support the early conclusion of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC)."

The three-day Shangri-La Dialogue attracts over 560 delegates from 52 nations and regions, including 32 official delegations.

According to the organiser, the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) think tank, participants comprise defence ministers, senior security officials, military chiefs, diplomats, executives from the corporate sector as well as academics and a significant media presence.—Xinhua

Japan, US to start talks on clarifying civilians subject to SOFA

SINGAPORE — Defence chiefs of Japan and the United States are likely to agree Saturday to begin talks on clarifying the definition of civilian workers for the US military subject to a bilateral pact relating to American soldiers and other personnel in Japan, informed sources said.

Japanese Defence Minister Gen Nakatani and US Defence Secretary Ashton Carter are expected to agree during their meeting in Singapore later in the day to launch talks on the Japan-US Status of Forces Agreement, following local anger sparked by the alleged involvement of a civilian US base worker in the death of a woman in Okinawa Prefecture, they said.

Okinawa Gov. Takeshi Onaga

and the assembly of the southern island prefecture that hosts the bulk of US military facilities in Japan have called for revising the SOFA, which is seen by locals as one-sided and overly protective of Americans.

Under the 1960 pact, which has never been revised, Japanese prosecutors cannot indict members of US forces or their "civilian component" if offenses are deemed to have been committed while on duty.

The agreement says US authorities have in principle the primary right to exercise jurisdiction over them in such cases.

The SOFA allows a suspect to cooperate with Japanese investigations only on a voluntary basis in some cases.

Washington has shown reluctance to undertake a fundamental overhaul of the SOFA as demanded by Onaga, but believes the way the agreement is applied can be improved, according to the sources.

Former US Marine Kenneth Franklin Shinzato, who worked in a civilian capacity at the US Air Force's Kadena Air Base, was arrested in May on suspicion of abandoning the body of the 20-year-old local woman.

He is alleged to have confessed to sexually assaulting and killing her, but has not been charged with murder.

In this case, the SOFA has not posed any obstacle to investigations.—Kyodo News

Taiwan's new president, on naval visit, champions local defence industry

TAIWAN— Taiwan is determined to build a local defence industry, the island's new president, Tsai Ing-wen, said on Saturday as she toured a naval base and took a ride on a homemade 600-ton warship.

Taiwan, isolated diplomatically and reliant on the United States as its only arms supplier, has struggled to maintain modern military wares in the face of China's growing might across the 180 km-wide Taiwan Strait to its west.

Taiwan's military is looking to build its own submarines and next generation jet trainers, and its navy has begun programmes to build minesweepers, support ships, and small stealthy warships.

Constrained by budgets and

approvals required in arms sales from the United States, the government hopes that building a home-grown defence industry will increase technological know-how, create jobs and boost economic growth.

Defeated Nationalists fled to Taiwan in 1949 after losing a civil war with Mao Zedong's Communists, and the island has been self-ruled since. China still deems Taiwan a wayward province, however, to be taken back by force if necessary, especially if it begins taking concrete steps toward independence.

Beijing distrusts Tsai and her ruling, independence-leaning Democratic Progressive Party, which overturned eight years of China-friendly Nationalists rule in landslide January elections.

"Let defence needs become the driving force of industrial upgrading and transformation," Tsai told a military audience at a naval base in northeastern Taiwan.

She had just been to sea on the 600-ton Tuo Jiang, Taiwan's first homemade, twin-hulled corvette.

"This new Tuo Jiang vessel represents our determination to be autonomous in our defence," she said. The small warship, built by Taiwan's Lung Teh Shipbuilding Co, is designed to be used for stealth missions and was delivered to the navy at the end of 2014. Since taking office two weeks ago, Tsai has been visiting military bases as Taiwan's first woman commander-in-chief.—Reuters



Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen waves her hand as she boards the nation's first domestically built stealth-missile 500-ton Tuo Jiang twin-hull corvette at Suao Naval Base in Yilan, Taiwan on 4 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS



US Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton waves after speaking at a 'Women for Hillary' event in Culver City, California, United States on 3 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Clinton opens up double-digit lead over Trump nationwide: Reuters/Ipsos poll

NEW YORK — Democratic presidential contender Hillary Clinton has opened up a double-digit lead over Republican rival Donald Trump, regaining ground after the New York billionaire briefly tied her last month, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll released on Friday.

The shift in support comes as Clinton steps up her attacks on the real estate mogul's policy positions, and as Trump fends off criticisms of his eponymous university and the pace at which he doled out money that he raised for US veterans.

Some 46 per cent of likely voters said they supported Clinton, while 35 per cent said they supported Trump, and another 19 per cent said they would not support either, according to the survey of 1,421 people conducted between 30 May and 3 June.

Trump had briefly tied Clinton in support among likely US

voters in mid-May, raising expectations for a tight race between the two likely contenders in November's presidential election.

Trump has all but sealed the Republican nod after a string of big wins in state nominating contests forced his party rivals to drop out, while Clinton is still fending off a long-shot bid for the Democratic spot on the ballot by US Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont.

Clinton is hoping to seal the nomination next week, when a slew of big states including New Jersey and California will hold primaries, allowing her to consolidate her party's support ahead of a general election matchup against Trump.

Clinton's polling surge comes as Trump is being harangued by criticisms over his Trump University, the target of a trio of lawsuits that claim it misled thousands of people who

paid up to \$35,000 for seminars to learn about Trump's investment strategies.

Trump has defended the school and said he will relaunch it once the litigation ends.

Trump this week also outlined the recipients of millions of dollars in donations he raised at an event in January for veterans' groups, in a bid to end speculation that he had not yet handed over all of the money.

On Thursday, Clinton used a foreign policy speech in California to paint Trump's policy platform as "dangerously incoherent" and cast her Republican rival as both a frightening and laughable figure.

Trump responded by saying she lied about his positions and by ripping her record as secretary of state, which he says was marred by his handling of government emails and the death of a US ambassador in Libya.—*Reuters*

Georgia hopes for visa-free travel to EU despite German objections

BRUSSELS — Georgia still hopes to win visa-free travel to the European Union, its envoy to Brussels said on Friday, after last-minute objections from Germany seem to have suspended the process.

Struggling to control immigration fuelling support for nationalist and populist parties across the bloc, the 28-nation EU failed to agree for the second week running on easier travel requirements for Georgia's three million residents.

The south Caucasus country has met all the criteria for the EU visa waiver, but Germany led the last-minute opposition with backing from France and Belgium, diplomats said.

It seemed Georgia was being held hostage to build leverage in the more complicated visa liberali-

zation talks with Turkey — whose help the EU needs to control immigration under a deal sponsored by Berlin — and Ukraine, where a peace deal negotiated by Germany and France to end a conflict with Russia-backed rebels in the east of the country has stalled.

"It's a little bit childish to say that we are hostage of the political circumstances, because these are the ones that dictate decisions and we understand this," Georgia's EU Ambassador Natalie Sabanadze told Reuters.

"But I do say that we feel that we have fulfilled our part of the bargain and now it's up to the EU to deliver ... The question now becomes political, it's a matter of taking a political decision."

After last year's arrival of

1.3 million refugees and migrants, most of whom ended up in Germany, the EU is now making it easier to suspend visa waivers before granting the privilege to more countries.

Already approved by member countries, the beefed-up "suspension mechanism" is now being handled by the European Parliament. German diplomats say they want European lawmakers to sign off on this before the bloc moves on other countries.

By far the biggest one in line is Turkey, which wants relaxed travel rules for its 79 million residents in return for preventing refugees and migrants from leaving its shores for EU member Greece and taking back those who make the journey anyway.—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Lightning strikes injure 51 at German music festival

BERLIN — At least 51 people were injured by lightning strikes at the "Rock am Ring" music festival in western Germany on Friday evening, according to German police, with forecasts of thunderstorms and possibly hail to come.

Organisers could not be reached for comment about any plans to shut down the festival, which is now in its 31st year and takes place at the airport in Mendig, a small town located about 150 km from Frankfurt, near the Nuerburgring motor racing track.

The festival organiser had reported on its website early Saturday morning that at least 42 people were injured, eight seriously.—*Reuters*

33 US cities cheat on water quality: paper

LONDON — After the outbreak of the water contamination crisis in the US city of Flint, Michigan, more US cities have been exposed to have similar problems, according to an investigation by *The Guardian* newspaper.

At least 33 cities across 17 US states have used water testing "cheats" that potentially conceal dangerous levels of lead over the past decade, the British newspaper reported on Thursday.

Testing methods that can avoid detecting lead include asking testers to run faucets before the test period, known as "pre-flushing," to remove faucet filters, called "aerators," and to slowly fill sample bottles. The investigation found that big cities like Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, Detroit and Milwaukee were among the cities using poor testing methods.—*Xinhua*

Vucic: Decision on gov't composition due by end of next week

BARIC — Serbia's Prime Minister-designate Aleksandar Vucic said Friday that he will make the final decision on the composition of the new government by the end of next week.

Speaking to reporters in Baric in Belgrade's Obrenovac municipality ahead of Monday's start of consultations on the new government, Vucic said that "this is a realistic timeframe if we want to go to the parliament on 15 June and then possibly complete the election of the government on 16 June," Vucic said.

He said that he wants the government to be united, unite towards objectives and achieve good results.

The deadline to form the government is 5 or 6 September, but the process will be completed much sooner, definitely before Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Belgrade, scheduled for the end of June, Vucic said.—*Tanjug*

Ljajic, Li discuss cooperation in telecommunications, IT

BELGRADE — Serbian Minister of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications Rasim Ljajic on Friday received Chinese Ambassador to Serbia Li Manchang to discuss ways to improve bilateral cooperation in telecommunications and information and communication technologies.

Ljajic and Li agreed that the signing of a Serbia-China agreement on an "IT silk road" should be the next step in strengthening the cooperation in the said fields.

The text of the agreement has already been coordinated by officials of the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications and China's National Development and Reform Commission, said Ljajic, who is also Serbian deputy prime minister.—*Tanjug*

Pakistan has seriously taken up drone strike issue with US: official

ISLAMABAD — Pakistan has seriously taken up drone strike issue with the United States, according to Pakistan foreign affairs adviser Sartaj Aziz.

"The drone attacks are serious violation of Pakistan's sovereignty and against the international, political and humanitarian laws," Aziz Thursday told the Senate.

Pakistan will also raise the issue at an international human rights council later this month, he added, saying "We have prepared a detailed briefing for presentation to the Human Rights Council on the issue."

He informed the senators that Pakistan has also briefed different countries including Russia, Saudi Arabia and Central Asian states of the fallout of a recent US drone attack.—*Xinhua*

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.

Lest you lag behind your peers

Kyaw Thura

WHEN we talk about time management, we refer to the management of our events against time. Typically, we feel like buying more time if our plans are behind schedule. All we have is 24 hours a day. We are all born equal but live differently. If there is anything that makes people different from one another in their social status, that thing is nothing but time management.

It is absolutely vital to

manage our time if we want to lead a life of quality. How we manage our time decides what the future will have in store for us. Alec Mackenzie states in his classic book on time management titled "The Time Trap" that managing our time effectively requires a distinction between what is important and what is urgent. In addition, experts in the same field have argued that the most important tasks usually are not the most urgent tasks.

It is important to note that change is a constant factor in the world of work today. In the past, a person applying for a driver post did not need any other skill more than a skill of driving well. Nowadays, employers are looking for people with the ability to handle a number of different job functions. In this modern industrial world, a degree can no longer guarantee employment. Graduates are to possess a range of skills applica-

ble in a wide variety of settings.

All things considered, graduates out of work should come to the sense that the time has come for them to equip themselves with the right mix of skills, abilities and personal qualities. Our country, as a developing country, is in desperate need of young people who are adaptable, enterprising, resourceful and dynamic. After all, you are the savior of your own future.

Communal Ordination Ceremony Organized by NRDC Family

Dr. Nyan Tun

(Continued from 3-6-2016)

As soon as the function ended up, the king of deva blessed the ceremony by pouring rain proving that it witnessed this great function. After that, lunch was offered to the *Sangha* and served the audience.

I would like to know the feeling of newly ordained student monks how they felt by changing life for temporary. So I approached the monks the next day and put some questions to some of them. I asked one monk and learned that he is a Rakhine ethnic, science student and what he told me is that for some students, their parents did not allow them to become a monk but for him his mother allowed him to do so. He was really happy by joining the Order. At this juncture, dealing with joining the Order, I would like to mention a little bit about the Disciplinary Rules (*Vinaya*) promulgated by the Buddha for everyone who wanted to join the Order, Higher Ordination (*Upasampada*). Even though you wanted to join the Order, you are not allowed to do as you wish and norms for a monk were required to be free from thirteen qualifications for the Higher Ordination. Those

rules are hard and fast for them. Among the rules, one norm is "Have your father and mother given their consent?" why was this rule laid down? It was due to the Buddha himself. By the time the Buddha returned to His native country, *Kapilavatthu*, *Rahula*, His son asked for inheritance from Him. Without giving secular inheritance, the Buddha gave spiritual one which means made him joining into the Order as a novice. King *Suddhodhana*, the father of the Buddha, who could not bear his emotional feeling was very sad because he had lost his son, the Buddha for the first time when he renounced the world and then he had lost again his grandson, therefore, he requested the Buddha not to ordain any boy without getting permission from their parents and as consequence, the Buddha consented his request and thus, He promulgated this norm.

As scheduled timetable, the monks have to do daily routing within the four days such as paying homage to the Buddha, cultivating loving-kindness, listening to the *Dhamma* Talk and practicing meditation. The newly monk said that when he was a young boy he told his mother that he wanted to be a monk af-

ter graduation. He kept on saying that due to being a monk lay devotees offer such things respectfully so he will return the gratitude of the benefactors. Dealing with practicing meditation what he said was that he could not control his mind which runs away but he followed the method through breathing in and out minutely as suggested by the Sayadaw and finally he could do it so he was really joyful.

I interviewed another student monk, a Chin ethnic, arts student. He said that his father is a Chin ethnic and his mother is a Bamar ethnic. He told his mother when he went back home in summer vacation that he would join into the *Sangha*. The mother allowed him to do so and to him to take care of health. Although his mother was happy hearing the news, she wanted to ordain him herself so she said that it was not her novice or monk. While shaving he remembered his parents he felt sad because the mother told him she would make him into the order herself so it was better if the mother was present in this function. He kept on saying what he had a thought while receiving offertories was that some teaching and administration staff who

made them as benefactors are not economically sufficient but they are very pious and generous. The best thing to return the gratitude to the benefactors is nothing but this meritorious deed, being a monk so he would return the gratitude by practicing meditation. In addition, what he said was that the life of human being is furious and complicated so even he had a thought to take permission from the principal that he will keep on stay as a monk to do missionary work for life.

I put forward questions to another one, a Kayah ethnic, engineering student, what he said was that he was proud of getting the noble life. He had never practiced meditation in his life so he could not catch his mind moving away. He tried his best but it was in vain so he was afraid of the in-charge Sayadaw for could not following as suggested by him. While listening to the *Dhamma* Talk, he decided to apply the words in his life that will always remind in his heart. The Sayadaw said to them, "**Be trustworthy person in life.**" This admonishing will remind him whenever or whatever or wherever he performs his duties.

If I put questions to the rest

of the student monks I believe I'm surely hear another interesting experience and feeling they will share to us. As the Buddha says, "*Pabbajitabhavo dullabho*" which means being a monkhood is very rare chance in the world. The newly ordained monks possess the noble life so they enjoy the happiness of religious life while joining into the Order.

The college family led by Dr. Min Thant, the principal, manages to offer alms-food to the monks in front of main building in 27th. Every department is preparing delicious rice, curry and other offertories what they wanted to offer. Over three hundred monks led by the senior monk approached to the place to accept offertories pacing up and down calm and peacefully. The donors are offering their alms-food respectfully. Under the leadership and management of the principal we can see family spirit of NRDC (Yangon) how united we stand by joining hands together and performing every social, education and religious activity in concord with family spirit. Therefore, the Buddha says, "*Samagganan tapo sukho*" which means happy is the practice of those in harmony.

Photo Exhibition held in Mandalay



Chief Minister U Zaw Myint Maung observing the photos of the State Counsellor. PHOTO: THIHA KO KO

A PHOTO exhibition to celebrate the 71 Anniversary birthday of State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was held in the Thiri Arts Hall in Chanmyathazi Township of Mandalay on Friday.

The opening ceremony was presided over by Manda-

lay Region Chief Minister U Zaw Myint Maung and members of the region government. The speakers then took a tour of the exhibition.

Photographer Saw Phoe Kwar took historical documentary photos of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi during her various

trips across the country during the 2015 general election.

The event, displaying a total of 71 photographs, opened on Friday and will close today.

All profits from the event will be donated to aid regions currently experiencing water scarcity.—*Thiha Ko Ko*

Ministry aims to ensure smooth flow of tourist traffic

THE Ministry of Hotels and Tourism is boosting its efforts to ensure smooth flow of tourist traffic in border towns.

Over 2 million international visitors entered the country through Myanmar-Thailand border towns, while another 1.5 million tourists visited the country via border towns between Myanmar and China.

To provide better tourism services to international visitors, the committee for the

smooth entrance of foreign visitors was established on 4 May.

The new committee was founded by permanent secretaries and directors of nine ministries as well as officials from general administration departments in every state and region.

The new committee will facilitate the admission of foreign tourists through all points of entry, coordinate efforts to ensure security and discipline, ensure sustainable development

of the natural environment and monitor travellers in restricted areas.

The committee will collaborate with relevant departments to prevent the admission of foreign nationals who have been blacklisted by the government for the country's security.

The ministry has a plan to ease some restrictions related to tourism, said U Tint Lwin, director-general of Directorate of Hotels and Tourism.—*Zar Zar*

First European Food Festival in Myanmar to be held in Yangon on 24 June

FIRST-EVER European Food Festival will be held in the Mahlzeit Function Hall in Sanchaung Township, Yangon from 3 p.m. on 24 June.

The event showcases all 28 countries of European Union and their variety of food.

The famous European Restaurants Barboon, Chococity, Mahlzeit, Le Planteur, L'Opera, La Taverna, Union Bar, Savoy Hotel, are teaming up to provide Europe's most exciting dishes.

During the event, flight tickets to Europe sponsored by Lufthansa together with attractive gifts and prizes from Embassies and our Sponsors Luther Lawfirm, DB Schenker, MTMF, Carlsberg Brewery, Wave Money and Grand Royal Whiskey can be won.

500 tickets will be available at 15,000 kyats for the whole festival.

The entry fee includes free drinks and food and are available from next week on at the participating Restaurants.



All profits from the event will be donated to Myitar Yangon Chi orphanage.—*Lin Aung Htet*

POEM:

To Politics

For over fifty years you have been the Fool
With a bag of dirty tricks and deadly traps.
You've been used as a hopeless stooge, a tool.
You triggered the loss of lives, making a grab
Of children in terror, broke off the entwining hands;
In the flames of war lay our motherland!
No song of the Dove in the air, poor little Bird.
'Politics' was then a taboo, a much hated word.
Now Integrity's been reconciled with you.
The Makers of Modern Myanmar hold you high,
Making our people's dreams come true—
A new horizon in the eastern sky!
Never allow the Bugs for blighting penetration,
But let your Roses bloom from generation to generation.

Zaw Tun

People's Forum

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor

Fenugreek (*Trigonella foenum-graecum* L.) is an annual forage legume and a traditional spice crop that has been grown for centuries across South Asia. Currently the crop is grown across parts of Mediterranean Europe, North Africa, Middle East, South Asia, limited parts of SE Asia and Far East, Australia, US, Canada, Argentina and Australia. India is the largest producer in the world but bulk of the produce is consumed internally; and hence there is a huge global demand of this crop. Used in both Indian Ayurvedic medication as well as Traditional Chinese Medicine for centuries as a powerful medicinal herb. The reason behind this is the presence of a large number of important phytochemicals present in the leaves and seeds namely disogenin, trigonelline, fenugreekine, galactomanans and 4-hydroxy isoleucine to name only a handful. Latest research has demonstrated that both leaves and seed have important anti-diabetic properties and has successfully reduced blood cholesterol levels in both humans and animals under experimental trials compared to their untreated control groups. Hence, the crop has now generated international demands for the pharmaceutical, nutraceutical and functional food industries. The crop has been recommended for the dry and semi-arid regions of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Myanmar with diverse agro-ecosystems should look forward in at least experimental trials for fenugreek (commonly known as 'methi' across South Asia) as a chemurgic crop. Boosting national agriculture with the experimental introduction of commercially important crops and animals from adjoining regions suitable for the agro-climatic conditions for Myanmar could add new boost for rural economic development and lead to new opportunities in expanding agriculture.

Thanking you

Sincerely yours
Saikat Kumar Basu

Betel chewing to be prohibited in public places

THE Ministry of Health and Sport has plans to launch a campaign to remove betel stands from public places and places of tourist attraction as an initial step in a broader campaign to cut down on the use of betel. The campaign will be launched in cities first to keep metropolitan cities and big towns clean, said an official from the ministry of health and sports.

"We will carry out this campaign as a project. This project will include arrangements to substitute the business of betel nut selling with other vocations. We will mete out deterrent pun-

ishment if we find betel nut shops and people spitting in prohibited areas." They added.

We have not yet decided how we will take action against betel nut spitters. We are taking steps to promote awareness of the danger of betel nut at government offices, hospitals and school areas. Chewing betel nut can cause oral cancer, throat cancer, gum cancer, tongue cancer and cavity cancer.

Myanmar is reported to have most cases of oral cancer in Asia. The project will be launched in first week of June—200

Syrian army opens new front as Islamic State's many foes attack

BEIRUT — The Syrian army backed by Russian air strikes has opened a major new front against Islamic State, the third big assault on the self-proclaimed caliphate this week after Iraqi forces attempted to storm a city and a Syrian militia advanced with US support.

The week's three big offensives are some of the most aggressive campaigns against Islamic State since it declared its aim to rule over all Muslims from parts of Iraq and Syria two years ago. They signal apparent new resolve by the group's disparate foes on a range of fronts.

Heavy Russian air strikes hit Islamic State-held territory in eastern areas of Syria's Hama province, near the boundary of Raqqa province on Friday. Raqqa city, further east, is Islamic State's de facto capital in Syria and, along with Mosul in Iraq, the ultimate goal of those seeking to destroy the group's rule. The Syrian army had advanced some 20 km (13 miles) and was now near the edge of the provincial boundary, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a group that monitors the war.



Fighters of the Syria Democratic Forces fire a mortar shell towards positions held by Islamic State fighters in northern province of Raqqa, Syria on 27 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Separately, US-backed militias, including a Syrian Kurdish force called the YPG and new Arab allies recruited to fight alongside it, have been pressing a multi-pronged attack against Is-

lamic State in other parts of Raqqa province and neighbouring Aleppo province.

This week, they began a push towards the city of Manbij near the Turkish border, aiming

to seize the last 80-km (50-mile) stretch of Turkish-Syrian frontier under Islamic State control and cut the group's main external link for manpower and supplies.

The US military said on

Friday its allies were advancing against heavy resistance from Islamic State. If successful, the Manbij campaign would free 40,000 civilians from Islamic State control.

The YPG and its Arab allies, who formed the Syria Democratic Forces (SDF) last year, have proven to be the first force in Syria allied to the United States that has been effective in fighting against Islamic State.

The SDF has taken 28 villages from Islamic State in its push towards Manbij, the Syrian Observatory said, and had freed more than a dozen women from the Yazidi minority who were taken by Islamic State fighters from Sinjar in Iraq.

US President Barack Obama has authorised several hundred special forces troops to operate in Syria, some of whom are deployed as advisers in the latest advance.

The Kurdish fighters' progress has been limited in the past by Turkey, which considers them enemies. But Ankara has signalled its tacit support for the latest advance, saying it understands most fighters involved will be Arabs, not Kurds.—Reuters

Iran's Khamenei says US, 'evil' Britain can't be trusted — state TV

ANKARA — Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on Friday Tehran had no intention of cooperating on regional issues with its main enemies, the United States and "evil" Britain.

Khamenei also accused Washington of not being committed to a nuclear deal reached between Tehran and six major powers, including the United States, in 2015 that aims to curb the country's disputed nuclear programme.

Under the agreement, economic sanctions were lifted in January after Iran suspended sensitive nuclear work that the West suspects was aimed at creating a nuclear bomb. Iran denies seeking a nuclear bomb.

Inflation, unemployment and other economic hardships persuaded Khamenei to support President Hassan Rouhani on the nuclear question aimed at improving the parlous state of Iran's economy.

"America has continued its enmity towards Iran since (the 1979 Islamic) revolution ... It is a huge mistake to trust evil Britain and the Great Satan (the United States)," Khamenei said in a speech broadcast live on state TV.

"We will not cooperate with America over the regional crisis," he said, adding that: "Their aims in the region are 180 degrees opposed to Iran's."

Asked about Khamenei's remarks, US State Department

spokesman Mark Toner said he did not really have a response.

"His rhetoric is always somewhat hyperbolic and so we take it with a grain of salt and don't necessarily rise to the bait," Toner told reporters.

Relations with Washington were severed after Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution and enmity to the United States has always been a rallying point for hard-liner supporters of Khamenei in Iran.

Tehran and Washington have common interests and threats across the Middle East. They have cooperated tactically in the past, including when Tehran helped Washington counter al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Islamic State militants (IS) in Iraq.

The United States and its allies in the Middle East accuse Iran of supporting terrorism and interfering in the affairs of regional states, including Syria, Yemen and Iraq.

Tehran is Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's main regional ally and has provided military and economic support to his fight against rebel groups and IS.

Following the end of the sanctions on Iran, the country has started to increase trade with the West. But some US sanctions remain and US banks remain prohibited from doing business with Iran directly or indirectly because Washington still accuses Tehran of supporting terrorism and human rights abuses.—Reuters

Retired generals, diplomats urge Obama to keep Afghanistan troop level

WASHINGTON — Thirteen retired US generals and senior diplomats urged President Barack Obama on Friday to maintain the current US troop level in Afghanistan, saying a reduction would undercut the morale of Afghan government forces and bolster the Taliban.

The 13 men oversaw US military operations and policy in Afghanistan during the administrations of Obama and former President George W. Bush.

They included retired Army general and CIA director David Petraeus and four other former top commanders of US-led international forces there, as well as five former American ambassadors to Afghanistan.

In an open letter to Obama in The National Interest magazine, they said maintaining the current level of 9,800 US troops would "likely have helpful effects on refugee flows, the confidence of the Taliban, the morale of the Afghan military and Afghan people, the state of the Afghan economy and perhaps even the strategic assessments of some in Pakistan."

"Conversely, we are convinced that a reduction of our military and financial support over the coming months would negatively affect each of these," they wrote.

The letter was published days before the current US military commander in Afghanistan, Army General John Nicholson, is expected to submit a review of US



Soldiers listen as US Secretary of Defence Ash Carter (not pictured) holds a question-and-answer session with US military personnel at Kandahar Airfield in Kandahar in this 22 February, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

military strategy in Afghanistan.

Under Obama's current plan, the number of US military personnel is due to drop to 5,500 by 2017. But Taliban forces lately have made significant gains and rejected peace negotiations with Afghanistan's government, which has been weakened by internal differences.

Obama has made extracting the United States from its 15-year-long war in Afghanistan a top priority of his presidency, unsuccessfully pursuing efforts to bring the Taliban into peace talks. "Afghanistan is the place where al Qaeda and affiliates first planned the 9/11 attacks and a place where they continue to operate — and is thus important in the broader effort to defeat the global extremist

movement today," the retired generals and diplomats wrote.

"It is a place where al Qaeda and ISIS (Islamic State) still have modest footprints that could be expanded if a security vacuum developed. If Afghanistan were to revert to the chaos of the 1990s, millions of refugees would again seek shelter in neighbouring countries and overseas, dramatically intensifying the severe challenges already faced in Europe and beyond."

The signatories also included: retired Marine Corps General John Allen, who served as Obama's chief representative to the US-led anti-Islamic State coalition; and former US ambassadors to Afghanistan Ryan Crocker and Zalmay Khalilzad.—Reuters

WHO experts say Zika may cause birth defects in thousands of babies

NEW YORK — World Health Organisation officials on Friday cautioned that “many thousands” of infants infected with Zika virus could suffer neurological abnormalities and said nations dealing with an outbreak need to watch for problems beyond the widely reported cases of microcephaly.

These include spasticity, seizures, irritability, feeding difficulties, eyesight problems and evidence of severe brain abnormalities.

Health officials had previously concluded that Zika infection in pregnant women was a cause of microcephaly in babies, a rare birth defect characterised by unusually small heads and potentially severe developmental problems. They now believe the range of potential neurological problems in infants could be much wider.

In an editorial published in a WHO bulletin, experts said 37 countries and territories in the Americas are now dealing with Zika, which is mainly spread by mosquitoes, as well as unprotected sex with an infected man. In Brazil, the country hardest hit so far, authorities have confirmed more than 1,400 cases of microcephaly believed to be linked to Zika.

“With such spread, it is pos-



Material to prevent Zika infection by mosquitoes are displayed at the 69th World Health Assembly at the United Nations European headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, on 23 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

sible that many thousands of infants will incur moderate to severe neurological disabilities,” the editorial said.

“Existing evidence and unpublished data shared with WHO highlight the wider range of congenital abnormalities probably associated with the acquisition of Zika virus infection in utero,” the editorial said.

The organisation called for

routine surveillance systems and research efforts to be expanded to include a larger population than simply children with microcephaly.

US officials are girding for local outbreaks, especially in southern states such as Florida and Texas, as summer mosquito season gets under way.

Local transmission is already present on the island terri-

tory of Puerto Rico, where officials have predicted there will be hundreds of thousands of cases. Other reported US cases have involved people who had travelled to Zika-hit areas.

WHO has also said there is strong scientific consensus that Zika can also cause Guillain-Barre, a rare neurological syndrome that can cause temporary paralysis in adults.—Reuters

New discovery of universe's expansion speed puzzles astronomers

SAN FRANCISCO — A team of astronomers has obtained what they believe to be the most precise measurement of how fast the universe is expanding, but the result seems to be puzzling, astrophysics news outlets reported Thursday.

Using data from the Hubble Space Telescope and the Keck I telescope in Hawaii, the astronomers report in an upcoming issue of the *Astrophysical Journal* that the current expansion rate of the universe is 73.24 (plus or minus 1.74) kilometres per second per megaparsec. A megaparsec equals 3.26 million light-years.

However, measurements by the European Space Agency's Planck Observatory a few years ago of fluctuations in the cosmic microwave background radiation, which documented the universe's early history, combined with the current Standard Model of physics, led to the prediction that the expansion rate is 66.53 (plus or minus 0.62) kilometers per second per megaparsec.

The discrepancy that the universe is expanding 9 per cent faster than expected means either that measurements of the cosmic background radiation are wrong, or that some unknown physical phenomenon is speeding up the expansion.

“If you really believe our number — and we have shed blood, sweat and tears to get our measurement right and to accurately understand the uncertainties — then it leads to the conclusion that there is a problem with predictions based on measurements of the cosmic microwave background radiation, the leftover glow from the Big Bang,” said Alex Filippenko, a professor of astronomy at University of California, Berkeley, and co-author of the new paper. The cause, according to the astronomers, could be the existence of another unknown subatomic particle, perhaps an often-hypothesized fourth flavor of neutrino; or that the influence of dark energy, which pushes and accelerates the expansion of the universe, has increased over the 13.8 billion-year history of the universe. Or perhaps, Albert Einstein's general theory of relativity, the basis for the Standard Model, is slightly wrong.—Xinhua

Niger confirms bird flu outbreak in poultry

PARIS — Niger has reported an outbreak of the highly pathogenic H5N1 bird flu virus among poultry, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) said on Friday, as the disease continues to hit flocks across West Africa.

Niger's veterinary services submitted a notification to the OIE on Thursday after the outbreak was confirmed at the end of May, the Paris-based OIE said in a statement.

The outbreak, which killed all 86,000 poultry birds at the affected site, started in late February, and followed a previous outbreak in the country last year, the OIE said.

H5N1 avian influenza, or bird flu, has spread across a number of West African coun-

tries in the past two years, hitting poultry farms.

Cameroon last week reported an outbreak of the H5N1 virus that killed several thousand birds at a poultry breeding center in the capital Yaounde.

On Friday, the authorities in Cameroon's western region said in a statement they had banned the transport of chickens after over 1,500 chickens died at a farm in Bayangam.

The series of outbreaks in West Africa has raised fears of transmission to humans, given a number of human deaths since the H5N1 virus first infected humans in 1997 during a poultry outbreak in Hong Kong.

The H5N1 virus is also one of two bird flu types to have in-



Chickens are seen in a contaminate farm while workers from the Animal Protection Ministry prepare to cull them to contain an outbreak of bird flu, at a farm in the village of Modeste, Ivory Coast, on 14 August 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

fecting flocks in parts of France since last year. This led the country to impose a freeze on duck and geese breeding in af-

fecting zones earlier this year to stamp out the disease and protect its large foie gras industry.—Reuters

Luxembourg sets aside 200 million euros to fund space mining ventures

BRUSSELS — Luxembourg on Friday upped its bid to be a leader in the nascent space mining industry by setting aside 200 million euros (\$223 million) to fund initiatives aimed at bringing back rare minerals from space.

Luxembourg in February announced plans for a law that would make it the first state in Europe to give legal clarity to the

commercial exploitation of asteroids. A similar law was passed by the United States in November.

“We have a first budget to get started but if we need more money, we will be able to provide it,” Etienne Schneider, Luxembourg's economy minister told a news conference.

Luxembourg's ambitions drew interest from pioneers in the

field such as US operators Planetary Resources and Deep Space Industries which aim to set up offices in the grand duchy.

A first reconnaissance mission to scout nearby asteroids for resources could take place as soon as three years from now.

Primarily known for its fund management and private banking industry, Luxembourg has high

ambitions for the exploration of space.

“Luxembourg's aims is to be in the top 10 space faring nations in the world,” Schneider said.

One of the successes the country can point to is Luxembourg's SES one of the world's largest operators of communication satellites.

“In 1985 the government de-

cided to launch the first satellite. We had huge discussions then that nobody would need that kind of satellite or that it could fall from the sky,” Schneider added.

Under international law, mining in space is a contentious subject as international treaties call for exploration to be carried out for the benefit of all countries.—Reuters

Investigators find car believed to belong to UCLA gunman



Students walk past the engineering building as they leave campus after police officers conducted a search at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) campus after it was placed on lockdown following reports of a shooter that left 2 people dead in Los Angeles, California on 1 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — A car found near Los Angeles on Friday belonged to a former graduate student who shot dead his estranged wife at her Minnesota home before driving half-way across the country and killing a professor and himself at the University of California, Los Angeles, a police spokeswoman said.

Mainak Sarkar's 2003 gray Nissan Sentra was found in Culver City, a suburb just outside Los Angeles, and a bomb squad has been sent to examine the vehicle, said Los Angeles police spokeswoman Liliana Preciado.

The car was found blocks from an apartment where Sarkar once lived.

Police do not know yet how Sarkar travelled

to UCLA after he left his car in Culver City, about 6 miles (10 km) away from UCLA, said Los Angeles police spokesman Drake Madison.

Investigators have been looking for the car since Wednesday, when Sarkar shot to death 39-year-old engineering professor William Klug at UCLA.

The shooting drew a massive response of heavily armed police and sparked a two-hour lockdown of UCLA's sprawling urban campus. Students said they hid in classrooms behind doors, some of which did not lock.

Sarkar had intended to also kill a second professor at UCLA, police said. The native of India was

convinced that Klug had stolen software he had developed, according to police, who called Sarkar's claim unfounded.

Earlier, Sarkar had killed his estranged wife Ashley Hasti, at her home in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, police said. Hasti's sister, Alex Hasti, described her in a statement on Facebook as a 31-year-old medical school student with a love of acting and stand-up comedy.

So far no motive has emerged to explain why he killed Hasti in the home they had shared in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, some 2,000 miles (3,200 km) from Los Angeles.

Hasti was found dead early on Thursday morning of multiple gunshot wounds, the Hennepin

County Medical Examiner's Office said in a statement on Friday.

"Because this was an unwitnessed death, a more accurate date and time of death cannot be determined," the statement said.

Sarkar is believed to have forced his way into Hasti's home through a window, which was found broken, Brooklyn Park police said in a statement.

Police only decided to check on Hasti after finding a note at the Los Angeles crime scene written by Sarkar, 38, asking authorities to check on his cat at his home in St. Paul.

The bizarre hint led to the discovery of a "kill list" that included Klug, Hasti and the second professor, Los Angeles Police Chief Charlie Beck told re-

porters on Thursday.

Alex Hasti on her Facebook post offered no indication of what might have provoked Sarkar.

"My sister, Ashley Hasti, was the smartest, coolest, and funniest person I knew. She could do anything she dreamed of," the sister said. "Unfortunately, she won't get to see that last dream come true as her life was cut short much too soon by her estranged husband ... I'm still in a state of shock right now."

Sarkar was armed with twin 9mm semiautomatic handguns and multiple extra clips of ammunition, authorities said.

The two guns were legally bought in Minnesota, according to Meredith Davis, a spokeswoman for the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. She declined to say who bought the weapons.

Wednesday's attack was the latest in a long string of deadly shootings at US schools, including an October attack at an Oregon community college that killed nine and a 2007 massacre at Virginia Tech, in which a gunman killed 32 people, was the deadliest mass shooting in US history.

Ashley Hasti married Sarkar in 2011, according to a copy of a marriage license obtained by Reuters. An active Facebook page belonging to Hasti shows pictures of Sarkar, none more recent than May 2011.

A page apparently belonging to Sarkar, with no public posts since 2011, prominently displayed several photos of them together.—Reuters

Remains found in Aussie croc's stomach believed to be missing woman

SYDNEY — Police in Australia's northern state of Queensland say they have found human remains in the stomach of a 4.3-metre saltwater crocodile suspected of killing a late-night swimmer.

State police, in a statement, said late Friday they "have recovered what are believed to be human remains from a crocodile that was removed from Cooper Creek this afternoon."

They said the crocodile, suspected of killing 46-year-old Cindy Waldron in the Daintree region of far north of Queensland last Sunday, was trapped by rangers on Thursday and was "humanely euthanized" before having its stomach contents examined.

"At this stage, police believe the remains are those of a woman who was reported missing on 29 May," the statement says. Waldron, a New South Wales resident originally from New Zealand, was wading in waist-deep water with a female friend at 10:30 pm on Sunday when she screamed that she was being attacked by a crocodile, before disappearing under the water, according to local media reports.—Kyodo News

World powers have duty to revive Middle East peace talks: EU

PARIS — The European Union's foreign policy chief said on Friday that major powers had a duty to revive talks between Israel and Palestine and that the perspectives created by the Oslo accords in 1993 were at risk.

"The policy of settlement expansion and demolitions, violence, and incitement tells us very clearly that the perspective that Oslo opened up is seriously at risk of fading away," Federica Mogherini told reporters in Paris during an international conference aimed to create momentum for peace talks.—Reuters

Finland government strikes deal with unions to boost stagnant economy

HELSINKI — After a year of negotiations and strikes, Finland's center-right government convinced the country's unions on Friday to accept an 'internal devaluation' that will cut workers' benefits for the first time in a century.

The largest trade unions and main business representatives approved a proposed labour reform pact intended to boost export competitiveness in the stagnant economy of the Nordic country, a euro member state.

The reform pact will increase annual working hours, lower holiday bo-

nuses, freeze wages for a year and increase pension contributions for workers while lowering them for employers.

"Today, we are making history in Finland. Only few countries are able to make a decision this tough by a joint agreement," Prime Minister Juha Sipila wrote on a blog post.

"With these measures, we will significantly catch up the competitiveness of Sweden and Germany."

With the country's largest industrial workers' union on board, around 85 per cent of Finnish work-

ers have now signed up for the deal. The government has promised to sweeten the deal with tax cuts.

High costs and rigid labour markets have been seen as a major obstacle for spurring growth in the country which has been pressured by a decline in Nokia's former telephone handset business, recession in neighbouring Russia and a fast-ageing population.

A preliminary agreement on the labour pact was reached in March but on-off talks between individual trade unions and business lobbies contin-

ued right up to the Friday deadline.

To reach the deal, the government had to compromise on its ambition to shift away from centralized wage-setting toward company-level labour deals — a move seen boosting small companies in particular.

Some entrepreneurs and analysts said the deal was insufficient to spur growth significantly.

"This pact does not fix the structural problems in the Finnish economy," said Mikael Pentikainen, managing director of the Federation of Finnish En-

terprises.

According to the World Economic Forum, Finland currently has the most rigid wage negotiation system in a comparison of 140 countries.

The Finnish economy is forecast by the European Commission to expand 0.7 per cent this year, less than any other EU country except Greece.

But data earlier on Friday showed the gross domestic product had expanded more than initially estimated in the first quarter, fueling hopes of a stronger recovery.—Reuters

Illegal poaching, logging and mining worth up to \$258 billion

NEW YORK — Illegal logging, mining, poaching and other environmentally destructive trade earned criminal gangs up to \$258 billion last year, the United Nations said in a report published on Saturday.

The scale of crimes ranging from illegal gold mining by drug cartels in Columbia to pillaging forests by rebels in Democratic Republic of Congo is expanding two to three times faster than the global economy, the study by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and Interpol found.

“Environmental crime is growing at an alarming pace,” Interpol Secretary General Juergen Stock said in a statement.

The amount spent by international agencies on combating environmentally damaging crime — \$20-30 million — is just a fraction of its estimated value of \$91-258 billion, it said. Trafficking products from endan-

gered wildlife, including tusks harvested by the decimation of one quarter of the world’s elephant population over the last decade, is worth between \$7 to \$23 billion a year, the report said.

Pointing to the mismatch between poachers’ profits and government measures to fight them, ivory traffickers in Tanzania reap five times the size of the country’s wildlife budget, or an estimated \$10.5 million per year, it said.

An average 3,000 elephants were killed per year there over the last decade, the data showed. “The vast sums of money generated from these crimes keep sophisticated international criminal gangs in business, and fuel insecurity around the world,” UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner said. The report also highlighted complex carbon credit fraud cases that run into hundreds of millions of dollars.—*Reuters*



A forest police shows two eviscerated body of Sumatran tigers found in a cool box after it was confiscated from villagers at the Deli Serdang district in Indonesia's North Sumatra Province on 3 June 2008. PHOTO: REUTERS



Smoke billows from a derailed oil train near Mosier, Oregon, US in this handout photo released to Reuters on 3 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Oregon derailment likely to reignite oil-by-rail safety concerns

MOSIER (Oregon) — A Union Pacific train carrying crude oil derailed and burst into flames along Oregon’s scenic Columbia River gorge on Friday in the first major rail accident involving crude in a year.

While no injuries were reported, the train remained engulfed in flames six hours after the derailment, officials said. The accident has already renewed calls for stronger regulation to guard communities against crude-by-rail accidents.

Union Pacific Corp, owner of the line, said 11 rail cars from a 96-car train carrying crude oil derailed about 70 miles (110 km) east of Portland, near the tiny town of Mosier.

Oil spilled from one car, but multiple cars of Bakken crude caught fire, said Oregon Department of Transportation spokesman Tom Fuller. Firefighters

were still fighting the flames several hours later.

The crude was bought by TrailStone Inc’s US Oil & Refining Co and bound for its refinery in Tacoma, Washington, some 200 miles (322 km) northwest of the derailment, the company said.

Television footage showed smoke and flames along with overturned black tanker cars snaking across the tracks, which weave through the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. “I looked outside and there was black and white smoke blowing across the sky, and I could hear the flames,” said Mosier resident Dan Hoffman, 32, whose house is about 100 meters (328 ft) from the derailment. “A sheriff’s official in an SUV told me to get the hell out.”

While rail shipments have dipped from more than

1 million barrels per day in 2014 as a result of the lengthy slump in oil prices, the first such crash in a year will likely reignite the debate over safety concerns surrounding transporting crude by rail.

“Seeing our beautiful Columbia River Gorge on fire today should be a wake-up call for federal and state agencies — underscoring the need to complete comprehensive environmental reviews of oil-by-rail in the Pacific Northwest,” said US Representative Earl Blumenauer of Oregon.

Ecology officials from Washington state said there was no sign of oil in the Columbia River or Rock Creek. Since 2008, there have been at least 10 major oil-train derailments across the United States and Canada, including a disaster that killed 47 people in a Quebec town in July 2013.

The incident comes eight months after lawmakers extended a deadline until the end of 2018 for rail operators to implement advanced safety technology, known as positive train control, or PTC, which safety experts say can avoid derailments and other major accidents. The measures included phasing out older tank cars, adding electronic braking systems and imposing speed limits, all meant to reduce the frequency and severity of oil train crashes. The tank cars involved in Friday’s crash were CPC-1232 models, which elected officials have raised concerns about in the past even though they are an upgrade from older models considered less safe. On Friday, US Senator Ron Wyden of Oregon repeated his call from last year for federal officials to look into whether the newer cars were safe enough.—*Reuters*

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA HASIL VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA HASIL VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5.6.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T/M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

At least 16 killed in Texas floods, four soldiers’ bodies found

AUSTIN, (Texas) — At least 16 people in Texas, including four soldiers who went missing when their vehicle overturned in flood waters, have died due to torrential rains in the past week that have deluged hundreds of homes and led to prison evacuations, officials said on Friday.

The bodies of five other soldiers were found a day earlier, bringing the death toll to nine after

their military vehicle flipped over in a flood-swollen creek on Thursday at Fort Hood Army post in central Texas. Three survivors were released from a hospital on Friday, Major General John Uberti told a news conference.

“This tragedy extends well beyond Fort Hood and the outpouring of support from around the country is sincerely appreciated,” he said.

The vehicle overturned at a low-water crossing, and military officials have not said why the convoy was training near a swollen waterway. The sprawling army post covering an area about 15 times larger than Manhattan was closing flood-hit roads when the accident took place.

The military plans to release the names of those killed after it has notified their relatives, Uberti said.

One more flood-related death in the state was likely, San Antonio police said on Friday, after recovering the body of a man caught in metal bars at a river drainage.

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice began evacuating on Friday about 1,700 inmates at its Ramsey Unit in Rosharon, about 30 miles (50 km) south of Houston, due to flooding along the Brazos River.—*Reuters*

5 Seconds of Summer announce song for new Ghostbusters movie

LONDON — Australian boyband 5 Seconds of Summer have announced a new single “Girls Talk Boys”, which will feature on the soundtrack to the new “Ghostbusters” movie.

The single will drop on 15 July and is already available for pre-order in selected coun-

tries, reported Digital Spy. Other artists to be featured on the soundtrack include G-Eazy ft. Jeremih, Pentatonix, WALK THE MOON, Fall Out Boy ft. Missy Elliott and Wolf Alice.

“Our new single #GIRL-STALKBOYS will be on the @ Ghostbusters soundtrack in theat-

ers 7/15. Avail for preorder in select countries tomorrow,” the band wrote on Twitter. The “She Looks So Perfect” band are bursting back onto the pop scene with “Girls Talk Boys”, to be featured in Melissa McCarthy and Kristen Wiig’s reboot of the supernatural comedy classic.—PTI

American Idol’s production company sues former winner

LOS ANGELES — Hit reality singing show American Idol’s production company is suing season 11 winner Phillip Phillips for USD 6 million.

19 Entertainment filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in late April and filed a complaint on 2 June in a New York bankruptcy court against the former winner said *The Hollywood Reporter*.

The complaint alleged that Phillips has been holding onto as much as USD 1 million of 19’s money, and argues that he should also be forced to pay them at least USD 5 million for apparently repudiating and breaching

agreements. Back in January 2015, Phillips sued to get out of his recording contract with 19 Entertainment. However, there was no decision on the case before the final season of “American Idol” this year, and the former winner even appeared on the show again.

“Phillips has refused and insists that he will continue to refuse to perform pursuant to the Agreements, thereby causing Plaintiffs additional damages,” stated the complaint from 19 Entertainment.

“The amount of the additional damages from these con-

tinuing breaches is not presently calculable with precision but will be presented at the time of trial and will exceed USD 5,000,000.”

Phillips’s attorney responded: “19’s new complaint is a blatant attempt to evade California’s jurisdiction and thwart its fundamental public policies crafted to protect artists. 19 cannot murder its parents, then seek mercy as an orphan.”

A Labour Commissioner hearing for Phillips’s lawsuit was scheduled for 31 May, but then 19 Entertainment declared bankruptcy which has paused his case.—PTI

Amber Heard sues comedian Stanhope for defamation over Johnny Depp

LOS ANGELES — Lawyers for actress Amber Heard filed a defamation lawsuit against comedian Doug Stanhope on Friday after he wrote an article accusing her of blackmailing and manipulating her estranged husband, actor Johnny Depp.

The complaint was filed in Cochise County, Arizona, against Stanhope and 20 unnamed individuals associated with the comedian.

The lawsuit demands a jury trial and says that Heard would donate all proceeds to a battered women’s shelter in Arizona.

Representatives for Stanhope and Depp did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The complaint is in response to a 29 May guest column by Stanhope published on entertainment trade outlet TheWrap.com and headlined “Johnny Depp Is Being Blackmailed by Amber Heard — Here’s How I Know.”

Stanhope, who said he was a friend of Depp’s, wrote that Depp had told him that Heard was leaving him and “threatening to lie about him publicly in any and every possible duplicitous way if he didn’t agree to her terms.”

“Blackmail is what I would imagine other people might put it, including the manner in which he is now being vilified,” Stan-



Actress Amber Heard leaves the Superior Court of Los Angeles in Los Angeles, California, US, on 27 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

hope wrote.

Lawyers for Heard called Stanhope’s comments, detailed in the complaint, “completely false and highly defamatory.”

The lawsuit is the latest step in the increasingly acrimonious split between Heard, 30, and Depp, 52, who had been married for 15 months.

Heard filed for divorce from Depp in Los Angeles last month, citing irreconcilable differences, and obtained a temporary restraining order against the actor.

She said in court papers that Depp had been abusive to her throughout their relationship, culminating in a 21 May argument during which he hurled a cell phone at her face and shattered objects in her apartment.

The documents included photos of the actress with a bruised eye that she said she sustained in the incident. Heard later gave a statement to Los Angeles police in which she accused Depp of domestic violence.

Depp, one of Hollywood’s top stars and box office draws, is currently touring with his band Hollywood Vampires in Europe and is scheduled to perform in Bucharest, Romania, on Monday.

The actor’s 17-year-old daughter from a previous relationship, Lily-Rose Depp, supported her father on Instagram last week, posting a photo captioning her father as “the sweetest most loving person I know.”—Reuters

‘Glee’ star Mark Salling pleads not guilty to child porn charges



US actor Mark Salling arrives at the Entertainment Tonight Emmy Party in Los Angeles, California on 19 September 2011. PHOTO: REUTERS

SAN FRANCISCO — Actor Mark Salling, who had a supporting role as a high school athlete-turned-singer in the TV series “Glee,” pleaded not guilty on Friday to charges of receiving and possessing child pornography, authorities said.

The 33-year-old Salling surrendered to authorities at the federal courthouse in downtown Los Angeles before entering not guilty pleas to the two charges, said Thom Mrozek, spokesman for the US Attorney’s Office for the region.

An attorney for Salling could not be immediately reached for comment on Friday afternoon. Mrozek said Salling would likely be freed on Friday on \$150,000 bond. A trial date was set for 12 July, he said.

The federal charges against the Texas-born Salling for receipt

and possession of child pornography stem from his arrest by Los Angeles police and federal agents on 29 December 2015. He was released on bail of \$20,000 and was initially expected to be charged in Los Angeles County court.

The US Attorney’s Office said that as a result of the investigation, the case was handed over to federal prosecutors.

The charges against the actor center on a still image and three videos of child pornography depicting young girls, prosecutors said. The two charges each carry a maximum sentence of 20 years in federal prison.

On the award-winning Fox television show “Glee,” which ran from 2009 to 2015, Salling played Puck, a bully and a football player who showed a softer side when he joined the glee club at his high school.—Reuters

Victoria Beckham didn’t have microphone turned down: Mel B

LOS ANGELES — Spice Girls star Mel B says she has no idea when Victoria Beckham’s microphone was switched off during the band’s gig.

The 41-year-old star said Victoria may have “secretly” asked for her microphone to be “turned down,” reported ET online.

“She wishes it was turned off! We sung live, and we wrote and recorded all our music together live and we performed it live. It wasn’t turned down. Not that I know of. Maybe she secretly asked for that — I don’t know about that,” Mel B said.

Singer-turned-designer Victoria Beckham recently revealed that her microphone was always turned off when she was performing on the stage with the other girls at Spice Girls’ past concerts.—PTI



Spice Girls star Mel B. PHOTO: REUTERS

Muhammad Ali, boxing great and cultural symbol, died at 74

SCOTTSDALE (Ariz.) — Former world heavyweight champion Muhammad Ali, whose record-setting boxing career, flair for showmanship and political stands made him one of the best-known figures of the 20th century, died on Friday aged 74.

Ali, who had long suffered from Parkinson's syndrome which impaired his speech and made the once-graceful athlete almost a prisoner in his own body, died a day after he was admitted to a Phoenix-area hospital with a respiratory ailment.

Even so, Ali's youthful proclamation of himself as "the greatest" rang true until the end for the millions of people worldwide who admired him for his courage both inside and outside the ring.

Along with a fearsome reputation as a fighter, he spoke out against racism, war and religious intolerance, while projecting an unshakeable confidence and humor that became a model for African-Americans at the height of the civil rights

era. "Muhammad Ali was one of the greatest human beings I have ever met," said George Foreman, who lost to Ali in Zaire in a classic 1974 bout known as the "Rumble in Jungle."

"No doubt he was one of the best people to have lived in this day and age. To put him as a boxer is an injustice."

Ali enjoyed a popularity that transcended the world of sports, even though he rarely appeared in public in his later years.

"We lost an icon," said Delson Dez, 28, a construction worker, who was holding up a poster of the fighter in Scottsdale, Arizona soon after Ali's death was confirmed in a statement issued by his family late Friday evening.

"He talked trash but he backed it up," Dez said.

Few could argue with his athletic prowess at his peak in the 1960s. With his dancing feet and quick fists, he could — as he put it — float like a butterfly and sting like a bee. He was the first person to win the heavyweight championship



World Heavyweight Champion Muhammad Ali (R), (formerly Cassius Clay), and challenger Henry Cooper fight at Highbury Stadium, London, Britain, on 21 May 1966 for the World Heavyweight Boxing title. The fight was stopped in the sixth round due to cut above Cooper's left eye. PHOTO: REUTERS

three times.

But Ali became much more than a colorful and interesting athlete. He spoke boldly against racism in the '60s, as well as the Viet Nam War.

During and after his

championship reign, Ali met scores of world leaders and for a time he was considered the most recognizable person on earth, known even in remote villages far from the United States.

Ali's diagnosis of Par-

kinson's came about three years after he retired from boxing in 1981.

His influence extended far beyond boxing. He became the unofficial spokesman for millions of blacks and oppressed people

around the world because of his refusal to compromise his opinions and stand up to white authorities.

"We lost a giant today. Boxing benefited from Muhammad Ali's talents but not nearly as much as mankind benefited from his humanity," said Manny Pacquiao, a boxer and politician in the Philippines, where Ali fought arch rival Joe Frazier for a third time in a brutal 1975 match dubbed the "Thrilla in Manila."

In a realm where athletes often battle inarticulateness as well as their opponents, Ali was known as the Louisville Lip and loved to talk, especially about himself.

"Humble people, I've found, don't get very far," he once told a reporter.

His taunts could be brutal. "Joe Frazier is so ugly that when he cries, the tears turn around and go down the back of his head," he once said. He also dubbed Frazier a 'gorilla' but later apologized and said it was all to promote the fight.—Reuters

Mexican 'Spider-Man' weaves web of knowledge for science students

MEXICO CITY — A Mexican science teacher has come up with a novel way to get his students' attention — giving lessons dressed as Spider-Man.

Moises Vazquez, 26, said he was inspired to pull on the tight blue and red suit of the superhero after reading in comics that the Marvel character behind the mask, Peter Parker, worked as a science teacher after his time as a freelance photographer.

"I do the same job as anyone else, I don't think it's the best class in the world just because I put



Moises Vazquez, 26, known as Spider-Moy, a computer science teaching assistant at the Faculty of Science of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), who teaches dressed as a comic superhero Spider-Man, poses for a photograph during a class in Mexico City, Mexico, on 27 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

on a suit.

But I assure you I want to be the most honest and dedicated there is, I just want to make the classroom a better place," he said.

When giving class at the National Autonomous University of Mexico as the superhero, Vazquez leaves home in eastern Mexico City with his mother's blessing, and rides in public transport to the prestigious seat of learning dressed as the Avenger.

Vazquez's family originally thought that pretending to be Spi-

der-Man could hurt his career when he started donning the suit for class a year and a half ago — but instead the unusual turn has gone down well with students and other teachers, he said.

"Obviously they reacted with surprise, but they were happy too," Vazquez added. "Everyone was smiling at me."

On the streets of the megalopolis, people are generally surprised to learn the Mexican superhero is a university lecturer, assuming that his outfit is part of a film shoot.—Reuters



Entertainment Channel

(5- 6-2016, Sunday)

6:00 pm

- Weather Report
- Music Programme

6:30 pm

- School For the Blind (Kye Myin Dine)

6:50 pm

- International Movie Songs

7:00 pm

- Myanmar Video

8:40 pm

- MRTV Entertainment Music

9:00 pm

- Bogalay Tint Aung: A Man of

Versatility

(Part- 1)

9:30 pm

- Myanmar Movie

**From 5-6-2016 (Sunday) 6:00 Pm
To 6-6-2016 (Monday) 6:00 Pm**



Myanmar International

(5-6-2016 07:00am ~ 6-6-2016 7:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Jade Pagoda: Weirawsana
07:43	Am	Myanmar Traditional Toys
08:03	Am	News
08:27	Am	MOYINGYI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY
08:45	Am	Village Belle
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Snow Flakes...Scenic Confluence...To Kachin State
09:47	Am	All About Orchids
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Ngapali, Unique Spot To Relax
10:46	AmShan Novices To Be.....

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Saturday 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	Myanmar Invites You
07:41	Pm	Now in Yangon
07:48	Pm	Today Myanmar "The Dawn of Education Reform"
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	The Stories of The Great Souls (Mar Mar Aye) (EP-2)

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

Colombia down US hosts 2-0 in Copa opener



Colombia goalkeeper David Ospina punches away the ball with defender Cristian Zapata against United States midfielder Clint Dempsey in the second half during the group play stage of the 2016 Copa America Centenario at Levi's Stadium. Colombia won 2-0. PHOTO: REUTERS

SANTA CLARA (California) — Colombia scored two first half goals to tame hosts the United States and open the Copa America tournament with a convincing 2-0 victory in front of a big crowd on Friday.

The South Americans did not take long to strike with Cristian Zapata delivering the first goal in the eighth minute, the defender seizing on a corner kick from the left and volleying the ball into the back of the net.

James Rodriguez scored the second from a penalty in the 42nd minute after DeAndre Yedlin had been penalised for handball, a call the Americans hotly contested.

"The hand ball was not a hand ball," defender Geoff Cameron told reporters. "We're disappointed, obviously. But I thought we were the better team."

Rodriguez, the Real Madrid playmaker, made no mistake with the spot kick and the two-goal cushion proved enough to give Colombia the early leg up in Group A, which also includes Costa Rica and Paraguay.

The United States, hosting the tournament for the first time and looking for some consistency after a difficult year, showed fight late in the second half but were

unable to finish what chances they created.

Still, they tried to put a positive spin on their efforts and said they were happy with how they successfully controlled possession against the 2014 World Cup quarter-finalists.

"We were okay with the team performance. Against a quality team, if you don't score a goal to get back in the game and equalise it's tough," said US coach Jurgen Klinsmann. "But overall we were totally even and we didn't give them anything." Clint Dempsey produced the best scoring opportunity for the Americans with a 63rd minute free kick that Colombia goalkeeper David Ospina saved at full stretch. Ultimately, though, the end result was the hosts' sixth straight defeat in Copa America matches. It was in line with US form over the last year. The Americans finished just fourth in last year's Gold Cup and suffered a deflating defeat to Guatemala in March that led to calls for German Klinsmann to be dismissed. The US next face Costa Rica in Chicago on Tuesday, while Colombia remain in California to take on Paraguay at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena later that same evening.—Reuters

Djokovic and Murray eye milestones in blockbuster Paris final

PARIS — An 18-year rivalry will play out its next gripping chapter at Roland Garros as Andy Murray and Novak Djokovic eye up a French Open final in which milestones galore will be on the line.

Will Murray become the first British man to lift the French Open trophy in more than eight decades? Or will Djokovic have enough energy left in the tank after playing four days in succession at the rain-ravaged claycourt grand slam to become the first man in almost 50 years to hold all four majors at once?

What is certain though, is that the Musketeers' Cup will have a new name engraved on it come Sunday — weather permitting — after Djokovic pulled rank on a player he described as "a leader of a new generation" to reach his fourth Paris final in five years. The world number one's 6-2, 6-1, 6-4 win over Austrian tyro Dominic Thiem on Friday had to be staged on the secondary Court Suzanne Lenglen after a week of rain derailed the tournament's usual schedule.

That left Murray and defending champion Wawrinka to grab Centre Court billing and while the Swiss conjured some blazing backhands to whip the noisy crowd into a frenzy, the winners were rare as he surrendered his Roland Garros crown with a 6-4, 6-2, 4-6, 6-2 defeat by the British second seed.

"I knew today if I wanted to win I was going to have to play one of my best claycourt matches. Stan was playing better every match," an emotional Murray, who became the first British man to reach the Paris showpiece since Bunny Austin in 1937, told the crowd with a quivering voice.

"I am extremely proud. I never expected to reach the final here, I always struggled on the clay. I played one of my best claycourt matches today... I hope I can put on a good match on Sunday."—Reuters



Novak Djokovic reacts during French Open Mens Singles Semifinal match at Roland Garros, Paris, France on 3 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Ibrahimovic will sign for Manchester United

LONDON — Manchester United will swoop for Sweden striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic on a free transfer as new manager Jose Mourinho's first marquee signing at Old Trafford, Sky Sports reported on Friday.

United's executive vice-chairman Ed Woodward is finalising a one-year deal with the player's representatives and the 34-year-old could join before Euro 2016, Sky sources said.

Sweden's first Group E match against Ireland is on 13 June. The former Malmo, Ajax Amsterdam, Juventus, Inter Milan, Barcelona and AC Milan striker, whose Paris St Germain contract is about to expire, wants to add the Premier League title to a trophy cabinet that already

includes the Dutch, Serie A, La Liga and Ligue 1 crowns.

The prolific Ibrahimovic scored 11 of Sweden's 19 goals in Euro qualifying including three out of four in a playoff win over Denmark that booked their place at the finals in France.

The tall Swede finished his career at PSG by helping the club to their second successive treble with two goals in a 4-2 victory over Olympique de Marseille in the French Cup final. Ibrahimovic had already celebrated his last PSG game at the Parc des Princes against Nantes by breaking the club's scoring record in a top-flight season with a double, taking his tally to 38 goals, one more than Carlos Bianchi in the 1977-78 season.—Reuters

Arsenal trigger Vardy's Leicester buy-out clause

LONDON — Arsenal have triggered a buy-out clause in striker Jamie Vardy's contract with English champions Leicester City after making a bid of about 20 million pounds, several British media reports said on Friday.

Vardy, who is in England's 23-man squad for the Euro 2016 finals in France that start next

week, scored 24 Premier League goals last season as Leicester won the top-flight crown for the first time in their history.

The 29-year-old was chosen as Player of the Year by the Football Writers' Association and was named in the Professional Footballers' Association's team of the year.—Reuters