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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi addresses Second IDA 18 Replenishment Meeting



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivers the opening address at the opening ceremony of the Second IDA 18 Replenishment Meeting. PHOTO: MNA

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi called for not only providing material support but also sharing technical and capacity-building assistance to Myanmar at the opening of the Second IDA (International Development Association) 18 Replenishment Meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

In her address the State Counsellor said that Myanmar is prioritising national reconciliation and internal peace.

opment Association) 18 Replenishment Meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

It is also striving to overcome the impacts of climate change and ensure gender equality for development, the promotion of education and employment, good governance and the improvement of the administrative mechanism.

The State Counsellor called on international development partners to support the country's efforts to realise its undertakings. The opening ceremony was also attended by Union Minister for Finance U Kyaw Win, Minister of State for

Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin and local and foreign representatives.

The IDA 18 Replenishment meeting is scheduled to be held four times this year and the current meeting is set to last until Friday.—Myanmar News Agency

Myanmar gold demand slumping

GOLD sellers in Myanmar are facing an up hill slog, as prices have reached record heights in the country. As of 20 June the price per ounce of gold was US\$1,285 globally, with Myanmar rates at Ks807,500 per tical (16.33 grams) (US\$608).

Seller in Yangon have blamed the slumping real estate and car markets as people, they claim, purchase gold from excess wages earned from the two different industries.

"We have to purchase the gold at the market rate although we sold them at around Ks500,000 or Ks600,000. The better we sell, the more we have to buy back," said U

Aung San Win from AungTham-adi Goldsmith in Shwewontha Street, Yangon.

The Myanmar gold market is reportedly failing to attract investors because of the high price of gold and the appreciation of the Kyat. Gold dealers are making ef-

orts to develop the gold market by selling quality items, reducing the charges of goldsmiths, reducing the wastage when making jewelry and offering lucky draws to customers, there was no elaboration to the final method of business development.—Myint Maung Soe



PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

Reduction in company registration fees sees two-fold increase in applications

THE reduction in service fees for company registrations has seen the number of companies registering in Mandalay increase two-fold, according to the Mandalay Office of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

In the past, the official registration of a company incurred a Ks1m (US\$843) service fee. But, the slashing of the registration fee to K500,000 (US\$421) as of 1 June saw the numbers of companies registering soared

from just 15 during two weeks in May to 56 during this month of June alone.

"It used to take three days for a company registration to be processed in the past, but it can now be issued in a single day. Increased transparency in tender processes has increased the numbers of companies applying [for official registration]. A registration is valid for five years," said Daw Nwe Ni Oo, director of the aforementioned government department.

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LOCAL Business



Cars are displayed at a trade centre in Yangon. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

Yangon automobile trading to happen under one roof

CONSTRUCTION of one large centralised automobile-trading centre, that would see all current trading centres within the greater Yangon Region close-up shop, is on the verge of being permitted, according to the Yangon branch of the Myanmar Automobile Trade Association (MATA).

The total 17 small-independent car trade centres across Yangon Region would be closed down and reportedly centralised under one roof on an area of 25 acres close-by the Dagon South/North junction.

“There are 17 small-inde-

pendent automobile trade centres in the Yangon area. They will all be closed down. The centralized trading centre will be constructed at the Dagon South/North junction. The exact location hasn't been advertised as yet for fear it would stolen. The minister himself has personally already allocated 25 acres of land. This centre won't feature any showrooms however. All the independent trade centres will have to move [to this new facility],” said U Aung Than Win, chair of the MATA.

The aforementioned cen-

tralized trading facility is being carried out by the Yangon Regional government, while representatives of the region's 17 trading centres were summoned to the office of the Regional government on 15 May where agreements were made relating to the anticipated automobile trade centre.

“Representatives from all of Yangon's small-independent trading centres met with the government that day,” said U Aung Than Win, adding, “Discussions had been going on for about a month and now the lo-

cation has been confirmed. The regional government will handle sanitation, hospitality facilities and electricity of the facility, so trading should be ready to commence from the end of the rainy season.”

The Hanthawady automobile trading centre was closed down during the U Thein Sein government before being re-established in three separate locations: the Minyekyawysar trading centre, Hlaing trading centre and a trading centre in the former Thirimingalar wholesale market.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Myanmar to export 515b cubic ft of gas this FY

MYANMAR is expected to export 515b cubic ft of natural gas this fiscal year while keeping 160.6b cubic ft for local use, according to the second National Development Plan (NDP), reported on Natural Gas Asia.com.

The main Myanmar gas projects; Yadana, Yedagun, Zawtika and Shwe are expected to bring in the lot with 206.2b cubic ft, 73.4b cubic ft, 89.4b cubic ft and 146b cubic ft, respectively. Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) has estimated that the total gas production this fiscal year will reach 689.8b cubic with 14.2b cubic ft from onshore blocks and 574.6b cubic ft from offshore blocks.

The first NDP ended in 2015



Yedagun offshore natural gas rig. PHOTO: SUPPLIED BY MINISTRY OF ENERGY

in the post-election period, as the first quasi-civilian government's first term ended. The second NDP will be led by the new National League for Democracy party.

Many international companies have shown interest in as-

sisting Myanmar's developing oil and gas industry as the country lacks the necessary technology, infrastructure and funding to complete gas and oil exploration around the country.

Recently, *The Global New Light of Myanmar* reported on

a Scottish delegation that visited the country who plans on building closer relations with the foreign and local companies, as well as assisting the development of the country's oil and gas sector with its 2,000 odd supply chains.—*GNLM*

Import of China tea leaves making local trade difficult

CHINESE tealeaves entering Myanmar's market through border trade is causing damage to the local economy, according to Myanmar Tea Producers' Association.

About 70 tonnes of tealeaves enter Myanmar each month. China tealeaves affect local tealeaf enterprises, as Myanmar businesses cannot keep up with Chinese manufacturing and packaging capacities.

“Some tealeaf plantations have been forced to shut down their businesses as they are unable to cope with losses,” said U Thiha Zaw, the vice chairman of Myanmar Tea Producers' Association.

Myanmar's Green Tea market will also be threatened when ASEAN Free Trade begins as there is no attractive packaging that can add value to products, according to tea entrepreneurs.

Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, China, Viet Nam and Thailand are the tealeaf producing countries. Myanmar needs technical assistance to enter the highly competitive tea market when ASEAN Free Trade begins. Tealeaves are produced with residual leaves after plucking immature leaves.

“China exports cheaper tealeaves to Myanmar to satisfy demand in the market. Tealeaves are exempted from taxation. Thus, we need to make effort to compete, not to block out the foreign market,” said U Thiha Zaw, the proprietor of Myanmar Green Tea Company.—200

Cooperative societies to receive Ks500b in loans

THE Department of Cooperatives will provide loans amounting to over Ks500b (US\$421m) to regional and state syndicates of cooperative societies as a gesture of hailing International Day of Cooperatives that falls on 3 July.

Regional products as well as products manufactured by cooperatives will be showcased at the Department of Cooperatives, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation in Nay Pyi Taw. There will be a total of 48 showrooms from 9 am to 6 pm on 2 – 4 July. Union Ministers will hand over the loan on the final day of the exhibition the loans.—200

Reduction in company registration fees sees two-fold increase in applications

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It is reported the Mandalay Office of the DICA has also reduced company registration extension fees from K500,000 (US\$421) to K300,000 (US\$252).

"I didn't register my company because I thought it would be a troublesome process. One needed to be cautious when going to extend their registration. Successful tender bids would be selected after scrutinising a company's longevity. There is a benefit if companies can effectively carry out their enterprises," said the director of a construction company from Mandalay.

Daw Nwe Ni Oo also candidly expressed the Mandalay Office of the DICA struck 2,700 companies off the registration list after they failed to extend their registration, putting them on a blacklist of companies that disobey rules and regulations.

Approximately 50,000 companies are reportedly registered in Myanmar, with 4,400 from within Mandalay Region.

The aforementioned Mandalay DICA Office was established in May 2014 in a bid to ease the lives of business entrepreneurs who had to travel from the countryside to the DICA based in Naypyidaw in order to submit an application for company registration or extend an existing registration.



Farmers transplant paddy in Bago. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

Over 400 Bago farmers prosecuted for failure to repay loans

MYANMAR Agricultural Development Bank (MADB) has announced that over 400 farmers from across 15 townships within Bago Region are currently facing prosecution for failing to repay agricultural loans issued to them with some due in 2012.

Sixty-seven farmers are being prosecuted in Thegon township, 56 in Waw township and 47 in Thanatpin township.

"The main issue is farmers

who borrow credit need to be responsible for paying it back. Delays are experienced in the repayment of loans since the law is not very harsh when it comes to taking legal action," said U Zaw Myint Htway, deputy administrator for Thegon Township.

Between 2012-13, farmers were eligible to borrow loans of Ks50,000 (US\$42) per acre on up to 10 acres of farmland. Last year saw loans of Ks100,000

(US\$84) per acre began to be issued for cultivation of monsoon paddy, while the loan limit has since increase to Ks150,000 (US\$126) per acre this year.

"We've been given Ks150,000 per acre from the bank for this year's monsoon paddy crops. As a matter of fact, expenses incurred per acre are over K250,000 (US\$210) which includes the money needed for seedlings, ploughing, fertilizer,

replanting and harvesting. Then amongst all these expenses, if we experience irregular weather fronts we risk losing our crops, rendering us unable to meet repayments on time." U Tin Win, a farmer from Waw Township.

It is anticipated the MADB can support credit loans for over 75% of Bago Region's 28,000 acres of monsoon paddy, this year will see returns to the bank.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Mol holds workshop for ministerial spokespersons

Byline: Aung Naing (MNA),
Photo: Aye Than (MNA)

THE Ministry of Information has organised a three-day workshop on media relations for the benefit of ministerial spokespersons in cooperation with the UNESCO and European Union in Myanmar. The workshop has been running since Monday.

The workshop is aimed at helping the government's spokespersons to be confident in their relations with the media.

Director-General Daw Nwe Nwe Win of the Budget Department under the Ministry of Planning and Finance expressed her view on the workshop, saying that the workshop helps promote knowledge regarding the media directory and the difference between press briefings and a press conference.

Prof. Dr Myint Han, Director-General of the Ministry of Health and Sports also expressed his belief that benefits can be gained from learning about me-



Prof. Dr Myint Han.



Mr. Ramon R. Tuazon.



Daw Nwe Nwe Win.

dia relations at the two workshops that include lectures by local and foreign experts.

The director-general called on the media to cooperate with the spokespersons in order to provide the public with accurate news, stressing the need

for strict adherence to media ethics.

"I want the people to enjoy the full benefits of having access to information through the media," added the director-general.

Mr. Ramon R. Tuazon ex-

pressed thanks to the participants for their energetic participation in the workshop, saying that appointment of the spokespersons will be effective in ensuring transparency and will enable the public to enjoy the benefits of transparency.

'Misfire' kills man in Myitkyina

Ministry of Defence (MoD) has announced that the death of a Kachin man on Monday night was caused by a misfire from a soldier's gun. According to the MoD, the two soldiers providing security to the Bala Min Htin Bridge in Myitkyina were escorting four civilians who asked them to help as they were being threatened by a group of men with robbing their motorbikes.

When the soldiers arrived back the bridge, a group comprising eight men fought them and attempted to grab the arm of a soldier, who then apparently misfired his weapon killing a young male. The two servicemen sustained injuries during the fighting and are receiving medical care at a local battalion. Action will be taken according to the procedures, said Ministry of Defence in its announcement.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Over three million fish to be introduced to Ayeyawady River



Fish are being introduced to Ayeyawady River. PHOTO: 200

OVER three million fish will be introduced into the Ayeyawady River to improve water recourses which have been adversely effected by deforestation and un-disciplined fishing. The project will be jointly implemented by the Ayeyawady West Development Organisation (AWDO) and civil

society organisations in July, it has been learned.

Currently, we are looking at places of natural hatchery in the river and creeks. We will also help the AWDO's project, said an official from the Magwe Region Fisheries Department.

The project is set to be im-

plemented due to fish species becoming scarce following the region's flooding last year. The project is being implemented in partnership with a civil society organisation called Thadar. The project will be funded by Partner Asia and a CSO called the Pyo Pin civil foundation -200

Vocational training course opened in Thayawady Township

ORGANISED by the Bago Region Small Industries Department under the Ministry of Agricultural, Livestock and Irrigation, a vocational training course has been put into motion to support consumer goods production for people in rural areas.

The course was opened in Thakhinmyaw village, Bilin

village-tract in Thayawady Township on Monday.

At the opening of the training course deputy director Daw Nwe Nwe Wha delivered a speech.

Trainers from the Small Industries Department and 15 female trainees are attending the 7-day course which will run until 26 June.—*Shwe Win (Pyay)*



Vocational training opening ceremony in progress.

PHOTO: SHWE WIN (PYAY)

Crime NEWS

Police arrested six for murder in Kyaukpadaung

POLICE have filed charges against six people for the murder of a man in Sapyia ward, Kyaukpadaung township in Mandalay region on 19 June, according to police.

According to an investigation, U Aung Kyaw Myint from Kanthayar village discovered the corpse of a man together with a motorcycle near a paddy field on 15 June and informed the local police. The police found that the victim had died due to knife injuries.

The victim has been identified as one U Min Zaw Oo, 40 from Sanpya ward, Kyaukpadaung township. The police also found that the victim and his wife Ma Aye Aye Cho were at the time of his death on bad terms. The victim's wife is reported to have called three strangers in the time leading up to the murder for the given reason that it was related to their domestic business.



The criminals being seen after arrest. PHOTO: NAY AUNG (IPRD)

The police interrogated Ma Aye Aye Cho, Ma Khin Sein, Ma Khin Ei, Aung Aung alias Aung Thu Chit, Ko Thet alias Htet Shar and Phyo Wai alias Bo Ei Si at Myo Ma police Station.

Aung Aung, Ko Htet and Phyo Wai admitted that they had committed the crime at the behest of Ma Aye Aye Cho, who said she would give them money if

they killed her husband. So, they killed the victim while he was sleeping at his house and abandoned his body on the road according to their statements. Ma Aye Aye Cho, Ma Khin Sein and Ma Khin Ei were also involved in killing the victim, it has been reported. Police have filed charges against all the suspects. — *Nay Aung (IPRD)*

Man charged for TOYOTA HIACE theft

THE police have filed a lawsuit against a man on suspicion of a Toyota HIACE theft in Kyaukme



Ye Lin Htut alias Ko Ye.

PHOTO: U MYINT AUNG

town on 17 June, according to the police report yesterday.

According to the investigation, General Manager U Mya Thein, 65, from Nay Pyi Taw Royal President Hotel and the driver Nyein Chan Aung parked the Hiace under the portico and left the key to a receptionist called Ko Ko Lin Maung in the front office in the lobby.

Next morning, GM found that the vehicle was missing and so he asked a security man, who

said that the vehicle was driven by someone around 9:30pm. So, GM informed this matter to the police station. The police from Kyaukme township stopped Ye Lin Htut alias Ko Ye who was driving the Hiace on Pinlon road, Kyaukme town.

When interrogated, Ye Lin Htut alias Ko Ye admitted that he had stolen the vehicle from the Nay Pyi Taw hotel. The local police have taken action against him.—*U Myint Aung*

Yaba, Heroin and ammunition seized

A COMBINED investigation team comprising officers and staff from Hpa-an police station seized yaba pills from a house in Taungkalay village, Hpa-an township on 18 June, according to a police report yesterday. Acting on a tip-off, the police searched the home of one Than Sein and found 109 pills in his home.

According to a connected investigation, police searched the home of one Saw Pho Lae in San Payee village, Hpa-an township and discovered 3428 yaba pills, a 9 mm handgun and 34 rounds of ammunition. Si Kyan, Saw Kae Palu and Nan Tin were found together with the host.

Similarly, a local police squad in Lashio seized 3200 yaba pills from motorcycle driver Ko Min and another motorcycle driver identified as one Ko Ko with Maung Aye on board near Oriental toll gate, Nawnghkio entrance gate on 19 June.

Police from Pinlebu township confiscated heroin weighing 2.9 grams and 1,564 yaba pills from motorcycle driver Aung Chit with Tint Zaw on board in Maw Lin village, Pinlebu township. Police have filed charges against all suspects under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—*Myanmar Police Force*



The criminals seen together with yaba, heroin and ammunition seized. PHOTO: MPF

Japan military on alert for possible North Korean ballistic missile launch

TOKYO — Japan's military was on alert for a possible North Korean ballistic missile launch, a government source said on Tuesday, with media reporting its navy and anti-missile Patriot batteries have been told to shoot down any projectile heading for Japan.

North Korea appeared to have moved an intermediate-range missile to its east coast, but there were no signs of an imminent launch, South Korea's Yonhap News Agency reported, citing an unnamed government source.

A South Korean defence ministry official said it could not confirm the Yonhap report and said the military was watching the North's missile activities closely.

Tension in the region

has been high since isolated North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test in January and followed that with a satellite launch and test launches of various missiles.

Japan has put its anti-ballistic missile forces on alert several times this year after detecting signs of missile launches.

The Japanese government source said there were again signs North Korea might be preparing a launch of the intermediate-range Musudan missile, the same missile it attempted to launch in May, prompting the order for the military to go on alert.

South Korea's Foreign Ministry said if the North goes ahead with a launch it would again be in violation of UN resolutions and de-



Japan Self-Defence Forces soldiers are seen next to a unit of Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) missiles at the Defence Ministry in Tokyo, Japan, on 21 June. PHOTO: REUTERS

fying repeated warnings by the international community. "It will further isolate the North from the international community," ministry spokesman Cho June-hyuck told a briefing.

The United Nations Security Council in March

imposed tightened sanctions against North Korea over its pursuit of nuclear weapons. North Korea has failed in all four attempts to launch the Musudan, which theoretically has the range to reach any part of Japan and the US territory of

Guam. North Korea tried unsuccessfully to test launch the Musudan three times in April, according to US and South Korean officials, while a May attempt failed a day after Japan put its military on alert.

North Korea is be-

lieved to have up to 30 Musudan missiles, according to South Korean media, which officials said were first deployed in around 2007, although the North had never attempted to test-fire them until this year.

—Reuters

GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Chief Executive Officer - Nakagawa Kiyoshi

ceo@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Chief Editor - Khin Maung Aye

ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Deputy Chief Editor - Aye Min Soe

dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Chief Proof Reader & Translator - Ye Myint

Expatriate Consultant Editors

Alec Wilmot

cconsultanteditor2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Jaidan Coonan

Chief Translator & Editor

Kyaw Thura,

editor2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Editor

Ye Htut Tin (Local News)

editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

International Editors

Tun Tun Naing (Editor)

intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor)

Translators

Khaing Thanda Lwin,

reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Hay Mar Tin Win,

translator@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Ei Myat Mon, Tin Nwe Lynn

Chief Reporter

Tun Aung Kyaw, reporter2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Reporters

Soe Soe Yu, Thein Ko Lwin (Nay Pyi Taw Bureau),

Khin Mg Win (Mandalay Bureau)

Computer Team

Tun Zaw (Chief of Computer Team), Thein Ngwe,

Zaw Zaw Aung, Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,

Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win, Sanda Hnin, Zu Zin Hnin

Circulation & Advertising

San Lwin (+95) (01) 8604532

Ads and subscription enquiries:

subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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Australian authorities hesitant to probe photographs that could help find MH370



A piece of an airplane displays during a news conference in Maputo, capital of Mozambique, on 3 March. PHOTO: XINHUA

CANBERRA — An Australian support group for family members of passengers who were aboard missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 has released photographs of personal

items this week that could belong to the missing travellers. Aircrash Support Group Australia (ASGA) has publicly released photographs which were recently found in Madagas-

car, but Australian authorities were hesitant to investigate the lead which could help rescuers identify where the airliner went down. A spokesperson from the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) told Xinhua on Tuesday that it would be "difficult" to link the items in the photographs to passengers who were on the missing Boeing 777, as there were no names, labels or identifiable markers on the items.

"It would be difficult to identify any item which does not have any unique markings and is not a part of the aircraft structure," the spokesperson said.

ASGA is hoping that family members might be

able to positively identify some of the items from the pictures so that authorities will further investigate the whereabouts of the missing plane. "These pictures are now being made public and the items are being handed to the authorities for further action," ASGA said in a statement on Monday.

However the ATSB said it was hesitant to get involved at this stage; the spokesperson told Xinhua that "Malaysian authorities are responsible for the investigation into the disappearance of MH370 and would possess the most information about those lost aboard the aircraft and their possessions." —Xinhua

India allows 100% foreign direct investment in defence, aviation

NEW DELHI — India on Monday announced it has "radically liberalized" its foreign direct investment regime in key areas like defence, aviation and pharmaceuticals, raising the foreign equity limit up to 100 per cent.

The government, in a statement, said the decision was taken at a high-level meeting chaired

by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, "with the objective of providing major impetus to employment and job creation in India."

"The country has potential to attract far more foreign investment which can be achieved by further liberalising and simplifying the FDI regime," it said. India, which had previously capped FDI in the

defense sector at 49 per cent, will allow 100 per cent FDI in cases resulting in access to modern technology, but it has dropped the condition that foreigners must bring in "state-of-the-art" technology.

Other sectors in which FDI rules have been relaxed include e-commerce in food products produced or manufactured in India,

private security agencies, single brand retail trading and animal husbandry.

Following major FDI policy reforms in a number of sectors in the last two years, India recorded its highest ever FDI inflows at \$55.46 billion in financial year 2015-16, which ended 31 March, compared with \$36.04 billion the previous year.—Kyodo News

Five die as heavy rain falls in quake-struck Kumamoto

KUMAMOTO (Japan) — Five people died while one person remains missing as heavy rain fell on Kumamoto Prefecture, hard hit by major quakes that struck the country's southwestern region two months ago, local authorities said on Tuesday. The Japan Meteorological Agency warned residents of the risk of landslides and swollen rivers, with the prefectural government issuing a landslide alert to municipalities as soil in the area has come loose due to the magnitude 6.5 and 7.3 quakes in mid-April and their aftershocks.

Downpours surpassing 100 millimetres per hour fell in areas of Kumamoto and neighbouring Miyazaki Prefecture on the southwestern main island of Kyushu.

The agency said rainfall of 150.0 mm per hour was logged around midnight Monday in Kosa, Kumamoto Prefecture, tying for the fourth highest on record in Japan.

The agency warned heavy rain is expected in areas of eastern and western Japan through Tuesday night as an atmospheric depression on a seasonal rain front is moving eastward.

In Kumamoto, 92-year-old Tameki Iwaya died after his home was hit by a rain-induced landslide in Kamiamakusa late Monday. Osamu Soga, 79, drowned after falling into a watercourse swollen by the downpour in Kosa, according to local authorities. Takamichi Nakaguchi, a 66-year-old man in Uto, was confirmed dead Tuesday

after landslides hit multiple homes in the city. A woman in her 50s is missing after the landslides.

The downpour also caused a landslide in the city of Kumamoto with mud gushing into a home and trapping a man and a woman. The woman, 85-year-old Tsuneko Hashitani, was pulled out of the home but later confirmed dead. The man, discovered with no signs of life, was also confirmed dead, local authorities said. Authorities in the village of Minamiaso instructed 4,400 of its residents to evacuate to safer places, while the town of Mashiki issued milder evacuation advisories for some 34,000 residents. Both municipalities were hit hard by the quakes in April.—*Kyodo News*



A rescue team tries to determine if there are any people trapped inside a damaged house, hit by a landslide triggered by torrential rain, in the southwestern Japan city of Uto on 21 June 2016. Heavy rain fell across Kumamoto Prefecture, where the ground was already unstable from massive earthquakes that shook the region in mid-April. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

'Mission 11 Million' to kick off as India follows China's lead

NEW DELHI — An ambitious project to awaken a sleeping giant of Asian soccer looks like confirming Nobel laureate Amartya Sen's famous remark that India pricks up its ears only when comparisons with China are made.

With China embarked on a multi-billion dollar mission to become a soccer superpower by 2050, India looks set to follow suit with its own plan to raise its status in the game to match its burgeoning economic power.

Come October, India, most famously described as soccer's sleeping giant by former FIFA president Sepp Blatter, will launch a programme to engage more than 11 million children in soccer-related activities.

All India Football Federation (AIFF) officials will not share details of the FIFA-backed programme yet, but according to a government statement, "Mission 11 Million" will be launched in about 30 cities across the country.

As in China, where the soccer revolution was inspired by President Xi Jinping, the desire to improve India's standing in the world game goes to the very top.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in March lamented India's decline from one of Asia's top soccer nations in the 1960s to its current position at 163rd in the FIFA rankings, sandwiched between the Comoros and Tajikistan.

"Unfortunately, over the decades we have slipped to the lowest rungs," Modi said in his weekly radio talk.

"Today our ranking in FIFA is so low that I feel reluctant even to mention it."

With India hosting the under-17 World Cup next year, states have been asked to promote football in a pattern similar to the trend across the border in China.

The world's most populous nation plans to engage 30 million school children by 2020 as the first

step towards achieving Xi's "three wishes" for China — to qualify for a second World Cup finals, to host a World Cup and to eventually win one.

And while the AIFF are looking to engage as many of the country's 1.3 billion people as possible, they have also cast their net wider with a global scouting programme to identify talent in the Indian diaspora.

"The idea is to increase the talent pool," former India captain and head of the scouting programme Abhishek Yadav told Reuters.

"We can't guarantee that we can unearth 20 players overnight. It's an attempt, which we believe might work. There's no harm in trying." The programme encourages anyone under 16 with an Indian passport to post, on a soon-to-be-launched portal, a two-minute video from a competitive match.

"We wanted to give the message that if you're talented, location should not be a problem. All you need is a passport and potential," said the former forward, who played 67 matches for India between 2002-2011.

Yadav and his team are now focusing on the Gulf States, where a large number of expatriates still hold Indian passports.

"Maybe we can then expand it to US and Australia, where we have many Indian students as well as parents who recently migrated there. We will also look at South Africa and Germany."

While this has added to the buzz in the country around the hosting of the under-17 World Cup, not everyone believes India is standing on the cusp of a soccer resurgence.

"The fundamental difference between the neighbours is that China woke up long ago and played in World Cup finals before veering slightly off-track," soccer writer Jaydeep Basu told Reuters.

"With state support, they are now trying to get back on track. In contrast, India, I'm afraid, is still in deep slumber," added Basu, who has written an anecdotal history of Indian soccer.

"Mission 11 Million" has a nice ring to it but with only 3,000-odd certified coaches around, who'll teach these kids to play soccer?" As well as the lack of qualified coaches, Basu cites a fast-shrinking number of pitches — China plans to build 70,000 around the country by 2020 — and paucity of infrastructure as the major handicaps for Indian soccer.

—Reuters



A man jumps to head a ball during his soccer practice in a public park on a foggy morning in Kolkata in 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

Cambodia welcomes 275,000 Chinese tourists in 4 months, up 13 per cent

PHNOM PENH — Cambodia received some 275,000 Chinese tourists in the first four months of 2016, up 13 per cent if compared to the same period last year, said a Tourism Ministry report on Tuesday.

The number of Chinese visitors to the Southeast Asian country accounted for 16 per cent of total foreigners to the kingdom during the January-April period this year, the report said.

It added that China ranked the second largest source of tourists to Cambodia after Viet Nam, whose 306,000 people traveled to Cambodia during the period, down 3 per cent year-on-year.

Kong Sopheareak, chief of the Tourism Ministry's statistics and planning department, said Cambodia-China excellent relations and Cambodia's attractive tourism sites are key factors to lure more Chinese tourists.

Also, there are many direct flights between the two countries, he said.

"More importantly, now,

Chinese people are rich and they are keen to travel overseas," he told Xinhua. "For my prediction, China will overtake Vietnam in one or two years to become the first largest source of tourists to Cambodia."

Cambodia sees China as a major market for its fast-growing tourism industry. Earlier this year, the country released a white paper targeting 2 million Chinese tourists by 2020.

The white paper lists steps to be taken by tourism authorities to facilitate visits by Chinese tourists, such as providing Chinese signage and documents for visa processing, encouraging local use of the Chinese yuan currency, and ensuring that food and accommodation facilities are suited to Chinese tastes. Cambodia is renowned for two cultural sites on the UNESCO's World Heritage List. One is the 12th-century Angkor Archaeological Park in northwestern Siem Reap province and the other is the 11th-century Preah Vihear Temple in northwestern Preah Vihear Province.—Xinhua

Four missing as landslide, flood hit central Indonesia

JAKARTA — Landslides and floods struck North Sulawesi province in central Indonesia on Tuesday, leaving four people missing and around 40 houses damaged, a senior official of disaster agency said.

Heavy downpours and tidal waves triggered the natural disaster in Kepulauan Sangihe district at about 5:00 am local time (2200 GMT Monday), Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, spokesman of national disaster management

agency told Xinhua via phone. Local disaster agency officials were assessing the damage of the disasters, including the number of injured persons, he added.

Soldiers, police, rescuers from local search and rescue office and volunteers, were undertaking emergency relief efforts, said Sutopo.

Indonesia is vulnerable to flooding and landslide during heavy rains.—Xinhua

With two days to go, Britain's EU referendum vote still on knife edge

LONDON — Opinion polls on Tuesday suggested growing support amongst Britons for staying in the European Union but the vote in two days time which will have far-reaching consequences for Britain and Europe remains on a knife edge.

Britons will vote on Thursday on whether to quit the 28-nation bloc amid warnings from politicians, economists and trade bodies across the globe that a decision to leave would plunge Britain and possibly much of Europe into recession. The bloc — already shaken by differences over migration and the future of the euro zone — would lose its second-largest economy, one of its top two military powers and by far its richest financial centre. George Soros, the billionaire who bet against the pound in 1992, wrote in an article for Britain's *Guardian* newspaper on Tuesday that a vote to leave would trigger a bigger, more disruptive devaluation in Britain's currency than the fall on Black Wednesday.

Opinion polls published since the murder of pro-EU lawmaker Jo Cox, who was shot and stabbed to death in her constituency in northern England last Thursday, have suggested sentiment might be

moving towards an "In" vote.

An ORB poll for Tuesday's *The Daily Telegraph* newspaper found support for Remain at 53 per cent, up 5 percentage points on the previous one, with support for Leave on 46 per cent, down three

points. "All the signs of ORB's latest and final poll point to a referendum that will truly come down to the wire," said Lynton Crosby, a political strategist who advised the ruling Conservative Party at the last national election in 2015.

The "Leave" camp had "failed to quash the almost ubiquitous perception that it is the riskier of the two options," he said.

Social research body NatCen also published a survey that found Remain on 53 per cent and Leave

on 47 per cent, using a method that took on recommendations by an official inquiry into why pollsters got last year's election wrong, although its research was conducted from 16 May to 12 June.

However, an online poll by YouGov for *The Times* showed Leave ahead on 44 per cent, up one point, with Remain on 42 per cent, down two points. That survey was conducted over the weekend after Cox was killed.

Campaigning was suspended for three days after the killing, which led to soul searching about the campaign and its tone, with Jeremy Corbyn, leader of Cox's opposition Labour Party, saying her murder was likely "extreme political violence".

Some "Leave" campaigners accuse the "Remain" camp of exploiting the murder as part of what they portray as a campaign of scaremongering over the referendum by the establishment at home and abroad.

Turnout is predicted to be key to the result, and the ORB poll found that Remain supporters, who had been regarded as being more apathetic, were becoming increasingly motivated to vote as polling day approaches.—*Reuters*



Student George Smith, a supporter of "Britain Stronger IN Europe", campaigns in the lead up to the EU referendum at Holborn in London, Britain, on 20 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Cracks emerge in the European consensus on Russia

BERLIN — As the European Union squabbled over refugees, Greek bailouts and austerity in past years, it showed striking unity in another area: its resolve to punish Russia for the annexation of Crimea and support of separatists in eastern Ukraine.

That consensus was possible because German Chancellor Angela Merkel was able to keep Russia-friendly members of her own government on-side and convince sceptical EU states like Slovakia, Hungary and Italy to back extensions of the bloc's economic and financial sanctions against Moscow.

Another six month extension seems likely to be agreed on Tuesday. But that cannot hide the fact that the mood in Berlin is shifting. And with that shift, the first real cracks are emerging in the European consensus on how to deal with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

In recent weeks, as NATO advanced plans to deploy battalions along Russia's western border, Russian athletes were banned from the Olympic Games over doping and Moscow was threatened with ejection from the European football championships because of violent fans, officials in Berlin have begun to express concern that ties with Moscow could suffer irreparable damage.

Coupled with these fears has been growing frustration with the

government in Ukraine and its struggles to implement its side of the Minsk peace deal by pushing through a law that would allow elections to take place in the disputed east.

More generally, some German and European officials have begun questioning how many fronts Europe can afford to fight at a time when the bloc faces major threats like Brexit, attacks from Islamic State militants and the simmering refugee crisis.

"People are tired of confrontation with Russia. They don't like the tensions and they see that Ukraine is not delivering enough on the reform front," said Ulrich Speck, a senior fellow at the Transatlantic Academy in Washington.

"When you're confronted with ISIS, Putin doesn't look so bad. Because of this fatigue, there is a growing risk that the anti-sanctions camp grows stronger," Speck said, a view also expressed by officials in the United States, which has imposed its own sanctions on Russia over Ukraine. Over the past weeks the divide between the parties in Merkel's "grand coalition" government has widened, with German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier leading the push for a more conciliatory approach towards Russia, and a step-by-step easing of sanctions.

At the weekend, he raised

eyebrows by suggesting that NATO risked provoking Russia with military manoeuvres in eastern Europe. "What we shouldn't do now is to inflame the situation by loud sabre-rattling and shrill war cries," he told the *Bild* newspaper.

There are two ways to read Steinmeier. The first is that he is playing good cop to Merkel's bad cop, and that the hardline German stance on sanctions is unlikely to change substantially.

"What has changed on Russia policy? I think nothing has changed," said one senior German diplomat. "Still, with the sanctions deadline looming, we have to show we are doing everything we can to engage with Russia."

The other interpretation is that Steinmeier's comments point to a deeper split between Merkel's conservatives and his Social Democrats (SPD) which will only grow as the 2017 German election approaches. Some officials fear this split could send a signal of disunity to Berlin's partners, undermining the EU consensus.

One thing is sure: domestic German politics is playing a role in the Russia debate. Steinmeier has come under significant pressure from SPD leader Sigmar Gabriel over the past month to soften his rhetoric on Russia, officials familiar with their discussions say.—*Reuters*

US Senate rejects gun-control measures after Orlando shooting

WASHINGTON — The US Senate on Monday rejected four measures restricting gun sales after last week's massacre in an Orlando nightclub, dealing a bitter setback to advocates who have failed to get even modest gun curbs through Congress despite repeated mass shootings.

A group of senators was still hoping to forge a compromise for later in the week aimed at keeping firearms away from people on terrorism watch lists, although that effort faced an uphill battle with critics in both parties skeptical about its chances.

Last week's massacre, the deadliest mass shooting in modern US history, had intensified pressure on lawmakers, who moved swiftly to take the issue to the Senate floor.

But the gun-control measures lost in largely party-line votes that showed the lingering political power in Congress of gun rights defenders and the National Rifle Association.

Republicans and their allies in the NRA gun lobby said the Democratic bills were too restrictive and trampled on the constitutional right to bear arms. Democrats attacked the

Republicans' two proposals as too weak and accused them of being in the thrall of the NRA.

"What am I going to tell the community of Orlando?" asked Democratic Senator Bill Nelson of Florida after the votes. "Sadly, what I'm going to tell them is the NRA won again."

Chris Cox, executive director of the National Rifle Association Institute for Legislative Action, attacked the Democrats' amendments and thanked Republicans for rejecting them. "Today, the American people witnessed an embarrassing display in the United States," he said.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, a Kentucky Republican, said the Democratic measures were ineffective and Republican senators "are pursuing real solutions that can help keep Americans safer from the threat of terrorism."

As the parties remain largely locked in their positions, polls show Americans are increasingly in favor of more restrictions on guns in a country with more than 310 million weapons, about one for every citizen.—*Reuters*

Opinion

Write for us

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You only get one pair

Alec J. Wilmot

As we all know, you only get one pair of adult teeth and it's our individual responsibility to take care of them. There are a myriad of factors to consider when talking about dental health but the universal rule is that one ought to brush them at least once a day before bed and if you're really good, one in the morning too. Flossing is recommended for the keeping of good breath and clean looking teeth. Dental health is not simply aesthetic, though. When teeth are not well taken care of tar, plaque and

other nasty by-products of our daily lifestyle build on and around our teeth and can infect the gums, ultimately causing the loss of teeth, gum infection, chronic bad breath and even stomach and heart issues due to these bad elements being swallowed – not a pleasant thought, I know, but it is worth bearing in mind that the maintenance of a clean mouth has demonstrable positive health effects on the rest of the body as a whole.

There does exist, due to the proliferation of advertising and

lifestyle chronicling that has become so endemic in the internet age, the idea that nothing short of a gleaming, perfectly set 'TV smile' will do. The attraction to perfect teeth is mostly cultural but also partly hard-wired into us as human beings. A good set of teeth is an indicator of good general health, yes, but the 'TV smile' is the result of bleaching and cosmetic work – it does not reflect life in the real world and, indeed, very few people can maintain flawless pearly whites without cosmetic aid. I say to those of us in the real world,

do not fret - slightly off-colour teeth are completely normal, as are slight defects in the alignment of our teeth. We ought not focus on achieving a 'TV smile' but should still remain aware of how important dental health is – a simple check of our teeth and gums once or twice a week should reliably tell us how much brushing and flossing care is necessary to balance out our lifestyle factors (coffee, red wine, sugar and starch intake, smoking). You only get one pair of adult teeth, it's important to take care of them.

Civil Servants and Human Rights Knowledge

Dr. Khine Khine Win

In Myanmar, people including civil servants have limited knowledge on human rights. Due to the political reason over the fifty decades in Myanmar, people have rare chance to have knowledge about human rights. I myself have been civil servant for fifteen years in the past and let me confess I have never heard about UDHR when I was a student and a civil servant. However, today Myanmar is on the way to democracy with civilian government and in this juncture this is the time for all people including civil servants to have knowledge about human rights. With the aim to build democratic society, people including civil servants have to have knowledge about culture of human rights such as basic principles of human rights, essence of human rights and character of human rights etc. The civil service is a subdivision

of government which is usually grouped with the executive, and without which government cannot function.

During these days I have heard the news relating to establishing the Myanmar Civil Servants Academy with the idea of the government of Myanmar. I really appreciate and welcome this valuable idea. At the same time I wish there is a course about human rights at the newly established academy. It is important to create sufficient awareness of human rights for civil servants and it is the right place to introduce human rights knowledge to them. I believe civil servant training in human rights helps to ensure that the rights of all civil servants within the workplace are respected. This can have a positive impact on civil servant morale and can be of tremendous benefit to any organization. Satisfied employees are likely to be more productive, deliver a higher quality service and stay

loyal to the organization.

Civil servant plays a crucial role in democracy and administrative system. There is immense importance of the civil service system in the administrative system which acts as most vital tool for governance. Nurturing good governance is essential to ensuring respect for human rights. If we want to establish good governance and clean government we have to respect human rights. However if we don't know what is human rights, how can we respect human rights? That's why in order to have good governance in civil service system civil servants have to know knowledge about human rights especially for the civil servants who lives in the country which is going to build democratic society. Without doubt, human rights are violated when governance failed.

In any democracy, ministers are responsible to the people through parliament and therefore civil servants are accountable to

the ministers. At the same time, implementing the policies of the duly elected government is a core function of civil servants. Indeed Civil servants impact on people's lives and environment particularly in key areas such as health, education, social welfare, housing, child protection, justice, disability etc which are relevance to human rights.

Human rights education promote attitudes and encourage all individuals to know their rights and those of others. And also it can enhance awareness not to violate the rights of others. Even Myanmar National Human Rights Commission has been giving lectures at some courses at Central Institute of Civil Service (Phaunggyi and Zeepingyi) since last year. I think it is not enough as there are many civil servants in Myanmar and most of them are missing the chance to learn the lectures about human rights at institute. In this regard if we can expand the course

to academy it would be another opportunity for civil servants to know human rights there.

If civil servants know more on human rights, they can have respect for human rights and they can do better for their daily work in civil service system. Excellence in civil service is essential for the nation's prosperity too. In addition, civil servants have a duty to respect, protect and fulfill people's human rights when developing and delivering government policy and services. In this regard, civil servants must have knowledge of human rights law and standards.

To perform the statutory duties of civil servants effectively and impartially, it is important to strengthen the culture of human rights awareness which will reduce the potential for any violations of human rights by government department. I fervently hope that one day every civil servant in Myanmar realize the effectiveness of human rights which will help them to implement policies effectively with good governance.

Steps towards nation re-building

Aung Myint Oo

ALMOST-FREE gadget that works somewhat like a trendy 'FitBit' and totally free mobile phone app to track daily steps for those who sign up to take part in the programme. Still not enough as enticements? Then how about some shopping vouchers to purchase anything you like from a famous local grocery store and chances to win one of the several lucky draw prizes including complimentary holiday packages i.e. to-and-fro air tickets and hotel stays at most popular destinations? Yes, this is not about someone's daydreams. This is real and a good example of how an impactful health promotion programme should be designed. Of course, rewards are not for everyone but

only for those who manage to meet the targets set.

In the later part of 2015, Health Promotion Board of Singapore launched a very attractive programme named "National Steps Challenge" with an objective to encourage Singapore residents to be more physically active every day, anytime and anywhere. That programme offered, as described above, a free wearable steps tracker to early birds and almost free of it to the rest who sign up to participate in the programme together with a free mobile phone app to track daily steps. Those taking part will earn points based on their daily step counts which later on can be used to redeem sure-win rewards such as variety of shopping and grocery vouchers.

That programme has been

received extremely well by the public. News about the programme spread like a wild fire from mouth to mouth among office colleagues or neighbours. Steps trackers ran out of stock quickly and people wearing it became a common sight everywhere be it in offices or on public transport vehicles such as buses or trains or around neighbourhoods. People started consciously making efforts to achieve the daily target which is usually 10,000 steps and beyond.

A good health promotion programme should not just tell the public what to do or not to, it should also help them make their behavioural changes happen. Meaning there should be enablers readily available and accessible at an affordable price for those contemplating

to change their lifestyles. Programme should be based on the outcome of robust assessment of the issues at hand so as to come up with meaningful and practical solutions. It should also be subjected to a good implementation and marketing research before it is launched to ensure that finite resources are not wasted. Companion programmes e.g. healthy diet, weight management, screening tests, quit smoking and moderate drinking should go hand in hand to gain synergistic effects from a holistic approach.

Locally, in Myanmar, the Ministry of Health and Sports may wish to consider this type of programme as a kick-start towards a nation-wide healthy lifestyle movement for the public. If it is considered not very appropriate or timely to begin as a mass programme aiming at general public as target population this time around, there is no harm trying it as a pilot or tar-

geted programme for a selected group e.g. civil servants. If the Ministry of Health and Sports wish to carry it out as a model programme of public-private partnership, there is little doubt that one of the private telecoms operators would be willing to co-sponsor that kind of programme which fits very well into the criteria of an excellent CSR (corporate social responsibility) activity or even a good marketing initiative.

Shall we start counting "steps towards nation re-building" collectively as a happy and healthy Myanmar?

Reference: (1) <http://www.healthhub.sg/programmes/37/NSC>
(2) <http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/health/putting-the-fun-into-healthy-living>



Shooting contest held to mark Olympic Day in Yangon

A SHOOTING contest to mark Olympic Day 2016 took place at the North Dagon Shooting Range in Yangon yesterday.

Altogether 66 contestants took part in the shooting event which is scheduled to be held until Friday. —*Tin Soe (Myanma Alinn)*

DHL expands its express footprint in Myanmar

DHL Express has opened its self-described “largest express facility in Myanmar,” near Yangon International Airport. Occupying over 50,000 sq ft housing a 280ft conveyer belt system, the factory is said to be capable of handling massive shipment volumes over the next decade, according to the press release.

“DHL launched this facility to cater to Myanmar’s

increasing logistics needs, driven by growth sectors such as infrastructure, oil and gas and garment industries,” remarked Mark Ong, DHL Express’ country manager for Myanmar.

The facility has high security with over 30 CCTV cameras and full visibility of the shipping process with parcels being examined by X-ray machines.

“The opening of this facility reinforces DHL’s commit-

ment to logistics excellence in the region. We look forward to contributing significantly to this crucial growth phase of the nation.”

The new facility forms part of a DHL Express Myanmar network which now incorporates four service points, three service centres and a fleet of over 30 vehicles. DHL Express has operated in Myanmar for over 30 years.—*GNLM*

30th Meeting of Myanmar-Thailand Regional Border Committee held

MYANMAR hosted the 30th meeting of the Myanmar-Thailand regional border committee in Kengtung, Shan State yesterday.

The meeting was attended by Lt-Gen Min Naung who led the Myanmar delegation, deputy leader Lt-Gen Yar Pyae and Lt-Gen Somsak Nilbanjerdkul who led the Thai delegation and officials.

During the meeting a review of the 29th meeting of the Myanmar-Thailand regional border committee was made and matters related to trust-building, cooperation in border issues and the fight against narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances were discussed in addition to boundary matters. The Thai delegation arrived at Kengtung Airport on Monday.—*Myawady*

Full scholarship for ICT Development Training offered to graduate youths

THE Yangon Region Computer Industry Association has offered a full scholarship programme for ICT Development Training to graduate youths.

The scholarship program is aimed at enabling graduate youths who are interested in ICT to become professionals in the sector, said U Zeyar Phyo, an executive committee member of the association.

The association wants to provide ICT enthusiasts who

cannot afford to pay for the courses the opportunity to partake in the program, he added.

The two courses — PC & Mobile Technician Training and System & Network Engineering Training which cost K550,000 and K280,000 respectively— will be offered free to chosen applicants.

According to the association, application forms can be downloaded from www.yangonrcia.org.mm and submission of

the application must be before 22 July.

A total of 15 graduate youths— 10 for PC & Mobile Technician Training course and five for Network Engineering Training course— will be selected to take the courses, said the association.

The four-month courses are scheduled to be opened this September and the full scholarship programme is set to run twice a year. —*Soe Win (MLA)*

Yangon Zoological Gardens to buy penguins to attract visitors

THE Yangon Zoological Gardens has announced its plan to buy penguins to encourage more visitors, it has been learned from Zoo Administrator U Tin Mon Hsan.

Further arrangements are being made to purchase penguins following a deal made between the zoo and an (unspecified) organisation that failed to

deliver penguins this month as was arranged, added the administrator.

He did not mention the date of delivery of the penguins to the zoo nor how the penguins will be housed in Myanmar, a tropical country.

The more than 110-year-old Yangon Zoological Gardens is home to 1,394 animals, repre-

senting 44 species of mammals, 70 species of birds and 17 species of reptiles. It consists of a zoo and educative booths.

According to the zoo, it is planning to collect more rare and exotic animals while conducting animal conservation measures that includes the exchange of animals with foreign zoos.—*Chan Chan*

Application for tour operator licences now available online

THE option to apply online to register a tour operating business will become available on 1 July according to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

The online application process is set to become a permanent fixture if success is met following the trial period, said Director U Myint Htway of the ministry.

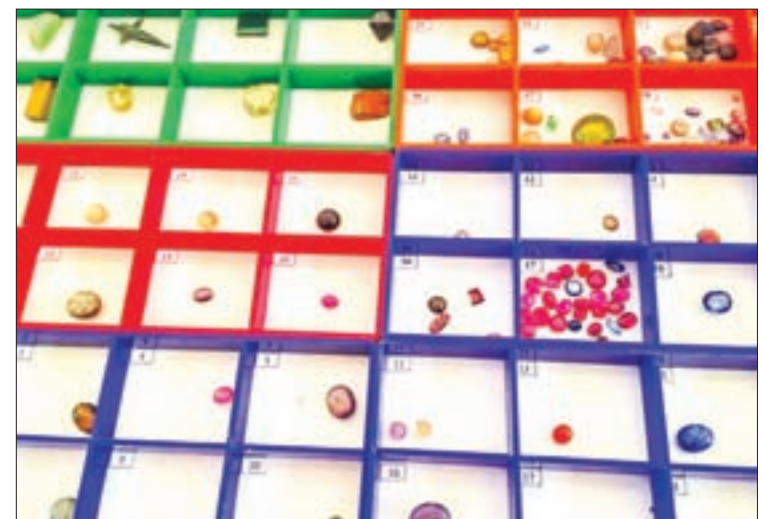
No limit has been set on the number of license applications per day, said the director, adding that the online process will enable applicants to save both time and money.

According to the ministry it has permitted four types of licenses, namely licenses for hotels and lodging house businesses, tour guide businesses,

tour operating businesses and tourist transport businesses in accordance with the relevant rules and regulations.

The ministry added that it is planning to issue tourist cards to arriving globetrotters that will, according to the ministry, permit access to increased tourism information. —*Chan Chan*

Mogok gems appreciate in value despite waning sales



Gems are displayed at a shop in Mogok. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

DESPITE the decrease in sales of gems and jewellery within Mogok’s gemstone markets, Mandalay Region, word from the local market has voiced gems and jewellery have actually appreciated in value at a good rate.

“There’s been a reduction in the sales of gems and jewellery in the market. There’s not much of a market for selling or purchasing, but the price of gemstones is good. Chinese traders prefer to purchase good quality gems, but they do also buy up even poor quality stones as well,” said U Kyaw Tun, a gemstone agent who operates in Mogok’s gem markets.

The reason for the unforeseen increase in the value of gems is reportedly linked to the limited sales of gems by agents in light of government policy changes.

“Buyers dare not give an unfair price for Myanmar gems. Gems were previously bought through traders, but now interested buyers come [from China] and purchase the stones themselves,” said Ko Kyaw Tun Sein, a gem agent.

According to the Myanmar Gems and Jewellery Entrepreneurs Association (MGJEA), they reportedly submitted a proposal to the Amyotha Hluttaw that has suggested a policy be imposed on the gem industry within Mogok that will regulate gem excavation and systematically mitigate environmental degradation.

Gemstones of ruby, sapphire, emerald, peridot and amber are mainly sold in the Mogok gem market, of which China is reportedly the major buyer. —*Myitmakha News Agency*

Islamic State launches counter-attacks on US-backed forces, Syrian army

AMMAN — The Islamic State group launched a counter-attack against fighters trying to capture the Syrian city of Manbij on Monday, inflicting heavy casualties on the US-backed forces, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and the militants said.

The monitor said the militants won back three villages south of the besieged city in a surprise assault against fighters from the US-backed Syria Democratic Forces. At least 28 SDF fighters were killed.

Two years after IS proclaimed its caliphate to rule over all Muslims from swathes of territory in Iraq and Syria, its many foes are advancing on a number of fronts in both countries. Their aim is to close in on its two capitals, Raqqa in Syria and Mosul in Iraq.

The SDF were poised to enter Manbij nearly three weeks after the launch of a major assault to regain the city backed by US air power and American Special Forces, to seal off the last stretch of the Syrian-Turkish frontier.

The alliance, formed last year by recruiting Arabs to join forces with a powerful Kurdish militia, fought to nearly 2 km (1.24 miles) from the city centre from the western side on Saturday before retreating.

US-led coalition jets hit militants taking cover near a large wheat silo complex on the southern edge of the city that has been encircled by SDF forces.

An SDF spokesman said



Fighters of the Syria Democratic Forces (SDF) carry their weapons as they walk in the western rural area of Manbij, in Aleppo Governorate, Syria, on 13 June, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

forces succeeded in repulsing the militant attack and remained positioned on the outskirts of the city, most of whose residents remain trapped inside due to mines planted by the militants, who have dug in to defend it.

"The situation is under control. They have many bodies on the ground," Sharfan Darwish, spokesman for the Syria Democratic Forces-allied Manbij Military Council, told Reuters.

"We are at the four gates to

the city. The whole city is booby-trapped. After 20 days of the campaign, we have yet to storm the city," he added, adding that some 2,000 people had succeeded in fleeing the city.

Islamic State militants were also able to roll back the Syrian army, which had reached as close as 10 km (6.2 miles) south of the strategic town of Tabqa, an Islamic State-held city on the Euphrates River, in Raqqa Province.

The town, some 50 km (30

miles) west of Raqqa city, the militant's defacto capital, appears to be the first target of a major Syrian army assault in Raqqa province backed by Russian air power that began earlier this month.

Tabqa dam and a major air base have been in militant hands since 2014. The monitor said the army reverses on Sunday lost it territorial gains made in over two weeks of advances in Raqqa province which enabled it to cross its provincial boundary for the first

time in over two years.

Amaq news agency, which is affiliated with the militants, said suicide bombers had attacked Thawra oil field, south of Tabqa, which the Syrian army had captured earlier this week, and regained it.

Eyad al Hosain, a Syrian journalist embedded with Syrian troops, told Reuters the militants had succeeded in regaining areas they lost near the oil field. He did not give figures on army casualties.

"A very intense attack has targeted army and allied positions in Thwara field that led to the withdrawal of troops from areas they liberated... and their retreat," al Hosain said.

Amaq also said militants seized a Syrian army checkpoint near a strategic junction which leads to Raqqa city that the Syrian government forces and their allies had seized in the early phase of its Raqqa campaign.

The monitor, which tracks violence across the country, said the militants had sent reinforcements and cited at least 300 fighters heading to Tabqa from Raqqa.

State media also reported clashes with the militants around the main Jazal field near the ancient city of Palmyra in the country's central desert.

The army and its allies continue to fight a costly war of attrition against Islamic State militants several months after seizing the city from them.—Reuters

Taliban kidnap at least 25 men from buses in Afghanistan's south

KABUL — Taliban fighters in the southern Afghan province of Helmand stopped vehicles and detained at least 25 people, officials said on Tuesday, as the insurgents continued a series of abductions on Afghanistan's highways over the past few weeks.

Omar Zwak, a spokesman for the governor of Helmand, said 18 women and children were released by the Taliban after the Islamist group's fighters stopped a number of buses and cars near the town of Gereshek, on the main highway linking Kabul with the south.

He said 25 men had been taken away and were being held by the Taliban. Police and army forces were searching for the men.

Qari Yousuf Ahmadi, a Taliban spokesman, said in a statement 27 people had been taken from three buses and were currently being investigated.

"Those who are innocent will be released but those who are working for the slave administration of Kabul's security organs will be submitted to the Islamic Emirate's courts," he said, using the term the Taliban use to describe themselves.

The kidnappings follow a series of similar incidents in other parts of the country, underlining the precarious security on Afghanistan's main highways, which are vital lifelines in a country where many cannot afford to travel by air.

Before the latest abduction, more than 200 people were reported to have been kidnapped on the road since the end of May, with at least another 21 murdered in northern and eastern Afghanistan.

Such incidents have led some officials and travellers to question a NATO-backed strategy that has reduced the number of security checkpoints in order to free up police and soldiers to go after the Taliban.

The Taliban have had to cope with the loss of their former leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour in a US drone strike last month but the insurgency has shown little sign of slowing under new leader Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada.

More than 20 people were killed in separate bomb attacks in Kabul and the northern province of Badakhshan on Monday.—Reuters

Iraqi forces retake two Falluja districts from Islamic State, push west

BAGHDAD — Iraq's armed forces pressed on with their offensive to retake the city of Falluja from Islamic State on Tuesday, dislodging the militants from two eastern districts and pushing them back into a handful of northern and western neighbourhoods.

A military statement said the elite counter-terrorism forces took the northeastern Shurta police district while units from Baghdad operations command recaptured the Askari military neighbourhood.

Islamic State still held the northern districts of Jughaifi and Golan as well as the western banks of the Tigris river.

Fighting to recapture the Iraqi city longest held by Islamic State, now in its fifth week, has forced more than 85,000 residents to flee to overwhelmed government-run camps.

Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said last week that the recapture of Falluja would pave the way for the military to march on Mosul, Islamic State's de facto capital.

The operation's commander Lieutenant General Abdul Wahab

al-Saidi told Reuters on Monday that US-backed Iraqi forces expected the final push would take place in the west.

The Iraqi army is also pressing on with an offensive to dislodge the militants from farmlands located on the western bank of the Euphrates, opposite the built-up area of Falluja, that the militants use as a base for snipers and mortar attacks.

"The simultaneous attacks are continuing from four directions to tighten the noose around Daesh (Islamic State) fighters

entrenched in houses among civilians and prevent them from catching their breath," said Colonel Ahmed al-Saidi from the federal police.

Government troops launched the operation on 23 May to retake Falluja, a bastion of the Sunni Muslim insurgency against US forces that toppled Saddam Hussein, a Sunni, in 2003, and later against Shi'ite-led governments.

The militants seized Falluja in January 2014, six months before they declared a "caliphate" over part of Syria and Iraq.—Reuters



A military vehicle of Iraqi security forces is seen in Falluja, Iraq, on 20 June. Photo: Reuters

US to help fund technology to eliminate Zika in blood supply

WASHINGTON — The US government said on Monday it has agreed to help fund two pathogen reduction technologies to help reduce the risk of Zika virus and other infections from being transmitted through the blood supply.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) said the funding will flow through its Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) unit, which will provide initial funding of \$30.8 million to Cerus Corp and \$17.5 million to the US division of Japan's Terumo Corp.

Cerus's Intercept technology has already been approved by the Food and Drug Administration to reduce pathogens in platelets and plasma. It is conducting a trial to show it can also reduce pathogens in red blood cells.

BARDA's agreement with Cerus includes \$10.7 million to help evaluate the safety of the

blood system in Puerto Rico, which is hard hit by the current Zika epidemic. The initial three-

year contract could be extended for up to five years and include an additional \$149 million to cover more studies, manufacturing and new products, including additional testing in regions where Zika is prevalent.

The contract with Terumo is to further develop its Mirasol System to confirm its can reduce the risk of infection through platelets. The contract may be extended up to a total of six years and \$151.8 million to cover additional studies, manufacturing and new product development, including the expansion of the system for use with plasma.

BARDA also has the option to fund tests using the Mirasol system specifically against the Zika virus, HHS said.

"Both systems have been shown to reduce the presence of

certain bacteria, viruses and parasites in blood components, though to varying degrees," HHS said in a statement.

The safety of blood products, including red blood cells, plasma and platelets, is typically ensured through donor screening and testing of donated blood. Pathogen reduction technologies would complement existing systems to reduce the presence of viruses in various blood components.

"In particular," HHS said, "the technologies can reduce the risk of transmitting emerging infectious diseases for which robust screening and testing methods may not yet be available."

Cerus's shares rose as high as \$6.37 in morning trading on Nasdaq before slipping back to \$6.20, or up 8.8 per cent, at midday.—*Reuters*



A sign explaining the parameters concerning the Zika virus and blood donations is seen at the American Red Cross Charles Drew Donation Centre in Washington, on 16 February, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Congo declares yellow fever epidemic, 1,000 suspected cases

KINSHASA — Democratic Republic of Congo on Monday declared a yellow fever epidemic in three provinces, including the capital Kinshasa, after confirming 67 cases of the disease, with another 1,000 suspected cases being monitored.

Health Minister Felix Kabange said only seven of the proven cases were indigenous to the Central African country, while 58 were imported from Angola, where the outbreak began. A further two cases came from remote forested areas not linked to the current outbreak. Five people in total have died, Kabange added.

"I declare today a localised epidemic of yellow fever in the provinces of Kinshasa, Kongo Central

and Kwango," Kabange told a news conference. Kinshasa is the primary concern for global health officials since it has a densely-packed population of more than 12 million and poor healthcare infrastructure.

Yellow fever is transmitted by the same mosquitoes that spread the Zika and dengue viruses, although it is a much more serious disease. The "yellow" in the name refers to the jaundice that affects some infected patients. The global stockpile of vaccines has already been depleted twice this year to immunize people in Angola, Uganda and Congo. It stands at 6 million doses, but this may not be enough if there are simultaneous outbreaks in multiple highly-populated areas, experts warn.—*Reuters*

Solar plane takes on Atlantic as part of round-the-world bid

NEW YORK — An airplane powered solely by energy from the sun headed across the Atlantic early on Monday, on one of the longest legs of the first-ever flight around the globe without using a drop of fuel.

The spindly, single-seat Solar Impulse 2 left John F. Kennedy International Airport at about 2:30 am EDT on a trip expected to take up to 90 hours, the 15th leg of its round-the-world journey.

Swiss aviators Bertrand Piccard and Andre Borschberg have been taking turns piloting the plane, which has more than 17,000 solar cells built into wings whose span exceeds that

of a Boeing 747, with Piccard at the controls for the transatlantic flight.

The airplane's slow cruising speed, similar to that of a car, has required both men to take up meditation and hypnosis as part of training to stay alert for long periods.

Solar Impulse 2 is due to land sometime on Thursday in Spain or France, with the precise location to be determined later depending on weather conditions, said Elizabeth Banta, a spokeswoman for the project team.

The carbon-fiber, propeller-driven plane has four solar-powered engines and four

batteries to store surplus energy. It weighs the same as a family car and can climb to 28,000 feet (8,500 m).

The team behind Solar Impulse — part of a campaign to build support for clean energy technologies — hopes to complete the circumnavigation in Abu Dhabi, where the journey began in March 2015.

Piccard and Borschberg completed a multi-flight crossing of the United States with an earlier version of the plane in 2013. Borschberg set an endurance record for the longest non-stop solo flight last July in a 118-hour trans-Pacific crossing from Japan to Hawaii.—*Reuters*

Millions stretch and bend on International Day of Yoga in India

CHANDIGARH (India) — Millions across India on Tuesday celebrated the International Day of Yoga, the country's signature cultural export, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi joining 30,000 participants in a mass session of exercise and meditation.

Modi pushed for the annual event to be celebrated worldwide soon after winning power in 2014, lending his political weight to an industry that has grown up around the ancient physical and spiritual discipline and is estimated to be worth \$80 billion.

The 65-year-old premier, who is reputed to rise at dawn to do yoga exercises before starting work, joined school children, residents and government employees in the northern city of Chan-

digarh for an early-morning mass yoga session. "With zero budget, yoga provides health assurance and it does not discriminate between rich and poor," Modi said in his speech before the session.

He also called for a focus on mitigating diabetes through yoga. The number of adults with diabetes has quadrupled worldwide in less than four decades to 422 million, and the condition is fast becoming a major problem in poorer countries, a World Health Organisation study showed in April.

Yoga guru Baba Ramdev and spiritual gurus Sri Sri Ravihankar and Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev all supported the yoga initiative, with several events.

Modi's ministers joined in at



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi (C) performs yoga during World Yoga Day in Chandigarh, 21 June, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

sessions across India, with several of them posting tweets and pictures. "Extremely happy to be amongst you all to participate and practice yoga," tweeted Urban Development and Housing Minister Vekaiah Naidu.

Hundreds of thousands gathered at spots across New Delhi to join in the government-organised mass yoga sessions in parks and on Rajpath, a central avenue.

Last year, the Indian capital set a world record for the largest

yoga demonstration at a single site. "I like the idea of yoga becoming the norm in our homes. Seems like fun, and with phenomenal consequences," Tarot card reader Ruchira Mittal tweeted on social media.—*Reuters*

US Navy officials say European exercises not 'sabre-rattling'

BERLIN — Top US Navy officials say increased US and NATO exercises in eastern Europe do not amount to “sabre-rattling,” but are necessary steps to train with allies and deter the most aggressive Russian maritime expansion in 30 years.

Vice Admiral James Foggo, who heads the US Navy's fleet in Europe and oversaw the annual NATO exercise that just ended in the Baltic Sea, told Reuters he was braced for incidents such as the one last April when two Russian warplanes flew simulated attack passed near a US guided missile destroyer.

But he said this year's 'Baltops' exercise saw “much less Russian activity and harassment” than in 2015, and Russian officials had apparently shifted to more strategic messages by senior politicians than tactical incidents like the flyover.

He said Russian surveillance ships did shadow US ships during the exercise, and Russian jets and helicopters flew over US



Norwegian army soldiers take part in the “Sabre Strike” NATO military exercise in Adazi, Latvia, on 13 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

and British ships, but they stayed at a safe altitude and acted professionally. Russian and US officials also met recently to discuss ways to avoid incidents at sea, Foggo said.

Foggo and Navy Secretary Ray Mabus both rejected comments from

German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, who warned this weekend that NATO exercises in eastern Europe could raise tensions with Russia at a time when more cooperation was needed.

“What we shouldn't do now is to inflame the

situation by loud sabre-rattling and shrill war cries,” Steinmeier told *Bild* newspaper in an interview published on Sunday.

Mabus said the remarks likely reflected domestic political issues, and stressed that Germany was part of the 28-member NATO alliance, which

had agreed by consensus to carry out the exercises in question.

“What's important is what comes out of NATO, and what comes out of the defence ministerial and the summit in Warsaw,” Mabus told Reuters in an interview in Berlin. “And the aim and the resolution of NATO are pretty clear in terms of deterrence and reassurance.”

NATO is increasing its defences in Poland and the three Baltic nations of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, as part of a wider deterrent that NATO hopes will discourage Russia from a repeat of its annexation of Ukraine's Crimea peninsula in 2014.

Russia sees NATO's deterrence plans as hostile.

Mabus said increased US shipbuilding deliveries — with the current fleet of 274 ships expected to grow to 308 by 2021 — would also allow the US Navy to increase its presence in Europe for the first time in 15 years, even as it also boosts its presence in the Asia-Pa-

cific region.

“Baltops was not about sabre-rattling,” Foggo said in an interview from his headquarters in Naples, Italy. “It was not our intent to look like or act like an aggressor force.” He said Russia — which last participated in the Baltops exercise in 2012 — could be invited to resume participation if its behaviour improved. But he said it was still unclear that Russia would want to participate.

Foggo said NATO and the US Navy needed to maintain dialogue with Russia to minimize the risk of accidents, while also keeping an eye on a 50 per cent increase in Russian naval operations. He cited Russian plans to deploy six more submarines in the Black Sea, and said US officials reported a level of submarine operations in the Mediterranean not seen since 1999.

“We need to be vigilant and we need to hone our anti-submarine warfare skills,” he said. “You must negotiate from a position of strength.” —Reuters

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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.

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Man arrested at Trump rally said he wanted to shoot candidate

LOS ANGELES — A man arrested over the weekend trying to wrestle a gun from a police officer at a Las Vegas rally held by Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump told an investigator he wanted to kill the candidate, court papers showed on Monday.

Michael Steven Sandford, who prosecutors described as a 19-year-old British national, was arrested on Saturday at the Treasure Island hotel in Las Vegas after trying to disarm the officer, according to Las Vegas police.

According to court papers filed on Monday in federal court in Nevada, Sandford told a Secret Service agent he had driven to Las Vegas from California with the goal of shooting Trump.—Reuters

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"electronic circuits; integrated circuits; printed circuit boards; substrates for electronic circuits; aluminum substrates for electronic circuits; ceramics substrates for electronic circuits; aluminum nitride substrates for electronic circuits; silicon nitride substrates for electronic circuits; radiation sheets for electronic circuits; radiation spacers for electronic circuits; emitters for electron microscopes" in International Class 9;

"rubber [raw or semi-worked]; synthetic rubber; plastic semi-worked products; chemical fiber, not for textile use; chemical fiber yarn and thread, not for textile use; plastic fibers used for manufacturing artificial hair; asbestos; rock wool; slag wool; electrical insulating materials; electrical insulating tapes; plastic carrier tapes as cushioning materials for the transport of electronic parts; adhesive cover tapes of plastic as cushioning materials for the transport of electronic parts" in International Class 17; and

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Rihanna and Coldplay are set to headline Made in America Festival. PHOTO: PTI

Rihanna, Coldplay to head Made in America Festival

LOS ANGELES — R&B star Rihanna and English rock band Coldplay are set to headline Made in America Festival.

Chance the Rapper, Martin Garrix, DJ Khaled, Bryson Tiller and many more will also perform during the two-day fest, reported Ace Showbiz.

Made in America festival is returning to Philadelphia on Labor Day weekend with a number of big names in its line-up.

Other notable acts scheduled to appear at the fest include Collegrove also known as 2 Chainz, Lil Wayne, Grimes, Bryson Tiller, Travis Scott (II), DJ Mustard, SZA, A\$AP Ferg, Tory Lanez, Designer, Lil Yachty, Bibi Bourcelly and Lil Uzi Vert.

Made in America, which Jay-Z has been curating since 2012, will be held at Philly's Benjamin Franklin Parkway on 3 September and 4 September.—PTI

Selma Blair hospitalised post mid-flight outbursts

LOS ANGELES — Actress Selma Blair has been hospitalised following a bizarre incident on board a plane bound for Los Angeles.

The actress was on vacation in Cancun with her four-year-old son and her designer ex-boyfriend Jason Bleick.

The Hellboy star was taken off a Delta flight from Cancun, Mexico on a stretcher after reportedly losing her cool during the trip and raging about an unseen foe.

Blair, 43, may have suffered a reaction to medication she was taking while seated in the first

class section of the plane, reported TMZ.

Upon landing, medical staff boarded the aircraft and helped the actress off the plane. She was then taken to a nearby hospital.

The incident comes just days after the Cruel Intentions star opened up about the challenges of being a single mother to her son Arthur Saint — from her relationship with Jason Bleick.

Blair was 39 when she gave birth, and while she acknowledges it was quite late in life to have a first child, she wouldn't have had things any other way.—PTI



Selma Blair has been hospitalised following a bizarre incident on board a plane bound for Los Angeles. PHOTO: PTI

Fiat Chrysler to investigate crash that killed 'Star Trek' actor



Actor Anton Yelchin. PHOTO: REUTERS

WASHINGTON/LOS ANGELES — Fiat Chrysler Automobiles NV said on Monday it would investigate a crash that killed "Star Trek" actor Anton Yelchin in his recalled 2015 Jeep Grand Cherokee.

Yelchin was killed when the SUV rolled away and pinned him against a fence in Los Angeles, police said on Sunday. Fiat Chrysler in April recalled more than 1.1 million cars and SUVs worldwide because vehicles may roll away after drivers exit, an issue linked to 41 injuries, 212 crashes and 308 reports of property damage, though it had no immediate fix for owners.

Yelchin died of accidental blunt force asphyxia, Los Angeles County Coroner Assistant Chief Ed Winter said in a phone interview Monday. The results of toxicology tests to determine if Yelchin was under the influence of any substances are not due back for at least six weeks, he added.

In a 24 May letter to dealers, Fiat Chrysler said it anticipated having the software updates required to fix the vehicles no later than July or August. The company previously had told owners it

hoped to come up with a "permanent" remedy by the fourth quarter. The US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said late Monday in a statement it is in contact with local authorities and Fiat Chrysler "to understand all of the facts related to this tragic crash, including whether or not this was caused by the current issue under recall."

The recall was done at NHTSA's urging, which again warned owners that "until all of these recalled vehicles are fixed, owners should take extra care to make sure their car is in park and turned completely off before exiting."

Clarence Ditlow, executive director of the Center for Auto Safety, said Monday that "while waiting for a recall remedy to be developed, the predictable happened. Anton Yelchin died. How many more people will be killed or injured waiting for a recall remedy of this fatal manufacturing flaw?"

Fiat Chrysler spokesman Eric Mayne said the company would conduct a "thorough investigation" of Yelchin's accident. "It is premature to speculate on its cause at this time," he added.—Reuters



Harry Potter and the EU referendum monsters: JK Rowling criticises campaigns

LONDON — Author JK Rowling has criticised the rhetoric surrounding the British referendum on the European Union, calling the campaign "divisive and bitter".

Writing on her website on Monday, the Harry Potter author dissected the narratives of both sides and compared the campaigning process to the creation of a "monster".

She criticised in particular the anti-immigration arguments put forward by the camp backing a so-called Brexit.

"For many of our countrymen, I suspect a 'Leave' vote will be a simple howl of frustration, a giant two fingers to the spectres that haunt our imaginations," Rowling wrote.

She also questioned the "grim" economic case disseminated by those who want to remain in the bloc. She did not state which way she would be voting.

In the article, entitled "On Monsters, Villains and the EU Referendum," Rowling, one of the world's most successful authors, also called herself a "mongrel product" of Europe, thanks to her part-French heritage. —Reuters

Paris exhibition displays Chirac-like 18th century Japanese masks

PARIS — Three antique Japanese theater masks that bear a striking resemblance to former French president Jacques Chirac will go on display from Tuesday in a Paris museum he set up 10 years ago and that will now bear his name.

“There are thousands of Chiracs in Japan,” said Jean-Jacques Aillagon, who served as culture minister during Chirac’s presidency, explaining that the late 18th century masks represent a Japanese theater character that was always carved with similar features.

The museum, which specialises in early art from Africa, Asia and the Americas, will be renamed “Musée du Quai Branly-Jacques Chirac”.

The exhibition delves into

his long-hidden passion for such works of art. The 83-year-old Chirac was better known for his taste for food and beer, and a pundit once said about him: “Men usually read Playboy hidden behind the cover of a poetry book, but Chirac reads poetry behind a copy of Playboy.”

Saying she also spoke in his name, Chirac’s wife Bernadette told reporters: “France is never greater than when it engages with other cultures, other people. It’s a strong message and one that is very relevant now.”

Chirac, a center-right politician who was a prominent figure in French politics for decades, was president from 1995 to 2007.—Reuters



Buaku Japanese masks from traditional Kyogen comic theatre are seen during a press visit of the exhibition ‘Jacques Chirac ou le dialogue des cultures’ at the Musée du quai Branly in Paris, France, on 20 June, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Hitler’s trousers, Goering’s cyanide container sold at auction

BERLIN — Trousers with leather pockets worn by Adolf Hitler and a brass container that held the cyanide used by a top deputy to commit suicide were among a trove of Nazi memorabilia sold for hundreds of thousands of euros at an auction in Germany.

The sale of items from a collection of an American medical officer who attended to the needs of defendants at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials was condemned by Germany’s Jewish community as “scandalous” and “disgusting”. The auctioneer did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

German media said one Argentine bidder spent over 600,000 euros (\$681,060) alone at Hermann Historica’s weekend auction in Munich, snapping up Hitler’s trousers and military jacket, and an aviator watch that belonged to Hermann Goering, the beefy Nazi air force commander, among other things.

The trousers sold for 62,000 euros, the jacket — made from “finely-woven field-grey cloth” — went for 275,000 euros, the watch for 42,000 euros and some silk underwear owned by Goering for 3,000 euros, according to mass-circulation daily Bild.

Other items under the hammer included the brass container for the hydrogen cyanide phial that Goering swallowed while awaiting trial in Nuremberg in 1946, which fetched 26,000 euros, and Hitler’s medical X-rays after a failed assassination attempt in July 1944, Hermann Historica said on its website.

It said the pockets of Hitler’s black trousers were leather lined “so he could carry a gun unobtrusively with him”.

The Central Council of Jews denounced the auction in the run-

up to the sale and had called on Hermann Historica to cancel the event. The auctioneer said on its website that it procured objects of contemporary German history only under strict conditions for museums, archives and serious collectors to help enable understanding and ensure the events of the Nazi era never recur.

Bild said on Monday 169 items had been sold from the collection of medical officer John K. Lattimer, who died in 2007.

The bidder from Argentina told Bild he was purchasing the objects for a museum whose name he did not disclose.—Reuters



The cover of Peter Longerich’s new book “Hitler” is pictured in Berlin, Germany, in 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

IOC discusses more crackdowns on drugs cheats before Olympics

LAUSANNE, (Switzerland) — Leading sports powerbrokers gathered at the International Olympic Committee’s headquarters on Tuesday morning to discuss further crackdowns on drug cheats before the Rio Games.

International athletics boss Sebastian Coe and Russia’s Olympic committee chief Alexander Zhukov were present at the meeting, just four days after the IAAF maintained its suspension of Russia’s track and field team, effectively ruling out their participation in Rio. The gathering of IOC members and federation heads is set to discuss the situation in Russia as well as several other countries, non-compliant

with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). The IOC said it would discuss “the difficult decision between collective responsibility and individual justice”.

On Saturday the IOC backed the IAAF’s decision to extend its ban on Russia for systematic doping, denting hopes the nation might have had of competing at the Rio Games in August with a full team. The IAAF suspended Russia last year over concerns its athletes were guilty of systematic doping. Several countries, including Russia, Mexico, Ethiopia and Kenya among other, are non-compliant with WADA less than two months before the start of the Rio Games.—Reuters



International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) President Sebastian Coe (R) attends the Olympic Summit in Lausanne, Switzerland, on 21 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS



Entertainment Channel

(22- 6-2016, Wednesday)

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 06 : 00 pm | • Adventurous Young Photographer |
| • Weather Report | 09 : 30 pm |
| • Pyi Thu Ni Ti | • Myanmar Traditional |
| 06 : 20 pm | • Thatched Roofs: Nipa Palm |
| • Cartoon Programme | 09 : 40 pm |
| “The Incredible” (Part-1) | • Music Programme |
| 07 : 00 pm | 10 : 00 pm |
| • International Drama Series | • Htan Taw Drums (Part-I) |
| 08 : 40 pm | • “Osi” |
| • MRTV Entertainment Music | 10 : 20 pm |
| 09 : 00 pm | • Myanmar Video |

* (22 : 30) Pm Live: EURO 2016 “Hungary Vs Portugal”

From 22-6-2016 (Wednesday) 6:00 Pm
To 23-6-2016 (Thursday) 6:00 Pm



Myanmar International

(22-6-2016 07:00am ~ 23-6-2016 7:00am) MST

Today Fresh

- | | | |
|-------|----|---|
| 07:03 | Am | News |
| 07:26 | Am | Myanmar Social & Charitable Association (EP-3) (Part-1) |
| 07:51 | Am | Myanmar Social & Charitable Association (EP-3) (Part-2) |
| 08:03 | Am | News |
| 08:26 | Am | Myanmar Childhood Games (Episode-III) |
| 08:36 | Am | Kayah Style |
| 08:44 | Am | Visiting A Serene Village In The Northwest of Myanmar |
| 09:03 | Am | News |

- | | | |
|-------|----|--|
| 09:26 | Am | We'll Leave After 12 Passengers Are On Board |
| 09:41 | Am |Changes |
| 10:03 | Am | News |
| 10:26 | Am | Back To A Paradise (Episode-1) |

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Tuesday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

Prime Time

- | | | |
|-------|----|-------------------------------|
| 07:03 | Pm | News |
| 07:25 | Pm | A Tour in Korea (Part-6) |
| 07:45 | Pm | YUFL |
| 08:03 | Pm | News |
| 08:26 | Pm | Myanmar Sculpture-Work of Art |
| 08:42 | Pm | Up Against The Tide |

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



Wales' players celebrate after the match at Stadium de Toulouse, Toulouse, France, on 20 June. PHOTO: REUTERS

Air of disbelief as Wales win Group B at Euro 2016

TOULOUSE, (France) — Wales enjoyed their greatest day in football for more than half a century by overwhelming Russia 3-0 on Monday to win Group B at Euro 2016 ahead of their oldest rivals England.

It was an outcome that had seemed unlikely when England beat them 2-1 last Thursday, and the thousands of Welsh supporters could have been forgiven for a feeling of disbelief as they celebrated every touch of the ball with "oles" before finally feeling free to chant "we are top of the league".

They will play a third-placed team in Paris on Saturday while England face the Group F runners-up and Wales will go into the knockout stage with realistic

hopes of reaching the last eight.

"It was never about beating England, it was about qualifying," Wales manager Chris Coleman told reporters, adding that he had never seen a better performance from a Welsh team.

Russia, bottom of the standings with one point, obtained with an undeserved last-minute equaliser against England, go home with much to think about before they host the World Cup in two years time under a new coach.

The story of the night, however, was a Welsh one.

In what had been described as the country's biggest game since the 1958 World Cup quarter-final, they rediscovered the attacking brio that enabled them

to beat Slovakia in the opening game.

Gareth Bale, the scorer of a direct free kick in each of the two previous games to equal a European Championship record, was close with several fine efforts before becoming the first player since Milan Baros in 2004 to score in three successive games at the European finals.

He was outstanding in running at a Russian defence that allowed far too much space to him and Aaron Ramsey, breaking in support of Sam Vokes, the surprise selection in attack in place of Hal Robson-Kanu.

That defence was not helped by a revamped midfield being outplayed by Joe Ledley and the tigerish Joe Allen.

Russia survived an early Bale chance but were two goals down inside 20 minutes after strikes by Ramsey, named man of the match, and wing back Neil Taylor.

Bale made further chances for Vokes and Ramsey before the latter, Wales' only other regular Champions League player, returned the compliment twice in the second half.

"We've topped the group which nobody probably saw coming," Ramsey said.

"Our main target was to get out of the group. To finish top is a fantastic feeling."

"It's probably the best performance I've been involved in with Wales," Bale added. —Reuters

England advance, Slovakia wait after goalless stalemate

ST ETIENNE, (France) — England put Slovakia on the rack for long spells but were forced to settle for a 0-0 draw on Monday, frustrating coach Roy Hodgson as his side reached the knockout stages despite slipping behind Wales in their group at Euro 2016.

England's failure to beat Slovakia, who came third in Group B, and should also go through to the last 16, means they will now face the runners-up in Group F instead of a potentially easier tie against one of the third-placed teams.

"It's certainly very disappointing that once again we've had all of the play and a lot of opportunities in and around the Slovakia box and we've not been able to take one," Hodgson told a news conference.

"I can't deny that's both frustrating and disappointing. It's something we'll have to continue to work on, but I believe it will come because I think we have players in the team who can score goals and who will score goals."

England have five points, behind Wales, who beat Russia 3-0, on six, and will play their last 16 tie in Nice on 27 June.

Slovakia, on four points, must wait to see if they go through as one of the four best third-placed teams.

"England have very good attacking quality," said goalkeeper Matus Kozacik, who was man of the match.

"We needed at least one point and managed to get it, and I hope with the four points we'll manage to get through." —Reuters

Sharapova owed apology from WADA, her lawyer says

LONDON — Maria Sharapova's lawyer has blasted WADA chief Craig Reddie for making remarks about the five-times grand slam champion at a conference in London on Monday and said the Russian tennis player was owed an apology.

The criticism came in a statement by Sharapova's management company, IMG, after Reddie commented at a World Anti-Doping Agency conference on Sharapova, who is serving a two-year ban after testing posi-

tive for the prohibited substance meldonium.

"For me the only satisfactory element in Madame Sharapova's case was that in one year she can earn more money than the whole of WADA's budget put together," Reddie said.

Reddie made his comments relating to Sharapova as he was making a call for more governments and TV broadcasters to pitch in extra money to WADA's campaign for clean sport.

Sharapova's lawyer, John

Haggerty, took exception to Reddie's comments, which he called unprofessional.

"Justice, whether in the eyes of WADA or a court, must be blind, including being blind to a player's earnings," Haggerty said in a statement.

"Mr. Reddie owes an apology to Maria and to all successful tennis players unless he wants fans to think WADA has different standards for players depending on their ranking and earnings." —Reuters



Maria Sharapova of Russia. PHOTO: REUTERS