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NON-NUCLEAR SOLUTIONS

ASEAN FMs gather at SEANWFZ commission meeting in Laos



Foreign Affairs Union Minister Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attending the meeting of the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Commission. PHOTO: MNA

FOREIGN Affairs Union Minister Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attended the meetings of the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Commission, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting and the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission for

Human Rights Representatives.

The Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Commission met at the National Convention Centre in Laos yesterday to review the plans for the SEANWFZ treaty being implemented from 2013 to

2017 the ratification of the international agreements on the disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the promotion of the cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and other regional partners in a

bid to help maintain peace and stability regionally and globally.

The ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission for Human Rights Representatives reviewed its annual report for 2016 and discussed a framework for its action plans to be carried out from 2016

to 2020 in order of importance. Union Minister Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attended a dinner hosted by Foreign Minister of Laos Mr Saleumxay Kommasith in honour of the foreign ministers attending the meetings.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Illegal fishing complaints within Myeik Archipelago can be made direct

U MYINT San, Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation of Tanintharyi Region, address Tanintharyi Region Hluttaw on Thursday stating that complaints can now be made directly to Myanmar's Navy if off-shore fishing vessels are found to be conducting fishing activities close to shore.

The regional minister's address was in response to a query raised by U Toe Lwin, Hluttaw MP for Kyunsu Township Constituency 1, who inquired which body would be responsible for taking legal action against such off-shore fishing vessels, which ply the waters of the Myeik Archipelago, who come and fish in coastal waters.

"If fishing vessels are discovered lawlessly fishing within water parameters non-permitted for fishing activities, legal action can be taken in the manner of the Myanmar Marine Fishing Law," continued U Myint San. "As well as staff from regional and district level departments of fisheries carrying out inspections in conjunction with Myanmar's Navy, efforts have been made that will allow those who spot [off-shore vessels entering to fish in coastal waters] to report such news directly to the navy's regional commander."

While off-shore fishing vessels do commence their trawling activities within the ten-mile permitted area, the proposal for legal

to be taken against those vessels which refrain from complying with such regulations, entering to fish in coastal waters, was made in a bid to mitigate such action which attributes towards depleting fish stocks and hostile behavior of such off-shore fishing vessels who reportedly chasing down, and sink, smaller vessels if they are challenged on their illegality of their fishing activities.

"I desire permission to know who, and in which manner, legal action will be taken against these large off-shore fishing vessels which lawlessly enter coastal waters of the Kyunsu Township to fish," inquired U Tin Lwin.

Violation of the Myanmar Marine Fishing Law brings with it a three-year long prison sentence and/or a fine of K200,000 in regard to Article 45, while sections a, b, c and d of Article 25 stipulate that fishing paraphernalia is to be confiscated and a written pledge stating such action would not be repeated is required to be permitted to re-conduct fishing activities. Furthermore, those caught breaking fishing regulations could face a fine of K3 million and a three-month fishing license suspension, while should an offender be caught again a fine of K6 million can be imposed while fishing licenses will be confiscated for six-months. Should a repeat vio-

lator of the rules and regulations be caught for a third time, their fishing vessel will reportedly be confiscated as public property.

A total of 46 unlicensed fishing vessels, including three for neighbouring Thailand, were caught during the previous fiscal year while this current fiscal year has so far seen a total nine vessels discovered not to be in line with rules and regulations.

U Myint San also noted that the public can report news of sightings of fishing vessels conducting lawless activities by communicating directly with Major Myo Han of the Myanmar Navy by phoning 09-731-524-49.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Myanmar's first political literature reading set to be held 29-31 July in Yangon



Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint meeting officials in Yangon. PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY

INFORMATION Union Minister Dr Pe Myint met officials in Yangon yesterday to review progress in the effort to organise the country's first reading session of political literature in conjunction with a literary festival.

The reading session will attract 18 prominent political researchers and analysts who will give talks on a variety of topics.

The papers to be read at the event will focus on the 1947 Constitution and the rights of separation, democracy and human rights, the political literature of the past, normative political ideology in speeches, liberal democracy and Myanmar's transition, ethnic armed movements portrayed in political literature, internal peace process of the past era, politics

and journalism, nationalist movements, and contemporary political ideologies. The event will be held from 29 to 31 July at the compound of the Printing and Publishing Department on Theinbyu road in Yangon in conjunction with a monsoon book fair, which will attract some 170 book shops.

Admission to the event is free.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Investors in Public Bus Company will be granted permits to distribute fuel

"Those who invest in the Public Bus Company, which is to be formed by the Yangon region transport authority, will be granted permits to distribute petrol and gas," said chief minister of Yangon Region U Phyo Min Thein during his meeting with all private bus lines control committee.

Currently, permits to distribute petrol have been sus-

pended. The chief minister justified the granting of petrol distribution licences by explaining that as bus owners may suffer losses from investment in the public company, the government is responsible for compensating the losses of the bus owners.

In the economic policy declaration made public during last year's election by the NLD, it

was unambiguously stated that those entrepreneurs who were not profit-oriented in participation in activities implemented by the government will be compensated to remedy their losses.

The Public Bus Company to be founded by the Yangon Transport Authority will include Myanmar Economic Holding Ltd and the Yangon Public Bus Company.—*GNLM*

New government's economic policy to be formally announced on 29 July

THE new government will announce its economic policy at the end of this month, it has been learned.

"We are going to announce the economic policy on 29 July. However, we cannot disclose yet what will be included in the

policy," said an official from the Ministry of Planning and Finance.

"It is said that there are twelve points in the economic policy and that they are based on five economic policy strategies of the National League of

Democracy made public before the November election," said an analyst.

The new economic policy is expected to involve social equality and redistribution of wealth, said an economic expert.—*GNLM*

Expatriates' stay permits to be extended up to one year

STAY permits for expatriates working in Myanmar will be extended up to one year, it has been learned from the Department of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

The extension of permits will begin on 18 July for expatriate employees who are

working in local companies registered with the Myanmar Investment Commission.

Previously, the extension of permits required a letter of recommendation from a Myanmar embassy. Now, a managing director or a BoD member's recommendation letter is

accepted for the extension of permits, said an officer from DICA.

Companies are reportedly optimistic that the government will take the necessary measures to be able to enact a law to monitor and control expatriate workers.—*GNLM*

Peace Commission provides assistance to Maijayan conference

THE Peace Commission said in an announcement yesterday that it was providing necessary assistance to ethnic armed organisations to facilitate their travel arrangements for a conference in Maijayan, Kachin State, from 26 to 29 July.

The Peace Commission, chaired by Dr Tin Myo Win, was formed on 11 July with the aim of facilitating the ongoing peace talks. The commission expects the 21st Century Panglong Peace Conference to take place in late August this year in line with the

Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).

The announcement stressed the commission's commitment to make the upcoming peace conference as inclusive as possible by extending invitations to other ethnic armed organisations which are yet to sign the NCA.

The agreement still has some points that need defining, the commission said in its announcement, expecting that the peace conference would be more inclusive and highly likely to yield positive results.—*MNA*

CLMV tourism conference to be organised for late July

CAMBODIA, Laos, Myanmar and Viet Nam will organise a joint conference in Yangon from 31 July to 1 August with the aim of connecting tourism industries and expanding cooperation in the banking sector, it has been learned.

The two-day conference is expected to attract more foreign investments and further deepen cooperation in the tourism sector between the four countries, the Ministry of Hotel and Tourism said.

U Tint Thwin, Director-General of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism, said that the conference would make plans to highlight tourist destinations that reflect the tradition, culture and food of

the four countries. In conjunction with the conference, the Bank for Investment and Development of Viet Nam (BIDV) will open its branch in Yangon, with the bank's country representative saying that its branch will promote economic cooperation between Myanmar and Viet Nam.

Banking representatives from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Viet Nam will read out papers at the conference. The leaders of the central banks of the four countries will exchange their points of view and set an agenda for broader cooperation in the banking sector. Myanmar hosted the 7th CLMV Summit last June.—*MNA*



Flood Bulletin

(Issued at 13:00 hr M.S.T on 23-7-2016)

(1) Flood condition above danger level

According to the (12:30) hr M.S.T observation today, the water level of Ngawun River at Ngathaing Chaung has exceeded by about (1½) feet above its danger level, it may remain above its danger level during the next (5) days.

It is especially advised to the people who settle near the river bank a low lying areas along the Ngawun River, to take precaution measure.

(2) Rising condition above danger levels

According to the (12:30) hr M.S.T observation today, the water levels have exceeded by about (2) feet at Hkati, about (1 ½) feet at Homalin, about (2) feet each at Phaungpyin, and Mawlaik, and about (1) foot at Kani of Chindwin River above their respective danger levels. The water levels may continue to rise about (2) feet at Hkanri during the next (1) day, about (1 ½) feet each at Homalin and Phaungpyin and about (½) feet each at Mawlaik, Kalewa, Minkin and Kani during the next (2) days, may remain above their respective danger levels.

It is especially advised to the people who settle near the rivers, bank and low lying areas along the Chindwin River, to take precaution measure.



ASEAN Foreign Ministers pose for a group photo at the meeting of the SEANWFZ Commission. PHOTO: MNA

Union Minister Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Brunei Darussalam and Viet Nam in Laos



Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shaking hands with Foreign Minister of Brunei. PHOTO: MNA



Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shaking hands with Foreign Minister of Viet Nam. PHOTO: MNA

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the Union Minister for Foreign Affairs met with Mr Pehin Orang Kaya Peker-

ma Dewa Dato Seri Setia Lim Jock Seng, Minister for Prime Minister's Office and for Foreign Affairs of

Brunei Darussalam at the National Convention Center in Vientiane, Laos yesterday. Similarly, Foreign

Minister Daw Aung San Suu Kyi received Mr. Pham Binh Minh, the deputy prime minister and minister

for Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam at the Lao Plaza Hotel.—Myanmar News Agency



Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets representatives of ASEAN Intergovernmental Human Rights Commission. PHOTO: MNA



The dinner hosted by Laos Foreign Minister. PHOTO: MNA

Chicken breeders investing in broiler chicken



A worker seen feeding chicken at a farm in Tatkon. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

LOCAL chicken farmers are investing more in broiler chicken which can be raised in 40 days and sent to market to broaden the Myanmar chicken industry, according to poultry farming entrepreneurs.

"Now we are self-reliant enough to be competitive. We

mainly need to strengthen the infrastructure and upgrade the laboratories for our local breeders," said Daw Hla Hla Thein, Chairperson of the Myanmar Poultry Business Association.

If Myanmar businesses import chickens, they need to hold a certificate from the World Or-

ganisation for Animal Health (OIE).

As the system of free trade will be introduced in the near future, we in the chicken trade should also invest in laboratories which will be essential, said an official from the Myanmar Livestock Association.—Zar Zar

Five sellerless bookshops to open in crowded places

"FIVE bookshops without sellers will be opened in crowded places for the people who are interested in reading books at the end of the raining season in Yangon," said U Aye Nyo, who is organizing the opening of bookshops without

salespersons.

These bookshops will be opened not only on Pansodan road and Yawmingyi road but also in North Okkalapa Township and Thuwunna Township. The books on politics and education will be sold for Ks

200 to Ks 2000, and some books will be sold at the original prices.

A bookshop without seller has already been opened on Pyinyayeiktha road near Yangon University of Education, it is learnt.—200

Data concerning human-elephant conflict to be collected

THE Myanmar government is taking measures to mitigate the conflict between human beings and elephants in rural areas as elephant habitats shrink and human activity grows. The Ministry of Resources and Environmental Conservation will launch a data collection programme to gather information concerning elephant-human conflict. Projects are being formulated to collect the data in elephant habitats and places where conflict between humans and elephants take place, said U Maung Win, administrator of the Inndawgyi Wildlife Sanctuary.

The projects will involve the opening of training courses related to finding solutions to human-elephant conflicts, especially in Taikkyi township, the drawing of maps within the southern part of Bago Yoma, the launching of an elephant census in 2017, assessment of the data collected and the establishment of an elephant emergency response units in conflict areas, it is reported.

The Forestry Department is working in co-operation with the worldwide Fund for Nature (WFN), aims to reduce elephant-human conflict.—Zar Zar



Pilgrims ride elephants on their way to Alaungtawakthapa Cave. PHOTO: PO CHAN-MONYWA

Crime NEWS

Fire destroys 20 houses in Tada-U

AN outbreak of fire caused by electric short circuiting destroyed 20 houses in Taung Pan Ya village, Tada-U township on Friday.

According to an investigation, the fire broke out due to an overheated solar plate on the roof of a home owned by one U Kyaw Soe Min, 30. The fire quickly got out of control and damaged his own house and nineteen others. The fire was put out by firemen with 18 fire engines and the assistance of neighbours. Local police have filed charges against the man.—Ye Tint (IPRD)



Firefighters seen extinguishing the fire. PHOTO: YE TINT (IPRD)

Truck car crashed into a bicycle

A 12-wheel vehicle bumped into a bicycle on Friday near Kyaukdaga Myoma police station, Bago region.

According to the investigation, the 12-wheel vehicle heading for Mandalay from Yangon driven by Myo Zin Ko, 20, crashed into the bicycle ridden by Ma Theingi Tun, 19, with Kyaw Thiha

Tun, 12, on the bicycle carrier while the 12-wheel driver attempted to overtake the bicycle.

Ma Theingi Tun and Kyaw Thiha Tun sustained minor injuries in the accident. The reckless driver is deemed guilty of careless driving by the police station.—Khin Ko (Kyaukdaga)

Death toll from Hebei storms climbs to 114

SHIJIAZHUANG — Torrential rain and floods have left 114 people dead and 111 others missing in north China's Hebei Province as of 6pm on Saturday, according to the provincial civil affairs bureau.

Local authorities have evacuated nearly 310,000 people. Flooding and rain-triggered landslides have caused the collapse of 52,900 houses and damage to 155,000.

Over 700,000 hectares of crops have also been destroyed, leading to direct economic losses of over 16 billion yuan (2.4 billion US dollars). —Xinhua



An abandoned bus filled with sand bags is used to build a makeshift dike at a flooded area in Xingtai, Hebei Province, China, on 21 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Singapore condemns shooting attack in Munich

SINGAPORE — Singapore condemned the vicious shooting attack which killed at least nine people and injured 16 others in southern German city of Munich on Friday evening, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) said in a statement on Saturday.

"We are shocked and saddened by the loss of innocent lives. We extend our condolences to the bereaved families and wish the injured a speedy recovery," it said.

MFA said it has verified the safety of most of the registered Singaporeans in Munich, and will continue to contact the remaining registered Singaporeans.

The ministry also added that so far, there are no reports of Singaporeans injured or directly affected by the incident.

Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong also wrote on a facebook post, saying that he was shocked to learn of the shooting. "Singapore condemns this senseless act. We have seen so many brutal terrorist attacks in recent months, one after another. We are at risk of becoming numbed, and have to remind ourselves of the terrible human tragedy each time." —Xinhua

Viet Nam to curb public debt, monitor environmental protection in economic development

HANOI — Vietnamese parliamentary chief Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan on Saturday said the country's legislature body will control public debt and closely monitor the implementation of environmental protection policies in economic development.

Talking with press and media agencies in Viet Nam's capital Hanoi on Saturday, Ngan said the

National Assembly (NA) of Viet Nam has set a ceiling for public debt of under 65 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and government debt under 50 per cent of GDP.

However, government debt is breaching the limit by 0.3 per cent.

At present, Vietnamese public debt is under the limit, but the country is facing

difficulties in payment, and even has to make new loans for debt payment, Ngan said.

The 14th NA is determining to control public debt and re-define the calculation of public debt.

The NA has been adjusting loan structure from short term to medium and long term loans in order to reduce the pressure of payment, Ngan said. Viet Nam

will strive to bring public debt and budget deficit to a safe level, Ngan told reporters.

Answering reporters' inquiries over the responsibilities of NA in supervising the implementation of environmental protection policies during operation of businesses, the Vietnamese top legislator said this is included in the

oversight activities of the NA.

Viet Nam does not pursue growth at all costs, Ngan said while mentioning the incident of mass fish deaths in the country's central localities recently which was caused by the discharge of waste water with toxic exceeding allowed level into the sea by Formosa Ha Tinh Steel Corporation.

Formosa is a lesson for Viet Nam to review all investment projects as well as policies in investment attraction in the future, Ngan told reporters. Viet Nam commenced the 14th NA for 2016-2021 tenure on Wednesday.

Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan was re-elected to be Chairwoman of the 14th NA on Friday. —Xinhua

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Foreign families to host children affected by 2011 quake in Japan

MORIOKA (Japan) — A number of foreign families in the greater Tokyo area will join a summer homestay programme starting 31 July to host children affected by the 2011 earthquake that ravaged north-eastern Japan.

The nonprofit Mother

Link Japan, which has organised the initiative, says the free of cost programme is intended for children who would otherwise have to spend time alone at home during their school summer vacation because their parents are away from home for work most of the day.

Around 10 families in

the Kanto region covering Tokyo and neighbouring prefectures will be hosting students from fourth grade in primary school to high school senior, providing cross-cultural experiences and chances to learn English for up to two weeks, according to the nonprofit based in Rikuzentakata,

Iwate Prefecture. Rie Nejime, the group's representative, said, "We have seen support extended by an increasing number of foreign residents. We hope to help single-parent families." Hosts are from countries such as Canada, the United States and Zimbabwe. —Kyodo News

India searches for missing air force plane, no wreckage found

MUMBAI — Indian ships and aircraft searched on Saturday for an air force plane that went missing over the Bay of Bengal with 29 people on board the previous day, with no indication what happened to the aircraft or sign of wreckage, the defence ministry said.

Sixteen ships, a submarine and six planes are involved in the search for the plane that disappeared while on a routine re-supply flight to remote islands in the Bay of Bengal on

Friday. Military officials said the weather had been rough in the Bay of Bengal over the last two days because of the monsoon season.

"There was no emergency communication message received from the plane. There is nothing to suggest what exactly happened," said air force spokesman Anupam Banerjee.

Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar was overseeing the search operation, which was based

out of the southeastern city of Chennai, from where the plane took off on Friday, he said.

The Russian-made AN-32 was on its way to Port Blair, the capital of India's Andaman and Nicobar islands when it disappeared from radar. There were 21 military personnel on board the missing plane including six crew. The other people on board were civilians, and some family members of soldiers deployed on the islands.

The Defence Ministry

said two high-tech naval surveillance planes, four other naval and coast guard planes, along with 16 ships and a submarine were searching for the aircraft in one of India's largest search and rescue operations in recent years.

The submarine had been deployed to locate transmissions from an emergency locator beacon on the aircraft. The AN-32 is a workhorse of the air force, chosen for its ability to operate from short runways. —Reuters

BoJ's Kuroda says to ease again if necessary to hit 2 per cent price goal

CHENGDU, (China) — Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda said on Saturday he would ease policy further if necessary to achieve its 2 per cent inflation goal, while reiterating a commitment to continue with the current stimulus until prices are anchored there.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a G20 meeting of finance ministers and central bankers in the southwestern Chinese city of Chengdu, Kuroda maintained an upbeat view on the Japanese economy and price outlook in spite of rising market expectations for more BoJ monetary stimulus.

A majority of economists polled by Reuters expect the BoJ to ease policy next week, forecasting a combination of measures in another attempt to kick-start inflation. "If the economy's (recovery)



Bank of Japan (BOJ) Governor Haruhiko Kuroda attends a news conference in Tokyo, Japan, on 16 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

trend continues, leading wages and prices to rise in a virtuous cycle, which is continuing, prices will eventually rise to the 2 per cent price stability goal," Kuroda said.

"We always examine risk factors for the economy and prices and will take additional easing steps if necessary to achieve the price stability goal. I'll explain that together with Japan's economy, prices and monetary policy at this meeting," Kuroda went on to say that the major topic of G20 debate is how Britain's vote to exit the European Union would affect the global economy.

"Uncertainty will continue, including negotiations between Britain and the EU, which will take years. So we will be paying attention to such things," Kuroda said, adding that there was no change in

expectations for global growth to rise despite Brexit.

Kuroda also shrugged off speculation about "helicopter money", saying that it would be prohibited by law if it meant the BoJ directly underwriting government debt. "If it means that central banks are directly underwriting government bonds, or managing monetary and fiscal policies as one, that would be prohibited in Japan as well as other advanced economies, as lessons from history tell us," he said.

Japanese markets have risen this month on speculation that authorities, battling to revive an economy dogged by decades of anaemic inflation, will resort to using helicopter money, possibly issuing perpetual bonds to underwrite public debt.—Reuters

Philippine foreign minister to attend ASEAN meeting for first time

MANILA — Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Perfecto Yasay Jr. will join his other southeast Asian counterparts in their meetings in Laos from 23 to 26 July, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said on Friday.

Yasay's attendance to the 49th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM) and Related Meetings will be his first ministerial meeting since he was appointed by President Rodrigo Duterte to the post.

Aside from AMM, Yasay will also attend the Ministerial Meetings of the ASEAN Plus Three, ASEAN Regional Forum, and East Asia Summit (EAS) including the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference with Dialogue Partners such as China, India,

Canada, Australia, and the United States. He will also attend the Meetings of the South East Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Commission, AMM Interface with the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission for Human Rights Representatives, and the Southwest Pacific Dialogue.

At the sidelines of the AMM, the DFA chief will have bilateral meetings with several counterparts to exchange views on matters affecting bilateral relations and common concerns on global and regional issues.

The AMM is the second regular Meeting of ASEAN Foreign Ministers this year under the Chairmanship of Lao PDR, after the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat in February.—Xinhua

Malaysian police say bomb plot on top officers foiled, 14 held

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysian authorities said on Saturday they had foiled a bomb attack on top police officers and arrested 14 suspected Islamic State (IS) operatives in a week-long operation.

The suspects included a senior IS member who is believed responsible for recruiting a Malaysian IS militant, Abu Ghani Yaacob, who was killed in Syria on 17 April, Inspector-general of police Khalid Abu Bakar said in a statement.

"Based on a search, police managed to seize one completed IED weighing one kilogramme, for use in a planned attack on the top PDRM leadership," Khalid said in a statement, using the Malay acronym for the Royal Malaysian Police, and referring to an improvised explosive device, or bomb.

Malaysia's security agencies are on guard against IS

spreading in the Muslim majority, but multi-ethnic Southeast Asian nation.

A few months ago, officials estimated nearly 50 Malaysians, most of them from the Muslim ethnic Malay majority, had joined IS in Syria and Iraq.

Khalid said police believe the 49-year-old senior IS member detained in the northern state of Kedah was an active recruiter and was responsible for arranging for IS members to travel to Syria.

A 43-year-old woman who was believed to have been planning to sneak into the South Philippines to join the IS-aligned Abu Sayyaf group was detained in a separate raid in Perak state.

The 12 others detained in separate operations in various places including the capital, Kuala Lumpur, are believed to be from the same cell, Khalid said.—Reuters

North Korea's new foreign minister heads to Laos for overseas debut

VIENTIANE/PYONGYANG — North Korea's new foreign minister on Saturday left for Laos to make his overseas debut at a major security forum, at a time of high tensions over Pyongyang's series of weapons tests.

This is the first trip abroad by Ri Yong Ho since he became foreign minister in May. His departure from Pyongyang's airport was confirmed by Kyodo News.

Ri was formerly a top nuclear negotiator and had experience in negotiating with the United States and other countries before assuming the new post.

The seasoned diplomat's remarks at the ASEAN Regional Forum on Tuesday, a gathering of his counterparts from nearly 30 countries, including China, Japan, South Korea, Russia and the United States, as well as his decision as to whether he will hold one-to-one talks on the sidelines, are being closely monitored by North Korea watchers.

This is particularly so this year in Vientiane as North Korea continues to perform ballistic missile tests in defiance of UN Security Council resolutions, even after it came under tougher additional sanctions in March.

Officials who were at the airport to see Ri off included China's ambassador to North Korea, Li Jinjun. Ri later arrived in Beijing on his way to Vientiane.

The ambassador's appearance indicates the possibility of Ri's upcoming interaction with officials from China, North Korea's sole major ally and most important economic partner, during his trip.

The forum, Asia's biggest annual security meeting, is one of the very few multilateral meetings in which North Korea's foreign minister participates.

The five countries — China, Japan, South Korea, Russia and the United States — are all members of the long-stalled six-party talks aimed at ending North Korea's nuclear programme.

Ri, who was North Korea's chief representative to the talks, is scheduled to arrive in the Laotian capital on Sunday afternoon, according to officials with knowledge of the situation.

North Korean officials have said the negotiations, which have been stalled since late 2008, are already "dead."

North Korea's most recent test-firing of banned ballistic missiles took place on Tuesday. The launch is widely seen as an angry response to the decision earlier this month by South Korea and the United States to deploy a new defence system.

The deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defence system in South Korea by the end of 2017 is aimed at countering North Korean missile threats.

North Korea, which has threatened to take "physical counter-action" in response to the plan, is also furious about the US administration's recent sanctions on leader Kim Jong Un for what it called his "notorious abuses" of human rights.

North Korea says the sanctions have impaired the dignity of its supreme leadership and it has already notified the United States that it will start dealing with all issues pertaining to the two countries from now on un-



Ri Yong Ho, North Korea's new foreign minister, left the international airport in Pyongyang on 23 July 2016, heading for Laos where he is to make his overseas debut at a major security forum. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

der its wartime law.

Japanese, South Korean and US officials have been on alert for a possible fifth nuclear test by North Korea. They said activity at the Punggye-ri nuclear test site in North Korea's northeast has been increasing since around 10 July.

North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test in January. Consequently, the United Nations imposed the new sanctions, but Kim made it clear at a once-in-a-generation party congress in May that he will not abandon his signature policy of pursuing nuclear armament and economic development simultaneously.—Kyodo News

France's Hollande says Munich shooting is a 'terrorist attack'

PARIS — A deadly shooting in Munich was a “disgusting terrorist attack” aimed at stirring up fear in Germany after France was targeted last week, French President Francois Hollande said on Saturday.

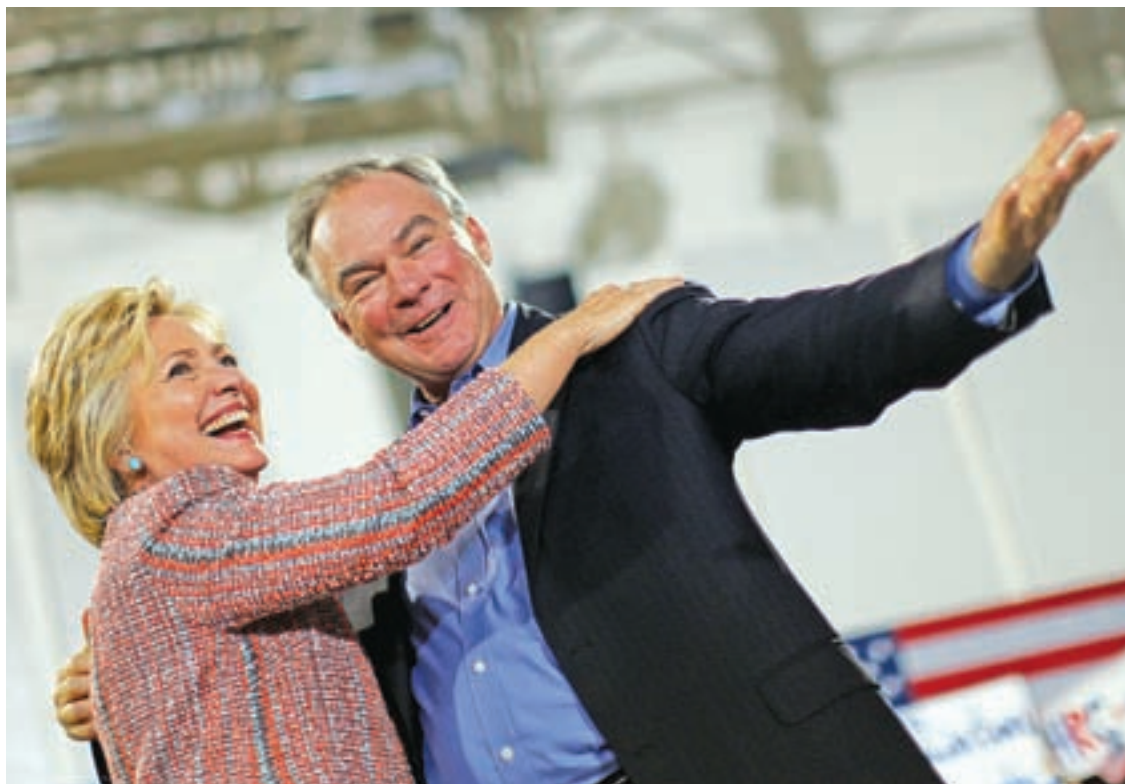
An 18-year-old German-Iranian gunman shot dead at least

nine people on Friday by opening fire in a busy Munich shopping mall, but the city's police have said it was too early to say whether it was a terrorist attack.

“The terrorist attack that struck Munich killing many people is a disgusting act that aims to foment fear in Germany after

other European countries,” Hollande said in a statement.

“Germany will resist, it can count on France's friendship and cooperation,” he said, adding that he would speak with German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Saturday morning. —Reuters



Democratic US presidential candidate Hillary Clinton and US Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA) react during a campaign rally at Ernst Community Cultural Centre in Annandale, Virginia, US, on 14 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Democrat Clinton picks Kaine as running mate, bypassing liberals

WASHINGTON/TAMPA (Fla.) — Hillary Clinton named US Senator Tim Kaine as her running mate on Friday, opting for an experienced governing partner who will help her present the Democratic ticket as a steady alternative to the unpredictable campaign of Republican presidential rival Donald Trump.

The selection of Kaine, a self-described “boring” Virginian with a reputation for low-key competence, could appeal to independents and moderates, but it quickly angered liberal groups that object to his advocacy for an Asian free-trade pact.

The Spanish-speaking former Virginia governor and Richmond mayor fit Clinton's long-stated criteria that the vice presidential choice be a capable and reliable partner who is ready to take over the presidency if necessary.

Clinton made the announcement via Twitter and a text message to supporters after the first day of a two-day campaign swing in Florida. She called Kaine to tell him about 40 minutes before the announcement, and called Presi-

dent Barack Obama shortly after Kaine.

“I'm thrilled to tell you this first: I've chosen Sen. Tim Kaine as my running mate. Welcome him to my team,” she said in her text message.

Kaine, 58, edged out two other finalists — Cory Booker, a US senator from New Jersey, and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, according to a Democratic source familiar with the discussions.

Clinton also bypassed candidates who would have generated more excitement among liberal and Hispanic activists, including progressive favourite US Senator Elizabeth Warren and two Hispanic members of Obama's Cabinet, Julian Castro and Thomas Perez.

The former secretary of state will be formally nominated as the party's presidential candidate for the 8 November election at next week's Democratic convention in Philadelphia. She leads Trump in many opinion polls.

Clinton's choice of a running mate could give her campaign momentum heading into the con-

vention, as the fight for the White House begins a more than three-month push to the finish.

Clinton, 68, acknowledged in an interview earlier this week that even Kaine admits he is boring, and said she did not mind.

“I love that about him,” she told Charlie Rose of CBS News and PBS. “He's never lost an election. He was a world-class mayor, governor and senator and is one of the most highly respected senators I know.”

A campaign official said Clinton was impressed with Kaine's down-to-earth style when she campaigned with him in Virginia last week. Afterwards, Kaine went back to her house in Washington, DC for a 90-minute evening meeting.

Two days later, Kaine and his wife, Anne, joined Clinton in New York for lunch, along with Clinton's husband, former President Bill Clinton, daughter Chelsea and Chelsea's husband. Kaine was the only vice presidential candidate to have a private family lunch during the vetting process, the official said. —Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

Russia's Putin sends condolences over Munich attack

MOSCOW — Russian President Vladimir Putin sent condolences to German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Bavarian premier Horst Seehofer over Friday's deadly shooting in Munich, Russian news agencies quoted the Kremlin as saying.

An 18-year-old German-Iranian gunman who apparently acted alone opened fire near a busy shopping mall in Munich on Friday evening, killing at least nine people in the third attack on civilians in Western Europe in eight days. —Reuters

Vietnamese, Lao, Cambodian children to meet in southern Viet Nam for cultural exchange

HO CHI MINH CITY — Nearly 180 children from Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia will gather here from 27 July to 1 August for sightseeing and cultural exchange, the Ho Chi Minh City authorities said on Saturday.

The children include 50 from Laos, 50 from Cambodia and 79 from Viet Nam. They will visit many historical sites and beauty spots in the city, and participate in art performances.

The event is designed to help strengthen solidarity and friendship among the three countries, said the local authorities. —Xinhua

Suicide bombers at Kabul demonstration kill at least 29

KABUL — Suicide bombers hit a large demonstration by members of Afghanistan's Hazara minority in Kabul on Saturday, killing at least 29 people and wounding 142, officials said.

Graphic television footage from the site of the blasts showed many dead bodies lying on the bloodied road, close to where thousands of Hazara had been demonstrating over the route of a planned multimillion dollar power line.

Mohammad Ismail Kawousi, a spokesman for the ministry of public health, said at least 29 dead and 142 wounded had been taken to nearby hospitals but the numbers may change. It was not immediately clear how many bombs were involved in the attack.

Emergency vehicles were at the site and wounded were being carried away. —Reuters

Indian aid worker kidnapped in Afghanistan rescued

KABUL — An Indian woman working for an international aid group who was kidnapped in the Afghan capital last month has been rescued unharmed, Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj announced on Saturday.

Judith D'Souza, who works for the Aga Khan Foundation, was abducted on 9 June in the centre of Kabul.

“I am happy to inform you that Judith D'Souza has been rescued,” the minister said in a tweet.

She thanked Afghanistan for its “help and support” but gave no details about how the release came about.

Swaraj said in a separate comment on Twitter she had spoken to D'Souza, who would be arriving in the Indian capital on Saturday evening. Kidnapping is a major problem in Afghanistan, affecting mostly Afghans although a number of foreigners have also been abducted in recent years.

Police in Kabul told foreigners living outside protected compounds to travel with guards after D'Souza's abduction. —Reuters

Man run over by police car, dies in Gifu Prefecture

GIFU (Japan) — A police car dispatched after an emergency call late Friday night ran over a man lying on a street in Godo in the central Japan prefecture of Gifu, who was pronounced dead shortly afterwards, police said.

Sgt. Shinji Matsuno, 31, was driving the car from a police post around 80 metres away from the scene, responding to a call reporting “a suspicious vehicle,” according to the police. A 23-year-old colleague was in the passenger seat.

The man who died after the accident at around 11:10pm was identified as Shigeo Hirata, a 58-year-old company employee from Godo town.

The police car was travelling at around 30 kilometres per hour with the red light on but no sirens, the police said. The two-lane street offers an unobstructed view.

The sergeant was quoted as saying that he did not notice the man as he was paying attention to cars in the opposite lane. —Kyodo News

Opinion

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We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with your name and title. Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Exercise restraints and patience

Khin Maung Aye

RAKHINE state has unique geographical nature with a long coastal line. Despite possession of good economic bases, Rakhine unfortunately lacks proper infrastructure, and has quite a complicated background history. These things considered, one can see that effective measures are needed for effectuation of the development of Rakhine state. In fact, the successive governments have also exerted effort for the development of the state. Nevertheless, its unique circumstances had prevented them from achieving the targets of their development projects. This being so, the incumbent govern-

ment has identified the issues that hinder the development, and formed a national-level development committee chaired by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who formed the working committees which include high-ranking public officials from various ministries. Although the new government is only in its nascent stage, it has given priority to the task of restoration of stability and peace as well as to development of Rakhine state, which has lagged behind. There are 142 targets to be achieved by the ministries concerned. Some of the targets have already been achieved but there

remain some targets to be fulfilled yet. In this regard, it is worth recalling what the state counsellor has given as the development guidelines, which require the respective authorities' earning the love and trust of the local people whose participation in the implementation of development activities play a cardinal role. She has also emphasized that those involved in implementation of development activities must prove by concrete results. Her guidance is quite appropriate because only when the development activities have yielded concrete results, can the trust be built. And only with confidence building can

the decades long conflicts between the two communities in the Rakhine state be solved. As these conflicts are of subtle, delicate nature, both sides are needed to exercise restraints and patience. At a time when the government is exerting strenuous effort for stability, peace and development of Rakhine state, the entire mass of people, both communities in Rakhine state and government departments are required to actively participate in the development activities together with civil society organizations, local and international NGOs and development partners and donors.

Pennywort Health Benefits

Pe Win Kyi

Background history
Pennywort is any of various plants with small round leaves growing in crevices of rocks and walls or in marshy places as any genus (Hydrocotyle) of perannial plants of the parsley family and small N. America plant (Obotaria virgenica) family. In other words, pennywort were acknowledged many centuries ago for the treatment of virous conditions. It is used as part of ayurvedic medicine, especially in Craditinos Indian and Chinese foractices. The bennywort is also percrial help that originated in most areas. It is native to India, Sri Lanka and Northern Australia and a few areas in Asia. Pennywort has been associated with Few Asian legends. It is a Tai Chi Chuan master; Tai Chi Chuan lived to the age of 256 years due to an assortment of herbs he consumed daily, one being pennywort. Another role is of king Hru-ma and his use of pennywort. He belived that it gave him The en-

- ergy and stamina necessary for his harem of 50 women.
- Pennywort is Known as**
- I. Centella
 - II. Gotu Kola
 - III. Asiatic and Indian Pennywort
 - IV. Grahml
- Pennywort has generally four Species**
- I. Common Pennywort
 - II. U.K Pennywort
 - III. Medicinal Pennywort
 - IV. Wild species Pennywort
- How it Functions**
- I. The herb functions by averting manner of the disorderly manner of the absorption of nutrition and corrects this process through an improved progression of disgestion of nutrients.
 - II. Pennywort has antibacterial and in flammatory properties.
 - III. It contains vitamin, B₁,B₂,B₃, and B₆ as well as calcium, maganesium, sodium, manganese and zinc.
 - IV. We operate it by blend-er for syrup for elixir.

- Health Benefits**
- The benefits of the pennywort tea are numerous and many people use this tea as a health tonic. Maintaining youth and the treatment of arthritis are its most popular use:
- I. Memory**
- Plus, it has been commanded as a great antidote for improving memory and therefore, considered food for the brain. Studies have indicated that consuming 2.4 new pennywort every a day may help sharpen alertness and memory and rejuvenate the brain.
- There is important research being conducted to observe the effects this herb can have on those suffering with Alzheimer's disease.
- II. Neverous System**
- The central neverous system can receive amazing benefits with the consumption of pennywort. The herb works well in relating the mind and can assist in certain neverous disorders, sonily senilaty. ADD and epietsy. It can be utilized as a nerve when coping with mental stress and fatigue and encourage

- sleep due to a neverous conduction.
- III. Immune System**
- Pennywort can help our immune system from toxins High blood pressure, congestive heart failure, venereal diseases and Urinary tract infections are a few range of illnesses that can be treated with this remarkable herb.
- Because of its antibiotic properties it has the capability to spread up the healing of wounds. Furthermore, pennywort can improve blood flow while also reinforcing veins and capillaries making them stronger.
- It is effective in bringing down fever and treating dysentery in children, which is a severe form of diarrhoea.
- IV. Circulation and Skin Conditions**
- Studies have shown it to be beneficial healing preventing phlebetis leg cramps and blood clots as well as decreasing the apperance of varicose veins.
- Pennywort has also proved to cleanse and purify the blood stream and can remedy certain skin conditions such as eczema, chronic ulcers sore and Sclero-

- derma, which is a condition that hardens the skin. A powder can be made from the leaves of this plant and applied to the eruaptions on the skin.
- Propagation**
- This herb can be propagated by the modified roots on average soil and at temperate climate.
- Caution**
- There are possible side effects of the herb and it should be taken under the advice of the doctor. It is also advised to take recommended doses as it overuse can bead to complication with your health.
- It may increase cholesterol and blood sugar levels. It should be avoided by those with high cholestrol or diabetic individuals. It should not be used during pregnancy due to possibility of miscarriage.
- Before implenting the pennywort into diet, consult doctor first to see if it's safe for you.
- To sum up**
- Most of Maha Rajas and the Majestic Kings used to consume this beneficial herb daily for their hygene, long life and dual purpose.
- *****

Annual water shortages in over 40 Nyaung-U villages yet to be resolved

A TOTAL of 43 villages situated within Mandalay Region's Nyaung-U district are annually confronted with water shortages, according to the Bagan Myanmar Foundation (BMF), a Nyaung-U township-based charity.

"Our foundation has five water trucks, which we use to distribute water on gratis to those villages in short supply. Looking ahead, we're going to team up with the U Kyaw Thu charity network to also dig a number of wells in these villages. We're also presently conducting health education initiatives in these rural areas too," said U Myo Min Oo, chair of the BMF.

Despite the annual concerted efforts of non-government organisations to donate water to villages where it is scarce, residents claim the amount of water provided still falls short of meeting their needs.

"The primary requirement for our village is wells; water is hard to come by. As such, we'd like to receive water donations if they are being made. There are NGOs that come and provide our village with water, but I can't say that it's enough to go around. We even have to pay K200 a barrel for water that comes out of the ground," said U Tin Maung, a resident of Nyaung-U Township's Letpateh village.

The provision of drinking water is the primary requirement within the Bagan/Nyaung-U re-



People seen falling in line as the water bowser arrives.

PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

gion, while local villagers are reportedly forced to solve their drinking water needs with water from under the ground.

"For the time being, ground water is being distributed to villages with water shortages. A plan is also in place to provide these villages with river water, for which we're currently con-

ducting further tests," said U Kyaw Htun, Amyotha Hluttaw MP for Nyaung-U Township.

The 43 villages within the Nyaung-U district, which suffer from water shortage induced problems, are reportedly part of a list of villages compiled by the BMF. —Myitmakha News Agency

Pasteurized milk still sour business for cattle farmers

DURABLE dairy farmers in Myanmar's Ayeyawady Region are stuck to producing yogurt and other milk products due to the high prices of the machinery required to produce pasteurized milk.

The shelf life of natural milk in Myanmar is seven days which cannot hold a candle to Double Cow brand milk which boasts a month long shelf life due to its mysterious origins.

"We don't have the technol-

ogy to be able to produce such long lasting milk.

It's not because we don't know how to, it's because we can't afford to invest in the types of machinery required," explained Ko Min Min Htun, owner of a milking machine in Hinthada.

The Double Cow technology is expensive and intricate, according to the report, requiring lots of money, electricity and space.

"We're still striving to produce long shelf life pasteurized milk across Myanmar. But, it's not that easy to connect every cattle farmer with a company that can provide a pasteurizing service; accessibility is difficult.

Even in Yangon, there are only four or five places which can pasteurize milk," said U Chit Ko Ko, joint secretary of the Buffalo, Cattle, Sheep & Goat Farmers Association. —Myitmakha News Agency

Kachin amber popular in Kalay

KALAY has seen an influx of Kachin amber jewellery following the emerging popularity of the stone, which is sourced from the Tanai region of Kachin State, as it is believed it contains properties that improves your health.

Lots of amber bracelets, beads, necklaces and earrings are being pushed on Kalay streets, apparently aiding digestion and making you fertile, according to the report. "We've been pushing a lot of Wet Si Pat Yaung (translated as: the colour of pork belly fat) type of amber. Sales haven't been so favorable of the clear type of amber, which contain crystal-

lized insects, as they carry a hefty price tag. We're clearing between 40 and 50 amber necklaces of the Wet Si Pat Yaung variety on a daily basis. We push to sell between K200,000-300,000 worth of amber per sale," said Daw Argyar, an itinerant amber jewellery seller to Kalay from Kachin State's Myitkyina.

"My weak heart tires me out. But, I wore one of these amber necklaces and within a day or two it's as though my tiredness has all but dissipated. At first, I didn't think it was because of the amber, so I sold it off. But then my tiredness returned. I vowed to visit

the clinic the following day but I re-bought my amber necklace and wore it overnight before going.

It was so extraordinary, I woke up and I felt so much better than I didn't even need to pay a visit to the clinic anymore," exclaimed Daw Aye Win Htay, a Kalay resident. Traders of amber in Kalay originally purchased the amber from miners in the Tanai region to sell in the Kachin State capital, Myitkyina, whereby a necklace of Wet Si Pat Yaung amber fetches K30,000 and a bracelet of the same amber variety reportedly costs K5,000. —Myitmakha News Agency

POEM:

The Lonely Little Bird in the Snow

The lonely little bird in the snow,
he knows
the Songs of Survival, scratched out
from the bottom of his little lungs,
would not dispel
the falling drizzles,
but he keeps on singing;

The Poet is a lonely tiny planet in the cosmos.

He knows
the songs of Peace springing
from the bottom of his agonizing heart
may not soothe and quench
this flaming world,
but he keeps on singing.

The little bird and the poet,
They keep on singing;
their singing never stops
till their throbbing hearts would drop.

Zaw Tun

Seven-year-old detected with contagious disease in Mingaladon

SOME 200 people have been prohibited from travelling out of their township for 10 days after the detection of contagious pulmonary disease in the area, sources said.

A seven-year-old girl in Mingaladon township was found to be carrying the infectious virus, leading to the travel ban.

U Aung Hlaing Win of

the Mingaladon constituency told the Global New Light of Myanmar that the Ministry for Health issued an instruction on Friday after the young girl was diagnosed with contagious pulmonary disease at Yangon General Hospital.

Officials of the Ministry of Health and Sport denied any knowledge of the case.—Ko Moe

Lack of grazing land keeps milk prices high

THE unsung heroes of Myanmar's dairy industry have expressed their grief in forcing their customers to pay high prices due to the use of feed as grazing land is lacking for their bovine buddies.

Breeding cattle is usually a cost-effective enterprise, according to the report.

"In neighboring Thailand, restrictions exist that require milk producing cattle to have at least seven acres of land to roam, upon which grass must be planted for the cattle to graze on. We don't have that kind of system in Myanmar; cattle are just allowed to graze anywhere, but there isn't enough," said Ko Min Min Htun, a cattle farmer from Ayeyarwady Region's Hinthada Township.

He also said that it would be cost effective for farmers if they

didn't have to purchase feed.

1.6L of milk from Hinthada costs K800, while the same quantity of a higher quality milk can reportedly cost between K1,000-1,200.

1.6Ls of milk in Yangon, fluctuates between K1,500-2,000 and is dependent on the distance from its place of origin and the cost of the cows feed.

"Grass is scarcer in Yangon than the countryside. It's still easy to find natural expanses of grass in rural areas. That's why there are discrepancies in price," said U Chit Ko Ko, joint secretary Buffalo, Cow, Sheep & Goat Farmers Association.

A lack of grazing lands and scarcity of grass within the greater Yangon Region forces cattle farmers to purchase foreign imported cattle feed. —Myitmakha News Agency

Obama denies any US involvement in Turkey coup bid

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama on Friday denied any US role in Turkey's failed coup and insisted that an extradition request for a US-based Muslim cleric accused of orchestrating the putsch would have to go through normal channels.

Obama, speaking at a news conference, said he told Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan in a call earlier this week that the United States had no prior knowledge of the abortive coup.

"Any reports that we had any previous knowledge of a coup attempt, that there was any US involvement in it, that we were anything other than entirely supportive of Turkish democracy are completely false, unequivocally false," Obama said.

"He (Erdogan) needs to make sure that, not just he but everybody in his government, understands that those reports are completely false," Obama added. "Because when rumours like that start swirling around, that puts our people at risk on the ground in Turkey and it threatens what is a critical alliance and partnership between the United States and Turkey."



US President Barack Obama and Mexico President Enrique Pena Nieto (not pictured) hold a news conference at the White House in Washington, US, on 22 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Reports of US involvement in the coup attempt, which were also denied earlier this week by the US ambassador to Turkey, appear to be partly fuelled by the fact that cleric Fethullah Gulen lives in self-imposed exile in Pennsylvania's Pocono Mountains.

Erdogan accuses Gulen, a

charismatic former ally, of masterminding the plot against him. In a crackdown on Gulen's suspected followers, more than 60,000 soldiers, police, judges, civil servants and teachers have been suspended, detained or placed under investigation.

Gulen has condemned the attempted coup and denied any

involvement in it.

Obama, reiterating what US officials had said earlier this week, said he told Erdogan his government must first present evidence of Gulen's alleged complicity in the failed coup. An extradition request would then receive the review required by the Justice Department and other government agencies just like any other petition.

"America's governed by rules of law, and those are not ones that the president of the United States or anybody else can just set aside for the sake of expediency," Obama said. "We've got to go through a legal process."

Serdar Kilic, the Turkish ambassador to the United States, told a news conference on Friday that his country had submitted the "necessary documentation" for Gulen's extradition. But US Justice Department spokesman Peter Carr said he could not yet give a "hard yes or no" on whether the materials submitted by Turkey constituted a formal extradition request.—Reuters

Fourteen bodies found after 'execution' in Benghazi, Libya

BENGHAZI — Fourteen unidentified bodies with shot wounds to the head have been found in the eastern Libyan city of Benghazi, a hospital official said on Friday.

UN Libya envoy Martin Kobler said he was "shocked and dismayed by the summary execution," labelling it a war crime and calling for those responsible to be brought to justice. The bodies were recovered from Laithi, a neighbourhood that forces loyal to eastern commander Khalifa Haftar captured this year from a loose alliance of Islamists and other opponents.

Military officials from Haftar's forces refused to comment, saying the incident was under investigation.

Benghazi has seen some of the heaviest violence of the sporadic conflict that developed after Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi was toppled in an uprising in 2011.

Haftar has been waging a military campaign there for the past two years against a coalition of armed groups called the Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries. His forces have advanced in several areas in recent months, but have not gained full control over the city.

Campaign group Amnesty International said on Thursday that air strikes by Haftar's forces were endangering the lives of scores of detainees being held captive in Benghazi.

Amnesty said it appeared that the Shura Council may be using the captives as human shields, which can constitute a war crime. It said the captives were likely being held in the district of Ganfouda, where Haftar's forces have recently dropped leaflets urging civilians to leave.—Reuters

Rebel mortar fire kills 8 in park in Syria's Aleppo

DAMASCUS — At least eight people were killed and 30 others wounded Friday in a public park in a rebel mortar attack on Syria's northern city of Aleppo, a well-informed source told Xinhua.

Three women were among those killed in the attack, the latest in an endless cycle of mortar shelling by rebels against government-controlled areas in Aleppo, the source said on condition of anonymity.

The fresh shelling came a

day after rebels in Aleppo detonated a bomb in a tunnel under a police station, killing an undisclosed number of government officers.

The blast destroyed parts of the building of the police station in the al-Hal area, said Sham FM radio.

Aleppo, Syria's largest city and once an economic hub, has recently witnessed intensified fighting between an array of jihadist groups and the Syrian army.

Last Sunday, government troops fully severed the last supply route connecting rebel-held areas in the northern countryside of Aleppo and those areas inside the eastern part of the city.

Aleppo, located near the borders with Turkey, has been a focal point of clashes between the Syrian army and the rebels.

In the summer of 2012, thousands of armed militants stormed residential districts of Aleppo from its countryside, striking the economic nerves of

the Syrian government, which has repeatedly accused Turkey of supporting the rebels for undeclared interests in Aleppo.

The rebels captured several districts in east Aleppo and tried repeatedly to expand their presence to government-controlled areas in the west.

The rebels laid siege to western Aleppo districts after cutting the international road to Aleppo in 2014, a siege broken later by the Syrian army, with the help of Hezbollah.—Xinhua

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First baby with Zika-related birth defect born in New York City

NEW YORK — New York City has reported its first case of a baby born with the birth defect microcephaly related to exposure to the Zika virus, health officials said on Friday.

New York City Department of Health officials said the baby's mother was infected after traveling to an area with ongoing Zika transmission. They declined to provide further details about the mother or child.

So far, the city has reported 346 cases of Zika infections, all related to travel. Of these, four have been linked to sexual transmission, including the first case ever of a woman transmitting the virus to a male partner.

US health officials have concluded that Zika infections in pregnant women can cause microcephaly, a birth defect marked by small head size that can lead to severe developmental problems in babies.

According to the US Cen-

tres for Disease Control and Prevention, there have now been 12 confirmed cases of babies born with microcephaly in the United States, and more than 400 pregnant women in the continental US have evidence of Zika infection.

Health officials in Florida have been working with the CDC to determine if Zika has arrived in the United States after two residents who have not travelled to areas infected with Zika tested positive for the mosquito-borne virus. The connection between Zika and microcephaly first came to light last fall in Brazil, which has now confirmed more than 1,600 cases of microcephaly that it considers to be related to Zika infections in the mothers.

So far, 1,404 people in 46 US states have contracted Zika, including 15 cases that were sexually acquired. CDC is also investigating one possible case of person-to-person transmission of Zika in Utah.—*Reuters*



Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Dr. Herminia Palacio speaks at a press conference after a baby infected with Zika virus was delivered in New York City, US, on 22 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

20-month US experiment narrows search for dark matter particle

SAN FRANCISCO — A 20-month experiment by Large Underground Xenon, or LUX, has come to an end, narrowing the search for, but failing to find, an elusive particle that should be everywhere.

The experiment operated beneath a mile, or 1.6 kilometre, of rock at the Sanford Underground Research Facility in the former Homestake gold mine in the Black Hills of South Dakota. Its mission: to detect so-called weakly interactive massive particles, or WIMPs, that some physicists think comprise the mysterious dark matter that makes up 85 per cent of all the matter in the universe. If the WIMP hypothesis is correct, billions of these particles pass through our bodies every second, as well as Earth and everything on it. But because

WIMPs interact so weakly with ordinary matter, this ghostly traveler goes entirely unnoticed.

Despite the LUX team's non-discovery, the researchers have narrowed the mass-range in which the putative particle can exist, focusing future searches within that range.

"The extra experiment gave us more sensitivity in searching for high-mass dark matter particles," Daniel McKinsey, a University of California, Berkeley, professor of physics and senior faculty scientist at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, and co-spokesperson for LUX, was quoted as saying by a news release from the school on Thursday. "Many theorists think that the dark matter mass will be high, around a thousand times the mass of a proton."—*Xinhua*



A nurse prepares a vaccine to be given to a child in a hospital in Beijing, China, on 13 April, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

China launches nationwide inspection of vaccines

BEIJING — China health authorities have started a nationwide inspection of vaccinations four months after a scandal broke involving nearly \$90 million worth of illegal vaccines that were suspected of being sold in dozens of provinces.

Authorities will track purchases as well as the distribution of vaccines and vaccination records, to ensure they are legally traded and properly handled and used, the National Health and Family Planning Commission said

in a statement published online.

Random checks will be conducted at 20 per cent of hospitals and clinics providing vaccinations, while all disease control and prevention agencies nationwide will be inspected, it said.

In March, authorities pledged to crack down on the black market sale of vaccines after a mother and daughter in Shandong province were found to have illegally bought vaccines from traders and sold on to hundreds of re-sellers around China. The vaccines,

which police said were made by licensed producers, were not kept and transported in the required cold conditions, which could mean that patients taking them could suffer severe side effects or even death.

Hong Kong limited the number of non-resident children getting vaccinations at government clinics there after the scare raised fears that mainland families would go to the city for inoculations and put pressure on supplies.—*Reuters*

Obama signs into law opioid addiction bill to protect newborns

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama on Friday signed into law a measure that pledges greater efforts to protect drug-dependent newborns and assist their parents.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act also stresses drug treatment and overdose prevention to help stanch the nation's heroin and opioid drug epidemic.

Obama said in a statement that 78 Americans die from opioid overdose every day, and noted that the legislation included only modest steps to address the epidemic.

"I am deeply disappointed that Republicans failed to provide any real resources for those seeking addiction treatment to get the care that they need," Obama said. "In fact, they blocked efforts by Democrats to include \$920 million in treatment funding."

The bill was passed nearly unanimously by both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Efforts to enforce provisions to protect newborns and help their parents come in response to a Reuters investigation last year ti-

tled "Helpless & Hooked."

The new law requires that the federal government and every state follow a 2003 law that was routinely ignored. That law called on states to require hospitals and social services to report, track and assist drug-dependent newborns and their families.

Reuters found that no more than nine states were following that requirement. Most children born to addicted mothers, including many mothers who were taking prescribed methadone, were not being reported by hospitals as required by law. Often, that was because medical workers feared involving child protective services, as the existing law requires. When cases were reported to social services, Reuters found, efforts to protect the child and help the parents often were limited.

The failures came at a cost. Reuters found more than 110 babies since 2010 died under preventable circumstances after being sent home to families ill-equipped to care for them. Experts said far more children have likely died but gone uncounted.

The new law promises a non-punitive approach that includes "safe care plans" aimed at keeping newborns at home with their parents, who will receive additional help.

"This is a step forward for vulnerable babies who, due to an opioid dependency, will begin their lives facing enormous challenges," said Senator Bob Casey of Pennsylvania, the ranking Democrat on the Senate subcommittee on children and families. "Reuters' initial reporting shined a light on a darkness that had enveloped far too many lives. There is much more work to do but this is a genuine step forward."

Representative John Kline, a Minnesota Republican who chairs the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, which initiated the measure, said it will track state actions.

"These reforms are an important part of our broader efforts to combat the nation's opioid epidemic and provide these vulnerable families a better chance at a brighter future," Kline said in a statement.—*Reuters*

Iranian gunman kills nine in Munich, then himself — police

MUNICH — An 18-year-old German-Iranian gunman who apparently acted alone opened fire near a busy shopping mall in Munich on Friday evening, killing at least nine people in the third attack on civilians in Western Europe in eight days.

The pistol-wielding attacker, identified by Munich Police Chief Hubertus Andrae as a dual national from Munich, was later found dead of a suspected self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Authorities said it was too early to say whether it was a terrorist attack, and said they had no immediate evidence of an Islamist motive.

Chancellor Angela Merkel is due to meet her chief of staff, Peter Altmaier, and Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere and a host of intelligence officials on Saturday to review the incident.

Police, citing witnesses, had initially said they were looking for up to three suspects and were treating the incident as a suspected terrorist attack.

But authorities told a news conference early on Saturday the shooter was believed to have staged the attack alone, opening fire in a fast food restaurant before moving to the mall.

Andrae said authorities did not see similarities to an attack in southern Germany last Monday in which an axe-wielding 17-year-old asylum-seeker killed five people in an incident claimed by the Islamic State group.

Andrae said it was premature to say whether the Friday incident



Members of the fire brigade attend the scene near the Olympia shopping mall, where yesterday's shooting rampage started, in Munich, Germany, on 23 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

was a terrorist attack, as French President Francois Hollande said, or the work of a deranged person.

Police said they were investigating a video in which the gunman is seen and heard exchanging racial slurs and profanities with another man. "We are trying to determine who said what," a police spokesman said.

There was no known motive for the shooting in Germany's third largest city, which went into lockdown with transport halted and highways sealed off immediately after the attack.

US intelligence officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said initial reports from their

German counterparts indicated no apparent link between the shooter and Islamic State or other militant groups.

It was the third major act of violence against civilians in Europe in eight days. Previous attacks in France and Germany were claimed by Islamic State.

At least 16 people, including several children, were in hospital and three were in critical condition, Andrae said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility but supporters of Islamic State celebrated on social media.

"The Islamic state is expanding in Europe," read one tweet.

The gunman, whose body was found on a side street near the mall, was not identified but Andrae said he was not previously known to police.

Police commandos, armed with night vision equipment and dogs, raided an apartment in the Munich neighbourhood of Maxvorstadt early on Saturday where the German newspaper *Bild* said the gunman lived with his parents.

"He lived right next to me," *Bild* quoted a neighbour as saying. "A friend of mine went to school with him and said he was rather a quiet guy. He recognised him from the videos from the scene."

The men had notified police

about their suspicion three hours before the police raid.

A police spokesman said police did not release names of suspects, even if they were killed, due to privacy concerns.

The mall is next to the stadium where the Palestinian militant group Black September took 11 Israeli athletes hostage and later killed them during the 1972 Olympic Games.

Friday's incident snarled traffic as authorities blocked highways, closed the main railway station, and shut down public transport.

A police spokesman initially said up to three gunmen were on the run after the shooting. The Bavarian capital was placed under a state of emergency as police hunted for them and special forces were deployed.

Two individuals were seen driving quickly away from the scene, but they were later cleared of any wrongdoing, the police chief said.

Nearly three hours after the shooting, authorities found a body about 1 km (0.6 miles) from the scene that was later determined to be the gunman.

German radio station Bayerischer Rundfunk said the man had a red backpack similar to one used by a gunman seen at a McDonald's restaurant where the attack reportedly began. It said police were using a robot to investigate the backpack.

German news magazine Focus said the man had shot himself in the head.—Reuters

EgyptAir Flight 804 broke up in midair after a fire — NY Times

NEW YORK — Evidence gathered in an investigation into the crash of EgyptAir Flight 804 in the Mediterranean Sea in May shows the plane likely broke up in midair after a fire near or inside the cockpit that quickly overwhelmed the crew, according to Egyptian officials involved in the inquiry, the *New York Times* reported on Friday.

But the officials could not determine whether the fire thought to have caused the crash had been set off by a mechanical malfunction or by a malicious act, the report said.

The findings are based on

information from the Airbus A320's flight data recorder and cockpit voice recorder along with an analysis of the condition and distribution of recovered debris, including human remains, according to forensic and aviation officials in Cairo, the report said. The officials spoke this week on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to discuss the investigation publicly, the *New York Times* said.

The Airbus A320 from Paris to Cairo plunged into the eastern Mediterranean on 19 May and all 66 people on board were killed.—

Reuters



People light candles during a candlelight vigil for the victims of EgyptAir flight 804, at the Cairo Opera house in Cairo, Egypt, on 26 May 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Kerry, Russian foreign minister to discuss Syria in coming days

PARIS — US Secretary of State John Kerry said on Friday that he would meet his Russian counterpart in the coming days to discuss an American proposal for closer military cooperation and intelligence sharing on Syria.

Kerry told reporters that he might meet Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in Geneva, but indicated detailed talks were more likely to take place on the sidelines of a gathering of Southeast Asian nations in Laos on Monday and Tuesday.

Kerry defended the US proposal, which has been greeted with deep scepticism by top American military and intelligence officials.

"The president of the United States has authorised and ordered this track," he said. "It is the president's desire to test whether or not the Russians are prepared to do what they said during our negotiations in Moscow that they will do."

"I don't comment on internal negotiations" within the US government, Kerry said. "The place for these arguments to be argued



A front loader remove debris from a site hit by an airstrike in the rebel held Douma neighbourhood of Damascus, Syria, on 22 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

is in the (White House) Situation Room with the president of the United States, and he has made a decision."

The proposed agreement — which Kerry discussed in Moscow with Russian President Vladimir Putin last week — would require the Syrian government to cease attacks on US-backed Syrian opposition fighters. In return, Russia

would receive US intelligence help to target militant groups in Syria such as Islamic State and al Qaeda affiliate Nusra Front.

"We're going to test this very carefully based not on trust, based on specific steps," Kerry said of the diplomacy with Moscow. "So far, it is showing a modicum of promise which, hopefully, we can complete."—Reuters

Kenyan court jails ivory smuggler for 20 years

MOMBASA (Kenya) — A Kenyan court on Friday sentenced a man to 20 years in jail and fined him 20 million shillings (\$200,000) for ivory smuggling.

Police accused Feisal Mohamed Ali, from the coastal city of Mombasa, of being behind an international ivory poaching syndicate linked to a 3-tonne haul of elephant tusks seized in Mombasa in June 2014.

Poaching has surged in recent years across sub-Saharan Africa, where gangs kill elephants and rhinos to feed Asian demand for ivory and horns for use in folk medicines.

Kenya has imposed longer jail terms and bigger fines for wildlife poaching or trafficking, saying it is harming tourism, a major earner of foreign exchange.

Ali was arrested in Dar es Salaam in neighbouring Tanzania in December

2014 on a warrant issued by Interpol.

He faced two counts of handling ivory tusks and possessing ivory. He denied the charges but the court in Mombasa found him guilty on the second count and acquitted him on the first.

Magistrate Diana Mochache said: “120 elephants were killed and the value of the tusks was 44 million shillings.”

She was referring to the consignment of elephant tusks confiscated during a police raid on a warehouse in Mombasa.

Four other suspects on trial alongside Ali were acquitted of all charges.

Ali’s lawyer Gerald Magolo told reporters his client would appeal the verdict. “There is no way he alone could be convicted,” Magolo said.

Prosecutors said they would appeal against the



A Kenya Wildlife Services ranger inspects part of elephant tusks recovered from suspected Kenyan ring-leader of an ivory smuggling gang Feisal Ali Mohamed, also one of the nine most wanted environmental crime fugitives worldwide listed by Interpol, before the judgment on a case in which he had been charged with dealing and possession of 2,152 kg of ivory in Mombasa, Kenya, on 22 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

acquittal of the other four suspects.

“The guilty verdict is a strong message to all networks of poaching gangs, ivory smugglers, financiers, middlemen and shippers that Kenya will not watch as its elephant population is decimated or

its territory used as a conduit for traffickers,” Kenya Wildlife Service said in a statement.

In January 2014, a Kenyan court convicted a Chinese man of smuggling ivory and ordered him to pay a fine of 20 million shillings or serve seven years

in jail, the first sentencing since Kenya introduced its anti-poaching law.

In April, President Uhuru Kenyatta set fire to thousands of elephant tusks and rhino horns, destroying a stockpile that would have been worth a fortune to smugglers and sending

a message that trade in the animal parts must be stopped.

In 2011, then-President Mwai Kibaki set fire to five tonnes of contraband ivory. His predecessor, Daniel Toroitich arap Moi, did the same in 1989.—Reuters

Brazil holds terror suspects, seeks leads about possible Olympic threat

BRASILIA — Brazil held 10 presumed Islamist militants in isolation cells at a maximum security jail on Friday as police combed their computers and mobile phones for information about possible threats to next month’s Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

Brazil’s Justice Minister Alexandre Moraes said after the arrests on Thursday that the men formed a disorganised group of “amateurs” who contacted each other via social media and had little clue of how to become terrorists.

His statements, however, did not go down well at ABIN, Brazil’s intelligence agency, or the Federal Police, where sources told Reuters the minister had underplayed the terrorist threat by portraying the group as a bunch of crazy young men.

“He gave the impression that this is a minor problem, that does not represent a risk,” said one Federal Police source. “That’s not right. We cannot spread that idea.”

Security officials and experts said that such

groups, even if inchoate or disorganised, reflect the growing efforts by Islamic State (IS) and other radical organisations to attract would-be militants through social media and Internet platforms.

“There is something qualitatively different about terrorist organisations and their dynamics today because they are more diffuse and widely distributed and may materialise where you don’t expect them,” says Robert Muggah, research director at the Igarapé Institute, a security and development think tank in Rio de Janeiro.

US intelligence officials said on Friday they have no evidence that the men arrested in Brazil, at least some of whom had allegedly pledged allegiance to IS, were actually part of or directed by the militant group.

Like Brazilian officials, they say they have no reliable evidence of plans for any specific attack on the Olympics, which start 5 August.

But recent attacks in Europe have raised fears of a “lone wolf” sympathetic

to IS attacking athletes or visitors to the Games, especially from countries targeted by the group, such as the United States, Britain, France and Israel, officials said.

“Amateurs or not, they were organising themselves,” said Paulo Storani, a former captain of an elite squad in Rio de Janeiro’s police. “This is the way the Islamic State recruits people.”

Federal Police sources said they had been monitoring some members of the group for around a year after they accessed militant Islamist web sites.

Police decided to arrest the men, who gave themselves Arabic names in exchanges over WhatsApp and Telegram message apps, when they started discussing weapons training and one tried to buy an AK-47 assault rifle online from a Paraguayan gun shop.

Authorities said only two of the men, all Brazilians between the ages of 20 and 40, had actually met each other, when they went to learn Arabic in Egypt in 2012 after converting to Islam.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

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Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA HARTA VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 24.7.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the by-laws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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Brazilian Federal Police officers escort one of the 10 people they arrested on suspicions of belonging to a group supporting Islamic State and discussing terrorist acts during next month’s Rio 2016 Olympic Games, at the Guarulhos airport in Sao Paulo, on 21 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

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New pictures released as Britain's Prince George marks 3rd birthday

LONDON — Britain's Prince George, the son of Prince William and his wife Kate, celebrated his third birthday on Friday with his father's office releasing new photographs of the great grandson of Queen Elizabeth.

George, the third-in-line to the British throne, was pictured with the family dog Lupo and playing in the grounds of the country mansion in Norfolk, east England, which belongs to his parents, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

Photographs of the young prince, who attends a local nurs-

ery, are hugely in demand with the world's media and William and Kate have been fiercely protective of his privacy, leading to some criticism that too few images of the toddler and his one-year-old sister Princess Charlotte have been released.

"The Duke and Duchess hope that people will enjoy seeing these new photographs," William's office said in a statement. "They would like to thank everyone for all the lovely messages they have received as Prince George celebrates his third birthday."—Reuters



Britain's Prince George is seen with the family pet dog, Lupo, in this photograph taken in mid-July at his home in Norfolk and released by Kensington Palace to mark his third birthday, in London, Britain on 22 July, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Leonardo DiCaprio raises USD 45 million at gala in France



Leonardo DiCaprio. PHOTO: PTI

LOS ANGELES — Oscar-winning actor Leonardo DiCaprio raised USD 45 million by throwing a star-studded fundraiser at St Tropez to support environmental awareness and research for climate change.

The A-list attendees included Bono, Chris Rock, Mariah Carey, Tobey Maguire, Jonah Hill, Naomi Campbell, Bradley Cooper and Edward Norton, reported Aceshowbiz.

Prince Albert of Monaco was feted with New World Leadership Award while Lana Del Rey, The Weeknd and Andrea Bocelli performed at the gala.

The guests had opportunity to bid for a week on set with Martin Scorsese, a private game of Texas Hold 'Em with Norton and Hill, an evening with Carey, a lunch with Margot Robbie as well as a Harley Davidson motorcycle and the Terminator: Genisys skull from Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Meanwhile, DiCaprio, 41, auctioned his Rolex, the diamond cufflinks he wore when he won his Academy Award earlier this year and a seven-night stay at his property in Palm Springs.

On Wednesday, Hollywood star-turned-artist auctioned his Tiger on Last

Legs artwork at Leo's gala. He was in esteemed company as famed pieces from Jeff Koons, Pablo Picasso, Urs Fischer, Olafur Eliasson and Adrian Villar Rojas were also up for bid. His painting was auctioned off at \$275,000. Brody raised 150,000 euro for an elephant charity by auctioning off a safari tour.

A portion of the proceeds will benefit victims and survivors of the recent Nice attacks and the rest will go to the actor's foundation dedicated for environmental efforts.

Earlier this year, DiCaprio, who is a staunch environmental campaigner, praised Pope Francis for help-

ing to try to combat climate change.

He's been inspiring and revolutionary, to come out and be outspoken about the issue of climate change and endorse the scientific community.

We have 99 per cent of the scientific community now saying climate change exists and it's caused by mankind. Anyone who doesn't believe in climate change doesn't believe in science.

So the fact that he has come out as the spiritual leader endorsing the scientific movement is unprecedented, and it was an incredible honour to meet him.—PTI

Edward Snowden talks film debut and dramatising his life in 'Snowden'

SAN DIEGO, (Calif) — When former NSA contractor-turned-whistleblower Edward Snowden met with Oscar-winning director Oliver Stone to discuss a movie on his life, he never thought he would be making his own film debut.

Stone had initially interviewed Snowden to include him in DVD outtakes, Snowden said via video link late Thursday in San Diego after a screening of Stone's "Snowden," which stars Joseph Gordon-Levitt as the title character.

But Snowden and Stone ended up filming nine takes for a scene in which he talks about his fears stemming from his actions.

"I spoke at length just about personal values and just what it meant to me with the things that were happening since 2013," said Snowden. "I guess he liked it. People do seem to respond to that."

The movie, due out in Sep-

tember, follows the 2013 events that led Snowden, a former contractor with the National Security Agency, to expose the US government's mass surveillance programs and flee the country after the government filed espionage charges against him.

He was granted asylum in Russia later that year, and has lived there since with his girlfriend, Lindsay Mills.

"When there is enough in the public record, you don't really get to decide whether or not the movie gets made," Snowden said.

The film follows Snowden's discovery of the US government's mass surveillance programs that digitally monitor unaware citizens.

It fictionalises and condenses some events, such as how Snowden smuggled the data out of the NSA — dramatised with a Rubik's Cube in the film — and got it to documentary filmmaker

Laura Poitras and Guardian journalist Glenn Greenwald in Hong Kong.

"I admitted that I did not have a plan beyond getting straight out of there (Hong Kong), I planned to ask the world for justice and see what happened. It was kind of surprising how that worked out," he said.

Asked by an audience member if he was happy, Snowden said: "I actually live a surprisingly free life," working with organisations such as the American Civil Liberties Union that Gordon-Levitt donated his "Snowden" acting fee to.

"Every day, I'm working on something now that I can be proud of. I love my country, I love the things that we try to do," he said.

"The fact that Lindsay ... has been with me for ten years, is still with me, that's something that just makes me happy every day."—Reuters

Ab Fab's Patsy and Edina grow older disgracefully in new movie

LONDON — Patsy and Edina, British television's raucous partying duo, may have aged a bit since they first appeared on screens in the 1990s, but they are as badly behaved as ever in "Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie".

In the movie, which hits US and Canadian theatres on Friday after premiering in Britain last month, Jennifer Saunders and Joanna Lumley reprise their roles as the chain-smoking, champagne- and vodka-drinking duo — fashion PR agent Edina Monsoon and magazine editor Patsy Stone.

More than two decades on, they are still partying hard.

"They never seem to go away actually," Saunders said about playing the characters again. "They're always with us."

The big screen adaptation of the television show, which began in 1992 with three series before resuming in 2001, sees

the pair face a media storm after accidentally pushing model Kate Moss into the River Thames, forcing them to flee to the south of France.

The movie has been eagerly awaited since Patsy and Edina returned to TV screens for a 2012 London Olympics special.

"For people to actually remember it and remember us, I think that as an actor is always thrilling," Lumley said in a joint interview with Reuters. "This is what's been a bit mind-stretching, this reception."

Saunders said she put pen to paper again for the movie after a wager with long-time comedy partner Dawn French, with whom she wrote the original sketch that gave rise to "Ab Fab". "She told me I was writing it and told the press I was writing it even though I wasn't," Saunders said of Lumley, adding French then bet her 100,000 pounds she would not do it.—Reuters

Singapore street stalls make dining history with Michelin star



People queue outside hawker Chan Hong Meng's Michelin star awarded stall, for his soya sauce chicken rice and noodle at a food market in Singapore, on 22 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

SINGAPORE — Hungry diners queued up at a small, modest street food stall in Singapore on Friday to get a taste of the restaurant's local delights worthy of a coveted Michelin star.

Hong Kong Soya Sauce Chicken Rice and Noodle and Hill Street Tai Hwa Pork Noodle made dining history on Thursday when they became the first street food stalls in the world to be awarded a star by Michelin as French critics revealed a Singapore guide of 29 establishments.

Singapore is the first South-east Asian country and the fourth in Asia to be rated by the Michelin Guide. It has more than 100 open-air "hawker" centres and 6,000 stalls selling popular multi-ethnic meals.

Chan Hon Meng, owner of Hong Kong Soya Sauce Chicken Rice and Noodle, said he was honored to receive the recognition as he cooked up treats for the

extra customers.

Chan hopes his stall's success will encourage more young people to enter the hawker trade, which is starting to suffer from a lack of successors for the stalls, which are primarily run by elderly cooks.

"I am very excited. Never knew hawker food can go global," Chan said in front of his stall. "Hopefully the next generation will also pick this up."

Roy Seeto, who often visits the pork noodle stall, praised Chan.

"I think he deserved the award. Really deserved it," Seeto said.

The 51-year-old chef said he had no immediate plans to increase prices of his food, such as his signature chicken rice dish, which he serves roughly 150 times per day at lunchtime for S\$2.50, or \$1.85, per plate. —Reuters

Hungary's Tokaj wine region revives Jewish heritage

MÁD (Hungary) — Two plaques put up in the village of Mád last month commemorate the important role Jewish families played in making Hungary's golden Tokaj wine, most of whom perished in the Holocaust.

The plaques mark another step in Hungary on a painful journey in coming to terms with the treatment of its Jews during World War II when most were handed over to the Nazis.

After two centuries of prosperity generated from the sweet wine that became popular in the courts of Europe, Jews in Tokaj were deported with the help of the Hungarian Gendarmerie to a ghetto and from there to Auschwitz concentration camp.

The plaques were mounted on the former home of the Zimmermann family, one of the biggest and most successful wine-makers and wine traders of Mád in the northeast of Hungary, after a lengthy campaign by family members.

From the Zimmermanns sent to Auschwitz from their home in Mád only Susy Oster, who was born Zsuzsanna Zimmermann in 1928 and now lives in the United

States, escaped the gas chambers.

But when asked if her mother had found some peace now that her family home in Mád was remembered, her daughter Beverly Fox said in an emailed response to Reuters: "No, it has not given her any peace."

"How can it when everything that generations of her family toiled for, and not just her family, but all Jewish families, had everything taken away from them? How can you ever have peace after your country deports you ... and sends you through the gates of hell?"

The central European nation deported half a million Jews. In the final months of the war, Hungarian fascists executed thousands of Jews, shooting them and pushing them into the Danube river.

From the village of Mád, around 250 Jews were deported. Their properties and vineyards on a plain of volcanic soil near the Carpathian mountains were mostly confiscated.

Fox recognised her mother's home in a photo of the wine-making company Royal Tokaji, which now owns the buildings, when

she was planning a trip to Hungary and the family embarked on a mission to gain recognition of the area's Jewish roots.

Around 30 Jews returned to the village after the war but they had all left by the 1970s and today there is not a single Jewish family living in Mád.

Alongside the plaques, however, there is a push to rediscover the wine-making region's Jewish roots. Hundreds of Hasidic Jewish pilgrims flock annually to Mád to visit the Baroque synagogue and the newly restored rabbi's house.

The plaques marked the first time that any Jewish family was given public recognition in Tokaj.

"This is a unique story: as far I know this is the first time that a (Jewish) family is remembered this way with a plaque in the Tokaj region," Mariann Frank, who leads a project to revive the region's Jewish traditions, said.

"If we face this openly, and put up as many signs as possible to commemorate the really once flourishing Jewish winemakers and wine traders of the region, I think the region and the country



The two sons of a leading Hasidic rabbi hold up their father Rabbi Eliezer Ehrenreich's photo in the newly-restored rabbi house in the village of Mad, Hungary, on 21 July 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

would benefit," Gabor Banfalvi, who runs tours of the region, added. The region is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and attracts

tens of thousands of tourists each year, among them descendants of the Jewish families who once lived there.—Reuters

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(24-7-2016, Sunday)

06 : 00 pm

- Weather Report
- Cartoon Programme "Minuscule Valley of the Lost Ants" (Part-2)

06 : 50 pm

- International Movie Songs

07 : 00 pm

- Myanmar Video

08 : 50 pm

- MRTV Entertainment Music

09 : 00 pm

- The Writer: Chit Oo Nyo (Part-2)

09 : 40 pm

- Myanmar Movie

Midnight

- Close Down

From 24-7-2016 (Sunday) 6:00 pm
To 25-7-2016 (Monday) 6:00 pm

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(24-7-2016 07:00am ~ 25-7-2016 07:00am) MST

Today Fresh

- | | | |
|-------|----|--|
| 07:03 | Am | News |
| 07:26 | Am | "Myanmar's Traditions and Culture" Tea |
| 07:52 | Am | Talented Musicians |
| 08:03 | Am | News |
| 08:26 | Am | Betel Nut Farmer |
| 08:38 | Am | Development Momentum of Sittway |
| 08:56 | Am | H.ELP (4) Understanding the Elephants |
| 09:03 | Am | News |
| 09:26 | Am | "Myanmar's Beauty and Nature" Beach |
| 09:51 | Am | Cultural Show: Theatrical Make Up |
| 10:03 | Am | News |
| 10:26 | Am | A Lucky Boy |
| 10:43 | Am | A Visit To Today's Along-Daw-Katthapha |

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

Prime Time

- | | | |
|-------|----|---|
| 07:03 | Pm | News |
| 07:25 | Pm | Dawei — Tavoy, Travel To The Southern Part of Myanmar |
| 07:43 | Pm | Will you feed the pigeons? |
| 07:49 | Pm | Today Myanmar "69th Anniversary of The Martyrs' Day" |
| 08:03 | Pm | News |
| 08:26 | Pm | Sai Htee Hseng or An Exceptional Music Star From Shan Plateaus (Ep-3) |
| 08:52 | Pm | Myanmar Masterclass: Conceptual Art |

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Saturday Repeat (03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) - Today Repeat (03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm)

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

Rooney welcomes Allardyce appointment as England manager

LONDON — England captain Wayne Rooney has welcomed the appointment of Sam Allardyce as national team manager and confirmed he is not planning on retiring from international football after the country's disappointing showing at the European Championship.

Allardyce was appointed England manager on Friday on a two-year contract, replacing Roy Hodgson, who quit following the team's last-16 exit from Euro 2016 at the hands of Iceland.

"I think it's a good appointment," Rooney, who is in China as part of Manchester United's pre-season tour, told reporters.

"He will probably bring a different way of playing to England. Hopefully it's a good way and we can be successful under him."

The England skipper, who



England's Wayne Rooney. PHOTO REUTERS

is also his country's highest goalscorer, said he had no intention of retiring from international duty.

"Am I going to carry on? It was asked of me after the Euros, but yes, I'll be there," the 30-year-old added.—Reuters

Johnson answers wake-up call to share Canadian Open lead

OAKVILLE, (Ontario, Canada) — US Open champion Dustin Johnson sleep-walked through his first four holes before snapping to attention to fashion a one-under-par 71 and remain tied for the lead after the second round at the RBC Canadian Open on Friday.

Johnson, who shared the overnight lead with fellow American Luke List after an opening 66, had an early tee time. He started at the 10th hole and bogeyed 11, double-bogeyed 12 and bogeyed the par-five 13th before turning on the jets to salvage his round.

"I just got in some tough spots," said Johnson, who finished the day on seven-under 137 to share the halfway lead with List at Glen Abbey outside of Toronto. "I think I was still asleep the first four holes but I

finally woke up and played pretty well the rest of the day," the world number two added.

List began another hot, dry day at the fast-running, dusty layout with a two quick birdies but ran into trouble on a trio of holes in the valley of the back nine, making three bogeys in four holes. "I'm real happy the way I finished up," said List, who hauled himself back into a share of the lead with birdies at the par-five 16th and 18th.

The co-leaders held a one-shot lead over Spaniard Jon Rahm, American Kelly Kraft and Canadian amateur Jared du Toit, who all shot 71, the same score the two leaders. Rahm and du Toit, trying to become the first Canadian to win the championship since 1954, were college team mates last year at Arizona State University.—Reuters

Bolt wins but hurdler Harrison takes the glory

LONDON — Usain Bolt delivered on his top billing by winning the 200metres at the London Diamond League on Friday but the Jamaican was upstaged for once as American sprint hurdler Kendra Harrison broke one of the oldest world records in the book.

Bolt, running his first 200metres race for a year in his last outing on the track before the Olympics, struggled for his usual rhythm as he laboured to victory in 19.89 seconds.

However, having pulled out of the Jamaican trials last month with a hamstring strain, he was delighted to get through Friday's race uninjured and can now go away and fine-tune for his attempt at the triple-triple of 100m, 200m and 4x100m relay golds in Rio.

Harrison, however, will be watching the Games on TV having finished sixth in the 100m hurdles at the US trials after breaking the national record in May.

She earned some consolation — as well as a \$50,000 bonus — on Friday with a stunning world record.

After delivering a silky smooth performance to win, the clock initially showed a modest 12.58 seconds.

However, it was quickly corrected to 12.20, one hundredth of a second faster than the mark set by Bulgaria's Yordanka Donkova in 1988 — four years before Harrison was born.



Kendra Harrison (USA) poses with scoreboard after setting a world record of 12.20 in the women's 100m hurdles in the London Anniversary Games during an IAAF Diamond League meet at Olympic Stadium in London, United Kingdom, on 22 July. PHOTO: REUTERS

Brianna Rollins (12.57), Kristi Castlin (12.59) and Ali Nia (12.63), all Rio-bound after finishing 1-2-3 in the US trials, finished in the same order, behind Harrison on Friday.

"I wanted to come out here with a vengeance to show that even though I won't be going to the Olympics I had to give it all I had," said Harrison, who collapsed to the track in tears when she saw the revised time.

There was a more muted celebration for Bolt, who nevertheless delighted the crowd by winning then spending his usual remarkable amount of time signing autographs, posing for photos and giving endless media interviews.

After a steady start he led halfway round the bend, but only just. As he hit the straight and the crowd expected the sort of surge that brought him three Olym-

pic golds on the same track four years ago, it didn't happen.

Rocking noticeably, he had to work all the way to the line for a time considerably shy of American LaShawn Merritt's season-leading 19.74. Panama's Edward Alonso was second in 20.04 with Briton Adam Gemili third in 20.07.

"I tried to hold my form. I'm not fully in shape and I don't think I executed well — I need

more work," said Bolt, who turns 30 next month.

"I don't want to see it again. I wasn't that impressed," he added of his performance.

"But I'm feeling good and happy I could run and finish the race without any injuries."

Shaunae Miller of the Bahamas will also head to Rio in confident mood after posting a world-leading 49.55 to win the women's 400metres, setting up a mouth-watering one-lap showdown with Allyson Felix.

There was plenty to cheer for the home fans in the Olympic Stadium now decked out in the claret and blue of its new tenants, West Ham United soccer club.

Britain's women's 4x100m relay team opened proceedings by triumphing in a national record 41.82 seconds, the fastest time in the world this year.

Laura Muir also channelled the spirit of 2012's "Super Saturday" when the crowd roared her home in a gutsy front-running victory in the women's 1500m for a huge personal best and another British record of 3:57.49 — knocking Olympic champion Kelly Holmes off top spot.

Frenchman Jimmy Vicaut won a disappointing 100 metres final in 10.02, having been the only man to dip under 10 seconds with a 9.96 in the heats.

The action continues on Saturday, with the day's highlight being the 5,000m, featuring home favourite Mo Farah.—Reuters