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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Saturday, 22 April 2017



A US\$100 million loan from the World Bank for Myanmar Financial Sector Development was signed on 11 April. PHOTO: WORLD BANK

World Bank loan for MFSD signed

A long-term, low-interest loan of US\$100 million from the World Bank for the Myanmar Financial Sector Development Project (MFSD) was signed on 11 April at Kempiski Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw.

The loan for the project to be implemented by the Ministry of Planning & Finance and the Central Bank of Myanmar has been approved by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. Under the agreement, service charges are 0.75 per cent

per year, with a 6-year suspended period and a 32-year repayment period, 38-year loan term in total, said a statement released by the ministry yesterday.

The financing agreement for the loan was signed by Mr Ulrich Zachau, the Country Director for the World Bank, and Daw Nwe Nwe Win, the director-general of the treasury department under the Ministry of Planning and Finance for Myanmar government, with the sub-

loan agreement signed by Daw Nwe Nwe Win, director-general of the treasury department and Daw Than Than Swe, director-general of the Central Bank of Myanmar.

The project agreement was signed by Mr Ulrich Zachau, the Country Director for the World Bank and Daw Than Than Swe, the director-general of the Central Bank of Myanmar.

Present at the ceremony for signing the agreements

were U Maung Maung Win, Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance for the Myanmar Government, the Central Bank of Myanmar Vice Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) Daw Khin Saw Oo, responsible officials from Union Attorney General Office and the Ministry of Commerce and responsible persons led by Mr Abodoulaye Seck, the Country Manager for the WB.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Suspect in murder of publisher arrested

A Yangon magazine publisher's alleged affair with a married woman led to his brutal death at the hand of her husband, who confessed to the killing, Yangon Region police said yesterday.

The lifeless body of Wai Yan Heinn, 27, the publisher of Iron Rose, a weekly news magazine, was found on Sunday in his office in Pazandaung slumped against a chair with 15 stab wounds to his stomach and upper body, authorities said.

Police said the victim's body was discovered after neighbours reported a rotten odour. Wai Yan Heinn's body was left undiscovered for at least three days, authorities said.

On Wednesday, police arrested U Aung Ko Ko, 31, a cargo ship officer for a Singapore-based shipping company, for the crime.

After questioning friends and colleagues of the victim and

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Murder suspect U Aung Ko Ko.

PHOTO: YANGON REGION POLICE FORCE



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Thousands of pink colored drugs seized in Maungtaw

ON 20 April, security forces from Kyainchaung police station positioned themselves on Reedha village road after receiving news of a drug smuggling activity. Around 4pm a motorbike ridden by Mamet Idris and Htun Naing departing from Kyainchaung to Aungsit-pyin were stopped for searching and found to be carrying ten packets of nearly 1,700 pink WY psychotropic drugs worth Ks 3.4 million.

Upon interrogation it was

discovered that the drugs were carried from the house of Yun-nus near Kyetyopyin village's market and meant for delivery near the Zeepinchaung Village crossroad on the Kyainchaung-Taungngpyo road and the suspects were paid Ks 40,000 as delivery fees. It is reported that the suspect Yunus had already fled his home when officials arrived there. Kyainchaung police station have filed a lawsuit against the two suspects.

—Myanmar News Agency



The two suspects with confiscated drugs on display. PHOTO: MNA

Chief Scout of Myanmar Boy Scouts and a Scout Leader left for Indonesia to attend 9th APR Scout Leaders Summit

UPON the invitation of World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and Asia-Pacific Scout Region to attend the 9th APR (Asia-Pacific Regional) Scout Leaders Summit, Chairman of Myanmar Scout Committee and the Chief Scout of Myanmar Boy Scouts Dr. Tin Nyo and Dagon University Scout Leader Maung Kaung Set Hein left Yangon yesterday for Indonesia. They were seen off at Yangon International Airport by Myanmar Scouts Federation Joint Secretary U Aye Kyaing and Senior Scouts.

They will attend the 9th APR Scout Leaders Summit to be held in Bali, Indonesia from April 22 to 25 together with Scout leaders from 25 member countries of Asia-Pacific Scout Region. After becoming a member of the World Organization of the Scout Movement, this is the first time for Myanmar to attend such summit.

At the summit, scout activities, future work programs and

resolving problems faced by the WOSM and Asia-Pacific Scout Region, future work programs of Myanmar, arrangement for World's Scout Summit to be held at Azerbaijan in 2019 will be discussed.

Ever since becoming a member country, Myanmar Scout Federation was invited to events abroad for cooperating in developing the scout movement. Senior Scouts, university and high school level scout leaders from Myanmar Scouts Federation are invited to attend a workshop of peace ambassador scout leaders at India in June, a national level scouts meet to discuss culture at Indonesia in July, pre-discussion for 2019 World's Scout Summit, Azerbaijan at US in July, 31st Asia-Pacific Scout region summit at Mongolia in August, workshop on developing education of scouts at Sri Lanka in July and study tours, workshops and trainings in Iceland, Switzerland, Poland and Korea.—Myanmar News Agency



U Tin Oo delivers a speech at the third commemoration of Hantharwady U Win Tin. PHOTO: ZAW GYI (PANITA)

Third commemoration events for Hantharwady U Win Tin held

Ko Moe

THE third commemoration of journalist Hantharwady U Win Tin, a presiding member of NLD, was held at Thiri Hall, Royal Rose Restaurant in Yangon yesterday.

The event was attended by the Yangon Region Chief Minister, Yangon Region government ministers, Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker, Hluttaw represent-

atives, NLD Central Committee secretaries, former political prisoners, political activist friends and those who loved and cherished U Win Tin.

Speeches in memory of and honoring U Win Tin were given by Hantharwady Foundation secretary U Kyaw Aung, NLD patron U Tin Oo, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, patron of Hantharwady Foundation writer U Moe Thu, writer Monywa Aung Shin and

U Min Ko Naing of 88 Generation Peace and Open Society. Saya Htin Lin Oo recited a poem honoring U Win Tin and then read the messages sent to the event.

At noon, wreaths were laid at U Win Tin's tomb in Yay Way cemetery and Hantharwady U Win Tin Saturday Book Reading Event was held in Peace Hall, Royal Rose Restaurant where an opening speech was given by NLD patron U Tin Oo.

Children in Beijing for free cardiac surgery receive medical checkups

FOUR of the twelve children who are in Beijing to receive free cardiac surgery received medical checkups yesterday at Anzhen Hospital.

Dr. Gu Hong (CoCo), Heart Specialist from Anzhen Hospital, doctors and nurses carried out blood tests, ECG tests and ultrasound scans to the four children aged above 10 years.

"We will take further steps for surgical operation for the children when we know the results," said Dr Gu Hong, who is responsible for the medical checkups and diagnosis.

Before receiving the medical services, all the children visited the Buddha Tooth Relic Pagoda and prayed for a successful operation.

Twelve children arrived in Beijing with their parents to receive free cardiac surgery and were encouraged by Myanmar Ambassador U Thit Lin Ohn who pledged to provide assistance to them. The operation will be car-



A child undergoing a medical checkup in Anzhen Hospital in Beijing as part of China-Myanmar Friendship Program for free cardiac surgery. PHOTO: MNA

ried out at the Anzhen Hospital in Beijing. The movement is a part of the China-Myanmar Friendship Program for free surgery treatment for 50 children, who received medical diagnosis out of 100 children between 28 to 31 March by a medical team from China at the Yankin Children's

Hospital in Yangon..

The children and their parents were accompanied by Heart Specialist Dr Aung Thein Tun from the Yankin Children's Hospital, a nurse and Mrs. Meng Fen (alias) Daw Kyi Lin, an in-charge of Yunnan-based Mingalar Magazine.—Thein Htut

Vice President U Henry Van Thio meets with Netherlands Ministers

VICE President U Henry Van Thio, who is on a working visit to the Netherlands, met separately with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Infrastructure and the Environment of the Netherlands in The Hague on 20 April.

The Vice President discussed at length on promoting relations between the two countries at the meetings with Netherlands' Foreign Affairs Minister Mr. Bert Koenders and the Minister of

Infrastructure and the Environment Mr. Melanie Schultz van Haegen.

Present at the meetings were Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung, Myanmar Ambassador to the Netherlands U Paw Lwin Sein and officials from Myanmar Embassy in Brussels.

Yesterday morning, the Vice President and entourage travelled to Utrecht, Hatigerstein and observed the construction of dams, dikes and floodgates while officials

concerned explained management about water resource and construction of the dam.

Afterwards they went to observe the Princess Beatrixsluis Lock, the name of two floodgates built in 1983, and a third sluice-gates which began construction in September 2016 and is slated to be completed by June 2019.

Roughly 50,000 watercrafts pass through the Princess Beatrixsluis Locks every year. —Myanmar News Agency



The Princess Beatrixsluis Lock has been in use since 1983, with a traffic of 50,000 watercrafts every year. PHOTO: MNA

UN FAO supports flood-affected Magway

THE UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has collaborated with Myanmar's Heart Development Organization (MHDO) Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department (LBVD) and the Department of Agriculture (DoA) in providing emergency support to around 23,000 people affected by the 2016 floods in Magway Region. The FAO-led project is funded by the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) that allocated US\$ 1 million in September 2016.

"Timely funding from UN CERF permitted to provide farmers with necessary means without which they would not be able to recover fast after the disaster," said FAO Representative Ms Xiaojie Fan. "This agricultural and livestock distribution had an enormous positive impact on rural population affected by the 2016 floods,

because it contributed to maintain food security at household level and avoid further risks of malnutrition."

Support came in the form of 30 kg of chickpea to 2,800 farmers, enough for one acre of land, vegetable kits consisting of onion, tomato, yard long and bitter gourd seeds, and 45 kg of fertilizers while 3,000 landless people were provided with two piglets and pig feed per household. Last year's flood particularly affected the agriculture sector when the rising waters damaged many farmlands just before harvesting season.

"In the aftermath of crisis, when people are in need of immediate life-saving support, even short delays can cause detrimental implications for their lives and livelihoods. Designing accurate emergency interventions require detailed assessments that help to estimate damages of floods in the

agriculture sector," said FAO Senior Resilience Officer Mr Andrea Berloff.

FAO utilized drones to gather reliable information after a project with the Department of Agriculture in the Philippines gave inspiration, while also increasing understanding of hazard impacts.

"FAO goes beyond traditional ways of working and in collaboration with the Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University (MAEU), applies new and cost-efficient technologies, such as drones, that allow for increased availability of timely and reliable data as a crucial component to augment efficiency and accuracy of emergency support," said Mr. Andrea Berloff. UN CERF remains among key donors for the FAO emergency interventions in Myanmar, having contributed a total of US\$ 3 million last year. —GNLM

Suspect in murder of publisher arrested

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investigating places that he frequently visited, police said they found out that the victim had started an affair with U Aung Ko Ko's wife. Police located her and also found Aung Ko Ko at his parents home in Pyin Oo Lwin.

Under interrogation, police said Aung Ko Ko said that he discovered several months ago that the victim was having an affair with his wife, prompting him to

call Wai Yan Hein and eventually go to the Iron Rose Journal Publishing House to meet the victim on 14 April.

During the conversation, they quarreled about the affair, police said.

"Aung Ko Ko burst out in anger, stabbing the victim with a knife on the table nearby. After killing Wai Yan Hein, Aung Ko Ko absconded to Pyin Oo Lwin with his wife and child, taking

the iPhone SE of Wai Yan Hein", according to Yangon Region police.

Wai Yan Hein's funeral was held on Wednesday.

Pazundaung Township Police Station have opened a criminal case (Pa) 87/2017 under section 302 of the Penal Code. Police said that the murder was not linked with Iron Rose stories as had been incorrectly reported previously. —GNLM



The State Counsellor with Mr. Chang Zhenming, Chairman of CITIC. PHOTO: MNA

State Counsellor receives chairman of CITIC

State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Daw Aung San Suu Kyi received the delegation led by Mr. Chang Zhenming, Chairman of China International Trust and Investment Company (CITIC) Group, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw at 2 pm yesterday.

Also present at the meeting were Dr. Than Myint, Union Minister for Commerce, U Kyaw

Tin, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Dr. Tun Naing, Deputy Minister for Electric Power and Energy. The delegation was accompanied by Mr. Hong Liang, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

During the meeting, they discussed matters relating to the development of Kyaukphyu deep sea port, transportation and infrastructure development in Myanmar. —Myanmar News Agency

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs receives outgoing ROK Ambassador

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin received Mr. Yoo Jae-kyung, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

who had completed his tour of duty at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw at 3 pm yesterday. —Myanmar News Agency



U Kyaw Tin meets with outgoing ROK Ambassador. PHOTO: MNA

Correction

THE name of an association contained in the story headlined "Rare Species — Ayeyawady Dolphins" on page 8 and 9 of yesterday's Global New Light of Myanmar was incorrect.

The correct name should read: "Wildlife Conservation Society-WCS (Myanmar), not Fauna Conservation Association".

Similarly, the credit for the photo on page 9 of the same story should read Photo: Wildlife Conservation Society-WCS (Myanmar). —Ed



A man herding ducks in a creek in Dagon (east) township, Yangon Region. PHOTO: NYI ZAW MOE

Independent research town to build in Dagon (East) township

An independent research town will be built in Dagon (East) township in Yangon region, according to U Kyaw Kyaw Maung, Regional Hluttaw MP of Dagon (East) township.

The new city will be constructed on a more than 200-acre plot of land in Dagon (East) township, Yangon region. The Yangon Region Government should make arrangements to at-

tract the people to come and live in the new city. The city will be built as a research city.

The medium-term project will be started in fiscal 2017-2018 and completed in 10 years time. Currently, the Yangon Region Government is surveying the land. The estimated cost of the whole project is over Ks 200 million.

People are mostly living in

only 30 wards out of 63 in Dagon (East) township.

The unpopular wards are notorious for insufficient supply of water, electricity and inconvenient transportation. Nowadays, people migrate into Yangon region for a better living. So, the Yangon Region Government is planning to build a new town to meet higher demand created by migration.—200

Safe Houses to be opened in Yangon and Mandalay

Safe Houses will be opened in Yangon and Mandalay to help women suffering from violence, said Daw Phyo Thu Nandar, assistant director of the Women's Development Section under the Social Welfare Department.

The safe houses will care for women who have been abused or been the victim of violence. Currently, a safe house in Yangon region is taking care of four women. The Social Welfare Department is planning to open similar safe houses

in other states and regions. The Social Welfare Department under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has set up a hot line for women to report cases of violence against women. The department has so far received 80 complaints.

The government must have a separate fund to prevent the outbreak of gender-based violence, advocates said. Currently, a specific fund has not been created. Also, there are no laws that

would punish those who commit violence against women.

The ministry is drafting a law to prevent violence against women and will submit the bill to the Hluttaw. The victims themselves or anyone can report on the violence cases to those following hotline numbers: 067-404222 and 067-404999.

Over 30 cases out of 80 were committed by victims' close relatives. Currently, the ministry has handled over 60 cases.—200

World Book Day on 25 April in British Council library

WORLD Book Day commemorative programmes will be organised by the British Council on Tuesday, 25 April in its library. These programmes will include a painting competition for children, story telling and literary talks. Those interested are all invited to participate, regardless of membership.

Children between five and 10 years of age can participate in the painting contest to be held beginning at 10 am on 25 April. There will be available at the library coloured pencils and pictures to

paint, but competitors can also bring their own favourite coloured pencils. Painting competitions will be held in three age groups. The five best painters will be selected from each group. Also, the prize-winning paintings will be displayed at the children's library in British Council.

In the afternoon, the great storyteller teacher Eliza from the British Council will tell fascinating stories to children between the ages of five and ten at 2pm and will present gifts to the children.

In the evening, the literary

talks will held at 5pm. Ma Thida (Sanchaung) will talk with the title "Let's read books for freedom". Participants can discuss what they want to know after the talk.

Interested persons can register with the British Council Library not later than 24 April, Monday either in person or by contacting the following numbers 254658/256290 ext-3316 or send an email to library.enquiries@mm.britishcouncil.org. When participants come to library, they have to bring student IDs or national IDs.—Zaw Zaw

Myanmar Forest Products Exhibition-2017 to be held in May

MYANMAR Forest Products Exhibitions-2017 will be held in Tatmadaw Exhibition Hall on U Wisara Road, Yangon between 11 and 14 May with the cooperation of non-governmental local and foreign organizations, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Myanmar Timber Entrepreneurs' Association.

The exhibition will be held with an aim to disseminate the

knowledge and promote awareness of sustainable use of forest resources.

The Myanmar International Furniture Expo-2017 was held in February with the objective of enabling people to appreciate Myanmar handicrafts, to promote the Myanmar furniture manufacturing sector, to create more job opportunities and to contributed to the reduction of poverty.—200

17 accidents, 4 deaths on Yangon-Mandalay Highway during Thingyan

SEVENTEEN road accidents that resulted in four deaths and 14 injuries occurred on Yangon-Mandalay Highway during the Thingyan festival that was celebrated from 13 April to 16 April, according to highway police.

Nine of the 17 accidents involved reckless driving that accounted for three deaths and five injuries. The accidents involved one express bus, one light truck, eight private cars and seven mo-

torcycles.

In 2016 during the same period, there were 15 accidents in which four people were killed and 78 injured involving four light trucks, one mini-bus, nine private cars and one Hi-Jet car. Seven of the 15 accidents involved reckless driving cases, one of which caused injuries to five persons and another that caused the deaths of three persons.—200

Crime NEWS

ICE and yaba pills seized in Myeik

HUSSEIN, alias Ko Ko Zaw Latt, and Abdulla, alias Kyaw Tun, were found to be in possession of five yaba pills and were arrested in the Golden Sky Hotel on Myintmo Street, Paledipar Ward, Ka Lwin village-tract in Myeik Township on Wednesday by an anti-narcotics squad from Myeik.

Upon interrogation of the two suspects, they admitted that they had bought the drugs from Bo Bo Aung, who lives on Pale Street, Myintma Ward in Myeik Township. Local police then searched Bo Bo Aung's house and found 4,000 yaba pills and 0.75 kilo of ICE in the kitchen

from Bo Bo Aung, Myo Nge, Yar Zar, Aung Gyi, Thein Lwin and Myo Min Oo. Further interrogation of the six suspects led to a search of the house of Yu Aung, alias Thar Gyi, on Shwe Padonmar street, Myothit Ward 7 in Myeik Township.

Police have taken action against Hussein, alias Ko Ko Zaw, 34, Abdulla, alias Kyaw Tun, 38, Bo Bo Aung, 31, Yar Zar, 35, Aung Gyi, alias Aung Lwin, 39, Thein Lwin, 53, Myo Min Oo, 35, and Yu Aung, alias Thar Gyi, 33, under the Anti-narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—MPF

Express bus crashes into bridge on expressway

A Shweyi Phu Pwint express bus driven by Maung Aye crashed into a road divider and collided with the concrete pole of a bridge on Yangon-Mandalay Highway when the driver apparently fell asleep at the wheel at 5:30am on Friday.

The accident occurred between mile posts 59/3 and 59/4 en route from Mandalay to Yangon. The 34 passengers on board were not injured, but the express bus was damaged with



PHOTO: MPF

losses amounting to Ks 10 lakh. Bawni Highway Police have taken action against the driver under section 279 of the Penal Code.—Nyi Nyi Than (Nay Pyi Taw)

LOCAL Business

Authority issues 1,501 mining permits as of last month

THE Department of Mines issued a total of 1,501 mineral prospecting, exploration and production permits to mining companies as of last month to run mining businesses in states and regions as well as the capital Nay Pyi Taw, according to the ministry.

The department under the Ministry of Natural Re-

sources and Environmental Conservation permitted 150 large-scale mineral production licenses, 915 small-scale mineral production licenses, 35 subsistence mining licenses and five small-scale processing licenses till the end of 31 March of this year.

Mandalay Region tops the chart with about 400

mining licenses for minerals including gold, followed by Sagaing Region with 280, southern Shan State with 172, Kachin State with 137, and Taninthayi Region and eastern Shan State with 108 each.

The permission for small-scale mining firms include exploration and production of gold, copper,

lead, marble, antimony, limestone and coal.

According to the Myanmar Mine Rules, no persons under the age of 18 shall be employed to work in a mine unless he is in possession of a certificate issued by the relevant health department certifying his fitness for the appointment.—*Shwe Khine*

Singapore tops FDI during last Fiscal Year 2016-2017

SINGAPORE ranked first in foreign direct investment in Myanmar with over US\$3.8 billion during last Fiscal Year 2016-2017, according to the statistics of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

During last FY, a total of US\$3.82 billion of foreign investments flowed into the country from Singapore. The FDI of European countries reportedly flowed into Myanmar through Singapore, putting Singapore at the top of the list.

Viet Nam placed second with FDI of US\$1.38 billion, China was in the third place with US\$482.591million, followed by Thailand with US\$423.058million and Hong Kong with US\$213.700million in the fourth and fifth place, according to the statistics released by DICA.

The FDI that entered these sectors — livestock and fisheries, manufac-

turing, power, transport and communication, hotel and tourism, real estate and other services, amounted to US\$6.649 billion.

Foreign direct investments in the FY 2016-2017 flowed from Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, China, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand, The Netherlands, United Kingdom, Viet Nam, Samoa, Marshall Island, China (Taipei), Ireland, etc.

Foreign investors put US\$96.678million into livestock and fisheries sector, US\$1.18 billion into manufacturing, US\$909.883 million into power, US\$3.08 billion into transport and communication, US\$403.646 million into hotel and tourism, US\$747.620million into real estate and US\$231.322 million into other services.—*Mon Mon*



File photo of Tin mine in Man Maw at ethnic Wa territory in northeast Myanmar in October 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

SME assistance in Mon and Taninthayi to begin next month

THE SME Capacity Building Program in Mon State and Taninthayi Region will start in May, said an official from the Ministry of Industry.

This programme, in cooperation with the Central Department of Small and Medium Enterprises under the Industry Ministry and Thailand based Kasikorn Bank, aims at providing technical assistance and capital so that local small and medium-sized enterprises are able to keep abreast with

those from international countries.

“The SME entrepreneurs play a key role in the development in Myanmar’s economy by creating more job opportunities for the local people. This being so, we will contribute technical and monetary assistance so as to tackle the challenges, create the economic opportunities, enhance the production techniques and expand the businesses, said Mr. Pattanapong Tansomboon from Kasikorn Bank.

Through this programme, the experts concerned will offer matters concerning management, marketing, human resource, administration, finance, etc, it is learnt.

About 59 per cent of Myanmar’s small and medium-sized enterprises accounted for food and beverage businesses. Eight per cent are engaged in construction, six per cent in garment enterprises and the remaining 27 per cent in hotel and tourism and service businesses.—*200*

External trade in one week fetched over US\$0.7B

EXTERNAL trade in the first week of this Fiscal Year 2017-2018 amounted to US\$731.913million, which is up by over US\$164million compared to that in the similar period of 2016-2017, according to the statistics of the Commerce Ministry.

From 1st to 7th April 2017, exports fetched US\$288.387million, while the imports hit US\$443.526million. During this FY, the value of normal trade increased by US\$123.13million, while that of border trade was up by over US\$41million

compared to that of last FY. Myanmar exported agricultural products, animal products, minerals, forest products, finished industrial goods whereas capital goods, raw industrial materials and personal goods were imported into the country.—*Ko Htet*

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

- Market Place by City Mart (6.5 Mile)
- Market Place by City Mart (Damasidi Road)
- City Mart (Aung San Stadium)
- City Mart (47th street)
- City Mart (Yankin)
- City Mart (China Town)
- City Mart (Myay Ni Gone)
- City Mart (FMI)
- City Mart (Junction Square)
- City Mart (Junction Maw Tin)
- City Mart (Sule Square)
- City Mart (Star City - Thanlyin)
- City Mart (Waizayandar)
- City Mart (Hledan)
- City Mart (Myanmar Plaza)
- Ocean North Point (9 mile)
- Ocean Shwegonedine



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Nepali PM urges Madhes-based parties to participate in local elections

KATHMANDU — Nepali Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal on Friday urged Madhes-based political parties to participate in the local elections on 14 May.

The prime minister's call came a week after the parties' announcement of launching nationwide protests to disrupt the local elections.

Dahal said during his meeting with the agitating party leaders that the constitutional amendments submitted to the parliament will be approved in due course.

The meeting between the prime minister and Madhes-based parties was held at the prime minister's office in Baluwatar in the capital which was also attended by ruling party leaders.

During the meeting, the six Madhes-based parties have reiterated that amendments to the constitution should be made prior to elections. The Madhes-based parties, which

represent Nepal's southern belt bordering India, announced their unification and the launch of a new group called Rashtriya Janata Party on Thursday.

The Nepali government has registered a new constitution amendment bill at the parliament last week in a bid to address demands of disgruntled Madhes-based parties.

However, the parties have rejected to join the local body elections, saying the constitutional amendment bill does not meet their demands.

The bill stated that changes in federal boundaries, a key demand of the Madhes-based parties, will be determined by a federal restructuring commission to be formed by the government in future.

The Madhes-based parties also demand more political representation at the provincial and upper house and re-demarcation of provincial boundaries. —Xinhua

Front-runner Moon widens lead in South Korea's 9 May presidential race

SEOUL — Moon Jae In, the front-runner in South Korea's presidential race, has widened his lead over second-place Ahn Cheol Soo ahead of the 9 May presidential election, according to an opinion poll released by Gallup Korea on Friday.

Moon, of the Democratic Party of Korea, which holds the most seats in parliament, received 41 per cent support, up 1 per cent point from last week, while Ahn of the People's Party, the country's third-largest party, saw his approval rating plummet 7 points to 30 per cent.

"It appears some of Ahn's supporters have reversed their stance in the wake of the vetting process and negative campaigns that have been intensified after official campaigning started" on Monday, according to the pollster.

In recent opinion polls, Ahn, a 55-year-old former medical doctor and antivirus software developer, has emerged as a major contender to Moon, a 64-year-old former human rights lawyer and close aide to former President Roh Moo Hyun.

Hong Joon Pyo of the conservative Liberty Korea Party, Sim Sang Jeung



South Korean presidential candidate Moon Jae In of the main opposition Democratic Party of Korea raises his arms during a rally in Daegu as official campaigning begins on 17 April, 2017. Polls have shown that front-runner Moon maintains a slight lead over Ahn Cheol Soo of the People's Party in the race to replace ousted President Park Geun Hye in the 9 May election. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

of the progressive Justice Party and Yoo Seong Min of the splinter conservative Bareun Party were trailing far behind in the poll.

The presidential election is heavily tilted toward candidates from liberal parties in the wake of the corruption and abuse-of-power scandal that brought down President Park Geun Hye.

Park, impeached by parliament in December

and put behind bars late last month, stands accused of letting her now-jailed confidante Choi Soon Sil, a private citizen, meddle in state affairs while colluding to extort donations from businesses for two foundations under Choi's effective control. She had one year left in her five-year term when ousted from office in March.

The poll was conduct-

ed Tuesday through Thursday on 1,004 voters nationwide.

South Korea's presidential race is taking place amid rising tensions, as North Korea continues to defy UN resolutions with ballistic missile launches and is showing signs of possibly conducting what would be its sixth nuclear test.

—Kyodo News

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Ocean drift analysis shows MH370 most likely in new search area: Australian scientists

CANBERRA — A new ocean debris drift analysis shows missing Malaysia Airlines MH370 is most likely within a proposed expanded search area rejected by Australia and Malaysia in January, the Australian government's scientific agency said on Friday.

A \$200 million (£117.67 million) search for the aircraft, which went missing in 2014 with 239 people onboard, was suspended when the two nations rejected a recommendation to search north of the 120,000 sq km (46,000 sq mile) area already canvassed, saying the new area was too imprecise.

The new debris drift analysis suggests the missing Boeing 777 may be located in a much smaller 25,000 sq km (9,652 sq mile) zone within that proposed northern search area.

"This new work leaves us more confident in our



Flight officer Rayan Gharzeddine looks out of a Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) AP-3C Orion as it flies over the southern Indian Ocean during the search for missing Malaysian Airlines flight MH370, on 22 March 2014.

PHOTO: REUTERS

findings," Dr David Griffin, a principal research scientist at the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) said in a statement.

The CSIRO report featured data and analysis from ocean testing of an actual Boeing 777 flaperon cut down to match the one

from MH370 found on Reunion island off the coast of Africa in 2015, rather than the wood and steel models used in a previous test.

"We've found that an actual flaperon goes (drifts) about 20 degrees to the left, and faster than the replicas, as we thought it might," said Griffin. "The arrival of MH370's flaperon at La

Reunion in July 2015 now makes perfect sense."

The location of MH370, which went missing on a flight to Beijing from the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur, has become one of the world's greatest aviation mysteries.

Australian Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Darren Chester said he welcomed the new CSIRO report but said it was important to note it did not provide new evidence leading to a specific location of MH370.

He said a copy of the report had been provided to Malaysia for consideration in its ongoing investigation into the disappearance of the aircraft.

"Malaysia is the lead investigator and any future requests in relation to searching for MH370 would be considered by Australia, at that time," Chester said. —Reuters

Singapore researchers turn water into 'virtual lemonade' but is it tart enough?

SINGAPORE — It looks like lemonade, tastes like lemonade, but it's simply water.

Researchers in Singapore say they have invented a "virtual lemonade", using electrodes to mimic the flavour of the beverage and LED lights to imitate its colour, that could one day allow people to digitally share drinks over the internet.

"We are primarily motivated by the fact that our current digital interactions are not supportive for sharing beverages and food, which is something very common in our everyday lives," said Nimesha Ranasinghe, who led the team that did the research.

The team conducting the research at the NUS-Keio CUTE Centre, a collaboration between the National University of Singapore and Japan's Keio University, decided to focus on the sour taste of lemonade to prove their idea.

A sensor dipped into a glass of real lemonade collects data on its acidity and colour, which is transmitted via Bluetooth to silver electrode strips on the rim of a tumbler.

The action of a drinker running their tongue over the strip in taking a sip causes the electrodes to simulate the sour taste, while a light-emitting diode (LED) flashes yellow.

The technology can also



A Keio-NUS researcher sets up the virtual lemonade kit to do a taste test among two students at the National University of Singapore campus in Singapore, on 13 April 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

simulate bitter and salty sensations, Ranasinghe said, adding that it could help people on restricted diets who need to cut back on salt or calories.

"We can even help the people who want to cut down their calorie intake," she added. "If he craves lemonade, and can have a virtual lemonade, he can

get the same experience, but zero calories."

Still, the design needs some improvement, said student Genevieve Low, a volunteer who participated in tests of the drink.

"I think it's definitely the way the tongue touches the cup, because no one would, sub-consciously or consciously, put their tongue onto the electrode and

then drink the water," she said in a recent test round.

Another volunteer student, Wang Pan, was surprised by the taste.

"I was imagining the electronic taste, but it's actually quite real to me because it's really mild, like mild-sweet. It's less sour than the real lemonade," she said.—Reuters

South Korea ready to embrace coinless society

SEOUL — South Korea on Thursday started its first step towards achieving the goal of becoming a coinless society by 2020.

Under a new initiative launched by the Bank of Korea (BOK), customers at selected stores no longer need to carry away small changes after purchases. Instead, they can opt to deposit the money into their prepaid cards such as transportation cards.

If the trial succeeds, bank officials plan to allow change to be remitted into customers' bank accounts directly by next year.

The concept of a coinless society is gaining ground in the country. About two thirds of people surveyed by BOK said the don't carry coins anymore, with half of those polled supporting plans to get rid of coins. While convenience is at the crux of the central bank's plan, there are other considerations. In 2016, the BOK spent about 47 million US dollars in making coins.

"When we make a 10-won coins, it costs more than 10 won," Lee Hyo-chan, head of research at the Credit Finance Institute in Seoul, was quoted by the Financial Times as saying.

South Korea is one of the least cash-dependent nations in the world. Its rate of credit card ownership is among the highest and only about 20 per cent of Korean payments are made with cash, according to the BOK.—Xinhua

Damages suit dismissed over tsunami deaths at disaster-use facility

MORIOKA, (Japan) — A court on Friday dismissed a damages suit filed by the families of two women who were killed in the March 2011 tsunami that ravaged northeastern Japan after fleeing to a disaster-use facility where tsunami drills had been held before.

The Morioka District Court brushed aside the families' claim that the city of Kamaishi in Iwate Prefecture had misled residents by using the facility for evacuation drills and failed to make clear to the residents that it was not the right facility to seek shelter in the event of tsunami.

The bereaved families of a 71-year-old female resident and a 31-year-old woman, who was working at a nearby kindergarten at the time of the disaster, sought some 90 million yen (\$820,000) in damages per victim from the coastal city.

The facility, located in the Usunomai district of the city, was not designated as a tsunami shelter. But when tsunami hit the region after a magnitude-9.0 earthquake on 11 March, 2011, an estimated 196 people had taken shelter there, of whom 162 died or went missing.

The court said the city did not mislead residents to understand that the facility was a designated evacuation site, as it had notified residents of the names and locations of real tsunami evacuation spots prior to the disaster.

During the trial, the plaintiffs claimed that the city had used the facility for drills despite tsunami having reached the area in the past, and did not make sure residents understood that it was not the right place to go in the event of tsunami.

The city argued the drills were held voluntarily by a residents' group and the real evacuation sites, including a shrine on a hill some 500 meters away, had been notified to the residents through the city's PR leaflets distributed to every household.

The city also claimed it could not have foreseen the tsunami reaching the area where the disaster-use facility stands.

The lawsuit is one of at least 15 filed by tsunami victims' families against administrators, such as schools and companies, in Iwate and Miyagi prefectures following the 2011 disaster.

The focus of all the trials has been whether those in charge

were able to predict the arrival of such massive tsunami. There has been no finalized ruling that held an administrator responsible for any deaths.

Of the four cases in which courts of first instance ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, two are pending at a higher court.

One is a damages suit filed by the families of 23 pupils at Okawa Elementary School in Miyagi Prefecture who were killed by tsunami. In that case, the Sendai District Court in October ordered the governments of Ishinomaki city and Miyagi Prefecture to pay 1.4 billion yen in damages.

Out-of-court settlements were reached in two other cases after initial rulings in favour of the plaintiffs, with administrators agreeing to apologize or pay settlement money. There were also five lawsuits that were settled at courts of first instance.

The Supreme Court has so far rejected two damages suits, one filed by the family of a child who died while being evacuated from a nursery school and another filed by the families of three bank employees who died after evacuating to the rooftop of a bank building.—Kyodo News



Lawyers representing the families of two women who were killed in the March 2011 tsunami head to the Morioka District Court in the northeastern Japan city of Morioka on 21 April, 2017. The court dismissed their damages suit claiming the city of Kamaishi failed to make clear to residents that an evacuation facility was not suitable for shelter in the event of tsunami. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Opinion

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Global communities need to work together to fight global warming

Aye Min Soe

THE people of Myanmar have been struggling to adapt to a warmer climate that is largely due to global warming. Currently, climate change is winning and the people of Myanmar are losing.

The consequences of climate change are unavoidable. However, we can carry out preventive measures and improve preparedness to reduce the impact of natural disasters. It is necessary not only to build infrastructure but also to conserve natural

infrastructure such as mangrove forests, coastal forests and coral reefs.

The destructive results of climate change demand that Myanmar invest heavily in dealing with it to be able to adapt to these changes as the country's people continue to experience adverse effects, which are getting worse and worse every year.

Experts have warned that warmer ocean temperatures could also increase the destructive potential of cyclones and storm surges, to which the country's coastal areas are already prone.

The Myanmar coastal region is 2,832 kilometers long, abounding with important natural ecosystems in the environs of Indian Ocean. The country's ecosystems in the coastal regions include mangrove forests, coral reefs and marine grass, which support marine life and the environment.

If we do nothing, the natural resources of the coastal area in Myanmar will continue to deteriorate. Systematic management of the coastal areas will be helpful to the development of marine life as well as the socio-economic life of the people and protection from natural disasters.

During the past decades, mangrove forests, coral reefs and marine grasslands have been destroyed, according to the study.

With a large investment, the extensive natural resources in Myanmar can be carefully managed and maintained so that future generations can enjoy their benefits.

But the country has very limited capacity in terms of human resources, institutions, finance and technology.

To fight climate change, the global community is urged to cooperate with Myanmar in tackling the challenges.

Petrified rocks should be protected

Khin Maung Myint

FOR decades our country had been preyed upon and exploited by the greedy businesspersons from within and without. Almost anything is being smuggled out of the country. Among the many things that are being smuggled out, but not much attention or interest given to, are the petrified woods or rocks (Ingyin Kyauk). The petrified woods or rocks are fossilized trees and treelike terrestrial plants that are highly valued and even revered in some Asian countries. In a neighbouring country I had seen people burning incense sticks, lighting candles and placing fruits and flowers as offerings and praying to a large fossilized tree trunk that was exposed when the banks of a stream

eroded due to the flash floods. They believe that such trees have spirits dwelling in them, a superstition, which most rural people shared.

As for the people in China, they make furnitures and ornamental objects with these woods, which they value so much and proudly displayed them in their offices, homes and gardens as symbols of wealth and high standards living. In some countries high quality petrified stones are used to make jeweleries. As for the Myanmar, most of us don't know their real values and uses other than as whetstones to sharpen tools or flints to make fire. I have a small piece of inferior quality petrified rock, that I use for sharpening kitchen knives, which I had bought at an annual pagoda festival. We should learn to value these objects more than just for sharpening tools and making fires only.

I think it would be necessary to explain briefly how the petrified woods are formed, based on my meager knowledge gained through reading. Thus it may not be very comprehensive, but just enough to give a rough idea for those who are not familiar with them. The term petrified has its roots in the Greek language, where petro means wood transformed into stone or rock. The petrification process took place underground in an oxygen-free environment when trees and tree-like terrestrial plants were covered by sediments or volcanic ashes and were being initially preserved. The mineral laden ground water seeping through the laund released the minerals, mostly silicates of quartz, onto the buried trees. These inorganic minerals replaced the organic matters in the buried trees through the permineralization process and transformed them into stones or rocks, while still retaining the original structure of the plant tissues and their general appearances. Sometimes Opal stones, a type of precious gem, are found embedded in the petrified woods. Some petrified woods were dated as old as approximately 230 million years.

Such woods or rocks are abundantly found in the Nahtogyi township in the Mandalay Region, where a lucrative trade in them had been going on for decades. The main purchasers are the traders from China. I'm not

Such woods or rocks are abundantly found in the Nahtogyi township in the Mandalay Region, where a lucrative trade in them had been going on for decades.



Crude petrified rock.

sure whether there is any proper restriction on them. If not, these rare objects would face depletion. There are only few places in the world where such woods are found. In some countries, including China, India and Thailand, our closest neighbours, the areas where such woods are found are designated as National Parks, where extractions are strictly banned.

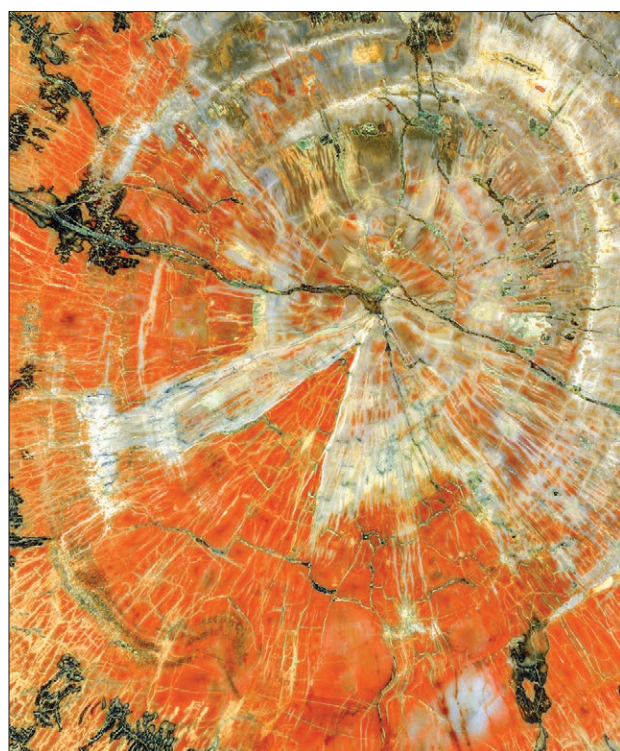
It is learned that the petrified woods are found only in about 24 countries worldwide. These petrified woods are usually found in large numbers, as the entire forests were transformed into rocks. Such places are called petrified forests. Except for our country, all the others had designated their petrified forests as National Parks. One thing I cannot understand is, our country is not even mentioned in the list of countries where such forests exist, while China and Thailand, which are the regular purchasers of our petrified woods, are included in that list. Both of them had designated their petrified forests as National Parks and strictly banned extractions. However, in our country, the unscrupulous businesspersons are indiscriminately extracting them and exporting them, either legally or otherwise.

As the process of the transition from wood to rock took hundreds of million years, that fact alone made them highly valuable; not only in terms of monetary value, but also in their scientific value. Taking into consideration the durations it took them to become petrified or fossilized, they are very unique and rare. In my opinion they are our National Treasures, which

we should preserve. We should also learn more about the geological evolution of the places where they are abundantly found, which could shed some important light on our geological past.

The geological researches had revealed many unthinkable facts about the evolution of our planet Earth. The studies of the rock formations in the European and the American continents revealed that they were once connected. Also the discoveries of fossilized palm trees, which are tropical species, in the frigid climes where no such trees grow there today are very interesting. This fact indicates that vast changes in the weather conditions had taken place over millions or may be even billions of years. Those discoveries shed very useful informations on the evolution of our Earth.

In conclusion, I would like to urge the departments concerned to look into this matter and take drastic actions to stop the indiscriminate trading in such rare and valuable objects. They should consider designating such areas as reserved areas or parks as in other countries. Not only petrified woods, but our country is being exploited of our precious timbers, jades, gems, rare ambers and other resources by outsiders because of lack of proper protections or restrictions. For decades due to laxity in control we had incurred great losses through smuggling and illegal trading, as some irresponsible authorities had turned blind eyes to such going-ons. It's high time that strict and effective controls be put in place and harsh actions imposed on the perpetrators.



Polished cross-section of petrified rock.

Trump may change rules allowing Myanmar terror victims to immigrate to United States

Mica Rosenberg and
Yeganeh Torbati

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON — The administration of US President Donald Trump is debating whether to rescind the waivers that have allowed tens of thousands of terror victims to immigrate to the United States in the past decade, including 6,700 Myanmar nationals.

The possible change stems from the concerns of immigration hard-liners who believe the exemptions could allow terrorists to slip into the country. Refugees from Myanmar are the largest single group of beneficiaries to date of the exemptions granted by USCIS known.

When Raj, a Sri Lankan fisherman, sought refuge in the United States in 2005, he had precisely the kind of fear of returning home that US asylum laws require.

In 2004, he was kidnapped by the separatist rebel group the Tamil Tigers and had to pay US\$500 to secure his release, according to Raj, his lawyer and court records reviewed by Reuters. The group then demanded more money, which he could not pay after a tsunami destroyed his house and fishing boat.

Raj, 42, who asked that only his first name be used because of the sensitive nature of his situation, decided to flee. He boarded a plane using a false Canadian passport and requested asylum upon arriving in the United States.

There was a catch, however. US laws ban immigration by anyone who has provided “material support” to terrorists, and the Tamil Tigers are designated as a terrorist group by the United States. A judge ruled that Raj’s ransom payment to them constituted material support.

Ultimately, Raj was granted asylum in 2011 because of rules that allow for waivers for people who provided aid to terrorists under duress. He now lives in San Diego, California, works in an Indian restaurant and hopes to become a citizen.

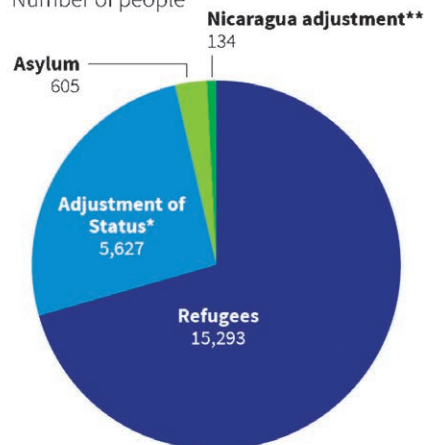
Raj said it was “a big relief” when he finally received his green card around a year after receiving asylum. “I am not a terrorist,” he said.

Inadmissibility exemptions

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) granted 21,659 exemptions to the Terrorism-Related Inadmissibility Grounds (TRIG) from 2006 through Sept. 30, 2016, according to the latest data available. President Donald Trump signed an executive order asking government agencies to consider the rescission of the exemptions.

BREAKDOWN OF EXEMPTIONS

Number of people



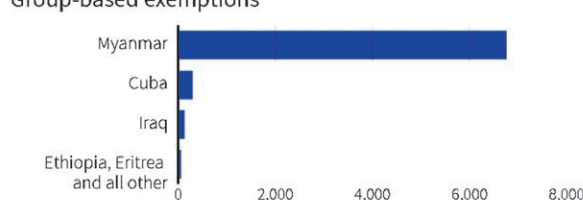
* Including I-730 (Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition), other Service Center Operations Directorate (SCOPS) and Field Offices.
** NACARA refers to the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act.
*** Also includes Solicitation under Duress

Source: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

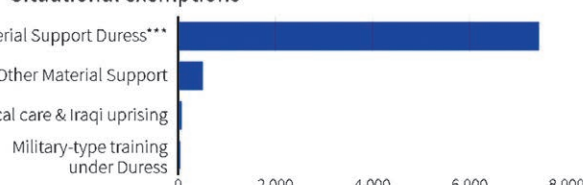
C. Chan 20/04/2017

BREAKDOWN OF REFUGEE EXEMPTIONS

Group-based exemptions



Situational exemptions



But now, Trump directed the secretaries of State and Homeland Security, in consultation with the attorney general, to consider abolishing the waivers in an executive order in March. That directive was overshadowed by the same order’s temporary ban on all refugees and on travellers from six mostly Muslim nations.

The bans on refugees and travel were challenged in lawsuits, and their implementation has been suspended pending full hearings in court. But the waiver review was not included in the court rulings, so that part of the order remains in effect. Rules governing the waivers have been hammered out over the last decade with both Democratic and Republican support. But in recent years they have drawn fire from some conservative lawmakers, including Attorney General Jeff Sessions when he was a senator. A State Department official said this week the department is working with DHS to review the waivers and is “looking at actually pulling them back in accordance with the executive order.” The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, declined to give details on the timing of the review or its

likely outcome. The Department of Justice declined to comment.

KURDS, KAREN, HMONG

Following the 11 Sept., 2001 attacks, Congress expanded the definition of who could be considered a terrorist and what constituted “material support” to terrorism in rules now known as the Terrorism Related Inadmissibility Grounds.

Those changes ensnared people like Raj who were coerced or inadvertently provided support to terrorists, as well as members of persecuted ethnic groups that supported rebel organisations, and even US-allied groups fighting against authoritarian regimes.

Without an exemption, members of Kurdish groups that battled Saddam Hussein’s forces in Iraq, Hmong groups who fought alongside US troops in Vietnam, or some Cubans who fought Fidel Castro’s regime would not be allowed to immigrate to the United States.

Under the exemptions, US authorities have the discretion to grant people residency in the United States after they have passed background checks and are found

to pose no threat to national security. Congress initially passed waivers to the terrorism bars in 2007 with bipartisan support, and in the years that followed both the Bush and Obama administrations added additional groups and circumstances to the exemptions.

“PHANTOM PROBLEM”

US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has granted nearly 22,000 Terrorism-related Inadmissibility Grounds (TRIG) exemptions in total over the last decade, according to the latest data available, which goes through September 2016. The State Department also grants TRIG exemptions, but a spokesman could not provide data on how many.

Refugees from Myanmar are the largest single group of beneficiaries to date of TRIG exemptions granted by USCIS, with more than 6,700 waivers.

The wave of Myanmar refugees dates to 2006, when US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice ruled that thousands of members of the Karen ethnic group, then living in a camp in Thailand, could resettle in the United States, even if they had supported the political

wing of an armed group that had fought the country’s military regime.

One high-profile supporter of scrapping the waivers is House of Representatives Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte, a Republican from Virginia whose staffers were instrumental in drafting Trump’s travel ban. Goodlatte told Reuters he was “pleased that the Trump Administration is reviewing the dangerous policy.”

Groups favouring stricter immigration laws have also applauded the review. Rosemary Jenks, director of government relations at NumbersUSA, called the waivers “a potential security risk.”

“I personally don’t think that a bureaucrat should be deciding how much support for terrorism is enough to be barred,” she said.

A USCIS spokeswoman, when asked if a recipient of an exemption had ever been involved in a terrorism-related case after arriving in the United States, referred Reuters to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which said it was a question for the State Department to answer. “I don’t know of any cases where beneficiaries of exemptions have gotten into trouble after arriving,” the State Department official said, noting that the department does not typically track people after they arrive in the United States.

Trump’s order to review the waivers “is another example of an attempt to address a non-existent phantom problem,” said Eric Schwartz, who served in the State Department during the Obama administration.

Schwartz and immigration advocates say the waivers are granted after lengthy review and are extremely difficult to get. “These are case-by-case exemptions for people who represent no threat to the United States but rather have been caught in the most unfortunate of circumstances,” said Schwartz.

For Raj, the initial ruling that his ransom payment supported a terrorist group led to more than two years in US immigration detention, followed by more years of electronic monitoring. His waiver allowed him to bring his wife to the United States after nine years apart. She now studies nursing. — Reuters

New transformers installed in Mandalay District

NEW transformers were installed in the wards and townships of Mandalay District starting from the second week of April, according to the Mandalay Electricity Supply Corporation.

“New transformers were in-

stalled to provide enough power supply to the public in the coming years. Mandalay Electricity Supply Corporation performs constantly for the public to receive enough electricity”, said U Aye Kyaw, Electrical Manager of

Mandalay District.

Mandalay Electricity Supply Corporation will provide electricity to the villages, Patheingyi Township, northern Mandalay with no electricity as the electricity became fully loaded at

100/2MVA and 203/11KV transformers in power station.

“Electricity in Mandalay has been supplied more than in previous years. Power supply also has been sufficient and regular. But power usually goes out when it is

windy or raining. It shouldn’t be happening like that.” said U Soe, a resident of Mandalay.

Two 315 KVA transformers were installed in the southern ward and V (7) ward of Chanmyathazi Township.—200

France mobilised for election security after Paris attack

PARIS — France said its security forces were fully mobilised for a presidential election at the weekend after the killing of a policeman by an Islamist militant threw a dark shadow over the last day of an unpredictable campaign.

With the first round of voting in the two-stage election due to take place on Sunday, centrist Emmanuel Macron still held on to his position as frontrunner in the closely contested race.

An Elabe survey of voter intentions, carried out before the Thursday night shooting on the Champs Elysees shopping avenue in central Paris, showed Macron with 24 per cent of the first-round vote and far right leader Marine Le Pen falling back slightly to 21.5 per cent.

Two other candidates — former conservative prime minister Francois Fillon and the far left's Jean-Luc Melenchon — were snapping at their heels with 20 and 19.5 per cent respectively. Campaigning and the publication of voter surveys are banned from midnight on Friday until polling stations close. Sunday's round of voting will be followed by a second-round runoff on 7 May between the top two candidates.



French police leave the house of the gunman killed in a shootout with police on the Champs Elysees Avenue, in the Paris suburb of Chelles, France, on 21 April 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

The Champs Elysees attack was claimed by militant group Islamic State. One attacker was killed and officials said they were looking for a potential second suspect.

Emerging from an emergency meeting of security officials, Prime Minister Bernard Cazeneuve announced a full mobilisation of security forces, including elite units, to back up 50,000 police already earmarked to ensure citizens' safety during the election.

"The government is fully mobilised. Nothing must be allowed to impede

the fundamental democratic process of our country," Cazeneuve told reporters. "It falls to us not to give in to fear and intimidation and manipulation which would play into the hands of the enemy."

The shooting abruptly pushed national security up the agenda, potentially making the outcome of Sunday's first round vote even more difficult to call. With their hardline view on security and immigration, the positions of Le Pen and Fillon may resonate more strongly for some voters.

But attacks that have

taken place soon before elections, including the November 2015 attacks in Paris ahead of regional elections and the shooting in a Jewish school before the 2012 presidential elections, have not appeared to change the course of those ballots.

An assault on a soldier in February at the Paris Louvre museum by a man wielding a machete also had no obvious impact on this year's opinion polls, which have consistently said that voters see unemployment and trustworthiness of politicians as bigger issues.

—Reuters

US defence secretary says Syria dispersed warplanes, retains chemical weapons

TEL AVIV — US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis said on Friday that Syria had dispersed its warplanes in recent days and retained chemical weapons, an issue that would have to be taken up diplomatically.

The United States launched dozens of missiles earlier this month against a Syrian air base in response to a chemical attack that killed 90 people, including 30 children. It says the Syrian government launched the attack from the Shayrat air base. The Pentagon has said that the strike had damaged or destroyed about 20 per cent of the Syrian military's operational aircraft. During a press conference alongside his Israeli counterpart, Mattis was asked whether the Syrian military had moved warplanes to a Russian base in Latakia.

"They have dispersed their aircraft, no doubt. They have dispersed their aircraft in recent days," Mattis said.

Mattis also reiterated



Israel's Minister of Defence Avigdor Lieberman (R) welcomes US Defence Secretary James Mattis (2nd R) with an honor cordon at the Ministry of Defense in Tel Aviv, Israel, on 21 April 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

that the United States believed Syria had retained some chemical weapons.

"The bottom line is, I can say authoritatively they have retained some (chemical weapons). It's a violation of the United Nations Security Council resolutions, and it's going to have to be taken up diplomatically," Mattis said. Israel's

military said on Wednesday it believes Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's forces still possess several tonnes of chemical weapons. A senior Israeli military officer told Israeli reporters that "a few tonnes of chemical weapons" remained in the hands of Assad's forces, a military official told Reuters.

In a 2013 agreement brokered by Russia and the United States, Syria agreed to destroy its chemical weapons.

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical weapons, a global watchdog, said sarin or a similar banned toxin was used in the 4 April strike in Syria's Idlib province.—Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

Trump to visit Philippines, Viet Nam in November

JAKARTA/WASHINGTON — US President Donald Trump will make a visit to the Philippines and Viet Nam in November to attend regional summits, Vice President Mike Pence said Thursday.

Trump will take part in a summit with ASEAN leaders and the East Asia Summit in the Philippines as well as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Viet Nam.

In Washington, a US State Department official said Secretary of State Rex Tillerson will meet with the foreign ministers of the 10-member Association of South-east Asian Nations in the US capital on 4 May.—Reuters

Indian air force's pilotless aircraft crashes, causing no casualty

NEW DELHI — A pilotless aircraft of the Indian air force crashed in the eastern state of Odisha during a test flight on Friday, a senior defense official said.

However, there have been no reports of any casualty on the ground. "The unmanned aerial vehicle, called 'Lakshya' (target), crashed in an open ground near Chandamani in Balia in the state's Balasore district soon after taking off from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur," he said on condition of anonymity. A probe has been launched into the crash, the official added.—Xinhua

At least 30 football fans electrocuted in Nigeria

ABUJA — Police in Nigeria's southern state of Cross River on Friday said an investigation is underway into the case where more than 30 football fans were electrocuted by a falling power cable while watching a match at a public viewing center late Thursday.

The incident occurred at about 9:30 pm in Calabar, the Cross River State capital, while a Europa Football League match between Manchester United and Anderlecht was being televised, a police spokeswoman Irene Ugbo said.

"Some of the people were rushed to the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital for treatment," Ugbo told reporters.—Xinhua

Libya, UN officials stress security, stability in Libya

TRIPOLI — Mohamed Amari Zayed, Libya's presidential council member and minister of state for specialized council affairs, met on Thursday with Lt. Gen. Paolo Serra, security adviser of the UN mission to Libya, in the council's headquarter in Tripoli.

The two officials discussed the latest security developments in Libya, particularly in the south of the country, as well as the eastern oil crescent.

Serra informed Zayed of the mission's efforts and support for Libyan security and military institutions, as well as the latest security arrangements based on the political agreement. Zayed stressed the mission's efforts to establish security and stability in Libya, and its support of a dialogue between Libyan parties.—Xinhua

China expresses confidence in Venezuela's stability

BEIJING — China said it believes the Venezuelan people can protect the country's stability and economic development following casualties caused by nationwide protests in the Latin American country on Wednesday.

China is aware the Venezuelan government hopes to resume talks with the opposition, Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang said at a daily press briefing.

"As a friend of Venezuela, China sincerely hopes and believes that the Venezuelan people can properly handle their domestic affairs," Lu said.

A power struggle between the ruling socialist party in Venezuela and the right-wing opposition has created an economic and political crisis, and provoked widespread protests.—Xinhua

Syria evacuations of besieged towns continue after two-day halt — monitor, state media

BEIRUT — The evacuation of Syrian civilians and fighters from four besieged towns, part of a swap deal between the warring sides, resumed on Friday after a 48-hour halt, state media and a monitoring group said.

Five buses carrying rebels and their relatives from towns near the capital left a transit point outside Aleppo city where they had been waiting to cross into rebel territory, the state-owned news channel Ikhbariyah said.

Meanwhile, ten busloads of people from the rebel-encircled Shi'ite towns of al-Foua and Kefraya arrived in Aleppo city, which is under government control, al-Ikhbariyah said.

Thousands of evacuees from

the two Shi'ite towns have been stranded for two days at a second nearby staging area outside Aleppo, where a bomb attack on an evacuation convoy last week killed scores of people.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the 48-hour suspension was due to rebel demands for the government to free 750 prisoners as part of the agreement.

The Britain-based war monitor confirmed the resumption on Friday morning of evacuations under the reciprocal deal, but said it remained unclear if authorities had released the prisoners.

Under the deal, thousands of Sunni rebels and civilians have been moved out of Zabadani and Madaya, which have long been



Evacuees from the two rebel-besieged Shi'ite villages of al-Foua and Kefraya, arrive to government-controlled Aleppo, in this handout picture provided by SANA on 19 April 2017, Syria. PHOTO: REUTERS

under siege by pro-government forces. They departed for rebel-held Idlib, bringing the two towns near Damascus under state control.

In exchange, thousands of

civilians and pro-government fighters were moved out of al-Foua and Kefraya, besieged by insurgent groups in Idlib in northwest Syria.

On Saturday, a bomb blast

hit a convoy carrying evacuees from al-Foua and Kefraya killing at least 126 people, including more than 60 children, who were waiting on Aleppo's outskirts. —Reuters

Suspect in German soccer bus attack wanted to profit on stocks

FRANKFURT — German police arrested a man on Friday suspected of detonating three bombs that targeted the Borussia Dortmund soccer team bus in the hope of sending the club's shares plummeting and making a profit on an investment, prosecutors said.

In a statement, the federal chief prosecutor said the 28-year old man, a dual German and Russian national identified as Sergei

V., had bought options on Borussia Dortmund's stock (BVB.DE) before the attack.

The team bus was heading to the club's stadium for a Champions League match against AS Monaco on 11 April when the explosions went off, wounding Spanish defender Marc Bartra and delaying the match by a day.

Prosecutors last week expressed doubts about the authen-

ticity of three letters left at the site of the attack that suggested that Islamist militants had carried it out.

The prosecutor's office said the suspect had bought 15,000 put options, or contracts giving him the right to sell Borussia Dortmund's shares at a pre-determined price, on the day of the attack, using a consumer loan he had signed a week earlier.

"If the shares of Borussia Dortmund had fallen massively, the profit would have been several times the initial investment," the prosecutor's office said.

The serious injury or death of any of the soccer players could have resulted in such a slump, it said.

Shares in BVB (BVB.DE) rose 1.8 per cent on 12 April, the day after the attack, and are up about 2 per cent so far this year.

Police detained the suspect in the city of Tuebingen in the south-western state of Baden Wuerttemberg. He faces charges of attempted murder, inflicting serious bodily harm and causing an explosion, the prosecutor's office said.

In March, the suspect

booked a room for 9-13 April in the same hotel where the Dortmund team players were staying for their home game against Monaco AS.

Prosecutors said the suspect had bought the Dortmund shares on the day of the attack using the IP address of l'Arrivee hotel, some 7 kilometres south of Dortmund's stadium.

The chief prosecutor will hold a news conference on the arrest at 12:30 pm (1030 GMT).

Security is a hot issue in campaigning for Germany's federal election on 24 September, in which Chancellor Angela Merkel is seeking a fourth term.

In December, a Tunisian man killed 12 people when he ploughed a truck through a Berlin Christmas market, one of a spate of Islamist militant attacks across France, Belgium and Germany in the past two years.

Last year, Merkel lost support to the anti-immigration Alternative for Germany (AfD) party after opening the country's doors to more than a million migrants. The AfD has since seen its ratings fall while Merkel has regained some ground. —Reuters



Police with the Borussia Dortmund team bus after an explosion near their hotel before the game in Dortmund, Germany, on 11 April 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Sudan, Egypt agree to leave Halayeb dispute to presidential meetings

KHARTOUM — Sudan and Egypt on Thursday agreed to leave their dispute over Halayeb area to be discussed at presidential-level meetings.

"We have agreed to discuss Halayeb issue in meetings of the two countries' presidents and to leave the consultations at the leadership level," said Sudanese Foreign Minister Ibrahim Ghandour at a joint press conference with his Egyptian counterpart Sameh Shoukry.

He added that the two sides also discussed the issue of armed movements and agreed that both should completely avoid supporting any opposition in the two countries.

For his part, Sameh Shoukry said "Halayeb issue is of the powers of the two countries' leadership. There is understanding between the two presidents on what must be done."

Meanwhile, a statement by Sudan's Foreign Ministry regarding the joint political consultation committee meetings said "both sides stressed the depth of the historical relations between the two countries and agreed to continue exchanging support and co-ordination at all levels regionally and internationally." —Xinhua

Six qualify to run in Iran presidential election, Ahmadinejad rejected

TEHRAN — Iran's Guardian Council announced six candidates "qualified" to run in the 19 May presidential election, including incumbent President Hassan Rouhani, while former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's candidacy was rejected, local media reported Friday.

In addition to Rouhani, First Vice President Eshaq Jahangiri,

Tehran Mayor Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf and former Attorney General Seyed Ebrahim Raisi are among the most famous of the six approved candidates.

Although more than 1,600 Iranians, including politicians, actors and ordinary citizens, were registered as candidates for the election, the Guardian Council — the sole authority for approving

or rejecting candidacies — has already asked famous faces with distinguished executive records to submit their names and said others are not likely to qualify.

Ahmadinejad was advised by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei to refrain from participating in the election, but he surprised everyone by announcing his

candidacy on 12 April.

The former president had also said he would use his power to gain qualification for close aide Hamid Bagaei, but his candidacy too was rejected by the council.

Although rejected candidates will have four days to appeal the council's decision, the overturning of a rejected application is unprecedented. —Kyodo News



Finland likely to quit euro in coming decades, lawmaker says

HELSINKI — Finland's exit from the euro zone is possible and even likely in the future, eurosceptic lawmaker Sampo Terho, the front-runner in a race to lead the co-ruling Finns party, said on Friday.

With his comments, Terho moved closer to his nearest rival, the hard-liner Jussi Halla-aho — a sign of challenges ahead for the country's unpopular three-party government. Terho kicked off his party leadership campaign on Friday, telling a press conference that it was hard for Finland to keep its exports competitive because of its euro membership. "The only way to sustain our competitiveness is internal devaluation, which we carried out," he said, referring to a hard-fought labour reform that sparked anti-government demonstrations and strikes in 2015.

"The other option, if looking forward to the 2020s, 2030s and 2040s, is to return to our own currency ... When we take this long look, that option seems possible, even likely," Terho said. Terho is considered the most popular candidate for the party leadership, trailed by Halla-aho. A poll for Finnish broadcaster MTV released this Wednesday showed support for Terho among party activists at 60 per cent, compared with 22 per cent for Halla-aho.

He has generally taken more moderate positions than Halla-aho, a member of European Parliament who has said bluntly he would take Finland out of the euro zone and the European Union.

The Finns party, previously known as True Finns, rose from obscurity during the euro zone debt crisis. It has since softened its anti-EU rhetoric, a move that helped the party enter government in 2015 but also angered voters: its support tumbled in municipal elections earlier this month to 8.8 percent. Terho also said he would be ready to campaign for a referendum on EU membership in the 2019 parliament elections, if the majority of the party backs the idea. "We will strengthen our position as Finland's only eurosceptic party," he said. According to a survey last year, 68 per cent of Finnish citizens support EU membership. Analysts have said a move back to a more hard-line platform in the party could spell trouble for the government, which is committed to the euro but is now having a hard time pushing through a major health care reform. The Finns will elect a new chairman in a party congress in June. The winner will replace Timo Soini, the foreign minister, who is stepping down from the leadership after 20 years.—Reuters

G-20 reaffirms commitment on orderly currency movements

WASHINGTON — Finance chiefs from the Group of 20 major economies on Thursday reaffirmed a G-20 commitment to orderly currency movements as a way to promote world economic growth and ensure stability in financial markets, according to Japanese Finance Minister Taro Aso.

Speaking to reporters after the first day of a two-day meeting in Washington, Aso said it was "significant" that the G-20 underscored the commitment when the world economy is gradually picking up but given growing uncertainties over the outlook such as geopolitical risks over North Korea and Syria.

"It is true that there have been positive views about the world economy, but there are growing uncertainties about the outlook. We sometimes see (disorderly) movements in markets as well," Aso said.

The G-20 "needs to continue coordination in ensuring stability in markets and the economy," he added.

Citing a communique the G-20 finance ministers and central bank governors issued last month in Germany, Aso said he and his G-20 peers reaffirmed that "excess volatility and disorderly movements in exchange rates can have adverse implications for economic and financial stability."

Aso also said the G-20 members reiterated their resolve to "use all policy tools — monetary, fiscal and structural — individually and collectively to achieve our goal of strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth."

The G-20 met on the side-

lines of semiannual meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, at which member states are seeking to affirm support for open trade and global integration in the face of US President Donald Trump's protectionist trade views.

Speaking to reporters ahead of the G-20 meeting, Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda declined comment on Trump's recent claim that the dollar "is getting too strong."

Kuroda said the BOJ's ultraeasy monetary policy is aimed at achieving a 2 per cent inflation target, not lowering the value of the yen against the dollar and other currencies.

"The Japanese economy is steadily recovering and on an expansionary trend," he said. "Momentum for a price increase is continuing but not strong enough. The BOJ will firmly continue its monetary easing so as to achieve the 2 per cent target as early as possible."

The series of financial meetings in Washington came as uncertainties persist such as heightened tensions over North Korea's aggressive development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles and Syria's use of chemical weapons, as well as rising protectionism in some developed countries.

Citing a potential clash between the United States and North Korea and a possible advance by a far-right candidate in the French presidential election which begins Sunday, a senior Japanese Finance Ministry official said he is closely watching such risk factors because they "could have a major impact on financial markets."

Aside from Trump's "America First" mantra, protectionist sentiment appears prevalent in Europe. Marine Le Pen, leader of France's National Front who opposes immigration and pledges to withdraw France from the European Union, is a major contender in the presidential race.

Also said he told the G-20 meeting that free trade will further bolster the current economic recovery, and that countries should not take action that would run counter to free trade — a message apparently directed to the Trump administration and some other advanced economies.

Last week, IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde, a former French finance minister, cautioned of a "sword of protectionism" that she said threatens to put a damper on the global economy's ability to expand.

Other risks to the world economy include faster-than-expected US interest rate increases, which could affect some developing economies by triggering an outflow of capital and investment, as well as China's reliance on excessively rapid credit expansion for growth, according to the IMF.

US and Japanese delegation members said they do not expect the G-20 financial leaders to issue a communique after the meeting, noting that they just did so at their 17-18 March gathering in Baden-Baden, Germany.

The G-20 groups Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Britain, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the United States and the European Union.—Kyodo News

NATO forces start services in Estonia

TALLINN — The NATO forces in Estonia on Thursday held a flag-raising ceremony and a military parade to mark the beginning of its services in the Baltic country.

At the Tapa Army Base in northern Estonia, about 1,200 troops from Britain, France, Denmark, and Estonia participated in the event, which was attended by British Secretary of State for Defence Michael Fallon, Danish Defence Minister Claus Hjort Frederiksen and Estonian Defence Minister Margus Tsahkna, said the Estonian Ministry of Defence in a statement.

Tsahkna termed the ceremony as a symbol of "NATO's resolve and unity", which was followed by the signing of a declaration about the establishment of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence in Estonia by the three defence ministers and the French Ambassador to Es-

tonia Claudia Delmas-Scherer.

Also present were Estonia President Kersti Kaljulaid, who met Fallon at the Office of the President in Tallinn on bilateral defence cooperation and regional security situation, and Estonian Prime Minister Juri Ratas, who said in a statement that the presence of allied forces shows NATO's unity and enhances Estonia's confidence on security. At the Warsaw Summit in July 2016, 28 leaders of NATO Member Nations decided to establish an enhanced Forward Presence in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. For the 1200-strong NATO battalion battle group in Estonia, Britain is contributing more than 800 troops, while France, 300 troops. The French unit will serve in Tapa for eight months, after that, it will be rotated by the Danish unit, said the Estonian Ministry of Defence.—Xinhua



Estonian soldiers march in parade at the ceremony to mark the beginning of services of the NATO battalion battle group at the Tapa Army Base in northern Estonia, on 20 April 2017. PHOTO: XINHUA

Queen celebrates 91st birthday

LONDON — Queen Elizabeth, the world's oldest and longest-reigning monarch, celebrated her 91st birthday in a usual low-key fashion on Friday.

Artillery gun salutes in London's Hyde Park and at the Tower of London will mark the occasion although the queen, who normally spends her birthday privately, has no formal engagements planned herself.

Elizabeth was born on 21 April, 1926 in Bruton

Street in central London when Calvin Coolidge was US President and Joseph Stalin had just taken control in the Soviet Union and became queen in 1952 at 25.

Despite her age, she still regularly carries out official duties although she has cut back on the number of engagements in recent years, passing these onto other members of the Windsor family such as to her son and heir Prince Charles and grandsons,

Princes William and Harry.

Polls show she remains very popular amongst Britons and royal aides say there is little prospect of her abdicating. Asked if she was well during a trip to Northern Ireland last year, she quipped "Well, I'm still alive".

The queen has an official birthday in June which is publicly marked with a large parade of soldiers through central London, known as Trooping the Colour.—Reuters



Britain's Queen Elizabeth leaves the Easter Sunday service in Windsor Castle, in Windsor, 16 April 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Elon Musk on mission to link human brains with computers in four years



Tesla Chief Executive, Elon Musk enters the lobby of Trump Tower in Manhattan, New York, US, on 6 January 2017.

PHOTO: REUTERS

NEW YORK — Tesla Inc (TSLA.O) founder and Chief Executive Elon Musk said his latest company Neuralink Corp is working to link the human brain with a machine interface by creating micron-sized devices.

Neuralink is aiming to bring to the market a product that helps with certain severe brain injuries due to stroke, cancer lesion etc, in about four years, Musk said in an interview with website Wait But Why.

"If I were to communicate a concept to you, you would essentially engage in consensual telepathy," Musk said in the interview published on Thursday.

Artificial intelligence and machine learning will create computers so sophisticated and godlike that humans will need to implant "neural laces" in their brains to keep up, Musk said in a tech conference last year.

"There are a bunch of concepts in your head that

then your brain has to try to compress into this incredibly low data rate called speech or typing," Musk said in the latest interview.

"If you have two brain interfaces, you could actually do an uncompressed direct conceptual communication with another person."

The technology could take about eight to 10 years to become usable by people with no disability, which would depend heavily on regulatory approval timing

and how well the devices work on people with disabilities, Musk was quoted as saying.

In March, the Wall Street Journal reported that Musk had launched a company through which computers could merge with human brains.

Neuralink was registered in California as a "medical research" company last July, and he plans on funding the company mostly by himself.—Reuters

Western Digital mulls joint bid for Toshiba chip unit with Japan funds

TOKYO — Western Digital Corp. is considering bidding jointly for Toshiba Corp.'s chip unit with the state-backed Innovation Network Corp. of Japan and the state-owned Development Bank of Japan, sources close to the matter said Friday.

The move comes as the US company is aiming to gain approval from the Jap-

anese government, which is keen for domestic suitors to submit a joint bid as it is concerned Toshiba's key technology could get into the hands of a foreign company deemed risky to national security. The government is especially worried about a sale to a Chinese or Taiwanese company and could step in to block such a deal.

Western Digital, which has jointly invested in Toshiba's Yokkaichi flash memory plant in central Japan, is demanding exclusive negotiations for purchasing Toshiba's chip unit based on a joint-venture contract between Toshiba and US semiconductor maker SanDisk Corp. which it owns. The contract says Toshiba can-

not put its chip unit up for sale without approval from Western Digital.

But with Taiwan's Hon Hai Precision Industry Co., which bought Japanese display maker Sharp Corp., submitting the highest bid of nearly 3 trillion yen (\$27 billion) for chip company Toshiba Memory Corp., Western Digital has appar-

ently decided to join a Japan consortium to have Toshiba prioritize the US firm in negotiations. Toshiba spun off its prized memory chip business as a subsidiary this month, and now plans to sell a majority stake in it to raise funds to cover massive losses from its US nuclear business.

On Tuesday, INCJ

Chairman Toshiyuki Shiga told a press conference that the state-backed turnaround fund may invest in Toshiba's memory chip company. And an official at the fund said, "As part of the Japanese consortium, we will decide who to partner with. Teaming up with Western Digital could (make the process) smoother."—Kyodo News

China, Canada to create joint research centre for future energy and environment

OTTAWA — The University of Alberta is teaming up with China's Tsinghua University to develop low-carbon, sustainable energy solutions while tackling global environmental challenges, according to the University of Alberta on Thursday.

Officials from the University of Alberta, Tsinghua University and the Government of Alberta led by Premier Rachel Notley are in Beijing now to sign

an agreement to create the Joint Research Centre for Future Energy and Environment.

Researchers of the center will collaborate on a range of problems related to energy, environment and climate change, renewable energy, advanced power systems, energy transport and more.

"This is a rare opportunity for a Canadian university to partner with Tsinghua University in

such a significant way," said Larry Kostiuk, University of Alberta associate vice-president. "We come from different places and backgrounds, but we're going to come together and leverage our different perspectives to solve common problems."

Kostiuk said the joint research centre is the latest evolution in more than two decades of collaborations between the University of Alberta and Tsinghua Uni-

versity, which is one of the best university in China and among the top in the world.

The centre will be based at Tsinghua in a state-of-the-art research facility. Once construction is completed in the next three years, the centre will be able to apply for grant funding through the Chinese Ministry of Education, which is establishing strategic international research centres across the country.—Xinhua

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV KONSTANTINOS VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KONSTANTINOS VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.4.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-5 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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'Guardians of the Galaxy' sequel gives heroes new 'million-piece puzzle'

LOS ANGELES — The stars of "Guardians of the Galaxy," the Marvel movie about a rag-tag group of intergalactic heroes, landed in Hollywood to debut their return in a much-anticipated sequel that sees them embark on another high-stakes space adventure.

In "Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2," space heroes Peter Quill, Gamora, Drax, Rocket and Groot find themselves pursued by a villain and once again are given the task of saving the universe.

They are joined along the way by Gamora's petulant sister Nebula, space pirate Yondu and Mantis, an empathic alien. The film is scheduled to open in theaters on 5 May.

"This is a million-piece puzzle and when you sit back and see the mosaic put together you get this one incredibly even, fully executed idea," Chris Pratt, who plays Peter Quill, said at the red carpet premiere on Wednesday.

"It's brilliant, great music,

it's super funny, dramatic and it's got great emotion and relationships, it's stunning," he said.

Sylvester Stallone, who makes an appearance as Stakar Ogord leader of the space pirates known as "ravagers," said action films "are modern mythology when it's done right."

"The kind of action films I've done are sort of more mano-a-mano ... now they've

developed this Marvel universe Guardians that have a heart, that has a lot of emotion to it, that takes it another step further," he said, using the Spanish phrase for "hand to hand" combat that has come to be associated with any kind of competition between two people.

"It's kind of a cross between



Actor Sylvester Stallone (C) poses with his daughters and his wife Jennifer Stallone (2nd-R) at the world premiere of Marvel Studios' 'Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2' in Hollywood, California, US, on 19 April 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

'Rocky' (and) 'Rambo' in space," he added.

The sequel follows 2014's "Guardians of the Galaxy," which smashed summer box office records and ushered in a new cadre

of edgy heroes in the Marvel cinematic universe.

"I made a movie about outcasts for outcasts and it's very touching for me that people all over the world, whether here or in

Japan or in Russia or in England have been touched by the movie," writer-director James Gunn said.

Gunn will write and direct the third "Guardians" film, due for release in 2020. —Reuters

The truth is still out there as 'X-Files' returns for new season



Cast member David Duchovny poses at a premiere for 'The X-Files' at California Science Center in Los Angeles, California, US, on 12 January 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — Mulder and Scully's search for the truth will continue in a new series of Fox's hit sci-fi show "The X-Files," the network said Thursday, a year after the show was revived.

"The X-Files" will return in the fall with 10 new episodes that will see fictional FBI agents Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) investigating cases involving unexplained and often extraterrestrial cases. The series, which ran between 1993 and 2002, was rebooted with a six-episode run last year, reuniting Mulder and Scully as they found themselves once again chasing government

cover-ups, monsters, mysterious objects in the sky and their son, William.

The revival drew nearly 16 million viewers, said 20th Century Fox Television, a unit of Twenty-First Century Fox Inc <FOXA.O>.

The show drew a devoted cult fan base with its questioning of government secrets and the constant search for the truth.

Show creator Chris Carter told Reuters last year that "The X-Files" as become even more relevant in the present age where conspiracy theories still run rife on the internet and UFOs still perplex people. —Reuters

Aamir Khan, Kapil Dev to get Dinanath Mangeshkar Award

MUMBAI — Actor Aamir Khan and cricket icon Kapil Dev will receive the 75th Master Dinanath Mangeshkar Awards, at a ceremony here on 24 April.

Khan will be honoured with the Vishesh Puraskar for Best Film "Dangal", while Dev for his outstanding contribution to Indian Cricket.

Apart from the duo, other awardees include legendary actress Vyjayanthimala Bali, who will be honoured with Master Dinanath Vishesh Puraskar for her achievements in Hindi cinema.

'Mohan Wagh Award' for best drama will be awarded to Sunil Barve for "Amar Photo



Studio Subak Sanstha".

"Various awards will be given to personalities who have contributed extraordinarily in the

field of social service, literature, drama and music etc," Avinash Prabhavalkar of Hridayesh Arts said in a statement.

Other awardees include Kishore Deshpande, who will be presented with Anadmayee Puraskar for his work in social service, Vishwanath Karad, founder, Vishwashanti Kendra will be presented with Samarpit Jeevan Puraskar, Vijaya Rajadhyaksha will be conferred with Vagvilasini Puraskar for her work in literature, Kaushiki Chakraborty for her work in the field of music.

The event will be organised by Master Dinanath Smruti Pratishthan and Hridayesh Arts. —PTI

Dior takes to rooftop with new looks to launch Tokyo store

TOKYO — Christian Dior launched its new Tokyo store with a fashion show in the rooftop gardens of a luxury mall, where models sported new looks from its creative director Maria Grazia Chiuri.

Underlining Dior's connection with Japan, which is an "important market" for the fashion brand, Chiuri drew her inspiration from cherry blossoms and Christian Dior's 1953 "Jardin japonais" dress for her latest creations.

House of Dior Ginza's cham-

pagne-fuelled opening on Wednesday comes as spending by visitors to Japan is at record levels, although growth has slowed due partly to Chinese tourists buying less. But Sidney Toledano, chief executive of Christian Dior Couture, told Reuters on Wednesday he was not concerned about cycles in tourism, which he has seen go through many phases during two decades running the French fashion house. "What we want to do in Japan is look for the local market. We look for the Japanese

customers," who have long been "super customers for luxury and high fashion," he said.

"Our business is not based on the tourist business ... my objective always in a country is to have a very strong local plan," said Toledano, who is also CEO of Christian Dior SE, the holding company for luxury group LVMH. As well as revealing the eight new looks from Chiuri, Dior used the occasion to present the autumn 2017 collection from men's line Dior Homme for the first time. —Reuters

Brexit makes campsites cool again as Britons tighten belts

NEWTON FERRERS, (England)/LONDON —

Before last year's Brexit vote, Scott McCready was struggling to fill his holiday cabins on the coast of south-west England. Now the site is fully booked with British tourists avoiding more expensive foreign trips following a plunge in the pound.

This turnaround in the 10 months since Britons decided to leave the European Union reflects a jump in demand for "staycations", with British consumers seeking ways to make their money go further as rising inflation squeezes their incomes.

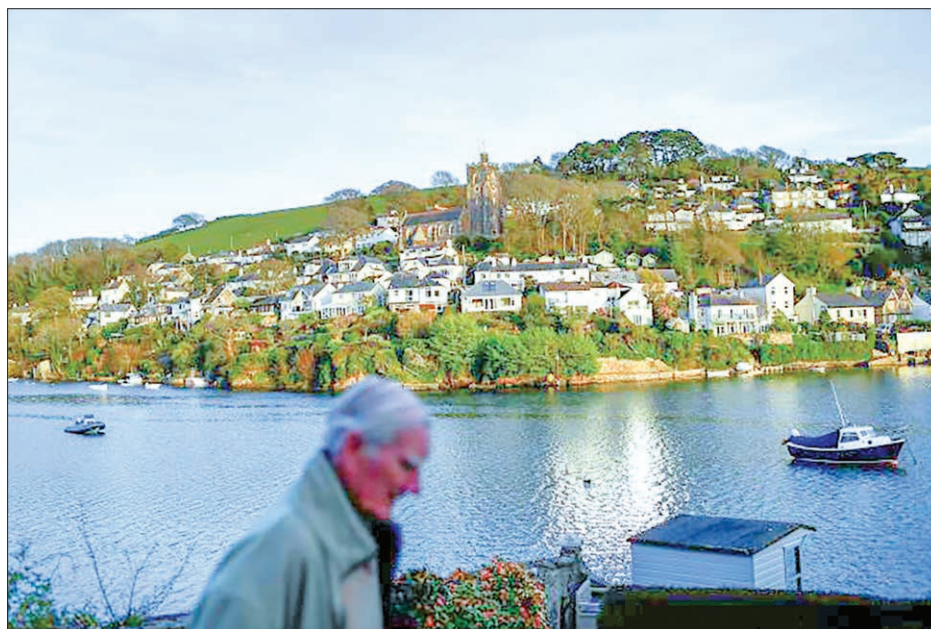
McCready, who gave up a job in IT to build his site between ancient woodlands and a creek in the county of Devon, recalled the hectic days after last June's referendum.

"My phone just took off," he told Reuters. "It was like someone flicked a switch. We were booked out for the rest of the summer and now this year we're having to turn people away."

The reason why Britons and some Europeans have flocked to his 24 wooden lodges in Newton Ferrers, once a quiet fishing village 370 km (230 miles) from London, is straightforward.

The referendum result caught financial markets off guard, sending the pound down about 20 per cent against the dollar and 16 per cent against the euro at one point. That rapidly pushed up the cost of holidays to the United States and continental Europe, both popular destinations for Britons.

Since then, sterling has



A man walks through Newton Ferrers, Devon, Britain, on 11 April 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

recovered some of its losses but remains down about 14 per cent against the dollar and 8 per cent against the euro.

So about 15 km away, Chris Duff is enjoying a similar jump in demand at his 90-lodge Thatches park, where he is investing to upgrade facilities which include a swimming pool and a fitness suite. "If we could, we would like to expand," he said.

Britain's \$2.6 trillion economy surprised almost all forecasters by withstanding the initial shock of the Brexit vote, a point made by Prime Minister Theresa May on Tuesday when she called a snap 8 June election.

"Despite predictions of immediate financial and economic danger since the referendum we have seen consumer confidence remain high, record numbers of jobs and economic growth that has exceeded

all expectations," she said.

But the picture for the years ahead looks weaker as sterling's fall raises import costs. With annual inflation pushing up toward 3 per cent, outstripping sluggish wage growth, Britons are becoming cautious in their spending - and not just on holidays.

Retail sales rose at the slowest pace in nearly a decade in the first three months of 2017, according to the British Retail Consortium, and surveys have shown that households are increasingly worried about the outlook for the economy.

German supermarket groups Aldi and Lidl, which attracted new British shoppers during the global financial crisis due to their deeply discounted prices, have seen accelerating sales in 2017.

"Customers are voting with their feet," Matthew Barnes, Aldi's CEO for Brit-

ain and Ireland, told Reuters in February. The squeeze facing many people in Britain is unlikely to be as sharp as in the years following the 2007-09 financial crisis when inflation hit 5 per cent and annual wage growth was even weaker than it is now. Nonetheless, the Bank of England expects almost no growth in the spending power of households over the next three years. Many private economists say even this forecast may be too optimistic.

The extent of the hit to consumer spending is the most important factor behind the central bank's view that the economy cannot be weaned off its record low interest rates.

"The big story in terms of the strength of the UK economy is ... the strength of consumer demand, and there are some signs of (that) coming off slowly," Governor Mark Carney said.—Reuters

After three weeks, French artist succeeds in hatching eggs

PARIS — French artist Abraham Poincheval, who famously spent a week inside a rock and two weeks inside a bear sculpture, has succeeded in hatching chicken eggs after incubating them for some three weeks.

Poincheval embarked on his latest project in late March of imitating a mother hen by incubating some 10 eggs with his own body heat inside a glass vivarium at Paris' Palais de Tokyo contemporary art museum.

At the time, he estimated it would take 21-26 days for the eggs to hatch

and the first did so on Tuesday. A spokeswoman for the museum said on Thursday nine had hatched and the chicks were on their way to a farm.

For the endeavor, Poincheval sat on a chair, wrapped in an insulating blanket, over a container with the eggs. He could leave his seat for no more than 30 minutes a day for meals.

Earlier this year, the artist spent a week inside a block of stone, while in 2014, he lived in a hollowed-out bear sculpture for two weeks.—Reuters



French artist Abraham Poincheval is seen in a vivarium on the first day of his performance in an attempt to incubate chicken eggs, which takes from 21 to 26 days, at the Palais de Tokyo Museum in Paris, France, on 29 March 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Robots, chefs hope to bring invasive lion fish to restaurants near you

LOS ANGELES — As it turns out, some of the best cooks in the world think lionfish, a venomous predatory fish which is breeding out of control and destroying marine ecosystems in the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea, is delicious.

The chefs gathered in Bermuda on Wednesday for a competition dubbed the "Lionfish Throwdown" where they challenged one another to come up with the tastiest solution to the problem of invasive lionfish.

"Every chef likes to be sustainable in what they are doing," said Chris Kenny, head chef on Necker Island in the British Virgin Islands.

"Lionfish are going to keep spreading, and it's not going to stop unless people step in and do something about it."

Native to the Pacific Ocean, lionfish have no natural predators in Atlantic waters and females can spawn nearly 2 million

eggs per year.

"On reefs where sport divers are actively diving with harpoons to try and control the lionfish, they actually do a pretty good job," said Colin Angle, executive chairman of iRobot Corp, a consumer robot company that builds and designs robots.

"But that's a very small percentage of the ocean ... We needed something far more flexible that could go far deeper, longer."

Angle, who recently founded Robots In Service of the Environment (RSE), a nonprofit organization set up to protect the oceans, built a machine named the Guardian specifically designed to hunt and capture lionfish.

"We basically drive the Guardian up to the fish, position it between two electrodes, apply a current and stun the fish, knocking the fish out," said Angle.—Reuters

mitv

Myanmar International
Programme Schedule

(22-4-2017 07:00am ~ 23-4-2017 07:00am) MST

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Great Shwedagon-The Historic Bells
07:39	Am	Life of Sea Urchin Diver
07:50	Am	Pyin Oo Lwin Sweater
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Myanmar Traditional Festival
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Myanmar Game Changer (Episode - II)
09:52	Am	Porcelain and Glass
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	The Caves
10:42	Am	Gardener: King Orange Plantation
10:56	Am	[Doctor] [Painter]

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

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

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	New
07:26	Pm	Snow Flakes...Scenic Confluence...To Kachin State
07:49	Pm	Today Myanmar: CBT in Myaing Township
08:03	Pm	New
08:26	Pm	U Kyaw Thu: From Artist to Philanthropist (Part-I)
08:47	Pm	Myanmar Masterclass: Artist Win Pe Myint

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

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

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

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

Myanmar in same group with China in 2018 AFC U-19 Championship qualifier

THE 43rd Asian U-19 football teams now know their qualifying opponents following yesterday's draw at AFC headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The Myanmar U-19 football team is included in Group (G) together with Asian football giant China and ASEAN rivals Cambodia and the Philippines. The Myanmar U-19 team has been tentatively selected with 50 players with U Nyi Nyi Latt as head coach for the international tournament.

Japan, the 2016 champion, will compete with Thailand, Singapore and Mongolia, who are

scheduled to host the Group I qualifiers. Saudi Arabia, the 2016 runner-up, will welcome Yemen, Turkmenistan and India in Group D, while 2016 semi-finalists and Group E hosts Iran will meet Palestine, Jordan and Syria. Meanwhile, the Republic of Korea will play host to a five-team Group F, which also features Malaysia, Timor-Leste, Brunei Darussalam and Indonesia.

Ten group winners and the five best second-place teams will advance to the AFC U-19 Championship, scheduled to take place from October 31 to November 8, 2017 in Indonesia.—Kyaw Zin Lin



Myanmar U-19 football team. PHOTO: MFF

Murray denies top ranking pressure after Monte Carlo exit

MONACO — Andy Murray has dismissed suggestions that the pressure of being the world's top tennis player is affecting his performance after losing to Spaniard Albert Ramos-Vinolas in the Round of 16 of the Monte Carlo Masters. Murray's defeat to Ramos-Vinolas was only his fourth match in two months after an elbow injury ruled him out of the Miami Open and the following Davis Cup game between Great Britain and France.

The 29-year-old's only tournament win this year came at the Dubai Championship in March after he lost to Novak Djokovic in the Qatar Open final followed by a Round of 16 exit at the Australian Open. He also exited Indian Wells in the Round of 64 stage last month. "It has been a difficult year for me because I know what it takes to get right up to the top and have the consistent results you need. This year has been stop-start for me, for a few different reasons," Murray said. "Now that I'm feeling better again I'm hoping that... my results will start to pick up. Injuring my elbow has nothing to do with getting to No 1, or getting sick. "I'm hoping that I can stay healthy now and hopefully my results will follow." Murray said that he was doubtful about his participation in the upcoming Barcelona Open and the Hungarian Open as he considers focusing on his fitness.—Reuters

Messi eyeing 500 as Barca bid to reignite season in Clasico

MADRID — Lionel Messi requires two more goals to reach 500 for Barcelona and will have his sights set on achieving the milestone against great rivals Real Madrid in Sunday's Clasico.

It is almost 12 years to the day since the diminutive Argentine netted his first, against Albacete in the Camp Nou, and there could not be a better time to bring up the magic number, particularly in a week that began with his great rival Cristiano Ronaldo netting a record 100th Champions League goal. Barca,

who trail Real by three points having played a game more, are under even more pressure than usual after Wednesday's Champions League elimination by Juventus.

The sight of Messi flat out with blood gushing from his face after a heavy tackle from Miralem Pjanic seemed to sum up his club's recent fortunes.

Barca lacked the hunger, fight or determination to break down a stubborn opponent.

What perhaps was most striking as they meekly exited Europe was that even the mercurial Argentine appeared drained

of his superpowers against a resilient backline. He was bullied, harangued and harried out of the game by the Italians.

In complete contrast to Ronaldo, who almost single-handedly dragged Real Madrid through against Bayern Munich 24 hours earlier, the five-time world player of the year looked dejected as the game drew to its inevitable conclusion before sloping off at the final whistle.

However, former team mate Ronaldinho is backing Messi to return to his best. "It's

a wonderful story. He's on the verge of 500 goals for the club and my pass set up the first of them," Ronaldinho said. "He's a great man. It's wonderful to see everything he's achieved — and he still has lots left to give."

The Brazilian's words will be put to the test this weekend as, in the absence of the suspended Neymar, the focus on Messi will be even more intense. The Argentine will need to be at his brilliant best if Barca are to overcome Zinedine Zidane's in-form side, who are unbeaten in their last 12.—Reuters

Rashford scores winner but Man United suffer Ibrahimovic blow

MANCHESTER, (England) — Manchester United needed an extra-time winner from Marcus Rashford to defeat Anderlecht 2-1 at Old Trafford on Thursday and move into the last four of the Europa League with a 3-2 aggregate victory.

While the result keeps open a possible path to next season's Champions League for Jose Mourinho's side, it came at a high price with defender Marcos Rojo and forward Zlatan Ibrahimovic both suffering possibly serious knee injuries.

United took the lead in the 10th minute through Henrikh Mkhitaryan, but Sofiane Hanni brought the Belgian side back level in the 32nd.

After Ibrahimovic wasted two great chances in the final stages of normal time, the contest went into extra time and Rashford settled the tie with a fine finish early in the second period.

It was not the comfortable passage into the semi-finals that United might have expected with Anderlecht showing no shortage



Manchester United's Marcus Rashford celebrates scoring their second goal during UEFA Europa League Quarter Final Second Leg at Old Trafford, Manchester, England, on 20 April 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

of guts and enterprising football, but it was a deserved victory for the English side.

United, buoyed by their Premier League win over Chelsea on Sunday, started confidently and grabbed the early advantage.

Paul Pogba played a pinpoint

40-metre pass along the ground to Rashford who, at the second attempt, found Mkhitaryan on the edge of the box and the Armenian midfielder drilled home his fifth goal in this season's Europa League. There was almost a swagger about United's approach and

they twice came close to instantly doubling their advantage with Pogba seeing a firm header tipped over by Anderlecht keeper Martinez Ruben who moments later excelled again as he pushed a curling Jesse Lingard shot wide.

But the 33-times Belgian

champions, were not willing to be swept away and after a defensive mix-up Frank Acheampong outpaced Eric Bailly and fired dangerously into the side-netting.

After Rojo was taken off on a stretcher with a knee injury, being replaced by Dutch international Daley Blind, United appeared to lose focus. The Belgians struck back when Youri Tielemans hammered a powerful long-range shot against the bar, Lukasz Teodorczyk got the loose ball stuck under his feet but was able to nudge it into the path of Algerian Sofiane Hanni who drove in the equaliser.

Rashford was again the main threat after the break, shooting off target from a promising position. He then robbed Dennis Appiah, burst goalward and rounded Ruben but was forced too wide for an effective shot. United certainly should have been back in the lead when Marouane Fellaini headed down a cross to Ibrahimovic but the normally clinical forward shot straight at Ruben from point-blank range.—Reuters