President U Thein Sein felicitates Hungarian counterpart, PM

NAY PYI TAW, 20 Aug — U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent messages of felicitations to His Excellency Mr. Janos Ader, President of Hungary and His Excellency Mr. Viktor Orban, Prime Minister of Hungary, on the occasion of the National Day of Hungary, which falls on 20 August 2014.

Vice President U Nyan Tun delivers speech at central committee meeting on drugs eradication

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Aug — Vice President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Nyan Tun delivered a speech at the meeting of the Central Committee for Prevention of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropical Substances held at the headquarters of the Ministry of Home Affairs here.

Vice President U Nyan Tun said that the drugs problem is threatening the global community, but that the illegal flow of these narcotics could not be controlled across the world until now.

He also said that Myanmar has adopted a 15-year plan to eradicate narcotics, resulting in opium-free zones of Mong La Special Region (4) in 1997, Kokang Special Region (2) in 2003 and Wa Special Region (2) in 2005 respectively despite remaining opium cultivations in some areas.

The opium cultivation declined in Myanmar from 163,000 hectare in 1996 to 21,500 hectare in 2006, but it has increased again to 57,800 hectare in 2013 since 2007 gradually.

Myanmar plans to accelerate the drug eradication programme under the five-year plan from 2014 to 2019.

The vice president also reminded to implement Drug Free ASEAN 2015 which is the objective of ASEAN community.

Myanmar to compete in six categories at ASEAN Skills Competition 2014 in Vietnam

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 19 Aug — Competitors from Myanmar will participate in the 10th ASEAN Skills Competition in Hanoi, Vietnam from 19 to 29 October, according to the “Organizing Committee For Myanmar Team Participation In The 10th ASC 2014.”

At a press briefing on Tuesday at Skills Training Centre in Yangon, committee officials elaborated on preparations for the event saying that the purpose of Myanmar’s participation was to “inform international and regional entrepreneurs of the quality of the country’s human resources”.

Myanmar nationals will compete in six out of 23 skill categories, including restaurant service, cooking, plumbing & heating, cabinet-making, electrical installation and electronics, with several team members also participating in two performance categories.

It will be the third time for Myanmar to attend the event as it only participated in the 6th and 7th skill competitions.

The official, who is also the vice-president of the Myanmar Tourism Human Resources Development Association, expressed hope that the Myanmar team can bring home medals from the Hanoi competition as they are undergoing intensive training provided by experts in respective areas.

“Participation in the event will provide an excellent chance for me to demonstrate my skills at a regional event level,” said committee member U Kyaw Kyaw Sint.

The official, who is also the vice-president of the Myanmar Tourism Human Resources Development Association, expressed hope that the Myanmar team can bring home medals from the Hanoi competition as they are undergoing intensive training provided by experts in respective areas.

“Participation in the event will provide an excellent chance for me to demonstrate my skills at a regional event level,” Min Hsu Paing, one of the selected participants to compete in cooking, told The New Light of Myanmar.
Immigration union minister inspects preparations on upcoming e-visa system

The system will be valid for tourists from 41 countries, starting from 1 September 2014, with the ministry now testing the official Myanmar e-Visa procedure at Yangon International Airport.

A tourist e-Visa costs US$50 per person, with visitors able to enter the country within 90 days after obtaining it. The maximum length for visitors to stay in the country on an e-visa is 28 days, according to the Myanmar Visa website.—MNA

Consulting firm opens in Yangon

YANGON, Aug—JTJB Myanmar Law Consultant Service Firm that will undertake a joint venture with Singapore-based Joseph Tan Jude Benny LLP was commissioned into service at Chatrium Hotel in Yangon on Monday.

Deputy Minister for Transport U Han Sein and Singaporean Ambassador Mr Robert Chua formally opened the firm.

JTJB Myanmar will provide a wide range of services, including legal consultation on the signing of contracts.—MNA

Myanmar implements economic zone in border town with China

Muse, Aug—Myanmar is implementing a new central economic zone in Muse, a border town in northern Shan state linking China’s Ruili of Yunnan province, to boost border trade at the most important crossing between the two countries, according to the project official saying on Tuesday.

The new Muse Central Economic Zone, being established on over 120 hectares of land at a cost of $51.54 million, comprises 18 estates including jade trading facilities, markets, shops, hotels, restaurants and housing complexes, said the official.

The plan of setting up of the Muse central economic zone was approved by local authorities in early 2013 and it was targeted to be completed in 2007.

Myanmar’s border trade with China is being mainly done through Muse, Lweg, Chinshwehaw and Kan Pite Tei.

Muse stands as the highest border trade transaction between Myanmar and China, reaching over $3 billion in the fiscal year 2013-14, accounting for over 60 percent of Myanmar’s total border trade.

According to Myanmar official statistics, the total value of China-Myanmar bilateral trade is $6.62 billion in 2013, accounting for 28.4 percent of Myanmar’s total foreign trade value which was $23.29 billion during the year.

Figures also show that China’s investment in Myanmar has reached $14.25 billion in 65 projects as of June 2014, accounting for 30.5 percent of the total and ranking the first in Myanmar’s foreign investment line-up. —Xinhua

UN advisor

Foreign affairs union minister receives UN advisor

NAY PYI TAW, Aug—Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wannna Maung Lwin received Vijay Nambiar, the Secretary-General’s Special Adviser on Myanmar here on Tuesday.

During the meeting at the foreign affairs minister’s office, Nambiar expressed his views on peace, stability and development of Rakhine State, the peacemaking processes and preparations for the 2015 election. Both sides also discussed matters related to cooperation between Myanmar and the United Nations.—MNA

Agreement signed for upgrading Industrial Training Centre in Hsindé

Officials sign agreement to upgrade No 1 Industrial Training School (Hsindé) and other development projects that will be implemented with the support of KfW Development Bank of Germany.—MNA

Myanmar to compete in six...

(from page 1)

With sponsorship from the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), the Myanmar team is also receiving support from local associations, including the Myanmar Engineering Society, Myanmar Restaurant Association, Centre for Vocational Training and government organizations such as the Ministry of Industry, Myanmar Timber Enterprise and the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security.

Several officials have called, however, for more financial and technical support of the team to be successful in the competition.

The first event of this kind was held in 1995 and it has since taken place every two years, with an age limit of 22 years for participants. Improving scale and quality of the competition over the years, the skill categories were expanded from only six in the 1995 event to 22 last year. —MNA
Vice-Senior General Soe Win visits “Oboronexpo 2014” in Russia

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Aug — Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services who also serves as Commander-in-Chief (Army), while on his visit to Russia last week, attended “The International Exhibition — Oboronexpo-2014” on 14 August, sources said.

Russian military officials briefed Vice-Senior General Soe Win and his delegation and showed them around booths displaying anti-aircraft missile systems, tanks, armours, and anti-tank weapons.

Vice-Senior General Soe Win held discussions with Army General Valery V Gerasimov, Chief of General Staff of Russian Armed Forces at the Ministry of Defence the same day. Their discussion covered the long tradition of mutual relations between the governments and armed forces of the two countries, prospects of greater cooperation in all sectors, and exchange of visits between the two armed forces.

On 15 August, the Myanmar’s commander-in-chief (army) visited the exhibition for a second day.

After briefings on military communication, he met Sergey I Bugakov, Chief of the Department of the First Department of the Federal Service for Military Technical Cooperation (FSMIC).

Mr Vijay Nambiar, the Secretary-General’s Special Adviser on Myanmar, called on Vice-Senior General Soe Win in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday, sources said. They exchanged views on Myanmar’s ongoing peace processes, the cooperation of the armed forces in democratic reforms, and relations between the Myanmar’s armed forces and the international community.—Myawady

Myanmar U-19 to meet Malaysian U-21 in semifinal


The Myanmar youth team will play against the Malaysian U-21 team in the semifinal. Myanmar Television will broadcast the match live at 1.15 pm on 20 August.—MRTV

Upgrading of railroads and running systems of MR discussed with foreign experts

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Aug — Investments to upgrade railroads and the running systems of Myanmar Railways and the improvement of railway stations and yards were discussed at a meeting between the managing director of AMONA Group of Companies and China Railways Engineering Corporation (CREC) and Union Minister for Rail Transportation U Than Htay at the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw on Monday morning.

The Union minister said there would be a formulation of respective committees to enhance rail transportation and monitor the developments at different levels.

In the afternoon, Mr Lee Chae Wook, Vice President of CJ Group and Chief Executive Officer of CJ Express of the Republic of Korea called on the union minister and discussed implementation of tasks regarding road transport and logistics, freight forwarding and third-party logistics tasks—Rail Transportation Ministry

Water levels of Thanlwin River likely to drop below dangerous mark

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Aug — According to the 12:30 hrs MST observation on Tuesday, the water level of Thanlwin River at Hpa-an rose one centimeter above dangerous levels, but will likely decline below the mark within the next 48 hours commencing Tuesday noon, the Meteorology and Hydrology Department announced.—MNA

Foreign direct investment to boost Myanmar’s economy discussed

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Aug — U Soe Tha, Chairman of the Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) Planning and Finance Development Committee held talks with Dr. J. Stephen Morrison, Global Health Policy Centre’s Director, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), and his delegation of respective committees to enhance rail transportation and monitor the developments at different levels.

In the afternoon, Mr Lee Chae Wook, Vice President of CJ Group and Chief Executive Officer of CJ Express of the Republic of Korea called on the union minister and discussed implementation of tasks regarding road transport and logistics, freight forwarding and third-party logistics tasks.—Rail Transportation Ministry

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham with British Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Andrew Patrick in Nay Pyi Taw.

(News on page 1)—MNA

Development prospects of Twantay Township discussed

YANGON, 19 Aug — A meeting to discuss the development prospects of Twantay Township was held in Twantay in Yangon Region on Sunday, attended by Union Minister U Soe Thane and Hluttaw representatives.

At the talks, officials said that the Union government, the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, the Ministry of Electric Power, the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, the Ministry of Construction and the Yangon Region government are implementing an integrated area development project for fish and prawn farms in 34,830 acres of ponds and will form a public breeding complex in the township in the near future. Regarding infrastructure, officials said they are planning to upgrade the Yangon-Twantay road, Twantay Bridge and Maubin-Twantay road. To ensure better transport, a plan is being drawn to dredge Pauhaling River and construct a bridge to link Twantay and the western part of Kymyindine Township.—MNA

U Soe Tha, Chairman of the Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) Committee, meets Dr. J. Stephen Morrison, Global Health Policy Centre Director. —MNA
AYADAW, 19 Aug — Deputy Director U Zaw Tun Myint of the Industrial Crops Development Department and officials inspected sugarcane plantations in Zayit Village of Ayadaw Township in Sagaing Region on Sunday as they are jointly cultivated by the department and local farmers who have been introduced to a new profitable strain.

The deputy director explained measures to systematically cultivate sugarcane and to grow quality strains on a commercial scale, saying officials have distributed high-yield sugarcane saplings that can produce over 80 tons of sugarcane per acre to local farmers.

According to farmer Daw Myint Kyi, the sugarcane strains the local farmers used in the past produced three tons per acre, fetching K30,000 per ton, with farmers hoping to make more profit in the future with the new high-yield sugarcane strain.

CHAUNGU, 19 Aug — Rising water levels of Chindwin River in ChaungU Township of Sagaing Region have had a positive effect on farming, with over 18,000 acres of farmland owned by locals irrigated as of 17 August, locals said. Although the township has been experiencing difficulties with its water transport system due to the recent heavy rainfall, officials said the public is benefitting from the monsoon as more river water flows into the township through Sulegon sluice gate, Tantawgyi sluice gate and Taungpon sluice gate, before irrigating the fields.

Chindwin River has reached dangerous water levels in Hkamti and Mawlaik townships, upstream of the river, with Monywa Township likely to be affected in about two weeks, officials said, without giving flood warnings.
Australia says to restore intelligence and military cooperation with Indonesia

Prime Minister Tony Abbott will travel to Indonesia to sign the new “Joint Understanding of a Code of Conduct” with Indonesian Foreign Minister Marty Na-talegava and Indonesia’s outgoing President Susi-lo Bambang Yudhoyono, Australian media said.

“We have reached agreement on the joint un-derstanding and we are currently arranging a time to sign it,” Bishop told the Australian Broadcasting Corp, without giving fur-ther details. Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade did not respond immediately to a request for further comment.

Teuku Faizasyah, Indonesia’s presidential spokesman for international affairs, said the document would allow Australia and Indonesia to resume mili-tary cooperation.

The often petty re-lations between the two neighbours sparked a new low in November over me-dia revelations that Austral-ia had spied on Yudhoyono, his wife and other top Indo-nesian officials.

“We are talking about a commitment to build trust after the tapencing incident and the code of conduct is the answer,” Faizasyah told Reuters. “We will have to evaluate its implemen-tation.”

Ties have been strained further over the is-sue of asylum seekers who attempt to sail to Australia via Indonesia.

Abbott implemented a policy, which has been condemned by Jakarta, of towing back to Indonesia often leaky vessels carrying asylum seekers.

Indonesia suspended military and police cooper-ation with Australia over asylum seekers. In Decem-ber, Yudhoyono presented a six-point plan for restor-ing good relations, includ-ing a code of conduct on intelligence matters.

The Australian news-paper reported that Yudhoyo-no wanted to review the new code and that it includes a promise by Australia not to use its spy agencies to harm its neighbour.— Reuters

Indian media calls off diplomatic talks with Pakistan

India called off on Monday peace talks with Pakistan, giving a jolt to renewed diplomatic efforts between the two nuclear-armed neighbours and adding to the troubles of Pakistan’s beleaguered government.

The move came near-ly three months after Paki-stani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif attended the inaug-uration of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the pair shaking hands amidst a thaw that had raised hopes of warm-er ties between the two na-tions.

India said it would not attend talks involving the foreign secretaries of the two countries, which had been set to take place on 25 August in Islamabad, be-cause of plans by Pakistan to consult Kashmiri separa-tists ahead of the meeting.

Foreign ministry spokesmen Syed Akba-ruddin called the invite an “unacceptable” attempt to “interfere” in domestic aff-airs, adding that the talks had been “cancelled”. Pakistan deplored In-dia’s move, calling it a “set-back” in efforts to promote good neighbourly relations.

The Himalayan region of Kashmir has been a bone of contention between In-dia and Pakistan since both gained independence in 1947.

The two nations have fought three wars and came close to a fourth war in 2001 and there have been regular clashes on the heavily mili-tarised Line of Control that divides Indian — and Paki-stan-controlled Kashmir.

In a statement, Ak-baruddin said Pakistan’s proposed meetings with Kashmir separatists “un-dermine the constructive engagement initiated” by India’s new administration. He added: “…under the present circumstances, it is felt that no useful purpose will be served by the Indian Foreign Secretary going to Islamabad next week.”

Pakistan’s foreign af-fairs ministry, however, de-feated the decision of the consulta-tion with Kashmir leaders, saying it was a “longstand-ing practice” prior to talks between the two nations to “facilitate meaningful discussions on the issue of Kashmir”.

India has for years complained that Pakistan backs separatist militants who slip in from Paki-stan-controlled Kashmir to stage cross-border attacks. Pakistan says it only consults with the “legitimate” Opposition in Pakistan.“We will not be deterred by such an attempt to distract us from our commitment to resolving the Kashmir issue,” an official in New Delhi said.

Pakistan’s hold on power almost slipped from the hands of Indian troops in 2014, when a rising China and long-running tension with Pakistan pushed its military to avert further conflict.

Pakistan has been under increasing pressure to mend its relations with India, which it has neglected regional ties. However, the new-found warm in the ties between the two nations took a hit last week when Modi accused Pakistan of waging a “proxy war” by sending militants to attack India.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (R) and his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif smile before the start of bilateral meeting in New Delhi on 27 May, 2014.— Reuters

New Delhi, 19 Aug — India called off on Monday peace talks with Pakistan, giving a jolt to renewed diplomatic efforts between the two nuclear-armed neighbours and adding to the troubles of Pakistan’s beleaguered government.

The move came near-ly three months after Paki-stani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif attended the inaug-uration of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the pair shaking hands amidst a thaw that had raised hopes of warm-er ties between the two na-tions.

India said it would not attend talks involving the foreign secretaries of the two countries, which had been set to take place on 25 August in Islamabad, be-cause of plans by Pakistan to consult Kashmiri separa-tists ahead of the meeting.

Foreign ministry spokesmen Syed Akba-ruddin called the invite an “unacceptable” attempt to “interfere” in domestic aff-airs, adding that the talks had been “cancelled”. Pakistan deplored In-dia’s move, calling it a “set-back” in efforts to promote good neighbourly relations.

The Himalayan region of Kashmir has been a bone of contention between In-dia and Pakistan since both gained independence in 1947.

The two nations have fought three wars and came close to a fourth war in 2001 and there have been regular clashes on the heavily mili-tarised Line of Control that divides Indian — and Paki-stan-controlled Kashmir.

In a statement, Ak-baruddin said Pakistan’s proposed meetings with Kashmir separatists “un-dermine the constructive engagement initiated” by India’s new administration. He added: “…under the present circumstances, it is felt that no useful purpose will be served by the Indian Foreign Secretary going to Islamabad next week.”

Pakistan’s foreign af-fairs ministry, however, de-feated the decision of the consulta-tion with Kashmir leaders, saying it was a “longstand-ing practice” prior to talks between the two nations to “facilitate meaningful discussions on the issue of Kashmir”.

India has for years complained that Pakistan backs separatist militants who slip in from Paki-stan-controlled Kashmir to stage cross-border attacks. Pakistan says it only consults with the “legitimate” Opposition in Pakistan.“We will not be deterred by such an attempt to distract us from our commitment to resolving the Kashmir issue,” an official in New Delhi said.

Pakistan’s hold on power almost slipped from the hands of Indian troops in 2014, when a rising China and long-running tension with Pakistan pushed its military to avert further conflict.

Pakistan has been under increasing pressure to mend its relations with India, which it has neglected regional ties. However, the new-found warm in the ties between the two nations took a hit last week when Modi accused Pakistan of waging a “proxy war” by sending militants to attack India.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (R) and his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif smile before the start of bilateral meeting in New Delhi on 27 May, 2014.— Reuters
Joint foreign policy a must for joining EU

BELGRADE, 19 Aug — Serbia’s EU accession talks are progressing well, but Belgrade will have to comply with the joint foreign policy at the time of joining the EU, says Peter Stano, spokesperson of EU Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Fuele. Since the start of Serbia’s accession talks with the EU, 18 out of 35 chapters have been subject to analytical screening, Stano said.

The reports for the significant chapters 23 and 24 have been adopted and the Serbian government is already working on action plans for them, Stano told the Belgrade-based Vecemje novosti daily.

The opening of one or more chapters depends on the decision of EU member states, and comes when they feel that everything in the process is ready and that the negotiations may begin, Stano explained.

The EU is not forcing anyone to do anything, Stano said, adding that Serbia made a voluntary choice when it submitted its EU membership application.

Speaking about the EU sanctions on Russia, which he said have been imposed on clear legal grounds due to an illegal annexation of the Crimea and continued destabilization of Ukraine, he said that there are third countries that comply with them.

As a membership candidate, Serbia is expected to fully comply with all EU foreign policy decisions at the time of joining the EU, Stano noted.

He said that he has no doubts about Serbia’s commitment to the dialogue with Pristina, and added that European integrations are a comprehensive process of reforms and establishing compliance with EU rules and standards.

This does not only include work on one chapter, but on all 35 chapters gradually — and although there is no dialogue under way due to the post-election situation in Kosovo, Serbia is continuing to work on significant matters, Stano said.

The integrations are not a result or a reflection of developments over a few weeks or months within a certain period of time, but of continued reform efforts and resolve over several years, Stano concluded.

Tainog

THAI police receive DNA sample of Japanese man in surrogacy case

BANGKOK, 19 Aug — The lawyer of a Japanese man suspected of fathering at least 15 surrogate babies on Monday submitted a DNA sample to Thai police to be used in paternity testing to verify his claim to be the biological father.

The Thai lawyer told reporters the 24-year-old businessman, who has not been charged with any crime, wants to not only prove that he fathered the babies and also to clear his name as he was not involved with anything illegal. The sample was collected in Japan — witnessed and approved by Japanese officials and other relevant parties — before being delivered to the Lad Prawo police station in northeastern Bangkok, he said.

He said the Japanese man, who is not in Thailand, is willing to cooperate with Thai officials and has even purchased free air tickets to question him in Japan.

Early this month, Thai authorities found nine pairs of surrogate babies and nannies found in an apartment in Bangkok early that month, to be used in paternity testing to verify his claim to be the biological father.

SEOUL, 19 Aug — Two former chiefs of South Korean cyber command were charged with being involved in posting political comments online before the presidential election and general election in 2012, Seoul’s Defence Ministry said on Tuesday.

The ministry’s investigation team announced a final conclusion on its months-long probe into the alleged political intervention, saying officials of the cyber command’s psychological warfare team posted comments in favor of or against some political parties and politicians “beyond the bound of normal operations.”

The two former cyber command chiefs failed to take proper actions though they were notified of such operations in violation of the military criminal act, which bans a political intervention, the ministry said.

A total of 21 former and current officials of the cyber command, including the two chiefs, faced criminal charges, higher than 10 officials subject to the interim investigation result was unveiled in December last year.

The cyber command has posted, since its creation in January 2010, nearly 800,000 comments in the cyberspace, among which some 7,100 comments favoured or went against certain political parties or politicians.

The investigation team, however, noted there were no organized attempts found to interfere with the presidential election in cooperation with other government agencies such as the spy agency.

South Korea was rattled last year by allegations that the cyber command and the intelligence agency attempted to intervene in the 2012 presidential election by posting online comments in favour of then ruling party candidate and now President Park Geun-hye and against her archrival Moon Jae-in, candidate for the main opposition party.

Then Defence Minister Kim Kwan-jin, who now serves as the national security adviser to President Park, was found not to be notified about the case at that time, the probe result showed.

People lodge a protest on 18 Aug, 2014, in front of the gate of the US Marines’ Camp Schwab in Nago, Okinawa, as the Japanese government started a drilling survey with a jack-up barge off the Henoko district of Nago to relocate the US Futenma airbase there. — KYODO NEWS

Photo taken on 18 Aug, 2014, shows the Thai national police headquarters in Bangkok. The lawyer of a Japanese man suspected of fathering at least 15 surrogate babies submitted the same day a DNA sample to Thai police investigating a case of nine pairs of surrogate babies and nannies found in an apartment in Bangkok early that month, to be used in paternity testing to verify his claim to be the biological father. — KYODO NEWS

RIYADH, 19 Aug — Saudi Arabia has executed four men for possession of hashish, domestic media reported, taking to 17 the number of people put to death in the conservative Islamic kingdom in two weeks and prompting disquiet from international rights groups.

Saudi Arabia’s Sharia Islamic legal code is not codified and gives extensive powers to individual judges to base verdicts and sentences on their own interpretation of Muslim law.

Activists say the system means similar punishments can result in very different sentences. Judges can also prevent defendants from having access to lawyers and can close their courtrooms to outside scrutiny.

Hadi bin Saleh Abdullah al-Mutlaq, Munefeh bin Jaber Zayed al-Yami, Ali bin Jaber Zayed al-Yami and Awadh bin Saleh Abdullah al-Mutlaq, who were executed on Monday, were from Najran on the kingdom’s southern border with Yemen, official media reported.

International human rights watchdog Amnesty International said the men were two sets of brothers from the same extended family and that the confessions their sentence was based on may have been obtained through torture.

It said the offense had taken place in 2007 and members of the family had later been warned by the government not to contact Amnesty. — Reuters

Former chiefs of S Korean cyber command charged with political intervention

SEUL, 19 Aug — Two former chiefs of South Korean cyber command were charged with being involved in posting political comments online before the presidential election and general election in 2012, Seoul’s Defence Ministry said on Tuesday.

The ministry’s investigation team announced a final conclusion on its months-long probe into the alleged political intervention, saying officials of the cyber command’s psychological warfare team posted comments in favor of or against some political parties and politicians “beyond the bound of normal operations.”

The two former cyber command chiefs failed to take proper actions though they were notified of such operations in violation of the military criminal act, which bans a political intervention, the ministry said.

A total of 21 former and current officials of the cyber command, including the two chiefs, faced criminal charges, higher than 10 officials subject to the interim investigation result was unveiled in December last year.

The cyber command has posted, since its creation in January 2010, nearly 800,000 comments in the cyberspace, among which some 7,100 comments favoured or went against certain political parties or politicians.

The investigation team, however, noted there were no organized attempts found to interfere with the presidential election in cooperation with other government agencies such as the spy agency.

South Korea was rattled last year by allegations that the cyber command and the intelligence agency attempted to intervene in the 2012 presidential election by posting online comments in favour of then ruling party candidate and now President Park Geun-hye and against her archrival Moon Jae-in, candidate for the main opposition party.

Then Defence Minister Kim Kwan-jin, who now serves as the national security adviser to President Park, was found not to be notified about the case at that time, the probe result showed. — Xinhua

Japanese officials and other relevant parties — before being delivered to the Lad Prawo police station in northeastern Bangkok, he said.

He said the Japanese man, who is not in Thailand, is willing to cooperate with Thai officials and has even purchased free air tickets to question him in Japan.

Early this month, Thai authorities found nine pairs of surrogate babies and nannies found in an apartment in Bangkok early that month, to be used in paternity testing to verify his claim to be the biological father. — KYODO NEWS

Photo taken on 18 Aug, 2014, shows the Thai national police headquarters in Bangkok. The lawyer of a Japanese man suspected of fathering at least 15 surrogate babies submitted the same day a DNA sample to Thai police investigating a case of nine pairs of surrogate babies and nannies found in an apartment in Bangkok early that month, to be used in paternity testing to verify his claim to be the biological father. — KYODO NEWS

People lodge a protest on 18 Aug, 2014, in front of the gate of the US Marines’ Camp Schwab in Nago, Okinawa, as the Japanese government started a drilling survey with a jack-up barge off the Henoko district of Nago to relocate the US Futenma airbase there. — KYODO NEWS

Photo taken on 18 Aug, 2014, shows the Thai national police headquarters in Bangkok. The lawyer of a Japanese man suspected of fathering at least 15 surrogate babies submitted the same day a DNA sample to Thai police investigating a case of nine pairs of surrogate babies and nannies found in an apartment in Bangkok early that month, to be used in paternity testing to verify his claim to be the biological father. — KYODO NEWS

Joint foreign policy a must for joining EU

BELGRADE, 19 Aug — Serbia’s EU accession talks are progressing well, but Belgrade will have to comply with the joint foreign policy at the time of joining the EU, says Peter Stano, spokesperson of EU Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Fuele. Since the start of Serbia’s accession talks with the EU, 18 out of 35 chapters have been subject to analytical screening, Stano said.

The reports for the significant chapters 23 and 24 have been adopted and the Serbian government is already working on action plans for them, Stano told the Belgrade-based Vecem je novosti daily.

The opening of one or more chapters depends on the decision of EU member states, and comes when they feel that everything in the process is ready and that the negotiations may begin, Stano explained.

The EU is not forcing anyone to do anything, Stano said, adding that Serbia made a voluntary choice when it submitted its EU membership application.

Speaking about the EU sanctions on Russia, which he said have been imposed on clear legal grounds due to an illegal annexation of the Crimea and continued destabilization of Ukraine, he said that there are third countries that comply with them.

As a membership candidate, Serbia is expected to fully comply with all EU foreign policy decisions at the time of joining the EU, Stano noted.

He said that he has no doubts about Serbia’s commitment to the dialogue with Pristina, and added that European integrations are a comprehensive process of reforms and establishing compliance with EU rules and standards.

This does not only include work on one chapter, but on all 35 chapters gradually — and although there is no dialogue under way due to the post-election situation in Kosovo, Serbia is continuing to work on significant matters, Stano said.

The integrations are not a result or a reflection of developments over a few weeks or months within a certain period of time, but of continued reform efforts and resolve over several years, Stano concluded.

Tainog

THAI police receive DNA sample of Japanese man in surrogacy case

BANGKOK, 19 Aug — The lawyer of a Japanese man suspected of fathering at least 15 surrogate babies on Monday submitted a DNA sample to Thai police to be used in paternity testing to verify his claim to be the biological father.

The Thai lawyer told reporters the 24-year-old businessman, who has not been charged with any crime, wants to not only prove that he fathered the babies and also to clear his name as he was not involved with anything illegal. The sample was collected in Japan — witnessed and approved by
**WORLD**

**Backed by US strikes, Iraq Kurds retake strategic dam**

**Baghdad,** 19 Aug — Iraqi and Kurdish forces recaptured Iraq’s biggest dam from Islamist militants with the help of US air strikes to secure a vital strategic objective in fighting that threatens to break up the country, Kurdish and US officials said on Monday.

US fighter, bomber and drone aircraft took part in the operation to take the Mosul Dam, the Pentagon said. The strikes damaged or destroyed six armed vehicles, a light armoured vehicle and other equipment.

The dam had given the militants control over power and water supplies, and any breach of the vulnerable structure would have threatened thousands of lives, US President Barack Obama said. Iraqi and Kurdish forces had retaken the dam with US help. US air strikes this month are the first in Iraq since the United States pulled out in 2011.

The Islamic State had accused the US of stalling a possible deal, although the circle of Israeli positions near the Mosul Dam, the Pentagon said. The strikes damaged or destroyed six armed vehicles, a light armoured vehicle and other equipment.

“The Israeli delegation has been instructed to insist on security requirements. The moment there is an agreement, the cabinet will be called for discussions,” said the official, who asked not to be identified.

**Israel, Palestinians renew truce but see risk of more Gaza violence**

**GAZA/CAIRO,** 19 Aug — The chief Palestinian delegate to truce talks with Israel warned on Tuesday that Gaza violence could erupt anew unless progress is made toward a lasting deal ahead of a midnight deadline in Egyptian-brokered talks.

After a last-minute agreement was stuck to extend by 24 hours a deadline to reach a truce, Azzam al-Ahmad, senior leader of President Mahmoud Abbas’s mainstream Fatah movement, said there had been “no progress on any point” in talks aimed at resolving the Gaza conflict.

“We hope that every minute of the coming 24 hours will be used to reach an agreement, and if not (successful), the circle of violence will continue,” Ahmad said.

He accused Israel of “manoeuvring and stall- ing” as gaps on key issues continued to dog efforts to achieve a long-term deal between Israel and militant groups in the Gaza Strip, dominated by Hamas Islamists, which would allow reconstruction aid to flow in after five weeks of fighting.

An Israeli government official said Israeli delegations were still in Cairo poring over details of a possible deal, although the parties had not yet agreed a draft.

“The Israeli delegation has been instructed to insist on security requirements. The moment there is an agreement, the cabinet will be called for discussions,” said the official, who asked not to be identified.

Senior Hamas official Moussa Abu Marzouk accused Israel of stalling and insisted in a post on his Twitter account that his group “will never cede any demands for a comprehensive deal.

A senior Palestinian official in Gaza said sticking points to an agreement were Hamas’s demands to build a seaport and an airport, which Israeli wants to discuss only at a later stage.

 İsrail, which launched its offensive on 8 July after a surge in Hamas rocket fire across the border, has shown scant interest in making sweeping concessions, and has called for the disarming of militant groups in the enclave of 1.8 million people.

Hamas has said that laying down its weapons is not an option.

**Obama urges Iraqis to unite because ‘the wolf's at the door’**

**WASHINGTON,** 19 Aug — US President Barack Obama urged Iraqis on Monday to quickly form an inclusive government to unite against Islamic militants, warning “the wolf’s at the door” and that US air strikes can only accomplish so much.

Speaking to reporters at the White House, Obama vowed to avoid the kind of “mission creep” that could deepen the US military’s involvement in Iraq to repulse Islamic State militants seen increasingly as a threat not just to Iraq but to the entire region.

Obama emerged from talks with his top national security aides about Iraq to declare US air strikes had helped Iraqi Kurdish forces take the Mosul Dam from the militants, averting a possible breach of the structure that could end up flooding Baghdad.

Displaced people from the minority Yazidi sect, who fled the violence in the Iraqi town of Sinjar, march in a demonstration at the Iraqi-Turkish border crossing in Zakho district of the Dohuk Governorate of the Iraqi Kurdistan Province on 17 Aug, 2014. —REUTERS

**WASHINGTON,** 19 Aug — US President Barack Obama urged Iraqis on Monday to quickly form an inclusive government to unite against Islamic militants, warning “the wolf’s at the door” and that US air strikes can only accomplish so much.

Speaking to reporters at the White House, Obama vowed to avoid the kind of “mission creep” that could deepen the US military’s involvement in Iraq to repulse Islamic State militants seen increasingly as a threat not just to Iraq but to the entire region.

Obama emerged from talks with his top national security aides about Iraq to declare US air strikes had helped Iraqi Kurdish forces take the Mosul Dam from the militants, averting a possible breach of the structure that could end up flooding Baghdad.

Israel, which launched its offensive on 8 July after a surge in Hamas rocket fire across the border, has shown scant interest in making sweeping concessions, and has called for the disarming of militant groups in the enclave of 1.8 million people.

Hamas has said that laying down its weapons is not an option.

**Israel, Palestinians renew truce but see risk of more Gaza violence**

**GAZA/CAIRO,** 19 Aug — The chief Palestinian delegate to truce talks with Israel warned on Tuesday that Gaza violence could erupt anew unless progress is made toward a lasting deal ahead of a midnight deadline in Egyptian-brokered talks.

After a last-minute agreement was stuck to extend by 24 hours a deadline to reach a truce, Azzam al-Ahmad, senior leader of President Mahmoud Abbas’s mainstream Fatah movement, said there had been “no progress on any point” in talks aimed at resolving the Gaza conflict.

“We hope that every minute of the coming 24 hours will be used to reach an agreement, and if not (successful), the circle of violence will continue,” Ahmad said.

He accused Israel of “manoeuvring and stalling” as gaps on key issues continued to dog efforts to achieve a long-term deal between Israel and militant groups in the Gaza Strip, dominated by Hamas Islamists, which would allow reconstruction aid to flow in after five weeks of fighting.

An Israeli government official said Israeli delegations were still in Cairo poring over details of a possible deal, although the parties had not yet agreed a draft.

“The Israeli delegation has been instructed to insist on security requirements. The moment there is an agreement, the cabinet will be called for discussions,” said the official, who asked not to be identified.

Senior Hamas official Moussa Abu Marzouk accused Israel of stalling and insisted in a post on his Twitter account that his group “will never cede any demands for a comprehensive deal.

A senior Palestinian official in Gaza said sticking points to an agreement were Hamas’s demands to build a seaport and an airport, which Israeli wants to discuss only at a later stage.

Israel, which launched its offensive on 8 July after a surge in Hamas rocket fire across the border, has shown scant interest in making sweeping concessions, and has called for the disarming of militant groups in the enclave of 1.8 million people.

Hamas has said that laying down its weapons is not an option.

Since 8 August, the US military has conducted a total of 68 air strikes in Iraq, 35 of which were in support of Iraqi forces near the Mosul Dam.

The president’s meetings came on a brief stop in Washington before he returns to his two-week vacation on the Massachusetts island of Martha’s Vineyard.

Obama is adamant that he will not allow the United States to replay the Iraq war begun by his predecessor, George W Bush. He said Iraqis should not get a false sense of complacency from his decision this month to use airstrikes against the militants.

“Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Iraq who now’s the time to let the foot off the gas and return to the kind of normalcy that has so weakened the country generally,” Obama said.

A new USA Today/ Pew Research Centre poll found on Monday that Americans are increasing-ly inclined to say the United States has a responsibility to respond to rising violence in Iraq.
PRE-SCHOOL BOOKS—A PREREQUISITE FOR CHILDREN’S LITERATURE

By Maung Hlaing

No one can deny that hundreds of thousands of books for children are being published all over the world today. The writers for children produce their work in accordance with the age groups and types of their work for children have become varied and many. They can be classified into picture books, comic journals, pictorials, modern short stories, science stories, tales and creative stories, children’s novels, drama scripts, humour and translation of literary works.

Writers are doing so simply because they have goodwill, or cetana to inspire the children to read more. While producing literary works for children, writers and scholars come to realize that books for pre-school children make the children take interest in reading.

By nature, a child takes great pleasure in becoming able to read some words. According to the educational theorists, however, the excitement lades when the texts the child must read force him to reread the same word endlessly. Word recognition deteriorates into empty rote learning, when it does not lead directly into the reading of meaningful content. The longer it takes the child to advance from “decoding” (word recognition) to meaningful reading, the more likely it becomes that his pleasure in books will evaporate.

The educational theorists conclude that a child’s ability to read depends on his learning pertinent skills. That is why they think that children of 3 to 5 age-group should become accustomed to the books without texts, before they go to school. Only when the children come to appreciate the books of illustrations without texts, will they be interested in reading both school text books and other reading materials. From the very beginning, the child must be convinced that his learning pertinent skills are only a means to achieve a goal—the only goal of importance is that he becomes literate.

As a result, he comes to enjoy literature.

It is for this reason that pre-school books can be called the source of children’s literature. Literary works for pre-school children are common to Myanmar children. You may see one page or half-page with out texts in Swwe Thway Journal published by San Pay Beikman of the Printing and Publishing Enterprise under the Ministry of Information and other children’s journals published by the private sector. Pre-school going age, indeed, is the golden time to make the memory and mind of the children creative. We can introduce them to pre-school books at this very stage, otherwise children may keep on wondering in the streets or playing around. Besides, through pre-school books, we can provide our dear ones with information, education, amusement and recreation. At the same time, we can stimulate their creative imagination.

Another reason is that without pre-school books, children may remain unfamiliar with the books and when they go to school and suddenly encounter the textbooks, they may develop a sorts of aversion to books. As a result, they shirk reading and keep on avoiding. We can conclude that the child who has not gone through the pre-school books cannot become a good reader in future.

Grandmothers can tell the children stories and sing lullaby. However, this is and oral education at pre-school stage. It is the book that can widen their imagination and quest.

Today, some developed countries have many kinds of books for pre-school children. In some countries and under-developed countries, however, they have very few books for pre-school children until now. Due to the lack of advanced technology, low rate of book—buying habit of the parents and financial difficulties of their publishers, they are reluctant to invest in this field.

Regarding issues and contents, it can be divided into two groups: story picture books (of folktales and creative stories) and picture books for knowledge on science (of life and animals and plants). Prior to starting illustrations for the world classic picture books and outstanding illustrations for children’s books in the developed countries have to be studied in depth so that the children can learn the sophisticated styles of expressions could be given in.

Whatever it may be, the objectives of the pre-school children are:

1. To let children have fun with and stimulated interest in books;
2. To nurture the reading habit and prepared them for reading skill; and
3. To acquaint children with the style of life of children in other countries.

If we want to raise the standard of the general public’s cultural and scientific education for building a modernized country, we have to attach importance to the beginners. In other words, we must produce as many beautiful and nice books as we can for the pre-school children.

Reading is a crucial element in an enriching and successful life. Serious reading can change our lives. Furthermore, without good reading skills, the subject matter of any discipline is incomprehensible.

It is reading with which people can achieve intellectual development and reasoning power.

Literature can change not only living standard of an individual but also family, community and society. Encouragement for reading habit of children has become primary importance.

Let us inculcate our kids with a reading habit through pre-school books before they go to school. I am looking forward to the participation of publishers who are interested in pre-school books.

Teaching aid competition held at college in Chanayethazan Township

Mandaly, 19 Aug—The Mandaly Education College under the Department of Education, Planning and Training of the Ministry of Education held a use-of-teaching-aid contest at the hall of the college in Chanayethazan Township of Mandaly on 15 August.

Principal Daw Khin Mya Thet of the college explained the purpose of holding such an event as well as “the student-centred academic system,” with officials from the literature department of the college explaining the different types of teaching aids.

Thitha Ko Ko (Mandaly)
Local entrepreneurs, Indian businessmen to increase cooperation on industrial production

Mandalay, 19 Aug — The Mandalay-based Indian Consulate General and the Mandalay Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry jointly organized a meeting on industrial cooperation between entrepreneurs from India’s city of Kolkata and entrepreneurs from Mandalay Region CCI as well as businessmen from Mandalay and Monywa, with senior officials discussing details at the talks held on Monday in Chanayethazan Township of Mandalay Region.

Mobile clinic provides health care services to rural people in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area

Nay Pyi Taw, 19 Aug — The Nay Pyi Taw Women’s Affairs Organization and Nay Pyi Taw Council Health Department jointly provided community-based health services with a mobile clinic stationed at the Basic Education Post-Primary School in Gwaygyo Village of Ottarathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on 16 August.

Theatrical performers form cooperative society in Nay Pyi Taw

Nay Pyi Taw, 19 Aug — The Nay Pyi Taw Council Area Theatrical Performers Association held a coordination meeting at the theatre in Tabaung Pagoda Ground in Pyinmana on 15 August to form a cooperative society.

Extension to be built for basic education high school in Ayadaw Township of Sagaing Region

Ayadaw, 19 Aug — A ceremony to drive stake for the construction of a one-storey reinforced concrete building has been held at the Basic Education Middle School in Gethahmway Village in Sagaing Region recently, with local authorities and construction officials saying the new school building will cost over K40 million.

Water tank and pipelines provided to rural people

Nay Pyi Taw, 19 Aug — Namkhon Company has donated a 20-foot water tank and water pipeline to officials in Mayesaw Village of Natmauk Township in Magyizauk plantations in Magyizauk.

Departmental officials inspect cotton plantations in Ayadaw Township

Ayadaw, 19 Aug — Officials visited two acres of Shwedaung-8 cotton plantations in Magyizauk Village-tract of Ayadaw Township of Sagaing Region on Monday.

Indian Consul-General Dr Nadakumar and Vice Chairman of Mandalay Region CCI U Mya Win attended the meeting during which entrepreneurs deliberated on production of shutting, solar panels and LED bulbs, solar-applied products, 3D image production, bio-gas production, aluminum doors, value-added wood products, and bronze, metal and steel wares.

Tha Ha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Myanmar imports medicine and industrial raw materials from India and exports agricultural produce, officials said.

Large-leaved trees and carry out sanitation work at the school. To fund part of the construction of the school building, Aungsitha Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Ticakhana handed over K20 million as rural development depends heavily on private donations.

Tha Ha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

U Sai Loi Kham inaugurating the water tank and pipeline.

According to officials, the construction cost K9.5 million and was mainly funded by private donors.

Tha Ha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Aungsitha Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Ticakhana handing over K20 million as rural development depends heavily on private donations.

Aungsitha Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Ticakhana handing over K20 million as rural development depends heavily on private donations.

Aungsitha Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Ticakhana handing over K20 million as rural development depends heavily on private donations.
Russian sanctions threaten both Europe’s farmers and policymakers

PARIS, Aug 19 — Pascal Sauveteur, an apple farmer in Poitou-Charentes on France’s Atlantic coast, has a head¬ache beyond the usual concerns about weather and tree fungus—Polish apples. As the European Union’s second biggest apple producer, Poland has some 700,000 tonnes of the fruit it usually sells to Russia but can’t, because Moscow has a food embargo on many EU and US goods as part of tit-for-tat sanctions related to the Ukraine crisis.

Many of those Polish apples will inevitably head for western Europe, potentially displacing their more expensive European rivals. Others will go to markets in Asia and the Middle East, traditionally supplied by EU countries such as France. “What’s really sending shivers down my spine is the ricochet effect,” said Sauveteur, sales manager of Pom’ Deux Serves cooperative. “These apples from eastern Europe that can’t be sold to Russia and will be sent to western Europe—it’s obvious it’s going to hurt, a lot.”

Apples are just one element in an unfolding problem for Europe’s farmers and its central bank policymakers. From Polish apples to French pork and Greek peaches, exporters to Russia may either have to slash prices or destroy produce it. It is just about the last thing that the European Central Bank wants to see as it struggles with a flattening economy and worries about deflation.

George Polychronakis of the European Central Bank wants to slash prices or destroy produce. It is just about the last thing that the European Central Bank wants to see as it struggles with a flattening economy and worries about deflation.

George Polychronakis of the European Central Bank wants to slash prices or destroy produce. It is just about the last thing that the European Central Bank wants to see as it struggles with a flattening economy and worries about deflation.

Russia were halted when the embargo hit. Greece exported 160,000 tonnes of fruit to Russia last year, worth 180 million euros to the crisis-hit EU member.

“They’ll either have to sell it at any price to countries along the way or be forced to bring it back to Greece where it will be destroyed,” he said.

“Over supply will drag down prices for other goods and that will have a domino effect on the entire market. Even today, I went to the supermarket to buy peaches for myself and they were cheaper than three days ago.”

It is also not just fruit.

“In total, a million tonnes of pork, poultry and beef from the EU will remain on the market (rather than go to Russia). It’s a very big blow,” said Paul Rouche, general manager in charge of pork for the French meat trade union SNIV. —Reuters

Dozens killed in attack on convoy, Ukraine says; rebels deny firing rocket

NEW YORK, Aug 19 — The US Federal Aviation Administration has barred all American airlines from flying over Syria, saying the ongoing conflict poses a “serious potential threat.”

The FAA had previously warned American carriers to avoid flying over Syria. The new rule requires operators to contact the FAA before operating in the airspace.

The agency said the move was taken after “up¬dated assessment of risk” and a lack of airlines wishing to fly in the airspace.

The ongoing armed conflict and volatile secu¬rity environment in Syria poses a serious potential threat to civil aviation,” the FAA said in a statement.

Airlines have been paying close attention to flight paths over conflict zones since Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 was downed by a suspected surface-to-air missile last month while flying over eastern Ukraine, where pro-Russian separatists are fighting Ukrainian troops.

All 298 people on board died. Syria is in the mid¬dle of a civil war in which 170,000 people have been killed since 2011.

The FAA also said “opposition elements” had warned civilian airlines not to provide service to Syria. Armed extremist groups in the country are known to be equipped with anti-aircraft weapons that could threaten civil aircraft, the agency said.

Reuters

US bars all American airlines from flying over Syria

KIEV, Aug 19 — Doz¬ens of people, including women and children, were killed as they fled fighting in eastern Ukraine on Mon¬day when their convoy of buses was hit by rocket fire, military spokesmen said.

Ukraine accused pro-Russian rebels of target¬ing the convoy, which it said was bearing white flags when it was hit near the eastern city of Luhansk. The separatists denied re¬sponsibility for the attack and one rebel leader sug¬gested the incident might never have taken place.

“The rebels were ex¬pecting the convoy and destroyed it entirely,” military spokesman Andry Ly¬senko told journalists. “We haven’t been able to count the number of victims ... dozens (were killed).”

The convoy had been in an area of fierce fighting between government forces and the separatists when it came under fire from rebel Grad and mortar launchers, the spokesmen said.

“A powerful artillery strike hit a refugee convoy near the area of Kryvyshchavtse and Novosvitlivka. The force of the blow on the convoy was so strong that people were burned alive in the vehicles — they weren’t able to get themselves out,” military spokesman Anatoly Pro¬shin told Ukrainian news channel 112.ua.

Describing the attack as a “bloody crime,” Ly¬senko said: “A lot of people have been killed including women and children. The number of the dead is being established.”

A rebel leader denied his forces had the military capability to conduct such an attack, and accused Kiev forces of regularly attacking the area and also using Russian-made Grad missiles.

Reuters

Smoke rises after what activists said was an air raid by Syrian government forces at the eastern Syrian city of Raqqa on 18 Aug, 2014. — Reuters

Smoke rises after what activists said was an air raid by Syrian government forces at the eastern Syrian city of Raqqa on 18 Aug, 2014. — Reuters
Impact of stress on emotions linked to genes: study

V IENNA, 19 Aug — The genetic conditions of each individual person determine what effect stress has on their emotions, researchers from the Medical University of Vienna in Austria have claimed in a new study.

The fact that people react differently to identical stressful life events, such as some managing to persevere while others break down and even fall ill, is determined by a complex interplay in depression gene variants along with environmental factors, the University said on Monday, according to an Austria Press Agency report. The Viennese research team, in conjunction with international partners, found the hippocampus in the brain, a switching station that processes emotions and is a central interface in the stress process, would lose volume over the long term when confronted with stress, which it interprets as distress.

This was visible in depressed patients and accounts for some of their clinical symptoms. On the other hand, it was observed that positive forms of stress (eustress) as can occur in emotionally stimulating social situations were capable of leading to an increase in the volume of the hippocampus.

People with genes that predispose them to a higher likelihood of depression perceive various life events such as deaths in the family, divorce, and job loss more negatively and thus negatively affects the volume of their hippocampus.

Those with very few or none of these genes may even perceive the same life event in a positive light, and overall maintain a larger-volume hippocampus, the researchers said.

Study leader Luke Pezawas said the research highlighted the importance of gene-environment interactions as determining hippocampus volume.

He added the results are important in understanding neurobiological processes involved in stress-related diseases such as depression or post-traumatic stress disorder.

Microsoft cloud service Azure restored after partial outage

NEW YORK, 19 Aug — Microsoft said it resolved an outage on its Azure cloud computing service, which occurred across multiple regions.

Partial disruptions began as of 1.40 pm ET on 18 August, the company said on the Azure website.

Microsoft Azure is a cloud-based platform for creating, deploying and maintaining online applications and services such as websites and web-hosted applications. The service, which is used by governments and corporations around the world, supports various programming languages, tools and frameworks. The company said Azure services such as virtual machines, cloud services, mobile services, service bus, site recovery, HDInsight, websites and StorSimple were down due to interruptions in multiple centres.

The core platform components were working properly throughout and only a small subset of customers were affected by the outage, Microsoft said.

Spacewalking cosmonauts launch satellite, set up studies

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla, 19 Aug — A pair of Russian cosmonauts began their work on Monday outside the International Space Station to toss out a small satellite for a university in Peru, install science experiments and tackle some housekeeping chores.

First out of the hatch was cosmonaut Oleg Artemyev, who stood on a ladder outside the station’s Pers airlock to release a 2.2-pound (1-kg), 4-inch (10-cm) cube-shaped satellite built by students at the National University of Engineering in Lima, Peru.

Video broadcast on NASA Television showed the satellite, called Chusquir-1, tumbling away from the back of the station as it sailed about 260 miles (418 km) above the southern Pacific Ocean.

The solar-powered spacecraft, whose name means “messenger” in the Quechua language of the Incas, is outfitted with visible light and infrared cameras to take pictures of Earth and sensors to measure temperature and pressure as it orbits.

Artemyev was then joined by spacewalker Alexander Skvortsov to install a European package of experiments to the outside of the Russian Zvezda module. The experiments include biomaterials and extremophiles, which are organisms that can live in extremely hostile environments. Scientists hope to use information about how the organisms fare in the highly radioactive and extreme temperatures of space to devise life-detection techniques for future robotic Mars missions.

The cosmonauts also installed a reinforcing clamp for a communications antenna they attached during their last spacewalk in June. Monday’s to-do list included taking samples of residue on the outside of some of Zvezda’s windows and setting up an experiment to measure how plumes from rocket engine burns may be impacting parts of station.

Artemyev and Skvortsov breathed through their planned six-hour spacewalk, which began shortly after 10 am EDT and was back inside the station’s airlock 45 minutes early.

Artemyev, Skvortsov and NASA station commander Steve Swanson are five months into a planned six-month mission. Also aboard the complex are NASA astronaut Reid Wiseman, European astronaut Alexander Gerst and Russian cosmonaut Maxim Surava, who arrived on 28 May.

The station, a $100 billion research laboratory for materials and life science experiments, technology demonstrations and other microgravity research, is a partnership of 15 nations that has been occupied by rotating crews of astronauts and cosmonauts since November 2000.

BlackBerry creates new unit for potential high-growth assets

TORONTO, 19 Aug — BlackBerry Ltd said on Monday it had created a new unit to house what many consider to be its most promising assets — cryptographic software, its QNX embedded software and Project Ion platform for connecting devices.

The Canadian smartphone maker, which CEO John Chen is trying to revamp, said Sandeep Chennakeshu will start immediately as president of the BlackBerry Technology Solutions unit.

The division will also include a portfolio of 44,000 patents and the Paratek antenna tech company purchased by BlackBerry in 2012.

Chen took the reins last year and has worked to stabilize the struggling handset business that made it a global giant while earning more money from its services and software.

“In any good turnaround, you focus in on the immediate tasks at hand but you also look down the road and say ‘Where do we want to be? And what assets do we have to get us there?'”

Gillis said he did not think Chen had shepherded the assets together in one place to prepare it for a sale.

BlackBerry’s QNX software powers its latest phones, but also helps run car infotainment panels, nuclear reactors and massive Internet routers.

“The company hopes it will play a major role in the nascent industry forming around the so-called “Internet of things” — the idea that all sorts of static devices could be connected to the Internet in order to send and receive information and commands.

“Combining all these assets into a single business unit led by Sandeep will create operational synergies and new revenue streams, furthering our turnaround strategy,” Chen said in a statement.

Chennakeshu himself is a named inventor on 73 patents, BlackBerry said, and was previously chief technology officer at Sony-Ericsson and president of Ericsson Mobile Platforms.

BlackBerry shares traded up 1.8 percent to C$10.63 on the Toronto Stock Exchange, while on Nasdaq they rose to $9.76.
Attacks on aid workers worldwide hit worst levels on record

Workers unload bags of humanitarian aid inside a warehouse in the Duma neighbourhood of Damascus on 20 March, 2014. — Reuters

LONDON, 19 Aug — The number of attacks on aid workers soared last year to the highest level on record, with Afghanistan the most dangerous country to be a humanitarian a report on Tuesday said.

In all, 155 aid workers were killed, 171 wounded and 134 kidnapped in 2013 — a rise of 66 percent compared with 2012, according to the Humanitarian Outcomes report, published on World Humanitarian Day.

It said three quarters of the attacks took place in Afghanistan, Syria, South Sudan, Pakistan and Sudan amid worsening violence. There were 81 attacks in Afghanistan alone.

The death toll for 2014 shows little sign of abating. Already, 79 humanitarians have been killed this year, including several in Gaza, according to provisional figures.

“One aid worker killed in the line of duty is one too many,” Valerie Amos, the UN emergency relief coordinator, said in a statement ahead of a memorial service for aid workers to be held in London’s Westminster Abbey on Tuesday.

“Nurses, engineers, logisticians and drivers … all take great risk doing their work in sometimes extremely dangerous and difficult circumstances,” she added.

The UN General Assembly in 2008 declared 19 August World Humanitarian Day to mark the day in 2003 when 22 people who were killed in a bomb attack on UN offices in Baghdad.

UN chief calls for protection of rights in Missouri protests

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon

UNITED NATIONS, 19 Aug — UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called on US authorities on Monday to ensure the protection of the rights of protesters in Ferguson, Missouri, where there have been demonstrations and rioting over the fatal police shooting of an unarmed black teenager.

“The Secretary-General calls on the authorities to ensure that the rights to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression are protected,” UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric told reporters.

“He calls on all to exercise restraint, for law enforcement officials to abide by US and international standards in dealing with demonstrators,” Dujarric said. — Reuters

Police fired tear gas, stun grenades at protesters in Missouri town

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon

FERGUSON, 19 Aug — Police fired tear gas and stun grenades at protesters in Ferguson, Missouri on Monday, after days of unrest sparked by the fatal shooting of an unarmed black teenager by a white policeman.

The police action came after hours of street protests that had been tense but mostly peaceful, Reuters witnesses said, adding that a projectile hurled from a crowd of protesters shattered on the ground and erupted into flames.

Protesters threw small projectiles, possibly rocks, at police clad in riot gear and flanked by armored vehicles.

Police arrested at least four people. One police officer was overheard on a CNN broadcast saying there was a “gunshot victim” as he ordered news media to clear the scene.

Missouri’s governor had lifted a curfew for the St. Louis suburb of Ferguson on Monday as National Guard troops were called out.

The National Guard deployment was the latest step by authorities to end the looting and burning of stores that have punctuated protests and stirred questions about race relations in the United States since the shooting death of Michael Brown, 18, on 9 August.

Governor Jay Nixon, who had declared a state of emergency for the town on Saturday and ordered the streets cleared for a curfew that ran from midnight to 5 a.m., said the National Guard would fall under the supervision of the Missouri Highway Patrol.

National Guard troops could be seen walking on the fringes of the gathering, keeping a distance from protesters.

President Barack Obama said he told the governor the use of the National Guard should be limited, and urged healing, instead of violence. Attorney General Eric Holder will travel to Ferguson on Wednesday, Obama said.

A specially equipped US ship finished neutralizing Syria's worst chemical arms

WASHINGTON, 19 Aug — A specially equipped US ship has finished neutralizing all 600 metric tons of the most dangerous of Syria’s chemical weapons components surrendered to the international community this year to avert threatened air strikes, the Pentagon said on Monday.

It said the Cape Ray, equipped with the US-developed Field Deployable Hydrolysis System, neutralized 581.5 metric tons of DF, a sarin precursor chemical, and 19.8 metric tons of HD, an ingredient of sulfur mustard, while afloat in the Mediterranean.

The vessel will travel to Finland and Germany in the next two weeks to unload the resulting effluent, which will undergo treatment as industrial waste to render it safer, a Pentagon spokeswoman said.

It was the first time chemical weapons components had been neutralized at sea, the Pentagon said.

Damascus agreed last September to a Russian proposal to give up its chemical weapons to avert threatened military strikes by the United States and France, which accused Syria of using the arms against opponents of President Bashar al-Assad.

A number of countries are involved in eliminating the chemical stockpiles. The United States was selected to dispose of the worst of the chemical weapons components because it had recently developed a mobile version of the hydrolysis system it uses for neutralizing chemical stockpiles.

The system uses substances and mixtures such as water, sodium hydroxide and sodium hypochlorite to neutralize bulk amounts of chemical warfare agents, according to the US Army’s Edgewood Chemical Biological Centre. Earlier this year, the hydrolysis system was placed aboard the Cape Ray, a 648-foot (198-metre) vessel that is part of the US Maritime Administration’s ready reserve force of 46 ships.

The ship was held at Rota, Spain, for several months due to Syrian delays in handing over its declared stockpiles of chemical agents. The Cape Ray began neutralizing the chemicals after picking them up from Italy in late June. — Reuters
Wednesday, 20 August, 2014

Weather report
BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is weak in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal. STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuation of weak monsoon.

Advertise with us!
For inquiries to place an advertisement in the NLM, please email: wallace.tun@gmail.com

TRADEMARK CAUTION
Staafford-Miller (Ireland) Limited of Clohaneen House, Vouglag Road, Dungarvan, Co Waterford, Republic of Ireland is the Owner and Sole Proprietor of the following trademark:

(Reg. No. 2V275/2008)
(Reg. No. 3V650/2004)

used in respect of - Class 3: Non-medicated toilet preparations, dentifrices, mouthwash and breath fresheners; oral care preparations, dental gels, bleaching preparations, tooth whitening preparations, tooth whitening accelerators, cosmetic stain removal preparations, medicated tooth polishing preparations, medicated tooth whitening preparations, medicated bleaching preparations)

Class 5: Medicinal oral care preparations, namely medicated mouthwash, medicated chewing gum and lozenges for dental hygiene.

Class 10: Dental care apparatus; flexible and disposable dental trays.

Class 21: Toothbrushes, toothpicks, dental floss, brushes and sponges; holders and adapters thereof.

Fraudulent imitation or unauthorized use or any other infringement whatsoever of this trademark will be dealt with according to law.

Theil Aung & B & R & L & B & L Advocate MYANMAR TRADEMARK AND PATENT LAW FIRM Email: mtpl@myanmarce.net Tel: 378318 G.P.O Box 695 Yangon. 20 August 2014

AMEN

Amgen thyroid drug succeeds in late-stage trial
NEW YORK, 19 Aug — Drugmaker Amgen Inc said its experimental drug to reduce thyroid levels in patients with chronic kidney disease met the main goal in a late-stage trial.

The drug, AMG 416, treats hyperparathyroidism, or excessive secretion of parathyroid hormone, in kidney disease patients.

The results follow the recent announcement of positive data from a placebo-controlled late-stage study of AMG 416, which was similar in design and size.

Reuters

Planning Department
Myanmar Petroleum Products Enterprise
Ministry of Energy, No. 60 Complex, Nay Pyi Taw

Japanese believed held in Syria said he planned to support rebels

DAMASCUS, 19 Aug — A Japanese man believed to have been captured in northern Syria by Islamic State militants said he came to the conflict-ravaged country in preparation for his plan to support rebels fighting the ruling Assad regime, a rebel leader said on Monday.

Haruma Yukawa, 42, reportedly said he wanted to open an office in Turkey, which borders Syria, to bring supplies to rebels. — Kyodo News

Ministry of Energy
Myanmar Petroleum Products Enterprise
No. 60 Complex, Nay Pyi Taw

Claims Day Notice
MV SHAHIR E KORD VOY NO (ISCC0050E)
Consignee of cargo carried on MV SHAHIR E KORD VOY NO (ISCC0050E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20.8.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: MS LAND & SEA LOGISTICS Phone No: 2301185

Claims Day Notice
MV YANGON STAR VOY NO ( )
Consignees of cargo carried on MV YANGON STAR VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20.8.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P 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 claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: MS CMA CGM LINE Phone No: 2301185

Claims Day Notice
MV DANU BHUM VOY NO (374N)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV DANU BHUM VOY NO (374N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20.8.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P 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 Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: MS INTERASIA LINES Phone No: 2301185

Claims Day Notice
MV WEST SCENT VOY NO ( )
Consignees of cargo carried on MV WEST SCENT VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20.8.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the 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 Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: MS KRUNG THON NAYA CO LTD Phone No: 2301186

Amgen thyroid drug succeeds in late-stage trial
NEW YORK, 19 Aug — Drugmaker Amgen Inc said its experimental drug to reduce thyroid levels in patients with chronic kidney disease met the main goal in a late-stage trial.

The drug, AMG 416, treats hyperparathyroidism, or excessive secretion of parathyroid hormone, in kidney disease patients.

The results follow the recent announcement of positive data from a placebo-controlled late-stage study of AMG 416, which was similar in design and size.

Reuters

Ministry of Energy
Myanmar Petroleum Products Enterprise
Invitation for Opened Tender (32014)

1. Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in Myanmar Kyats and United States Dollars (CIF Yangon).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No</th>
<th>Tender No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Qty</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>MPP/EL/MCY/CAP/T5</td>
<td>2,805 Gallons Bowser (Brand New)</td>
<td>20 Nos</td>
<td>Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>MPP/EL/MCY/CAP/T6</td>
<td>6,000 Liter 100 IGPB (Positive Displacement Liquid Controls, Branded)</td>
<td>20 Nos</td>
<td>Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>MPP/EL/MCY/CAP/T7</td>
<td>Air Conditioner</td>
<td>20 Nos</td>
<td>Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>MPP/EL/PITTS/T2</td>
<td>Tyre with Tube and Flap</td>
<td>20 Nos</td>
<td>Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>MPP/EL/MCY/CAP/T3</td>
<td>300 IGPB Fuel Transfer Centrifugal Pump (Engine Driven)</td>
<td>20 Nos</td>
<td>Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>MPP/EL/MCY/CAP/T4</td>
<td>Fire Fighting Angus Engine Driven Pump With Trailer Inductor</td>
<td>20 Nos</td>
<td>KYats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>MPP/EL/MCY/CAP/T5</td>
<td>Mercedes Refueler Engine Assembly with Clutch and Gear Box Assembly</td>
<td>20 Nos</td>
<td>Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>MPP/AV/T1</td>
<td>Aviation Gasoline 100LL</td>
<td>20 Nos</td>
<td>Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>MPP/AV/LUB/T1</td>
<td>Aviation Lubricating Oil &amp; Grease</td>
<td>20 Nos</td>
<td>Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>MPP/EL/MCY/T2</td>
<td>Filter Elements</td>
<td>20 Nos</td>
<td>Kyats</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Tender Closing Date & Time: 18-9-2014, 12:00 Hrs.

3. Tender documents are available at our office starting from 19-8-2014 during office hours and for further details please contact Phone: 067-411487.

Planning Department
Myanmar Petroleum Products Enterprise
Ministry of Energy, No60 Complex, Nay Pyi Taw

Japanese believed held in Syria said he planned to support rebels

DAMASCUS, 19 Aug — A Japanese man believed to have been captured in northern Syria by Islamic State militants said he came to the conflict-ravaged country in preparation for his plan to support rebels fighting the ruling Assad regime, a rebel leader said on Monday.

Haruma Yukawa, 42, reportedly said he wanted to open an office in Turkey, which borders Syria, to bring supplies to rebels. — Kyodo News

Japanese believed held in Syria said he planned to support rebels

DAMASCUS, 19 Aug — A Japanese man believed to have been captured in northern Syria by Islamic State militants said he came to the conflict-ravaged country in preparation for his plan to support rebels fighting the ruling Assad regime, a rebel leader said on Monday.

Haruma Yukawa, 42, reportedly said he wanted to open an office in Turkey, which borders Syria, to bring supplies to rebels. — Kyodo News

Japanese believed held in Syria said he planned to support rebels

DAMASCUS, 19 Aug — A Japanese man believed to have been captured in northern Syria by Islamic State militants said he came to the conflict-ravaged country in preparation for his plan to support rebels fighting the ruling Assad regime, a rebel leader said on Monday.

Haruma Yukawa, 42, reportedly said he wanted to open an office in Turkey, which borders Syria, to bring supplies to rebels. — Kyodo News

Japanese believed held in Syria said he planned to support rebels

DAMASCUS, 19 Aug — A Japanese man believed to have been captured in northern Syria by Islamic State militants said he came to the conflict-ravaged country in preparation for his plan to support rebels fighting the ruling Assad regime, a rebel leader said on Monday.

Haruma Yukawa, 42, reportedly said he wanted to open an office in Turkey, which borders Syria, to bring supplies to rebels. — Kyodo News
Actress Debbie Reynolds to receive SAG lifetime honour

LOS ANGELES, 19 Aug — Debbie Reynolds, the star of such enduring Hollywood films as "Singin’ in the Rain" and "How the West Was Won," will be honoured with a lifetime achievement award by her peers, the Screen Actors Guild said on Monday.

Reynolds, 82, will be given the accolade at the acting organization’s annual awards ceremony in January for her achievement as an actor, singer, dancer and for her efforts to preserve historical film, the guild said.

Actress Debbie Reynolds

co-founded in 1955. “Her generous spirit and unforgettable performances have entertained audiences across the globe, moving us all from laughter to tears and back again,” Ken Howard, the president of the SAG-AFTRA labour union, said in a statement.

Reynolds, known for her wholesome looks, starred opposite some of the leading male film stars of the 1950s and 1960s, including Gene Kelly, Frank Sinatra, Tony Curtis and Fred Astaire. Reuters

‘Creature 3D’ not a horror movie, says Bipasha Basu

MUMBAI, 19 Aug — Bipasha Basu has spooked the audience by acting in horror films ‘Raaz’ and ‘Aatma’. But she says her forthcoming film ‘Creature 3D’ does not belong to the genre.

“It’s the first Indian creature film and that was the most exciting part... also being done by Vikram Bhatt is great,” she said.

“I really didn’t know where we were going to head. We shot the entire film and it was completely on the basis of trust, Now ‘Creature’ has been made and it’s looking exciting,” she said.

“Anybody who thinks it’s a horror film doesn’t have the right information. It’s a film like ‘Jurassic Park’ or ‘Anaconda’. It’s action-oriented and adventurous film,” she said.

Also starring Imran Abbas, it is produced under the banner of T-Series and is slated to release on 12 September.

Gisele Bundchen leads pack as world’s highest paid model

NEW YORK, 19 Aug — With estimated earnings of $47 million during the past year from lucrative contracts and other business ventures, Brazilian supermodel Gisele Bundchen is the world’s highest paid model for the eighth consecutive year, Forbes.com said on Monday.

The 34-year-old wife of New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady and mother of two young children easily outpaced her closest competition, Dutch Victoria’s Secret model Doutzen Kroes, 29, with earnings of $8 million before taxes and fees, and fellow Brazilian Victoria’s Secret ‘angel’ Adriana Lima, 33, with the same amount.

“The Brazilian icon pocketed $47 million in the last 12 months before taxes and fees,” Forbes.com said about Bundchen, adding that she made $16 million more than her football player husband.

The model has contracts with fashion retailer H&M, the French fashion house Chanel and designer Carolina Herrera, among others, and has design deals for lingerie and sandals.

“Bundchen, who boasts 2.7 million Instagram followers, has earned $386 million from modelling since 2001,” according to Forbes.com.

Forbes calculated the earnings from June 2013 to June 2014 for the models and looked at income from cosmetics, endorsements, advertising and fragrance deals.

British model Kate Moss, 40, the face of luxury jeweler David Yurman, was also among the top earners, bringing in $7 million, as did American model and Sports Illustrated magazine covergirl Kate Upton, 22, who is a newcomer to the list and rounded out the top five models.

Other newcomers to the list of the 21 highest paid models who earned a combined total of $142 million include English model Cara Delevingne, 22, and American Karlie Kloss, 22.— Reuters
America’s cartoon cat Garfield gets TV makeover in Indonesia

Jakarta/Singapore, 19 Aug — The comic strip cat Garfield was created in America, but the animated television series based on the famous Jim Davis cartoon character is produced at a sprawling studio on the Indonesian resort island of Batam.

Infinite studios started in 1997 as a film post-production company with 13 people. In part building on the success of Garfield, it has diversified into creating its own content production as well as animation and visual effects, with facilities that employ 200 people in Indonesia and Singapore.

Southeast Asia has been emerging as a film production centre, with an expanding local workforce and growing exports to the region or even to the traditional creative powerhouses like the United States and Europe.

“The Southeast Asian region is very new to the media game. I think we’ve been in the business for about a decade or just over a decade, whereas the rest of the world has had a lot of time developing their creative economy,” Infinite Chief Executive Mike Wiluan told Reuters.

“I think it’s a great opportunity. When we go out to the world, we come out as a region as opposed to just coming out as a singular country and trying to compete within such a small region.”

The film industry in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam is worth a total of $1.15 billion in 2014 through ticket sales (box office) and cinema advertising, and is projected to jump nearly 17 percent to $1.34 billion by 2018, according to Pricewaterhouse-Coopers estimates. Britain’s Pinewood Studios Group, famous for its James Bond film franchise, partnered the Malaysian government’s investment arm Khazanah Nasional Berhad to open Pinewood Iskandar Malaysia Studios in June.

American studio The Weinstein Company will use the $170 million complex in the southern Malaysian state of Johor as the shooting site for “Marco Polo”, a series about the Italian merchant traveller from Venice, media reported. It will be shown on US video streaming service Netflix.

In Singapore, “Star Wars” creator Lucasfilm launched a visual effects and animation hub in January to work on Hollywood blockbuster films and bolster its marketing efforts in Asia.

“CREATION BIBLE”

The learning curve to animate Garfield, which started as a comic strip by Davis in 1978, is not too steep for Infinite’s team of animators who are mostly Indonesians, Wiluan said.

France’s Dargaud Media, which owns the rights to “The Garfield Show”, has come up with a “creation bible” which is followed by the subcontractors in the production process.

“It basically enables anyone to follow the instructions of how this character would look, feel and act,” Wiluan said.

“I guess why Garfield has been so successful all over the world is because it’s the adventure of a really cute cat and everyone understands it.”

On top of bringing to life characters originating in the West, Southeast Asian film makers are increasingly tapping on local culture to create unique content that appeals to both domestic and international markets.

Suarez makes winning return to action with new club Barca

Barcelona’s player Luis Suarez gestures to his coach Luis Enrique during the Joan Gamper Trophy soccer match against Mexico’s Club Leon at Nou Camp stadium in Barcelona on 18 Aug, 2014. — REUTERS

Barcelona, 19 Aug — Luis Suarez made his first appearance following his biting controversy for new side Barcelona and Neymar scored twice as the Spanish giants beat Mexican side Leon 6-0 in a pre-season friendly on Monday.

Suarez, named as a substitute at the Nou Camp, came on for the final 15 minutes in what was his first action since being banned for biting Giorgio Chiellini in Uruguay’s World Cup game with Italy on 24 June.

The striker was initially banned from all football activities for four months, but an appeal hearing last week allowed him to train with Barca and play friendlies.

Suarez, who cost Barcelo

a reported 81 million euros ($108m) from Liverpool, will not be allowed to play a competitive game for his new club until after his ban ends at the end of October. Attacking partner Neymar returned after fracturing a vertebra for Brazil in the World Cup quarter-finals against Colombia, and he coolly lifted the ball over keeper Williams Yarbrough for Barca’s second after Lionel Messi had headed home the opener.

Neymar flicked in another before half time, and after the break substitute Munir El Haddadi netted twice and Sandro Ramirez, another youth product, completed the scoring a minute from time. It was a new look Barcelona that took to the field against Leon following an overhaul of the side for the La Liga season, which starts this weekend.

Barcelona’s first season without silverware in six years has led to the arrival of Luis Enrique as coach. Suarez headed the list of reinforcements on the pitch.

Claudio Bravo started in goal following the departure of Victor Valdes, while another new signing, Jeremy Mathieu, partnered Javier Mascherano at the centre of defence.

Luis Enrique continued Barca’s trademark 4-3-3 formation that also saw new faces Ivan Rakitic and Rafinha slot in comfortably.

29 trapped in China coal mine blast

HUAIAN, (Anhui), 19 Aug — Twenty-nine people were trapped after a blast occurred in a coal mine in east China’s Anhui Province early Tuesday, rescuers said.

The accident occurred at 10:58 am in the Dongfang coal mine in Xiejiaxi District of Huaian City, when 39 miners were in the underground shaft, said the rescue headquarters.

Ten workers were lifted out of the mine after the blast. One of them was injured and sent to a hospital.

29 trapped in China coal mine blast

Huain, (Anhui), 19 Aug — Twenty-nine people were trapped after a blast occurred in a coal mine in east China’s Anhui Province early Tuesday, rescuers said.

The accident occurred at 10:58 am in the Dongfang coal mine in Xiejiaxi District of Huaian City, when 39 miners were in the underground shaft, said the rescue headquarters.

Ten workers were lifted out of the mine after the blast. One of them was injured and sent to a hospital.

29 trapped in China coal mine blast

Huain, (Anhui), 19 Aug — Twenty-nine people were trapped after a blast occurred in a coal mine in east China’s Anhui Province early Tuesday, rescuers said.

The accident occurred at 10:58 am in the Dongfang coal mine in Xiejiaxi District of Huaian City, when 39 miners were in the underground shaft, said the rescue headquarters.

Ten workers were lifted out of the mine after the blast. One of them was injured and sent to a hospital.

29 trapped in China coal mine blast

Huain, (Anhui), 19 Aug — Twenty-nine people were trapped after a blast occurred in a coal mine in east China’s Anhui Province early Tuesday, rescuers said.

The accident occurred at 10:58 am in the Dongfang coal mine in Xiejiaxi District of Huaian City, when 39 miners were in the underground shaft, said the rescue headquarters.

Ten workers were lifted out of the mine after the blast. One of them was injured and sent to a hospital.
**Burnley**, (England), 19 Aug — New signings Diego Costa and Cesc Fabregas made an instant impact for Chelsea as they launched their Premier League title bid with a confident 3-1 win at promoted Burnley on Monday.

Former Arsenal midfielder Fabregas, brought in from Barcelona during the close season, was influential throughout the game, having a hand in all three Chelsea goals and striking up an impressive midfield pairing with Eden Hazard.

Chelsea recovered from conceding a 14th minute goal, quickly turning on the style in an impressive half hour spell to go in 3-1 up at the break.

Jose Mourinho’s side were content to see out the game in the second half as Burnley, tipped by many for relegation, put in a creditable professional display after the Londoners had threatened to run away with the game. “I think we had a good reaction and the demand was there. It is tantamount, that mentality will be going which was important to what we are hoping to achieve against a top quality opponent so early in the campaign,” said Mourinho.

Mourinho had hoped to compete for Thibaut Courtois over Petr Cech in goal and the Belgian showed his quality shortly after the break to deny Arfield a second from a curling shot which he tipped wide.

**LONDON**, 19 Aug — Dutch 16-year-old Max Verstappen is set to become Formula One’s youngest ever driver after the Toro Rosso team announced on Monday that he will replace Frenchman Jean-Eric Vergne in their lineup next year.

Verstappen, son of former grand prix racer Jos, turns 17 only next month and is still too young to take a driving test in the Netherlands.

Even when he does turn 17, he will still have to wait a year before he is allowed to drive unaccompanied on public roads at home. The sport’s youngest driver to date is Spaniard Jaime Alguersuari, who made his debut with the same Red Bull-owned team in 2009 at the age of 19 and 125 days.

Alguersuari — whose arrival was questioned by some on safety grounds — was then discarded at the end of 2011 and reluctantly left the sport at an age where few others had even broken into it.

Verstappen has already built up an impressive resume, however, after starting in go-karts at the age of seven and coming from a racing family. He has won a string of karting titles, including the world championship at the age of 15, and is currently challenging for the European Formula Three title.

“We consider Max to be one of the most skilled young drivers of the new generation and we believe he has the necessary maturity and mental strength to take on this challenge successfully,” said team principal Franz Tost in a statement.

Verstappen will partner Russian Daniil Kvyat, who made his debut with the team this year at the age of 19 years and 324 days.

Kvyat joined Italy-based Toro Rosso from the junior GP3 series and has made a strong impression, becoming the youngest driver ever to score a point when he finished ninth on his debut in Australia.

The same Red Bull junior production line has produced four times world champion Sebastian Vettel, who took his first win with Toro Rosso before graduating to the main team, and the German’s Australian team mate Daniel Ricciardo.

“Ever since I was seven years old, Formula One has been my career goal, so this opportunity is truly a dream come true,” said Verstappen, who thanked his father and sponsors for their help.

**New York, 19 Aug —** Rafa Nadal has pulled out of the US Open title defence this month because of a wrist problem, the world number two said on Monday.

The 28-year-old Spaniard sustained the injury in practice last month and has been training with a cast on his right wrist, forcing him to miss the Rogers Cup in Toronto and last week’s Cincinnati Open.

“I am very sorry to announce I won’t be able to play at this year’s US Open,” Nadal said on his Twitter feed and on Facebook, “I am sure you understand that it is a very tough moment for me since it is a tournament I love and where I have great memories from fans, the night matches, so many things.

“Not much more I can do right now other than accept the situation and, as always in my case, work hard in order to be able to compete at the highest level once I am back.”

The 14-times grand slam winner also triumphed at Flushing Meadows in 2010.

Despite missing the entire North American hardcourt campaign, Nadal had hoped to compete in New York, previously posting a picture of himself working on court with his uncle and coach Toni with a black wrist support clearly visible.

The left-hander won his ninth French Open title in June but has not played since losing in the fourth round to Australian Nick Kyrgios at Wimbledon on 2 July.

It is another worrying setback for Nadal, who has had to battle back from injuries several times in his brilliant career. After being sidelined for seven months with a knee injury, he returned last season to win 10 titles including grand slams in Paris and New York.