CANCELLATION OF HOLDING JOINT PORTFOLIO

NAY PYI TAW, 9 April — Minister for Bamar National Affairs U Thet Win’s concurrent holding of the post of transport minister in the Mon State government has been cancelled, according to Order No (2/2015) of the President’s Office on Thursday.— MNA

APPOINTMENT OF MON STATE TRANSPORT MINISTER

NAY PYI TAW, 9 April — U Hla Tun, Mon State Hluttaw representative for Kyaikmaraw constituency No (1), has been appointed to the post of transport minister in the Mon State government, according to Order No (3/2015) of the President’s Office on Thursday.— MNA

Vice President U Nyan Tun outlines land resources management reform

NAY PYI TAW, 9 April — Vice President U Nyan Tun explained the reform of the land resources management system Thursday to the central committee at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry in Nay Pyi Taw.

The vice president, who is also chair of the Central Committee for Land Resources Management, said there are three preliminary tasks being undertaken as part of the reform.

The first is the development of basic principles for land resources management policy, with public participation, that will lay a sound foundation for the future. It is being carried out with advice from Hluttaw representatives in states and divisions, civil society organizations and town elders, the vice president said.

The second task is a pilot project towards people-centred development outcomes, which is to be realized by developing the One Map database, which will use technology to centralise land records and statistics, the vice president added.

The third task is a pilot project that meets the standards of fairness, enforceability and compliance by the public as the second task.

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Vice President U Nyan Tun highlights reform process of land resources management system.— MNA

CANADIAN FORESIGHT GROUP, PARTNERS TO EXPLORE LARGE GAS FIELD OFFSHORE MYANMAR

YANGON, 9 April — A joint venture of Canadian Foresight Group (CFG), Perth based Transcontinental Resource Group (TRG) and Myanmar’s KMA Group will explore a large gas field in the Andaman Sea.

CFG was awarded offshore Block M-15 late last month. Under the terms of the joint bid, CFG will undertake a seismic program and drill two wells.

Block M-15 is located in the Andaman Sea, within the Taninthayi Offshore basin, which is off Myanmar’s southern Taninthayi coast. The area of Block M-15 covers 13,480 square km with estimated P50 Recoverable 16.1 Tcf.

One of the biggest offshore gas fields in Myanmar, Yetagun gas field is, is located 60 km to the north of M-15. The Yetagun field contains an estimated 4.2 Tcf of recoverable gas.

Exploration work is expected to commence in September.

GNLM/Natural Gas Asia

57 APPLY FOR YANGON STOCK EXCHANGE SERVICE PROVIDER LICENSES

YANGON, 9 April — The Securities and Exchange Commission of Myanmar has received 57 service provider applications for the Yangon Stock Exchange, SECM chairman and deputy minister for Finance Dr Maung Maung Thim said Thursday.

Among the applications, 20 are for underwriters, 30 for consultants or advisors and seven for brokers and dealers, he said, during talks on the development of the stock exchange, which is slated to launch on 1 October this year.

According to the chairman of the SECM, the commission plans to invite companies to seek listing on the Yangon Stock Exchange following the country’s traditional four-day New Year’s festival in mid-April.

Currently, the commission is reviewing its listing criteria. Companies seeking to list should have transparency, good governance and trust, he added. The Yangon Stock Exchange project is on track and the project is now more than 60 percent complete. SECM invited applications for the service licenses — underwriters, dealers, brokers and consultants — setting different levels of capital requirements for each in January.

(See page 2)

Correction

A story titled “Three foreign banks set to open Yangon branches 23 April” on Page 1 of the 9 April edition incorrectly stated that The Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ would be one of three overseas banks to open branches in Yangon on 23 April. The bank will in fact open its branch on 22 April. We regret the error.— Ed
Appointment of permanent secretaries is lawful: Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Representatives of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw discuss issues on appointment of permanent secretaries and their salaries.—MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw

Ministry says Indaw gem mine operation lawful

Deputy Minister for Electric Power U Aung Than Oo replying to questions.—MNA

57 apply for Yangon Stock Exchange service provider...

(from page 1)

A license for underwriting requires K15 billion (around US$15 million); for dealing K10 billion; for Brokerages K7 billion and for consultancy business K30 million as paid-up capital, according to the deputy minister. An underwriting license, which tops the capital requirements, also allows operation in the other three businesses areas.

The four kinds of service providers are also allowed to have joint ventures with foreign firms in anticipation of speeding up the development of the stock market, U Maung Maung Thein said.

The Yangon Stock Exchange, Myanmar’s first, will have the abbreviation YEX. Japan’s Tokyo Stock Exchange and Daiwa Institute of Research Ltd signed an agreement with the Myanmar Economic Bank to help establish and run the exchange in December, 2014.

The market will be run by Yangon Stock Exchange Joint Venture Company, with a 51 percent stake owned by the Myanmar Economic Bank under Myanmar’s Finance and Revenue Ministry and the remainder by the Japanese partners.—GNNM

KOICA donates laboratory equipment, research assistance

Yangon, 9 April—A ceremony to provide laboratory equipment and assistance for research works worth US$450,000 was held at Medical Research Department on Ziwaka Street in Dagon Township, here, on Thursday.

The molecular research centre was constructed in 2004 between Medical Research Department and Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

Director-General Dr Kyaw Zin Thant spoke about a plan on research of communicable diseases of the department in cooperation with KOICA.

Thanks to the donation, medical researchers will have the opportunities to conduct research on malaria, hepatits B and TB diseases through modern technology.

Win Win Maw

Rural development tasks being carried out according to priorities; Deputy Minister

Deputy Minister for Livestock, Fishery and Rural Development Dr Aung Myat Oo.—MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw

Representative U Hlaing Oo of Ayeyawady Region Constituency (12).—MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Dr Kan Zaw, Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development, responded that the new rank will steer the government into a good, clean, transparent and accountable body in terms of public management.

He added the appointment of permanent secretaries is an early preparation to ensure a smooth transition between the coming elections and the post-election period.

The union minister quoted the State Constitution as granting the President the rights to appoint, approve, transfer and terminate high-ranking officials of the Union Civil Services Board, with UCSB Chairman U Kyaw Thu saying that officials appointed by the President are entitled to their monthly salaries in line with the presidential power, although the Union Civil Service Law and Regulations has no mention of it.

U Mahn Aung Tin Myint of the Kayin State constituency urged the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw to include funds in the new fiscal year for the construction of housing for MPs to stay, with the speaker noting that MPs are to stay in government-run guest houses as there is no housing for MPs. The speaker promised to work on the proposal in accordance with the law.

Dr Kan Zaw also said he would give top priority to the issue, pledging further discussions with the planning commission and the government.

MNA
Vice President U Nyan Tun outlines land...

(from page 1)

Concerning the relocation of farmland, the vice president suggested the current system of relocating farmland in forest reserves, to settle land disputes and fulfill the need to relocate farmland in the post-conflict period, should be based on international standards, with the cooperation of the international community.

After the speech of the vice president, central committee member Dr Tun Shin explained the draft land law.

Tatmadaw conquers strategic hill of Kokang insurgents

NAY PYI TAW, 9 April — Tatmadaw forces captured a strategically important Kokang insurgents hill position Wednesday in the latest of a series of fierce battles that have claimed the lives of 10 government soldiers and wounded another 62.

The Tatmadaw forces used heavy weapons in the early morning battle for Point-1845, occupying the hill by 11 am.

The forces of the Tatmadaw have recently carried out offensives against a number of rebel strongholds, bringing them under government control.

The Point-1845 hill is more than 6,000 ft high and located about 4,000 meters from the high and located about 6,000 ft high and located about 4,000 meters from the high and located about 6,000 ft high and located about 4,000 meters from the high and located about 6,000 ft high and located about 4,000 meters from the high.

The Tatmadaw will use the site as a stronghold to clear surrounding areas.

Then, vice chairman of the central committee, Union Minister Lt-Gen Ko Ko and Union Minister U Win Tun, reported on the use of state-owned land, rent, compensation for land confiscation and resettlement, as well as rules and regulations for classification of land.

Afterwards, members of the central committee reported on matters including management of virgin and vacant land, land use for mining and urban development projects in cities.

Thandwe Township receives RC bridge in rural area

NAY PYI TAW, 9 April — Mobile medical teams of Defence Services have provided health care services to more than 300,000 people across the nation during four years period, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing told the cash donation ceremony at Thandwe District General Hospital on Thursday.

The senior general and wife presented cash donation of Tatmadaw families of Army, Navy and Air to district medical officer Dr Daw Myat Myoe. Well-wishers also donated cash to the hospital.

In the morning, the senior general, wife and Chief Minister of Rakhine State U Maung Maung Ohn cut the ribbon to open a 360-foot-long RC facility Thahtaychaung bridge linking Zeegyun and Myinhaisawm villages in Thandwe Townshap.

The senior general and party visited a rural health branch built by Min Din Foundation in Zeegyun village.

Information-sharing programme aims to improve haemophilia treatment

YANGON, 9 April — To provide better treatment to people with haemophilia, the Ministry of Health and partner organizations are implementing a project to share information and expertise.

Dr Aye Aye Khaing, Senior Consultant Paediatrician at Yangon Children’s Hospital, said Tuesday.

Dr Aye Aye Khaing told the Global New Light of Myanmar in an interview Tuesday.

She said, “Currently, 150 patients are receiving treatment in Yangon Children’s Hospital. About 80 per cent of them have haemophilia A, also called factor VIII (FVIII) deficiency.”

According to the estimation of international experts, there are more than 350,000 haemophilia patients worldwide, with some 1,500 in Myanmar.

Myanmar has sought to become a member country of the World Federation of Haemophilia since 2013. The federation has agreed to officially recognize Myanmar as a member at its world congress to be held in 2016.

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“The inborn disease is mostly found in males and I have seen a female patient along my career,” Dr Aye Aye Khaing said.

According to the federation, there are more than 350,000 haemophilia patients worldwide, with some 1,500 in Myanmar.

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Dr Aye Aye Khaing said.—GNLM
Friday, 10 April, 2015

**War veterans with disabilities receive cash assistance**

Yangon, 9 April—In honour of the 70th Anniversary of the Armed Forces, Insein Township War Veterans Organization presented cash assistance to its members with disabilities at its office in Aung San Ward, Insein Township, in March.

Chairman of the Township Organization Major Saw L C (Rtd) presented K235,000 to 47 disabled war veterans.

*Kyemon (684)*

**Japanese flower art staged to enthusiasts**

Nay Pyi Taw, 9 April—The Japanese Flower Art Event, jointly staged by Ministry of Culture and Japanese flower artists, took place at Mingala Thiri Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw Hotel Zone on Tuesday, with a speech by Director-General Daw Nanda Hmun of Historical Research and National Library Department.

International Sakura flower specialist Mr Fumihiko Muramatsu of Floral Décor Marumatsu of Tokyo spoke about flower art of Japan, while garden owner in Japan Mr Watanabe Takahiko demonstrated skills of flower art, with hotel staff and flower art lovers totalling more than 130 in attendance.—MNA

**Authorities to clamp down on noisy vehicles during Maha Thingyan festival**

Mandalay, 9 April—Police will target drivers of cars and motorcycles with noisy exhausts during the Maha Thingyan festival period in Mandalay, Police Major Thein Ko Ko of the No 11 traffic squad said.

“Action has been taken against motorcycles and vehicles without exhaust pipes each year,” he said. “We have warned that work licences will be revoked for the car workshops and garages that install inappropriate exhaust pipes.”

On 2 March, officials met owners of 762 motorcycle and car workshops in Mandalay District at the Mandalay City Hall and gave talks on the outbreak of common crimes in the festival.

“Authorities will impound unlawful vehicles during Maha Thingyan festival period,” the major said. “After the festival, action will be taken against owners and orders will be given to reinstall the original exhaust pipes.”

The local authorities took action against 53 unlawful motorcycles in 2013 and 35 in 2014 under the MCDC Law.

*Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)*

**Yangon Zoo welcomes new animals**

Yangon, 9 April—A number of new animals, including a lion and a rhinoceros, arrived at Yangon Zoological Gardens from Nay Pyi Taw Zoo and Safari Park on 4 April.

“Among the animals that arrived recently here, one pair of camels were born in Nay Pyi Taw, with the remaining animals coming from Africa,” administrator U Tin Shwe of Yangon Zoo said.

The newcomers to Yangon Zoo were one brown female lion, one white rhinoceros, a pair of camels, a pair of ostriches and a pair of zebras.—*Thi Thi Min*

**Villages enjoy illumination with solar panels**

Nay Pyi Taw, 9 April — A ceremony to electrify Sibintha Village with solar panels was held on the evening of 7 April.

Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Phone Zaw Han delivered an address while Deputy Chief Engineer U Than Tun Aung of Electricity Supply Enterprise reported on efforts to electrify of the village.

Township Administrator U Myat Soe handed over solar panels and related equipment to village administrator U Than Tun.

Shwe Ye Yint

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Gov’t declines comment on Japan’s possible contribution to AIIB

Tokyo, 9 April — The government on Thursday declined to comment on news reports that Japan’s possible financial contribution to a China-led development bank would amount to billions of dollars in the event Tokyo participated.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said that regardless of such reports, Japan remains “cautious” about joining the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which will be launched by the end of the year.

“I refrain from commenting on every news report,” Suga said at a news conference. “The government is conducting various studies, but our country maintains a cautious stance about participation in the AIIB.” “In coordination with relevant countries, we have been urging China that the AIIB meet standards suitable for so-called international financial institutions, which we believe is naturally necessary,” the top government spokesman said.

While Britain and other key European countries have announced that they will participate in the new bank, Japan — in close coordination with the United States — has decided to stay out of it, citing concerns over the opaqueness of the institution’s governance standards.

Earlier this week, Kyodo News reported that an internal government document showed that Japan envisaged a possible contribution of up to $1.5 billion to the AIIB in the event that Tokyo participated.

The Yomiuri Shimbun reported on Thursday that if Japan would chip in $1.1 billion-$1.5 billion should it join the bank. Citing government calculations, the Japanese daily paper said the envisaged amount would expand to $2.1 billion-$3 billion if the institution’s initial capital of $50 billion was raised to $100 billion in the future.

Kyodo News

India’s Modi says progress possible in Rafale fighter jet talks

Paris, 9 April — India and France should be able to make progress in talks over the purchase of Rafale fighter jets, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in an interview with French newspaper Le Figaro. “The question of the Rafales is still in discussion and we should be able to make progress on mutually acceptable bases,” Modi told the newspaper ahead his arrival on Thursday in France for a state visit. Talks on the proposed purchase of 126 Rafale planes have been under way for more than three years, trying to resolve differences over pricing and local assembly.

—Reuters

Singapore’s public housing flat resale prices decline in March

Singapore, 9 April — The resale prices for Housing and Development Board (HDB) flats in Singapore dropped by 0.8 percent on-month in March, according to the HDB on Thursday.

The prices of all property types decreased in March, except HDB executive flats which rose 1 percent. Resale prices for three-room and four-room flats dropped by 0.9 percent and 1.1 percent respectively, while five-room flats experienced a 0.5 percent decline. SRX Property said prices have declined 6.6 percent from the same period a year ago and 11.1 percent from the peak in April 2013 on the whole.

A total of 1,349 HDB resale flats were sold in March, an 17.5 percent increase from the 1,148 transacted units in February. The resale volume was down 5 percent compared with a year ago, SRX Property said. The overall median Transaction Over X-Value (TOX), a measurement of whether people are overpaying or underpaying SRX Property’s estimated market value, remained negative.

About 80 percent of the resident population in Singapore live in high-rise flats built by the Housing and Development Board and sold to local households under the basic principle of one unit per household.

—Xinhua

S Korea says has no word if North has nuclear ICBM capability

Seoul, 9 April — South Korea’s Defence Ministry said on Thursday it could not confirm a Pentagon report saying North Korea has the ability to launch an intercontinental ballistic missile carrying a nuclear weapon. The ministry spokesman Kim Min Seok said during a press briefing that Seoul has no information on whether North Korea is capable of mounting a miniaturized nuclear warhead on a ballistic missile.

—Kyodo News

Cambodia’s new election body to start functioning on 13 April

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen(R) and Sam Rainsy, president of the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), speak to media in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 9 April, 2015. Xinhua

Prime Minister Hun Sen (R) and Sam Rainsy, president of the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), have announced that they would expand to $2.1 billion-$3 billion if the institution’s initial capital of $50 billion was raised to $100 billion in the future.

“Confident that the reformed NEC will end the concerns of our people and businessmen over post-election crisis,” Hun Sen said.

Sam Rainsy said, “From now on, the Cambodian people will have confidence in the future elections. Definitely, there will be no post-election dispute in the future.”

Under the new election law, any party, that wins one or more parliamentary seats in the election but boycotts the National Assembly when the king convokes, will be deemed to have abandoned seats.

—Xinhua

Empress mourns war dead on Palau’s Peleliu Island

Japanese Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko talk with local people on Peleliu Island, Palau, on 9 April, 2015. The imperial couple visited the island to commemorate those who lost their lives there during World War II.

Kyodo News

Girl missing after ferry catches fire off southern Thailand

Bangkok, 9 April — An Israeli girl is missing and about 40 people suffered minor injuries after a four-hour boat trip on which some 100 passengers, mainly foreign tourists, were aboard caught fire in the Andaman Sea off Thailand’s southern coast, according to local rescue authorities. The boat had just departed seaside town of Krabi on a two-and-a-half-hour cruise to the resort island of Phuket when the fire broke out around 3 pm local time.

The ferry was completely destroyed by the fire and sank, with the passengers and crew rescued by a fishing boat.

According to the Japanese Embassy in Bangkok, there is no word of any Japanese being injured in the accident. —Kyodo News

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen(R) and Sam Rainsy, president of the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), speak to media in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 9 April, 2015.

—Xinhua

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—Empress mourns war dead on Palau’s Peleliu Island

Japanese Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko talk with local people on Peleliu Island, Palau, on 9 April, 2015. The imperial couple visited the island to commemorate those who lost their lives there during World War II.
**In Jamaica, Obama seeks to reassert US leadership in Caribbean**

**WASHINGTON** — US Secretary of State John Kerry said on Tuesday that the United States is well aware of the support that Iran has been providing to Houthi forces who have driven Yemeni President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi out of the country.

Kerry said the United States would support countries in the Middle East who feel threatened by Iran. “We’re not looking for confrontation, obviously, but we’re not going to step away from our alliances and our friendships and the need to stand with those who feel threatened as a consequence of the choices that Iran might be making,” Kerry said in an interview with PBS NewsHour.

**US President Barack Obama (2nd R) is greeted by Jamaica’s Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller (C) as he arrives aboard Air Force One at Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston, Jamaica on 8 April, 2015. — REUTERS**

**Kerry says US aware of Iran’s support to Yemen’s Houthis**

**WASHINGTON** — US Secretary of State John Kerry said on Wednesday the United States is well aware of the support that Iran has been providing to Houthi forces who have driven Yemeni President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi out of the country. Kerry said the United States would support countries in the Middle East who feel threatened by Iran. “We’re not looking for confrontation, obviously, but we’re not going to step away from our alliances and our friendships and the need to stand with those who feel threatened as a consequence of the choices that Iran might be making,” Kerry said in an interview with PBS NewsHour.

**N Korea fired two short-range missiles into Yellow Sea on Tuesday**

**SEOUL**, 9 April — North Korea test-fired two short-range surface-to-air missiles, known as KN-06, into waters off its west coast on Tuesday, South Korea’s Defence Ministry said on Thursday.

Spokesman Kim Min Seok made the statement when asked by reporters to confirm news reports carried by local media earlier Thursday. When pressed why the information was not immediately made public, he said it was because the range of the missiles was relatively short. Kim said South Korea is closely monitoring signs of North Korea preparing to launch ballistic missiles. Speculation has surfaced in recent days that it may launch missiles around founder Kim Il Sung’s birthday, which falls on 15 April, or when US Defence Secretary Ashton Carter makes a three-day visit to Seoul, which is set to begin later Thursday. Last week, North Korea fired several short-range rockets into the Yellow Sea, apparently as a gesture of defiance against an annual US-South Korean military exercise that has been under way since 2 March and is scheduled to run until 24 April.

**Russia to stop air search for missing crew from sunken fishing trawler**

**VLADIVOSTOK**, 9 April — Russia will end its air search on Friday for the 13 people missing from a fishing trawler that sank off Russia’s Kamchatka Peninsula, local authorities said on Thursday.

The maritime search and rescue efforts in the shipwreck area will continue until 10 April, and the number of fishing vessels participating in the rescue mission has increased to 43, the Russian Emergency Situations Ministry said.

**A MI-8 helicopter is carrying out the last day’s air search, the ministry said.** The fishing trawler Dalniy Vostok had 132 crew members on board when it sank in the Sea of Okhotsk at 6:15 am local time (1915 GMT) on 2 April. So far, 56 people have been confirmed dead, with 63 rescued and 13 still missing. The cause of the accident is under investigation.

**Iran will sign final nuclear deal only if sanctions lifted**

**Rouhani on state TV**

**ANKARA**, 9 April — Iran will agree to a final nuclear accord with six major powers only if all sanctions imposed on the country over its disputed nuclear work are lifted, President Hassan Rouhani said in a televised speech on Thursday. We will not sign any deal unless all sanctions are lifted on the same day ... We want a win-win deal for all parties involved in the nuclear talks,” Rouhani said.

The tentative deal between Iran and the six powers on curbing Iran’s nuclear work, reached last week in the Swiss city of Lausanne, revived hopes of an end to sanctions in return for limits on the Iranian atomic programme. Iran wants sanctions to be lifted altogether and at once, but the United States made it clear on Monday that sanctions would have to be phased out gradually under the final nuclear pact.

A deadline for reaching the final agreement is 30 June and Iran, the United States, Germany, France, Britain, Russia and China are expected to meet in the coming days to discuss the deal. — Reuters
US soldier killed in possible Afghan insider attack

JALALABAD, (Afghanistan), 9 April — An Afghan soldier dressed in the uniform of local security forces opened fire on US soldiers in eastern Afghanistan on Wednesday, killing one American and wounding several more before the shooter himself was killed, a US official said.

Many details surrounding the incident were still unclear. The Pentagon and US State Department only confirmed an exchange of gunfire between US and Afghan forces, saying an investigation was ongoing.

“I can confirm that one American soldier was killed today,” Colonel Steve Warren, a Pentagon spokesman, told reporters.

Asked whether this was an insider attack by an Afghan soldier turning his weapon against NATO forces, Warren said: “It’s a little early to tell. Indications are leaning that way.”

“But we need to let the site before the shooting be confirmed,” Warren added. Two Afghan soldiers were also injured in the shootout, but it was unclear who had fired first, Afghan or US forces.

A US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said shooting was initiated by an unidentified Afghan man dressed in the uniform of Afghan security forces. He was killed in the ensuing return fire from American troops.

A second US official estimated that around six Americans were wounded.

The US State Department acknowledged only that an exchange of gunfire took place about an hour after State Department officials held a meeting with the provincial governor in Jalalabad. They had left the site before the shooting began, officials said.

“I have seen nothing to indicate they were targeted though, and I know the investigation is ongoing,” said State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf.

The frequency of “insider attacks” in Afghanistan has fallen sharply this year as most foreign forces withdrew from the country in 2014. A small contingent of around 12,000 NATO troops remains in Afghanistan to train Afghan forces after the combat mission officially ended last year.

Wednesday’s incident was the first since January, when three US military contractors were killed by an Afghan soldier in the capital Kabul.

In the final years of the war, dozens of incidents seriously eroded trust between Afghan forces and their international allies, forcing the coalition to scale back interaction with government troops.

The Taleban have sometimes claimed that insider attacks reflect their ability to infiltrate the enemy, but Afghan coalition forces say incidents more often arise over misunderstandings or arguments between troops.

By Reuters

Greek PM gets support, not money from Putin

MOSCOW, 9 April — Russian President Vladimir Putin offered Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras moral support and long-term cooperation in exchange for any financial aid on Wednesday, leaving Athens to fend for itself in resolving urgent debt problems with Western creditors, sources said.

A left-led Greek government, at loggerheads with its euro zone and International Monetary Fund creditors, risks running out of money within weeks unless it can reach a new cash-for-reform deal.

“The Greek side has not addressed us with any requests for aid,” Putin told a joint news conference after Kremlin talks. “We discussed cooperation in various sectors of the economy, including the possibility of developing major energy projects.”

Tsipras added: “Greece is not a beggar going around to countries asking them to solve its economic problems. We are not a country that doesn’t only concern Greece but is a European crisis.”

South Carolina police shooting reflects racist pattern, residents say

NORTH CHARLESTON (SC), 9 April — For the dozens of protesters who descended on the working-class South Carolina city of North Charleston on Wednesday, a bystander’s video of a white police officer gunning down a fleeing black man was long-awaited as 100 billion pounds with a final decision on the renewal due to be taken in 2016.

Opponents argue replacing Trident could cost as much as 100 billion pounds and Britain should consider cheaper alternatives.

The Conservative manifesto will guarantee that we will build a new fleet of four Successor ballistic missile submarines, “Defence Secretary Michael Fallon wrote in the Times newspaper. “We will retain the Trident continuous-at-sea nuclear deterrent to provide the ultimate guarantee of our safety.”

The Conservatives have long supported renewing Trident, and Thursday’s pledge is designed as a challenge to Labour which, whilst also backing the programme, has mooted the idea that three submarines could fulfil the same role.

With neither Labour or the Conservatives forecast to win the election outright, Labour’s most likely route to power is a deal with the Scottish National Party (SNP) who vocally oppose any renewal of the fleet, which is based in Scotland.

SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon on Wednesday said her party would “never ever ever vote for a renewal of the Trident programme, potentially complicating post-election government-forming negotiations.”

“Labour is committed to maintaining a minimum, credible, independent nuclear deterrent, delivered through a continuous-at-sea deterrent,” Labour defence spokesman Vernon Coaker said in a statement. “This is not up for negotiation with any party.”

Reuters

Crew stand on the deck of the Royal Navy nuclear-powered submarine HMS Astute near the Skye bridge off the Isle of Skye, northwest Scotland on 22 Oct, 2010.

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South Carolina police shooting reflects racist pattern, residents say

NORTH CHARLESTON (SC), 9 April — For the dozens of protesters who descended on the working-class South Carolina city of North Charleston on Wednesday, a bystander’s video of a white police officer gunning down a fleeing black man was long-awaited as 100 billion pounds with a final decision on the renewal due to be taken in 2016.

Opponents argue replacing Trident could cost as much as 100 billion pounds and Britain should consider cheaper alternatives.

The Conservative manifesto will guarantee that we will build a new fleet of four Successor ballistic missile submarines, “Defence Secretary Michael Fallon wrote in the Times newspaper. “We will retain the Trident continuous-at-sea nuclear deterrent to provide the ultimate guarantee of our safety.”

The Conservatives have long supported renewing Trident, and Thursday’s pledge is designed as a challenge to Labour which, whilst also backing the programme, has mooted the idea that three submarines could fulfil the same role.

With neither Labour or the Conservatives forecast to win the election outright, Labour’s most likely route to power is a deal with the Scottish National Party (SNP) who vocally oppose any renewal of the fleet, which is based in Scotland.

SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon on Wednesday said her party would “never ever ever vote for a renewal of the Trident programme, potentially complicating post-election government-forming negotiations.”

“Labour is committed to maintaining a minimum, credible, independent nuclear deterrent, delivered through a continuous-at-sea deterrent,” Labour defence spokesman Vernon Coaker said in a statement. “This is not up for negotiation with any party.”

Reuters

Crew stand on the deck of the Royal Navy nuclear-powered submarine HMS Astute near the Skye bridge off the Isle of Skye, northwest Scotland on 22 Oct, 2010.

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Reuters
Don’t let poverty drive children out of school

By Kyaw Thura

There is no child who does not love being told fairy tales before bedtime. This tells us children are enthusiastic about learning and shows us how important primary education is to them. As the United Nations Millennium Development Goals state, every boy and girl should be able to complete a full course of primary education.

Most people feel education can help society eradicate poverty in a sustainable manner. The view that educating children is crucial to ending extreme poverty is held by many nations. They prioritize programmes designed to invest in human capital in the belief that it can pave the way for social mobility.

Investing in primary education encourages children to realize their full potential as future leaders of their countries and the world as a whole.

In Myanmar, some children, especially in rural areas, do not have easy access to education. The number of schools in remote and rural areas is quite small. Many schools do not have adequate resources. In addition, long travelling distances discourage children from attending school. Many children in rural areas have to walk miles to the nearest school.

Despite the government’s generosity in making primary education free nationwide, poverty still remains a major obstacle for school-age boys and girls from poor families. We should not let poverty drive our children out of school, especially in this age. Leaving school and working to support families will no doubt have tragic consequences for children.

All things considered, primary education is not only the basic rights of all children but also a solid foundation for upward social mobility.

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email wallace.taw@gmail.com with your name and title.

Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish “Letter to the Editor” that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Let us pay deep homage to the Sacred Uppatasanti (Protection against Calamity) pagoda (Cetiya) of 325 feet in height, the Replica of the most famous Shwedagon Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw, the capital of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

We all Buddhists take great awareness that the Omniscient Buddha Himself made a vow (resolution) before His Parinibbana (noble demise). The vow says, “After My Parinibbana all my scared relics should not be in one and should be parted in various pieces and propagated in different parts for all beings in the universe to be able to attain the stage of the nibbana”.

During the lifetime of the Omniscient Buddha and after the noble demise (Parinibbana) of the Omniscient Buddha, the four kinds of pagodas (Cetiya) were greatly built by Buddhist peoples and Buddhist communities across the world dedicating to the Nine Supreme Attributes of the Omniscient Buddha. The four kinds of pagodas (Cetiya) are as follows:-(1) Dhathu Cetiya (Pagoda) in which the sacred relics of the Omniscient Buddha are enshrined. (2) Dhamma Cetiya (Pagoda) in which scriptures and inscriptions of the Omniscient Buddha are enshrined. (3) Oddissa Cetiya (Pagoda) in which materials and objects used by the Omniscient Buddha are enshrined. The world Buddhist communities firmly recognize that the Republic of the Union of Myanmar is a leading Theravada Buddhist nation in the Buddhist world. According to the historical records of Buddhism, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has been a genuine Theravada Buddhist nation for thousands of years and over 90 percent of the whole population of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar have taken faith in genuine Theravada Buddhism since then.

According to the historical records of Myanmar, the successive Myanmar kings and governments of Myanmar significantly encouraged and supported for carrying out the noble task of the purification, perpetuation and propagation of the Buddha Sasana (the noble teachings of the Omniscient Buddha) throughout the country and they themselves built pagodas, monasteries, temples and other religious edifices dedicating to promotion and propagation of the Buddha Sasana. The successful Kings of Myanmar devoutly and deeply took faith in the genuine Theravada Buddhism. For instance, His Majesty King Anarawtha who firstly founded a strong and stable Kingdom of Myanmar vividly implemented the noble task of the purification, perpetuation, propagation and promotion of the genuine Theravada Sasana with great assistance of the Most Ven. Shin Arakan from Suwannahommi (Thaton). Furthermore, His Majesty King Anawrahta built a large number of pagodas, monasteries, temples and other religious buildings not only in Bagan, the capital of Myanmar Kingdom at that time but also throughout the Kingdom. Multifarious Buddhist people across the Kingdom carried out the noble task of promotion and flourishing of the Buddha Sasana ( Teachings of the Omniscient Buddha) under the prudent guidance and supervision of members of Sangha Order and His Majesty King Anawrahta.

And also now, we all Buddhists throughout the Republic of the Union of Myanmar take awareness that the newly-built sacred Uppatasanti (protection against calamity) Pagoda (Cetiya) of 325 feet in height, the Replica of the most famous Shwedagon Pagoda which was built by the life-time of the Omniscient Buddha in 103 Great Era, over 2558 years ago, is being paid homage in Nay Pyi Taw, the capital of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

The great grand auspicious state driving ceremony for construction of the sacred Uppatasanti Pagoda was held in Nay Pyi Taw on 9th March 2009 respectively.

All Buddhist people, well-wishers and donors throughout the country were cordially invited to attend these auspicious ceremonies in order to pay deep homage to the newly-built Uppatasanti Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw, the capital of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Paying homage to the newly-built Uppatasanti Pagoda, the Replica of the most famous Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon, will be like just paying homage to the most famous Shwedagon Pagoda which was built in the lifetime of the Omniscient Buddha in 103 Great Era (589 BC) over 2585 years ago.
Monastery receives replica of Japan’s Maha Kamakura Buddha

Pyin Oo Lwin, 9 April — Myataung Monastery in Pyin Oo Lwin Township on Wednesday received a replica of Japan’s Maha Kamakura Buddha donated by a well-wisher who commissioned the silicon-fibre copy of the famous statue located near Tokyo.

The statue was transported from Padauk Street in Industrial Zone-1 of Mandalay to the monastery at Perkinmyaung Cave. Well-wisher U Myint Thein spent K70 million on the carved image, which took two years and three months to make.

“The image made of silicon can be conveyed easily.” U Myint Thein said. “I studied the technology in China to create this image.”

The image is 14 feet high and 10 feet wide. The chamber and throne for the image were donated by U Lwin-Daw Myint Myint Sein and family of UTL generator industry.

Electoral officials compile voter lists ahead of poll

Kyaukpadaung, 9 April — Staff of Kyaukpadaung Township Election Sub-commission are compiling voter lists ahead of the general elections slated for the end of October or early November. A total of 99,335 men and 120,021 women voters are residing in 12 wards and 109 village-tracts in Kyaukpadaung Township as of 31 December, 2014.

The sub-committee is computerizing the voter lists based on information from ward and village-tract administrators, as well as the Township Immigration and National Registration Department.

Under the supervision of the chairman of the township sub-commitmission U Maung Maung Shein, 20 computer operators from the Ministry of Education compile the voter list as of 30 March.—Ko Nay (Kyaukpadaung)

Loans contribute to extension of livestock breeding

Kanbali, 9 April — A ceremony to present loans to livestock breeders was held at the hall of the Township Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department in Kanbali, Sagaing Region, on 3 April.

Commander of the Township Police Force Police Major Moe Myint Zaw, and the head of the Township LVBD Dr Kyaw Win spoke at the ceremony.

The cooperative, formed with 59 members in 2009, began a breeding program with 6,354 goats, funded with K59 million from World Yadana Bank Ltd.

A total of 9,453 goats have been sent to Kachin State and Mandalay Region. As the bank disbursed K59 million with 1.7 percent interest from 2009 to 2015, the cooperative society has the opportunity to extend its tasks to be able to contribute towards alleviation of poverty in rural areas.—Aung Win Nyein (Kanbali)

Natogyi Township plans to dredge 55 more lakes next FY

Natogyi, 9 April — The Township Irrigation Department has dredged 25 earthen lakes this summer in Natogyi Township, Mandalay Region, so as to store water in the coming monsoon season, Staff Officer U Aung Myint Than of the department said.

The department dredged 99 small lakes last year and 25 more lakes this year. These lakes can store monsoon rainwater to boost local supplies, he added. Under the township General Administration Department, the Irrigation Department will dredge 55 more lakes in the 2015-16 fiscal year.

Deputy Director of Myawady District Immigration and National Registration Department U Aung Thein Win and officials discuss birth registration activities in Myawady on 9 April.—Tun Tun Oo (Myawady Town)
Yemen’s Houthis seize provincial capital despite Saudi-led raids

The attack on Taiz comes as Houthis have taken over the capital, Sanaa, and other key cities in Yemen, putting pressure on the government of Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi. Houthis have been fighting a war against President Hadi since 2015, seeking to gain control of the country.

The Houthis have been backed by Iran, while the Saudi-led coalition has been backing Hadi’s government. The conflict has led to a humanitarian crisis and has strengthened the hand of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), which has been growing in strength.

In recent days, the Houthis have captured a number of key cities, including Taiz, as part of an offensive aimed at weakening the government’s hold on the country.

French broadcaster TV5Monde hit by Islamist hackers

PARIS, April 9 — Hackers purporting to be supporters of Islamic State have launched a cyber attack on the French public television station TV5Monde and posted material on its social media feeds to promote French military action in Iraq.

President Francois Hollande’s government branded the cyber attacks, which started late on Wednesday, as “vile and cowardly” and affirmed its commitment to freedom of expression and to investigating the attackers.

Yves Bigot, head of the TV5Monde station, said the assault caused its 11 channels to be offline temporarily as it dealt with the malware.

Islamic State releases more than 200 captive Yazidis in Iraq

Kirkuk, Iraq — More than 200 elderly and infirm Yazidis were freed on Wednesday by Islamic State militants who had been holding them captive since overrunning their villages in northwestern Iraq last summer.

A Reuters reporter saw the group of 216 people, which included two Christians, handed over to Kurdish forces near the city of Kirkuk. Some were too exhausted and disoriented to speak.

One elderly woman said she had been captured by the insurgents last August when they overpowered Kurdish forces in the Sinjar area and proceeded to purge its Yazidi population, killing hundreds and taking thousands captive.

The woman, who asked not to be named, said she had told her son and two young daughters they would be led to their execution, but instead, they were piled onto a minibus that drove them to televised mass executions.

Yemen crisis: Iranian FM promises to track down Houthis

Sunnis and Shia Muslims in Yemen’s south have declared allegiance to the Islamic State, which has been expanding its influence in the region.

The United Nations has said that the Houthis, who control much of Yemen, are receiving financial and military support from Iran, while the Saudi-led coalition is backed by the United States and its allies. The conflict has been加剧ed by the desire of all sides to control the country’s strategic position.

The Houthis have been accused of human rights abuses, while the Saudi-led coalition has been criticized for its attacks on civilians.

Iran, Pakistan agree to work for peaceful solution to Yemen crisis: Iranian FM

Islamabad, April 9 — Visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad-Javad Zarif said on Wednesday that Iran and Pakistan have agreed to work for a peaceful solution to the Yemen crisis.

Zarif made the remarks at a joint press conference with Pakistan’s top foreign affairs adviser Sartaj Aziz after their official talks that focused on the crisis in the Middle East.

“We support intra-Yemeni dialogue to find out solution and to form a broad-based government there,” Zarif said. He denied any military support to the Houthis.

The Iranian foreign minister warned that the Islamic State or Daesh and al-Qaeda are taking advantage of the situation in Yemen and they have already taken control of some areas.

He said Pakistan and Iran face serious challenges of terrorism and extremism and referred to the recent killing of eight Iranian guards near the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. He welcomed Pakistan’s announcement to investigate the incident.

Zarif said he also discussed the situation in Afghanistan and both sides agreed to work together for peace and stability in Afghanistan.

UAE says ‘systematic’ Iranian meddling in Yemen, region

The United Arab Emirates says “systematic” Iranian meddling in Yemen’s conflict and elsewhere in the region is making it difficult for the UAE to continue its support for President Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi’s government.

UAE’s foreign minister, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, said he had been holding talks on the situation in Yemen with his Iranian counterpart and had discussed the situation with the US and Saudi Arabian foreign ministers.

He said the UAE had been working to find a political solution to the Yemen conflict, and that it was important for all parties to take part in the talks.

Iran denies arming the Houthis and its allies in Yemen, saying it is providing them with only non-lethal aid.

The UAE has been providing military aid to President Hadi’s government, but it has also been providing non-lethal aid to the Houthis, who control much of Yemen.

The Houthis have been accused of human rights abuses, while the Saudi-led coalition has been criticized for its attacks on civilians.

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Dust-covered ice glaciers found on Mars

CAPE CANAVERAL, 9 April — Mars has thousands of glaciers buried beneath its dusty surface, enough frozen water to blanket the planet with a 3.6-foot (1.1-metre) thick layer of ice, scientists said on Wednesday.

The glaciers are found in two bands in the mid-southern and mid-northern latitudes. Radar data, collected by Mars-orbiting satellites, combined with computer models of ice flows show the planet has about 5.3 trillion cubic feet (150 billion cubic metres) of water locked in the ice, according to a study published in this week’s issue of the journal Geophysical Research Letter.

“The ice at the mid-latitudes is therefore an important part of Mars’ water reservoir,” Nanna Bjornholt Karlsson, a researcher at the University of Copenhagen’s Neils Bohr Institute, said in a statement. Scientists have been trying to figure out how Mars transformed from a warm, wet and presumably Earth-like planet early in its history into the cold, dry desert that exists today.

Billions of years ago, Mars, which lacks a protective, global magnetic field, lost much of its atmosphere. Several initiatives are under way to determine how much of the planet’s water was stripped away and how much remains locked in ice underground reservoirs.

“The atmospheric pressure on Mars is so low that water ice simply evaporates and becomes water vapor,” the institute said in a news release. Scientists suspect that the glaciers remained intact because they are protected under a thick layer of dust.

In addition to evidence of river beds, streams and hydrated minerals, scientists have observed molecules in the Martian atmosphere last month concluded that the planet probably has an ocean more than a mile deep covering almost half of its northern hemisphere. Mars has lost about 87 percent of that water, scientists said.

Currently, the planet’s largest known water reservoir is in the polar caps.

Scientists restore the good name of Brontosaurus

WASHINGTON, 9 April — Paleontologists are restoring the good name of Brontosaurus more than a century after it was deemed scientifically invalid and the famous dinosaur was reclassified as another genus called Apatosaurus.

They unveiled on Tuesday an exhaustive analysis of Brontosaurus remains, first unearthed in the 1870s, and those of closely related dinosaurs, determining that the immense, long-necked plant-eater was not an Apatosaurus and deserved its old name back.

Paleontologist Emanuel Tschopp of Portugal’s Universidade Nova de Lisboa cited important anatomical differences including Apatosaurus possessing a wider neck than Brontosaurus and being even more massively built.

“The differences between Apatosaurus and Brontosaurus are numerous enough to revive Brontosaurus as a separate genus from Apatosaurus,” Tschopp said. Brontosaurus, which lived in North America around 150 million years ago in the Jurassic Period, was about 72 feet (22 metres) long and weighed about 40 tons.

“Brontosaurus and T rex are the two most popular dinosaur names ever,” said Universidade Nova de Lisboa paleontologist Octávio Mateus. “Even 112 years after paleontologists considered it invalid, the name Brontosaurus still echoes in the popular culture. It was indeed a very cool dinosaur name.”

“This will be like recovering Pluto as a planet again,” Mateus added, referring to astronomers’ 2006 decision to downgrade Pluto to from a full-fledged planet to a dwarf planet.

After his team excavated fossils of two huge long-necked dinosaurs, prolific 19th-century paleontologist Othniel Charles Marsh named the first one Apatosaurus (“desiccated lizard”) in 1877 and the second one Brontosaurus (“thunder lizard”) in 1879.

In 1903, paleontologist Elmer Riggs declared that Brontosaurus and Apatosaurus were too similar for each to be considered a separate genus. Because Apatosaurus was named first, under the rules of scientific naming it supplanted Brontosaurus.

But the name was so popular it survived its burial, with “Brontosaurus” and things like “Bronto Burgers” appearing in numerous books, cartoons, movies and elsewhere.

Brontosaurus belonged to a group of dinosaurs with long necks and tails and pillar-like legs called sauropods that included Earth’s largest land animals ever.

“This study, published in the scientific journal PeerJ, focused on the anatomy and relationships among a category of sauropods called diplodocids, which includes Brontosaurus, Apatosaurus, Diplodocus and others.”

“I remember finding out that Brontosaurus was actually called Apatosaurus as a child,” University of Oxford paleontologist Roger Benson said. “It didn’t seem right, and I think a lot of people will secretly be pleased that Bronto is back again.”

Riggs’s discovery has been much-anticipated smartwatch on for Samsung’s Gear. The S6 models are widely expected to be hard to manufacture.

“Extinct” New Zealand plants rediscovered in wild

WELLINGTON, 9 April — Two unique New Zealand plants that have been believed extinct in the wild have been rediscovered, the government’s Department of Conservation announced on Tuesday.

Dysphania pusilla, or pygmy goosefoot, had been one of eight native plant species listed as completely extinct until its surprise rediscovery at two widely-separated sites in the South Island, said a statement of the department.

Another native herb, Lepinetia filiformis, or slender buton daisy, was being cultivated at some protected sites, but was last seen growing wild in the late 1990s until it was rediscovered growing wild at another site in the South Island.

“The last record of pygmy goosefoot was from 56 years ago and amazingly, when rediscovered this year, a few thousand plants were seen at both locations,” director-general Lou Sanson of the department said in the statement.

“Botanists believe pygmy goosefoot may lie dormant for many years and when conditions aren’t suitable for it to grow. It was fortunate rangers were in the right places at the right time when it had germinated in abundance enabling its rediscovery,” he said.

“Both herb species grow in dry, open areas and finding them highlights how much is still being learnt about the unique species that inhabit such dryland ecosystems and what is needed to preserve them.” — Xinhua

Samsung expects record Galaxy shipments, S6 edge shortage

SEOUL, 9 April — Samsung Electronics Co Ltd (005930.KS) expects record shipments for its new Galaxy S6 smartphones and said it will struggle to meet demand for the curved-edged version due to production constraints, adding to hopes for a turnaround in mobile sales.

The S6 models are widely expected to sell briskly following a string of positive reviews, boosting prospects for an earnings recovery in 2015. This week, the company estimated its January-March operating profit to be its highest in three quarters, which analysts said was partly because Samsung put its own chips in the new phones.

Samsung expects the flat screen S6 to sell more than the higher-margin S6 edge — priced about $120 more in South Korea — but mobile chief J K Shin said at a media event on Thursday the firm won’t be able to keep up with demand for the latter model in the near term because the curved screens are harder to manufacture.

“Some carriers are switching existing orders to get more of the S6 edge, and it looks like demand for the model will exceed supply throughout this year,” said HMC Investment analyst Greg Roh. “That means average selling price will fall at a slower rate, which will have a positive impact on Samsung overall.”

Samsung has not disclosed its shipment record for a handset. Analysts regard the Galaxy S3 as its best-selling model overall, though they estimate the Galaxy S4 to have done better in its initial year, when a model is most profitable.

Nomura estimated that Samsung sold 80 million S3s in three years from its 2012 launch, and 49 million S4s from the model’s April 2013 launch to the end of that year. Some analysts say Samsung could ship 50 million or more S6 phones this year.

Samsung’s Shin also said the South Korean electronics maker is preparing a variety of wearable devices, including a new version of its Gear smartwatch, but did not give specifics. Arch-rival Apple Inc (AAPL.O) is due to roll out its much-anticipated smartwatch on 24 April.

“Both herb species grow in dry, open areas and finding them highlights how much is still being learnt about the unique species that inhabit such dryland ecosystems and what is needed to preserve them.” — Xinhua
Norway’s prime minister apologizes for treatment of Romas during World War Two

Oslo, 9 April — Prime Minister Erna Solberg apologized on Wednesday for discrimination against Norway’s Roma population before and after World War Two, calling it a dark part of the country’s history, and promised to pay reparations.

The Scandinavian country’s small Roma minority, of around 500, have campaigned since the 1990s for compensation for their mistreatment. Solberg’s comments followed the release of a government-commissioned report in February that detailed how Norwegian Roma citizens in the 1930s were denied re-entry after travels abroad. It named 62 people who ultimately perished in Nazi death camps following the rejections.

Survivors of the death camps were also denied re-entry to Norway after the war for up to 10 years, the report by the Centre for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities showed.

The prime minister said the measures taken by the authorities at the time amounted to a “racist exclusion policy”.

“It’s time for a moral reckoning with this dark part of our history. The state recognizes its responsibility for the errors that were made and the injustice done to Norwegian Roma,” Solberg said in a statement.

Data from the mid-1920s shows that between 100 and 150 Roma lived in Norway at that time, according to the Centre for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities.

More research was needed to uncover the full extent of what happened to Roma in Norway during German occupation of the country from 1940-1945, the report said.

Solberg promised that the right-wing coalition government would pay reparations but said the details would be worked out in cooperation with Roma representatives.

Elsewhere in Europe, Greece is seeking 278.7 billion euros from Germany in reparations from World War Two.

North Korea demands cargo ship held in Mexico since summer be freed

NEW YORK, 9 April — A North Korean diplomat on Wednesday called for the immediate release of a North Korean cargo ship moored in Mexico since last summer and blamed the United States for pulling strings behind the grounding of the vessel, suspected of links with a shipping company blacklisted by a sanctions panel under the UN Security Council.

Speaking to a group of reporters at the North Korean diplomatic mission in New York, An Myong Hun, deputy ambassador, said the Mu Du Bong is “totally a peaceful and legitimate commercial ship” and had “not shipped any items prohibited by international law and regulations.”

He also said that the Mu Du Bong “has no relations at all with Ocean Maritime Management Co,” the Pyongyang-based shipping company targeted by the committee on sanctions against North Korea under the Security Council. The deputy envoy said Mexico has acknowledged that the North Korean ship has not violated any international laws, adding that “we believe that it is none other than the United States which is behind” the detaining of the ship in Mexico. The UN Security Council’s sanctions panel sent experts last fall to investigate the Mu Du Bong. OMM is one of the North Korean companies also subject to sanctions imposed by the US Treasury Department in July.

American woman deported from N Korea arrives in Beijing

BEIJING, 9 April — A woman believed to be American humanitarian aid worker deported from North Korea arrived in Beijing on Thursday, seemingly in good health.

The grey-haired woman, thought to be the person identified by North Korean official media as Sul Sang-dea, was escorted away by US officials in the terminal of Beijing’s international airport. The Korean Central News Agency on Wednesday night reported that the woman, who had frequently visited the country over the past two decades for supposed humanitarian work, had actually been engaged in “plot-breeding” and producing propaganda against the country through photos and videos.

It said she had “apoligized for her crimes” and begged for forgiveness. Instead of detaining her, it was decided to deport her, “taking into full consideration her old age and by displaying the generosity” of the North Korean law.

The brief report did not provide her age or other specifics.

Three killed, two injured in Milan courthouse shootout

MILAN, 9 April — Three people were killed and another two were injured when the defendant opened fire during a hearing in Milan’s courthouse on Thursday, local reports said.

A bankruptcy judge, Fernando Campani, and a young lawyer, Lorenzo Alberico Claris Appiani, were among the victims, according to court sources quoted by ANSA news agency.

The accused, an entrepreneur named Claudio Giardiello, 57, was arrested later by police some 20 km away from the Milan’s courthouse while trying to flee the scene on a motorbike, Rai State television said.

Two injured people, of whom one was reportedly seriously wounded, were rushed to hospital. “I was outside a courtroom on third floor and I heard the gunshots. I saw a young man who had been shot to death and later two others lying on the floor,” a lawyer told Rai. “He used to be a client of mine, but I gave up on him because he was an over-the-top person,” Giardiello’s former lawyer commented on the shootout.

“Understanding how it was that a man armed with a gun was able to enter the courthouse will be a very serious issue,” a columnist of Milan-based Corriere della Sera newspaper, Giuseppe Guastella, told Xinhua.

“Those are seven passages in the courtroom, of which three are equipped with metal detectors,” Guastella said.

He explained to Xinhua, however, that judges and lawyers are allowed to enter the courthouse without passing through the metal detectors.

Hundreds of courthouse workers, journalists and passers-by gathered outside the courthouse, which is located in a central area of the northern Italian city where the next world exposition will kick off on 1 May.
At least 24 killed, 22 injured in road accident in central Bangladesh

DHAKA, 9 April — At least 24 people were killed and more than 22 others injured when a passenger bus veered off the road and fell into a ditch in Bangladesh’s central Faridpur district, some 101 km away of capital Dhaka, early Thursday.

“The passenger bus fell into a road side ditch, leaving 15 passengers dead on the spot and some 22 to 24 were injured,” Ratan, a Faridpur police official, told Xinhua. “Nine of the injured died on the way to local hospitals,” he added.

The accident occurred as the bus driver lost control over the steering and plunged the vehicle into a ditch.

Bangladesh has one of the highest fatality rates for road accidents in the world mainly due to shoddy highways, poorly maintained vehicles, violation of traffic rules by inept drivers and lack of monitoring of the traffic department. According to a study of Accident Research Centre of Bangladeshi University of Engineering Technology, some 10,000 to 12,000 people are killed in road accidents in Bangladesh every year, of which about 75 percent fatalities occur in rural areas. — Xinhua

Death toll from fuel truck explosion in SE Mexico climbs to 20

MEXICO CITY, 9 April — The death toll from a fuel truck explosion in Mexico’s southeast state of Tabasco in late March climbed to 20 Wednesday, officials said.

Victims numbered 19 and 20 both died on Wednesday, the Tabasco State Prosecutor’s Office (FGE) and the Health Secretariat reported separately.

“We report that at this time the body of the 19th victim of the gas truck explosion on the Cardeñas-Coatzacoalcos Hwy. is being taken to the Semelo (Forensic Medical Service),” the FGE said via Twitter.

The victim was identified as Ana Patricia Sanchez Madrigal, 24.

Minutes earlier, the Health Secretariat reported that Abinamu Candelero Correa, 24, lost of his injuries at the hospital where he was being treated.

The accident occurred on 26 March when the dual-tank fuel truck carrying 60,000 liters of gasoline veered off the highway and crashed into nearby trees.

According to media reports, local residents were drawn to the scene to collect the spilled fuel, with two people killed instantly and 34 others severely injured after the tanks exploded.

Mexico’s Mileleno daily called the FGE as saying “the victims ... tried to collect the fuel of the overturned tanks, not heeding the barricade tape placed by members of Civil Protection.”

The company that owned the truck, Transportadora de Lugares del Norte, claimed the accident was caused by armed robbers trying to steal the cargo — Xinhua

Falls in crime may be due to drinking decrease in Australian state

MELBOURNE, 9 April — The number of young adults committing crime in Australian state of Victoria is lowering drastically, statistics released by the Sentencing Advisory Council suggested on Thursday.

The statistics said that the number of people aged between 18 and 24 that were being sentenced dropped a whopping 26.4 percent across all Victorian courts between 2009 and 2014.

However, this was partly due to police being more lenient to young people regarding some crimes, with more warnings being handed out for offenses such as possession of cannabis. Cautions issued to young adults in the same time period had risen 31 percent, but the number of young offenders detained by police dropped 5 percent in the same time. Sentencing Advisory Council chairman Professor Artie Freebarg said that similar trends were being seen around the country, so it wasn’t just merciful policing, but a change of attitude towards illegal practice from young people.

“The trend being observed in Victoria is consistent with broader trends across Australia indicating that it is not simply the result of a change in policing practice,” he told Fairfax Media on Thursday.

The study also illustrated a dramatic drop in the number of juvenile offenders, with 39 percent fewer young people being sentenced over the same five year period between 2009 and 2014. A spokesperson for Victoria Police said that by managing police units better and increasing the number of warnings handed out for minor breaches, young people tended not to risk a second offense.

“Putting people before the court is not always the best use of our time, nor the best outcome for the offend- er,” the spokesperson told Fairfax Media on Thursday.

“Getting people appro- priate treatment is important and, anecdotal, once people have been issued with (something like a) cannabis caution, we don’t tend to encounter them again for the same offenses.”

The study also found that young people were binge drinking less, smoking less and using illicit substances less than those in the same age bracket five years ago. — Xinhua
Bloodborne full soundtrack will be available in Europe and North America as a physical CD and digital release.—PTI

London, 9 April — The original soundtrack for Bloodborne will be on sale from 21 April, it has been revealed.

Priced at USD 9.99, the full soundtrack will be available in Europe and North America as a physical CD and a digital release through Sumthing Else Music Works, reported Digital Spy.

Consumers can also purchase songs individually for USD 0.99 from the publisher.

The soundtrack comprises 21 tracks featuring over 70 minutes of music by a 65-piece orchestra and 32-piece choir, according to Eurogamer.

Bloodborne’s music was composed by artists such as Yuka Kitamura (Dark Souls 2), Tsukasa Saitoh (TerenchZ), Nobuyoshi Suzuki, Ryan Amon (Elysterious) and Michael Wandmacher (Twisted Metal).

A recently-released promo for the PlayStation 4 exclusive gives an inside look at a live recording session for one of the tracks that make up its ‘haunting’ score.

Elsewhere, a newly-discovered glitch seemingly makes in-game boss battles easier after 12 hours.—PTI

Frank Ocean’s new album to be out in July

Los Angeles, 9 April — Rapper Frank Ocean’s new album, rumoured to be called “Boys Don’t Cry”, will release this July.

A new publication by the 27-year-old rapper will also come out the same month, reported Aceshowbiz.

Ocean took to his website FrankOcean.com to share a photo of him sitting next to two stacks of magazines with the words “Boys Don’t Cry” on the covers.

“I got two versions. I got twooooo versions,” he wrote in the caption, hinting that the album would be titled “Boys Don’t Cry”.

His representative then confirmed that a new Frank Ocean album would indeed come out in July.

Ocean has been working on his new full-length with producers Hit-Boy, Rodney Jerkins, Happy Perez, Charlie Gambetta and Kevin Ristro.

The record will serve as the follow-up to his 2012 acclaimed set “Channel Orange” that won the Best Urban Contemporary Album Award at the 2013 Grammys.—PTI

Wale edges out ‘Furious 7’ for top spot on Billboard 200

Los Angeles, 9 April — Rapper Wale’s latest studio record topped the weekly US Billboard 200 album chart on Wednesday, but it was the soundtrack to Universal Pictures’ hit “Furious 7” movie that posted the largest rise this week.

Wale’s “The Album About Nothing,” which features narration by comedian Jerry Seinfeld, sold 88,000 albums, 74,000 songs and was streamed 6.9 million times, for a total unit tally of 100,000, according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan.

The “Furious 7” soundtrack, which features Wiz Khalifa and Charlie Puth’s song “See You Again” as a tribute to the street car franchise’s late star Paul Walker, rose to No 2 from No 17 on the chart, with 74,000 units sold this week.

The boost in sales comes from the film’s debut over the weekend, which broke April box office records with a $143.6 million (97 million pound) opening.

The Billboard 200 chart tallies album sales, song sales (10 songs equal one album), and streaming activity (1,500 streams equal one album).

“Furious 7” star Ludacris’ new album “Ludaversal” came in at No 3 just behind the soundtrack, with sales of 73,000 units.

Last week’s chart-topper, Kendrick Lamar’s “To Pimp A Butterfly,” dropped to No 4.

Other new albums this week include country artist Darius Rucker at No 7 with “Southern Style,” alt-rockers Death Cab for Cutie at No 8 with “Kintsugi” and singer-songwriter Sufjan Stevens at No 10 with “Carrie & Lowell.”

On the Digital Songs chart, Mark Ronson and Bruno Mars’ “Uptown Funk!” was pushed from the top spot to No 2 by Khalifa and Puth’s “See You Again,” which sold 168,000 downloads.

‘John Wick’ directors eyed for DC movie?

Los Angeles, 9 April — Directors of Keanu Reeves starrer “John Wick”, Chad Stahelski and David Leith, are reportedly being pursued to helm a big-screen adaptation of DC Comics for Warner Brothers.

It is unclear what movie is offered to the pair, but there are a number of DC movies in works, reported Aceshowbiz. “The Flash” starring Ezra Miller and “Aquaman” starring Jason Momoa are due in 2018. “Shazam!” starring The Rock will arrive in 2019, while “Cyborg” starring Ray Fisher and “Green Lantern (2020)” will follow in 2020.—Reuters

‘Logan’s Run’ to get new version with female lead

Los Angeles, 9 April — Warner Bros is reportedly reviving the classic sci-fi movie ‘Logan’s Run’ with a female lead after Ryan Gosling bowed out of the project.

The story is set in a dystopian future where people are killed off when they reach a peak age in order to avoid overpopulation and maintain the consumption of very limited natural resources, reported Aceshowbiz.

Director Nicolas Winding Refn (“Drive”) was initially circling the project and actor Ryan Gosling was attached to play the title role, but the two eventually left to pursue other projects. Based on a novel by William F Nolan and George Clayton Johnson, the original movie was released in 1976 with Michael York as the titular character. It spawned a TV spin-off starring Gregory Harrison and airing from 1977 to 1978.—PTI

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Rapper Wale attends the re-opening of 40/40 Club in New York on 18 Jan, 2012.—Reuters

The “Furious 7” re-opening of 40/40 Club in New York on 18 Jan, 2012.—Reuters

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Toyota to start Tokyo trial of electric three-wheeler in green mobility push

TOKYO, 9 April — Toyota will get a chance to zip around town on Toyota Motor Corp’s three-wheeled electric car—motorbike from Friday, in a trial aimed at crafting a global business model to reduce gridlock and pollution.

The world’s top-selling automaker will partner Japanese car-sharing service operator Park24 Co Ltd for a six-month experiment leasing the i-Road concept vehicle, with a view to setting up a green car-sharing business akin to Daimler AG’s car2go service.

The pint-sized i-Road has two front wheels that move up and down independently of each other, allowing it to lean like a motorcycle but retain the stability of a car. Toyota has not yet decided whether to mass-produce it.

“Our concept was to offer something that’s both fun and convenient for city driving,” i-Road chief engineer Akhiro Yamaoka told Reuters. Devising smarter ways to get around — known in the industry as “smart mobility” — looks set to become a new battleground for automakers as urbanization grows, pollution worsens, and more cars clog up cities in emerging markets.

Germany’s Daimler has taken the lead with car2go, whose 1 million-plus members in 30 European and North American cities use a mobile app to reserve the tiny Smart Fortwo car, many of which are zero-emission. Drivers pay by the minute and can drop the car off at various spots around town.

Ford Motor Co in January announced the Ford Smart Mobility initiative that would involve various types of trials around the world including a car-sharing service in London. Toyota also has car-sharing experiments underway in its namesake city as well as in France’s Grenoble, but Tokyo would be its first in a major metropolis, which it says would benefit most from the i-Road. “Data shows that about 70 percent of cars in big cities are occupied by one person, with most traveling less than 10 km (6.2 miles),” said Toshiya Hayata, group manager of Toyota’s Smart Community department. “That means the mode of transportation doesn’t have to be a car.”

In the upcoming trial, users can lease one of five i-Roads from the upmarket Ginza shopping district for 412 yen ($3) per 15 minutes, dropping it off at any of five spots in the capital.—Reuters

Second case of feared banana disease confirmed in Australia

SYDNEY, 9 April — A second case of a destructive disease for banana plants has been confirmed in Australia, dashing hopes that a recently confirmed outbreak would be isolated and threatening the country’s A$550 million ($423 million) sector.

The so-called Tropical Race 4 strain of Panama disease was found at a farm in Mareeba in the far north of Queensland, the local government said on Thursday.

It comes a month after the discovery of the first case in Queensland at a farm in Tully, State biocuriosity officials quarantined that farm and growers hoped the incident would prove to be isolated. Now, with a second case 200 km (124 miles) from the original outbreak, the banana industry is concerned the disease may spread to other parts of the country’s largest banana-producing state.

“The Panama tropical race 4 (TR4) on a second North Queensland banana farm has further emphasized the need for every assistance to be provided to the banana industry to help contain the disease,” the Australian Banana Growers’ Council said.

Panama disease hits banana plant roots, with Race 4 considered particularly destructive.—Reuters

IKEA seeks to drive food sales growth with eco-friendly menu

STOCKHOLM, 9 April — Swedish furniture retailer IKEA said sales growth at its food business could accelerate in coming years, helped by a drive to meet customer demand for healthy and eco-friendly dishes. IKEA Food Services, which runs the group’s in-store budget restaurants and Swedish food stores, in January reported an 8.6 percent rise in sales in its 2013/14 fiscal year, to 1.7 billion euros ($1.8 billion).

The division’s boss, Michael La Cour, said it could outstrip that sales growth in coming years as it catered better for customers who had become more conscious about the nutritional value and sourcing of their food in recent years.

“This massive shift in terms of how to serve and what people expect around food of course has an impact on how we want to do food going forward at IKEA,” he told Reuters on Wednesday. “The food business will be a strong contributor to IKEA. We don’t think the 8.6 percent is the ceiling.”

The food business accounts for 5 percent of sales in the fiscal year to August 2014 at IKEA Group, which owns IKEA Food Services and most of the IKEA stores worldwide. La Cour said he expected that proportion to be at least unchanged this year. In a first step of its food drive, IKEA on Wednesday launched a vegan version of its signature Swedish meatballs with a carbon footprint 30 times less than that of the meat-based product. Within months, all seafood on sale will be certified as sustainably fished, La Cour added.

La Cour said the 2013 horse meat scandal — which saw IKEA withdraw its meatballs across most of Europe after a supplier found a batch that contained traces of horse meat — was a wake-up call for the food industry.

“The horse meat scandal, which we got entangled in due to lack of transparency in the supply chain, was absolutely an example of how demands on the food industry have to change,” added the IKEA veteran, who became food chief 18 months ago. Besides making money on their own, IKEA banks on its restaurants, which average 2,000 square meters and last year had 600 million customers, to make visitors to its stores stay and shop longer.—Reuters

India expects normal monsoon rains this year

NEW DELHI, 9 April — India’s summer monsoon rains are expected to be normal this year, stated chief economic adviser at the finance ministry said on Thursday.

Monsoon rains are vital for India’s farm sector, which accounts for 14 percent of the $2 trillion economy, as half of the country’s farmland lacks irrigation.

Weaker monsoon rains have cut farm output in the past, stoking inflation. Arvind Subramanian also said inflation is not expected to run up in the medium term due to the recent seasonal rains, which have damaged over 10 million hectares (24.7 million acres) of crops.— Reuters

News Channel in Brief

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Coutinho goal sends Liverpool into FA Cup semi-final

LONDON, 9 April — Philippe Coutinho thumped home as second-half winner as Liverpool broke the resistance of Championship Blackburn Rovers to reach the FA Cup semi-finals with a gritty 1-0 replay victory on Wednesday.

Brendan Rodgers' side, who came into the game after back-to-back Premier League defeats that all but ended their hopes of a top-four finish, will face Aston Villa in a Wembley semi-final.

They came out on top at Ewood Park having dominated possession but struggled to break down the hosts who got men behind the ball and restricted Liverpool to very few sights of goal.

The breakthrough came in the 70th minute when Coutinho exchanged passes with Jordan Henderson from a corner, drove into the box and drilled the ball low into the bottom corner.

"From start to finish, I thought we were brilliant tonight," Liverpool's captain on the night Jordan Henderson told BT Sport.

"Now we have a tough game against Villa at Wembley, but it gives the club a good lift." The victory kept sev- en-times Cup winners Liv- erpool on course to win Rodgers' first trophy for the club after a disappoint- ing league campaign that has left them out of the Champions League qualifi- cation places.

Rodgers had said win- ning the FA Cup would represent progress for his side despite failing to make any impact in the league after last season's second-place finish.

It was far from a con- vincing performance from Liverpool, however, who looked like the confidence had been knocked out of them by consecutive losses to Manchester United and Arsenal.

With the bone-hard and bobbly playing surface mak- ing possession difficult, Liv- erpool, who lost defender Mamadou Sakho to injury early on, spent the first half probing at a pedestrian pace with little success.

Blackburn were rolling their sleeves up and keep- ing numbers in defence, the tried and tested formula for lower league teams hoping to cause a cup upset.

Liverpool had little more than glimpses of goal in the first half, with Coutin- ho firing an effort that was saved by Simon East- wood and Daniel Sturridge trying his luck with a spec- ular effort that drifted a fraction too high.

The hosts had two ef- forts saved by Simon Mi- gnolet at the start of the sec- ond half, with the Liverpool keeper tipping Tom Cairn- ney's 25-metre effort over the bar and palming Ben Marshall's firm header on to the post.

Liverpool maintained their stranglehold of the ball, however, and Coutinho's moment of class proved the difference.—Reuters

Ronaldo reaches 300 goals for Real in Rayo win

MADRID, 9 April — Cristiano Ronaldo headed his 300th goal for Real Madrid in a laboured 2-0 La Liga victory at neigh- bours Rayo Vallecano on Wednesday that kept the gap on leaders Barcelona down to four points.

Fresh from thrashing Granada 9-1, when Ronaldo hit five, the European champions needed a win at Rayo’s Vallecas stadium after Barca strolled to a 4-0 home victory over Almeria to open a seven-point ad- vantage over their arch-rivals.

In-form Lais Suarez scored twice and Lionel Messi ended a three-game goal drought, with Marc Bartra also getting on the scoresheet at the Nou Camp.

Real struggled to ex- er the control over lowly Rayo and missed a host of chances before Ronaldo netted his 37th La Liga goal of the campaign with a header from Dani Carval- o’s cross.

The prolific Portugal forward, five clear of Mes- si at the top of the scoring chart, is the third player af- ter Raul (323) and Alfredo Di Stefano (307) to reach 300 goals for Real, but has needed only 288 matches, compared with Raul’s 741 and Di Stefano’s 396.

Ronaldo had earlier been booked for a dive in the penalty area and will be suspended for the La Liga game at home to Eibar on Saturday.

James Rodriguez made it 2-0 with a sharp finish from Ronaldo’s lay- off to lift Real to 70 points, five ahead of third-placed champions Atletico Mad- rid, who won 2-0 at home to Real Sociedad on Tues- day.

“We tried to pressure them with more intensity high up the pitch but in the first half we were not con- vincing,” Real coach Carlo Ancelotti told a news con- ference.

“In the second, we were more complete, we played well and we de- served to win,” added the Italian.

After edging to a 1-0 win at Celta Vigo on Sunday, Barca dominated Almeria at the Nou Camp to record their 20th victory in 11 league games.

Real Madrid’s Cristiano Ronaldo (L) celebrates after scoring a goal against Rayo Vallecano during their Spanish first division soccer match at Vallecas stadium in Madrid on 8 April, 2015.—Reuters

Manchester United manager Louis Van Gaal

LONDON, 9 April — Manchester United, buoyed by five successive Premier League victories, head into Sunday’s derby against Manchester City a place and a point above their ri- vals and believe they are poised to restore red ac- cendancy in the city.

Champions City have won their last four meetings against United, including a 1-0 victory at the Etihad Stadium in No- vember, but their hopes of retaining the title have faded. They have dropped down to fourth after four wins in 11 league games and trail leaders Chelsea by nine points.

United, meanwhile, have put their early season struggles behind them to climb to third, eight points clear of fifth-placed Liver- pool in the race for Cham- pions League qualification.

“It was another Man- chester United (last No- vember), I believe,” United boss Louis van Gaal told re- porters after Saturday’s 3-1 win against Aston Villa.

“That was more in the start of the process and now we are in the end of the process. Now we have developed the team. I think also the confidence of our players is very high at the moment.

“This next game is the decisive game... you have to win these kinds of matches. Come alive at Old Trafford on the back of a 2-1 defeat by Crystal Palace but captain Vincent Kompany believes form counts for nothing in a der- by. “It doesn’t matter what place you are in the league, it’s a derby,” Kompany said after the Palace loss.

“If anything, it’s a good moment to go into a derby, “I guess the moment- um is a little bit with our neighbours at the moment, but it’s the perfect place for us to go and try to rectify what we’ve had.”

United primed to resume Manchester top-dog role

BNPP